

Minutes of a meeting of the **Evangelical Group of the General Synod** on Wednesday 20 February 2019 at c. 8pm in the Harvey Goodwin Suite, Church House.

## **(1) WELCOME / APOLOGIES**

John Dunnett (Chair – hereafter JD) welcomed 4 new members

- John McGinley (C)
- Josias De Souza (C)
- Marian Nicholson (L)
- Paul Buckingham (L)

He also welcomed a newly elected member to GS, Simon Friend, as an observer.

19 apologies had been received and noted.

## **(2) BIBLE READING / PRAYER**

Jason Roach offered some thoughts on Revelation 7:9, with the encouragement that, whatever we face, now or in the future, there is a day when we will ‘come out of tribulation ...’

## **(3) MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 6 JULY 2018**

No requests for amendments or corrections having been received, the adoption of the minutes from our previous meeting, proposed & seconded by Jacob Vince and Peter Breckwoldt was passed nem con.

## **(4) MATTERS ARISING, NOTE OF ANY AOB AND CHAIR’S MENTIONS**

None notified by members ahead of the meeting

Chair’s notes:

1. Congratulations to members appointed to posts beyond GS –
  - Jackie Searle (+Crediton)
  - Emma Ineson (+Penrith)
  - Sally Gaze (AD Eds & Ips)
  - Jenny Tomlinson, AD of Birmingham
  - Sean Doherty, Principal Trinity College Bristol
2. Congratulations to members appointed to posts within GS –
  - Carl Fender & Clive Scowen – Scrutiny Committee
  - Stephen Trott / Peter Bruinwelds, Jacob Vince / – Church Commissioners
  - Gavin Oldham – Dioceses Commission
3. Plug for CEEC – we are part of it / and recent publication ‘Glorify God in your body’ ...
4. Invited Ian Paul to say a word or two re letter over HoB Guidance ...

Ian Paul – this letter was not an EGGS initiative, but arose spontaneously in December from IP’s blogpost ... prompted a letter to the Church Times from Edward Dowler, AD Hastings. It became clear that a significant

number across traditions were uneasy: the letter therefore represented views from many different parts of the C of E, and acquired a lot of interest very quickly: as of now, it has just under 3100 signatures.

As a result, he is sure that the HoB recognises that these concerns need to be taken seriously.

The letter is still open for signing ...

## **(5) THIS GROUP OF SESSIONS – INCLUDING:**

### **A Thursday business**

#### **1. Legislative business : Changes to Church Representation Rules**

**Summary** – after debate, the abiding sense was that the proposal on Church Representation Rules contained so much that we could not risk losing by voting it down, although some retained concerns about the changes to length of length of service for DS members

#### **Detail –**

- Adrian Greenwood reported that the chair of Business Committee has agreed to refer the issue of length of terms of service for Deanery Synod members to the Elections Review Group
- Debbie McIsaac – don't want to rely on a future GS voting on a change to what we vote on tomorrow: let's vote it down
- Clive Scowen – Chair of Elections of Review Group. Please vote for it – this is time sensitive, e.g. because of electronic elections ... no scope for delay or bringing it back ... please accept this creative approach. ERG will undertake a wide ranging consultation across the Ds
- JD – what assurance do we have?
- CS – assurance that the ERG will consider it and report it back to BC with clear recommendation. Then, the AB of C can bring an amending motion back to GS and GS can vote to change the provisions
- David Lamming – please do support it as we need the new CRRs in time. But we should urge the ABs, when they implement it, to leave out resolution 5
- Gavin Oldham – this isn't good enough ... people are up in arms ... agree with Debbie M ...
- Clive – no scope for any amendments tomorrow: only choice is voting for or against. If vote against, CR rules fall, no elections in 2020 ... it will not be difficult to get this sorted out ...
- Stephen Hofmeyr – opposed to this provision, but sees a balancing act ... only agreeing under protest ... we must take note of 30 lay chairs who are totally opposed ... ask AB for an assurance on the floor of GS
- ...

#### **2. Living in Love and Faith & Pastoral Advisory Group**

Presentation by LLF / PAG

Sean Doherty spoke as a member of the LLF Group

- the aim is to produce public-facing resources ...
- A good Q to ask would be: how can we ensure that these resources are helping people to engage with scripture for themselves, pushing people to grapple and discern God's voice from his Word?
- It would be good to avoid simple assertions (e.g. there are lots of different views) or just lots of nice stories

Ed Shaw spoke as a member of the PAG Group

- The pastoral principles are meant to challenge all of us – please don't use them to bash the other side.
- Helpful to share how they are challenging us and leading us to reflect and repent

David Banting – is it the case that LLF / PAG have not heard from conservative evangelical parishes because they think they won't be believed or accepted or even listened to?

Ed replied that he would be surprised were that the case: Eva John has been working very hard to ensure that's not the case ... do speak to her if you feel otherwise ...

## **B Friday business**

### **1 Evangelism and discipleship – GS2118**

- Barry Hill's briefing paper had been circulated. Barry –
  - danger is that we point out all the things that aren't included, rather than acknowledge those that are ...it would be a shame if we get dragged down into the wrong sort of detail ...
- JD – this ought to be something we can make a real contribution to GS ... we have something to share ...
- A table debate followed.
- JD – use any speech to encourage, share good practice ... don't let it be said that EGGs took the opportunity to attack motions on evangelism

