

March 12, 2009

Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women) Measure and Draft Amending Canon No 30.

Submission from Church Society Trust.

Church Society Trust is an evangelical patronage society established in 1903 holding rights of presentation to over 100 parishes. In common with other patrons it has a concern for the spiritual welfare of the people in the parishes for which it holds these rights of presentation.

The Directors of the Trust are not in favour of the proposals to consecrate women as Bishops but wish to bring the following particular matters to the attention of the Revision Committee.

1. Parishes which have passed **Resolutions A or B** under the Priests (Ordination) of Women Measure should continue to be able to insist that the presbyteral ministry in the parish is exercised by men as we believe is required by Scripture. This provision should remain, as at present, in legislation.
2. There are many evangelical clergy of “the traditional integrity” and we see evidence of discrimination against such in appointments. Indeed sadly the difficulties of clergy in finding appointments has led to a number of young and very capable men establishing new churches or ministering in existing churches outside the Church of England structures. We are concerned that this legislation, if it goes ahead, should not drive more people out of the Church of England and that **provision must be made that allows such evangelicals to remain with integrity.**
3. Whilst provision such as new dioceses is attractive in many respects we are concerned as patrons that it should not create impermeable boundaries which will make appointments much more difficult. Therefore it seems preferable to us to have **provision which is adequate but flexible.**
4. Patrons have a lot of experience working with legislation governing appointments and pastoral changes. We find that often people do not follow the law either through ignorance, lack of time, or deliberately. Codes of practice and even more neglected and there is no recourse where such are not followed. Therefore, we consider that **the main provisions** for those who cannot in conscience accept the consecration of women as Bishops **must be in legislation, not in codes of practice.**

Yours faithfully,

David Phillips (Revd)
Secretary, Church Society Trust

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