

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL SYNOD OF THE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH HELD AT ST PAUL'S & ST GEORGE'S CHURCH, EDINBURGH FROM 11–13 JUNE 2015

Freshers' Meeting

A meeting was held prior to the start of Synod to introduce new members to the programme and to the Synod's business procedures.

Opening Eucharist

The Synod was constituted at a celebration of the Eucharist in St Paul's & St George's Church, Edinburgh at 10.30am on Thursday 11 June 2015.

The Most Rev David Chillingworth, Primus, delivered his Charge to the Synod during the Eucharist. He reflected on the person of St Barnabas, the encourager, suggesting that members of Synod ought also to be encouraged and to be full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. In the Gospel, Jesus had said that "we should love one another as I have loved you". Those words of Scripture were an encouragement to transcend what might be expected of a General Synod, an encouragement to strive to act as a community of faith and love and an encouragement to sustain visible unity in Christ.

He suggested that the most significant challenge to the Synod would come in addressing questions around same-sex marriage. The time had come when this fundamental issue of current times needed to be addressed. Two weeks previously, he had been in Dublin at a Four Nations' meeting on "Faith and Order". The constitutional referendum on same-sex marriage had just taken place and the most Catholic country in Europe had decided to make a change. It had been no wonder that the Catholic Archbishop had said that churches needed a "reality check". In such words he had unconsciously echoed the response of Archbishop Justin Welby to the introduction of same-sex marriage in England when he had said that a major change in UK society had taken place and the churches had not come to terms with it.

In addressing such matters, two dialogues were involved. There was a dialogue with the Church's diversity. The different strands of theological and Church tradition were woven together in the Church's life but the complex of issues around human sexuality had the potential to turn that diversity from enrichment into division. The Cascade Process of dialogue had shaped a space in which the Church's diversity could be spoken and heard. There was also a dialogue with tradition – the Church's reading of Scripture, its theology and its social and moral teaching. The Doctrine Committee report on the theology of marriage, due to be considered in the meeting, had created conceptual space for consideration of that tradition. The current Synod did not represent a legislative space but a space which might be described as deliberative in which it would consider whether to make change and, if so, what kind of change that might be.

Most of all, there was a need to discern what the Spirit might be saying – speaking through one another, through Scripture, the tradition of faith and the extraordinary social changes taking place.

The Primus suggested that members could use Synod and its processes to express the underlying unity of the Church – a visible unity in Christ. That meant that everyone needed to be part of any decision, even if everyone did not choose to enter into any new situation which might develop. His hope for the Synod was that its decision-making would be a discernment of God's will for the Scottish Episcopal Church and for the current times.

During the Eucharist, an offering was taken to support the work of the Scottish Episcopal Institute. The offering amounted to £1,494.44 (including prospective tax reclaims).

SESSION ONE – THE MOST REV THE PRIMUS IN THE CHAIR

1.1 Welcome

The Primus welcomed all members of Synod including the following delegates representing other churches and faiths: –

Lt-Col Carol Bailey and Lt-Col Jonathan Roberts (Salvation Army), the Rev Alan Berry (Baptist Union of Scotland), the Rev Tim Cole (Assistant Chaplain General), the Rev Ralph Dunn (United Free Church of Scotland), the Rev Dr David Easton (Methodist Church in Scotland), the Rev John Bremner (United Reformed Church), the Very Rev Dr Sheilagh Kesting (Church of Scotland), Dr Satwant Singh Multani (the Scottish Interfaith Council), Mrs Lis Perkins (Church in Wales), the Rt Rev Dr Stephen Robson (Roman Catholic Church), the Rev Matthew Ross (Action of Churches Together in Scotland).

1.2 Election of Prolocutors

The Very Rev Nicki McNelly and the Very Rev Jeremy Auld were elected as Clerical Prolocutor and Vice-Prolocutor respectively by the House of Clergy.

Mr Alex Stewart and Dr Alistair Mason were elected as Lay Prolocutor and Vice-Prolocutor respectively by the House of Laity.

1.3 Tellers

Dr Daphne Audsley, Mr Malcolm Bett, Mrs Elspeth Davey, Mrs Carol Duncan, Dr Mike Hull, the Rev Canon Dr Anne Tomlinson and Mr Donald Urquhart were appointed Tellers for the meeting.

1.4 Assessor

The Primus announced that Dr Joe Morrow, Advocate, had been appointed as his Assessor.

1.5 Minutes of General Synod 2014

Mr David Palmer (Convener, Standing Committee) proposed, and Mr Michael Lugton (Convener, Administration Board) seconded, the following Motion: –

“That this Synod approve the minutes of the meeting of the General Synod held on 12-14 June 2014.”

The Motion was put to the vote and passed.

1.6 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

1.7 Elections

The Secretary General explained that the posts to be filled by General Synod in 2015 comprised the Convenership of the Standing Committee, the Convenership of the Administration Board, the Convenership of the Mission Board (assuming that the new Board was created by Synod later in the meeting), the Convenership and membership of the proposed new Institute Council, two vacancies for clergy on the Standing Committee, a vacancy for one General Synod member on the Administration Board, two vacancies on the Clergy Discipline Tribunal, a vacancy for a General Synod Trustee and in the Chair of the Pension Fund Trustees.

Details of nominations for most of the vacancies were set out in the Synod Papers. In relation to the vacancy for clergy members on the Standing Committee, nominations of the Very Rev Kelvin Holdsworth, the Rev Canon David Richards and the Very Rev Alison Simpson had been received. A ballot would be conducted on the Saturday morning of Synod for those two vacancies.

No nomination had been received for the vacancy for a General Synod representative on the Administration Board and it would be for Standing Committee to determine whether to fill that vacancy for the year ahead.

In relation to the nomination of Mr Robert Gordon for the Convenership of the Standing Committee, the Secretary General reported that Mr Gordon had indicated that, if appointed, he would relinquish the roles he currently fulfilled at St Paul's & St George's.

He further explained that the normal practice of Synod to fill vacancies where there were no competing nominations was to fill such vacancies by general acclaim. Synod confirmed that it would be willing to do so again at the current meeting.

1.8 Voting

The Secretary General reminded Synod members as to who was entitled to vote on motions and in elections. Also, in the light of the difficulties encountered the previous year in the counting of some votes, he wished to suggest that where an actual count was required, each table would appoint its own "table Teller" who would be asked to complete a voting slip to record the votes on their table, with the voting slips then being collected by the Tellers who had been appointed earlier in the meeting. Synod agreed to that procedure.

1.9 Audio Streaming of Proceedings

The Secretary General indicated to Synod that, as had been done in previous years, the proceedings of Synod would be audio streamed through the Provincial website.

1.10 Roll Call

The roll call of Synod members was taken by completion of attendance slips. A total of 130 members attended.

1.11 Permission to Speak

The Synod granted its permission for each of the following to speak during the course of the meeting: Mr Chris Townsend, Ms Emily Alldritt, the Rev Kate Reynolds, Dr Martin Auld, Mr Andrew November, Mr Jonathan Livingstone and all ecumenical and interfaith guests at Synod, including the Rt Rev Dr Stephen Robson.

1.12 Rule 10 Motions

The Secretary General reported that three Motions had been received prior to the commencement of the Synod meeting which had been brought under Rule 10. It was intended that such Motions be taken during Saturday morning and the procedure applicable to such Motions would be explained then.

1.13 Standing Committee – Annual Report and Accounts to 31 December 2014

Mr David Palmer (Convener, Standing Committee) presented the Annual Report and Accounts of the General Synod for the year ended 31 December 2014. During the year, the Standing Committee had considered a wide range of issues. These had included the setting up of the transitional Institute Council as the governing body of the Scottish Episcopal Institute; the changes required to the structure of the Mission and Ministry Board as a result of the setting up of the Institute; monitoring the progress of the Whole Church Mission and Ministry Policy; the possibility of replacing the Grants for Ministry scheme with a Block Grant system; the progress of the Cascade Conversations regarding human sexuality and issues relating to the

Pension Scheme, the organisation of the General Synod meeting and a range of other matters mentioned in the Annual Report.

Mr Palmer then commented on the financial aspects of the Report. The Standing Committee remained committed to ensuring that the General Synod operated within the financial resources available. It set budgets which it hoped would result in a break even position and in recent years Boards had been asked to review their budgets on a regular basis in order to keep expenditure as tight as possible. Restraint on the part of Boards and Committees had been one contributory factor to there having been a surplus the previous year. Income in 2014 had totalled nearly £1.8 million mainly comprising investment income of over £1 million and quota payments by dioceses of nearly £660,000. Income had been £11,000 higher than the budget projection, mainly due to higher than budgeted investment income, donations and legacies. Expenditure had been nearly £1.6 million and had been approximately £150,000 below budget. This had produced a surplus of over £190,000 (£162,000 more than budgeted). The Standing Committee was not deliberately trying to make a surplus but, in looking to future budgets, the surplus would be most helpful.

The most significant element of the savings in expenditure related to the delay in the appointment of the budgeted Director of Studies post. A further significant factor had been the lower than expected take up of available grants, particularly in relation to the Grants for Ministry Fund, mainly due to delays in appointments and vacancies arising during the year. Also there had been no requests for emergency building grants. He expressed thanks to the Boards and Committees for their excellent work in keeping within their budgets during a time when costs had been rising.

In terms of capital resources, the General Account showed capital funds of nearly £25.4 million, an increase of nearly £1.6 million on the previous year. This had resulted mainly from improvements in the Stock Market. Total capital resources were now in excess of £38 million as shown in the balance sheet.

Overall, the Accounts showed a reasonably healthy financial position but there remained a need to budget carefully for future years. As far as 2015 was concerned, the Committee would continue to address the significant financial deficits which were currently projected for future years including the question of whether it was feasible or desirable to reinstate the availability of substantial buildings grants. The feasibility of providing further funding for the training and formation of clergy, such as the availability of training grants for full-time students and the level of provincial curate grant, would also be matters for consideration. It would also consider, if approved by Synod, the introduction and implementation of the proposed Block Grant scheme. It would also oversee the completion of arrangements for a new governance structure for the Scottish Episcopal Institute and the creation of a new Mission Board.

Mr Palmer expressed thanks to the Conveners and members of the Boards and Committees and General Synod Office staff.

Questions were invited but there were none.

Mr Palmer then proposed, and Mr Michael Lugton (Convener, Administration Board) seconded, the following Motion: –

“That this Synod accept the Annual Report and Accounts of the General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church for the financial year ended 31 December 2014.”

The Motion was put to the vote and passed.

SESSION 2: THE RIGHT REV THE BISHOP OF MORAY, ROSS AND CAITHNESS IN THE CHAIR

2.1 Faith and Order Board: Process for Discussing Marriage

The Rt Rev Dr Gregor Duncan (Acting Convener, Faith and Order Board) explained that Motions 3 and 4 on the Synod agenda were designed to enable Synod to commit itself to a particular process for debating and deciding upon the Scottish Episcopal Church's understanding of marriage and for considering the religious registration of civil partnerships. He explained that the proposals had a wider context, especially that of the Cascade Conversations which had begun at Pitlochry the previous year and had been taking place across the Province and in which many Synod members had shared in some way or another. The Board hoped that discussion at the current Synod would be conducted in a similar spirit of respectful listening, speaking and engagement except that, on this occasion, it was proposed to make important decisions for the future as the outcome of the Synod debates. The proposals being brought were those of the Board itself and the Board hoped that they constituted a careful, measured and coherent approach which would enable many voices to be heard and which would give Synod clear pathways to be chosen – pathways which the Board hoped would allow everyone to hold together across divergences in belief and opinion. They were, of course, simply proposals since the Board could propose but it was for Synod to dispose. It was possible that Synod could improve upon the proposals and that would be Synod's right, even its duty.

Bishop Duncan explained that the process had four distinct phases, spread out across the current meeting of Synod. Firstly, there would be a debate on the floor of Synod on the Doctrine Committee's paper on the theology of marriage. The Board had commissioned that very substantial piece of work from the Doctrine Committee in the conviction that Synod needed to tackle the theology of marriage and that that was a necessary task before it could move on to consider both the possibility of change and particular options for change. At the end of that debate, Synod would be invited to support a Motion asking the Synod to receive the paper, thank the Doctrine Committee and recognise its work as providing material helpful to future discussion of possible canonical change.

The second phase of the proposed process, which would happen the following day, would be the opportunity for Synod to decide whether or not it wished to proceed to

consider options for canonical change in relation to the nature of marriage as understood by the Church. There was also an entirely separate provision by way of the possibility of a new Canon for the religious registration of civil partnerships. Bishop Duncan emphasised that the options on marriage had been developed by the Board on the basis of input from the Committee on Canons and they were distinct from the general thematic options mentioned in the Doctrine Committee's paper. They did not seek to address the suggestion made by the Doctrine Committee of removing the description of marriage as a "mystical union" from the present Canon, something which the Board believed might better be addressed at a later stage once the matter of genders of parties to marriage had been resolved. If the Synod voted in favour of considering options for change it would move to the third stage of the process.

The third stage would be to consider the six options for canonical change, in effect three groups of two, which were listed in the Board's paper and to vote upon them. Once the votes had been counted, Synod could move to the fourth stage to instruct the Faith and Order Board to have the Committee on Canons draw up the necessary canonical texts for first reading in 2016. In that session, consideration would also be given to a Motion instructing the Board to bring forward an entirely new Canon allowing for the religious registration of civil partnerships. The Board considered that, since the law had changed not only the provisions for marriage, but also for civil partnerships, Synod ought to be offered options for responding to both.

Bishop Duncan indicated that if Synod decided to opt for change and then selected a canonical option, the timeframe would be to have the necessary canonical texts for first reading at General Synod 2016, after which they would be passed to Diocesan Synods for debate early in 2017 and come back to General Synod 2017 for second reading. If Synod so decided, therefore, the middle of 2017 would be the time when the Church reached a decision regarding opting in to the new legislation.

Bishop Duncan explained the purposes of Motions 3 and 4 on the Synod agenda. Motion 3 proposing the overall process would require a two thirds majority because the proposed expressing of preferences as to canonical options was not catered for in the Rules of Order of Synod. The process therefore amounted to a suspension of the Rules of Order. The Board was also of the view that the other Motions which formed part of the process ought to be by way of ballot rather than simply on a show of hands. Under the Rules of Order voting was required to be by ballot on any particular Motion if one third of the present and voting members of any house so wished. However, the Board considered that it would be tidier and less confusing if Synod was invited to express a mind on this matter at the outset, hence the inclusion of a Motion (Motion 4) to that effect. That Motion would also require a two thirds majority because it amounted to a temporary suspension of the Rules of Order relating to ballots.

In concluding his presentation, Bishop Duncan indicated that the Board strongly believed that the passing of the Motions would enable Synod to commit not only to a careful, measured and coherent process but also to a safe process whereby members of Synod, voting by ballot, would have space and freedom to reflect and

vote according to their consciences and to their deepest desires for the Church's discipline of marriage. The Board hoped that the process would allow everyone to hold together across divergences in belief and opinion.

Bishop Duncan then proposed the following Motion: –

*“That this Synod agree to adopt the process for debating the nature of marriage and canonical options as recommended by the Faith and Order Board in the paper entitled **“Marriage, its nature and canonical options: a process paper from the Faith and Order Board”**.”*

Mrs Helen Hood (Edinburgh) seconded the Motion. She suggested that the process might not be perfect but nevertheless it would enable Synod to continue with the debate and she encouraged Synod members to vote in favour of it.

The Rev Alastair MacDonald (Aberdeen and Orkney) proposed that the following wording be inserted at the end of the Motion:

“subject to that process being amended as follows: –

the addition of a canonical option of keeping section 1 of Canon 31 and inserting a conscience clause that would enable a cleric to solemnise a marriage between two people of the same gender.”

Mr MacDonald explained that the options contained in the paper from the Faith and Order Board meant that for those who had difficulty with those options, their only option was to vote against the proposals. He indicated that those who had difficulties did not wish to vote against the process but that the process as proposed was not a helpful way forward. He explained that he was not asking members of Synod to vote in favour of the option incorporated in his amendment but simply that his proposed additional option be included alongside the options already proposed in the Faith and Order Board process. That would allow those who had difficulty with the options contained in the Faith and Order Board process to participate fully in the process. He invited Synod members to vote in favour of the amendment not because they would necessarily agree with the option but in order to include it as one of the options. If people did not feel able to vote in favour of his amendment, he asked that they abstain.

The Rev Canon Malcolm Round (member, Standing Committee) seconded the amendment and invited those who might have a very different perspective from him to vote in favour of the amendment. Accepting the amendment would mean that everyone could remain in the debate together. He did not want to vote against Motion 20 when it came to that point. The proposed amendment was a proposal for unity and diversity.

The Rev Markus Duenzkofer (Edinburgh) wondered why this amendment was being addressed now rather than at the stage of Motion 20 on the Synod agenda. Bishop Duncan explained that the Board's intention was to have a process for

Synod agreed at the outset which would not be subject to further amendment at a later stage. It was therefore best to have all amendments to the process being proposed and dealt with in the current debate.

The Rev Canon Ian Paton (Edinburgh) appreciated the offering of the amendment but indicated that he would vote against it. He believed that to include it would skew the voting process. He did not consider that members of Synod would be seen as negative if they chose to vote against Motion 20.

The Most Rev David Chillingworth (Primus) indicated that he intended to vote in favour of the amendment. He was aware that a further amendment was likely to be proposed suggesting a transferable voting system which would address any question of the amendment operating to skew the voting process. He expressed his appreciation to those who had brought the amendment.

The Very Rev Kelvin Holdsworth (Glasgow and Galloway) also expressed gratitude for the spirit in which the amendment was being proposed. However, he felt unable to support it. He struggled to find any way in which the proposal could lead to a canonical amendment which would be competent.

The Rev Prof John Richardson (Edinburgh) accepted the point made by the Primus regarding a transferable vote which would address the point made by Canon Paton. He suggested that a vote on the amendment be postponed until the question of the voting system had been dealt with. The Very Rev Francis Bridger (Brechin) supported Prof Richardson.

The Rev Dr Harriet Harris (Convener, Doctrine Committee) also appreciated the spirit in which the amendment was being brought but she considered that the content of the amendment was inconsistent. She suggested that options E and F as set out in the paper from the Faith and Order Board were the relevant options to address the point that was being made by the amendment.

Mr MacDonald agreed with the suggestion that the voting system be addressed first. He emphasised that the intention of the amendment was to hold two divergent views together.

The Chair suggested that voting on the amendment be postponed until all possible amendments during the current debate had been discussed. Synod indicated its agreement with that proposal.

Prof Alan Werritty (St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane) then proposed that the following wording be inserted at the end of the Motion:

"subject to that process being amended as follows: –

to separate out options B, D and F and invite Synod to vote on a motion that supports a conscience clause that ensures that no cleric would be obliged to solemnise a marriage against their conscience."

Prof Werritty explained that options A-F as set out in the paper from the Faith and Order Board conflated two issues – one substantive and one secondary. If Synod accepted his amendment, the question of a conscience clause as incorporated in options B, D and F would be dealt with collectively. The purpose of his amendment was to enable a robust, unambiguous and clear vote.

The Rev Alastair MacDonald (Aberdeen and Orkney) seconded the Motion.

The Rev Christine Mylne (Moray, Ross and Caithness) indicated that at the current time, a cleric could refuse to solemnise a marriage. In her view, there was therefore, no need for a conscience clause.

Mr Howard Thompson (Edinburgh) considered it was unclear as to how the amendments were designed to help the debate at Synod. Bishop Duncan explained that, at the current point, the Synod was trying to agree the process which it wished to adopt. The amendments were, therefore, a proper thing to consider. He was comfortable with what was being suggested.

Dr Beth Routledge (Glasgow and Galloway) voiced her support for Prof Werritty's amendment.

Prof Werritty then proposed a further amendment to the Motion so that there would be added to the end of the Motion the following:

"subject to that process being amended as follows: –

to conduct the vote on the options on the basis of a single transferable vote instead of the voting process outlined in the Board's paper."

Prof Werritty explained that if voting were conducted as set out in the Board's paper it was unclear what the outcome of that vote would mean. Under a single transferable vote system Synod members would be asked to list the options in order of preference with the possibility of second and subsequent preferences being reallocated. This would provide a less ambiguous result.

The Rev Alastair MacDonald (Aberdeen and Orkney) seconded the amendment. The purpose of it was to ensure that whatever option was ultimately chosen, it would be accepted by a majority of the Synod. He explained that, if the first preference achieved more than 50% of the votes, that would resolve the matter. However, if it did not, those who had voted for the second-highest option would have their votes reallocated in accordance with their second preferences. A similar process would continue until one option had secured more than 50% of the vote.

Prof Werritty then proposed a fourth amendment to the Motion so that there would be added at the end:

"subject to that process being amended as follows: –

to introduce a procedural Motion, before proceeding to vote on the proposed options, to the effect that "this Synod proceed to vote on its preferences on the proposed options for canonical change in relation to marriage as proposed by the Faith and Order Board"."

He explained that the effect of his amendment would, in effect, be to revisit Motion 20 once Synod had had the opportunity to discuss the options substantively. It would specifically allow Synod to agree that it wished to vote and allowed Synod to do so having heard the debate on the options.

The Rev Prof John Richardson (Edinburgh) seconded the amendment.

The Very Rev Kelvin Holdsworth (Glasgow and Galloway) asked for further explanation. Prof Werritty explained that, at present, the Synod agenda did not specifically include a Motion that the Synod should proceed to a vote. His amendment proposed that.

Mr Grant Swain (Moray, Ross and Caithness) asked at what point he could say "no" to the proposals. Bishop Duncan explained that Motion 20 on the Synod agenda was the point at which Synod could decide not to proceed.

Bishop Duncan, responding to the points made in debate, indicated that he was happy with the proposals for a single transferable vote system, that he understood the reason for proposing an amendment to include an additional option, but that he understood the arguments on both sides. He agreed that separating out the conscience clause appeared sensible. As to the final amendment suggesting an additional Motion prior to voting on the options, it was his view that it was for the Synod itself to decide.

The Chair indicated that the amendments would be put to the vote in the following order: the proposal to adopt a single transferable vote; the inclusion of an additional option; the separating out of the proposal regarding a conscience clause; the introduction of an additional Motion after debate on the options to proceed to a vote.

The amendments were then put to a vote on a show of hands with the following results: –

- The amendment regarding the adoption of a single transferable vote system was approved unanimously.
- The amendment regarding the inclusion of an additional option of retaining section 1 of Canon 31 but inserting a conscience clause enabling a cleric to solemnise a marriage between two people of the same gender was not passed.
- The amendment to separate out options B, D and F and invite Synod to vote on a Motion supporting a conscience clause to ensure that no cleric would be

obliged to solemnise a marriage against their conscience was passed by majority.

- The amendment to introduce a procedural Motion, before proceeding to vote on the proposed options, was passed by majority.

The Chair then put the Motion, as amended by Synod, to the vote, namely: –

*"That this Synod agree to adopt the process for debating the nature of marriage and canonical options as recommended by the Faith and Order Board in the paper entitled **"Marriage, its nature and canonical options: a process paper from the Faith and Order Board"** subject to that process being amended as follows: –*

- *to conduct the vote on the options on the basis of a single transferable vote instead of the process outlined in the Board's paper.*
- *to separate out options B, D and F and invite Synod to vote on a Motion that supports a conscience clause that ensures that no cleric would be obliged to solemnise a marriage against their conscience.*
- *to introduce a procedural Motion, before proceeding to vote on the proposed options, to the effect that "this Synod proceed to vote on its preferences on the proposed options for canonical change in relation to marriage as proposed by the Faith and Order Board."*

The amended Motion was carried by a clear majority of more than two thirds of those present and voting.

Bishop Duncan then proposed, and Mrs Helen Hood (Edinburgh), seconded the following Motion: –

"That voting in relation to the Motions numbered 9, 20, 23 and 24 on the agenda be conducted by ballot."

Prof Alan Werritty (St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane) indicated that the reference in the Motion to Motion 20 should, in the light of the passing of the previous Motion, be understood as including his additional procedural Motion.

The Motion was put to the vote and carried by a clear majority of more than two thirds of members present and voting.

SESSION 3 – THE REV CANON DR ALISON PEDEN IN THE CHAIR

3.1 Faith and Order Board: Committee on Canons - Canons for First Reading

3.1.1 Canon 52, Section 5

The Rt Rev Dr Gregor Duncan (Acting Convener, Faith and Order Board) explained that in relation to the Canons for first reading he would state the policy of the Faith and Order Board in putting forward the Canon and the Committee of the Convener on Canons, the Rev Paul Romano, would deal with the specific texts.

