

## General Synod Report Monday in York

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### Anglican Mainstream

Anglican Mainstream ran a fringe meeting in the early evening with Greg Venables (Primate of the Southern Cone), Stephen Nyorsok (Bishop of Kitale, Kenya), Peter Rwaboma (Uganda) and Ellis Brusk (the new Network in the US). It was refreshing to hear each of them speak about the gospel and the priorities it brings to us. There is no doubt that the Africans in particular do not really understand the western church. They do not understand the way it plays politics in bodies such as the General Synod or the Primates meetings. They do not understand how 'fundamentalist revisionist' Bishops in the US can persecute Christians and others turn a blind eye, they do not understand how some leaders can blatantly lie to them and they do not understand why we are so lifeless as a church and why we have sold out so thoroughly to the culture around us. The meeting heard about all these issues from the various speakers. It is evident that none of them expect the Lambeth Commission to do any more than Rowan Williams and Robin Eames wanted it to do - produce a fudge. We were told that in October the Africans will leave the Anglican Communion.

### Finance & Annual Reports

The Synod's morning agenda consisted of four main items.

A debate on the Archbishops' Council's Annual Report. This report includes all the central bodies of the Church of England.

Financial Business which focused on the votes for central church costs for 2005.

The following were approved:

	£
Training for Ministry	10,446,840
National Church Responsibilities	17,096,220
Grants and Provisions	1,271,850
Inter-diocesan Support/Mission	
Agencies Clergy Pension Contributions	735,753
Retired clergy housing	3,117,000

There was a separate debate on the payment of clergy pensions for Mission Agencies. This provision was agreed (the costs also used to be met of smaller organisations such as Church Society and Scargill House with ordained clergy on

their staff but being small they lost out in the mid 1990s when the system changed.)

Final business of the morning was the Church Commissioner's Annual Report.

### **Liturgy**

Consideration was given to material supplemental to the initiation services and also texts for reconciliation and restoration. These are commended services rather than authorised (not being explicit alternatives for a service in the BCP. The point was made in the debate, including by this writer, that we seem to have moved away from one of the great principles of Anglican liturgy - simplicity of worship (see the Preface to the Book of Common Prayer.)

The texts were commended and it is open to anyone to write in with suggestions as to how these texts ought to be changed before they are published. The text should be available on the Church of England website [www.england.anglican.org](http://www.england.anglican.org) and any submission have to be made to the Clerk to the Synod by sometime in September.

### **Trade Justice**

The debate on Trade Justice began based on two reports on from Christian Aid and an accompanying report from the Mission and Public Affairs Council. This is a very worthy matter but an almost identical debate was held about five years ago.

### **Churches in Europe**

The Synod addressed a report on the Churches in Europe. There were amendments which attempted to politicise the motion by making reference to the consequences for the churches of the growing European super-state but these were resisted.

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