

The General Synod of the Church of England meets in London in February for a three day meeting from 2.30 pm on Monday 15 February until 5.00 pm on Wednesday 17 February. This will be the first full-length meeting of the newly-elected General Synod since its inauguration in November 2015.

The agenda for the meeting can be found [here](#). The majority of the papers have been released today. A major theme of this group of sessions will be taking forward the next stages of the Archbishops' Renewal and Reform initiative. On Wednesday 17 February the various Task Group leads will be giving an overview to Synod on their plans for the coming year. Specific items related to Renewal and Reform feature on the February agenda.

One key aspect of Renewal and Reform is the introduction of legislative changes to make it easier for parishes and dioceses to organise themselves to facilitate mission and growth. This is known as the Simplification work stream. On Monday 15 February legislation will come before Synod to simplify the Church's rulebook to reduce regulatory burdens in the form of the Draft Mission and Pastoral etc. (Amendment) Measure (GS2014). On Tuesday 16 February, Synod will be asked to endorse plans to introduce an 'Enabling Measure' to make it easier to update Church legislation in the future as required on an on-going basis (GS 2018).

On Wednesday 17 February there will be a debate on a motion on the Resourcing Ministerial Education work stream, another element of Renewal and reform. The motion and the accompanying paper sets out plans for new funding arrangements to boost the number of candidates for ministry and a strategy for the continuing enhancement of their quality and deployability (GS 2020). Immediately after this item, there will be a Take Note debate on a report from the Task Group on Resourcing the Future which sets out plans to reorganise the way that the Church distributes money centrally to focus it on driving growth and helping mission in the poorest communities (GS 2021). Linked to these initiatives, there will be a report from the Evangelism Task Group with examples of best practice with regards to Church growth and evangelism (GS 2015).

On Monday 15 February the Archbishop of Canterbury will be giving a Presidential Address which will include a Statement on the outcome of the recent Primates meeting in Canterbury. There will also be an update by the Archbishop's Director for Reconciliation on the progress in the dioceses of the Shared Conversations on Spirituality, Scripture and Mission. Synod members will have an opportunity to ask questions on the presentation.

On Tuesday 16 February, the Rt Revd Dr Angus Morrison, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland will give a presentation on the Report of the Church of England - Church of Scotland Joint Study Group (GS 2016). This will be followed by a debate on the Report introduced by the Bishop of Chester.

Synod will be debating three Diocesan Synod Motions, two of which are closely related. The first two DSMs from Worcester Diocesan Synod relate to Parochial fees and related costs for weddings and funerals (GS 2017A and 2017B). This will be taken together on Tuesday 16 February.

On Wednesday 17 February there will be a Diocesan Synod Motion arising from Leeds Diocesan Synod on the 'Impact of Sanctions on Benefit Claimants' (GS 2019A and GS2019B). A further Diocesan Synod Motion from Leeds Diocesan Synod on 'Blood and Organ Donation' (GS 2022A and GS2022B) is listed as contingency business.

