



Conducting Business in Congregations

An Overview of Policies and Procedures
for Pastors and Leaders in Community of Christ

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Description of Congregation

“Congregations are communities of disciples, and they form the fundamental unit of the church’s administrative, ministerial, and **missional** life. Congregations gather frequently, preferably at least weekly, to engage in worship, education, fellowship, and other preparation for **mission**. Out of a common sense of vision, each congregation seeks to **engage in significant missional ministries** and together celebrates life as a gift from God as caring, service, prayer, and love are offered and received.”

Church Administrator’s Handbook, 2005 Edition, p. 8

Preparing for a Conference

- Convene at least once yearly
- Schedule in cooperation with the Mission Center President
- At least 2 weeks notice to members
- Prepare the agenda
- When possible, publish & distribute agenda and minutes in advance



Who Presides?

- Pastor presides over conference
- Counselors may preside by request or in absence of pastor
- First Presidency, Council of Twelve or Mission Center Staff may preside as courtesy or special circumstances



Who Votes?

- Only confirmed members of the congregation
- Administrative officers having jurisdiction over the congregation have voice and vote in a congregational conference by right of their office.
- Others may speak or present, but are not allowed to vote
- No proxy or absentee votes



Standard Order of Business

- 1) Opening Ceremonies (optional)
- 2) Introduction of Guests (optional)
- 3) Approval of Minutes
- 4) Reports of Officers, Teams, Committees
- 5) Special Orders
- 6) Unfinished Business & General Orders
- 7) New Business



Principles of Parliamentary Procedure

Rules are based on regard for the rights of:

- 1) Majority
- 2) Minority (especially greater than 1/3)
- 3) Individual Members
- 4) Absentees
- 5) All of these together



Principles of Parliamentary Procedure

- 1) Consider one item at a time
- 2) Alternate between opposing views
- 3) Maintain decorum (respect)
- 4) Accept decisions of majority
- 5) Protect rights of minority
- 6) Always call for the negative vote
- 7) Ensure all have ability to participate



Some Important Rules

- 1) 6 members must be present to transact business (this is called a quorum)
- 2) Once a motion is made, seconded, and stated by the presider it belongs to the conference
- 3) A main motion requires a **majority (more than half) of those voting** to be in favor in order to be adopted



Ways Dispose of a Main Motion

- 1) Refer to a Committee
- 2) Postpone (definitely or indefinitely)
- 3) Withdraw
- 4) Vote to Adopt or Reject



Guidelines for Debate

- 1) Generally the maker of motion has the right to speak first
- 2) A person may conclude comments by making an appropriate motion
- 3) Try to alternate between view points
- 4) The conference can limit or extend debate (number of speeches, length of speeches, total time allowed)
- 5) Speak to the chair
- 6) Keep remarks germane (on topic)



Meeting Minutes

- 1) Information about meeting (date, location, presider, quorum)
- 2) Whether minutes were read & approved
- 3) All main motions as disposed of (name of mover, vote if counted)
- 4) Secondary motions that passed
- 5) Reports & notices
- 6) Points of Order, Appeals & Rulings
- 7) Adjournment

