



**From the Chairman  
The Venerable Michael Lawson  
Archdeacon Emeritus  
Rector, St Saviour's Guildford**

15 November 2010

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ

*"How good and pleasant it is when brothers and sisters live together in unity!"*  
Psalm 133:1.

As you will know, draft legislation providing for the admission of women to the episcopate (known formally as the Draft Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women Measure and Amending Canon No. 30) has been referred by the General Synod to diocesan synods. The debate and decision of your Diocesan Synod whether or not to approve the draft legislation will take place in 2011, in many cases in June 2011.

The way the process works is that if the draft legislation is approved by a majority of Diocesan Synods, it will then go forward to the House of Bishops. However, if it should not be approved by a majority of Diocesan Synods the legislation will fail. While the legislation cannot be amended by your Diocesan Synod, it can be altered by the House of Bishops. In the form approved by the House of Bishops the legislation will then go for final approval to the General Synod where a two-thirds majority in each house is required.

Although no Diocesan Synod can amend the draft legislation it is possible for "Following Motions" to be proposed and voted on by diocesan synods calling upon the House of Bishops to revise the legislation.

My purpose in writing is to encourage you (together with other Evangelicals and like-minded Anglicans) to consider proposing a following motion in your Diocesan Synod in the terms of the draft attached. You will need to propose the following motion for consideration by your Diocesan Synod alongside the draft legislation regardless of whether your Diocesan Synod votes for or against the draft legislation.

This is because, even if your Diocesan Synod votes against the draft legislation, it will progress to the House of Bishops if it is approved by a simple majority of Diocesan Synods.

Within the Church of England views on the proposed legislation differ. There are many who favour the consecration of women to the episcopate; and there are many who are opposed. Both groups are loyal Anglicans. It is our belief and understanding that if the draft legislation is approved as it stands, many who are opposed to the consecration of women bishops (both Evangelicals and Catholics) will face considerable difficulties in maintaining their vital contribution to the Church of England, and in time will find themselves marginalised or even excluded from the Church of England. It is for this reason that The Church of England Evangelical Council is promoting the attached following motion because we are deeply committed to maintaining unity in Christ and keeping all faithful Anglicans within the Church of England.

Please would you join with us as we strive to maintain this unity in Christ.

With the draft following motion you will find an explanatory memorandum. This provides more background to and motivation for the following motion. However, if you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to be in touch.

May I also take this opportunity to urge you to get out into your deanery and diocese, to make connections and discuss the issue with people of all persuasions, and to do all you can to maintain our unity in Christ. There is some urgency in this regard because your Deanery Synod (and many PCCs) may choose to discuss and even vote on the draft legislation in the very near future.

Thank you for reading this, and may our Lord bless you in His service.

Michael Lawson

*“My prayer is not for them (i.e. the disciples) alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.” John 17:20-23.*