

RULES OF PROCEDURE

Under the By-laws of the Maine Conference of the United Church of Christ (as amended) (“By-Laws”) and/or Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised (“Robert’s”)

1. **Regulation of Proceedings:** Unless otherwise provided for, all proceedings of the Conference Annual Meeting shall be governed by Robert’s Rules of Order except as altered by rules adopted by vote of two-thirds of the delegates present and voting. (By-Laws, Article X, Section 5)

2. **Role of the Coordinating Council:** The Coordinating Council shall submit to the Annual Meeting any recommendation it may deem useful for the development of the effectiveness and efficiency of the life, work and organization of the Maine Conference. (By-Laws, Article VI, Section 5)

3. **Introduction of Business:** The Annual Meeting Committee shall prepare and present the Docket for the Annual Meeting. A delegate wishing to bring a matter not on the Agenda to the attention of the Annual Meeting is asked to do so through the Coordinating Council. “All business shall be introduced to the Conference through the Coordinating Council except, that in case the Council shall decline to present any matter of business, appeal may be had directly to the Conference.” (By-Laws, Article VI, Section 5)

4. **General (or Unanimous) Consent:** Matters deemed by the Moderator to be merely formal, routine, and non-controversial, may be disposed of by general consent. If there is objection however, the Chair will request a formal motion and submit the question to debate and vote. (Robert’s, 4)

5. **Motions:** Delegates are required to state their name and church when they are recognized and to provide written copies of main motions and amendments before the same are submitted to vote. Except when rising to a point of order, or to second a motion, delegates are required to take places at a microphone. (Robert’s, 4)

6. **Amendments:** All proposed amendments shall be in writing and delivered to the clerk. In addition, delegates offering an amendment shall make every effort to circulate copies of proposed amendments to all delegates prior to introduction of the amendment. Not more than one amendment to an amendment shall be considered at the same time. One wishing to offer an amendment in the third degree should announce their intention to offer further amendment after action is completed on the pending amendment. (Robert’s, 12)

7. **To Close Debate:** To close debate, the proper motion is “I move the previous

question” or “I call for, or “call” the question.” The mover must gain recognition and the motion requires a second. The motion cannot be amended or debated and requires a two-thirds vote for adoption. It does not suffice to call “Question” if there are still delegates who wish to be heard in debate. (Robert’s, 16)

8. **Order of the Day:** Once the Docket for the Annual Meeting is adopted, the Moderator is under obligation to follow the Agenda. If certain business is not completed in the segment of time allotted, the Moderator, in conjunction with the Annual Meeting Committee, determines when such business shall be considered. The Moderator is under obligation to give the delegates as much advance notice as possible concerning the matter. At any time, a delegate may “call for the orders of the day” whereupon the schedule of business for that time shall be addressed, except that a two-thirds vote can set the regular schedule aside. (The order of the day can be set aside by a vote of two-thirds in the negative to proceed to the orders of the day, or by a vote of two-thirds in the affirmation to extend the time for considering the pending questions.) (Robert’s, 18)

9. **Point of Order:** Any delegate who thinks that these Rules of Procedure are being violated may make a “Point of Order,” thereby calling upon the Moderator for a ruling and enforcement of the Rules. A Point of Order can be made at any time and is not debatable, although the President can permit the delegate to explain their point. Following any explanation by the delegate, the Moderator shall rule that: “The Point of Order is well taken” or “The Point of Order is not well taken.” The ruling is final, subject to appeal. (See paragraph 10) (Robert’s, 23)

10. **Rulings by the Chair:** The Moderator and Parliamentarian are charged with the duty of providing fair and orderly disposition of the business of the Maine Conference. Any ruling may be appealed by a delegate. The appeal requires a second. A majority or a tie vote of the delegates upon the appeal sustains the decision of the Moderator. (Robert’s, 24)

11. **Nominations:** Nominations, whether made by the Nominating Committee or from the floor, need not be seconded. Nominations from the floor shall not be in order unless the written consent of the nominee has first been secured and filed with the presiding officer. If there is no opposition to a nomination or slate of nominations, a motion to instruct the Clerk to cast a ballot for the nominee or slate of nominees is in order and requires a unanimous vote. (Robert’s, ¶45, By-Laws, Article VIII, Section I)

12. **Speaking Time:** No speaker shall speak to the same issue more than twice,

except to answer questions addressed to them from the floor through the presiding officer. A delegate may not make a second speech on the same question until every member who desires to speak on it has had an opportunity to do so. A maximum of three minutes is allotted to the first speech by any speaker, and two minutes for the rebuttal. Leave to extend the time further may be granted upon unanimous consent. (Robert's, 42)

13. **Appropriations:** The Coordinating Council shall submit the budget and the recommended appropriations for action at the Meeting. No motion on the floor of the Conference to increase expenditures shall be in order, unless such motion includes a designation of the source of funds required therefore. (By-Laws, Article VI, Section 5(c), Article XI)

14. **Tabling:** When something else of immediate urgency has arisen, the pending question can be tabled upon motion, which is not debatable, and a majority vote as soon as the interrupting business is disposed of, the question can be taken from the table" upon a motion, which is not debatable, and a majority vote. (Robert's, 17, 33)

15. **Postpone Indefinitely:** Whenever it is useful to dispose of a badly chosen main motion, that cannot be either adopted or expressly rejected without undesirable consequences, "to postpone indefinitely" allows the Conference to decline to take a position. The motion to postpone indefinitely is debatable and requires a majority vote. (Robert's, 11)

16. **Postpone to a Certain Time:** If it is desirable to postpone a question so that it may be considered at a more convenient time or because debate has shown reasons for holding off a decision until later, it is appropriate to move to postpone to a certain time. The motion must specify that the question is put off to a definite day, meeting, or hour, or until after a certain event. The motion to postpone to a certain time is debatable and requires a majority vote. (Robert's, 14)