

MOTION

That this Synod:

(a) support the overall proposal and timetable set out in [GS 2358](#);

(b) request that the House of Bishops, with the advice of the LLF working groups:

- i. revise the Pastoral Guidance to **remove restrictions on the use of PLF in 'standalone' services** alongside the introduction of an arrangement to register for Pastoral Reassurance;
- ii. establish the basis for the provision of Pastoral Reassurance through a House of Bishops' Statement and Code of Practice which provides for the **delegation of some specific and defined episcopal ministry**, and which is overseen by an Independent Review Panel;
- iii. report to this Synod at its February 2025 group of sessions on the **further theological work** carried out under the auspices of the Faith and Order Commission around the nature of doctrine, particularly as it relates to the doctrine of marriage and the question of clergy in same-sex civil marriages.

(c) Agree that taken together the Pastoral Guidance, the Bishop's Statement and Code of Practice for pastoral provision will **replace Issues in Human Sexuality**.

(d) Agree for the **arrangements for Pastoral Reassurance to be regularly monitored over a period of at least three years** before being formally reviewed by General Synod.'

Final Voting figures

	For	Against	Abstain
Bishops	22	12	5
Clergy	99	88	2
Laity	95	91	2

Prayers of Love and Faith: July 2024 Update

IN SUMMARY

The General Synod have voted by a small margin to "support" the House of Bishops' proposal:

- To allow standalone services of blessing using the PLF for same-sex couples
- To provide delegated episcopal ministry to parishes that do not share the theological convictions of their diocesan bishop (Pastoral Reassurance)
- To wait for further theological work on the nature of 'doctrine' before deciding whether to allow clergy to enter into same-sex marriages (included in the Pastoral Guidance)
- To replace the current House of Bishops' guidance, "Issues of Human Sexuality", with new Pastoral Guidance, a Statement from the Bishop and a Code of Practice

BUT

None of this can happen until the detail of the Prayers of Love, Pastoral Guidance and Pastoral Reassurance are agreed. The three workstreams will continue and final proposals will be brought back to General Synod in February or July 2025.

What still needs to be decided?

Prayers of Love and Faith (PLF)

The Prayers of Love and Faith resources have already been commended by the House of Bishops to use in regular services of worship.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2023-12/prayers-of-love-and-faith.pdf>

It is not expected that there will be much change to the prayers themselves but the extent to which the 'standalone services' could have / shouldn't have the appearance of a 'wedding' still needs to be worked through.

Pastoral Reassurance

The House of Bishops has rejected 'transferred episcopal oversight' but have offered the delegation of some specific and defined episcopal ministry – which may be quite like that offered to those who cannot in conscience accept the episcopal ministry of women. This may be arranged within a diocese or regionally.

The CEEC and The Alliance have said that this is NOT sufficient and have suggested further talks.

Pastoral Guidance

The first two parts of the Pastoral Guidance have been published – covering how the prayers should be used and ways to manage disagreement.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/living-in-love-and-faith-pastoral-guidance.pdf>

The most controversial third part has yet to be written as this is concerned with clergy conduct in relation to LLF – namely should clergy be able to enter into civil same-sex marriages.

QUOTES

Most Rev Justin Welby

We are today nowhere near a final decision as Bishop Martin has made very, very clear the next step is detailed work to bring different traditions and views and theological and doctrinal understanding to a place so that all may flourish and so that above all salvation may be proclaimed clearly to our nation.

Bishop Martyn Snow

On hope for those who believe the use of PLF goes against apostolic teaching:
"My desire is that such people should have a place within the Church of England, um, but inevitably if that's to be the case there will have to be some shift from an understanding that says, "We cannot simply agree to disagree".

On the three-year discernment process:
"If prayers are commended, I don't really see a scenario where they are un-commended."

Rev Ian Paul

"If you are thinking of voting for this proposal, please do it with your eyes wide open. Knowing it will destroy trust. Knowing it will divide the Church. Knowing it will lead to greater decline. Personally, I don't feel that any of these things are a demonstration of the love of God. Vote for this only if you think that distrust, disunity and decline are the price worth paying."

Mrs Zoe Ham

"Bishops, Archbishops please would you treat me as a weaker sister. Please would you be willing to give up some power for my sake."

Rev Aneal Appadoo

"For the sake of trust and the unity of this chamber and the Communion, which I love, I urge the Synod to vote against this motion. As has devastatingly been reported the processes have not been followed and I for one feel like I've been tricked."