

This is why the election of even a small number of additional orthodox clergy and laity would represent a significant and positive sea-change in the composition of the Synod.

Thus, to ensure that orthodox Anglican Evangelicals are fully represented in the 2020-2025 General Synod, clergy, laity and PCCs need to start taking action NOW.

ACTION REQUIRED

1. PRAY...

- for existing members of the General Synod as they consider whether to stand again in 2020;
- for whether God is calling you or a member of your clergy chapter, PCC or parish to stand for election in 2020;
- for the future of the Church of England and for its adherence to its historic, apostolic doctrine and teaching.

2. ENCOURAGE...

- clergy and lay people in your church whom you think could be good General Synod candidates to consider standing for election in 2020;
- your church to engage with current members of the General Synod and get to understand the work of the Synod;
- candidates to engage with their electorates (their fellow clergy or lay deanery synod members in the diocese) well in advance of autumn 2020.

3. ENGAGE

- ensure that you, your PCC and your parish engage with your deanery and diocese;
- ensure that your parish takes up ALL of its allotted places on your local deanery synod – *it is the lay members of deanery synods who elect the diocesan lay representatives to the General Synod!*
- engage with your local diocesan evangelical fellowship and networks to ensure that there is proper planning for the 2020 elections, that clergy and lay electors are appropriately briefed on the candidates and the election process, and that there is an appreciation of other orthodox candidates beyond the evangelical tradition;
- if you are thinking of standing for election, contact EGGS (see below) who can put you in touch with people who can help you in your preparation.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please contact the Chair (Revd John Dunnett) or Secretary (Revd Paul Langham) of EGGS via our website at www.eggscofe.org.uk



Planning for the 2020 Elections to the General Synod (2020-2025)

**What orthodox
Anglican
Evangelicals need to
do to safeguard the
doctrine and teaching
of the Church of
England**

**A briefing paper
for clergy, laity
and PCCs**

May 2019



Church of England
Evangelical Council

EGGS

Evangelical Group of
the General Synod

Why is the General Synod relevant to me?

The General Synod is the overarching governance body of the Church of England, having responsibility for the Canons, doctrine and liturgy of the Church, as well as for matters such as finance and mission¹.

Major changes to what the Church believes, or to its liturgy, require General Synod's consent. Significant doctrinal and liturgical changes require a super-majority of 2/3rds or more.

If you believe that it is important to maintain the historic, orthodox beliefs and practices of the Church, then the General Synod is very relevant to you and your parish. It is vital that this voice is clearly heard in the forthcoming elections in 2020, as the future of our Church might well be decided in the 5 years after 2020.

Who are the members of the General Synod?

The General Synod reflects the nature of the UK Parliament in terms of its structure and operation. It generally meets for about 10 days each year in February and July and comprises three houses, elected by diocese:

- **House of Laity**

195 members of the laity elected by the members of the **deanery synods** in each diocese; the number of elected lay members varies with the size of the diocese, subject to a minimum of 3 members per diocese. The House also includes 3 representatives from the armed forces and 2 from religious communities.

- **House of Clergy**

191 members of the clergy elected by their fellow clergy in each diocese; the number of elected clergy varies with the size of the diocese, subject to a minimum of 3 clergy per diocese. The House also includes 5 elected cathedral deans, 3 representatives from the armed forces, 2 from religious communities and 4 from universities/theological education institutions (TEIs).

- **House of Bishops**

All 42 diocesan bishops and 9 elected suffragan bishops.

Who can stand for election to the General Synod?

Clergy – any member of the clergy who is (a) licensed by the bishop, or (b) has permission to officiate and is a member of a deanery synod.

Laity – any lay person who is an actual communicant, who is aged 18 years or older, and whose name is on the electoral roll of a parish in the diocese. *NB the lay person does not need to be a current member of a PCC or a deanery synod.*

When are the next elections to General Synod?

Elections to the General Synod take place every five years. The next elections will take place in each diocese in 2020:

• Nominations submitted	August 2020
• Hustings and elections	October 2020
• New Synod meets in London	November 2020

Why are the elections in 2020 SO important?

The General Synod which serves during the period 2020-2025 will consider a number of significant doctrinal and liturgical matters, including with regard to the Church's teaching on human sexuality.

In 2017, the House of Bishops initiated a process, now called *Living in Love & Faith*, which will provide teaching and learning resources on marriage, sexuality and identity, drawing on Scripture, theology, ethics, history and science. These materials will be published prior to the Lambeth Conference in the summer of 2020. Thereafter, the House of Bishops will determine its proposed policies relating to human sexuality which will then be debated by the new General Synod.

On the basis of the voting patterns of the current members of the Synod, the Houses of Clergy and Laity appear to have significant liberal, revisionist groups of c.50% and 40% respectively, compared with members holding orthodox views of c.30% in each House.

About a quarter of dioceses currently have no clear orthodox voices amongst their lay members. A similar position applies amongst clergy members.

¹ Full details of the role and work of the General Synod can be found at
<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/about-general-synod>