

Government (Amendment) Measure was given deemed first consideration (a new term in Standing Orders which replaces the general approval stage). The Measure gives additional functions to the diocesan synod with regard to the annual budget and annual accounts for the diocese and amends the Pastoral Measure 1983 by requiring the diocesan pastoral committee to review conventional districts at least once in five years. The other provisions amend the Church Representation Rules to enact recommendations of the Bridge Report which attracted broad support from dioceses as being uncontroversial. The Measure is now remitted to a Revision Committee.

A further recommendation of the Bridge Report that the Bishop of Dover should be an *ex officio* member of the Upper House of Canterbury Convocation and of the General Synod was embodied in draft Amending Canon No. 25, which had its first consideration and revision stages at the November sessions. The Canon will come back to the Synod for final approval in February with a view to promulgation in July in time for the General Synod elections. Deemed approved was given to other small election changes contained in the Convocations (Elections to Upper House) (Amendment) Rules and the Religious Communities (Lay Representatives) (Amendment) Rules. The Payments to the Churches Conservation Trust Order was also approved; this lays down the basis for the Church's financial contribution to the Churches Conservation Trust (formerly the Redundant Churches Fund) during the funding period to 31 March 2003. A maximum sum of £12.6m has been agreed with the government of which the Church will provide up to £3.7m (30%).

THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CHURCH IN WALES

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**THIS REPORT COVERS THE MEETINGS HELD AT LAMPETER ON
14/15 APRIL AND 22/23 SEPTEMBER 1999**

The meeting in April marked the imminent retirement of the Most Reverend Alwyn Rice-Jones, Bishop of St Asaph since 1982, Archbishop of Wales since 1991 and a member of the Governing Body for some forty years. A presentation was made to the Archbishop who retired at the end of June by the Bishop of Monmouth, the Right Reverend Dr Rowan Williams, speaking on behalf of the clergy, and Mr Richard Parkinson, Chairman of the Representative Body, on behalf of the laity.

In replying and expressing his appreciation of the sentiments expressed by both speakers and thanking the Governing Body for the gift of a cheque given to him to mark his retirement, the Archbishop recalled his long membership of the Governing Body and the wide range of experience which he had drawn from it. Later, in his final presidential address he recalled too the period of almost eighty years now passed since disestablishment, the special needs which arose from that time to establish the Province as an independent entity and to take account of sweeping social change in the years which have passed. These changes still continue, amongst the most recent being the changes enabling women to be ordained to the priesthood, the need to face and deal with the difficulties arising from the remarriage of people who have been divorced but whose previous partner is still alive, and the special arrangements which the Province has worked out for clergy who find themselves in such a position personally.

The Governing Body gave a First Reading to a Bill to establish a new Disciplinary Tribunal to make provision for the hearing of complaints against clergy and other members of the Church in Wales. This was a purely formal reading of the title of the

Bill which will be considered in more detail at subsequent meetings. A Bill to amend Chapter XI of the Constitution of the Church in Wales by phasing out the office of Archdeacon's Registrar and rationalising the retiring dates of certain provincial office holders was voted down at its Second Reading on the invitation of the Standing Committee, the preparation of amendments following consideration by a Select Committee having shown that the issues raised were more far reaching than had first been anticipated and required consideration on a wider basis and in greater depth. A revised Bill is to be brought before the Governing Body at a future date.

The Governing Body received the reports of the Board of Mission presented by the Director of Mission, the Reverend Enid Morgan, and of the Board of Ministry. The then Secretary of the Board of Ministry, the Reverend P.A. Crockett (now the Venerable P.A. Crockett, Archdeacon of Carmarthen) was unable to reach the meeting because of sudden heavy falls of snow and the report was presented in his absence by the then Archdeacon of St Asaph, the Venerable J.S. Davies (now the Right Reverend John Davies Bishop of St Asaph). The Governing Body also received the report of St Michael's College Llandaff presented by the Warden, the Reverend Dr John Holdsworth, and on a motion proposed formally from the Chair, of Trinity College Carmarthen.

Reports were received on discussions with the Lutheran Church in Germany and from the Secretary for Training in World Mission of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, addressing the Governing Body at its invitation and from the Province's representatives at the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Harare in December 1998, the Right Reverend Dr Barry Morgan, at that time Bishop of Bangor, now Bishop of Llandaff, and the Reverend Jennifer Wigley.

The Governing Body also heard a presentation by members of a party which had visited Palestine on the findings of their visit and on the aims and working of the project known as 'Pilgrim 2000'.

