

CONFIRMED Minutes of the Meeting

Thursday 25 June – Saturday 27 June 2026

Thursday 25 June 2026

WELCOME TO COUNTRY

Jordan Sumner officiated a welcome to Kurna country in Kurna language for the 2026 Synod.

WORSHIP

The Moderator and Worship Team led the session with a Call to Worship, the song 'Come Christians Join to Sing' and 'How great is our God'. The band Sevenfold opened the meeting with the song 'Surprised by Joy'. A prayer of praise and thanksgiving was offered followed by a Bible Reading from 1 Thessalonians 5:12-24 with reflection and Prayers of Intercession. Rev Uncle Ken Sumner offered a reflection 'welding together by Spirit' and led the meeting into an indigenous deep listening technique 'dadirri'. Rev John Hughes led our Intercessions incorporating the song. 'O Lord Hear My Prayer'. Worship concluded with the singing of 'For You Deep Stillness' as a blessing

Session 1 – Plenary

The Moderator welcomed everyone to the Synod with particular acknowledgement of:

- Andrew Johnson (Assembly General Secretary ex officio member of Synod)
- Rev Dr Sefarosa Caorroll (Bible Study Leader)
- Rev Stu Cameron (Resourcing presenter on Gambling Reform)
- Rev Bruce Moore (Moderator, Queensland Synod).

The Moderator also acknowledged and welcomed the following Members who are new to the Synod of SA:

- Rev Vicki Aitken
- Rev John Dansie
- Rev Emily Hayes

The Moderator acknowledged first time members to the Synod Meeting who were welcomed with acclamation.

The General Secretary presented Proposal 1.

Proposal 1: PROCEDURAL (Deliberative & Decision)

Proposed by the General Secretary Rev Philip Gardner and Associate General Secretary Governance & Operations, Rev Sue Page

Presented by Rev Philip Gardner who highlighted significant matters in Proposal 1 to the meeting

S26.01 The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) to:

1.
 - a. ADOPT standing orders and rules of debate as set out in 'A Manual for Meetings in the Uniting Church', as recorded in the Constitution and Regulations, 2025 edition. (Reg. 3.8.4)
 - b. APPROVE that the style of decision making shall be by the use of coloured cards unless a secret ballot is called for by the Moderator.
 - c. AGREE that in the event that a procedural motion for the council to move into "Private sitting" is carried by a simple majority then ALL those who are not members of the Council must leave the meeting. The required Uniting Technology and Synod staff will be able to remain to execute their respective tasks.
 - d. DETERMINE that all discussions or decisions will be conducted in ways which comply with the Church's responsibilities under the "Synod Work Health and Safety Corporate Policy and Procedures" and the Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act 2012 (SA).
2. NOTE that at the beginning of each session the Moderator will deal with the business coming before the house in the following order:
 - a. Minutes of any meeting requiring to be approved or confirmed.
 - b. Letters or other communications to be received.
 - c. Reports from the Business Committee or other special committee appointed by the Synod.
 - d. Confirmation or variation of the proposed hours of session and order of the day.
 - e. Formal Business.
 - f. The order of the day.
3. RECEIVE all reports as provided (electronic and hard copy) in the Reports and Business Papers of the Synod of South Australia 25 – 27 June 2026 and supplements thereto.
4. NOTE that:
 - a. Questions relating to the proposals brought before the Synod by the Business Committee will be answered at the time when the proposals are being considered by a plenary session of the Synod.
 - b. Questions relating to the reports and proposals which are not considered by a plenary session of Synod because of time constraints will be referred along with the particular proposals to the Synod Standing Committee.
 - c. Comments and/or questions from the floor and replies to questions shall be limited to three (3) minutes unless otherwise determined by the house.

5. DETERMINE that the Roll shall only contain the names of those members listed on the roll present at the meeting at 10.15am on Thursday 25 June 2026, or those who have advised the Synod Event Manager of extenuating circumstances that prevent them arriving by this time.
6. DEFINE the boundaries of the house to be the main auditorium of the Adelaide West Uniting Church, and the creche.
7. ADOPT the Hours of Session as listed hereunder:

Sessions 1 – 5	Thursday 25 June 2026 9:00am – 6:00pm
Sessions 6 – 11	Friday 26 June 2026 9.00am – 8.30pm
Sessions 12 – 14	Saturday 27 June 2026 9.00am – 4.00pm
8. APPOINT the following officers for this Synod meeting:
 - a. Assistant Secretaries: Rev Travis Turner, Anna Wilson, Rev Sue Page
 - b. Minute Secretaries: Michelle Cavallaro, Johanne Manning
 - c. Chief Scrutineer: Anne Wilson Ballot Scrutineer: Peter Wilson
 - d. Chaplains Rev Beth Seaman, Rev Mark Dickens
 - e. Business Committee
 - Moderator, Rev Peter Morel
 - General Secretary, Rev Philip Gardner
 - Event Manager, Rev Sue Page
 - Rev Travis Turner
 - Anna Wilson
 - Event Coordinator, Gina Tickner
 - Minute taker, Silvana Marveggio
 - f. Facilitation Team
 - Malcolm Wilson (Convenor)
 - Jacob Blackwell
 - Dr Valerie Aloa
 - Rev Naomi Duke
 - g. First Aid Officers: Dr Joanna Palmer, Dr Lawrie Palmer
9. ASSOCIATE the following people with the meeting for the purposes of participating in the meeting: (presenting reports and proposals and report electives).
 - Rev Gary Stuckey (Moderator's Chaplain)
 - Presentation to plenary: David Shepherd (Environmental Action Group)
 - Mark Lee (Uniting Venues SA)
 - Peter Murchland (RCOC)
 - Electives: Andrew Fechner, Karen Granger, Alice Hammer, Matt Wilson, Astrid Kuivasaari and Wayne Booth.
10. CO-OPT the following people to membership of the Synod: Rev Sue Page (Associate General Secretary (G & O); Rev Christa Megaw.