Canon 52 was the Canon which regulated the General Synod. Section 5 concerned the qualifications for elected membership of lay members and alternate lay members of the General Synod. The policy of the Board was to reduce the qualification age from 18 to 16 in line with the age of majority in Scotland and to encourage younger people in the life of the Church and to remove the requirement for confirmation since confirmation was no longer required for communicant membership. Communicant membership was the primary requirement. Bishop Duncan explained that the amended form of declaration shown in the Synod Papers was reproduced for information only since it would be presented for voting upon the following year at second reading stage.

The Rev Paul Romano (Convener, Committee on Canons) spoke to the text of Canon 52.5.

Bishop Duncan then proposed, and the Rev Cedric Blakey (Glasgow and Galloway), seconded the following Motion: –

“That the amended text for Canon 52, Section 5 be read for the first time.”

The Motion was put to the vote in houses and passed by the requisite majorities as follows: –

House of Laity: passed by majority
House of Clergy: passed by majority
House of Bishops: passed unanimously.

3.1.2 Canon 57, Section 6

Bishop Duncan explained that Canon 57, Section 6 defined the meaning of certain terms used in the Code of Canons. The policy of the Board was to redefine the terms "adult" and "full age" in the Code of Canons to mean a person who had attained the age of 16 (and not 18 years) in line with the age of majority in Scotland and to encourage younger people in the life of the Church.

Mr Romano spoke to the specific text of the proposed change. Bishop Duncan then proposed, and Mr Blakey seconded, the following Motion: –

“That the amended text for Canon 57, Section 6 be read for the first time.”

The Motion was then put to the vote in houses and passed by the requisite majorities as follows: –

House of Clergy: passed unanimously
House of Laity: passed, *nem con*
House of Bishops: passed unanimously.

3.1.3 Canon 60, Section 5

Bishop Duncan explained that Canon 60 related to vestries. The policy of the Board in presenting the new section was to reduce the qualification age for vestry membership from 18 to 16 in line with the age of majority in Scotland and to encourage younger people to take an active part in the governance of the Church.

Mr Romano spoke to the specific text of the proposed new section.

Dr Peter Kemp (Argyll and the Isles) asked whether, in the light of the fact that many church constitutions would not allow someone aged only 16 to stand for vestry membership, the Canons took priority over local constitutions. Mr Romano confirmed that the Canons would take priority and that any part of the constitution which was contrary to the provisions of the Canon would be regarded as a *pro non scripto*.

The Rev Prof John Richardson (Edinburgh) asked why the Committee had come to the conclusion that provision in the Canon was the appropriate way to deal with this matter. Hitherto, congregations had made their own decisions about who could be elected to their vestries. He thought a change to the Code of Canons was heavy-handed. He agreed with the principle of the change but questioned whether this was the way to do it. Mr Romano responded that the matter was a policy question. By incorporating provision in the Code of Canons, it put the matter beyond the vagaries of individual members of clergy or vestries who might otherwise indicate to someone that they were too young to stand.

Bishop Duncan then proposed, and Mr Blakey seconded, the following Motion: –

“That the text for Section 5 of Canon 60 be read for the first time.”

The Motion was put to the vote in houses and passed by the requisite majorities as follows: –

House of Laity: passed unanimously
House of Clergy: passed by majority
House of Bishops: passed unanimously.

3.1.4 Canon 63, Section 4

Bishop Duncan explained that Canon 63 related to the office of lay representative. The policy of the Board in presenting the alteration to the Canon was to reduce the qualification age for the office of lay representative, a very important position in the life of the Church, from 18 to 16 in line with the age of majority in Scotland and to encourage younger people to take an active part in the governance and leadership of the Church.

Mr Romano spoke to the specific text of the proposed change.

Bishop Duncan proposed, and Mr Blakey seconded, the following Motion: –

“That the amended text for Canon 63, Section 4 be read for the first time.”

Dr Peter Kemp (Argyll and the Isles) suggested that the wording concerning age appeared to relate to the first part of the clause in Canon 63, Section 4. Bishop Duncan explained that the change was addressing the question of eligibility.

The Very Rev Kelvin Holdsworth (Glasgow and Galloway) asked whether the section of the Canon, referring to "any lay communicant member" meant a lay communicant member of the congregation making the election. Mr Romano confirmed that that was the case.

The Motion was put to the vote in houses and passed by the requisite majorities as follows: –

House of Clergy: passed by majority
House of Laity: passed unanimously
House of Bishops: passed unanimously.

3.2 Faith and Order Board: Doctrine Committee – Paper on the Theology of Marriage

In opening the Doctrine Committee session, the Chair encouraged respectful debate and for a process in which contributions would enlarge and extend the debate rather than simply repeating points which had already been made in discussion.

Bishop Duncan explained that the paper on marriage contained in the Synod Papers had been prepared by the Doctrine Committee at the request of the Faith and Order Board. The Committee had been asked to set out the Church's present teaching on marriage and to examine any case for change on the basis of Scripture,

tradition and reason. The Board was of the view that it was very important for Synod, before it came to decide on whether or not to consider change, to have the opportunity for an informed debate on the theology of marriage, to take seriously the heritage of Scripture and tradition and the Church's present context.

The Rev Dr Harriet Harris (Convener, Doctrine Committee) introduced the paper prepared by her Committee. She explained that the paper had been produced to provide a theological basis for a discussion of whether the Church's theology could be developed, in accordance with Scripture, tradition and reason, to include marriage of people of the same gender within the Church's life. The paper contained three thematic options: that of no change, that of canonical change to allow same-sex marriage to be incorporated into the theology and practice of the Church, and the possibility of a parallel change for the blessing of same-sex relationships. The paper considered options for "no change" and for "change" under four headings: marriage as for procreation; marriage as a remedy against sin; marriage as for mutual comfort and support; marriage as reflecting the very nature of God's character and love.

Bishop Duncan then proposed, and Mrs Helen Hood (Edinburgh) seconded, the following Motion: –

“That this Synod receive the paper laying out the theology of marriage, thank the Doctrine Committee and recognise its work as providing material helpful to future discussion of possible canonical change.”

The Rt Rev Dr John Armes (Bishop of Edinburgh) said that he had been reminded by the Cascade Conversation Process that marriage was not an issue on which the Church was divided across "party" lines. There was no single conviction on marriage which might be described as either "evangelical" or "liberal". Neither was the debate divided between those who loved the Bible and those who did not – it was a debate amongst those who loved Scripture. He referred to the potential for division in the early Church and how the Council of Jerusalem had led to a creative rediscovery of Scripture and the pronouncement by St James that "it seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us" that the Church should not insist on observance of aspects of the Jewish law. There was a sense in which the present debate was a continuation of the heated exchange of the first century – what did it mean to lead pure and holy lives?

Bishop Armes suggested that the Bible did not offer many healthy role models for marriage and family life; people of faith had tended to mimic the customs and practices peculiar to their own age. He suggested that that was what the Church's liturgies meant when they talked of marriage being a gift of God in creation. In doing what came naturally to them, people found something worthwhile in marriage (for all sorts of economic and genetic reasons, as well as romantic). Seeing that, the Church sought not only to bless the social stability that marriage offered but had also discovered that an exclusive lifelong relationship offered a way into holiness. Indeed, there were some Christian traditions which saw the marriage vows themselves as akin to the ascetic vows made by monks and nuns. Where the Bible

was strong was in helping to discover what made for healthy relationships. His observation was that both healthy and unhealthy relationships could be found inside marriage and outside, between people of different genders and of the same gender. He also found in couples of both kinds inspiring examples of how they enabled each other to grow towards holiness. That observation made him wonder whether it might not be possible to find a way to honour the image of God expressed in the longing of two people of the same gender for each other and to seek out with them the potential for holiness within their mutual self-giving. Might the Church not be willing to call that marriage, as everyone else did and even to go further and to see in such a relationship - faithful, exclusive, lifelong - an opportunity to affirm that such a couple reflected the joyful longing at the heart of God. He suggested this diffidently and tentatively because it was necessary to bear in mind Cromwell's dictum "to think it possible in the bowels of Christ that we may be mistaken". Where he was not tentative was his belief that the Holy Spirit was with the Church and that the task of the Synod was to discern what seemed good to the Holy Spirit so that it might seem good to the Church too.

The Rev David Mumford (Brechin) commented on the Doctrine Committee paper. He had an anxiety about any lack of definition of marriage, that its sacramental nature was not adequately addressed and also that the ecumenical implications had not been taken account of. As far as definition was concerned, he was reminded of the remarks of Humpty Dumpty that a word could mean whatever he wanted it to mean. Who had power to define marriage? Was it the State, the Church or others? The State and the Church could have different views of what marriage was. As far as the Church was concerned, its concern was about divine teaching and of marriage as a means of the grace of God. For the Church, marriage was a holy mystery. He believed that the paper, in paragraph 96, wilfully confused State and Church understandings. On the question of marriage as sacrament, he suggested it was a *mysterium*. Those who saw marriage as sacrament would want to argue that the wording of Canon 31.1 ought to stay as it was and that the reference to holy mysteries was appropriate. There was a need too to take account of the ecumenical implications. He observed that in the Orthodox Church a first marriage was regarded as sacramental with a second marriage incorporating a penitential aspect. He considered that the paper was too functional and not sufficiently ontological. He was happy with option C as set out in the Doctrine Committee paper but struggled with alterations to the understanding of marriage.

The Rev David McKenzie Mills (St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane) said that when he had served within the Church of England, marriage had been seen as sacramental but also as building up the community. He thought it was necessary to feed into the Church's deliberations contemporary discoveries. He referred to reports from the universities of Cambridge and Melbourne which suggested that children brought up in the context of same-sex relationships fared very similarly to those reared in that of a heterosexual relationship. However, children in the former situation could nevertheless experience significant stigma.

Bishop Duncan, speaking as an individual and not as the Acting Convener of the Faith and Order Board, indicated that he had shared his personal journey on the

subject of marriage within his Diocese. He had tried hard to bring his mind to accepting the possibility of marriages between persons of the same gender being solemnised. He had not arrived at that point thus far. However, the Cascade Conversation undertaken within the College of Bishops had proved a significant moment for him and his anxiety levels had dropped considerably. He was now at a point where he could live with a situation where the Church decided to bring same-sex marriage into its life provided that his own conscience was respected. His journey had forced him to think again about the topic and it was a journey which everyone needed to take for themselves.

The Rev Paul Watson (Aberdeen and Orkney) was puzzled by the paper. It was important to be very careful about how words were phrased and there appeared to be a nuancing of the evangelical position. He wondered whether there had been an individual on the Committee which had prepared the paper who was an evangelical. He was puzzled that all of the options from the Committee on Canons for discussion later in the Synod appeared to be based on option B as set out in the Doctrine Committee paper, namely change to incorporate same-sex marriage. There appeared to be no opportunity for option A (no change) to be properly considered.

Mr Jim Gibson (Glasgow and Galloway) indicated that he also was on a journey. He wished to thank the Doctrine Committee for their work which he considered to be a masterpiece.

Dr Beth Routledge (Glasgow and Galloway) also expressed thanks to the Committee. The paper discussed "the homosexual experience". The discussion at Synod was predicated on the basis that what the Doctrine Committee said was correct. In fact, it did not resonate with her experience nor with her experience of the Church. She had attended same-sex blessings and did not see such relationships as any less sacramental than opposite sex relationships. Was part of the problem the fact that marriage between a same-sex couple and one between an opposite sex one, was seen as intrinsically different? She asked Synod members to bear this in mind in the continuing debate.

The Rev Canon Dominic Ind (St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane) raised the question of transgender matters. He had attended a conference at St George's, Windsor at which he had heard from a transgender priest in the Church of England. Canon Ind had also been dealing with the subject in his local situation and had also been affected in his thinking by a recent visit to Texas where he had listened to a man who had changed his gender. He encouraged the Synod to go beyond questions of gender and think in terms of human beings.

The Rev Canon David Richards (Edinburgh) indicated that at his own church of St Paul's & St George's, it had come as something of a surprise to learn that within the congregation there were more gay members than at either Old St Paul's or St John's, Princes Street. Every year a marriage preparation course was run within the Church. This included a candlelit dinner and St Paul's & St George's would welcome same-sex couples. However, he was disappointed with the Doctrine Committee paper which he considered neither evangelicals nor liberals were happy

with. He did not think it was a masterpiece and he questioned the incorporation of the word "helpful" in the Motion. He hoped for more in terms of the paper.

Mr Brendan Grimley (St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane) was disappointed with the report. He had found that it did not support the prejudices with which he came to the subject! He had been very challenged by the paper and considered the Committee should be commended. He believed the closing remarks in the report were particularly noteworthy in that it finished with a question. He trusted the report.

Ms Catriona Beel (Argyll and the Isles) also commended the paper. As a lay person, she thought it was well written. Speaking as a "cradle Episcopalian", she said that she had had various "lightbulb" moments as she had considered the paper. She thanked the Committee for reminding her that God was love.

The Rev Canon Ian Paton (Edinburgh) noted that many people had said that they were on a journey. He too had been on a journey and had been struggling with the issue for all of his adult life. He said that the Church happily ignored parts of the Old Testament or liturgies which contained what one's forebears had thought but which were quite different from how people thought today. As a divorced person, he had found that his second marriage had been welcomed by the Church and his Bishop. How was it possible to go on thinking that same gender unions could not be similarly accepted? He could find no reasons as to why this present development should be prevented from happening.

The Rev Cedric Blakey (Glasgow and Galloway) wished to ask the Doctrine Committee and those offering marriage preparation which examples of role models or married couples in the Scriptures they would commend to those preparing for married life.

The Rev Willie Shaw (Edinburgh) suggested there was a need to reflect on the question of cost. He had experienced some of that cost within his own family and had seen the cost within the Church of Scotland. There was a question of the ecumenical cost. Whatever choice the Church made, there would be a cost.

The Rev Canon Ian Ferguson (Aberdeen and Orkney) took very strongly the words of Bishop Armes about matters seeming "good to the Holy Spirit and to us". He noted that in paragraph 15 of the paper it was argued that the inclusion of doctrine in Canon 31 was incorrect. He wondered what had changed since at the time the Canon had been adopted, it had presumably seemed "good to the Holy Spirit and to us". He was concerned that the canonical options being proposed to Synod did not give him the opportunity to participate in debate. Following the Synod's rejection of the amendment proposed earlier in the day, he felt that change was being imposed and that he had no opportunity to argue for "no change".

The Rev Canon Prof John Richardson (Edinburgh) explained that the current text of Canon 31.1 had been adopted because the Scottish Episcopal Church had at that point been changing its mind about the nature of marriage and divorce. The change had been to underline that marriage was seen as "lifelong". With one other

exception, he believed, it was the only place where doctrine was referred to in the Canons. The other was Canon 25 which had also been adopted for the sake of clarity. He suggested that Canons were not the place in which the Church should keep its doctrine.

The Very Rev Dr Francis Bridger (Brechin) welcomed the report but had a number of comments. He considered that one glaring omission was that there was no real exploration of the theological understanding of gender difference, other than a passing reference to complementarity. The paper did not address whether there was any connection between a theology of creation, which saw humanity in terms of male and female, and the question of same-sex marriage. He would have liked more discussion of this. If the issue was simply one of the quality of relationship then the Church should say that but in fact there were quite a number of people who were not ready to take that step.

The Rev Paul Fletcher (Glasgow and Galloway) spoke of the question of becoming "one flesh". For him, one flesh could only mean the procreation of a child. There was something Trinitarian and sacramental about that. That did not mean that a heterosexual marriage was not valid if there were no children - so that meant there was an acceptable second definition of marriage. If that were the case why could there not be a third definition and more?

The Rev Canon Malcolm Round (Edinburgh) thanked the Doctrine Committee for their paper but indicated that he did not recognise any orthodox or evangelical perspective within the paper. He noted the reference in paragraph 19 to Hooker and emphasised that in Hooker's view Scripture was primary and that tradition and reason helped in reflecting upon Scripture. He was concerned, however, that the report glossed over the importance of Scripture. Wrestling with Scripture was a battlefield but Scripture was fundamentally important. He suggested that in referring to St Paul's thinking being informed by his Jewish moral background, the paper failed to recognise that Paul's adoption of that position made it Christian through the doctrine of revelation and inspiration. He suggested that if the paper was the base model for future discussion, it was not sufficient. A number of people were feeling disenfranchised.

The Rev Markus Duenzkofer (Edinburgh) thanked the Doctrine Committee for condensing 40 years of discussion. There were inevitably shades of grey and there was a danger of approaching the subject in a dualistic way. As far as the question of gender was concerned, he suggested that the creation story indicated that God created diversity. Initially he had created the dust and then had made a man and then a helper. The binary system was more about the individual containing both male and female. He also commented that it was news to him that the Church viewed marriage as a sacrament. That was certainly not a view universally held within the Anglican Church. He was very open to hear the story of ecumenical partners. However, there was also the story of gay Christians who had left the Church and their stories were equally important. Sometimes he felt like Lazarus picking up the crumbs. That was what option C as set out in the Doctrine Committee paper amounted to.

The Rev David McCarthy (Edinburgh) indicated that a detailed critique of the Doctrine Committee paper was available on his blog. The general trajectory of Scripture was very clear. In the book of Genesis, a man was to be united to his wife and Jesus, in Matthew's Gospel, repeated this. The book of Ephesians similarly took up the same theology. A most helpful comment on the subject was that of Prof Diarmaid MacCulloch who had commented that the Bible was "simply wrong" on the question of same-sex relationships. That, at least, was an honest analysis. If the Church made the decision to incorporate same-sex marriage within its life, Mr McCarthy suggested that it should be clear that it was doing so on the basis of experience. He referred to the work of the Freedom Trust which supported gay people wishing to remain celibate. There was no provision in the Doctrine Committee for how the Church could support such people. He himself had been divorced and remarried and was grateful that he was still able to function as an SEC minister. He believed that he was married in the sight of God but had been through the horrible experience of divorce, which was seen as an exception. When the amendment for an additional option had been proposed earlier the Synod, it had been put forward at great cost. There was a need to recognise that if the Church went ahead to change the definition of marriage there would be ecumenical implications. He noted that the Russian Orthodox Church had recently announced that it was no longer in relationship with the Church of Scotland because of the decisions on this subject at the General Assembly.

Mrs Christine McIntosh (Argyll and the Isles) said that she had been an Episcopalian for many years. It was not theological argument that had persuaded her on this matter. She had been married for 45 years. It was not the physical aspects of her and her husband which made them one flesh. It was the intimate knowledge and familiarity with one another. That was something which any gay couple could also experience in their life together.

Dr Harris responded to points which had been made in debate. She was sorry if some people felt that the paper had fallen short. The paper did say explicitly that Scripture was regarded as primary and never had the paper suggested that it was not important. The paper contained extensive footnotes and she hoped that they presented a balanced resource. She was mortified if the phrase "the homosexual experience" had been used. To those who had said that they did not feel represented in the paper, they needed to say why. She disagreed that the paper took a purely functional approach. It did in fact contain a lot about ontology.

Bishop Duncan thanked the Synod for its participation in the debate.

The Motion was put to the vote by ballot and the result was subsequently announced as follows: –

103 in favour
17 against
3 abstentions.

SESSION 4: THE VERY REV ALISON SIMPSON IN THE CHAIR

4.1 Faith and Order Board, Doctrine Committee: Launch of Grosvenor Essay

The Rev Dr Harriet Harris (Convener, Doctrine Committee) launched the most recent Grosvenor Essay produced by the Doctrine Committee entitled *Towards an Integration of Theology and Science?* The Essay had been put together from a series of lectures arranged by Prof Eric Priest of St Andrews University. It included questions for both private thought and group study. The first ever Grosvenor Essay had been on the theme of theology and science. Since then the debate had become more nuanced and included matters such as cosmology and psychology. She was grateful to the theologians who had been willing to provide their contributions.

Questions were invited but there were none.

The Chair thanked Dr Harris and members of the Doctrine Committee.

4.2 Information and Communication Board

The Rev Chris Mayo (Convener, Information and Communication Board) indicated that the year ahead would be a busy but hopefully productive one. The intranet to help Boards and Committees share continued conversation and resources in an internal form of social media was beginning to be used. In the light of change in some of the Conveners and members at the current Synod, it was thought wise to hold off sending details on how to use the facility until after Synod. This would be done in the course of the following weeks and he would be on hand to offer assistance.

A number of items had taken up time and energy. Social media was now being used more actively than before and the Board was looking to explore ways in which tools such as Facebook, Twitter and the like could be far more powerful in encouraging engagement across the SEC and beyond its walls and also to explore the use of such media in ways which were respectful and opened up conversations. How things were said was as reflective of a Gospel message as was the content, at times more so. These aspects would form part of an emerging updated communications strategy which the Board would look at in earnest later in the year.

Inspires online had been revamped and subscriptions were steadily increasing both within Scotland and globally. It was emerging as a primary channel of communication and the Board would review it further to see what more could be done. *Inspires* magazine had enjoyed its 10th anniversary earlier in the year. The Board considered this to be an opportune time to consider the magazine's future. Since it had been moving towards a loss-making position, the Board had to decide whether to move to a purely digital edition or give it one last push. It had decided on the latter and in the following two years would assess and review its viability in print format. It was possible that the subscription cost would need to be increased to

reflect the significant increases in postage. There was now a regular production schedule of four editions per year.

The provincial website was undergoing minor review to make it more accessible and to open it up to contributing articles and moderated discussions. The "find a church" facility was moving to a geo-location method of searching. There was much work to do in-house at the General Synod Office to ensure the accuracy of this so it had been decided to wait until after Synod was over and the resources were available.

There was now a website template available for charges which followed the aesthetics and some simplified functionality of the provincial site. Details would be sent to dioceses via their I&C representatives. Mr Mayo stressed that this had been designed as a new installation but if WordPress was currently being used, content could be moved into it. An installation guide would be available and advice given where and when appropriate but the Board neither had the resources nor capacity to be able to install the template or provide training in using WordPress. If charges did not have that expertise amongst their membership then they should seek to obtain it through a third party.

Connections had been built during the previous year with journalists and would continue to be developed. Mr Mayo welcomed comments, suggestions and helpful criticism but encouraged that this be done through the diocesan representatives on the Board.

The work of the Board was about communication itself, not simply the methods used to deliver, encourage and enable it. It was important to remember that, as a senior newspaper editor had told the Board in a web conference, the message was more important than the medium. The message would be the Board's primary concern. The College of Bishops had been approached and asked for comment on what they needed to say and do as one primary interface between the SEC and wider society. In addition to the Bishops there were those, lay as well as ordained, who had as part of their ministry a calling to engage publicly with society. In the year ahead the Board would seek to engage with those existing and emerging facilitators to offer a platform so that their experience of the Gospel could find a voice.

Mr Mayo commented that during the General Election campaign the SEC had been comparatively quiet in terms of engagement with the election process. He had observed that the Society of Friends, which comprised a membership of just over 14,000 across Scotland, Wales and England, had held regular video presentations, online hustings and broadcast discussions. They had performed a detailed analysis of the Chancellor's budget in March asking significant questions as to the future of the country. Perhaps part of the future work of the Board was to encourage ways in which there could be a consistent and constant engagement with Scotland. The question was how to promote and encourage the sort of engagement which the Society of Friends had managed to achieve despite being one third of the size of the SEC and covering the whole of mainland Britain. Part of the answer might lie in encouraging different ways of modelling the SEC's internal practice. Mr Mayo was

currently in conversation with *Place for Hope* whose work provided training in opening up communications and helping people to both find their voice but also to listen to the voices and experience of others. Could the Board model more widely within the Church's structures a more engaged and intentional practice? He believed this was worth exploring.

If members of Synod had questions, he was happy to receive these and provide answers in due course.

Mr Mayo closed his presentation with a time of silence.

Miss Mary McKinnell (Aberdeen and Orkney) asked about the provision of support for congregations using the template. In her Diocese all congregations were now online and she had helped them in that process. There was a need to find a way to enable support for congregations.

The Rev Prof David Atkinson (Aberdeen and Orkney) spoke both as the Convener of the Church in Society Committee and as an individual involved in communications within his Diocese. He thanked the Board for the enormous work it had undertaken to enable the website to be a vehicle for discussion. In relation to Mr Mayo's comments regarding the Church engaging with society, he understood that what was being said was that there was a more positive way of doing so than might have been the case in the past. He recognised that the Board could not provide a one-to-one service for congregations but he encouraged the Board to think about how that could be facilitated. He was grateful for what had been done to enable the 42 congregations in the Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney to get themselves online.

Mr Mayo confirmed that he was happy to take these comments onto the agenda of the Board.

4.3 Greetings from Ecumenical Delegate

The Rt Rev Dr Stephen Robson, Bishop of Dunkeld, representing the Bishops' Conference of Scotland brought greetings on behalf of the ecumenical delegates at Synod. He thanked the Synod for its kindness, hospitality, generosity and openness. He had been a Bishop for three years and had been privileged to represent the Bishops' Conference at the General Assembly and was pleased now to do so at the General Synod. He was privileged also to work closely with the Primus and Bishop of Brechin.

