MINUTES OF THE FIFTH DAY OF THE NINETEENTH GENERAL SYNOD OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA HELD IN SYNOD HALL, GRAND MEETING ROOM, PULLMAN MELBOURNE ALBERT PARK, MELBOURNE, VICTORIA, ON FRIDAY 14 AUGUST 2026

TO BE CONFIRMED

1 SYNOD ASSEMBLED

The Synod assembled at 8.30am, with the Primate, Bishop Mark Short, presiding

2 PRAYERS

The Synod opened with morning prayer led by Bishop Keith Joseph.

Formal business of Synod started at 9.00am

The President welcomed all members, and invited Synod to follow the following timetable:

TIMETABLE OF THE COMMITTEE TO ARRANGE THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

11:30am

Motions of Thanks

24.20 – Mr Doug Marr

24.21 – Bishop Mark Calder

24.22 – Bishop Ian Coutts

24.23 – Bishop Donald Kirk

24.24 – Bishop Chris McLeod

24.19 – Bishop Garry Weatherill

24.18 – Mr Robert Tong AM

24.25 – Recognition of Service and Contribution

The Venerable Guerin Tueno led prayers.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the previous business day will be read and confirmed.

4 GENERAL SECRETARY UPDATE ON ARRANGEMENTS

The General Secretary announced arrangements relating to matters including e-voting, storage of luggage, airport transport, and group photographs of Synod members and attendees.

The General Secretary gave thanks to the sponsors, and all members and participants of GS19.

5 ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Question 1: Financial Distress of Diocese

Dr Reuben Scott asked:

Acknowledging that GSSC has identified it has few or no mechanisms to assist a diocese in serious financial trouble:

(a) What options have been explored for General Synod to offer assistance to the Diocese of North Queensland?

(b) What is the financial exposure to General Synod if the Diocese of NQ is delayed in recommencing payments of its debt to General Synod?

(c) What are the anticipated consequences if the Diocese of North Queensland defaults on its debt to General Synod entirely?

(d) Has the GSSC considered ways parishes and parishioners may be helped directly in the event that a Diocese for example NQ, ceases to function? If so, what options have been considered? Are they viable?

The President gave the following answer:

(a) The details are found in the General Synod Reports, which are available on the Portal.

(b) It is not possible to give a definitive answer.

(c) It is not possible to give a definitive answer.

(d) The details are available on the Portal.

6 PETITIONS

The President called for petitions.

None were received.

7 NOTICES OF QUESTIONS

None were received.

8 NOTICES OF MOTIONS

None were received.

9 CALL OVER OF MOTIONS

The following motions were passed formally:

20 **MOTIONS BY REQUEST OF A DIOCESAN SYNOD OR DIOCESAN COUNCIL**

20.2 Minimum Requirements for Ordination

Bishop Michael Stead sought leave to present the Motion as recorded in the Business Paper. Leave was granted.

Bishop Michael Stead moving, Dr Michael Tong seconding

R98/19 General Synod, recognising the urgent need for an increasing number of well-prepared, biblically literate and theologically astute candidates for ordination, encourages the Ministry & Mission Commission to continue its work on Minimum Requirements for Ordination and publish its guidelines as soon ***Carried***

TO BE CONFIRMED

as possible. It further expresses its desire that the aspirations published in the draft guidelines of one year's full-time study for the diaconate and of an approved theological degree for the priesthood (or a course of studies as approved by the Bishop for either) be at least retained, if not strengthened.

23 NOTICES OF MOTIONS RECEIVED BY STANDING COMMITTEE FROM MEMBERS OF SYNOD

23.1 Ministry to and by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

Bishop Keith Joseph sought leave to present the Motion as recorded in the Business Paper. Leave was granted.

Bishop Keith Joseph sought leave for Auntie Rose and Bishop Chris McLeod to speak to the motion. Leave was granted.

During debate a minor amendment was moved. The Amendment was agreed to by the mover and seconder.