11. DECLARE that proposals be dealt with in the following order:
 - a. Those which must be dealt with by Synod in full session which cannot be referred (in an order decided by the Business Committee).
 - b. Those which arrive by 5pm on Friday 15 May 2026 (in an order decided by the Business Committee).
 - c. All others (in an order decided by the Business Committee).
12. ADOPT the following procedure in respect of ballots:
 - a. Note that nominations for all councils, committees and boards will close at 3.30 pm on Thursday 25 June 2026.
 - b. Agree that any necessary ballots be held during the meeting with ballots conducted electronically via Election Buddy with secure links sent to members at a time determined by the Business Committee and that ballots will close at a time to be determined by Business Committee.
13. ASK that proposals with costing implications:
 - a. include a process for raising new revenue and/or
 - b. be submitted to the next year's budget process to be determined by Synod and/or
 - c. be submitted to annual Synod grant processes.

Proposal 2: MINISTERIAL MATTERS (Deliberative & Decision)

Proposed by the Associate General Secretary, Placements & Safe Church, Rev Andrew Robertson and Associate General Secretary, Rev Sue Page

Presented by Rev Andrew Robertson and passed as Decision **S26.02**

The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) to AFFIRM the record of Ministerial Matters from November 2024 to June 2026:

1.	Deacons	Received by Admission	Generate Presbytery Rev Prof Bart Bruehler
2	Ministers of the Word	Received by Ordination	Generate Presbytery Rev David Sigley Rev Elissa Inglis Rev Travis Turner
		Received by Admission	Presbytery of Southern SA Rev Craig Schultz

Ministers who have retired since the last Synod Meeting

Wimala Presbytery

Rev Wendy Prior

Presbytery of Southern SA

Rev Dean Davidson

Rev Dr Craig de Vos

Rev Ian Dow

Rev Prof Andrew Dutney

Rev Dieter Engler

Rev Dr Sean Gilbert

Rev Dr Kyoung-Soo Oh

Rev Malcolm Rawlings

Generate Presbytery

Rev Trevor Faggotter

Rev David Prior

Transfers into
Synod of SA**Generate Presbytery**Rev John Dansie from the Synod of Queensland
(Defence Force Chaplain)

Rev Emily Hayes from the Northern Synod

Rev Joanne Smalbil (retired) from Synod of NSW/ACT

Presbytery of Southern SA

Rev Jenny Ducker from the Synod of NSW/ACT

Rev Vicki Aitken from the Northern Synod

Rev Cathie Lambert from the Synod of WA

Wimala Presbytery

Rev Tony Goodluck (on retirement) from the Northern Synod

Transfers out of the
Synod of SA

Rev Angela Smith to the Synod of NSW/ACT – Riverina Presbytery

Returned to the
Synod of SA

Rev Shelley Alexander

Proposal 3: IN MEMORIAM (Deliberative & Decision)

Proposed by the Moderator, Rev Peter Morel and the General Secretary Rev Philip Gardner

Presented by the General Secretary, Rev Philip Gardner and led in prayer by the Moderator, Rev Peter Morel. Passed as decision **S26.03**

The Synod of SA RESOVLED (by consensus) to STAND in silence to acknowledge the ministry of the following Ministers who have died since the 2024 Meeting of the Synod, and in gratitude to God for their contribution to the ministry and mission of the Uniting Church:

Rev Gowan Armstrong
 Elizabeth Anne Haslam (Specified Ministry of Lay Pastor)
 Rev Thelma Frances Holmes
 Rev Elaine Valerie Hosking (Deacon)
 Rev Eric Kirkham
 Rev John Howard Magor
 Rev Norah Aliene Norris
 Rev Trevor John Oates
 Rev Ruth Sylvia Threapleton
 Rev Robin John Trebilcock
 Rev Robert Edgar Stephen Williams
 Rev Brian Ross Zeitz

AND FORMALLY RECOGNISE the extensive number of people who have faithfully offered lay leadership and who have died since the 2024 Meeting of the Synod.

Proposal 12: MINUTE OF APPRECIATION - UCFAMS COMMITTEE (Deliberative & Decision)

Proposed by the Moderator, Rev Peter Morel and the Executive Officer: Mission Resourcing Rev Jenni Hughes

Rev Jenni Huges gave a verbal presentation of Proposal 12 to the meeting highlighting the great works of the Ministry.

S26.12 The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) to:

1. RECORD its deep appreciation for the faithful service and ministry of the Uniting Church Fellowship and Mission Support (UCFAMS) Committee within the life of the Synod of South Australia.
2. ACKNOWLEDGE with gratitude the significant contribution of UCFAMS over many years in enriching the life and witness of the Church through ministries of encouragement, connection, support, and service amongst congregations and communities.
3. GIVE THANKS to God for the commitment, wisdom, and generosity of Committee members, office bearers, volunteers, and supporters who through their service, have encouraged fellowship, mutual care, mission engagement, and the strengthening of Christian community across the Church and wider community;
4. RECOGNISE the contribution and legacy of UCFAMS along with the continued recognition of Adult Fellowships and mission ministries across the Synod of South Australia.

MODERATOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT (Information)

Presented by Rev Sue Page

Convenor of the Moderator Nominating Committee Rev Sue Page presented the report and expressed thanks to the Committee members and the nominees for their participation in the process. They led the Synod through the ballot process and introduced each of the three nominees: Rev Dianne Holden, Rev Rebecca Purling and Prof Ian Olver for Moderator-elect to speak on their vision for the role of Moderator in South Australia.

Rev Sue Page declared the ballot for Moderator-elect open at 11.00am. The ballot closure was extended to 11.45am due to technical issues. A second ballot for Moderator-elect was announced with candidates Rev Dianne Holden and Prof Ian Olver opening at 12.30 closing at 1.15pm.

The Moderator declared the ballot for Moderator-elect at 2.45pm on advice of the results from Chief Scrutineer Mrs Anne Wilson, Professor Ian Olver was declared. After a short thank you from Prof Olver the Moderator led the meeting in prayer.

Session 2 – Plenary**ASSEMBLY REPORT** (Information)

Presented by the Assembly General Secretary, Andrew Johnson

A video from the President of the Assembly, Charissa Suli was presented to the members thanking the Moderator and the Synod leaders, congregations and communities for the faithful witness, partnership and ministry in the church's life. They are attending the 200-year celebration of Christianity in the Church of Tonga at this time and offered apology for their absence. In their travels, she advised that there are many in multicultural communities and the younger generation seeking to speak truth, listen deeply and make space for us to walk together.

Andrew Johnson gave a presentation introducing the National Director of Uniting World, the National Director of Frontier Services, and the CEO of UnitingCare Australia with a profile on each of the agencies concluding with the six priorities of the National Assembly UCA. They noted that we are now officially in the 50th Anniversary year, with the 18th Assembly being held in July 2027 at the Adelaide Town Hall along with a specific event to celebrate the anniversary during the Assembly and other celebrations throughout the year. The Past Moderator honoured those members who are contributing to Assembly and led the meeting in prayer.

GENERAL SECRETARY REPORT (Information)

Presented by the General Secretary, Rev Philip Gardner

Rev Philip Gardner presented an overview of the report tabled including highlights from the Trans-Tasman General Secretaries Conference at Uluru and the 13th Quadrennial Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. The Past Moderator invited questions and comments and then led the meeting in prayer.

PLACEMENTS & SAFE CHURCH REPORT (Information)

Presented by the Associate General Secretary, Placements & Safe Church Rev Andrew Robertson

Rev Andrew Robertson introduced the Safe Church Conference to be held in Adelaide hosted by the Synod Placements & Safe Church Team 19-21 August 2026, they invited the membership to attend, promote the event or sponsor a congregation member to attend and gave a summary of the report tabled. A video was presented to the Synod exploring 'church planting' in South Australia.

MODERATOR REPORT (Information)

Presented by the Moderator, Rev Peter Morel

The Moderator Rev Peter Morel gave a summary of the report tabled indicating the key aspects of the PROK trip to South Korea and the flourishing relationships found journeying together. He shared upcoming plans for the 50th Anniversary celebrations. The Past Moderator thanked the Moderator and led the meeting in prayer.

Session 3 - Plenary**Proposal 9: SYNOD STRATEGIC PLAN** (Information)

Proposed by Rev Philip Gardner, General Secretary and Rev Andrew Robertson, Associate General Secretary, Placements and Safe Church

Rev Philip Gardner presented the Synod Strategic Plan 2026-2030 to the Synod in an information only session. He advised the members that they would have an opportunity to participate in working group conversations on the Strategic Plan as listed in the program for the Synod. Questions and feedback were directed to the working groups later in the program.

Proposal 8: CALD ACTION PLAN (Information)

Proposed by Rev Paul Turley and Rev Cyrus Kung

Rev Cyrus Kung directed members to proposal 8 tabled and invited deep listening 'dadirri' as he led the meeting through the detail within. Paul Turley gave examples from local congregations that are living the journey of working together.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION GROUP (Information)

Proposed by David Shepherd

David Sheperd presented a report on the Environmental Action Group highlighting the UCA National Climate Justice Network who has nominated Queensland Synod to set national standards to monitor and measure the progress to the Net Zero 2040 target. Examples of actions within Synod of SA congregations were presented along with funding opportunities to initiate projects, concluding with an invitation to the Synod to consider the tasks ahead.

Session 4 – Working Group (Session 1)

The Synod met in facilitated working groups to consider the Synod Strategic Plan 2026-2030 and the CALD Action Plan tabled. The Facilitation Group will collate responses and recommendations to present to Synod as indicated in the program.

Session 5 - Plenary

CELEBRATION OF MINISTRY SERVICE

Proposed by the Moderator Rev Peter Morel and the General Secretary Rev Philip Gardner

RECOGNITION OF UCFAMS COMMITTEE AND ADULT FELLOWSHIPS

Committee Members were invited forward to be recognised. The Moderator read the Minute of Appreciation that had been resolved (Decision 26.02) earlier in the day and gave thanks in prayer.

