



actions of churches, including the Russian Orthodox Church, who had given support to the invasion of Ukraine was passed unanimously.

## THE SEPTEMBER SESSION

The September session of the Governing Body will likely be of more future interest to historians than ecclesiastical lawyers. The legislative business had been scheduled for the final afternoon's session, but by lunchtime news of the rapidly declining health of Her Late Majesty had broken. The President adjourned the Governing Body immediately after lunch to allow the clergy to get back to their parishes as quickly as possible. The Governing Body's Standing Committee has since adjourned the legislative business until the scheduled session in April 2023.

Prior to the adjournment, the Archbishop announced in his Presidential Address the intention of the Representative Body to draw down £100m of reserves over the next 10 years as additional funding for mission and evangelism across the Province. The Governing Body received a report from the Bench of Bishops on the Lambeth Conference and a presentation from some of the projects funded by the Representative Body's £10 million 'Evangelism Fund' established in 2018.

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# General Synod of the Church of England

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## INTRODUCTION

This report covers the group of sessions held in July 2022. General Synod met in York for the first time since the pandemic between 8 and 12 July 2022.

## PENSIONS, STIPENDS AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Three pieces of legislation received approval on first consideration. The Church of England Pension (Application of Capital Funds) Measure extends the period during which the Church Commissioners may resort to capital to meet their

obligations in respect of certain clergy pensions. The Diocesan Stipends Funds (Amendment) Measure introduces permissive legislation to enable one DSF to transfer funds' surplus funds to another. A further Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure was proposed, covering areas including clergy discipline appeals, legal aid, clergy terms of service, delegation of episcopal functions, Church Commissioners' functions and disposal of land. Alongside that draft Measure, Amending Canon 43 received first consideration, which makes various amendments to the canons on marriage law, parish church services, lay residentiary canons, rural deans and the ecclesiastical courts. All three Measures and the Amending Canon stand remitted to a Revision Committee and will return to Synod in February 2023.

## SAFEGUARDING

Synod received a report and update on the work of Independent Safeguarding Board. Amending Canon 42 received first consideration to amendment of canonical requirement in Canon 30 from Diocesan Safeguarding 'Adviser' to 'Officer', implementing a commitment to IICSA.

## CLERGY DISCIPLINE

Synod endorsed the final report of the Implementation Group entitled *Under Authority: Revisited* which set out legislative proposals for the reform of clergy discipline. Two amendments to the Clergy Discipline Measure: Code of Practice were passed—the first changing the procedure by which penalties by consent are to be published and the second reversing the presumption that the church will always wait for secular proceedings to finish first.

## OTHER BUSINESS

Synod passed a motion decrying the invasion of Ukraine which calls on the government to secure a negotiated peace. Further motions were passed—affirming that the current law on assisted suicide should be unchanged; affirming the role of disabled people in the life of the church; exploring the resourcing of ministerial formation; and setting out a roadmap to net zero carbon by 2030. Two diocesan synod motions were passed; the first from the Diocese of Canterbury called on the Archbishops' Council to conduct a review of PCC membership in light of bishops' mission initiatives; and the second, from the Diocese of Guildford, called on the government to introduce legislation to requiring pornographic sites to have age verification procedures in place.

The following were approved: amendments to the Canterbury Crown Nominations Commission Standing Orders; Legal Officers (Annual Fees) Order 2022; Ecclesiastical Judges, Legal Offices and Others (Fees) Order 2022; and The Church of England Funded Pension Scheme (Amendment) Rules 2022.

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