Bishop Robson said that he was impressed at how quickly the Scottish Episcopal Church could change its Canon Law. In the Roman Catholic Church it took much longer. In the Catholic Church doctrine was enshrined in canons and they were much more difficult to change. The issues currently before the Synod marked a great stride forward for some but heartache for others. He asked the Synod to accept the prayers of the Catholic Church which was also going through similar traumas. The theology of marriage and the family was under discussion. Different

parts of the Church were moving at different rates and were pulling in different directions. Whatever might happen would be traumatic.

The Pope had declared a Year of Mercy which would explore a new hermeneutic of Christian anthropology. Holding a "year" only happened occasionally. It was an opportunity for peace and reconciliation for those who felt torn apart and to encourage those who felt that they were not listened to. The Roman Catholic Church had never sat particularly happily with the forces of modernity, for example, in relation to marriage, but there was a need to consider the new forms of relationship which were being thrown up. The Year of Mercy would be an opportunity to bring together diverse bodies of opinion into some kind of synthesis.

Bishop Robson closed by thanking the Synod for its kindness and love and promised his prayers for the Scottish Episcopal Church.

4.4 Faith and Order Board: Inter-Church Relations Committee

The Rev Canon John Lindsay (Convener, Inter-Church Relations Committee) referred to the annual report of his Committee contained in the Annual Report and Accounts of the General Synod for the year ended 31 December 2014. He expressed his thanks to Elspeth Davey for her heroic secretarial role and also to Helen Hood for serving as the Scottish Episcopal Church Trustee on ACTS for seven years of which two had been as the Convener of ACTS. He drew attention to the fact that members of his Committee were wearing black in support of the World Council of Churches' intention to revive the *Thursdays in Black* campaign started in the 1980s against sexual and gender-based violence. He reported that the Committee would the following week be meeting with the Church of Scotland Ecumenical Relations Committee. It was possibly the first time that the two Committees had met together. The meeting would explore World Council of Churches documentation including *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*. He hoped the joint meeting would also be able to talk about where they might go for the future. Canon Lindsay also mentioned the EMU partnership which had been going for five years and was now in the course of being reviewed. He recorded the Committee's pleasure at the success of the joint working within EMU on ministerial training.

Questions were invited but there were none.

Canon Lindsay then addressed the Committee's response to *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*, a copy of which was contained in the Synod Papers. He noted that there were certain typographical errors in the document which would be corrected. The Committee invited the Synod to approve the response. The opening paragraph of the document was a good summary and the closing paragraph was a good summary of the task ahead. He expressed thanks to the Rev Charlotte Methuen, the Rev John McLuckie and Elspeth Davey who had worked with him on the response.

The Rev Markus Duenzkofer (Edinburgh) had noted an inconsistency in that the introduction to the Code of Canons suggested that the Scottish Episcopal Church was in communion with the Philippine Independent Church whereas Canon 15 made no such reference. He invited the Committee to consider whether there was a job of tidying up which needed to be done.

Canon Lindsay responded that he had twice emailed Mr Duenzkofer on the point but would take it back to the Committee.

The Rt Rev Dr Gregor Duncan (Acting Convener, Faith and Order Board) then proposed, and Mrs Helen Hood (Edinburgh) seconded, the following Motion: –

“That this Synod approve the response to the World Council of Churches document “The Church: Towards a Common Vision”.”

The Motion was put to the vote and passed *nem con*.

The Chair expressed the thanks of Synod to Canon Lindsay and his Committee.

SESSION 5: THE VERY REV SUSAN MACDONALD IN THE CHAIR

5.1 Standing Committee: Committee for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

In the absence of its Convener, Mr Hugh Donald, Mr Chris Townsend reported on behalf of the Committee for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults. He explained that over the previous two years, the Committee had considered and developed a response to the Safe Church Charter. This followed the adoption by the Anglican Consultative Council in 2012 of a Charter for the safety of people across the Anglican Communion. The ACC had called on member churches of the Communion to adopt and implement the Charter. The aim of the Charter was to manage risks within the personal and pastoral ministry of the Church by detailing steps to minimise the risk of harm and abuse occurring and to provide an effective response to any disclosures. It sought to establish standards of behaviour expected of all those working for the Church, both as employees and as volunteers, and to provide guidelines for the effective screening, selecting and training of ordained clergy and lay workers. The paper presented to Synod indicated the five key areas of the Charter along with the Committee's understanding of how the Church was addressing those areas. They comprised: pastoral support where there was abuse; effective responses to disclosures of abuse; pastoral ministry, including the need for training in safeguarding matters; suitability for ministry including the checking of the ordained and lay readers through the PVG scheme; developing a culture of safety. That final item was the overarching principle of safeguarding but was also the most difficult to implement. He explained that the Committee recommended that General Synod adopt the Safe Church Charter by passing the Motion which would be proposed shortly. The Committee recognised that there was still much work to be done to ensure the full implementation of the Charter and would highlight especially the need for training in safeguarding across the Church.

Mr David Palmer (Convener, Standing Committee) then proposed, and the Rt Rev Mark Strange (Bishop of Moray, Ross and Caithness) seconded the following Motion: –

“That this Synod adopt the Safe Church Charter as commended by the Anglican Consultative Council and encourage the whole of the Scottish Episcopal Church including dioceses and congregations in developing a culture of safety.”

The Motion was put to the vote and passed unanimously.

Mr Townsend then addressed the Motion contained on the agenda for Synod to alter the Digest of Resolutions to include reference to vulnerable adults.

Mr Palmer then proposed, and Bishop Strange seconded, the following Motion: –

“That Section 2.2.9 of the Digest of Resolutions be altered by the inclusion of the words “and vulnerable adults” after the words “the protection of children and young adults” as set out in the paper included in the Synod Papers for this Synod.”

Mr Howard Thompson (Edinburgh) wholly supported the Motion. He was aware that those who sought to abuse others were often very clever. He wondered whether there was any way in which they could be pre-empted so that safeguarding was not simply a form filling exercise.

Mr Townsend responded that the Committee always sought to minimise risk. The passing of the Safe Church Charter, it was hoped, would help the Church in its efforts. Mr Thompson could speak in more detail either with him or with the Provincial Officer, Donald Urquhart.

Mr Alan Rumble (Glasgow and Galloway) suggested that a comma should be inserted after "young adults". The point was noted.

The Rt Rev Dr Gregor Duncan pointed out that the reference to "young adults" should be a reference to "young people". With that alteration, the Motion was put to the vote and passed *nem con*, one abstention.

The Chair thanked Mr Townsend and all members of his Committee.

5.2 Faith and Order Board: Liturgy Committee

Dr John Davies (Convener, Liturgy Committee) referred to the report of the Liturgy Committee contained in the Annual Report and Accounts of the General Synod for the year ended 31 December 2014. The new Collects for use on Sundays throughout the year, which had been authorised for experimental use for a period of four years by the College of Bishops, were based mainly on those found in the Sarum Missal which had their origin in the ancient Roman Sacramentaries. The

Sarum Missal had been the prayer book used most widely in Scotland before the Reformation and had been used by Cranmer to produce his Collects and which were also found in the present Scottish Book of Common Prayer. Those Collects were a starting point because they represented a historic use in Scotland over many years. They could, therefore, be viewed as a venerable part of the Church's doctrinal and liturgical inheritance. If the Cranmerian versions were included, many of the Collects had been in continual use since the days of the early Sacramentaries. It could be said that few people had written better Collects than the authors of those early Sacramentaries. The Committee had, however, tried not to indulge in antiquarianism or historicism, nor has it been fundamentalist about the project. The ancient Collects were merely a starting place.

Dr Davies explained that the Church of England, in *Common Worship*, and also the Church in Wales and Church of Ireland, had retained a large number of the ancient Collects in their modern forms and the modern Roman Rite also retained a great deal of them. Many of the Collects for Saints' Days and special occasions which had no direct parallel in the ancient Sacramentaries took their inspiration from the newer Collects – the Prayer Book, the old Yellow Book, *Exciting Holiness*, and some were wholly new compositions. No prayers had been taken verbatim from another source. The aim had been to produce Collects which were rooted in the Scottish Episcopal Church's liturgical heritage, which were theologically sound, which asked for particular and concrete things and which were rendered in a formal English which was natural and modern. The style led itself to private recitation, formal proclamation or intoning and he commended their use to the Church. Questions were invited but there were none.

Dr Davies then turned to the Motion to be proposed regarding the authorisation of the *Service of the Word*. The Faith and Order Board had first commissioned such a liturgy from the Liturgy Committee in 2009 and the first experimental Rite had been authorised in 2011. Following a lengthy period of experimentation and feedback, several revisions had been made. The Synod Papers contained the full text of the liturgy. If authorised, it would be published in booklet form as well as being available online. The overall shape remained the same as the experimental Rite but some additional seasonal sections had been added and it also allowed for the exchange of the peace. The shape of the liturgy was important particularly where the liturgy could be the main act of a congregation's Sunday worship. The shape of liturgy had also been a focus of ecumenical discussion because it could be a means of mutual understanding between Christian traditions. In 1995 the Faith and Order Committee of the World Council of Churches had recommended that churches focus on the fourfold Eucharistic pattern of gathering, Word service, table service and dismissal or sending out. That fourfold shape influenced the way the *Service of the Word* was to be understood. Each stage could be understood as relating to different phases of Christ's incarnation. The gathering or preparation related to the advent of God's coming kingdom; the proclamation of the Word related to Christ's ministry of teaching; the prayers related to Christ's passion interpreted as a priestly act of service; and the conclusion or dismissal related to Christ's resurrection and ascension, the coming of the Holy Spirit and the authorisation of the Church. The *Service of the Word* could also be interpreted within the other fourfold pattern of

taking, thanksgiving, breaking and distribution. As a Service of the Word, the liturgy used texts from Scripture as the basis for responses. It was hoped that this would also make it more adaptable in an ecumenical setting. Used in conjunction with the Sunday Eucharistic lectionary readings Dr Davies hoped that Synod members could see that the liturgy was a celebration of the Word and indeed a true Eucharist of the Word.

The Rt Rev Dr Gregor Duncan (Acting Convener, Faith and Order Board) proposed and the Rt Rev Dr John Armes (Bishop of Edinburgh) seconded, the following Motion: –

“That, upon the recommendation of the Faith and Order Board, there be added to the Schedule to Canon 22 the Service of the Word (2015).”

The Rev Willie Shaw (Edinburgh) thanked the Committee for the liturgy. He noted that in terms of presiding at the liturgy, reference was made in the introductory notes to authorisation, support and preparation being required and that Rectors and vestries "should consult their Bishop" before appointing people to that ministry. He asked whether "should" meant "should" or "must". Dr Davies replied that it meant "should". However, he was aware that, in the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway, there had been extensive study days undertaken to equip people to lead the service.

The Motion was put to the vote and passed unanimously.

The Chair thanked Dr Davies and the members of his Committee. She also expressed thanks to the Rev Canon James Milne who had stepped down from the Convenership of the Committee a number of months previously on moving to England.

5.3 College of Bishops

The Most Rev David Chillingworth (Primus) indicated that in the past the College of Bishops session at Synod had been used to share something about Episcopal ministry. At the current Synod, the intention was to share something about the ministry of Bishops beyond the life of the Scottish Episcopal Church. Because the Scottish Episcopal Church was small, outside relations, such as those with the Anglican Communion, were very important. There was the historical connection with The Episcopal Church flowing from the consecration of Bishop Seabury. When he attended the General Convention of The Episcopal Church later in the month he would be greeted in the spirit of that relationship.

In terms of the Canons, the office of Primus was a modest one. Primarily, he functioned as a Diocesan Bishop but the office of Primus also opened the door to other areas of ministry, particularly representational roles on behalf of the Scottish Episcopal Church. That was demanding in terms of time and energy. In recent years he had served on the Standing Committee of the Anglican Communion which carried major responsibility for the Communion and for the preparation of meetings

of the Anglican Consultative Council, next due to meet in 2016. He also served as the Chair of the Reference Group for Continuing Indaba. That initiative endeavoured to encourage "honest conversation across difference" across the life of the Communion. Often the need for such conversation had been seen as being inter-provincial. Increasingly, however, such dialogue was being seen as needed in an intra-provincial context. That had been the spirit of the Cascade Conversation undertaken within the Scottish Episcopal Church. That was in turn linked to reconciliation, one of the four priorities of the ministry of the present Archbishop of Canterbury.

In March 2015 the Primus had responded to the invitation of the Archbishop of Cape Town to attend the "Eco-Bishops Conference" in South Africa. The Scottish Episcopal Church had had a growing link with South Africa on matters of climate change and he had attended partly to foster that link. Many of those attending had come from parts of the world where climate change was not just a matter of debate but a life-changing daily reality. He had been particularly impressed by the contribution of those representing the indigenous peoples of Canada. They had a spirituality of seeing themselves in God's creation which was revelatory. As he reflected on this, he saw a similar connection in the Scottish Church's Celtic roots.

In October 2015, the Primus would start a new piece of work as Anglican Co-Chair in the Communion's dialogue with the World Communion of Reformed Churches. Its first meeting would be in India and, in fact, he would be in India twice before the end of the year, fostering his own diocesan link with the Diocese of Kolkata. The Church of Scotland was a founder member of that World Communion and, therefore, something which was expressed internationally was of local significance as well. It recognised that the relationship between the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of Scotland was foundational for the dialogue between the Anglican Communion and the World Communion of Reformed Churches. He suggested that the Scottish Episcopal Church should think about how it prioritised that key relationship with the Church of Scotland.

The Primus felt honoured to be part of these many relationships beyond Scotland. In his experience, no one asked about the size of the Scottish Episcopal Church. The Scottish Episcopal Church was seen as an important and foundational strand of the life of the Anglican Communion. The Church was seen and welcomed as a somewhat feisty church which could be relied upon to be independent-minded. People also honoured the historic contribution of Scottish people in countries all over the world. He was encouraged and the Synod should be likewise encouraged.

The Rt Rev Dr John Armes (Bishop of Edinburgh) spoke about the link of the Diocese of Edinburgh with the Diocese of Cape Coast in Ghana forged in 2007. The intention was for both Dioceses to celebrate what they held in common and also to be enriched by their respective differences. The distance between the Dioceses meant that face-to-face encounters had to be few. Nevertheless, youth and clergy exchanges had taken place and congregations had been linked in different ways. The link had been of great value during a period when the Anglican Communion had been facing a period of difficulty. It had been an opportunity to

learn how Christians in another part of the world thought differently. It had also been an opportunity to discover that the Diocese of Cape Coast had different needs and, therefore, different priorities. Above all, the Diocese of Edinburgh had discovered that there was no single "African viewpoint". Ghana was not Nigeria nor Kenya nor South Africa. Cape Coast was a beautiful country but, in the past, it had also been a major slave trading centre.

Cape Coast was also home to St Nicholas' Seminary. Many ordinands across West Africa trained there. It was his hope that some kind of link would be possible with the Scottish Episcopal Institute in due course. Since the link had originally been established the two initial Diocesan Bishops had retired. Bishop Armes had been able to reconfirm the link with the new Diocesan Bishop (Bishop Victor) who had previously been the Principal of the Seminary. During his visit to the Diocese of Cape Coast, Bishop Armes had participated in what were by Scottish standards long services. Such services included multiple offerings, lots of smoke and bells and the occasional inspection of uniformed organisations. The Rev Lynsay Downs, part of the Diocese of Edinburgh delegation, had been the first woman priest to celebrate at a Eucharist in Cape Coast Cathedral. Personally speaking, Bishop Armes had gained a huge amount from the link. It had been important for him to realise that he was a symbol of unity not only in the Diocese of Edinburgh but also across the dioceses of the Anglican Communion. It had been of huge benefit to get to know Bishop Victor who was a significant theologian in his own right.

Bishop Armes suggested, however, that links needed to go beyond being simply Bishop to Bishop. They came alive properly when congregations and other groups were able to join in. There was something hugely enriching about getting beyond national boundaries and learning to appreciate at first hand a culture very different from the one at home and to learn about discipleship. The link had never been about money but was always about people and faith. A little money here could, however, go a long way there. Electricity and water, for example, were a daily struggle for people in the Diocese of Cape Coast. Nevertheless, the link was very much two-way. The Church could find challenges in its diversity but could also find much joy.

The Rt Rev Mark Strange (Bishop of Moray, Ross and Caithness) wished to talk about door opening. Since becoming Bishop, he had been surprised at the extent to which the rest of the world understood what it meant to be a Bishop. Having been consecrated only for a number of months at the time of the most recent Lambeth Conference, he had suddenly found himself surrounded by many others who simply accepted him as a Bishop. Since then he had tried to use the hospitality of his own Diocese, both in fellowship and in prayer, in the knowledge that his Diocese could not afford to send him all over the world. He had been to Québec, one of his linked dioceses, and had met there with the then Bishop of Bujumbura in Burundi and had tried to forge a link based on education and young people, rather than simply bishops meeting bishops. Three years previously, a large group from Québec had come to the Glenalmond Youth Camp and this year he would take young people from Scotland back to Québec. His experience was that in so many places, people simply wanted to hear what he had to say. Across the Diocese,

others were often being hosted, frequently by prayer. The Diocese had been able to open doors and receive visitors from other parts of the world, thereby allowing those people to walk through those doors. He himself was not a great traveller but, because of his ordination as a Bishop, he was able to open doors.

Bishop Strange was unsure where the future of the link with Bujumbura lay. His Dean, the Very Rev Alison Simpson, had worked hard to keep the link doing. However, the political situation in Burundi in recent weeks had meant that people whom he knew had found themselves in a deeply difficult situation. His Diocese had been able to pray not only for Bujumbura but for "friends" there. He valued that and he hoped the rest of the SEC also valued it.

The Rt Rev Dr Nigel Peyton (Bishop of Brechin) spoke to update the Synod on developments following the Motion passed by Synod 2014 regarding statistics. The Motion had asked the College of Bishops to consider the annual statistical return because concern continued to be expressed about what features of church wellbeing the current mode of collection did, or did not, capture, about the consistency of form filling and the narrowness of the single Sunday snapshot of church attendance. The statistics lacked clarity and authority and, therefore, utility.

Bishop Peyton explained that the College was minded to give to the new Mission Board a brief to undertake further work on the collection of statistics. The College had suggested that the Board might wish to consider: whether there was a need for external expertise; whether clergy properly understood how to complete the current form; how best to capture attendance beyond simply Sunday morning services; whether the return should include average attendance; and the fact that any future form would need to maintain some continuity with the current form so as to allow for meaningful comparisons to be made in future. He expected that at the next meeting of the College of Bishops, a brief for the Mission Board would be finalised.

Bishop Peyton suggested that two contrasting matters needed to be understood. On the one hand, were the statistics which the Church could rejoice in, the points of growth and the extent of the Church's activity reaching into local communities. On the other hand, there were realities which needed to be faced up to such as the apparent decline in communicant membership reported in 2014 compared with the previous year. His own Diocese was keen to examine the demographic of the core membership of each charge. The concept of "age" was surely more urgent and critical for the Church's immediate future than the somewhat optimistic notion of "persons of all ages belonging to the congregation". Death and diminishing finance hung over many charges. However, the Scottish Population Census of 2011 had thrown up a puzzling paradox which the Mission Board might wish to consider. The Annual Report and Accounts for the General Synod ended 31 December 2014 suggested that the Church had a membership of 32,634. However, the Census reported six Anglican groups (Church of England, Episcopalian, Scottish Episcopal Church, Anglican, Church of Ireland and Church in Wales) which together totalled 103,000 people, equivalent to 2% of the Scottish population. Where were those people – they needed to be found!

In closing the session, the Chair thanked the Bishops for their presentations and all members of the College for their work and role in the life of the Church.

SESSION 6: THE RT REV THE BISHOP OF MORAY, ROSS AND CAITHNESS IN THE CHAIR

6.1 Mission and Ministry Board

The Most Rev David Chillingworth (Convener, Mission and Ministry Board) presented his final report as Convener of the Board. In so doing, he wished to thank all those who had travelled on the journey which the Board had made in recent years and especially the Rev Canon Fay Lamont, the Convener of the Home Mission Committee which was due to disappear in the proposed new board structure.

The Primus explained that he had come into the Convenership of the Board at a time when the need for change had been recognised. The proposal set out in the Synod Papers was a final tidying up of structures which followed the establishment of the new Council for the Scottish Episcopal Institute. That brought to an end the somewhat awkward arrangements which had lodged the former TISEC within the Mission and Ministry Board. The first Motion to be considered in the current session was a second reading of a revised text for Canon 52, Section 23 which in effect ratified the establishment of the Institute Council which had been operating as a transitional body since General Synod 2014. Consequently, the change also turned the Mission and Ministry Board into a Mission Board which would be a very welcome clarification of its role. The second Motion which would be considered provided for a series of changes to the Digest of Resolutions. In the main, these were consequential upon the establishment of the new Institute Council.

The Primus referred to the fact that the proposed Section 2.1.2 (h) of the Digest of Resolutions provided for the Chair of the Institute Council to be a Bishop, nominated by the Standing Committee to General Synod. Some might feel there were enough Bishops in leadership roles such as this. However, the rationale for this particular provision lay in the very close relationship between the processes of training and the decision as to whether or not an individual was to be ordained. There was a Bishop content in every part of that relationship towards ordination which made this a reasonable suggestion to propose. The following three sections to be altered in the Digest related to representation on other Boards and Committees which arose from the creation of the Institute Council and the new Mission Board. The proposals would also result in the loss of certain bodies and that was significant and important. The new Institute Council would replace a complex network of Committees (one of the matters criticised in the Ministry Division Report on TISEC). As a shadow body during the previous year, the Council had made rapid progress and he was delighted with that progress. The new Mission Board would be able to give its full attention to the mission of the Scottish Episcopal Church. From the beginning, the Whole Church Mission and Ministry Policy had confirmed that the focus of mission in the Church was in the dioceses and congregations under the Bishop, as leader of mission. In suggesting that, he believed that the Board had been recognising the

reality of the life of the Scottish Episcopal Church. Later in the meeting of Synod, consideration would be given to the establishment of Mission and Ministry Support Grants. That would allow financial devolvement from Province to dioceses under a formula and would be a means of bringing the financial system into line with the Mission Policy. The Mission Board would have a role in supporting a number of inter-diocesan networks bringing together people with a passion for particular aspects of mission to share experience and good practice. The list of networks could change as needs and priorities changed. The Board would also be responsible for reviewing and revising the Mission Policy of the Church. The new Board would bring coherence to discussion with and among dioceses. He believed the proposals would bring to an end a process of change worked on by the Mission and Ministry Board in recent years and he commended them to Synod.

The Primus then proposed, and the Rt Rev Kevin Pearson (Bishop of Argyll and the Isles) seconded, the following Motion: –

“That the amended text for Canon 52, Section 23 be read for the second time.”

The Rev Kirstin Freeman (Glasgow and Galloway) noted that the text of Canon 52.23 referred to the "Board" of the Scottish Episcopal Institute but recognised that it was to be known as the Institute "Council". She suggested that one or other term, rather than both, should be used.

Mr Grant Swain (Moray, Ross and Caithness) asked whether it was assumed that the new provincial structure would be rolled down to dioceses.

The Secretary General explained in relation to Ms Freeman's point that the Council would be treated as a "Board" to ensure that it enjoyed full status as one of the Boards of the General Synod. However, in practice it was to be known as the Institute Council.

The Primus, responding to Mr Swain, indicated that the dynamic was in fact one which flowed from dioceses to the Province rather than the other way around. The Block Grant would be a way of reflecting that principle in the Church's administrative assistance. Asking whether the structures were to be replicated in dioceses assumed a "head office" mentality which was not what the Whole Church Mission and Ministry Policy was about. Increasingly, it concerned an inter-diocesan dynamic. It was possible that there could be parity in provincial and diocesan structures but that was not the expectation.

The Motion was then put to the vote in houses and passed by the requisite majorities as follows: –

House of Laity: passed unanimously
House of Clergy: passed unanimously
House of Bishops: passed unanimously.

The Primus then proposed, and Bishop Pearson seconded, the following Motion: –

“That the Digest of Resolutions be altered as follows:-

- *That a new paragraph (h) be inserted at the end of Section 2.1.2*
- *That Section 2.2.1 be altered so that the first sentence of that section read:*

“The **Standing Committee** of the General Synod shall consist of a Lay Convener appointed by the General Synod, the Primus, a Bishop other than the Primus (appointed by the College of Bishops) and the Conveners of the Administration Board, the Mission Board, the Information and Communication Board and the Board of the Scottish Episcopal Institute.”