The Celebration of Ministry service recognised and honoured the following:

Lay Pastors celebrating significant milestones: 30th Anniversary Brian Tugwell

Ministers and Deacons Celebrating Significant Milestones

20 th Anniversary of Ordination	Rev Ross Honey
	Rev Ian Dow
	Rev Diane Bury
	Rev Judi Hartwig
	Rev David Williamson
	Rev Andrew Hogarth
	Rev Malcolm Rawlings
	Rev Alison Whish
	Rev Janice McWhinney
30 th Anniversary of Ordination	Rev Susan Langhans
	Rev Robert Hutchinson
	Rev Peter Morel
	Rev Christine Garner
	Rev Vikki Waller
40 th Anniversary of Ordination	Rev Andrew Diprose
	Rev Dr Kyoung-Soo Oh
	Rev Philip Gardner
	Rev John Deer
	Rev Angela Smith
50 th Anniversary of Ordination	Rev Rod James
	Rev Edwin Curnow
	Rev Dr Graham Vawser
60 th Anniversary of Ordination	Rev Lewis Kelsall
	Rev Don Bell

Lay Preachers Celebrating Significant Milestones

30 th Anniversary	Gladys Fleming Louise Perry Chris Thornton Helen Baker
40 th Anniversary	Neville Pope Tina Lee
50 th Anniversary	Colin Beaton David Carver John Howland Campbell Menzies Jim Hayward
70 th Anniversary	Don Hopgood
80 th Anniversary	Geoff Pike

RECOGNITION OF ORDINATIONS SINCE SYNOD 2024

Rev Elissa Inglis, Rev Travis Turner, and Rev David Sigley

ADMISSION AS A UNITING CHURCH MINISTER (DEACON)

Rev Prof Bart Bruehler

RECOGNITION OF CURRENT CANDIDATES

Jacob Blackwell	Pietta Brown
Alicia Burns	Jethro Buxton
Emelia Haskey	Max Kowalick
Ashlee Littleford	Nina Luscombe
Denis Msema	Dan Phan
Kaitlyn Phillips	Susy Plein
Isaac Prior (Deacon)	Nathan Pullman
Kingson Selvaraj	Simon Story

RECOGNITION OF MINISTERS RETIRING

Rev Dean Davidson	Rev Dr Craig De Vos
Rev Ian Dow	Rev Prof Andrew Dutney
Rev Dieter Engler	Rev Trevor Faggotter
Rev Dr Sean Gilbert	Rev Dr John Oh
Rev Wendy Prior	Rev David Prior
Rev Malcolm Rawlings	

Friday 26 June 2026

The Moderator opened the meeting and Rev Elissa Inglis welcomed everyone with an Acknowledgement of Country.

WORSHIP & BIBLE STUDY

The Moderator and Worship Team led the session with a Call to Worship, the band Sevenfold opened worship leading the meeting in songs 'Goodness of God' and 'Yet not I, but through Christ in Me'. A prayer was offered. The Bible Reading was Joshua 2:1-24 with reflection and prayers to conclude. Rev Dr Seforosa Carroll led Bible Study 'Rahab: Notoriety, Resistance and Hospitality' using Scripture Joshua 2 (main text) Matthew 1:5, Hebrews 11:31, James 2:25.

Session 6 - Plenary**GAMBLING REFORM** (Information)

Proposed by Stu Cameron and Scott Litchfield

A warning on triggering content with support service contacts was initiated prior to the presentation by Stu Cameron. The presentation was in information only session with workshops scheduled later in the program.

Stu Cameron delivered a presentation supporting the Gambling Reform proposal with national statistics and stories. Scott Litchfield provided information focusing on specific data regarding gambling harm in South Australia.

MISSION AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT REPORT**Uniting College for Leadership & Theology** (Information)

Proposed by Executive Officer and Principal UCLT, Rev Prof Vicky Balabanski

Rev Prof Vicky Balabanski gave a presentation to support the report tabled highlighting new programs and pathways, Being offered at UCLT. Rev Prof Bart Bruehler spoke to learning pathways open to everyone such as 'Exploring the Old Testament', Dr Toar Hutagalung is engaged in a podcast project with Mission Resourcing around Ecotheology, Rev Dr Cathie Lamgert is offering a Graduate Certificate in Spiritual Care including a topic 'Faith in a Fractured World' and Dr Rosemary Dewerse spoke to the Doctor of Professional Practice, engaging in deep work with Yarta Wandatha and Kungan Kaldowinyeri on offer.

Mission Resourcing (Information) - deferred to Saturday Program

INTRODUCTION TO BALLOT (Information)

Proposed by Associate General Secretary, Governance & Operations Rev Sue Page

Rev Sue Page introduced the ballot process. Ballots were declared open at 11.00am and closed at 4.00pm. Nominees are tabled for: Synod Standing Committee and Placements Committee Chair.

The ballot was recalled due to an error on the ballot at 11.30am and declared re-opening at 11.45am.

Session 7 - Plenary**Proposal 5: PREVENTION OF FAMILY & SEXUAL VIOLENCE** (Deliberative & Decision)

Proposed by Rev Jenni Hughes and Dr Joanna Palmer

Rev Jenni Hughes started with a safety trigger warning, advised of prayer room and support services accessible to contact. Synod Chaplain, Rev Beth Seaman was present in the prayer room to offer support to any members who needed it.

Rev Jenni Huges and Dr Joanna Palmer gave a presentation on the Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Report (SA August 2025) with key learnings on the prevalence of domestic, family and sexual violence, exploring the role Synod of SA could play in the state-wide response to the work of the Royal Commission.

