

The Guild Church of St Botolph-without-Aldersgate  
Aldersgate Street  
London EC1A 4EU

The Rt Revd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE  
The Old Deanery  
Dean's Court  
London EC4V 5AA

**By email and post**

27 March 2023

Dear Bishop Sarah

It is with great sadness and concern that we have watched on as the General Synod of the Church of England has approved the proposals in the House of Bishops' Report comprising *Living in Love and Faith: A Response from the Bishops of the Church of England about Identity, Sexuality, Relationships and Marriage* and the *Prayers of Love and Faith*, in response to *Living in Love and Faith*. It is also with sadness that we note that you personally supported them and recommended their adoption by the General Synod.

We recognise that you believe these proposals offer a way for people across the spectrum of beliefs in the Church of England to walk together and do not consider them to change the teaching and doctrine of the Church of England. However, for the reasons set out by Revd Phil Martin in recent conversations with you and described in the letter from him and other incumbents dated 23 November 2022, as a GCC we see these proposals as a departure from the Biblical gospel, contrary to the clear teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ and the doctrine of the Church of England, and a misrepresentation of Biblical sexual ethics for people in our church, nation and world. We are dismayed that the House of Bishops has introduced and backed proposals which cause confusion and distress in our congregation, particularly for those who experience same sex attraction but wish to remain celibate.

Following discussions and agreement at our GCC meeting on 7 March 2023, we therefore find ourselves unable to remain in gospel partnership with you and with the House of Bishops. Applying Scripture such as Ephesians 5:7 and Romans 16:17, this in practical terms means:

- the Guild Vicar not accepting any form of spiritual oversight from you, or from any Bishop who is walking together in partnership with the members of the House of Bishops who supported the proposals;
- not inviting you or Diocesan staff to conduct or participate in any St Botolph's-Without-Aldersgate services;
- not joining with you, or with any Bishop who is walking together in partnership with the members of the House of Bishops who supported the proposals, in spiritual

activities (that is, activities which communicate shared fellowship with Christ, such as participating together in the Lord's Supper and praying together);

- pausing our current contributions to the Common Fund, which occurred following email correspondence between the Diocesan Finance Team and our Administrator, Alan Bright, at the beginning of February 2023;
- working with you, others in the Diocese and the wider Church of England to discuss how to address the situation now that we have no appropriate episcopal oversight;
- partnering with the CEEC and those in the Church of England who oppose the proposals; and
- continuing to attend Deanery and Diocesan Synod to contend for the historic faith as originally received by the Church of England.

We are happy to discuss any of the issues this letter raises further. In the meantime, you, the House of Bishops and the whole Church of England remain in our prayers.

Yours sincerely

The Guild Church Council of the Guild Church of St Botolph-Without-Aldersgate

pp     Revd Phil Martin

cc     The Rt Revd Dr Rob Munro, the Bishop of Ebbsfleet  
       The Ven Luke Miller, the Archdeacon of London