- *That Section 2.3.1 be altered so that it read:*

“The **Administration Board** shall consist of a Convener appointed by the General Synod, a Bishop (appointed by the College of Bishops), a representative appointed by the Mission Board, three members appointed by the General Synod from its own membership, a representative of each Diocese as appointed by each Diocesan Synod and the Conveners of the pendant committees of the Board.”

- *That Section 2.3.3(b) be altered so that it read:*

“the Finance Committee consisting of a Convener, a representative appointed by each Diocesan Synod and a representative appointed by the Mission Board;”

- *That Section 2.4 be deleted in its entirety and replaced by the wording set out in the paper included in the Synod Papers for this Synod*
- *That at the end of Section 2.5, a new Section 2.6, as set out in the paper included in the Synod Papers for this Synod be inserted and that the existing sections 2.7 to 2.10 be renumbered as 2.8 to 2.11 respectively*

for the avoidance of doubt, all as set out in the paper included in the Synod Papers for this Synod.”

The Very Rev Kelvin Holdsworth proposed that the first bullet point of the Motion be altered to read "that a new paragraph (h) be inserted at the end of Section 2.1.2 omitting the words "a Bishop"."

Provost Holdsworth thanked those who had worked on the material which had been brought to Synod. He explained that he had served on Standing Committee when the process had started to establish a new Institute Council. He had had doubts as to whether it could be achieved, particularly within the proposed timescale, and he congratulated all those who had been involved in the process. He also wished to emphasise that his amendment was not in any way a comment on those who had served on the transitional Institute Council. He wished to affirm Bishop Pearson and wished him well in convening that Council. However, he did wish to ask whether it was the case that the person fulfilling the role of Convener always needed to be a

Bishop. He had no difficulty with the concept of the Standing Committee being the body to nominate the Convener. It was important that significant thought went into finding the right person. However, he believed that the nature of the Church's training and formation was about affirming the gifts and skills of the whole Church. There were people who knew much about education and formation and about how people moved into ordination or lay readership who did not happen to be Bishops. Should such people automatically be excluded from the role of Convener? Also, he did not wish the balance of Standing Committee to be upset as a result of the proposal. The Standing Committee stood in place of General Synod between Synod meetings. The House of Bishops was already particularly well represented on the Committee. He wished to invite Synod to avoid tying the hands of Standing Committee in the future in finding the best person for the role. The Synod had already discovered in the current meeting that it should be wary of making doctrinal statements in its Canons. Whether a provision requiring the Convener of the Council to be a Bishop was a doctrinal statement was one on which a theological paper could doubtless be prepared but he believed that a well-qualified and gifted lay person or cleric could undertake the role. He asked Synod to support his amendment.

The Rev Canon Clifford Piper (Moray, Ross and Caithness) seconded the amendment.

Bishop Pearson speaking as Convener of the transitional Institute Council, was appreciative of Provost Holdsworth pointing to the ministry of the whole Church, lay and ordained. In answering the amendment, he wished to address discernment, formation and governance. Bishops were responsible for the discernment of vocation throughout the Church for either lay or ordained. Ordination was the prerogative of the Bishop. The intimate involvement of Bishops in the process of discernment and formation was essential. The barriers were being broken down as between the selection phase, initial ministerial education, continuing ministerial education, etc. The first and foremost motivating factor in his life was the fact that he was a disciple of Jesus Christ. The fact that he was a Bishop was by the way. The formation of those ministering within the Church was part of the responsibility of the Bishops. It was significant that when the initial TISEC review had been undertaken, the report had included a section regarding the formation of Bishops. The external advisers and assessors had warned that this might prove a rod for the Bishops' backs and had suggested its removal. The College of Bishops, however, was unanimous in wishing to retain that section because they were an integral part of formation. In relation to governance, the Bishops had in fact made themselves more accountable to the Standing Committee and Synod. The Institute Council was responsible to the Bishops but principally to the General Synod. He suggested that in the Institute Council and its Conventership a new way was being modelled which was part of the vision for the following five years, namely a collaborative approach. He commended the Motion as it stood.

Provost Holdsworth thanked Bishop Pearson for his comments, Bishop Pearson had not convinced him that there was a need for the Convener always to be a Bishop. Discernment, vocation and governance were areas in which all members of

the Church had a role. He affirmed the idea of collaborative working but if the Church believed in the gifts and skills of all members of the Church then it must open itself to the possibility that others could take on the role of Convener.

The amendment was put to the vote but not passed. Voting was as follows:

49 in favour
68 against
8 abstentions.

The Motion was then put to the vote in its original form and passed by majority, two against, one abstention.

6.2 Mission and Ministry Board: Overseas Committee/Global Partnerships Committee

6.2.1 Committee Report

The Rev Val Nellist (Convener, Overseas (now renamed Global Partnerships) Committee) provided a brief update on developments since the date of the written report of the Committee in the Annual Report and Accounts of the General Synod for the year ended 31 December 2014. She explained that John Rea would complete his term of office on the Committee later in the month, having served two terms as the holder of the education portfolio. He had been a great resource of informed support and critical assessment. His wide experience of and connections within the Anglican Communion had enabled the Committee to give support for higher educational development for clergy and diocesan workers in places of great need. He had ensured that the limited budget allocation for that portfolio had been used to maximum benefit. Linda Brownlie had been unable to continue as the holder of the Africa portfolio but Isobel Booth-Clibborn had offered to take her place and would bring extensive experience of work in Africa latterly through CMS in Uganda. Sian Harris was being appointed to the Committee to take on the publicity portfolio and would bring professional experience to that role.

Later in the day Val Brown of Christian Aid and Elaine Cameron of the Inter-Anglican Women's Network would be present at Synod lunchtime meetings. They would share some of the work which had been done together with the Committee including the adaptation of Brazilian Bible study material designed to help churches combat domestic and gender-based violence. Mrs Nellist also commended the *Thursdays in Black* initiative of the South African churches, again taking a stand against domestic violence. Such violence was not always gender-specific. Also, in the area of international networking, the Committee hoped, subject to a visa being available, to welcome Moumita Biswas in August 2015. She was the Executive Secretary of the All India Council of Christian Women. That was an organisation actively promoting programmes to end gender-based violence and the trafficking of

women and children. A programme for her visit to Scotland would be published shortly and she would participate in the *Just Festival* also. Finally, another Companion Partnerships Day would be run for dioceses on 21 November 2015 in Perth. This would look at the practicalities of both setting up, and amicably closing, a partnership link. It was hoped that that gathering could hear a report from the Diocese of Moray, Ross and Caithness on the youth visit to Québec which the Committee had helped to fund. Publicity regarding the day would be distributed in August.

Mrs Nellist then introduced Emily Alldritt who was the Scottish Episcopal Church's Provincial Link on the Inter-Anglican Women's Network and who had represented the Church at the UN Commission on the Status of Women meeting in New York earlier in the year.

6.2.2 59th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women

Emily Alldritt reported on her attendance at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). It had been a privilege to join women and men from around the world dedicated to achieving equal status across industry, society and government. The 2015 session had focused on what had been achieved, 20 years on, from the 4th World Conference for Women held in Beijing in 1995.

Ms Alldritt reported that there had been progress. More women than ever now had access to basic education, there were more women in positions of leadership, more women who suffered violence and abuse were being heard and women had a voice in peace-making negotiations. However, the power of the voice of women remained a threat to some. She had heard stories of women in peasant collectives being treated brutally by regimes which were more interested in global agricultural corporations and profit than the people who had farmed the land for generations. Similarly, women had dared to challenge the UN narrative of what "development" meant. The Western-style neoliberal economic model would not work everywhere and yet it appeared high on the agenda for agencies which had little to do with the grassroots movements. The grassroots movement had become of central importance for her and for the Anglican delegation at that CSW. Without organisations working directly with people "on the ground", the higher tier development work would crumble and yet such grassroots movements were routinely left out of the picture. She wished to challenge that. CSW had taught her to dare to be ambitious. The Scottish Episcopal Church was small, with many individual congregations struggling financially, but it could do a great deal because of its size, not despite it. Her day-to-day experience was recorded in her blog "Scottish Piskie New York".

There were three particular messages which she had taken away from CSW. Firstly, she referred to work undertaken in the Diocese of Jerusalem which covered part of the world's most contested lands and yet managed to hold a biannual women's conference, empowering both lay and ordained women. If that diocese, with 30 priests and 7,000 Anglicans, could achieve so much,

what could the Scottish Episcopal Church do? It could model effective practice – how many men were on the church cleaning rota; how many women were on vestries; how many women under the age of 35 were on any rota at all?

Secondly, CSW had highlighted to her the status of "youth". Youth was vital in congregations not because they were the future of the Church but because they were the Church here and now. At CSW too often there had been talk of "youth" as if it were an "other" entity. She urged that the Church should not be one that treated "women" and "youth" as problems to be addressed, tokenistically handed positions to assuage guilt. Women and young people needed safe places to talk and to be heard but that did not mean they needed to be treated as some separate thing in congregations. What was being done for the women and young children who wanted to be more than "quota-fillers"?

Thirdly, she had been delighted to accept the invitation to attend CSW because she knew that the Church would support her visit financially. She could not have attended otherwise. If the Church ever found itself in a position where financial cutbacks were necessary, she made a plea that funding for CSW ought not to be cut. It was important that income ought not to be a barrier to participation in the wider world of Anglican fellowship and women's development.

6.2.3 Visit to Israel/Palestine

The Rev Kate Reynolds reported on her visit in 2014, on behalf of the Overseas Committee, to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. Her participation had been as part of an ecumenical visit organised by the Church of Scotland's World Mission Council. Her participation had been funded by the Overseas Committee. The visit had involved visiting partner organisations of the Church of Scotland in Israel and the West Bank and she had heard stories from Christians, Jews, Muslims, Israelis and Palestinians about how the occupation affected their lives. At the end of the visit she had attended the Kairos Conference which had been held to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the release of the Kairos Palestine Document which had been created by Christian leaders in Israel and Palestine calling for support and prayer from Christian communities throughout the world. Ms Reynolds then presented a brief slideshow to communicate the stories of some of the people in Israel/ Palestine.

The constant refrain which she had encountered during her visit was "we want peace but it is complicated". The political, theological, social and cultural situation was far too complicated to address in the context of her short presentation but a lunchtime meeting later in the day would be held on the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel which would outline more of the situation. Elspeth Strachan, a member of the

Scottish Episcopal Church, was currently serving as an ecumenical accompanier in Bethlehem.

Every person to whom Ms Reynolds had spoken during her visit had offered a different response to the situation. People on both sides of the wall had described the complexities of their own identities and histories and the frustrations they felt in simply being defined as "other". However, everyone had said that they wanted peace. On the 24th day of each month, Christian Aid encouraged Christians in the UK to join with Christians throughout the world in an ecumenical prayer vigil for the people of the Holy Land. Resources were available on their website for public prayer sessions and there were short prayers which could be used by individuals. Throughout Scotland, Christian Aid also often held events on the 24th day of each month (and on other days) to raise awareness of the effect of the occupation on all people of the land. They were happy to send representatives to local churches and communities. Val Brown was the contact person at Christian Aid for organising such events.

In closing, she wished to urge everyone to join with Christian Aid and Christian communities throughout the world in praying for brothers and sisters in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories who were living in these anxious and uncertain times.

The Primus addressed the Motion which appeared on the Synod agenda encouraging support for the Christian Aid initiative. The pattern of regular prayer was a time hallowed one. He drew attention to one particular resource which he had been asked to present to the previous meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council, *Land of Promise: an Anglican Exploration of Christian Attitudes to the Holy Land with Particular Reference to Christian Zionism*. It was available on the website of the Anglican Communion. It expressed the toxic mix of faith, politics, culture and tradition which lay at the heart of most of the intractable problems of current times. In Scotland it manifested as sectarianism. Quoting Archbishop Rowan Williams' comments in the report, the Primus indicated that it was necessary to encourage the religious leadership on all sides in the Holy Land to speak as if they believed in a God who acted - not only a God who endorsed their version of reality. In the Primus' experience, some kinds of conflict would not be resolved by political negotiation alone. They required that the people in the situation grew spiritually to a point at which they could transcend their own conflict. That was the reason why the Church should commit itself to prayer because there was no other way.

The Primus then proposed, and Ms Catriona Beel (Argyll and the Isles) seconded, the following Motion: –

“That this Synod encourage members of the Scottish Episcopal Church to join the Scottish ecumenical initiative, promoted by Christian Aid, in praying for Israel/Palestine on the 24th day of every month.”

The Rev Cedric Blakey (Glasgow and Galloway) was sure that the Motion would carry wholehearted support. He reported that in May 2015, 35 members of the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway had been on pilgrimage in the Holy Land with Bishop Gregor Duncan. They had visited St George's Cathedral, Jerusalem and had spoken with the Dean who would be a particular person to hold in prayer on the 24th day of each month. He had offered four challenges. Firstly there was that of partnership. He had explained that "this is your Holy Land" as Christians and, therefore, it was important to think of ways of developing relationship because Christians were leaving the area in droves. Secondly, he had encouraged people to come on pilgrimage and to engage with the living stones in that land. He had spoken of "pence" – they needed money. His principle injunction had been that of prayer. Mr Blakey commended the proposal for a regular monthly reminder of that.

The Motion was then put to the vote and passed *nem con*.

In closing the Overseas Committee session, the Chair thanked the Rev Val Nellist, Ms Emily Alldritt and the Rev Kate Reynolds.

6.3 Mission and Ministry Board: Church in Society Committee

The Rev Prof David Atkinson (Convener, Church in Society Committee) referred to the written report of his Committee in the Annual Report and Accounts of the General Synod for the year ended 31 December 2014 and to the background paper from his Committee contained in the Synod Papers. During the session, he intended to speak about the work of the Committee which had largely centred on the subject of poverty and he would be assisted in the presentation by Prof Alan Werritty, the current Vice-Chair of Eco-Congregation Scotland and by Dr Martin Auld of the RSPB.

Prof Atkinson explained that "wisdom" had been an important tradition in the Church and in Scripture and the Committee believed that it could bring wisdom to debates about society. The Committee had therefore tried to look at societal issues through a lens of wisdom from Scripture.

Prof Atkinson initially addressed the question of climate change, a subject which had been described as the single largest most important issue in relation to humankind. International committees had looked at this and there now appeared to be little debate that humankind had impacted creation, largely as a result of the release of carbon into the atmosphere over a short period of time. He believed that it was unarguable that there was a warming of the climate system. It had consequences for every country in the world but it would have its greatest impact upon communities which were poor because they would be least able to adapt. It would also impact unevenly on genders. There was, therefore, a link between the work being undertaken by the Church in Society Committee and the work of the Overseas Committee about which Synod had just heard.

Prof Alan Werritty (St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane) wished to consider the churches' responses to the question of climate change. He endorsed the view of the Moderator of the Church of Scotland that whilst "the earth was the Lord's and everything in it", it was being treated as if it were a disposable asset. Prof Werritty agreed that climate change was perhaps the most pressing issue in human history and its effects were most keenly experienced by the poorest of the world's poor. The Pope had also addressed the issue and had called for a collective answer which went beyond particular interests and behaviour. The Pope was in the final stages of issuing an encyclical on the subject. Prof Werritty also referred to the Primus' report earlier in Synod regarding his visit to South Africa. In his Easter message, the Primus had commented that only an awareness of the gift of creation could transform humankind from being careless exploiters to being careful guardians of the goodness of the Earth.

At the level of governance, the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change would take place in Paris later in the year. It would address three issues: how to limit emissions from developed countries; how to help developing countries adapt to the impacts of existing climate change; how to develop low carbon economies. It would be a major challenge but there were some encouraging signs. China was already moving rapidly towards renewable technologies and the USA was inching its way towards becoming a low carbon economy. These gave a window of opportunity in Paris.

Prof Werritty argued that the care of creation was a duty, not a choice, for Christians. "We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors we borrow it from our children". What could be done here in Scotland? Eco-Congregation Scotland was strongly campaigning for a successful outcome of the Paris meeting. This was being given expression through a baton, akin to those prior to the Olympic and Commonwealth Games, which was being relayed around Scotland. It had started with the presentation of the baton by Aileen McLeod, the Minister for Environment, to a member of Eco-Congregation in Aberdeen. It had already been to over 40 places and was a means of raising the profile of the issue. The baton had been crafted from an old church pew and would be taken to Paris and returned to the Environment Minister. It was hoped the baton would enter the conference hall.

At this point, the baton was received in Synod and presented to Prof Atkinson.

Prof Atkinson referred to the fact that many churches had been considering their investments in fossil fuels. The Committee was in dialogue with the provincial Investment Committee. The Church held some investments in fossil fuel companies. They were good investments in terms of the income they generated and were important in terms of funding the work of the Church. Work was being done on a strategy to determine when, and if so how, the Church might decide that it wished to disinvest. The dialogue with the Investment Committee was an important indication of the way that the Church handled such matters.

Prof Atkinson spoke about food production as an issue which was important to everyone but it also had a large carbon-releasing component. There were a range

of issues which needed to be balanced. The Committee had expertise in these areas and was actively working on it. The Committee was not simply concerned about economic or environmental issues but was interested in how the wisdom from Scripture could be applied in order to engage with communities. The Committee had been doing work on pilgrimage and he believed this was a way in which the Church could use the interest in the environment as a means of evangelism. It was important to work in partnership with others and one of the current major partners was the RSPB. He welcomed Dr Martin Auld to Synod.

Dr Auld explained he was a Regional Director with the RSPB in Scotland based in Aberdeen and was a member of St Mary's, Inverurie. Partnership, in his view, constituted joint interest. It was a place of sharing and synergies. He believed that in coming together there had been a moral obligation which resulted in an ethical response. The current partnership included the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Church of Scotland, Eco-Congregations, A ROCHA, RSPB Scotland and the RSPB at the national level.

Already, there was considerable community empowerment legislation, with more in the pipeline, to enable local communities to take responsibility locally. Dr Auld referred to the Bruntland doctrine namely that one should hand on to future generations something better than one had received. Humankind was not separate from the natural world, it was part of it. Education had an important role in connecting people to the actual world. Many young people were in fact completely disconnected from the natural world. Advocacy was important in encouraging those in power to make good decisions. Everyone could do something to give nature a home, even on a small scale. Human health was also tied to a healthy natural environment.

In terms of practical delivery, what could be done? His organisation had computer programmes which could layer maps to include sites of special scientific interest, local authority boundaries, RSPB reserves, local churches, etc so that people could be aware of relevant information for their locality. This would help bring people and communities together. Joint work could be done to produce information, encourage practical engagement, undertake site visits, etc. The partnership provided links between the secular and the sacred. It could encourage pilgrimage, quiet space and peace.

Prof Atkinson then reminded Synod that the previous year it had considered the Living Wage. The Committee had subsequently sent out a questionnaire to congregations and dioceses. One third of those who had responded indicated that they had not heard about the Synod's discussions the previous year. The responses had also indicated a number of reasons why churches did not pay the Living Wage including matters such as potential clawback of disabled benefits and problems in finding a cleaning contractor which paid the Living Wage. These indicated that the matter could be complicated but it was nevertheless important to think about paying the Living Wage. One of the resolutions which would be proposed shortly would encourage not only payment of the Living Wage within the Church but also encourage others to pay it. This had a strong basis in Scripture (Acts 4:32–35).

The Committee also continued to work on the issue of human exploitation. It was important to bring wisdom to bear on the economic realities.

Prof Atkinson then referred to the split which existed in society in relation to access to finance. Not everyone had access to banks and some were at the mercy of payday lenders. Credit unions had been set up many years ago in order to address the question of access. They continued to be successful but were perhaps viewed as something in which the churches did not engage. That was the reason for the establishment of the Churches' Mutual Credit Union which had come into being in February 2015. The purpose in its establishment was partly to show that credit unions were for everybody. It was important for churches to support this and a lunchtime meeting later in the day would allow Synod members to explore matters further.

Prof Atkinson then proposed, and the Rt Rev Dr John Armes (Bishop of Edinburgh) seconded, the following Motion: –

“That this Synod endorse:

- *the actions being taken by Scottish Churches to influence Government so that the United Nations Climate Change Conference, to be held in Paris in December 2015, can result in firm and clear proposals to limit the rise in global mean surface temperature to no more than two degrees Centigrade;*
- *the following practical steps being taken by the Scottish Episcopal Church through the Church in Society Committee:*
 - *Encouraging congregations to join Eco-Congregation Scotland;*
 - *Working collaboratively with other concerned organisations.”*

Mr Jim Gibson (Glasgow and Galloway) voiced a reservation about the Motion. The background paper from the Committee referred to Scotland having one of the most far-reaching programmes in implementing a renewable electricity supply. That was true but his concern was that renewable energies were being pursued at any cost and that damage was being done to the environment as a result. Fossil fuel companies did make money but so did those engaged in renewable technologies. He believed that the Government planning process was fundamentally flawed in many ways. Economic development appeared to be used as a trump card to allow all sorts of monstrosities on the landscape in terms of power lines and windfarms. He declared a vested interest as a trustee of the John Muir Trust but he asked the Committee to take his comments on board to see what wisdom it could bring to preserving the landscape in Scotland.

Prof Atkinson noted the point.

The Motion was then put to the vote and passed by majority.

Prof Atkinson then proposed, and Bishop Armes seconded, the following Motion: –

“That this Synod

- *commend those Scottish Episcopal Church congregations which pay the Living Wage, including to part time and temporary staff, and urge all congregations to pay the Living Wage to all staff by 2016;*
- *further support the efforts of Scottish Churches to persuade all employers to pay the Living Wage as a basic tenet of their working ethos, recognising that it is important that all working members of our society should receive a financial reward which covers the costs of living.”*

Comment was invited but there was none.

The Motion was put to the vote and passed by majority.

Prof Atkinson then proposed, and Bishop Armes seconded, the following Motion: –

“That this Synod welcome the establishment of the Churches’ Mutual Credit Union (CMCU) in February of this year and urge member churches to support the CMCU by making its work and the financial support it offers known to members in parallel with continuing their support for local credit unions.”

Dr Beth Routledge (Glasgow and Galloway) commended what the Committee was trying to do in its support of the credit unions but indicated that she could not vote for the Motion. The Credit Union was only accessible to clergy and church workers and gave no benefit to others who had no access to finance.

Prof Atkinson responded that at the present time members of the Credit Union had to have a clear connection with the Church. In order for the Credit Union to have been established it had had to demonstrate minimal risk in relation to bad debts and the decision regarding membership had been taken on financial grounds. It was, however, hoped that within two to three years it could be opened up to a broader range of members.

The Motion was then put to the vote and passed by majority.

In closing the session, the Chair thanked all who had participated and also the Rev Canon Fay Lamont, the retiring Convener of the Home Mission Committee and the Primus as retiring Convener of the Mission and Ministry Board.

SESSION 7: THE REV PROF TREVOR HART IN THE CHAIR

7.1 Faith and Order Board: Marriage – Decision to Debate Canonical Options

The Chair explained to Synod the place which the current session had in the ongoing process during Synod of discussion on the topic of marriage.

The Rt Rev Dr Gregor Duncan (Acting Convener, Faith and Order Board) was sure that Synod members had been praying, reflecting, conversing, debating, arguing, hoping and hurting and much more than that but the Synod now came to a major point of decision. He wished to make clear that the Motion which would shortly be proposed was intended as the gateway to detailed discussion of the canonical options which would follow later. He believed it was also important for him to stress that the Board's thinking in presenting the Motion was that this was the point at which, if Synod wished to maintain the status quo regarding the canonical understanding of marriage, it could express that wish by deciding not to pass the Motion.

Bishop Duncan then proposed, and Mrs Helen Hood (Edinburgh), seconded the following Motion: –

“That this Synod proceed to debate the options for canonical change in relation to marriage as proposed by the Faith and Order Board.”

The Chair encouraged the Synod to continue in the same spirit of respect, generosity and good grace which had characterised the debate earlier in the meeting.

The Rev Ken Webb (Edinburgh) said he would vote in favour of the Motion but he was concerned for those who had proposed the amendment which had failed to win approval in the debate earlier in Synod. He was glad that Bishop Duncan had made clear that those who were opposed to change could clearly vote against the Motion. He also wished to remind Synod of what had happened to those who had supported Scottish independence in the recent Referendum, even though the result of that Referendum had gone against them. It did not mean that the discussion was totally closed down.

