



Anglican Church of Australia

General Synod

September 7, 2017

Anglicans to study family violence inside the church

The Anglican Church of Australia plans to study how prevalent family violence is inside the church.

The church's triennial General Synod, meeting at Maroochydore, Queensland, voted to look at professionally designed and independent research into the nature and extent of family violence among Anglicans. Other churches may be invited to join the research.

University of Western Australia lecturer Dr Renae Barker said a recent ABC series on violence inside the church relied improperly on outdated overseas research with little relevance to Australia. It was important to have proper evidence to set against these claims, she said.

The synod formally condemned domestic violence and offered "a heartfelt apology" for failures in teaching and pastoral care to support victims and hold perpetrators to account.

"No victim of domestic abuse should ever be pressured to forgive, submit to or restore a relationship with an offender," the resolution approved by the synod said.

"We confess with deep shame that domestic abuse has occurred among those who attend our churches, and even among some in leadership."

The resolution said abuse of power was at the heart of many relationship problems in the church and community.

For more details, contact Barney Zwartz at bzwartz@melbourneanglican.org.au; phone 0422 373 891.