

**AS WE MOVE TOWARDS THE FEBRUARY 2023 GENERAL SYNOD
PEOPLE ARE ASKING IMPORTANT QUESTIONS**

Q - Why is CEEC making such a 'big thing' about what might happen post *Living in Love and Faith*? And why is it so important right now?

Throughout its history the Church of England (C of E) has seen a number of debates, tensions and disagreements threaten its vitality and even existence. But never before have we found ourselves at a place where there is a very real possibility that the foundation 'deeds' (ie the Book of Common Prayer, the 39 Articles and the Ordinal) might be changed following next February's General Synod. It is this possibility that concerns CEEC since they contain the biblical foundations upon which the C of E is built.

Q - What might happen at General Synod in February 2023 ?

In short - it is very difficult to answer this question while the College and House of Bishops are still discerning what they believe should be the outcome of the *Living in Love and Faith* process. However, it is likely that they will bring to the February 2023 General Synod a series of proposals to 'test the mind' of General Synod. These could include a proposal to introduce affirmations or blessings of same sex marriages.

Q - How can we help to maintain the Church of England's current biblical position on issues of marriage and sexuality?

1. It might sound obvious – but pray! Pray that God enables the bishops to see that any departure from our biblical foundations will be bad for the C of E, bad for our gospel witness and bad for all the communities in which we serve.
2. Please write to your bishop(s) and ask them to hold on to the C of E's current and biblical position on issues of sexuality and marriage. Do explore the 'Keeping Faith' page on the CEEC website for further information (www.ceec.info).

Q - What will happen if the General Synod gives a green light to change?

If the General Synod in February indicates support for a change of either doctrine, liturgy or practice then concrete proposals could be brought back to the Synod in July for formal approval. Alternatively, the House of Bishops might be able to introduce some changes through what is called 'pastoral guidance'.

Q – When will this all end so that we can focus entirely on mission and evangelism?

Those wishing to see the C of E change regarding what it accepts/affirms around human sexuality are not going to stop pushing for it. And if the General Synod indicates that it would welcome change – then CEEC will be asking evangelicals up and down the country to pursue a series of steps by way of ‘protest’ to indicate to the House of Bishops that we will not accept such changes. In other words – it does appear that there is a very real possibility of an absolute stalemate going forwards – in which no one is content with where we are.

It is because of this that CEEC is asking the House of Bishops and General Synod to explore the idea of differentiation.

Q – What, in a nutshell, is CEEC’s proposal for differentiation?

In the event of a change to either the doctrine, liturgy or practice of the C of E many orthodox people (both clergy and lay) might find it difficult to remain in the C of E UNLESS some kind of ‘silos’ can be created such that the change is not universal but applies only to part of the C of E – the other part(s) remaining biblical. This is what is meant by differentiation. For a fuller exploration of this please read ‘*Guarding the Deposit*’ – a CEEC paper to be found on the ‘Keeping Faith’ page on the CEEC website (www.ceec.info).

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