Mrs Pamela Gordon (Edinburgh) referred to the fact that Bishop Duncan had spoken earlier of being on a journey. Some people had been on a longer journey than others. Her own generation had started in a position of complete ignorance about the complexities of human sexuality. Her generation had been enlightened, as life went on, by mixing with colleagues who had enormously conflicted problems at a time when the law was against them, in some cases leading to tragic deaths. Others had encountered within their own families those struggling with their sexuality. Her generation had lived through a period of greater change than at any other time in history. Much had been learned that enlightened human experience. The fact that change in society had brought secular benefits did not necessarily mean that the Church needed to change but neither should the Church ignore the truths that may have been discovered. The Church and society had learned something of the breadth and complexity of God's creation, far beyond what was known before. In the earlier debate about the environment, Synod had heard of how the diversity of God's creation was valued. However, the Church had balked at embracing the diversity of one aspect of that creation, the wide spectrum of human sexuality. The conventions of an early tribal society had been privileged – a society of great spirituality but of its time, sexist and patriarchal. This had been privileged

against what science had been showing. The Church was a child and thought as a child but it now needed to grow up. Much had been learned that ought to inform that growing up. Prejudices had been fuelled by daring to judge that which those in the Church did not feel comfortable with, albeit that Christians were enjoined not to judge. Most people had now moved beyond that in order to cherish individuals. The Church had withheld public recognition and blessing of same-sex unions because of that background and had denied the experience of others. Sexuality was a component of human life but did not equate to love. Love transcended sexuality and gender. It was time to move on from narrow definitions and remove artificial man-made restrictions. Christians were not enjoined to have sex but they were enjoined to love one another. Love, like human nature, was a many-splendoured thing. She, therefore, supported the Motion and the concept of change.

The Rev Canon Malcolm Round (member, Standing Committee) indicated that when he had arrived at Synod the previous day there had been no badge awaiting him. He joked that he had been marginalised before even entering the meeting but, unfortunately, he now wondered if it had been a prophetic act. He was sad to be speaking against the Motion. He had genuinely hoped to be able to commend discussion later about possible options in which everyone could engage. He had naïvely thought that the Synod would understand the need to include an option that upheld the definition of marriage but allowed permissive change. Whilst the additional option which had been proposed for inclusion earlier in the meeting might not have gained traction, it would have allowed the whole Synod to engage together in debate and discuss a full range of options. He did not want to say "no" because the intention had been to try to make a decision of the Synod together. He apologised if he had not made clear why the proposed option for permissive change would have smoothed the passage towards change. He expected that the Motion would be passed but he hoped that enough people would vote against it to show that the Church was not united over the way in which the process had been offered. He feared that the consequences of starting the process in the way which was unfolding over time would be detrimental to the unity and mission of the Church. The much-lauded inclusivity of the Scottish Episcopal Church was being shown to be a bit of a myth. Despite 35 years of involvement in the Scottish Episcopal Church by those holding to the evangelical position, the debates which had taken place earlier in Synod indicated that that wing of the Church had not been included. The Doctrine Committee paper had not understood the evangelical position despite his having been given to understand that it would reflect the inclusivity of the evangelical position. Many evangelicals did not wish to be faced with a yes/no option in the way that matters were now being presented. Evangelicals had tried to be involved fully in all of the processes, including Cascade, had acted respectfully during Synod, had refrained from scathing comments about Bishops in social media but this had not converted into an understanding of the evangelicals in the process. The much-lauded diversity of the Scottish Episcopal Church had not been translated into process. The evangelicals appeared to be loved for the significant amounts of finance which they provided to dioceses and the Province and for their numerical strength which made some dioceses look much more healthy than would otherwise be the case. However, the numerical strength was ignored in the Church's system

of governance with influence being affected accordingly. On Sundays there would be more people worshipping in the building where Synod was taking place than in the entirety of at least one, if not two, whole dioceses. Size must never be mistaken for right but diversity needed to be recognised in the process. Evangelicals had been disenfranchised by the system. The fact that people thought the process recognised diversity showed a lack of understanding of the position of the evangelicals and traditional Church members. Long-term the Scottish Episcopal Church might not end up more healthy for the change. Statistics tended to suggest that where churches had followed cultural change (such as in North America and in some Porvoo churches) the decline in numbers and influence had been much faster than had been the case beforehand. The statistics for the Scottish Episcopal Church might start to haemorrhage numbers. The “small” church might just become a lot smaller and neither would huge numbers be attracted by a liberalised church. Redefining marriage, rather than opening a door for mission might result in greater decline. Paradoxically, the churches which grew tended to be those which were radically counter-cultural. Young and gay people kept coming to counter-cultural churches. Canon Round referred to the fact that St Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 6: 9–11 was uncomfortable reading in a debate such as the current one but it was also about people being converted and changing lifestyle. At the end of Synod the previous day he had gone home sad and disappointed. Whilst change was inevitable, he felt the process was flawed and he therefore asked Synod to vote against the Motion until a process which allowed everyone to participate had been established.

The Rev Alastair MacDonald (Aberdeen and Orkney) said that in praying earlier in the day he had read the verse in the Psalm "I love to do your will oh Lord". Earlier in the current session, Mrs Gordon had spoken in a way which he felt insulted by because his motivation in voting today was to do what he believed was the will of God. He realised that others might disagree with him and he respected that. However, each Synod member had to discern God's will. The Doctrine Committee paper noted that whilst the Scottish Episcopal Church had removed the requirement of subscription to the Thirty Nine Articles, the Committee wished to concur with article 20 in not ordaining anything contrary to God's Word. He had been a Christian for 28 years and had become an Episcopalian in St Paul's & St George's 25 years previously. He believed that all of the options on offer would lead the Scottish Episcopal Church to do something which he considered to be contrary to God's Word. It was for that reason that he urged those people, who also believed that, to be brave enough to vote against the Motion. If people did not believe that, he urged members to vote what they believed for. In this decision, members did not stand before society or each other but stood before God. Each member had to choose what was right before God. He did not understand why, when a society was drifting away from belief in God, the Church thought society's values and morals in the area of sexuality would provide an indication of God's values and morals. From his perspective, the Church was simply following society and he did not believe that that was the right thing to do. He would have preferred to have had an option which he could vote for, but, in the absence of such an option, he urged those who were brave enough to vote against the Motion.

Gordon Aitken (Brechin) spoke as a white heterosexual male in the developed world. As such, he had very few barriers to life and would not be judged on the basis of his married status, the colour of his skin or his sexual preferences. He urged Synod members to vote in favour of the Motion because it chipped away at some of the barriers to discrimination. On his way to Synod, he had unexpectedly met a friend who was gay. On all occasions when they had met in previous years the friend had asked when he would be able to marry his partner in church. Mr Aitken had always had to give him the same answer namely, "not at the moment". When Mr Aitken had explained the content of the subject matter for Synod, his friend's eyes had lit up. He urged Synod to vote in favour of the Motion.

The Rt Rev Mark Strange (Bishop of Moray, Ross and Caithness) said that for the first time for quite a while he felt able to say what he felt. On a recent visit to a congregation, one member had suggested to him that all he talked about was "love". As Bishop, he had responded that that was what he thought he was supposed to do. He wished to share that he had a very ambiguous sexuality. He had been married for 32 years and had been with his wife for 34 years but he was clear that in all the time before that he could just as easily have brought to the priest his other love who was male. His friend, however, had not wished to do that and Bishop Strange had subsequently fallen in love with his wife, which had been wonderful. He was completely aware of the ambiguity that went on in people's lives, and in their Christian lives. He understood because he had lived and spoken to people on all sides of the debate. He wished to go back to the question put to him, "what do you do, Bishop Mark?" – "I talk of love". He wanted a church that recognised that love in all. He was convinced that Christ himself would understand. He asked Synod to support the Motion.

The Rev Christine Mylne (Moray, Ross and Caithness) said the debate was about the clash between law and love. This was a clash on which Christ himself had not been silent. How was law to be the servant of love and not its opponent? If the Church could not accompany faithful same-sex couples on their journey through life, it disobeyed the final command which Christ had given to love one another. Failure to do this diminished the credibility of Christians charged with proclaiming God's love and with promoting stable, loving relationships. Out of context references to selective Biblical passages irrespective of the culture, religious background or era in which they had been written for the purpose of condemning same-sex love deflected the Church from God's invitation to all men and women to form loving, stable relationships. Sociology, anthropology, psychology, biology and theology, to name but a few, could deepen the understanding of human love and of sexual expression of that love. Sexuality was a gift from God to be accepted in faithful love. Since God had created people with different sexual orientations, it was imperative that the Church found ways of allowing those differences to be expressed in an honoured way. Sacramental marriage had evolved to allow heterosexual couples to express their belief in that gift in a way acceptable to society. It was now necessary to find a way of allowing homosexual couples to express the same belief that their sexuality and love was a gift from God to be honoured.

The Rev David Mumford (Brechin) said that the debate was not about sympathy for the experience of gay and lesbian people in a homophobic society, it was principally a debate about the Christian definition of marriage. The Church always loved to say "yes" and rightly so, but there were occasions in life when the Church said "no" (for example, when someone offered themselves for ordination, the result might be that the Church said "no"). The Church was in a position where it struggled with its loyalty and faithfulness to Christ, the recognition that it was part of a worldwide church and with the question of how far the teachings of Scripture and Jesus were normative. He himself was not persuaded that the Church could move to redefining marriage in the way that the resolution, if passed, might lead the Church to do. He was persuaded by option C given in the Doctrine Committee paper. His understanding, now that the legislation had been passed by the Scottish Parliament, was that section 5 of Canon 31 meant that a civil marriage could be given a Benediction even though that civil marriage could now be a same-sex union. Looking at the teaching of Scripture and tradition and the teaching of Christ, he did not find it within himself at this time to say that the Church should redefine its understanding of marriage. He would, therefore, vote against the Motion.

Mr Howard Thompson (Edinburgh) indicated that he had only been an Anglican for 60 years and so did not know much about theology. However, his theology on this particular subject had changed in the course of the previous two days. He described himself as a thespian and knew many gay people. All of his gay friends simply wanted to be in solid loving relationships and most were and had been for many years. They were wonderful people but on the basis of St Paul's theology he had always thought he would need to say to them that he could not support them on the issue of gay marriage. The Doctrine Committee paper had had a profound influence on him. He had not appreciated that doctrine was based not just on Scripture but also on tradition and reason. In a conversation the previous day with the Bishop of Edinburgh, it had been pointed out to him that St Paul's teaching needed to be taken in context to understand it. He was therefore coming round to the fact that he had been wrong to have been so dogmatic previously. He had found difficult the reference in the paper to the fact that physical union reflected the relationship between Christ and the Church. He could not think of any moment of physical union when that theology had been uppermost in his mind. That was the only piece of theology in the paper which he had found difficult to accept. He had arrived at the point where he would embrace gay marriage. It had taken him three marriages to realise that God had to be involved in order to make a marriage work. By the time of his third marriage, both he and his wife had become Christians and the desire to have God in their marriage had made such a difference. He would not wish to see that denied to gay people. He urged Synod members to support the Motion so that all were equal under God.

The Very Rev Dr Francis Bridger (Brechin) said that it was not correct to set the debate up as one between law and love. Love was the fulfilling of the law. There was no theological conflict. If the debate were set up as a conflict between the two then no one would wish to say that they considered that law should prevail over love. It did not work that way. The main point, however, which he wished to make linked to discussions earlier in the day. Any decision which would be taken was not

just for the Scottish Episcopal Church but was also about the Church's place in the Anglican Communion. For three years he had lived in the Diocese of Los Angeles, one of the most radical dioceses in the USA. He had observed the damage which had been done both to The Episcopal Church and to its relations with the wider Communion because of its failure in 2003, when Gene Robinson had been elected as Bishop, to take account of its place in the wider Communion. The Scottish Episcopal Church had the responsibility and the right to alter its canon law. However, theologically and ethically, the Church did not have the right to say that what it did did not matter to other Christians elsewhere, whether ecumenically or within the Anglican Communion. The Scottish Episcopal Church had only just begun to have a theological debate. His view was that, whatever position were adopted, the changing of the Canon prematurely would put at risk positive long-term outcomes in terms of relations with the wider Anglican Communion. The change would be read by others as a signal that the Scottish Episcopal Church was giving up on the doctrine of marriage. Speaking as someone who had set up a centre for the study of the Anglican Communion and having travelled widely within the Communion, he believed that it was necessary for Synod to appreciate that the debate was not simply about the Scottish Episcopal Church. There was a need to find a way of signalling this to other provinces since otherwise it would be interpreted as a renunciation of truth. That was why he would vote against the Motion.

The Rev Markus Duenzkofer (Edinburgh) said that the Cascade Process had allowed for mutual sharing and listening – it had not required people to agree. He said he was petrified by what was going on in the Synod. The Synod was engaging in something which was against Biblical commandment and which broke with a 2000 year tradition and which broke ecumenical links. He was referring to the version of the Lord's Prayer which had been used in Morning Prayer at the beginning of the day. What had been used was not, with all due respect, the Lord's Prayer. Was he speaking with tongue in cheek? He did not understand how the Synod could agree with such a fundamental change in the wording of the Lord's Prayer so easily and yet see the definition of marriage as a question of salvation. He did not understand why a reordering of a church building, such as St Paul's & St George's, and the changing of the theology of sacred space which that involved could be celebrated whilst the proclaiming of God's grace in the lives of same-sex couples was labelled blasphemy. He did not understand how the Church could change its ecclesiology and break with apostolic tradition by entering into communion with everything that moved while arms were thrown in the air in disgust at LGBT people speaking about the sacramentality of their relationships. As a gay man he wondered whether there was more going on which had nothing to do with theology. There was a need to be honest. Were all the changes which he had just mentioned sparked by mission, were they consistent with what it meant to be the body of Christ? He could see how the changing of the understanding of the sacramentality of ordained ministry, the changing of the theology of sacred spaces and the changing of the dominical words of the Lord's Prayer might indeed aid the Church's mission. He urged Synod members to open their hearts and minds to see the Spirit of God at work in the lives and relationships of LGBTQ people. He urged the Synod not to try to change gay people into something which they were not by

giving in to one particular Biblical hermeneutic. Motion 20 and the subsequent options to be discussed were very consistent with Anglican theology and with God's self-revelation. The revisionist position would be to reject it. He urged the Synod to vote for the Motion.

The Rev Canon Ian Ferguson (Aberdeen and Orkney) was concerned that the debate was starting to address the various options. He felt really sad and had felt very sad the previous day, that there was no option to keep the Canon as it currently stood. It seemed unfair and undemocratic. It had been understood that the evangelical view would be represented but it had not been expressed in the Doctrine Committee paper. He found himself in a position where he did not know what to make of the situation nor, when he returned to his congregation, what to make of any decision for change which he believed would happen. He did not believe that voting in favour of the Motion was the will of God. He firmly believed that marriage was between a man and a woman and he wished to express his deep sadness that Synod members had not found it in their hearts to accept the amendment which had been proposed the previous day. He considered he had been disenfranchised and was not happy about that. He did not want in his heart to vote against the Motion because he wanted the debate to happen but because there was nothing in the options for him to debate, he would have to vote against the Motion. He encouraged Synod members to do likewise.

The Very Rev Andrew Swift (Argyll and the Isles) did not believe he could say anything to persuade those whose minds were made up. He was sure, however, that many Synod members might be feeling nervous about what the pain and repercussions might be of any decision for change. He believed that many people had an intuitive sense that some kind of change could, should or would happen but feared the possible negative consequences whether locally, nationally or internationally within the Anglican Communion. He suggested that Synod should have the courage to begin the process. It would still take a further two years of discussion and debate for the Church to work out how it could live with the two differing theologies of marriage. As to the pain and the consequences, people would feel distanced and isolated but LGBTQI people currently felt distanced in what the Church was able to offer. In the process which could begin now, it would be possible to work to keep diversity within the Scottish Episcopal Church without fractured division. The Cascade Process had shown that Church members could talk together even where views were different. The Church knew how to conduct this sort of debate. He urged those who were feeling nervous to have the courage to allow the process to begin.

The Rev Dr Harriet Harris (Convener, Doctrine Committee) had heard the comments which people such as Canon Round, Mr MacDonald and others had made about not being taken along if the Motion were passed. She wished such people to reconsider option E in the paper from the Faith and Order Board which she believed achieved the same as the amendment which had been proposed the previous day had sought to address. Option E allowed for the retention of the existing doctrinal statement but also included an explicit understanding of an alternative expression of marriage. By making it explicit, rather than implicit, it was

safer for everyone involved. The proposed amendment would have only made it implicit. The practical outcome would be the same in either case but in the absence of an explicit statement people were put into a shadowland in which couples both were, and were not, recognised as married. The implicit alternative would lead to an incoherent two integrities situation.

The Rev Canon David Richards (Edinburgh) wished initially to respond to the Rev Markus Duenzkofer. Canon Richards apologised if he had felt "miffed" by the worship at the beginning of the morning. The intention of the worship had been to lead people into God's presence. If Mr Duenzkofer had felt that it was not representative of his tradition, then "welcome to the club". Canon Richards had been an Episcopalian for many years and many worship services which he had attended had not represented his tradition. He was genuinely sorry if the worship had not been helpful. Since the previous day's debate he had been thinking about why the Doctrine Committee paper had fallen short in his expectations. Dr Harris had rightly asked him to say what he felt it lacked. He had woken at 4.00am and had not got back to sleep because the subject had been exercising him. He said that not to play the "hurt card" because when played in such a debate as the current one, it was the trump card and it became difficult to speak after that. When the marriage preparation course was taught at St Paul's & St George's couples were encouraged to think about what contributed to a healthy marriage. The course addressed subjects such as the handling of money, how to resolve conflict, how to cope with in-laws, how to nurture a healthy sexual relationship and how to decide who did what in the relationship. The analysis in the Doctrine Committee paper was too analytical, functional and lacking in practicalities. It was thorough but lacked heart. It was coldly forensic and had no soul. It took as read, pastorally, that same-sex couples were part of the Scottish Episcopal Church but it did not actually define what marriage really was. Marriage was not something which was simply defined by theology or liturgy: the pastoral implications of the debate were far more complicated for some than was outlined in the paper. There were gay people in same-sex relationships in churches but also some gay people whose reading of Scripture had led them to be celibate. How were clergy to pastor both views? He had concluded by 5.00am that morning that the paper lacked a high enough view of marriage as the ultimate expression of two people's love for one another. Evangelical Episcopalians took their doctrine from Scripture rather than liturgy (and, indeed, there was a debate to be had if doctrine were to be derived from liturgy and if the liturgy did not itself have its roots in Scripture). For evangelicals, marriage was established in creation. Humans were not simply animals but bore the image of God. As Canon Round had said, the issue, for him, came down to what the Bible said and how that was interpreted. There were different evangelical exegeses but as yet he was not convinced about the extension of marriage to same-sex couples. Jesus had said that the moral and ceremonial code no longer applied and yet the New Testament appeared to reiterate its opposition to same-sex relationships. The question for him was what sort of relationships were being prohibited or encouraged in the New Testament. The State was perfectly entitled to define marriage as it wanted. That view could change and adapt to cultural change and perceptions. However, what the State could not do was to ask the Church to perform such marriages in its name according to its definition of marriage which might differ from

the Church's one. Ten years previously, he had spoken in favour of civil partnerships from the point of view of justice and compassion but for him marriage had remained something different. So what ought the Church to do? There were those who wished in conscience to conduct same-sex weddings and there were those who in good conscience could not do so. On both sides clergy had gay people in their churches and wished to respond to them pastorally. At the present time he had to vote against the Motion because the option for no change did not appear because the amendment the previous day had fallen. He was grateful to Synod members for the atmosphere and attitudes in which the current debate had been conducted which had been so different from debates which had preceded it in previous years. In considering the options later in the day, he asked that Synod members ask themselves not simply what they wanted but also what might those of a different view be able to live with. What would preserve the unity of the Church but also express its diversity? The challenge for everyone was how to live in a church with people of different views. In the Church people were called to love all, perhaps particularly those who were of a different view. In the words of someone else, "what bit of *all* did we not understand"?

The Rev Canon Ian Paton (Edinburgh) wished to speak about "tradition". It was being said that people who valued tradition were feeling excluded from the current debate. As an Anglo-Catholic, he was often labelled as a traditionalist. He had valued the worship at the beginning of the morning. The Scriptures offered various versions of the Lord's Prayer. He had had no difficulty, therefore, with that as a traditional Anglo-Catholic. However, his views about the real presence of the Lord in the Sacrament, the value of the Sacraments in the life of the believer, and the role of the Bishops in the life of the Church could produce labels like "traditionalist" in relation to people such as himself. As a student he had been deeply impressed by a statement of the ecclesiastical historian Jaroslav Pelikan namely that traditionalism was the dead faith of the living whereas tradition was the living faith of the dead. Tradition had always been a living, changing, moving thing. Christians had discovered that Gentiles were called to receive the gift of the Spirit, that women were called to the priesthood and that marriage had been changing. For him, the question of whether marriage was changing sufficiently to include the experience of LGBT people was a question within that context, the living reality of tradition. In looking at the options to be considered, he saw four possibilities, two of which appeared to be positive developments of the tradition of which the Scottish Episcopal Church was a part. The fourth option was to vote "no". He did not accept that those who did not agree with any of the options had no voice. Such members had a voice to say "no". Since two out of the four options presented stability of development within tradition, he thought that was not bad and urged Synod members to vote in favour of the Motion, whether members considered themselves as traditionalists or not.

The Rev Simon Mackenzie (Argyll and the Isles) said that if the Synod approved gay marriage it would be part of a movement that would probably increase the persecution of Christians in the Middle East who would be accused by Muslim neighbours of immorality. If the Church did not accept it, it might be seen as possibly helping to reinforce the state execution of gay people in Uganda. The

consequences of any decision were potentially huge on either side but it was not possible to know what they might be. He urged Synod members to vote in accordance with their own conscience not in fear or anxiety about possible consequences because they could not be known.

Responding to the debate, Bishop Duncan said that he loved theological debate but that he had no intention of engaging in such debate at this particular point. That was not his job in the current process. He had heard much with which he profoundly agreed, he had heard some comments which bemused him and he had heard some which he found impossible. He did, however, wish to thank members both for the content and manner of the contributions which had been made. He had felt moved by the passion but also by the measure with which people had expressed that passion. He considered that the debate was about the discernment of truth and that that ought not to be forgotten. However, if the process proceeded in the current Synod there would still be two more years in which to debate whatever canonical texts might be brought forward. That debate remained an open debate.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions and the way in which they had been made.

The Motion was then put to the vote by ballot and the results were subsequently announced as follows: –

92 in favour
35 against
1 spoilt paper.

7.2 Discussion of Canonical Options

The Rev Markus Duenzkofer (Edinburgh) apologised for the remarks which he had made earlier regarding morning worship. He had been carried away in his enthusiasm to make a theological point. He expressed his thanks for the morning's worship.

The Chair and the Secretary General explained the process to be undertaken in the current session. In the light of the amended Motion which had been adopted the previous day, this would involve a discussion of the options, a Motion for Synod to confirm that it wished to proceed to vote on its preferences (using a transferable vote system), a Motion to the effect that if a preference were expressed for any of options A, C or E set out in the paper of the Faith and Order Board then a conscience clause was to be included and, finally, a ballot on the options themselves using a transferable vote system.

The Rt Rev Dr Gregor Duncan (Acting Convener, Faith and Order Board) introduced the options contained in the Faith and Order Board's paper which was set out in the Synod Papers. Options B, D and F had been subsumed into the Motion to be presented later regarding the conscience clause. The proposal comprising option A

was simply to delete section 1 of the present Canon, leaving it silent on the matter of a doctrinal definition of marriage. The Board believed that the rest of the Canon could remain unchanged, including the provisions for remarriage after divorce, which had prompted section 1 in the first place. Option C was suggested to help those who might very well feel uneasy at the loss of any doctrinal definition in the Canon. The present definition would be retained but rendered non-gender specific. Option E would make explicit the fact that the Church fully intended to retain within its life the traditional understanding of marriage, while at the same time adding alongside it a new understanding. The Board believed that this could be understood as an attempt at comprehensiveness in the Anglican tradition. In that option, the non-gender specific definition of marriage in option C would be followed by a section which stated that within the life and discipline of the Scottish Episcopal Church there were two expressions of marriage.

The Rev Ken Webb (Edinburgh) believed that option A, to delete section 1 of Canon 31, was the only option which offered a prospect of keeping the Church together. As had been pointed out in the Doctrine Committee's paper and by various speakers in previous debate the Canons were not the place where suitably nuanced theology could be set out. By its very nature, Canon law had to operate in a more binary way. Removing the section would leave the definition open to a more nuanced interpretation that would become enshrined, in due course, in the Church's liturgies as they were adapted to make room for a variety of interpretations. Option C, it was clear, would not be acceptable to a significant number of people in the Church and Synod members needed to bear in mind that they were voting on behalf of those other people as well in the course of the current Synod. Option E narrowed the issue down too much to two expressions when, as had been pointed out in previous debate, the question of gender was also not simply a binary matter. He urged members to place option A as their first option.

