



Open to revelation at General Synod

By Ann Nadge

Nineteenth Session of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia. Melbourne. 9-14 August, 2026.

In his Presidential Address, The Right Reverend Dr Mark Short, Bishop of Canberra and Goulburn and Primate of Australia, reminded us of the ongoing challenges to social cohesion, political stability, and community and family wellbeing. Such challenges can lead us to ask, not only “What does it mean to be Australian?” but “What does it mean to be the Anglican Church in Australia? What strengthens us and holds us together and what could divide us?”

Throughout Synod, presentations and stories from the season of HOPE25 reminded us that as Christians, we find our hope in the faithfulness of God and in making Christ our Saviour known.

Confidence in our lives together as a national church also comes through Synod worship, discussions, Legislation to underpin our work, formal motions and strategic decisions to enable new ministries and sustain existing ones.

As the Primate noted in his address, key areas of focus included Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministry; the Viability of Rural and Regional Dioceses; Practising Safe Ministry and Living in a Conflicted World.

These focuses resulted in legislative changes around Episcopal Standards, Defence Force Ministry and the incorporation of First Nations Bishops into the Constitution (A National Aboriginal Bishop and a National Torres Strait Islander Bishop as Bishops Assisting the Primate).

General Synod acknowledged the leadership of Bishop Chris McLeod, who has served for 11 years in the role of National Aboriginal Bishop and is retiring from this role.



The Primate, Dr Mark Short, with NATSIAC leaders at General Synod.

In a series of motions, Synod committed to addressing social issues including family and domestic violence, antisemitism, gambling reform, commercial surrogacy, protection of the environment, inclusion, and a continuing call to raise the age of criminal responsibility from 10 to 14 years.

Synod gave thanks for the work of ministry agencies (ABM in the Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East), and CMS and BCA (in Australian Dioceses where churches are closing). Business papers, reports of various commissions and minutes are available on the General Synod website.



South Australian Anglicans share a meal with the Archbishop of Adelaide Bradley Billings during General Synod.

Beyond the business sessions, a feature of this General Synod (my third) was the way in which the three dioceses of the Province of South Australia intentionally gathered to share perspectives and opportunities and to acknowledge the challenges before us.

Bishop Garry Weatherill, known to many in Adelaide, Willochra and the Murray, is retiring. In his reflection on the final day, he reminded us that Michelangelo found the Pieta in a block of marble. And that if we â??listen with the ears of the heartâ??. we too, can be open to revelation.

No image found

Date Created

August 16, 2026