Bishop Keith Joseph moving, Bishop Chris McLeod seconding

R99/19 This General Synod: ***Carried***

1. notes
   a. the significance of ministry to and by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to the life and health of the Anglican Church of Australia
   b. that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are disproportionally located in less resourced remote and regional Dioceses; and
2. asks the Standing Committee to recommend to all the dioceses of the Anglican Church of Australia that they work together (with agencies including ABM, CMS and BCA) to strengthen existing work and find new ways to provide financial and other support for ministry in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities so that the burden of this ministry does not have to be borne by remote and regional dioceses.

24 NOTICES OF MOTION RECEIVED AFTER CONFIRMATION OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR FIRST DAY

24.11 Various Financial Matters

Mr James Flavin sought leave to present the Motion as recorded in the Business Paper. Leave was granted.

Mr James Flavin moving, The Rev'd David Ould seconding

R100/19 General Synod asks the Standing Committee to consider capping the growth in expenditure using the average weekly earnings (AWE) percentage rather than a percentage based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). ***Carried***

24.14 Giving Thanks for Sustaining Rural Ministry

TO BE CONFIRMED

The Rev'd Canon Tim Swan sought leave to present the Motion as recorded in the Business Paper. Leave was granted.

R101/19 ***Carried***

The Rev'd Canon Tim Swan moving, Bishop Mark Calder seconding

General Synod, in light of the challenges of sustaining rural ministry and the unavailability of centralised support:

1. notes with appreciation the significant support given to rural parishes and dioceses by BCA, CMS, and various dioceses, parishes and individuals, that has sustained and expanded gospel ministry across various dioceses;
2. notes that Christians give generously to fund ministry when they are confident that the gospel of the Lord Jesus is being clearly and effectively proclaimed;
3. encourages the deepening of relationships and building of trust between struggling dioceses and those able to support them, that gospel ministry may grow across regional and rural Australia.

23 NOTICES OF MOTIONS RECEIVED BY STANDING COMMITTEE FROM MEMBERS OF SYNOD

23.2 Metropolitan Support for Regional and Rural Dioceses

Bishop Keith Joseph sought leave to re-present the Motion in an amended form. Leave was granted.

Bishop Keith Joseph moving, Bishop Donald Kirk seconding

R102/19 ***Carried***

This General Synod recognising the financial stress and administrative strain placed on regional and rural dioceses due to the legacy of historic sexual abuse claims, the higher costs associated with the provision of ministry in regional and remote locations and the smaller asset base of most regional and rural dioceses: requests that the Metropolitan Dioceses take on greater responsibility, in conjunction with agencies including ABM, CMS and BCA, for supporting ministry within each Province and requests that the General Synod Standing Committee coordinate with the Metropolitan Dioceses and the Diocesan Financial Advisory Task Force to put together a plan to enable the continued ministry of the Anglican Church of Australia in regional and rural areas where that is not able to be provided by a regional or rural diocese.

24 NOTICES OF MOTION RECEIVED AFTER CONFIRMATION OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR FIRST DAY

24.1 ABM's work in the Middle East

Mr Howard Benson sought leave to re-present the Motion in an amended form. Leave was granted.

Mrs Helen Grainger moved a procedural motion seeking to suspend so much of Standing Orders to enable a non Synod

TO BE CONFIRMED

member to address the Synod for 2 minutes on the motion. More than 10 members stood to object. The procedural motion was lost.

Mr Howard Benson moving, Dr Dianne Rayson seconding

With reference to the ABM report on page 103 of the Reports to Synod Book 4, General Synod:

R103/19 ***Carried***

1. notes the impact the conflict in the Middle East is having on the ministry of the Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East, especially the Al Ahli Hospital and the field clinic at Khan Younis in Gaza;
   a. critical shortages of medicine and medical supplies
   b. critical shortages of food and clean water
   c. an estimated ten thousand children with life changing injuries.
2. encourages the members of General Synod to pray for the work and ministry of the Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East and the work of the Anglican Board of Mission Australia in that diocese.

24.3 Say No to Commercial Surrogacy

The Rev'd Dr Danielle Treweek sought leave to re-present the Motion with the agreed amendments as shown in the business paper. Leave was granted.