Dr Beth Routledge (Glasgow and Galloway) also intended to vote for option A as her first preference. She believed that that was the only option which would open up the Church's theology of marriage without altering it in a way which would be difficult for those who adopted a different view to her. It would allow for an understanding that everyone could live within the grace of God and in love for each other. The debate in the course of Synod had been a valuable one. She had heard a lot about pain and heartache of people who felt that perhaps the Church was leaving them behind. She empathised with that but there was also pain and heartache on the other side of the conversation. In an article the previous day in *The Herald*, the Primus had quoted the Irish journalist Fintan O'Toole who had indicated that for everyone who had spoken with eloquence and passion in the debate, there had been hundreds of thousands of painful conversations, which had started with the words "I've got something I have to tell you". For those who had supported those speaking out in pulpits and in Parliament, it had also started in conversations with "I've got something I have to tell you". There was pain in being told that one's relationship was less, that one's life was worthless and that one's love was less worthy of a place at God's table. There was anger too in the lack of a pastoral response available for those asking for their love to be witnessed in the sight of God. There was anger for the parents who wanted to know why their sons

or daughters could not be married in the Church. There was heartache in the hearts of children and parents and grandparents and friends and neighbours as they struggled to understand why their church still treated the people they loved as different, unequal and as less. This was not an abstract theory which existed in a consultation group but was a reality which affected everyone. It affected those LGBT brothers and sisters who felt they had to leave the Church because it had nothing for them. She would vote for option A, but could live with option C. She knew that there would be people in Synod who could not live with option C and she wanted them to continue in communion. For the same reason she would not vote for option E because she considered that it enshrined discrimination.

The Rt Rev Dr John Armes (Bishop of Edinburgh) felt that option E was the most honest approach to take. It recognised that there were two ways of understanding marriage within the Church. Christians were often known as "God botherers" but he was finding that God was bothering him. If he looked back at his own development he could see how the Spirit had unsettled him and his assumptions about how things ought to be. What he now believed about marriage had resulted from God leading him to that point. What had also become clear during the previous two days was that there were many people in the Church who felt equally guided by God to take a different position. That was why, if a Canon could frame option E in the right way, that might honestly, if messily, take account of the situation. It was possible that the Church might need to live with a messy situation for a while. He recognised that option A was a tidy one but it perhaps obscured disagreement. He wished to ask those who disagreed with him what would be the least worst option for them?

Mr Gordon Aitken (Brechin) indicated that he had initially thought that option E would satisfy everyone. He recalled the poster advertising the film *Towering Inferno* in which both Paul Newman and Steve McQueen had starred. The poster designer had had the difficult task of creating a poster to balance the fact that they were equal co-stars. He felt Synod ought not to agree a "Towering Inferno" solution and would be voting for option A as his preference.

The Rev Prof David Atkinson (Aberdeen and Orkney) indicated that like others he had been on a journey, even during the course of the current Synod. He had come prepared to vote in favour of option A but now wished to ask Synod members to consider voting for option E. Having served on Synod for many years, he had seen a number of issues come to Synod and develop over time. The question of the ordination of women had been dealt with in a series of different stages which had been developmental. Synod had needed those stages and he considered that the Synod was now in a similar position. Option E expressed the range of views which had been clear from the Synod debate thus far. Personally, he embraced the understanding that marriage was for all. He spoke as someone whose son had entered into a same-sex marriage the previous year which, unfortunately, had been unable to be blessed by the Church. The honest expression was option E. It was possible that in 10 years' time that might have changed. Marriage was such a fundamental bedrock of society and that was why it had doctrine associated with it in the Canons. What the Canons said about doctrine was important. He also

considered that option E was the only option which really recognised the importance of the conscience clause.

Bishop Duncan wished to clarify that option E stated one doctrine of marriage but would then go on to say that the Church recognised two legitimate expressions of that one doctrine. It did not offer two doctrines of marriage.

Mr Jim Gibson (Glasgow and Galloway) asked whether, if Synod were to pass the Motion to vote on the options, that would tie the hands of the Faith and Order Board in terms of the subsequent Motion where the Board would be asked by the Synod to arrange for the preparation of canonical material. He would not wish to tie the hands of the Faith and Order Board.

Bishop Duncan responded that the Faith and Order Board expected Synod to instruct it to instruct the Committee on Canons to prepare canonical legislation that would embody whatever the preference of Synod was. The Board was the servant of the Synod.

The Very Rev Kelvin Holdsworth (Glasgow and Galloway) sought a church where everyone could thrive. That was not strictly true – what he would really like was a church in which everyone agreed with him. That would be much easier but it was necessary to live in the real world which meant he had to think about not only what he wanted but what he could live with and what he hoped other people might be able to live with too. If a church were to be built in which everyone could thrive, it was necessary not to try to force people to say things with which they could not agree. In relation to the idea that the Canon might contain two expressions of marriage, he queried whether there were really only two such understandings. Marriage was not something which could be defined. Marriage was lived, not defined. What he would like was a statement from the Church that affirmed the full experience of the lives of people like him, a gay man. It would be possible for him to put up a Rule 10 Motion, for which he believed there would be support, that would commit the Church to the things which he agreed with. However, he did not do so because he cared about those who disagreed with him and he could see that that would be divisive. He would support option A. He could live with option C – in some ways it was what he would prefer but he thought option A was the right thing to do. The previous day, the Rev Chris Mayo had offered the Synod the gift of silence. It had been welcomed by many. In the current debate, there was the opportunity for the marriage Canon to have the same gift – silence about the matter. Silence could be a space where God could speak. He asked Synod to vote for an option which did not try to define what each other believed about marriage. Option A would allow all to live together.

The Rev Canon Ian Paton (Edinburgh) intended to vote for option A because it was the only option that would allow those in the Church to keep talking to one another. The best kind of theology was reflection on experience in the light of Scripture and reflection on Scripture in the light of experience. Already the experience of same-sex couples and of all other couples had helped the Church to reflect on the theology of marriage. He wanted the traditional theology of marriage to help those who had said that they were not bound to that view of marriage to reflect also on the

experience of marriage. He wanted the dialogue to begin, not to end. Option E appeared to him to close down the option and he would not vote for it. He would therefore vote for option A which was a return to the original Canon 31.

Mr Howard Thompson (Edinburgh) wished to comment on option C. He recalled that Rugby Union, which had previously been an amateur game, had a number of years previously turned professional. He was not suggesting there was a direct parallel but it had been enlightening as an exercise of fundamental change in human interaction. Prior to the change there had been considerable discussion about a range of different options. In the end, the governing authority had simply allowed clubs to do what they wanted. That had resulted in turmoil for several years but eventually matters had settled down and now rugby was more established and popular than ever. He believed that option C suggested that there would never need to be any further discussion because all bets were off. However, could the Church cope with the turmoil that would go with that? If so, would it help the Church to move more quickly because if the other options were chosen the Church would need to come back at some future point and debate the matter all over again?

The Most Rev David Chillingworth (Primus) explained that it was part of his ministry and that of his colleagues that one thought, like everyone else, about the unity of the Church. What the Synod was struggling to find was a way forward in truth and integrity which upheld and strengthened the unity of the Church. He had listened carefully to Dr Beth Routledge and recognised that there was no monopoly of hurt. She had quoted from his article in *The Herald* where he had referred to an Irish journalist commenting on how opinion had changed so significantly in Ireland. He had also indicated in his article that it was particularly difficult to find agreement by vote. Many people held the views that they did because they believed that the authority by which they held such views lay outside themselves. Consequently, they were not negotiable. He did not know which option he was going to vote for. At times he had been an advocate of option E because it was at least honest to express the diversity of the Church in that way. On the other hand, he had had a sharp dislike of what the Church of England had done in diminishing the authority of episcopacy by allowing alternative episcopal oversight. That had institutionalised differences of view in a way which he believed was unhelpful. He had ventured to say he was not greatly enamoured of the Church of Scotland's mixed economy concepts for the same reason. Nevertheless there was honesty and clarity in option E. There was logic to option A if the Church were to move to an understanding of marriage without differentiation. However, he wished particularly to remind Synod members that it had adopted a sophisticated pattern of voting which meant that members would have more than one vote. Consequently, the vote could work right the way through the process and he had advocated it in his speech supporting the amendment which had been rejected earlier in Synod. By indicating second and third preferences, members could signal support and acceptance and ability to live with options which might not be their first preference. That could send signals across the Church as to who was accepted and who was not. He believed that the current exercise was work in progress. It had taken a long time to deal with other similar changes and it was possible that the view of the Synod could change in future or wish to express it differently.

The Rev Canon Dom Ind (St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane) spoke about "fudge". He had been brought up on a diet of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer. It was a Prayer Book full of fudge which had succeeded in holding people together. The Prayer Book could be used by those from an evangelical, catholic, liberal or conservative background. He intended to vote for option A because he saw fudge as something wholesome and as part of the Church's tradition. As had been said already, it was about opening the door and allowing the dialogue to continue.

Prof Alan Werritty (St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane) understood that adoption of option A would mean that there would be no statement of a doctrinal kind regarding marriage. The inference he drew from that was that the Church's understanding of marriage would then be expressed in liturgy. What liturgy would be used in a situation where there appeared to be two unstated understandings held in tension across the Church? For that reason, he was verging towards voting for option E because it was more honest to acknowledge the differences. That option also expressed the provisionality of the Church's understanding and it might be that the Church was being guided by the Spirit in stages. He was minded to accept a messy and provisional, but ultimately more honest and transparent, outcome. The voting system would allow a robust and clear statement of where the Church was at the moment. He did not believe that it was in a final place.

The Rt Rev Dr Nigel Peyton (Bishop of Brechin) explained to Synod that in September 2013 he had taken on the chairing of the Church's Cascade Process. He had known that to do nothing was not an option but that to do something would be difficult. The Cascade Process had been a discomfoting experience for him. He had discovered that the different aspects of being a heterosexual man, a Bishop and a priest had not always for him converged in the same place at the same time. He was not sure whether no expression of marriage was better than two expressions. He wanted the Church to keep together as one family in one house. He would not vote for anything which had a hint of "second-class" about it. One matter which had not been mentioned in debate was the question of how the Church's choices would go down with the State and the public square. He wondered how secure a conscience clause would be and whether choices made by the Church fit in with the secular system? That might have a bearing on the order in which Synod members wished to place their preferences. At present, he felt drawn to option A.

Bishop Duncan said that in relation to option E, the Board had taken both legal advice and advice from a Scottish Civil Servant on the issue to make sure that it was within the law to express two different understandings of marriage. The Board had been assured that such an option was acceptable. As to the question of possible challenge of a conscience clause, the Church had to make its decision and then it could look further at the implications.

The Rev Canon Cliff Piper (Moray, Ross and Caithness) explained that he had been married for over 40 years. For him marriage was the union of two people living in a monogamous loving relationship but did not need to be gender-specific. He

believed that the suggestion of two expressions of marriage contained in option E was a nonstarter. Option A would allow two people to enter into a monogamous loving relationship, making their vows before God and being blessed by God. He considered that the Church had got Canon 31 right the first time around and so he would be voting for option A and urged Synod members to do the same.

The Rev Canon Dr Alison Peden (St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane) also intended to vote for option A on the grounds of vocation. Much had been said about discernment and how the Church was discerning its path. The Doctrine Committee paper had referred to marriage as a vocation. It was sometimes a vocation for which more discernment was needed than was sometimes given. Her Quaker grandmother had undergone discernment by the entire Quaker meeting before entering upon marriage and the whole meeting had signed as witnesses to her marriage. Perhaps there was a need to be more careful, whatever one's sexual preference was, about entering marriage. Option A opened that vocation to all.

Mrs Helen Hood (Edinburgh) suggested, in relation to option E, that the Canons were not the place to enshrine messy provisionality.

The Rev Nick Green (St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane) thought that many people found it difficult to speak into an issue which affected people's lives, particularly from the position from which he would speak. He had grave concerns about option A because it would open the door not only to same-sex marriages but also to all kinds of other union. It had long been known that siblings often felt they wished to get married. There was now pressure in North America for groups of people to be brought into a union. Removing the clause might leave the position wide open. Members of Synod might feel that such options were morally unacceptable and might have drawn such a conclusion on the basis of Scripture. His concern, however, was that none of the other options were scripturally supported. The exegetical explanations needed to arrive at those other options required members to discount and abandon Scripture. At the very least, there was a need for the intellectual integrity to acknowledge that that was the case.

Dr John Davies (Convener, Liturgy Committee) explained that no marriage could be conducted outside the prescribed forms of the authorised liturgies. That would preclude any form of marriage that was not approved by the Church taking place. Also, the 1929 Prayer Book would remain in force and, therefore, those minded to support option E ought to bear that in mind. If the Church altered its understanding there would be a need to amend the current Rite or adopt a new one. However, there were several expressions of marriage within the new Rite and he therefore urged Synod to support option A.

Mr Grant Swain (Moray, Ross and Caithness) believed in marriage between one man and one woman because the Church had told him that for the previous 40 years. If the doctrinal expression of marriage were removed from Canon 31, then he would no longer believe that any longer. His opinion had been formed by the view of the Church itself. He would not be in his entrenched position if Canon 31

had not said what it currently said. He therefore suggested that the doctrinal statement should be removed.

The Rev Canon John Richardson (Edinburgh) spoke in support of option A. The Canons were not the place to incorporate doctrine and options C and E simply modified the doctrinal statement. As Prof Atkinson had pointed out major changes had been made in recent years which would be regarded as doctrinal. In terms of the Canons, the alterations which had been necessary to allow for women priests and Bishops had comprised a small alteration to the interpretation clause of the Canons. In other words, the doctrinal changes had been made but they had not been made in the Canons. There were many doctrines of the Church which were not contained in the Canons.

In responding to the debate, Bishop Duncan thanked all members for their contributions and for the measure which they had exhibited. One could talk about many different definitions and understandings of marriage. The issue underlying any of the options was to enable a change in the gender of the parties to a marriage.

Bishop Duncan then proposed, and Mrs Helen Hood seconded, the following Motion: –

“That this Synod proceed to vote on its preferences on the proposed options for canonical change in relation to marriage as proposed by the Faith and Order Board (as amended by this Synod).”

The Motion was put to the vote by ballot and the result was subsequently announced as follows: –

110 in favour
12 against
2 abstentions.

Bishop Duncan then proposed, and Mrs Helen Hood seconded, the following Motion: –

“That this Synod confirm that, if a preference is expressed for any of options A, C or E, it wishes such preferred option to include a conscience clause that ensures that no cleric would be obliged to solemnise a marriage against their conscience.”

The Motion was put to the vote by ballot and the result was subsequently announced as follows: –

119 in favour
5 against
1 abstention.

At the request of the Chair, Bishop Duncan led the Synod in prayer prior to the completion of ballot papers.

Synod members then expressed their preferences on the options A, C and E by ballot using a transferrable vote system. 119 ballot papers were returned, of which 6 recorded abstentions. The result of the ballot was subsequently announced as follows: –

Option A - 88
Option C - 8
Option E - 23.

Option A had, therefore, secured a majority on the first round of voting.

SESSION 8: THE RT REV THE BISHOP OF EDINBURGH IN THE CHAIR

8.1 Pension Fund: Actuarial Valuation Report

Mr Andrew November (Chair, Pension Fund Trustees) explained that the role of the Pension Fund Trustees was to ensure that the assets and affordable future contributions to the scheme were sufficient to pay for all of the cash flows which were required to pay both at the current time, and in future, all pensioners. Every three years a full analysis was done by the Fund's Actuarial Advisers to examine whether the value of the assets, using prudent assumptions, was going to be greater or less than the value of all of the expected liabilities. Illustrating his presentation with a PowerPoint presentation, he explained that at the time of the valuations in 2008 and 2011 the liabilities of the Fund had exceeded its assets and that had resulted in a recovery plan being put to the Pensions Regulator following the 2008 valuation, the Church agreeing to put an extra £2 million into the Fund and Synod agreeing to an increase in the contribution rates.

The Trustees and the Standing Committee had also agreed a de-risking strategy in 2010 which had involved reducing the riskiness of the Pension Fund at predetermined levels to reduce the risk of major loss in any investment market turmoil. That had been put into effect over the previous five years and had reduced the riskiness of the Fund whilst allowing it to grow at the same time. The deficit, namely the difference between the value of the assets and the value of the liabilities, had shrunk from £8.9 million in 2008 to £3 million in 2011. However, there had still been a deficit and after a consultation period the Church had agreed to reduce certain pension benefits. The normal pensionable age had been increased to 67 and future pensionable stipend growth had been limited to no more than increases in the Retail Price Index. The good news was that owing to the reduction in benefits and the upward movement in assets, the deficit had been erased by the end of 2014 and a small surplus of £1.3 million had been achieved. The recovery plan, in consequence, was no longer required and the Trustees had been happy to review the required contribution rate and recommend a modest change.

Mr David Palmer (Convener, Standing Committee) explained that the Standing Committee had considered the preliminary results of the recent actuarial valuation at its most recent meeting and had been pleased to note the significant improvement in the financial position of the Fund to a small surplus of £1.3 million at

the end of 2014. The cost of future benefit accrual had also fallen from 32.2% of standard stipend and pensionable salary in 2011 to 30.3%. Mr Palmer pointed out that the improvement would not have been possible without the changes which had been made to raise the normal retirement age and to the level of future growth in pensionable stipends and salaries. Those changes alone had reduced the contribution rate by 6.1% and had made the Fund more financially viable and stable. In the light of that improvement, whilst it would have been possible to recommend a reduction in the contribution rate from 34.9% to 30.3%, the results of the valuation were very sensitive to small changes in the underlying conditions and assumptions which could adversely affect the funding position and contribution rate for the future. The Trustees and the Standing Committee needed to strike a balance between reducing the contribution rate, maintaining a margin against future market movements and reducing risk, with the aim of achieving greater long-term stability in the contribution rate and funding levels. The Standing Committee and Pension Fund Trustees were, therefore, recommending a reduction in the contribution rate from 1 January 2016 from 34.9% to 32.2%, a reduction of 2.7% which represented a saving of approximately £670 in relation to standard stipend. 2.7% was equivalent to the element of the current contribution rate which for the previous three years had been used to fund the deficit recovery plan.

Questions were invited but there were none.

Mr Palmer then proposed, and Mr Michael Lugton (Convener, Administration Board) seconded, the following Motion: –

“That the contribution rate in relation to serving clerical and staff members of the Scottish Episcopal Church Pension Fund be reduced with effect from 1 January 2016 to 32.2% of standard stipend and pensionable salary respectively.”

The Motion was put to the vote and passed *nem con*.

Mr November commented that there were vacancies on the Trustee Board for member-nominated Trustees and, particularly now that the Fund was in surplus, he hoped that people would be willing to serve.

8.2 Standing Committee: Payment of Pension Costs

Mr Palmer addressed the question of payment of pension costs. He referred to the explanatory paper contained in the Synod Papers. He explained that all clergy and staff members of provincial and diocesan offices were permitted to become members of the non-contributory defined benefit SEC Pension Fund. However, clergy and staff could opt out of the Fund if they so wished. A small number of clergy chose to do so. Opting out, however, was not cost neutral for the Pension Fund. Members who opted out were still covered for death-in-service benefit equivalent to three times of stipend and the Pension Fund Trustees held a group life insurance policy for that purpose with an annual premium paid from the Fund. Also, if no contribution were paid on behalf of an individual cleric who had opted out, the

overall number of employers contributing to any recovery plan would be reduced. The Standing Committee considered that in those circumstances there ought to be an obligation on the relevant employer, vestry or diocese, to pay an appropriate amount to cover the cost of life cover, administration costs of the Fund and any deficit reduction contribution which might be payable. That would mean that where individuals opted out of the Fund, other employees in the scheme were not financially disadvantaged. In order to address this question, changes to the Digest of Resolutions were being proposed.

Before proposing a Motion on that subject, Mr Palmer wished to mention the question of pensions auto-enrolment. He explained that Synod members were likely to be aware of the Government's plans to ensure pension provision for employees which were being implemented through "auto-enrolment". Automatic enrolment placed legal duties on every employer with one or more member of staff to enrol those who were eligible into a workplace pension and contribute towards it. An eligible employee was a person who was paid stipend or salary of at least £10,000 a year from April 2014, who was aged 22 or over and who was under State pension age. Employees in some lower pay bands in certain circumstances had the right to be asked to be entered into a scheme.

Mr Palmer further explained that the new duties came into effect for employers at different staging dates. Depending on the size of payroll, this might be at any time from later in the current year until 1 April 2017. It was possible that congregations might already have received a letter from the Pensions Regulator about that. A note had been sent from General Synod Office to congregations in March 2015 with some preliminary information. Every employer (and that meant individual congregations and dioceses) with a PAYE reference number needed to register with the Pensions Regulator and identify and enrol eligible employees even if they were already members of the SEC Pension Fund. Mr Palmer explained that it was expected that the SEC Pension Fund would be a qualifying pension arrangement for the purposes of automatic enrolment and work was underway to be able to confirm this to congregations and dioceses later in the year. However, if a vestry or diocese had other employees who were not members of the Pension Fund then the vestry or diocese in question would be responsible for assessing whether those employees were eligible for automatic enrolment and for identifying a qualifying pension arrangement. That might involve obtaining certification of a pension arrangement already in place or the setting up of a new arrangement such as NEST which was the workplace pension arrangement established by the Government to help employers comply with their auto-enrolment obligations. Vestries and dioceses ought also to be aware that even if they did not at the current time have employees who needed to be auto-enrolled, it would nevertheless be necessary to auto-enrol any future eligible employees. Mr Palmer urged that if auto-enrolment had not hitherto been given any consideration in congregations the matter be addressed sooner rather than later.

Mr Palmer then proposed, and Mr Lugton seconded, the following Motion: –

“That the Digest of Resolutions be altered by the insertion of a new section 6.11 after section 6.10 as set out in the paper included in the Synod Papers for this Synod.”

Mr Alan Thornton (St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane) said that it was becoming increasingly difficult to find people to stand as a Vestry Treasurers. In some cases he was aware that those serving in that role did not even have email. The Pensions Regulator expected auto-enrolment issues to be dealt with electronically and it might be necessary to find ways to support local Treasurers.

Mr Palmer responded that this would be taken account of when guidance was issued.

The Motion was then put to the vote and passed *nem con*.

The Chair expressed thanks to Mr November, who was stepping down as Chair of the Pension Fund Trustees. The Church had been fortunate in benefiting from his expertise for a period of 12 years’ service on both the Investment Committee and Pension Fund.

Mr Richard McIndoe, who was nominated as the incoming Pension Fund Chair, was welcomed to Synod.

SESSION 9: THE REV PROF TREVOR HART IN THE CHAIR

9.1 Faith and Order Board: Marriage

The Rt Rev Dr Gregor Duncan (Acting Convener, Faith and Order Board) suggested that the Motion which he was about to propose was self-explanatory. He then proposed, and Mrs Helen Hood seconded, the following Motion: –

“That this Synod instruct the Faith and Order Board to instruct the Committee on Canons to prepare canonical material, reflecting the preference as to canonical options expressed by this Synod, so that a first reading of such canonical material can be considered by General Synod 2016.”

The Motion was put to the vote by ballot and the result was subsequently announced as follows: –

110 in favour
9 against
1 abstention.

9.2 Faith and Order Board: Civil Partnerships

The Rt Rev Dr Gregor Duncan (Acting Convener, Faith and Order Board) spoke to the Motion he was about to propose regarding civil partnerships. He explained that in proposing it, the Faith and Order Board was bringing forward the possibility of creating an entirely new Canon which would allow the Church to register civil partnerships in a religious setting. The Board considered that since the law had changed not only in relation to marriage but also in relation to civil partnerships, Synod ought to be offered options for responding to both. He himself knew Christian gay couples who would prefer the route of civil partnerships to that of marriage and would prefer their civil partnerships to be religiously registered rather than being married. He also wished to make clear that the law now allowed civil partnerships to be registered in a religious context hence the reference to "registration" in the text of the Motion.

Bishop Duncan then proposed, and Mrs Helen Hood (Edinburgh) seconded the following Motion: –

“That this Synod instruct the Faith and Order Board to instruct the Committee on Canons to prepare canonical material to enable the registration of Civil Partnerships to be undertaken in the Scottish Episcopal Church, so that a first reading of such canonical material can be considered by General Synod 2016.”

The Rev Kirstin Freeman (Glasgow and Galloway) said that, since the law had changed, people in a same-sex relationship could choose either to get married or to enter a civil partnership. Prior to the change in the law, opposite sex couples could choose whether or not to marry and could take account of issues such as inheritance in making such a choice. It was expected that the Scottish Government would soon be consulting on whether to open up civil partnerships to people of opposite genders. If that happened, some people would doubtless choose a civil partnership over marriage. That would be their right but what the Church offered was marriage. The revelation of God's wonders was too big to be comprehended in a single go. It was too early to say what effect the development of civil partnership might have on the doctrine of marriage. She was confused as to why civil partnerships continued to be available now that marriage was available to everyone. She had difficulty understanding the difference between the two and yet there nevertheless was a difference otherwise they would not coexist. She asked Synod members to think carefully about the Motion. There had been a suggestion that the proposal was akin to blessing a civil marriage but she disagreed with that view. The Motion asked for the drawing up of a Canon, not of a liturgy. Before civil partnerships were enshrined in Canon law, there was a need to come to a common mind and understanding on how civil partnerships fitted into the Church's understanding of marriage and God's revelation of how the myriad of human relationships was celebrated. She urged Synod to vote against the Motion since everyone was well aware of the difficulties which arose when Canon and doctrine did not quite meet.