The Moderator led the meeting through the deliberation process to decision.

The session was concluded in prayer led by Rev Jenni Hughes and the Moderator.

S26.05 The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) to:

1. ACKNOWLEDGE AND LAMENT all occurrences of domestic, family and sexual violence, including those times that the church, or members of the church, may be complicit in such acts.
2. REQUEST the Moderator write to the Minister for Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence to AFFIRM the work of the Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence and AFFIRM the government engagement with faith-based organisations, in particular, the Uniting Church.
3. REQUEST the Moderator and Justice Mission and Theology COMMIT to engaging in the response to the Royal Commission through working ecumenically, and in partnership with the public, not-for-profit and private sectors in prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence.
4. REQUEST Mission Resourcing, with Justice, Mission and Theology, RESOURCE congregations, members and leaders to increase visibility of services and accessibility of information and support through sharing of information, highlighting referral services, Break the Silence Sunday and other worship resources.
5. REQUEST Mission Resourcing, with Justice, Mission and Theology, EQUIP leaders and members to be aware of governance structures, theologies, texts, and pastoral practices that perpetuate and normalise domestic, family and sexual violence.
6. COMMIT the South Australian Synod to including prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence in education for ministers, church leaders and members by including DFSV as a topic in a Formation Days, Code of Ethics refresher, Ministers' Day and training forums accessible to the wider church and community.

7. COMMEND AND PROMOTE the ongoing work of organisations in association with the Uniting Church in provision of prevention, crisis and support services for victim-survivors and people who use violence and the recent and ongoing work of the Uniting Church Assembly and Synod of SA by drawing upon existing resources and programs for referral, prevention, education and training.
8. REQUEST the Justice, Mission & Theology Subcommittee reports at least annually through Mission and Leadership Development Board to the Synod Standing Committee on the progress and response to the commitments of this proposal.

Session 8 – Working Groups (Session 2)

Facilitated working groups were held at various locations around Adelaide West Uniting Church & Yarthu Apinhi on Gambling Reform (Proposal 5).

Session 9 – Electives

Members selected to attend one of the two report elective sessions listed

Report Elective	Contact
Mission Resourcing	Jenni Hughes
Justice Mission & Theology	Paul Turley & Jenni Hughes
Safe Seen Strong Sharing our call to move beyond compliance	Andrew Robertson
Understanding Neurodiversity	Anna Wilson
Uniting College for Leadership & Theology	Vicky Balabanski
Financial Report for 2025	Andrew Fechner
Property Q&A	Matt Wilson & Astrid Kuivasaari
HR Induction, Onboarding and effective supervision Q&A	Karen Granger
Uniting Care (Aged Care)	Mark Waters
Uniting Foundation	Alice Hammer
Work Health & Safety	Wayne Booth

Session 10 – Plenary

FACILITATION TEAM REPORT (Information)

Presented by the facilitation team as listed in Proposal 1

The facilitation team provided a summary of discussions which were undertaken by the working groups. The range of feedback, comments and perspectives were presented in relation to proposals:

- Proposal 9 – Synod Strategic Plan 2026-2030
- Proposal 8 – CALD Action Plan

The team were thanked for their contribution and the meeting then moved into the deliberative process for the proposals tabled.

Proposal 8: CALD ACTION PLAN (Deliberative & Decision)

Proposed by Rev Paul Turley & Rev Cyrus Kung

The Synod Action Plan for becoming a flourishing CALD and Intercultural Church 2026-2030 proposal was presented to Synod by Rev Cyrus Kung and Rev Paul Turley. The Moderator led the meeting through the deliberation process to decision.

S26.08 The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) to:

1. ACKNOWLEDGE with gratitude the work undertaken through the Synod Action Plan for Becoming a CALD and Intercultural Church: 2022–2025, including the report to the Mission and Leadership Development Board (October 2025), (Appendix 2) and RECOGNISE the continuing relevance of the Mapping Intercultural Neighbourhoods in SA survey (2021).
2. REAFFIRM its commitment, as expressed in the 2012 Synod resolution, to the Assembly statements: We Are a Multicultural Church (1985); A Church for All God's People (2006); and One Body, Many Members (2012), as guiding theological and practical frameworks.
3. ENDORSE the Synod Action Plan for Becoming a Flourishing CALD and Intercultural Church (2026–2030) as the Synod's strategic framework, and its implementation through a CALD and Intercultural Ministry Community of Practice, facilitated by Mission Resourcing under the oversight of the Mission and Leadership Development Board (MLDB).
4. CALL UPON all Synod bodies, presbyteries, congregations, faith communities, and associated organisations to implement relevant actions of the Action Plan within their contexts.

Proposal 9: SYNOD STRATEGIC PLAN (Deliberative & Decision)

Proposed by Rev Philip Gardner

The Moderator led the meeting through the deliberation process to decision.

S26.09 The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) to:

1. ADOPT the Synod Strategic Plan 2026 – 2030.
2. REQUEST congregations, presbyteries, boards, committees, and synod ministry centres put the Strategic Plan into action by developing and implementing goals.
3. REQUEST Synod Ministry Centres report on implementation of the Strategic Plan to Synod Standing Committee twice yearly.
4. REQUEST congregations and presbyteries, boards and committees report on implementation of the Strategic Plan annually.