Amendment moved from the floor in debate.

Amendment:

Delete subparagraph 2(f)

The President affirmed that the amendment is in Order, and recommended it to be further considered following morning tea

Synod adjourned for morning tea at 10.30am

Synod resumed at 11am

Members of the Minutes Reading Committee reported to the President that the Committee had received copies of the Minutes of Day Four and certified them as correct.

R104/19 The President moved that the Minutes for Day Four be confirmed ***Carried***

Debate on the Amendment continued.

A voice vote was conducted on the amendment. ***Failed***

Debate on the motion in its original form resumed.

The Rev'd Dr Danielle Treweek moving, The Very Rev'd Sandy Grant seconding

R105/19 General Synod:

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1. notes that the Australian Law Reform Commission's (ALRC) Review of Surrogacy Laws (Discussion Paper 89) promotes proposals that, if accepted would move Australian law away from a purely altruistic model of surrogacy as currently legislated;
2. informs the Commonwealth Parliament that it:
   a. affirms that all people, including unborn children in surrogacy arrangements, are made in the image of God, and that their rights must be upheld;
   b. holds the formation of family and the welcoming of children in the highest regard, honours the social significance of gestational and maternal care, and recognises with compassion the pain of infertility;
   c. affirms that children are a gift to be received, not a right to be claimed or a good to be provided, and that no universal right to parenthood has been established in law;
   d. believes children have a natural interest, wherever possible, in knowing their biological and gestational origins and, where in their best interests, being raised by their own biological parents;
   e. deplores the commodification of children and the exploitation of vulnerable women, whether in Australia or overseas, and calls on the Commonwealth Parliament to enhance legislated safeguards for this purpose;
   f. opposes absolutely the legalisation of commercial surrogacy — whether in name or effect — and calls on the Commonwealth Parliament to definitively reject any recommendation to that effect.
3. notes that the ALRC's final report is due to the Attorney-General on September 11, 2026 and thereafter to be tabled in Parliament within 15 sitting days;
4. requests the Primate to write to the Prime Minister, the Attorney-General and the Leader of the Opposition informing them of this resolution by the end of September, 2026.

Carried with acclaim

24.20 Mr Doug Marr

Dr Robert Tong AM moving, Dr Laurie Scandrett seconding

R106/19

General Synod notes that this will most likely be the last General Synod that Mr Doug Marr will attend as a representative of the Diocese of Sydney. Doug was first elected as a Sydney Diocesan Representative to the General Synod in 1987 and attended his first General Synod that same year, the 1987

Carried with acclaim

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Special Session held in the Chapter House in Sydney. He has attended 12 ordinary sessions and two special sessions of General Synod, a total of 14 sessions.

General Synod gives great thanks to God and records its deep appreciation to Doug for his commitment to the national Church, with particular thanks for his many years of service to the Long Service Leave Board and the Audit Committee of the General Synod.

Finally, this Synod wishes Doug God's richest blessing for the future.

24.21 Bishop Mark Calder

The Most Reverend Kanishka Raffel moving, The Most Reverend Jeremy Greaves seconding

R107/19 General Synod notes that Bishop Mark Calder will retire as the Bishop of Bathurst in September this year and therefore records its deep appreciation for his faithful service to the Anglican Church of Australia, and especially for his ministry in the Diocese of Bathurst. ***Carried with acclaim***

Bishop Mark served in parish ministry in the Diocese of Sydney from 1988, in the parishes of Lalor Park and Kings Langley, North Sydney and Roseville. He was subsequently called to the Diocese of Brisbane, where he served as Rector of the Parish of Noosa for more than a decade. From 2014 to 2019 he also served as Area Dean of the Deanery of Sunshine Coast.

Mark has been a member of the General Synod since 2017. In 2019 he was elected as the Bishop of the Diocese of Bathurst, where he has served faithfully as bishop, pastor and leader of a diverse rural and regional diocese.

General Synod gives thanks for Bishop Mark's commitment to the ministry and mission of Christ's Church, and for the pastoral care, wisdom and leadership he has brought to his episcopal ministry.

