Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ (UCC)
Procedural Pathfinder and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Background

This information sheet is designed to explain the context for the Minnesota Conference Annual Meeting and the rules and procedures that guide deliberations during the Annual Meeting. The Conference By-Laws (Article V) sets forth the time and place of the Annual Meeting and the numerous tasks and activities that occur during the Meeting. Various aspects of the meeting, including the Business Meeting, are also set forth in the By-Laws, which is the overall guiding document for the activities that occur at the Annual Meeting. The Conference Moderator is typically the Presiding Officer and is assisted by others including the Annual Meeting Organizer and parliamentarian. The Moderator is charged with officiating, subject to Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised. The Procedures and Rules for the Annual Meeting specify in more detail how the Business Sessions are conducted, including Floor and Virtual Speaking Procedures.

Why use Robert's Rules of Order?

This set of rules is a time-tested way of protecting the rights of people who join together to accomplish the goals and objectives of the Minnesota Conference. Using parliamentary authority helps ensure the right of the majority to decide, the right of the minority to be heard and the rights of individual members. Delegates are selected from Member congregations and ordained clergy to conduct the business of the Annual Meeting.

Why are there quorum requirements?

The quorum requirements are designed to ensure a sufficiently broad-based representation of Minnesota Conference members. The quorum details are set forth in Article V, Section E.

How do I make a motion?

First, ask for recognition by the Chair (Madam Chairperson I wish to be recognized to present a motion)
Once recognized by the Chair, *I* _____*(indicate name & Congregation) move that xxxxxxxxx*.

Chair says: *Is there a second?*

If seconded, the Chair restates the motion and says, It has been moved and seconded that ....."
Is there discussion? Debate, discussion then follows. Pro & Con positions per 2026 Standing Rules.
Ultimately, a vote will be taken (subject to any possible proposed amendments).

How do you amend a motion?

Ask for recognition by the chair indicating you want to propose an amendment. Once recognized, state the language of the amendment you propose. This requires a second.

(for example, amendments might propose adding language, striking language or modifying a resolution). Ultimately, as guided by the Moderator, a vote will be taken on the amendment.

Why is a second frequently required for motions?

The requirement of a second is designed to ensure that at least one other person wants to discuss a motion brought before the assembly. It confirms to the chair that at least two members wish to bring the idea before the assembly for formal debate and consideration.

How does someone move to limit debate or "call the question"?

A motion may be made to call the previous question (to end debate). A second is required and two-thirds vote is required to call the question. If the motion passes, the proceedings continue to vote on the resolution or amendment before the assembly.

Why are there limitations on the number of speakers and time of speaking in considering resolutions?

In light of the number and complexity of potential issues facing us in today's turbulent world, it's essentially a matter of time management and efficiency of deliberations. The specific rules and procedures are set forth in the Standing Rules for the 2026 Annual Meeting.

How does voting occur at the Annual Meeting?

Voting delegates are issued a Conference badge that authorizes them to exercise their right to vote. These requirements are set forth in more detail in the By-Laws and Special Rules and Procedures. The By-Laws also provide for the possibility of Conference Guests to speak, subject to certain limitations as enumerated in the By-Laws. Voting by delegates (in-person and remotely) will be managed by and audience system via QR code and/or web address. For delegates in person unable to use the QR code or web address, a physical tally will be used by a process deemed appropriate by the Moderator. The Moderator will announce the outcome of each motion voted upon.

Why have a parliamentarian?

At times, the interpretation and application of the By-Laws, Standing Rules, Robert's Rules and other sometimes arcane details can be cumbersome and complicated. The Conference Moderator as presiding officer is charged with running an efficient meeting, while also providing sufficient time and space for members to be heard and allowing adequate consideration of issues brought before the assembly. The role of the parliamentarian is to assist the presiding officer in effectively navigating the various rules guiding our meeting for the benefit of members of the Conference.