Proposal 11: MISSION AND PROPERTY STRATEGY REPORT (Deliberative & Decision)

Proposed by Rev Sue Page and Rev Steph Tai

Rev Sue Page (Chairperson, MAPS Working Group) and Rev Steph Tai (MAPS Project Officer Data Analysis) presented the MAPS Strategy Report outlining the mission of the working group, its activities since Synod 2024 and the key learnings from the MAPS Questionnaire data.

The Moderator led the meeting through the deliberation whereby the proposal was held until the following day's program for further deliberation and decision.

NCLS – NATIONAL CHURCH LIFE SURVEY PRESENTATION (Information)

Proposed by the Mission Resourcing Team

Rev Nick Patselis presented on the 2026 National Church Life Survey that the Synod of SA will be participating in. The Mission Resourcing team went through the purpose and the process and invited membership to register to serve as a contact agent for their congregation in the foyer and through contacting the team via email mr@sa.uca.org.au

The Moderator concluded the members session for the day with a prayer and encouraged attendance to hear Rev Stu Cameron at the public session at 7pm.

Session 11 – Public Session

Stu Cameron, CEO of Syndey's Wesley Mission delivered a talk available to the wider public

'The Whole Gospel: Evangelism, Justice and the Mission of God: Good News and Gambling Reform'

Saturday 27 June 2026**WELCOME & WORSHIP**

The Moderator opened the meeting and the Worship team led with the songs 'Holy, Holy. Holy (Nicaea)' and 'Living Hope' and Bible reading Romans 12: 9-21 NRSV. Rev Dr Seforosa Carroll led Bible Study 'Beyond "All Are Welcome" Hospitality that Transforms'.

Session 12 – Plenary**UAICC Report** (Information)

Presented by Rev Ken Sumner

Rev Ken Sumner gave a summary of the report tabled highlighting the change of Congress SA Chairperson with Sean Weetra moving to the Victorian Synod. Uncle Ken introduced Jordan Sumner who spoke on programs, ministries and communities active within the Congress of SA, honouring the memory of Auntie Dawn's ministry and service in the Murraylands. Rev Hohaia Matthews invited Māori sisters to stand for welcome Māori Language. Hohaia and Jordan then

offered a song in language and then led the meeting in a collective 'Let it Shine' song. Melissa Thompson led all members in song. Jordan Sumner gave a report on the Anangu Congregation at Salisbury North, the only service in first language in SA. Rhanee Lester spoke to the meeting on Pt Augusta ministry and Jordan acknowledged a felt presence of Aunty Denise honouring her 40 years of ministry. Ian Dempster gave an update on the Oodnadatta opening and Bush Chaplaincy in Congress and highlighted the account written by Rev David Houston in the Uniting History Newsletter.

Members were invited to provide direct support for Congress youth and young adults (18-35 years old) through the '2026 Pilgrimage of Healing Appeal' where they will attend the President's 'Held Together Conference' in the Blue Mountains January 2027.

Proposal 4: GAMBLING REFORM (Deliberative & Decision)

Proposed by Scott Litchfield and Christa Megaw

Scott Litchfield started with a safety trigger warning, advised of retreat room and chaplain services accessible to the meeting. Christa Megaw also spoke to the proposal. The Moderator led the meeting through the deliberation process to decision.

S26.04 The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) to:

1. ENGAGE with the issues of gambling harm and gambling reform as a major Synod focus for 2026–2028, by REQUESTING the Justice, Mission and Theology Subcommittee (JMT) of the Mission and Leadership Development Board (MLDB) to establish a Gambling Reform Task Group to lead, coordinate, and support the Synod's response and implementation of this resolution.
2. ENCOURAGE presbyteries, congregations, and faith communities to support gambling reform activities, to participate in Gambling Harm Action Week each October, and to promote education, awareness, and pastoral support for individuals and communities experiencing gambling-related harm.
3. ESTABLISH a prayer network linked with the Gambling Reform prayer initiative of Wesley Mission New South Wales, recognising the pastoral and spiritual dimensions of addressing gambling harm.
4. JOIN the Alliance for Gambling Reform and actively participate in its coordinated advocacy and collaboration at state and national levels.
5. ADVOCATE in coalition with relevant community service organisations and peak bodies, to the South Australian Government for increased and better-targeted funding for services addressing gambling harm, including an integrated public health response, financial counselling, treatment and recovery services, and education initiatives, with particular attention to communities experiencing disproportionate harm.
6. ADVOCATE independently and through the Assembly, for a comprehensive public health response at the national level, including:

- a. a complete ban on gambling advertising, particularly to protect children and young people, and
 - b. the establishment of a robust, well-resourced, and independent national gambling regulatory framework.
7. PETITION the South Australian (SA) government to amend the operating hours of poker machines (Electronic Gaming Machines) in SA to enforce a shutdown from midnight to 10.00am every night of the week.

Session 13 – Plenary

Mission Resourcing (Information)

Presented by Executive Officer: Mission Resourcing, Rev Jenni Hughes

Rev Jenni Hughes presented with an introduction to the Mission Resourcing Team 'Mission Activators', the MLD (Mission & Leadership Development) Framework and the various projects within the Mission Resourcing throughout the year.

UNITING VENUES SA REPORT (Information) Presented by Mark Lee

Group Manager, Mark Lee gave a presentation outlining the venues and programs that form part of Uniting Venues SA, its mission statement, reporting obligations and composition of staff, volunteers, programs and participants engaging with UVSA. There was an update on key projects and maintenance schedules along with staff recognition and the introduction of the UVSA Ministry and Business Plan 2026-2029.