Synod also gives thanks for the support and partnership of his wife Susan, whose loving and faithful support has been a tremendous blessing to Mark throughout his ministry.

General Synod offers its prayers and warmest good wishes to Bishop Mark and Susan as they enter this new season of life and ministry. Synod prays that God will richly bless them in retirement and in all that lies ahead, and that Mark's years of faithful service will continue to bear fruit for the glory of God and the building up of Christ's Church.

24.22 Bishop Ian Coutts

The Venerable Geoff Chadwick sought leave to re-present the Motion in an amended form. Leave was granted.

TO BE CONFIRMED

The Venerable Geoff Chadwick moving, Dr Renae Barker seconding

R108/19 General Synod notes that Bishop Ian Coutts is retiring in August as the Bishop of Bunbury, bringing to a close many years of faithful ordained ministry in Australia and England. Synod gives thanks to God for his service and records its deep appreciation for the breadth and diversity of his ministry. ***Carried with acclaim***

Bishop Ian began his ordained ministry in the Diocese of Birmingham, serving as Curate of Hamstead St Bernard from 1989 to 1992. He then served for many years in the Diocese of Southwark, first as Vicar of Warlingham with Chelsham and Farleigh from 1992 to 1997, and subsequently in the same parish from 1997 to 2000. He continued to minister in England through permissions to officiate in the Diocese of Southwark from 2000 to 2003 and the Diocese of Oxford from 2003 to 2011. In 2011 he moved into ministry in the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn, receiving authority to officiate while continuing his postgraduate studies completing his PhD in 2015 on the subject of the Family from a Trinitarian theological perspective. He subsequently served in a number of roles which brought together theological education, ministry formation and practical ministry. From 2013 to 2018 he served part-time as Anglicare Parish Partnerships Coordinator for Anglicare ACT, NSW West and South West. From 2014 to 2018 he was also Lecturer in Practical Theology and Ministry Formation Coordinator at St Mark's National Theological Centre.

In 2018 Bishop Ian was elected as the 10th Bishop of Bunbury. Since then he has served the Diocese with distinction, while also contributing to the wider life of the Anglican Church of Australia as the Bunbury representative on the General Synod and on the Safe Church Commission.

General Synod gives thanks for the breadth of Bishop Ian's ministry: for his service in parish ministry, his commitment to theological education and the formation of Christian leaders, his work alongside Anglicare, and his episcopal ministry in Bunbury. His background is social work has been a particular gift to the Church. Synod acknowledges the gifts and experience he has brought to the service of Christ and his Church.

Synod expresses its gratitude for his contribution to the councils of the national Church and for the perspective gained through ministry in both England and Australia.

General Synod offers Bishop Ian its prayers and warmest good wishes as he retires from episcopal ministry. Synod prays that God will richly bless him in this new season of life, giving thanks

TO BE CONFIRMED

for the years in which he has served Christ and his people, and praying that he may know the Lord's continued guidance, joy and peace in the years ahead.

24.23 Bishop Donald Kirk

Dr Laurie Scandrett moving, Mrs Mandy Walsh seconding

R109/19 General Synod notes that this will be the last General Synod attended by the Right Reverend Donald Kirk as Bishop of the Diocese of Riverina, following his announcement of his forthcoming retirement at the end of August after seven years of faithful episcopal ministry to the people and communities of the Riverina. ***Carried with acclaim***

General Synod gives thanks to Almighty God for Bishop Donald's long and devoted ministry in the Anglican Church of Australia, including his ordained service in the Dioceses of Newcastle, Ballarat, Armidale and Grafton, and, since 2019, his ministry as the eleventh Bishop of Riverina.

Synod records its deep appreciation for Bishop Donald's pastoral care, wise leadership, generous collegiality and steady witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, especially in serving a rural and regional diocese marked by great distances, resilient communities and distinctive challenges.

Synod also acknowledges with gratitude Bishop Donald's contribution to the life and councils of the national Church through his participation in the General Synod, and gives thanks for the grace, humility and faithfulness through which he has undertaken that service.

