

Annual Meetings

Important Update

On November 26 2020, the Sub-Executive of General Council approved the following, effective immediately. These remain in place until 30 June 2021, subject to earlier cancellation or further extension by decision of the Executive or Sub-Executive of the General Council:

GS 81 Extension of Temporary Amendment of Bylaws re: Pastoral Relations; Temporary Amendment re: Congregational Annual Meeting

The General Secretary recommends:

That the Sub-Executive of the General Council:

1. extend the temporary amendments to pastoral relations policies that were originally adopted in April, 2020; (*allowing governing bodies to make pastoral relations decisions if a congregational meeting is not possible*)
2. temporarily suspend the requirement in section B.5.1 of The Manual for congregations or pastoral charges to hold an annual meeting; and
3. temporarily amend the responsibility of the congregation or pastoral charge to make a decision on their annual draft budget by allowing the governing body of the congregation or pastoral charge to fulfil this responsibility where necessary, and where permitted by the regional council;

with each of the foregoing to be in effect until June 30, 2021, subject to earlier cancellation or further extension by decision of the Executive or Sub-Executive of the General Council.

However, the covenant commission encourages all congregations to hold their annual meeting at their regular time if at all possible. Information on [holding a meeting](#) during a pandemic using zoom or telephone conferencing can be found on the regional council website under Covid-19 resources.

Annual Meeting Best Practices

Purpose

At the annual meeting, the congregation or pastoral charge is responsible for:

- a) electing a chair and a secretary for the annual meeting;
- b) receiving the annual reports from the governing body, committees, and other groups in the congregation or pastoral charge;
- c) electing the governing body, regional council representatives, and members of the committees; and
- d) considering, and making, a decision on the draft annual budget. ([Manual 2019](#))

Before the Meeting

- Ensure that notice of the meeting is read in worship for two Sundays before the date of the meeting. The meeting can be held the on the next day (Monday) or any time after that. If you are not meeting in person due to covid-19 you can hold the meeting electronically or by phone. Notice should be given by email, phone or in writing as needed. The minutes shall record how notice was given. The same time requirements apply for giving notice. ([Manual 2019](#))
- Provide copies of the annual report for review before the meeting.
- Provide an agenda and copies of the minutes from the previous annual meeting for review before the meeting. These may be included in the annual report.
- Whenever possible provide copies of other material being approved at the annual meeting for review by the congregation in advance. For example, the profile worksheets and living faith story
- Have a list of members and adherents available. *An adherent of a congregation is a person who contributes regularly to the life and work of the congregation but is not a member or full member. The governing body is responsible for deciding who is an adherent.* ([The Manual 2019](#) B.3.4)

Quorum

- a) for congregations or pastoral charges with 100 or more full members, at least 20 full members must be present;
- b) for congregations or pastoral charges with between 30 and 99 full members, at least 10 full members must be present; and
- c) for congregations or pastoral charges with fewer than 30 full members, at least 1/3 of the full membership must be present. ([The Manual 2019](#) B.5.5)

Note: It may be helpful to have a copy of the historic roll available if there is a question regarding membership, and a list of adherents.

Basic Rules of Order

1. A motion is put forward by a member or adherent (if voting privileges have been extended).
2. The chair asks for someone to second the motion.
3. The motion is then open for discussion, and all comments are in reference to the motion. During discussion “friendly amendments” can be made with the agreement of the mover and seconder.
4. Following discussion the chair calls the vote by asking for a show of hands from those who are a) in favour b) opposed c) abstaining.
5. If a secret ballot is requested it must be provided
6. In the case of a tie, the chair casts the deciding vote. The chair would generally vote against the motion i.e. against change and in favour of the status quo, based on the fact that there is not enough support for a change.

Agenda

It is helpful to have a written agenda. The following is a sample template for use at an annual meeting.*

1. Welcome, territorial acknowledgement, opening prayer	Pre-arrange with minister or other person to do this
2. Constitution of the Annual Congregational Meeting	Meeting is called to order
3. Election of a Chair and Secretary for the meeting.	Those elected as congregational chair and secretary may fill these rolls at all congregational meetings throughout the year. This is not the same as the chair and secretary of the governing body
4. Motion to allow adherents to vote	Members can vote to extend voting privileges to adherents for all matters. It is helpful to have a list of adherents who have been recognized as such by the governing body
5. Review of Holy Manners	Reminder to speak and listen with open hearts and minds and to treat one another with respect.
6. Approval of the Agenda	Any additions may be made before approval.
7. Approval of Minutes	This includes the previous annual meeting and any other <u>congregational</u> meeting held during the year.
8. Approval of Annual Reports	This includes the reports included in the Annual report with the exception of Finance and nominating reports as these are dealt with separately.
9. Approval of Finance Committee Report	Review and approve the financial report for the year.
10. Approval of Proposed Budget	

11. Report of the Financial Review Committee	Approve the report of those who reviewed the financial report or auditors if a full audit was conducted
12. Nominations Committee Report for open positions on the governing body, followed by the election of officers to these positions. This may be done individually or as a slate.	After the report is presented, a request is made for further nominations from the floor. If the congregation has set terms for various positions then it is helpful to provide a list of those who are not up for re-election.
13. Appointing Trustees	If there is a need for an additional trustee or if the congregation has set the term of office for trustees at 1 year then they may be appointed at this meeting
14. Ministry Personnel Appointments	If ministry personnel are on appointment rather than a call, the congregation can pass a motion to renew the appointment for a set period of time.
15. Profile and Living Faith Story	It is expected that the profile and living faith story be updated and approved annually by the congregation. The annual meeting may be an opportunity to do so.
16. New Business	Opportunity for people to raise questions, ideas, proposals etc.
17. Motion to Adjourn	

* Based on the "Annual Meeting Agenda Helper" by Rev. Brad Morrison

After the Annual Meeting

1. Send a digital copy of the Annual Report to the regional Council covenant commission by emailing it to LAllin@united-church.ca
2. Ensure the minutes are written up and stored safely for approval at the next annual meeting.
3. Update signing authority at the bank, on investments and with Canada Revenue if necessary.
4. Send an updated and approved copy of the profile worksheets and living faith story to the covenant commission by emailing it to LAllin@united-church.ca
5. Save a copy of the annual report, profile worksheets and living faith story on your ChurchHub account.
6. Update contact information on your ChurchHub account as needed.
7. Arrange for training for new members of the M&P committee (optional, but recommended)
8. Update appointment forms based on decisions to re-appoint ministry personnel. If the decision was made not to re-appoint ministry personnel, contact Diane Blanchard, Minister for Pastoral Relations regarding next steps. Dbianchard@united-church.ca