The Rev Dean Fostekew (Edinburgh) was pleased to see the Motion but also wished to emphasise what Ms Freeman had just said regarding the opening of civil partnerships to different sex couples. He himself was in a civil partnership and he and his partner did not intend to convert their partnership to marriage. That was where he stood but he was happy to support equal marriage of others. His question, however, was what the position would be of those who were in civil partnerships. Would such people be forced to marry? The default position for clergy in relationships was marriage. Would he be forced to marry his partner? Also, for a person who offered themselves for ordained or licensed ministry and who was in a civil partnership (whether same-sex or opposite sex) – would they be acceptable for selection for ordination or authorisation without being married? He considered there was a need for a bigger discussion about civil partnerships in relation to marriage.

Dr Beth Routledge (Glasgow and Galloway) wished to reiterate what Ms Freeman had said about the difficulties of the Motion. She opposed the Motion. She did not understand what religious civil partnership would look like. "Religious" and "civil" were two separate terms and she could not see how they could coexist. The Synod would not be discussing whether the Church should carry out the religious registration of a civil marriage. The Church had a covenant before God which was understood to be marriage. In previous debates during the current meeting, Synod had heard that there was not just one understanding of marriage. There were potentially as many understandings of marriage as there were married couples. She could accept that but could not accept that civil partnership was something which could be covenanted in a religious setting. If the Liturgy Committee were to propose a liturgy for the blessing of civil partnership couples, she would be comfortable with that. However, that would be different from what was proposed in the Motion. She suggested that if the Motion were to be passed it would do far more to change the understanding of marriage than anything else which had been done thus far in the Synod.

The Very Rev Kelvin Holdsworth (Glasgow and Galloway) also opposed the Motion and encouraged Synod members to vote against it. The questions which had been raised by Mr Fostekew were good ones but they were questions which could not be answered at the current time. That in itself made it difficult for him to support the Motion. It was correct that the Government was intending to consult on opening civil partnerships to straight couples and he did not know what it would mean for the Church already to have approved the registering of civil partnerships in Church if that change were to happen. Ironically, had this proposal been made a number of years previously he would have supported it but things had moved on. It was not appropriate to go down the road of registering civil partnerships in a religious setting because civil partnerships were "civil". Much had been said about the undermining of marriage. If Synod members wished to undermine marriage they should vote for the Motion and then see what happened when the Government changed the law relating to civil partnerships.

Bishop Duncan invited the Secretary General to comment on the Government's attitude to civil partnerships. The Secretary General confirmed his understanding

that the Scottish Government was intending to consult on the opening up of civil partnerships to persons of the opposite gender. The outcome of that remained an open question.

Bishop Duncan commented that if there were people in the life of the Church who were in civil partnerships, and not married, and who might wish their partnership to be celebrated in a religious context according to law then he did not see why that could not at least be a possibility. He was also not convinced that there was such a radical distinction between what was civil and what was religious. There was also a question of offering justice and inclusion to people but he could see the arguments on the other side. He could see that if the Government altered the law relating to civil partnerships to extend them to heterosexual couples that might cause difficulty for the Church. However, he believed that it was the same issue as the Church had been facing in relation to marriage – was this a change in society which the Church should go along with or not?

The Motion was put to the vote by ballot and the result was subsequently announced as follows: –

30 in favour
82 against
4 abstentions.

The Motion was not passed.

SESSION 10: THE RT REV THE BISHOP OF BRECHIN IN THE CHAIR

10.1 Rule 10 Motions

The Secretary General explained that a number of Motions had been received under Rule 10 of the Rules of Order and that the Rules provided for the proposer of such Motions to address Synod for a maximum of two minutes as to why the Synod ought to consider the Motion. A two thirds majority of those present and voting was needed to enable a Motion to be considered and, if that majority were achieved, the substance of the Motion could then be debated.

10.1.1 Rule 10 Motion Regarding Repeal of the Human Rights Act

The Rt Rev Dr John Armes (Bishop of Edinburgh) addressed Synod on the text of the following Motion which he proposed and Mrs Helen Hood (Edinburgh) seconded: –

“That this Synod note with concern the proposal of the UK Government to repeal the Human Rights Act 1998 and request the Church in Society Committee to work with ecumenical partners to make representations to the UK Government on the matter.”

Bishop Armes explained that the issue came in the form of a Rule 10 Motion because the General Election had taken place since the most recent meeting of the Church in Society Committee and, therefore, after it had had an opportunity to influence the Synod agenda. The Edinburgh Diocesan Mission and Ministry Committee had, however, met more recently and the Motion came from it and was supported by many of the Edinburgh representatives on Synod.

The discovery that the Human Rights Act might be repealed had come as an unwelcome surprise to many. The fact that it had not found its way into the Queen's Speech was to be regarded as a postponement and for the purpose of further consultation only, rather than as a change of heart. He was not asking for a full-scale discussion of human rights at the current Synod because that would need experts on the subject. However, he believed that Synod might well wish to have the opportunity to make a simple public statement of concern and to offer its mandate to the Church in Society Committee to investigate further, using expertise available to it, and to join with ecumenical partners in speaking to the UK Government.

The proposal that the Motion be considered by Synod was put to the vote and passed by the requisite majority in excess of two thirds of those present and voting.

Bishop Armes then spoke to the subject of the Motion. He explained that it largely mirrored one which had recently been passed by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. The Human Rights Act 1998 had come into force in October 2000. Its aim had been to incorporate into UK law the rights contained in the European Convention on Human Rights. The Act made a remedy for breach of a Convention right available in the UK courts without the need to go to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. The Act also made it unlawful for any public body to act in a way which was incompatible with the Convention.

The new UK Government had promised in its election manifesto to repeal the Act and replace it with a Bill of Rights. It was not clear what that meant nor whether it would be possible to repeal an Act which, in different ways, was embedded in devolution legislation across the UK.

The Synod, as a Christian body, might be concerned for two reasons. Firstly, much thinking on human rights had originated in the Christian tradition of natural law and those rights, protected by the rule of law, marked out the baseline for a civilised society. Secondly, the erosion of such rights was likely to affect the weakest disproportionately. The Synod might feel particularly protective of a right of freedom of thought, conscience and religion. However, it might also be mindful of the consequences of any erosion of the rights to life, to privacy, the right to marry and have a family life, to a fair trial, to protest or, indeed, the rights to freedom from torture, discrimination and degrading treatment. On the face of it, it seemed to those

proposing the Motion that there was cause for concern. Given that the Government clearly thought it wise to enter into a period of consultation, Bishop Armes suggested that early opportunity ought to be taken for the Church in Society Committee to scrutinise the proposals and to share concerns with the Government. He had consulted with the Convener of the Church in Society Committee whom he believed was supportive of the Motion.

Bishop Armes then formally proposed, and Mrs Helen Hood, seconded the Motion (as set out above).

The Rev Prof David Atkinson (Convener, Church in Society Committee) indicated that his Committee would be delighted to take on the task envisaged by the Motion. He welcomed the reference to ecumenical working and would wish to tackle the subject with the Church of Scotland and others. The intent of the Motion accorded with the strategy which he had set out earlier during the Synod about working for the disadvantaged and the poor across the world. If human rights were weakened in the UK, it sent the wrong signal to other parts of the world.

The Motion was put to the vote and passed by majority.

10.1.2 Rule 10 Motion Concerning Reconciliation in the Holy Land and Middle East

The Very Rev Dr Emsley Nimmo (Aberdeen and Orkney) addressed Synod on the text of the following Motion presented under Rule 10 which was seconded by the Rev Prof David Atkinson (Aberdeen and Orkney): –

“The General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church, aware of the current situation in Palestine and in the Middle East with its resulting loss of life, displacement of thousands from across the region and the destruction of its cultural and religious heritages, wishes to express its heartfelt appreciation of the Vatican’s de facto recognition of the State of Palestine and for the accord which is currently in final draft for signature by the Vatican and President Mahmoud Abbas. We encourage all people of good will and of all faiths to pray for reconciliation in the Holy Land and in the wider Middle East.”

Dean Nimmo explained that within his congregation at St Margaret’s, Aberdeen, there were members who had strong connections with the Middle East. Since the Pope had made overtures towards Mahmoud Abbas there ought to be opportunity at the current Synod to express support ecumenically for the Pope’s efforts. Many years ago he had gone on pilgrimage to the Holy Land with the late Dean Ernest Brady and he had been deeply affected by the plight of the Palestinians. He asked for Synod’s support to hear the Motion.

The proposal that Synod consider the Motion was put to the vote and passed by the requisite majority in excess of two thirds of those present and voting.

Dean Nimmo then addressed the Motion substantively. Over the years, his congregation had supported the work of schools in Ramallah, particularly through the enthusiasm of Sister Columba. There was a need to support people of all faiths in Palestine but especially the Christians and the remnants of Byzantine Christianity. The current situation was encouraging Christians to emigrate. Many Muslims recognised that the departure of Christians was not helpful. The Motion ought also to be supported from an ecumenical point of view. It was important that Christians around the world recognised that Christians, and particularly western Christians, cared about what went on in the Levant. Speaking as an Episcopalian with a strong grasp of the Church's liturgy, he spoke of the strong connections in the Church's liturgy with the Levant and he believed that that common inheritance should be celebrated with the churches of the East. Much of the current Synod had been spent on one particular subject and the Synod should show the world that it cared about the wider agenda.

The Rev Prof David Atkinson, seconding the Motion, urged Synod to support it. He believed that the message which ought to go out from the current Synod was the Synod's concern in relation to two great challenges: that of climate change and that of the situation emanating from unrest, warfare and persecution in the Middle East. A Motion might have focused on all sorts of aspects of the Middle East but it seemed important, at the current time, to focus on the plight of the Palestinians and those who had tried to do something about that. The Motion recognised that Pope Francis had taken a risk in trying to make common ground with Muslims. He urged support for that bravery.

The Rev Ken Webb (Edinburgh) supported the Motion for two reasons. Synod had just been addressing the question of human rights. Theologically and biblically he believed that everyone had the right to call somewhere "home". The Palestinians needed a place where they could feel secure. Also, whilst the Motion might appear to be a one-sided support for Palestine he did not believe that to be the case because security for the Palestinians would bring security for Israel also.

The Motion was put to the vote and passed by majority.

10.1.3 Rule 10 Motion Regarding Canon 63

The Secretary General announced that a Rule 10 Motion regarding possible change to Canon 63 had been withdrawn following discussion between the proposer and the Acting Convener of the Faith and Order Board on the understanding that the Board would give consideration to the issue in question, namely *ex officio* membership of the vestry on the part of the Alternate Lay Representative.

10.2 Administration Board

The Chair explained that whilst not all pendant Committee Conveners were due to give a verbal report at the current Synod, Conveners were nevertheless available to take questions.

10.2.1 Board Report

Michael Lugton (Convener, Administration Board) indicated that overnight he had received an email from the Convener of the Investment Committee, Mr Jeremy Burchill, in which Mr Burchill had indicated that, in the light of the decision of Synod the previous day to commence a process to redefine marriage, he had concluded that it would be lacking in integrity for him to present the report on behalf of the Investment Committee and he had, therefore, resigned as Convener. Mr Lugton recorded his sincere thanks to Mr Burchill for all that he had done for the Church and the Investment Committee over the previous nine years.

Mr Lugton then addressed the investment performance of the Unit Trust Pool on which the Province was very heavily dependent for its income. The performance had continued to be strong and the total return performance over the previous year had been in excess of 10%. As at 31 May 2015, the value of each unit stood at £14.08 which had been its highest level ever. The performance was also 3% above the benchmark set for the investment managers. In the previous five years, the total return had been 12.59% per annum. The total value of the Unit Trust Pool now stood at £55 million. Five years previously, when Mr Burchill had started as Convener, it had been under £40 million. He thanked the Committee for its good record of achievement.

Mr Lugton also commented that the Committee was conscious of concern about investment in fossil fuels and so were the investment managers. The direct holdings in the portfolio currently amounted to 2.9% of total holdings which could be controlled by the Church. The indirect holdings, in pooled funds, amounted to 2.24% so that the overall amount invested in fossil fuels was less than 6% at the current time.

Despite the strong performance, the Budget Report in the Synod Papers showed projected deficits for future years. In the recent past, expected deficits had been covered by the now long-standing moratorium on the main provincial Building Grants programme. The scale of the projected deficit in the following three years could be addressed by continuing the moratorium. However, the Board had been undertaking a survey across the Church to try to establish what impact the moratorium had had and how its continuation might impact on the Church's built estate. The Board was most grateful to all who had responded to the survey. It was clear from the responses that the availability of grants in the past had been regarded as valuable by a significant number of charges and in some cases had made the difference

between being able to go ahead with essential maintenance work and deferring such work (with all the risks which that entailed). The retiring and new Conveners of the Board, the Finance Committee and the Buildings Committee had concluded that, notwithstanding the Province's challenging financial position, the time had come for the Board to consider asking for an increase in its Building Grants budget to allow for the reintroduction of larger grants. This would form part of the budgeting process in the autumn and by Synod 2016 the matter ought to have been brought to a conclusion. In the meantime, assistance from the Dunderdale Building Fund and for emergency works remained available and he encouraged charges to bear this in mind.

10.2.2 Buildings Committee

Mr Alex Stewart (Convener, Buildings Committee) referred to the Committee's report contained in the Annual Report and Accounts of the General Synod for the year ended 31 December 2014. It had mentioned the fact that the Committee had been reviewing guidance relating to disability discrimination. The Committee had now produced new guidance for congregations on the Equality Act into which the previous disability discrimination legislation had been subsumed. The guidance was available from the provincial website. He encouraged charges to consider it. Also, it appeared that grant making bodies were becoming increasingly stringent about quinquennial reports. Not only did they wish to ensure that such reports had been carried out but also that they had been carried out by a competent professional. In the case of a historic building, that meant a conservation-accredited professional. If provincial Building Grants were reinstated, quinquennial reports would feature in the application process. In the past, many applications for Building Grants were for remedial work. If there were better basic knowledge about buildings maintenance at local level, that might alleviate the extent of problems which resulted. Later in the year, the Committee hoped to start arranging basic maintenance courses. It was hoped the first might take place in Stirling and a further one in Aberdeen. He encouraged members to ensure that the information was passed to the congregational Buildings Convener.

The Rev Peter Harris (Edinburgh) indicated that he had the joy of looking after a Grade 1 listed building. There was a significant cost of bringing in professionals to undertake reviews. He welcomed the fact that these be done properly but he wondered whether there should be professionals available from the Province or diocese so that cost could be shared more easily rather than having to be borne by each Church individually.

Mr Stewart responded that the issue had been raised from time to time. Ultimately, it came down to a question of resources. For any diocese to maintain a list of professionals, there would also be a need for an individual to monitor such a list to ensure that quality was maintained. If a diocese started making recommendations without that kind of monitoring, it could find itself liable. Whilst it was a good idea, it was a question of resources. In his

own diocese the diocese was able to provide three or four names of professionals but it was then up to the local congregation to undertake its own appointment and be satisfied as to their competence. That system seemed to work well.

Mr Lugton, in closing, thanked the retiring Conveners Mr Alex Stewart, Dr John Ferguson-Smith and Mr Jeremy Burchill for their outstanding contributions.

The Chair thanked all those Conveners both retiring and continuing.

10.3 Scottish Episcopal Institute Council

The Rt Rev Kevin Pearson (Convener, Institute Council) referred to the written report of the Council in the Annual Report and Accounts of the General Synod for the year ended 31 December 2014. From the beginning of the review process, and in setting up the Council, efforts had been made to model a new way of being part of the Church's structure while looking towards the future in 5-10 years' time. Part of that modelling had been the appointment to the Council of people for their particular expertise which included not only expertise in theology and education but also change management, human relations and finance. That enabled provincial officers to be given a vision of where the Council expected to be in future. That was why so much had been achieved in the previous two years.

Bishop Pearson reported that the College of Bishops had decided the previous year that the 2015 Lent Appeals by Bishops would be devoted to the Scottish Episcopal Institute because it was looking for new money. Whilst there was still money to be received in some dioceses, the total collected to date was £28,000. He took encouragement from that. That could cover the cost of two full-time students for a year which was something the Council was moving towards. He thanked everyone for their contributions.

Bishop Pearson explained that to avoid talking about students as if they were a mythical body, he had asked Jonathan Livingstone, a current ordinand, to join him. Mr Livingstone explained that he was a member of Old St Paul's, Edinburgh and lived and worked as a community member and warden at Emmaus House. He spoke of what formation meant to him, what nourished him in that and his call to parish ministry. He commented positively on the changes which had been underway within the Institute in the recent past. His high expectations had been exceeded. As the Institute moved towards Common Awards, Mr Livingstone confirmed that the work was stretching him. He asked what the 5-10 year vision for the Institute was.

Bishop Pearson responded that there had been a significant change in the levels of confidence within the Church. 25 years previously, people had wondered whether the Scottish Episcopal Church would still exist 10 years later. Despite comments which had been made earlier in Synod regarding the smallness of the Church, he did not feel part of a small or failing organisation. In five years' time, he believed the

Council would have taken on board that change. The Council was trying to model a new way of being a Board of the Church. It was currently working on how to assess students for full-time grant eligibility and was also bringing a lighter touch to its work. His own diocese was encouraging those in the local church to be able to respond to the question "why do you go to the local church?" by explaining that that was where they had an experience of the living God. The training and formation provided by the Institute was to enable people like Mr Livingstone to help those in congregations to be able to speak of that. It was important that when people turned up on Sunday, there was something worth turning up for. In 10 years' time, he hoped that the Scottish Episcopal Church would be known as a place for taking questions seriously. People could get worked up about making church buildings available for community use. That was worthwhile but the Church ought also to be praying and celebrating the Sacraments and that would give a voice in the wider community. The Council could assist the Church in that vision.

Questions were invited.

Mr Gordon Aitken (Breachin) referred to the Lent Appeal. He wondered how sustainable the future funding was.

Bishop Pearson responded that the Lent Appeal had been a test of the availability of future funding within the Church. It was the case that there would need to be a realignment in relation to future finance. However, the ability to raise £28,000 demonstrated that if the Church pulled together, it could achieve more. The Lent Appeal showed there was an appetite for this.

Mr Jim Gibson (Glasgow and Galloway) suggested that there was a need not only for realignment of existing finance but a need for new money. He had commented at General Synod 2014 on the low level of giving within the Church. He believed his comments remained valid and it was incumbent upon everyone to respond. Bishop Pearson suggested that if people felt they were receiving value for money, then they would respond by giving.

The Rev Gerry Bowyer (Aberdeen and Orkney) spoke as a pioneer evangelist as well as being an ordained priest. He asked whether, in the evolution of the Mission and Ministry policy, provision was being made for pioneer ministers who could plant new forms of church. Also, he asked whether thought had been given to supporting Church Army Officers. There were seven such officers in the Province of whom two were in training.

Bishop Pearson responded that he believed that pioneer ministry was enhanced by the structures of the Scottish Episcopal Church. The Church was not the Established Church and so when there were projects which were well thought through there was scope to recognise these within the present structures. One of the things about being "not large" as a Church was that if energies were too thinly spread, focus would be lost. On the question of the Church Army, Bishop Pearson agreed that it was becoming more important provincially. He had great respect for it and funding could be looked at.

Mr Bowyer commented that he was aware of one diocese which had had to import a pioneer minister from elsewhere because they had been recognised for their special gifts and for the specific training they had undergone. If the Church continued to use just one model of ministry and one shape for the local church, the Scottish Episcopal Church would be less effective. There was a need to broaden thinking, as he had mentioned at a previous Synod, and he therefore wished to encourage the Council to give consideration to this. He was heartened that there was a reference to Fresh Expressions in the report. He asked that pioneer ministry be considered as a specialist ministry for starting new churches and to make true disciples of Jesus Christ.

The Rev Ken Webb (Edinburgh) spoke as someone intimately involved in delivering training and formation locally and asked what thought the Council was giving strategically about how better to fund the part of initial ministerial education which comprised the curacy stage. The best placements for curacies were not limited to those places which had money and housing available. Bishop Pearson responded that on many occasions he had advocated that curacy placement should not be limited to congregations which had housing and money. Curacies should be attached to the training rector who could provide the training needed. The Council had a strategy for looking at that. IME was not just being seen in terms of years 1-6 but beyond. He agreed that curacies were essential and the College of Bishops was endeavouring to consider the implications of this. Part of the Common Awards system talked of "field education" rather than placements and that represented a longer term approach.

The Chair thanked Bishop Pearson.

10.4 Standing Committee: Mission and Ministry Support Grants

Mr David Palmer (Convener, Standing Committee) presented the paper regarding Mission and Ministry Support Grants contained in the Synod Papers. He explained that in recent years the Mission and Ministry Board had kept Synod informed about the development of the Whole Church Policy and the recognition of dioceses as the focus of mission. An aspect of the role of the Province, under that policy, was to ensure that financial resources available to dioceses were aligned with the impetus of the policy. As had been mentioned at General Synod 2014, work had been carried out to bring together sources of provincial funding so that, in future, funds could be made available to dioceses on a Block Grant basis. The effect would be to allow dioceses to determine how funds could most effectively be used locally.

Mr Palmer explained that the proposals had been extensively discussed, particularly in the College of Bishops, whose members were the leaders of mission in their dioceses. The Mission and Ministry Board, the Administration Board and the Finance Committee had also considered the proposals. If Synod approved them, the new Block Grant system, to be called the Mission and Ministry Support Grant, would be introduced from January 2016. It would replace the current Grants for Ministry scheme and would also include Retreats Grants and grants to support

youth work in the dioceses. The new Grant would not include funding for curates, responsibility for which would be transferred to the Institute Council.

It was proposed to allocate funds to dioceses on the basis of a formula thereby removing the need for a complicated and lengthy application process as applied under the current Grants for Ministry scheme. Using a formula would also give dioceses greater certainty about the level of funds they could expect to receive and this would help with future planning. Details of the formula were set out in the paper. It was based on the relative income of dioceses and the number of stipendiary posts required in each diocese. Those elements were given weightings and the College of Bishops had considered that a weighting of 55% in relation to income and 45% in relation to the stipendiary posts figure was the most appropriate one. The Standing Committee had also considered the weightings and had seen no reason to question those suggested by the College of Bishops.

The level of funding to be distributed by the Grant was currently assessed at £250,000 but this would be reviewed by the Standing Committee later in the year as part of the budget discussions for 2016. In advance of Synod, a specific question had been received as to how the figures for the "required posts" element of the formula had been arrived at. These were included in the data set out in the paper. The figures had been agreed within the College of Bishops with each Bishop having been asked to provide an assessment of the stipendiary posts in their respective dioceses considered reasonable to endeavour to maintain. That included an assessment not only of current posts but of possible future ones. Curacy posts had been excluded because they could vary from year to year across the Province. The figures provided by each Bishop had been considered by the College as a whole and the College had approved the final figures.

Mr Palmer explained that it was proposed that the new system should operate on the basis that total funding and the data used in the formula were fixed for three years after which the formula and funding available could be reviewed. Annual increases in the total funding would be linked to the rate of increase in standard stipend. There would be some flexibility for dioceses to carry forward unspent funds. An important element in the proposals was a requirement on dioceses to be accountable to the Province for their use of the funds. An annual accountability statement would be provided to the Province which would include details of how the funds had been used and why. The new Mission Board, with oversight of the Whole Church Policy, would be responsible for considering the accountability statements and providing a report for consideration by the Standing Committee and College of Bishops. The Bishops would have a key role in the accountability process with the expectation that any issues identified by the accountability process could be considered within the College. Inevitably, there would be winners and losers in introducing a new scheme but a four year phased introduction would enable dioceses to adjust to the new level of funding which they would receive. The figure set out in the table on page 194 of the Synod Papers were for illustration only. The actual starting amount for the transitional period would be calculated later in 2015 based on a more accurate estimate of the actual Grants for Ministry used by dioceses in the current year. He was sure that the Standing Committee would also

wish to take account of any relevant adjustments which dioceses considered appropriate to reflect a better starting position for the transitional period.

Mr Palmer then proposed the following Motion: –

“That this Synod agree to the adoption of a block grant system of Mission and Ministry Support Grants as set out in the paper included in the Synod Papers for this Synod in place of the current Grants for Ministry system.”