Finally, this Synod assures Bishop Donald and Mrs Camryn Kirk of its prayers and warm good wishes and prays that God will bless them richly in retirement and in all that lies ahead.

The President led Synod in prayer.

24.24 Bishop Chris McLeod

The Rev'd Cameron Burr moving, Bishop Matt Brain seconding

R110/19 General Synod acknowledges and give thanks for the ministry, support, and leadership that Bishop Chris McLeod has provided both to NATSIAC and the Anglican Church of Australia during his eleven years serving as the National Aboriginal Bishop. ***Carried with acclaim***

24.19 Bishop Garry Weatherill

Bishop Michael Stead moving, The Most Reverend Kay Goldsworthy AO seconding

R111/19 General Synod notes that Bishop Garry Weatherill will retire as the Bishop of Ballarat in October this year and therefore this is his last session of the General Synod. Synod thanks God for, and records its deep appreciation for, Bishop Garry's extensive ***Carried with acclaim***

TO BE CONFIRMED

service to the life of the Anglican Church of Australia and beyond.

Bishop Garry was ordained in Adelaide in 1986 and served in the parishes of Brighton, St Peter's Cathedral, St Bede's Semaphore and St Paul's Port Adelaide. He was elected as a member of General Synod in 1995, representing the Diocese of Adelaide.

In 1997, he moved to the Diocese of Willochra to serve as the Ministry Development Office. After serving as Archdeacon of Willochra, then the Administrator of the Diocese, he was elected as the Bishop of Willochra in 2000. In 2011, he was elected as the Bishop of Ballarat.

In a quarter of a century of episcopal ministry, Bishop Garry has not only served with distinction in two dioceses, but has also served in a range of national roles, including:

- Chair of Mission to Seafarers (2004-2011)
- Co-chair of the Anglican / Lutheran Dialogue (2002-2011)
- Episcopal Advisor (Australia) to the Oratory of the Good Shepherd (since 2014)
- Bishop Protector for the Third Order of Society of St Francis (since 2014)
- Warden of The Community of the Holy Name, Cheltenham 2012-2021
- Visitor to the Society of the Sacred Mission 2007-2012
- Visitor the Community of St Barnabas and St Cecilia 2001-2011
- Chair, Advisory Council for Anglican Religious Life in Australia (since 2012)
- Chair, Liturgy Commission of General Synod (2015-2022)
- An Episcopal Member of the Appellate Tribunal (since 2017)

Bishop Garry has also made a long and significant contribution to the work of the Anglican Board of Mission. He commenced as a Board Member in 2006, and was a Director from 2011 to 2022, also serving as Chair from 2015 to 2020.

Since 2014, Bishop Garry has served on the General Synod Standing Committee and its Executive Committee. He has served on innumerable sub-committees and task forces with commitment and grace. Bishop Garry has demonstrated a commitment above and beyond the call of duty, not letting ill-heath or limited mobility prevent him from serving. Garry has often spoken words of wisdom from his years of experience at

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just the right moment, that have altered the course of debate and helpfully resolved an apparently intractable impasse, always with good humour and courtesy.

Bishop Garry has the courage to present contrary positions but also with wisdom, principle, deep thoughtfulness and care for the church. He is respectful of the principles and theological positions of other. He has a thoughtful and reflective understanding of the episcopal vocation.

General Synod offers its prayers and best wishes to Garry on his retirement as Bishop as Ballarat, and prays for God's riches blessing on his continued service of the Lord in his retirement.

TO BE CONFIRMED

24.18 Dr Robert Tong AM

Dr Laurie Scandrett moving, The Hon Justice Debra Mullins AO seconding

R112/19 General Synod, noting that this is likely to be the last session of the General Synod he will attend as a member, gives great thanks to God and records its deep appreciation for the outstanding service of Dr Robert Tong AM to the Anglican Church of Australia and the wider Anglican Communion. ***Carried with acclaim***

Dr Tong was first elected as a Sydney Diocesan Representative to the General Synod in 1979 and attended his first General Synod in 1981. He has attended 14 ordinary sessions and two special sessions of General Synod, a total of 16 sessions.

