



General Synod report February Group of Sessions 2019

Presidential Address, the Archbishop of Canterbury

- “I urge you to consider giving up cynicism and renewing love for those with whom you and I differ. It is not easy. Some of them have views we find so obnoxious that we wish they were not in the church...Yet they and we are equally loved by God in Christ...Yes, we argue. Yes, we fail. Yes, we disagree about inclusion and we let people down and we mess up, but do not leave the wonderful work of the spirit of God out of the equation.”

Synod approves greater service flexibility for benefices

- Priests with oversight of multiple churches no longer have to get permission from their bishop not to hold a service in each church every Sunday.

Synod backs the setting up of a homeless task force

- The task force will work in partnership with statutory and other agencies. It is designed to make better use of Church resources whether financial, buildings or volunteers to provide shelter and support for the most vulnerable.

There was a presentation on new pastoral principles for welcoming LGBTI+

- There are six principles and they have emerged out of *Living in Love and Faith* project and the work of the Pastoral Advisory Group. The principles are for all churches and are worth studying. Take them back to your PCC!

Synod steps up environment work

- Every Diocese is to have an environmental programme with a designated member of Bishop's staff team to lead and advocate for the programme.

Synod commends resources to help families pray at home

- As part of *Growing Faith* (GS2121), hundreds of thousands of school children will receive a free 'prayer map' as part of a new national commitment to children and young people's ministry designed to revolutionise our work in this area.

Synod backs drive to create new churches on estates

- Noting the historic marginalisation of social housing estates in the policies of both church and nation, Synod committed the Church to ensuring a Christian presence in every significant estate in the country.

A vision of hope, mission and ministry with Gypsy, Roma and traveller communities

- Synod voted to give more support to tackling racism and discrimination directed towards the traveller community.

The State of the Nation, Address by the Archbishop of Canterbury

- “Today we see signs of division, perhaps more clearly than for generations in peacetime. There is exclusion from a sense of common purpose and of equal rights in our society, politically, economically, and socially...Brexit has... revealed how our politics and society have not paid sufficient attention to the common good: that shared life of society in which everyone is able to flourish. That pain and exclusion continues in this country. If we do not as a nation pay attention, it will cause greater division and ultimately strife.”

Justin Welby's [Presidential Address](https://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/node/464/speeches/speeches/15) and his [State of the Nation](https://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/node/464/speeches/speeches/15) address can be found here:

The Pastoral Principles are here (see the appendix):

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-01/GS%20Misc%201200.pdf>

All other Synod papers can be found here:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/work-general-synod/agendas-papers/general-synod-february-2019>

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