WIMALA PRESBYTERY REPORT (Information)

Presented by Rev Dianne Holden (Chairperson) and Amy Duke (Secretary)

Wimala Presbytery reported on signs of flourishing across the region through its theme of "Gather, Connect, Go." Highlights included the tenth anniversary of the Nuriootpa Community Kitchen, the Pentecost merger of Elizabeth Grove and IPPC, community engagement initiatives such as Spicer's "Craft in the Park" and Semaphore's community lunch, and innovative ministry partnerships between Morialta and Kimba Uniting Churches through shared worship across distance. The Presbytery also noted the completion of its Review process and its ongoing focus on leadership development, lay and ordained ministry pathways, and investment in younger generations. The report affirmed that flourishing is being expressed in diverse ways through community, relationships and mission across the Presbytery.

PRESBYTERY OF SOUTHERN SA REPORT (Information)

Presented by Bronte Wilson (Chairperson) and Christopher McWhirter-Whitlock

Presbytery of Southern SA shared their vision of being *connected to Christ, connected to congregations, and connected to community*. A range of initiatives supporting this vision were shared in the presentation including the Effective Church Councils and Leaders Seminar held in

April 2026 and the Principles of Church Renewal seminars led by Rev Dr Tim Hein, which have strengthened leadership and governance across the Presbytery. Stories of faithful ministry from congregations and the many leaders serving faithfully across the Presbytery were shared.

GENERATE PRESBYTERY REPORT (Information)

Presented by Scott Button (Chairperson) and Steph Tai (Secretary)

Generate Presbytery reported on the development of its Strategic Plan, centred on seeing people come to faith in Jesus, growing passionate disciples, raising courageous leaders, and planting and renewing churches. Key initiatives include evangelism and discipleship resources, Kairos gatherings, leadership pathways, mission planning, and church planting. The Presbytery celebrated several encouraging signs of growth, including a Chairpersons' Retreat, three ordinations, the planting of three new faith communities, the transition of Golgotha Faith Community to congregational status, and the ongoing success of Hub Gatherings. The report also acknowledged the challenges of congregational closures alongside stories of renewal and new vitality in smaller congregations. Appreciation was expressed for the strong relationships shared with other Presbyteries and for the staff and volunteers whose leadership and service support the Presbytery's mission.

Proposal 6: MISSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL (Deliberative & Decision)

Presented by Bronte Wilson and Rev Paul Turley

On conclusion of the presentation by Bronte Wilson and Rev Paul Turley the Moderator led the meeting through the deliberation process. After significant deliberation it was agreed to defer decision until the next session.

Session 14 – Plenary

RELIEF CENTRE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (RCOC) REPORT (Information)

Presented by Mark Waters and Peter Murchland

Peter Murchland took the meeting through a history of the formation of the Relief Centre Oversight Committee (RCOC) operating in a broad landscape within South Australia. They meet quarterly. Mark Waters shared examples of God's Grace in the RCOC work and an update on the John Lodge Trust Fund Grants welcoming applications to support people who are in need.

Updated Proposal 6: MISSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL (Deliberative & Decision)

Presented by the General Secretary

The Moderator led the meeting through deliberation and decision.

S26.06 The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) that:

1. Proposal 6 be REFERRED to the Synod Standing Committee with particular attention to point 3 (with "REQUIRE" changed to REQUEST) to collaboratively develop a Guide.

Proposal 6: That the Synod resolve to:

1. RECOGNISE the Uniting Church's long-term missional aim of supporting the disadvantaged in society.
2. AFFIRM the commitments expressed in the Uniting Church Statements to the Nation of 1977 and 1988, which pledged the Church to work to alleviate poverty.
3. REQUIRE the Synod Standing Committee to oversee the development of a guide to mission-motivated development that assists congregations and others navigate the path towards the approval of a new project.
4. REQUIRE the Standing Committee to make alterations to the Property By-Law (18.5) and other By-Laws as necessary, to recognise the Mission-motivated Development process and the engagement of Congregations and Presbyteries in the application of Regulation 4.11.10 Classifying Property for Alternative Missional Use.
5. REQUEST all relevant councils of the church to engage in a mission-motivated development conversation when a property is considered no longer needed for its current missional purpose, and no other council of the church has a missional use for the property. These conversations, informed by the mission-motivated development guide, will occur before the property is dealt with by the Synod's process for managing surplus properties.
6. DETERMINE that when, as a result of mission-motivated development not proceeding, and the property is subsequently sold, a portion of the proceeds will be used to support mission-motivated development and renewal in other congregations.

Proposal 7: CHURCH PLANTING (Deliberative & Decision)

Proposed by Simon Story and Mark Elford

Simon Story presented proposal 7 and Mark Elford gave some examples of faith journeys and church planting. The Moderator led the meeting through deliberation and decision.

S26.07 The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) to:

1. THANK the Synod for its support of Church Plants over past years.
2. REQUEST Synod Church Planting Task Group to explore and describe the models of church plants / new forms of church and eligibility for funding, developing policy and process for access to funding remembering the differences between Rural and Urban situations.
3. REQUEST Synod Church Planting Task Group to develop a new schedule, for significant investment in funding future Church Plants, to begin by the end of 2026.
4. REQUEST the Synod Standing Committee to ensure there is sufficient funding for proposal 2 from the New Church and Ministry Development Fund to begin the work by the end of 2026.

