

York could be a woman and the PRBs would not be able to derive their jurisdiction from such an archbishop. A similar problem attaches to a male archbishop who consecrates or is in full communion with women as bishops

- more thought be given to the problem of men ordained as priests by women bishops
- T.E.A. arrangements enshrined in law to guarantee the future place within the CofE of Anglicans who do not accept that women can be priests or bishops — the ‘honoured place’ promised when women were first ordained as priests

T.E.A. parishes would not be a ghetto

They would remain open and welcoming to all people. Anyone who worshipped in them could do so knowing that the Sacraments administered there were valid. They would remain outward-looking and missionary, freed from expending their energy on church politics and able to focus on preaching and teaching the Faith of the Church and administering the Sacraments.

What’s next?

The February meeting of the General Synod passed this motion, proposed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, by 384 votes to 1. Six attempts to amend this motion were voted down.

‘That this Synod

(a) welcome the assessment made in GS 1605 of the options for removing the legal obstacles to the ordination of women to the episcopate;

(b) consider that an approach along the lines of ‘Transferred Episcopal Arrangements’, expressed in a Measure with an associated code of practice, merits further exploration as a basis for proceeding in a way that will maintain the highest possible degree of communion in the Church of England;

(c) invite the House of Bishops, as part of its ongoing work on the underlying issues raised by the ‘Rochester report’, to produce for the July group of sessions a statement of the theological, ecumenical and canonical implications of such an approach;

(d) instruct the Business Committee to make sufficient time available at the July group of sessions for Synod to determine, in the light of advice from the House of Bishops, the next steps, including a possible timetable for legislation; and

(e) invite all members of Synod to reflect prayerfully and consult widely on the serious decisions now facing the Church.’

We should still pray — unlikely though it might seem — that the General Synod decides to reject the innovation of appointing women as bishops — but, failing that, that full, proper and honourable provision should be made for those who cannot *in conscience* accept women as bishops or priests.

T.E.A.

(Transferred Episcopal Arrangements)

An explanation for the people, deacons and priests of parishes under the pastoral and sacramental care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet.

T.E.A. (Transferred Episcopal Arrangements) is the name given to the proposals debated and approved ‘for further exploration’ at the February 2006 sitting of the General Synod of the Church of England to safeguard the position of those who cannot in conscience accept the appointment of women as bishops.

This leaflet is intended to help in the understanding and explanation of the need for provision for those who in conscience could not accept women as bishops, and the current position of the T.E.A. proposals.

The position since 1992

- In 1992, the General Synod of the Church of England (CofE) voted to ordain women as priests. Women were first ordained as priests in the CofE in 1994
- Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) were at that time given the right to pass a resolution not to accept a woman acting as a priest in the parish (Resolution A) and/or not to accept a woman as the incumbent of the parish (Resolution B)
- PCCs were further given the right to petition for extended episcopal care (so-called ‘Resolution C’), usually provided by a Provincial Episcopal Visitor (PEV or ‘Flying Bishop’) such as Bishop Andrew
- The PCCs of parishes that are under the pastoral and sacramental care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet have passed Resolutions A and/or B and Resolution C
- This system has made adequate provision until now for those who do not accept that women can be priests

So why are the T.E.A. proposals necessary?

The General Synod of the CofE has decided to move towards appointing women as bishops. Serious and fundamental problems will inevitably and immediately arise as a result of the appointment of women bishops, because there will be serious doubt for many as to whether the women ordained as bishops really will be bishops

'Sacramental assurance'

- The Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, Confession, Confirmation, Marriage, Ordination and Anointing are vital to our life in the Church. They are the means by which in a variety of ways Christ is present with us and God's Grace is conveyed to us. *We need to know that the sacraments we receive are valid and true*
- Those who cannot accept women as priests in the CofE nevertheless **know** that the Sacraments they receive at the hands of a male priest or a bishop of the CofE are valid, because they have all be ordained by male bishops
- But a man ordained as a priest by a woman bishop could not be accepted as a priest by those who do not accept that women can be bishops ...
- ***It would be impossible to know easily who had ordained the man at the altar or in the confessional and so it would no longer be possible to know whether he was able to administer valid Sacraments. This would be an intolerable situation.***

Unity and dis-unity

- We as members of the CofE are in communion with one another because we are in communion with our bishops, and they are in communion with each other. Even if we do not accept the ordination of women as priests, we nevertheless know that the present bishops of the CofE are in communion with one another and that the CofE is therefore in communion with itself. This could not be the case if women were appointed but not able to be accepted as bishops by all the bishops of the CofE. ***Women as bishops in the CofE would mean that the CofE could no longer be fully in communion with itself***
- The majority of the Anglican Communion does not accept that women can be bishops. ***Women as bishops would mean that the CofE could no longer be fully in communion with all of the Anglican Communion***
- The CofE believes that it shares the orders of bishop, deacon and priest with the whole of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. Fundamentally altering in isolation the character of the episcopate that it claims to share with the whole Church will isolate the CofE from the rest of the Church. ***Women as bishops would mean that the great efforts and advances made towards greater unity with the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches would effectively have been brought to an end***

These are serious problems which it has been acknowledged are fundamental and cannot be ignored. T.E.A. is the means by which the CofE is proposing to address some of the problems generated by the appointment of women as bishops.

In the February AD2006 debate of the General Synod on women as bishops, **the Archbishop of Canterbury** concluded his speech with the following words, acknowledging the legitimacy of not accepting that women can be bishops:

'People have talked at times about differences of opinion and how the Church can live with differences of opinion. I think that the problem is, for those who are not content with the idea that we should go forward along the line of ordaining women as bishops, the problem is not one of opinion, it's rather one of obedience. It is one of obedience to Scripture, or obedience to the consensus of the Church Catholic. And, while that's not a view I wholly share, I think we ought to recognise that that is where it comes from: those who hold to it are not just thinking 'this is a matter of opinion'. And therefore it is rightly and understandably a lot harder to deal with dissent if you are talking about what fundamentally comes down to a question of whether you obey God or human authority. That is why it is serious. That is why it is difficult ... more than 'opinion'.'

He then proposed a motion that the T.E.A. proposals should be explored further. That vote was passed by 384 votes to 1.

What T.E.A. currently proposes ...

- Parishes that voted to join T.E.A. would be placed under the care of what would be called Provincial Regional Bishops (PRBs)
- PRBs would be men who played no part in the ordination or ministry of women as priests or bishops. Their jurisdiction (legal authority) would be derived not from the diocesan bishop but from the Archbishop of Canterbury or York
- Resolutions A and B as they now stand would be abolished. Parishes would have either to vote to be part of TEA, or else would have to accept women as priests and bishops without reservation
- PRBs would have greater powers than the PEVs, especially in relation to important matters such as: appointing parish priests; selecting and training ordinands; pastoral reorganisation; and ministerial review and discipline. These new responsibilities would give parishes in the PRBs' care essential support in their mission and ministry
- Certain functions, such as the maintenance of vicarages and the running of church schools would remain under the authority of the diocese. The Parish share would still be paid to the diocese

But T.E.A. does not yet provide all that those who could not accept women as bishops would need, including:

- PRBs with their own jurisdiction and who choose and consecrate their successors as bishops — it would only be a matter of time before either the Archbishop of Canterbury or