A Private Member's Motion requesting the Bishops to consider bringing forward proposals for a marriage service which could be used in the marriage of parties where a former marriage of one or both parties had been dissolved with the previous partner still living was defeated.

The September 1998 meeting had experimentally taken place over a weekend. The Standing Committee subsequently reviewed the outcome of a questionnaire completed by members on the success of the experiment and noted that mid-week meetings were considerably more popular, although there was limited support for a further trial possibly over a Friday and Saturday in a few years' time.

The Archbishop of Wales having retired at the end of June, the President at the meeting in September was the Right Reverend Dr Rowan Williams, Bishop of Monmouth and Senior Diocesan Bishop of the Church in Wales.

The Governing Body received the annual report of the Representative Body which was proposed by the Chairman of the Representative Body, Mr Richard Parkinson, chairmen of individual sub-committees speaking to matters within the sphere of competence of their respective sub-committees.

The Governing Body heard a report on the conference held earlier in the year at Abergavenny to consider the furtherance of mission in the Province which had produced a report entitled 'Good News in Wales'.

The Governing Body considered a motion asking for the detailed revision of definitive services in both volumes of the Book of Common Prayer of the Church in Wales and decided that in view of the implications of such a programme, including the amount of work involved in preparing it and the cost, it should not proceed at the present time.

A Bill to amend the procedure under which Bills themselves pass through the Governing Body was given its Third Reading and was approved by the three Orders of Bishops, Clergy and Laity and thereupon promulgated as a Canon of the Church in Wales. The purpose of this Bill is to dispense with the formal First Reading of a Bill, comprising simply the reading of its actual title, and to allow for subsequent

stages to be taken together, the Bill having first been vetted by a Select Committee and the Standing Committee in order to ensure that it is in a satisfactory form and that all amendments which members of the governing Body wish to make, having had copies of the Bill circulated to them, have been considered and either recommended by the Select Committee to the Standing Committee or rejected in this way. There remains a procedure under which if the Standing Committee, either of its own motion or at the recommendation of the Select Committee, so propose, or any one Diocesan Bishop or ten members of the Governing Body request, the Bill is to be treated as controversial and will then go through a formal Committee Stage and Third Reading instead of proceeding straight to the final vote.

The Bill to establish a Disciplinary Tribunal, given its First Reading in April, received its Second Reading at this meeting. This Bill was introduced before the promulgation of the Bill referred to in the previous paragraph and therefore has to be taken under the old procedure. A number of members spoke in the debate on the Second Reading and various suggestions were made as to how details of the Bill might be amended, but the Governing Body approved the Second Reading of the Bill without dissent. It will now go to a Select Committee who will consider all the proposed amendments in detail before reporting back to a full meeting of the Governing Body not earlier than September 2000.

The regulations known as the Church Sales Regulations which deal with the application of the proceeds of sale of churches, church sites and churchyards and the income from leases of such property have been under detailed consideration for some time. It had been felt that they were no longer completely appropriate to cope with the manner in which disposals by sale or by lease were now taking place. They were also drafted before the development of the practice of the operators of mobile phone networks of seeking sites for their relay equipment. The agreements for such arrangements often provide for rental which in terms of parish church budgets is substantial, and yet under the regulations as they stand the parishes which have such agreements would only be entitled to the interest generated by the rental income. Accordingly a completely new set of regulations had been passed by the Representative Body at its meeting in July and came before the Governing Body for approval. That approval was granted and the new regulations accordingly take account of the considerations which currently present themselves on the sale of churches, church sites and churchyards and also provide for the first £5,000 per annum of income from a lease, licence or other such agreement which has been approved by the Representative Body to be paid to the parish for the maintenance of a place of worship in the parish. The Representative Body has power to vary this figure and where the income is more than the prescribed figure, must determine in consultation with the parish how that excess is to be applied. This gives the Representative Body power to allow the parish to retain all or a proportion of the excess if it considers that there is a sufficient case for doing so, or otherwise to apply the difference for the benefit of the Province.

The Governing Body debated two private member motions. The first invited the Governing Body to request the Representative Body to review the arrangements of the insurance of church and other buildings and to consider whether the best interests of the Province would be served by permitting parishes to arrange their own cover. A number of contributions were made to the debate and the motion was ultimately defeated. An emergency private member motion on the state of the farming industry in Wales was considered, noting the measures which had very recently been taken to give a degree of assistance to Welsh farmers but urging the British Government and the Welsh Assembly to take more fundamental long-term action to alleviate the crisis which has developed. A number of members contributed to the debate, following which the motion was passed without dissent.