General Synod acknowledges Robert's deep personal commitment to Christ, his tireless commitment to the ministry and mission of Christ's Church, his dedication to fostering unity and understanding, and his leadership in church governance. Robert has always brought a gospel priority to the issues before him and has encouraged us all to keep Christ front and centre. His knowledge and love of God's word have enabled him to give sage advice when the way forward has not always been as clear to those around him.

General Synod particularly gives thanks for Robert's strategic mind, theological wisdom, an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of church law, and the personal example of faith and integrity he has provided throughout his years of service.

Robert's *"A Member's Guide for General Synod"* has been the handbook many members of the Synod have used to understand the processes and how to participate in what we do.

General Synod also acknowledges with great thanks the many roles that Robert has served the Anglican Church of Australia, including as:

- a member of the General Synod Standing Committee since 1985;
- a member of the Church Law Commission (formerly the Canon Law Commission) since 1994;
- a member of the Panel of Electors of the Primate since 2010;
- a lay representative on the Anglican Consultative Council 1995-2002;
- a member of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Panel of Reference 2005-2008; and

TO BE CONFIRMED

- for some time, the Chancellor of the Diocese of The Murray.

In 2010 Robert was most deservedly awarded an AM *"for service to the Anglican Church of Australia through a range of diocesan and national executive and administrative roles, and to the law as a practitioner and as an academic".*

In all this Robert has been supported by his loving wife, Winsome, and their children Andrew, Peter, James, Michael, Stephen and Sylvia and their families. General Synod gives special appreciation to Winsome and especially acknowledges the generous partnership between the two of them that has allowed Robert to be away so often and involved so much in the affairs of the national Church.

General Synod offers its prayers and best wishes to Robert in his retirement from General Synod, trusting that his example of lay ministry will continue to inspire others to use their gifts and professions to serve God in the years to come. May God raise up many more lay people to follow his example.

24.25 Recognition of Service and Contribution

The Venerable Canon Arthur Copeman moving, Bishop Matt Brain seconding

R113/19 General Synod recognises and gives sincere thanks for the contribution of all those who have made this a well organised, harmonious and constructive session of General Synod, including the Secretaries of the Synod, the Chair and Deputy Chairs of Committees, the Committee of Elections and Qualifications, the Minutes Reading Committee, the Primate's Chaplain, the Primate's Chancellor, the General Secretary, the Staff of the General Synod Office and other staff who have supported the Synod. ***Carried with acclaim***

TO BE CONFIRMED

Bishop Paul Barker gave thanks to the President for his leadership, wisdom and service at Synod and beyond with the following speech:

R114/19

"Mr President, members of synod

I seek leave of synod to move a motion of thanks for the Presidency of the Primate at this General Synod. Bishop Jeremy James is seconding this motion.

Mr President, you have steered this Test to the fifth day with calmness, grace and good humour. Perhaps the pitch was fairly benign, not too much for the spin to get a grip. You didn't need the third umpire, Mr Vero very often. We didn't need to resort to the Bairstow 'moral victory' claims because you adjudicated even-handedly.

Some of us may feel Warne, some Warner than others. My Head is full. But we kept away from the Border of all out Waugh. We survived with little Paine. You have drawn us to Chappells, with Noble Grace, and Taylor-made this synod for us. That has been a Boon, that is Starc to see, a Lyon-hearted performance. We pray you have good rest in the days aHead, whether on the Green, in a Marsh, or having a Wade in the water when you return North with your Love.

(I can't work out how to pun Labuschagne or Khawaja, but there were 18 cricketers in that previous paragraph!)

Mark, we thank God for your leadership and good grace. Thank you."

The President gave thanks to all Synod members and attendees.
The President declared General Synod closed with a blessing.

Synod adjourned with Grace at 12.08pm.

President

TO BE CONFIRMED

Date

Minutes of the Fifth day of the Nineteenth General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia on Friday 14 August 2026

Confirmed by Minutes Reading Committee:

Name _____ _____

Name _____ _____

TO BE CONFIRMED