

To: All diocesan bishops in the Church of England

Monday 13th May 2024

Dear Bishops

We write to you following a gathering of 80 ordinands that the Alliance hosted last Thursday. As you are aware, the Alliance is an informal partnership of leaders from networks within the Church of England including the Church of England Evangelical Council, Church Society, the HTB Network, Living Out, Myriad, New Wine, ReNew and The Society. Around 2000 clergy and licensed lay ministers have now expressed their support for the work of the Alliance, and the ordinands present on Thursday included those from all our different networks.

We are writing to make you aware of the depth of concern that is being expressed by these ordinands in relation to *Living in Love and Faith*, and to ask that you might respond graciously to those who feel powerless and without a voice in this whole process.

We therefore come to you with a specific request that collectively you allow for pastoral provision in relation to the upcoming Petertide ordinations - accommodating individual consciences in the midst of this time of pastoral uncertainty. The House of Bishops has acknowledged that “it would be difficult to say that making the PLF available for same-sex couples without there being an assumption as to their sexual relationships was not indicative of any departure from the Church’s doctrine” (GS 2328, Annex A, para 17). In the light of this, these ordinands are expressing reservations about the promises they will be required to make to Bishops who have advocated for these changes to the doctrine of marriage.

Our request is that you do not insist that these ordinands have to choose between *their conscience* and *their calling*. Rather, we pray that the House could agree to a provision for these ordinands this Petertide by permitting ordination by a bishop who publicly supports the Church of England’s current teaching and discipline in relation to marriage and sexual ethics which the ordinands themselves accepted and agreed to live within when they were recommended for training.

In addition, if further changes are recommended by the House of Bishops to General Synod, particularly any which go against legal advice, this is likely to create substantial problems not only for those getting ordained this summer, but for the entire pipeline of ordinands in the future which has already been reduced due to the current trajectory of travel.

We would be grateful to hear from you on this matter soon after you next meet together, as it is obviously an urgent priority as Petertide draws ever closer.

With thanks and love in Christ,

Fr Adam Gaunt, Chair of **Catholic Group** in General Synod
Emma Joy Gregory, Vice-Chair of **Catholic Group** in General Synod

Tom Middleton, Director of **Forward in Faith** and Secretary of the Council of Bishops of **The Society**

Busola Sodeinde, Church Commissioner and **UK Global Majority rep**
Ade Adebajo, Lay Chair of London Diocesan Synod, Chair of Lambeth Partners and **UK Global Majority rep**
Canon Dr. Addy Lazz-Onyenobi, Member of General Synod and **UK Global Majority rep**

Revd Dr. Rich Johnson, National Leader, **New Wine**
Revd Wole Agbaje, Head of Young Adults, **New Wine**
Revd John Coles, **New Wine** Ambassador
Revd Paul Harcourt, former National Leader, **New Wine**
Revd Canon Paul Langham, National Leadership Team, **New Wine** on General Synod

Revd Archie Coates, Vicar of Holy Trinity Brompton and Head of **HTB Network**
Revd Nicky Gumbel, President of Revitalise Trust, **HTB Network**
Revd Sarah Jackson, CEO of Revitalise Trust, and Chair of **HTB Network** on General Synod
Revd Jago Wynne, Vice-Chair of **HTB Network** on General Synod

Revd Canon John Dunnett, Chair of **Evangelical Group** on General Synod (EGGS)
Jane Patterson, Secretary of **Evangelical Group** on General Synod (EGGS)

Rt. Revd Julian Henderson, President of **Church of England Evangelical Council**
Sarah Tett, Trustee of **Church of England Evangelical Council**

Revd Kieran Bush, Chair of the **ReNew** Planning Team
Debbie Buggs, Member of **ReNew** and Member of General Synod and of the Crown Nominations Commission

Revd Canon John McGinley, Church Planting Network Leader

Ed Shaw, Ministry Director of **Living Out**
Revd Canon Vaughan Roberts, Co-Founder of **Living Out**
Rt. Revd Keith Sinclair, Trustee of **Living Out**
Helen Lamb, Trustee of **Living Out**

Revd Dr. Lee Gatiss, Director of **Church Society**

All signatories are leaders of networks/organisations but are signing in their personal capacities, recognising they cannot claim to speak for everyone that they lead.