### **2 CNC – standing orders – GS2120**

**Summary** – the overwhelming sense was that retaining the use of a secret ballot on CNC is crucial

#### **Detail –**

- Jane Patterson – having served on more than 20 CNCs, she believes that the changes proposed to SO 141 are based on a false premise – a result of no nomination is not a failure! Only happened once in 20 CNCs.
- Strongly recommend that we keep to secret ballot – very hard to hold a minority view, especially for those on for the first time ...
- JD – I understand that the AB of Y may make some comments about changing the way that voting happens when it comes to the final part. At the moment, you either write the name down or not; you can't vote against. JD may be disposed to resist the proposal as tabled and vote against it.
- JD – re the secret ballot, endorsed JP: a secret ballot gives security to someone to act according to conscience ... when someone is out on a limb compared to colleagues on the Diocesan team, secret ballot is crucial
- Anthony Archer – member of the central CNC (only done 11!). Catalyst for these proposed changes were some difficult CNCs. Central members are divided on this. Trajectory is towards greater transparency ... this explains the move towards ending secret ballot ... AA disagrees that local diocesan reps will be cowed ... in his experience they are of a very high standard ...
- Philip Plyming (only done 3!) Attention to power dynamics in the room is so important. Some research on coercion ... lets name them: secret ballot still helpful ...
- + Jonathan Gibbs – vice-chair of a separate committee looking at the process whereby people are elected to CNC, both centrally and from dioceses ... aiming to give a broader view of representation ... discover what people think they're doing when they enter the room ... touches on 5 guiding principles ... following on from O'Donovan
- + Pete Broadbent – O'Donovan was romantic and played on trust in a way that isn't real in the way we do things. When you're under pressure from the Abs very hard to hold your view. Can be pushed into a decision that can stitch up a diocese for 10 years. Plays to ++ Justin's very noble view of reconciliation ... but doesn't acknowledge the very real divisions and differences within the C of E
- Peter Breckwoldt – agree secret ballot needs to remain ... we mustn't allow the pressure of position to determine the outcome ...

### **3 Growing Faith : Ministry amongst children and young people – GS2121**

- Paul Langham – had tabled Qs for earlier but we ran out of time. Hopes to speak, asking GS to commission some more specific research to determine causal links between churches' mindset etc. and the presence of children and young people
- + Paul Butler – chair of the group bringing the report: evangelical churches are no better than any others. This is a remarkable paper – combining church, school and family ... we've been talking about this for years ... finally done it ... please put every effort behind it.
- A Good Question to ask would be – why are we operating old models rather than going where children are
- Gavin Oldham – most frightening statistic is in 7 – the numbers of those who stopped pursuing faith between 11 & 24: want to see social purpose ...

### **4 Estates evangelism – GS2122**

- Kate Wharton – aiming to speak and share stories, will endorse the direction of travel
- Steven Boyle – from personal experience, it is very different, huge problems, very costly ... long term, can't just parachute in and out ...
- Alastair McHaffie – inner city estate in Preston ... chaotic lives ... pointless to organise courses ... some can't read or write, recognise words ... relationship building is critical ...
- Mary Durlacher – perspective from going on mission to a Sink estate in Ashford ... grim place, but a lot more openness to the gospel, lots more need for hope. By contrast, on mission in the New Forest, people's response was "I'm fine, don't need you ..." we need to encourage the local church

## **C Saturday business**

### **1 Encouraging youth evangelism – GS2124A/B**

- An opportunity for joined up thinking – please support this amendment. MR will not resist it ...
- David Banting ... 'in my day' youth workers and youth ministers were called ... curates ... why doesn't C of E ordain them to a long-term ministry ... only a few models of people who've done this for any length of time ...

### **2 Advertising and Gambling**

David Lamming – tabling an amendment designed to beef up the motion – a reminder that the secular press are watching with interest ...

### **3 State of the nation (no comments received)**

## **(6) PMMS**

Carl Fender – about a piece of legislation 5 years ago re legal aid reform

- People dependent on benefits
- Children who are in the midst of parental conflict

Read the Fabian Society / Labour Party reports ... on p 21 of printed agenda

## **(7) ELECTIONS TO GENERAL SYNOD 2020**

- JD – only just over a year til the present QQ ends
- EGGs Committee has been doing some thinking about how to ensure how we get a good number of evangelicals elected across the dioceses

- 2020 Elections are going to be critical – debate and decision coming out of LFF / PAGs will dominate the next QQ
- EGGs Comm and CEEC will, over next few weeks, be publishing a briefing paper on this
- Carl Hughes' Analysis of voting patterns shows that
  - some 50% of house of clergy and 40% of house of laity are in a different place to most of the EGGs membership
  - 10 Dioceses where no evidence of HoC orthodoxy
  - 12 Dioceses where no evidence of HoL orthodoxy
  - 12 Dioceses have no DEF
- We need to change this, we need to galvanise our DEFs
- This is a great opportunity within the Evangelical wing to encourage more women / BAME candidates ...
- For now, please ensure you are engaged with your DEF to give attention to 2020 elections
- Each of us needs to consider what we can do to:
  - encourage people to stand C & L
  - help them get elected (Brig Dobbie pounding the streets)
  - ensure DEFs are galvanising and mobilising C & L ...
- Andrew Corns – in many Ds, other networks (New Wine) are more dynamic
- Angus Goudie – this issue is not the only touchstone for what defines an evangelical

#### **(8) NOTIFIED AOB**

JD – 2

- + **Peter Hancock** – please support in prayer or come tomorrow evening ... performance at 7.15 pm. One man, one act play ... speaking about experiences of being groomed and abused ... getting voice of victims and survivors into General Synod. Good reviews in national press ... + Peter sponsoring it, not met him so bit of a risk ... Please pray ...
- **Martin Taylor** – on ABs Council Finance Committee ... pointing out serious discrepancies between dioceses in terms of historic legacy ... e.g. Lincoln Diocese has £92 per person ... Liverpool 65 p. This is a Jubilee principle. It's time to reorganise the finances of the C of E. Over £300 million could be released if there was the will.

#### **(9) PRAYER**

The meeting ended with the Grace ...