The Most Rev David Chillingworth (Convener, Mission and Ministry Board) seconded the Motion. He suggested that what was being proposed was something for which many churches would strive in the aligning of financial policy with mission policy. It was very important to achieve that. The process had not been Bishop-driven but had been processed through the Boards and Committees of the Synod, as was appropriate. An important element of it, however, was an inter-diocesan discussion and negotiation about the nature of the formula. In the absence of an obvious process for handling that, one of the quickest ways to move forward had been for there to be discussion within the College of Bishops, as the group of diocesan leaders. If any were anxious about the proposals, he suggested that the amounts of money were modest. The proposal would remove a bias in the system towards historical patterns of augmentation (even though called stipend support). His own diocese had tended to under-apply. The proposal removed the bias by providing sums as of right to dioceses but subject to appropriate accountability back to the Province.

The Very Rev Jeremy Auld (Brechin) commended those who had prepared the paper. It contained much good material especially in relation to the proposed accountability of how money would be spent. Probably, all would agree that the existing system was far from perfect. At the heart of the Whole Church Mission and Ministry Policy was the principle of subsidiarity. In the main, he supported that but he believed that the allocation of grants was one area in which that principle did not work. A Block Grant system based on diocesan income and number of posts in his view took no account of the uneven spread of population across Scotland, nor of areas of urban deprivation or the needs of particular areas. Under the proposals, one diocese might end up with surplus cash whereas, in another, a charge undertaking valuable community work might lose its priest. At present, a relatively large pool of money was available for distribution according to proven need. He believed the proposals would put in jeopardy people's jobs and the very presence of the Church in places where there was a real need. The report talked of "winners and losers". He believed that that was unhelpful and that each case should simply be decided on its own merits. He also wished to suggest that dioceses had not had sufficient time to discuss the proposals internally. His own diocese appeared set to lose approximately £31,000. In real terms that amounted to the loss of a full-time post. There was a sense in some parts of his diocese that it was being bounced into the proposals and had not had sufficient opportunity to respond to them. For that reason, he opposed the Motion.

Dr Beth Routledge (Glasgow and Galloway) said that while she did not have any concerns for her own diocese, she was concerned that the formula did not take into account the geographical disparity of the Province. Specifically, the Diocese of Argyll and the Isles was set to lose a significant amount of money. The reports indicated that the current system made provision for travel grants. There were matters of concern for clergy in certain parts of the Province which might not be matters of concern for clergy in, say, the Dioceses of Edinburgh or Glasgow and Galloway. She was worried that the proposals might make things more difficult for some parts of the Province.

The Rev Dean Fostekew (Edinburgh) spoke as one of the "non-financial" people who had been involved in considering the annual Grants for Ministry applications. He had noted significant changes in the way that dioceses had applied for funds. Increasingly, the applications indicated responsibility for mission. The feedback forms provided by dioceses also indicated what difference the provision of funds had made. He was keen that in any new system, the accountability should be very strong so as to ensure missional intention. He was keen that the way the application forms and feedback forms had been developed should not be lost. He was keen for the accountability to be rigorous and ensure a continued missional focus. He also suggested that a pool of money should be kept back to enable funding of those initiatives which needed money quickly, so that there could be some pump priming.

The Very Rev Andrew Swift (Argyll and the Isles) indicated that he was reluctantly speaking against the Motion. The Block Grant idea sounded good allowing for the growing mission of the Church and he was disappointed to be speaking against it. He felt, however, that the process was being rushed and that it was not something which the Synod could agree to at the current moment. The sums of money might seem modest overall but there could be a human impact and it could be the difference between life and death for a local congregation. His own charge, over the course of the previous five years, had advanced to the point where it no longer required Grants for Ministry. However, without Grants for Ministry funding, it would not have managed to do that. More time was needed to consider the impact of the proposals. He believed that it would be possible for everyone to be a "winner" if handled correctly. He asked Synod to vote against the Motion so that the proposals could be reconsidered.

The Rev Canon Fay Lamont (Brechin) also recognised that a huge amount of work had been undertaken. She declared an interest in that application was made to the Grants for Ministry Fund for her own post and she had also been involved in the Missional Review Group which considered all of the annual applications. She had been involved in the process of developing the current proposals but something had niggled her throughout. She could understand the power being given to dioceses regarding local funding decisions but she disagreed that dioceses would thereby have greater freedom. At present, each diocese had the freedom to apply to the Province and the applications were then scrutinised through the provincial process. The provincial representatives who scrutinised the applications were able to have an overall understanding of the whole Province. The Province had been able to

support those dioceses which needed support. She feared that the provincial overview would disappear and that individual dioceses would retreat into their conclaves leaving other dioceses simply to "get on with it". In the light of the accountability process, she wondered whether dioceses would in fact truly have freedom. Referring to comments made earlier in Synod by the Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, some things could be done better where people worked together rather than separately.

Prof Alan Werritty (St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane) very much welcomed the proposals but also heard the concerns which had been voiced. He noted that the proposal envisaged that in 2016 20% of the new system would be introduced and that it would be phased over four years. He suggested that during that first year those who had prepared the paper reconsider the formula. It was clear to him that the formula proposed did not capture all that it needed to. It would not be challenging or difficult to introduce some measurement of social deprivation. That might produce some rebalancing to make the system equitable. He passionately believed that the proposal was the right way forward.

Mr Gordon Aitken (Brechin) referred to the weighting of 55% to income and 45% to required stipendiary posts. He referred to his experience in the workplace where a decision had been taken in 2009 regarding distribution of a bonus. The bonus system had used a similar weighting and it had been decided to allocate the bonus on the basis of amounts which could be saved or generated for the employer. As a result, approximately 25% of the workforce in his call centre had received a bonus. Many people had not received a bonus and he saw a direct parallel with the current proposal. He believed that the weighting on income was not correct. He suggested that wealthier congregations would receive money which they did not need whereas poorer congregations would not receive the money they did need. The Scottish Episcopal Church was a provincial church and a family. In any family, individual family members needed to be supported by others. He urged Synod members to vote against the Motion. If the current system was rigorous and bureaucratic and accountable, what was wrong with that?

The Rev David Mumford (Brechin) opposed the Motion, but with a degree of embarrassment because the proposal would adversely affect the Diocese of Brechin. He believed it was feasible to have mission which was diocesan-led but provincially-supported. He had no difficulty with the Diocesan Bishop being leader in mission whilst at the same time saying that money should be allocated within a provincial framework. He believed stipend support and travel were two areas which made sense to be supported at provincial level. Also, coming from charges which had benefited in the past from stipend support, he had no difficulty with the current system. It operated to encourage charges to articulate their mission and ensure the existence of a business plan and the level of accountability meant that charges could have financial support for a limited period. Canon Lamont's work in the Mid-Craigie area of Dundee was absolutely essential and was significantly dependent upon stipend support. He was unhappy with including Travel Grants in the Block Grant. The question of travel was a very real one for rural dioceses and he believed travel ought to be kept separate.

The Rt Rev Mark Strange (Bishop of Moray, Ross and Caithness) said that the figures demonstrated that his diocese might do well out of the new system but the reason for that was because it was starting from a very low basis. The freedom which dioceses had at present was dependent on the amount of inherited money which a diocese had. His diocese did not have inherited money and since the current system required matched funding, he was in a position where application could not be made because the diocese could not provide that matched funding. The reason his diocese appeared to gain so much under the proposal was because under the current system it had been unable to access funds for its mission.

The Rev Willie Shaw (Edinburgh) asked whether there was no sense that mission was provincial? The Glenalmond Youth Camp was funded provincially but was there nothing else which the Province wanted to fund directly? If money were given to dioceses, could individual dioceses not find it in their hearts to give money to other dioceses? Did such money have to stay in a diocese?

The Rev Kirstin Freeman (Glasgow and Galloway) asked why, if the budgeted grants under the Grants for Ministry system had been approximately £300,000, it was being proposed that the amount available under the new system would be £250,000. If the £300,000 level could be maintained, the pain suffered by some dioceses would be less. There was a danger that the underspend on the budget was in effect being targeted on places where there was a need for funds.

Mr Palmer thanked Synod members for their contributions. In the limited time available, he would not be able to respond to all of the points which had been made. He suggested that the members of the College of Bishops and Standing Committee who had heard the debate would wish to reflect upon it whether or not the Motion were to be passed. In his working life he had been involved in the application of formulae for distributing significant resources across the National Health Service. Formulae were always problematic and what he had discovered was that it was better to consult on the details and principles of a formula before showing people the outcome. Unfortunately, with the current proposals, there had not been time to do that. His view was always to try to keep formulae simple. The College of Bishops had considered a range of options and the one reflected in the paper was the final one they had decided upon. It would be possible to include factors for deprivation, population, etc but whether it would make any difference was questionable. Overall, the sums of money involved were not huge. The intention, as indicated in the paper, was that the formula should in any event be reviewed. He noted Prof Werritty's comment that the review should be brought forward. Mr Palmer's view was that the introduction of the scheme should be allowed to settle down a little before a review was undertaken. There would be a review in three years' time but if the implementation of the scheme really did not work he thought the Standing Committee and College of Bishops would be willing to review it before then, albeit he could not commit them to that. The phasing period was intended to help with the move from the current position to that which would apply once the formula was implemented in full. The two dioceses which stood to lose most were Brechin and Argyll and the Isles. Brechin had received for the current

year two large grants of £36,000 which was why its starting point was as high as £62,000. The previous average for that diocese had been £46,000. Argyll and the Isles was different in that it currently had a vacancy for which Grants for Ministry funding had normally been available. In consequence, the starting point for that diocese was lower than it might ordinarily have been. He wished to recommend to the Standing Committee that that ought to be taken account of when the final figures were determined for the starting point of the implementation period.

Mr Palmer referred to the fact that the question of redistribution had been raised in debate. The proposals were not about redistribution, the proposals were about ensuring that funds went to the right place where they could best be used. He was not convinced that members of the Finance Committee from, say Argyll and the Isles, knew about the problems of the Diocese of Edinburgh, or vice versa. The dioceses themselves, however, would know exactly where their own problems were. Redistribution was dealt with through quota and was working very effectively: the Diocese of Edinburgh now bore almost 40% of quota.

On the question of timing, members of the College of Bishops had agreed to the proposal. He agreed that accountability had to be strong but had to be balanced with freedoms. The last thing intended was to have an impact on individual people and their jobs. He was sure that dioceses would be extremely careful about risking posts. If there were a real problem, he expected that a Diocesan Bishop might come back to the Province, albeit that the Province might not be able to do anything about.

Mr Palmer considered that the proposal was a fair and equitable way of dealing with a small amount of money which he recognised was very important in some dioceses. On the question of the total amount being put into the scheme, he agreed that that was a point which the Standing Committee needed to consider very carefully. One reason why the proposed amount of £250,000 was less than the originally budgeted sum of £300,000 for Grants for Ministry was that certain elements were being removed such as the Grant funding for the Aids Chaplain which was being passed to the Church in Society Committee. He recognised that if the total allocation under the Block Grant was slightly greater, it would ease the allocation amongst dioceses. He urged Synod members to vote in favour of the Motion and encouraged members of the College of Bishops and Standing Committee to keep a close eye on the matter.

The Motion was then put to the vote with the following results: –

In favour 51
Against 41
Abstentions 13.

Mr Palmer then explained that in order to implement the scheme, certain changes were needed to the Digest of Resolutions.

He proposed, and the Primus seconded, the following Motion: –

“That the Digest of Resolutions be altered as follows:-

- *That section 2.3.5 be altered by the deletion of the words “the Grants for Ministry Fund,”*
- *That sections 4.1 and 4.2 be altered as set out in the paper included in the Synod Papers for this Synod*
- *That a new section 4.3 as set out in the paper included in the Synod Papers for this Synod be inserted and that the existing sections 4.3 to 4.6 be renumbered as 4.4 to 4.7 respectively*
- *That the existing section 4.7 be deleted in its entirety*
- *That section 6.2.1 be deleted in its entirety and that sections 6.2.2 to 6.2.4 be renumbered 6.2.1 to 6.2.3 respectively*
- *That sections 7.5.2 and 7.6 be altered as set out in the paper included in the Synod Papers for this Synod*

for the avoidance of doubt, all as set out in the paper included in the Synod Papers for this Synod.”

Mr Jim Gibson (Glasgow and Galloway) indicated that, as a member of the Standing Committee, he would wish to ensure that comments made during the debate were taken back to the Standing Committee.

The Motion was then put to the vote and passed by majority.

10.5 Rule 10 Motion: College of Bishops Guidelines

The Rev Canon Ian Paton (Edinburgh) was grateful for the opportunity to invite Synod to consider discussing the Motion he was about to propose. It was with trepidation that he introduced another Motion to Synod at the current point. It was also with trepidation because the Motion was not intended to be a controversial one but rather a pastoral one. The Motion was not attempting to pre-empt any final decision which the Church might make in the coming two years about the way in which the Church wished to incorporate the marriage of same-sex couples into its life. Also, the Motion was not telling the Bishops what to do or what to think about something which was their prerogative alone. The purpose of the Motion was to express the mind of the Synod to ask the Bishops to consider again the situation of certain people as candidates for ministry whose discernment process had been interrupted by the Church's process on marriage up to the current point. In the light of the decision which had been taken earlier in Synod, the Motion invited the Bishops to reconsider the guidance which they had issued previously.

Canon Paton then proposed, and the Rev Canon Cliff Piper (Moray, Ross and Caithness) seconded, the following Motion for consideration: –

“That in the light of the discussion and decisions of this General Synod and the process of canonical change in which we are now engaged, the Synod asks the College of Bishops if it would agree to consider again, when it next meets, the

prevention of those who are married in accordance with Scots civil law from being candidates for ministry, as expressed in the recent Guidelines to Clergy and Lay Readers.”

The proposal that the Motion be considered by Synod was put to the vote with the following results: –

In favour 57
Against 32
Abstentions 7.

In the light of the fact that a two thirds majority of those present and voting was required, the Motion was not passed.

10.6 Standing Committee: Powers of Investment

Mr David Palmer (Convener, Standing Committee) explained that the Digest of Resolutions currently referred to the Trustee Investments Act 1961. That legislation had been repealed and replaced by the Charities and Trustee Investments (Scotland) Act 2005. The proposed Motion would remove the reference to the former legislation from the Digest of Resolutions.

Mr Palmer then proposed, and Mr Michael Lugton (Convener, Administration Board) seconded, the following Motion: –

“That the first sentence of section 1.6.1 of the Digest of Resolutions be altered to read as follows:-

“Without prejudice to the provisions relating to the pooling of investments referred to below, the funds of the General Synod may be invested in the purchase of investments and securities and subject to the terms of any gift or bequest and in the investment of lands, buildings or other heritable or real property either in the United Kingdom or overseas.”

for the avoidance of doubt as set out in the paper included in the Synod Papers for this Synod.”

The Motion was put to the vote and passed unanimously.

10.7 Standing Committee: Code of Conduct for Board and Committee Members

Mr David Palmer (Convener, Standing Committee) spoke to the proposed introduction of a Code of Conduct for conveners and members of Boards and Committees of the General Synod. He referred to the paper on the subject set out in the Synod Papers. He explained that the Standing Committee regularly reviewed the risks to which the General Synod might be exposed and took whatever steps were appropriate to try to reduce such risks. The Committee recognised that Boards and Committees dealt with a wide range of matters and was of the view that,

as in most other organisations, there ought to be a Code of Conduct so that members accepting office were aware of the standards of behaviour expected of them. That would also give confidence to the Synod in the ongoing governance of the Province. Many charities had equivalent measures in place and the draft Code contained in the papers was based in part on a similar one already in place in the Church of Scotland. In addition, Standing Committee had noted that whilst there were provisions in the Digest of Resolutions to appoint members to Boards and Committees, there was no provision for their removal. Whilst the need to use such a provision was likely to be remote, the lack of any provision represented a potential risk to good governance. The draft Code, therefore, included provisions for dealing with breaches which would include the possibility of suspension or removal from a Board or Committee. In order to allow flexibility to change the Code, it was being suggested that the Digest of Resolutions ought to be altered to include a new power which would enable Standing Committee to adopt a Code of Conduct and make changes to it if necessary. The Motion he was about to propose was an enabling Motion. If it were accepted, the Standing Committee would propose to adopt the Code of Conduct set out in Synod Papers.

Mr Palmer then proposed, and Mr Michael Lugton (Convener, Administration Board) seconded the following Motion: –

“That the Digest of Resolutions be altered by the insertion of a new section 2.1.6 after section 2.1.5 as set out in the paper included in the Synod Papers for this Synod.”

The Motion was put to the vote and passed unanimously.

SESSION 11 – THE MOST REV THE PRIMUS IN THE CHAIR

11.1 Standing Committee: Budget and Quota

Mr David Palmer (Convener, Standing Committee) presented the budget report contained in the Synod Papers. He explained that every year there was a detailed budgetary process carried out by every Board and Committee. The proposals of the Boards were then considered by the Standing Committee. Boards had again been asked by Standing Committee to review critically their budget proposals for the years 2015–2017. In considering the Boards’ proposals, the Standing Committee had had, as always, two underlying principles in mind, namely that budgets ought to be set with a view to achieving a break even position on the General Fund and also that large one-off receipts, such as legacies, ought to be capitalised by investment in the Unit Trust Pool to provide future income rather than being used to fund current operating costs.

During 2009 investment income had fallen dramatically and pension costs had increased. As a result, significant savings had had to be found in subsequent years. The General Synod was heavily dependent on investment income. In 2008, approximately two thirds of the Synod's annual income had been derived from investments but in more recent years this had fallen to 62% because of reductions

in investment income. Investment income had increased to £1.02 million in 2014 and since market conditions had continued to be volatile it was difficult to predict what future rates of distribution from the Unit Trust Pool might be. The Investment Committee continued to work with a view to achieving modest growth but it was clear that there was little prospect of anything other than modest increases in investment income in the short term. Savings made by Boards and Committees had contributed to reductions in actual spending but such savings had not been enough to eliminate an underlying deficit. A major part of the cost reductions achieved from 2010 were in consequence of a moratorium on major Building Grants. It had been necessary to continue the moratorium to ensure that budget deficits were avoided. The actions taken had in fact resulted in substantial surpluses on the General Fund totalling approximately £1 million over the course of the previous five years. It had not been the Standing Committee's intention to generate surpluses but they had nevertheless been welcome. They had helped to fund the lump sum of £2 million needed by the Pension Fund and had avoided the need to sell investments which, in turn, would have further reduced income. It had also been possible to increase investments by £200,000 which would, in turn, increase future income. The availability of such surpluses meant that the General Synod was well-placed, in the short term, to address some of the financial issues it faced.

There were a number of specific recommendations being made to General Synod which would have an impact on budgets. These included the possible change in pension contributions and the introduction of Block Grants. These might lead to some changes in the budget, including some reallocations as between fund budgets. It had not been possible fully to reintroduce the Building Grants programme and whilst there had been a phased reintroduction of smaller Building Grants, the larger Grants had not been introduced owing to the budgetary impact which that would have had. Current budgets reflected a phased reintroduction but Mr Palmer explained that that might not be possible given other financial pressures. The Standing Committee recognised that there was understandable concern regarding the impact which the lack of provincial Building Grants support might have on the condition of the Church's buildings. Such Grants, however, were one of the largest areas of discretionary spending within the General Synod budget and, in the absence of any alternative, was the most likely area of focus when any substantial savings were required.

Following a period in which there had been a relatively small number of stipendiary curates in training, there were now many more curates and it was anticipated that the number would continue to increase in the coming years. That was a welcome and important addition to the life of the Church but it also had a budgetary impact. Current budgets forecast an increase in curate numbers from 8 in 2014 to 13 in 2017 with costs of £101,000 in 2014 increasing to £169,000 in 2015 and further increases to £214,000 in 2016 and £239,000 in 2017. The financial impact of the proposed changes recommended in the TISEC Review Working Party regarding an increase in the level of curate grant and funding for ordinands in full-time training were not included in the budget. Work was ongoing on making a case for such changes and would be considered by the Standing Committee in due course.

After taking account of recent changes a deficit of £20,783 was budgeted for 2015 with projected deficits for 2016 and 2017 of approximately £63,000 and £101,000 respectively. The budgets for 2016 and 2017 were indicative only and would be reviewed by the Standing Committee in the autumn. The Committee acknowledged the importance of ensuring that future patterns of expenditure were sustainable and that deficits, as far as possible, ought to be avoided. One of the key priorities would be to review future expenditure taking into account the future work of the Scottish Episcopal Institute and discussions on Building Grants. The Committee recognised that, in the short-term, it would be possible to budget for deficits to allow sufficient time for plans to evolve without the added difficulty of immediate financial pressure. It also recognised that it might be necessary to identify additional sources of income to help fund some of the proposed changes in respect of training and curacies.

As far as the overall budget was concerned (including Miscellaneous and Restricted Funds) deficits of approximately £62,000, £13,000 and £52,000 were forecast for 2015, 2016 and 2017 respectively.

As far as quota was concerned, it was proposed to increase provincial quota to £698,960, an increase of £20,358. Standing Committee had considered whether it ought to recommend a lower increase or even freeze quota levels. However, it had decided that that could not be justified on good governance grounds given the significant projected deficits. The respective increases borne by dioceses as a result of the proposed increase in quota were shown in the Synod Papers. Those increases were more evenly balanced across dioceses than had been the case in some recent years ranging from 0.96% for St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane to 4.04% for Aberdeen and Orkney.

Questions were invited but there were none.

Mr Palmer then proposed, and Mr Michael Lugton (Convener, Administration Board) seconded, the following Motion: –

“That this Synod, having examined the proposed budgets for the General Synod for the year 2016, agree to a quota figure of £698,960 for that year.”

The Motion was put to the vote and passed *nem con*.

Mr Palmer closed by thanking the Primus for his leadership during Synod and throughout his seven years as Convener of the Mission and Ministry Board.

11.2 Elections

11.2.1 Standing Committee Convenerhip

There being no competing nominations, Mr Robert Gordon was elected as Convener of the Standing Committee by general acclaim.

11.2.2 Administration Board Convenership

There being no competing elections, Dr John Ferguson-Smith was elected as Convener of the Administration Board by general acclaim.

11.2.3 Mission Board Convenership

There being no competing nominations, the Rev Jane Ross was elected as Convener of the Mission Board by general acclaim.

11.2.4 Institute Council

By general acclaim, the Synod appointed the following: –

Convener: the Rt Rev Kevin Pearson, Bishop of Argyll and the Isles
Other members: Mr Nigel Cook, the Rev Canon Anne Dyer, the Rev Dr Paul Foster, the Rev Prof David Jasper, the Rev James Jones, Mrs Nan Kennedy, Dr Jenny Wright, Mrs Zoe van Zwanenberg and the Rt Rev Dr Bob Gillies.

11.2.5 Standing Committee Membership

A ballot was conducted in the House of Clergy for the two vacancies for clerical members of the Standing Committee. The Rev Canon Dave Richards and the Very Rev Alison Simpson were elected.

11.2.6 Clergy Discipline Tribunal

The Rev Maggie McTernan and the Very Rev Kenny Rathband were appointed as clerical members of the Clergy Discipline Tribunal by general acclaim.

11.2.7 General Synod Trusteeship

Mr David Palmer was elected as a General Synod Trustee by general acclaim.

11.2.8 Pension Fund Trustee Chair

There being no competing nominations, Mr Richard McIndoe was elected as Chair of the Pension Fund Trustees by general acclaim.

11.3 Vote of Thanks

The Primus expressed thanks to all members of Synod for their attendance and engagement. Throughout Synod there had been an energy and intensity of life and an astonishingly high level of involvement. The standard of speaking had been very high.

He also expressed particular thanks to the following: the group working with the Rev Canon Dom Ind and who had arranged the Eucharist and Morning and Evening Prayer, the Cantor and worship band; the retiring Conveners particularly Mr David Palmer who had led the Standing Committee through a period in which a great amount of business had been processed, Mr Michael Lugton, Mr Andrew November, the Rev Canon Fay Lamont, the Rev John Conway, Mr Jeremy Burchill, Dr John Ferguson-Smith and Mr Alex Stewart; the retiring clerical members of the Standing Committee, the Rev Canon Malcolm Round and the Very Rev Richard Kilgour; the representatives of other denominations and faiths; those who had chaired sessions of Synod; Dr Joe Morrow as Assessor; Paul Deponio and Alison Dines for operating the IT and audio-visual facilities and the other staff of St Paul's & St George's; Pat Ashworth of the *Church Times*; and General Synod Office staff.

11.4 Confirmation of Acts of Synod

The Primus confirmed the Acts of Synod and closed the meeting with the Blessing at approximately 12:30pm on Saturday 13 June 2015.