Updated Proposal 11: MISSION AND PROPERTY STRATEGY REPORT (Deliberative & Decision) Proposed by Rev Sue Page and Rev Steph Tai

Rev Steph Tai and Rev Sue Page tabled an updated proposal reflecting the consultation with Rev Dr Paul Goh and Rev Ken Sumner outside of session. The Moderator led the meeting through deliberation and to decision.

S26.11 The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) to:

1. NOTE the Mission and Property Strategy Working Group report 2026.
2. AFFIRM the work of the Presbytery MAPS Project Officers and ENCOURAGE their continued conversations with congregations.
3. REQUEST the General Secretary or nominee within three months of this Synod meeting, to initiate conversation with the leadership of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC) regarding the MAPS project, consistent with the Covenant relationship between the Synod and the UAICC, recognising the authority of the UAICC to discern and determine its own priorities, participation and manner of engagement, and to report to the Synod Standing Committee by the end of 2026 on the progress of those conversations.
4. ENGAGE Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities in the MAPS project by requesting the working group, in consultation with CALD leaders, to identify at least one concrete pathway for CALD community participation in the next stage of the MAPS project by the end of 2026.
5. REQUEST the General Secretary seek suitable resourcing for the project moving forward (including for Presbytery project officers and the future role of the Working Group) and bring a report to the next Synod meeting.
6. REQUEST the Synod Standing Committee discern the next stage of the MAPS project and determine the appropriate membership of the working group going forward—including consideration of inviting the UAICC to nominate a representative, should the Congress discern that participation on the Working Group is an appropriate expression of its engagement with the MAPS project.

Proposal 10: SYNOD ECUMENICAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE (SERC) (Deliberative & Decision) Proposed by Rev Philip Gardner and Rev Sue Page

Rev Philip Gardner presented the proposal for the Synod Ecumenical Relations Committee and Review of Ecumenical Relationships.

S26.10 The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) to:

1. NOTE the report of the Synod Ecumenical Relations Committee (SERC).
2. GIVE THANKS for the faithful ministry, witness, and service of the members of the Synod Ecumenical Relations Committee, and acknowledge:

- a. the importance of ecumenical relationships as part of the Church's participation in the mission of God;
 - b. the contribution of the Committee in fostering dialogue, partnership, prayer, and shared witness with other Christian communities;
 - c. the challenges presently faced by the Committee in membership, resourcing, and sustaining engagement across the life of the Synod.
3. In response to the report, REQUEST the Synod Standing Committee to undertake a review of ecumenical relationships, structures, and priorities within the Synod of South Australia, including:
 - a. the role and future of the Synod Ecumenical Relations Committee;
 - b. opportunities for strengthening ecumenical engagement across the councils and breadth of the church, i.e. across congregations, communities, regions, presbyteries and Synod;
 - c. possible new models for supporting ecumenical partnerships and shared mission;
 - d. recruitment, resourcing, and leadership support for ecumenical ministry.
4. REQUEST that the Synod Standing Committee consult with relevant bodies and partners during the review process, including ecumenical representatives, presbyteries, congregations, and partner churches.
5. REQUEST the Synod Standing Committee determine the future form of ecumenical engagement within the Synod of South Australia within twelve months, and report the new forms/structures back to the next meeting of Synod.
6. AGREE that the current Synod Ecumenical Relations Committee enter a period of recess while the Synod Standing Committee undertakes the discussions and review so named.

DECLARATION OF BALLOTS

Presented by Rev Sue Page

In accordance with nominations received and the results of the election, the Chief Scrutineer Mrs. Anne Wilson, RECOMMENDS that the Synod DECLARE the following persons to be ELECTED:

Moderator-elect: Prof Ian Oliver

Placements Committee Chairperson: Rev John Hughes

18th Assembly:

Dr Pam Bartholomaeus	Rev Cyrus Kung	Rev Rebecca Purling
Jethro Buxton	Rev Dr Cathie Lambert	Rev Dave Sigley
Rebekah Gardiner	Rhane Lester	Rev Andrew Robertson
Emelia Haskey	Ashlee Littleford	Rev Steph Tai
Rev Dr Tim Hein	Rev Tim Littleford	Jenny Wardrop
Rev Dianne Holden	Dr Joanna Palmer	Anna Wilson
Billy Hogarth	Rev Nick Patselis	Bronte Wilson
Rev Jenni Hughes	Trevor Phillips	Jeff Wright
Rev Elissa Inglis	Isaac Prior	

Synod Standing Committee:

Jacob Blackwell	Rhane Lester	Des White
Rev Simon Dent	Kaitlyn Phillips	Jeff Wright
Peter Hollister	Helen Rodwell	
Bruce Ind	Rev Peter McDonald	

Proposals 13: SYNOD STANDING COMMITTEE (Deliberation & Decision)

Proposed by the Synod Business Committee and presented by Rev Sue Page

The Moderator led the meeting through deliberation to decision.

S26.13 The Synod of SA RESOLVED (by consensus) to:

1. DIRECT the Synod Business Committee to seek three members who meet the unmet criteria: a) rural; b) female for co-option by the Synod Standing Committee.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgement of the staff, volunteers and members in their roles were presented by the Moderator's Chaplains; Rev Leanne Davis, Rev Gary Stuckey, Rev Nathan Whillas

CLOSING WORSHIP WITH COMMUNION

Presented by Moderator-elect Prof Ian Olver and Moderator Rev Peter Morel

The Synod concluded at 4.00pm Saturday, 27 June 2026