



News Release

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Church Society prays for a mutually respectful way forward on women bishops

Church Society is dedicated to promoting and strengthening the evangelical and reformed foundations of our Anglican faith within the Church of England. We remain convinced that the best way forward on the issue of women bishops is one where those who are not persuaded from scripture of the necessity of the proposed changes continue to be able to flourish in the Church. We are therefore delighted that the new legislative proposals before General Synod this week do acknowledge that this view is “within the spectrum of teaching and tradition of the Anglican Communion” and that for those who hold to the classic and historic view, “the Church of England remains committed to enabling them to flourish within its life and structures.”

There are various issues that need to be ironed out in the new proposed legislation for this to be a truly credible and reliable statement, and for the gospel to flourish within the Church of England. Some helpful, positive steps have been taken, not least in developing a mandatory grievance procedure, though significant worries remain for those who are not content to acknowledge the spiritual oversight of women bishops in good conscience. Many also find it difficult to believe that their ministry is valued or encouraged when, unfortunately, there are currently no serving evangelical bishops who hold to the classic and historic teaching on this subject. We are also concerned that *any* new bishops should be orthodox and faithful to our Anglican formularies such as the *Thirty-nine Articles of Religion*, which officially and legally function as our doctrinal foundation and guide in ministry, and that trustworthiness here should be given a higher priority in selection criteria. Just as Her Majesty the Queen promised 60 years at her coronation to maintain and defend “the true profession of the gospel... the Protestant Reformed religion”, so also, we believe, should all our bishops.

We are committed to praying for the current process and for those (including many members of Church Society) who have been involved in the synodical debates on this issue for many years now. Our earnest prayer is that a way may be found for us to go forward together with integrity and transparency, for the sake of our witness to the truth of the gospel and the good of our nation. If it is true that the Church of England is in danger of dying out within a generation, then it is urgent that we do not lose, hinder, or discourage the evangelistic dynamism of conservative evangelical clergy or children’s and youth workers, who do so much to reach the peoples of Britain for Christ.

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Church Society exists to uphold biblical teaching and to promote and defend the character of the Church of England as a reformed and national Church. For further information visit www.churchsociety.org