



Proposed Standing Rules of Order for the 137th Covenant Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting Agenda Committee recommends the adoption of the following proposed standing rules of order for the 137th Covenant Annual Meeting.

INTRODUCTION

The written documents that govern the Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Covenant Church are the Illinois Not For Profit Act, the Articles of Incorporation of the Evangelical Covenant Church, the Evangelical Covenant Church Constitution and Bylaws, the Rules for the Ordered Ministry of the Evangelical Covenant Church, the Covenant Pension Plan, and the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order (henceforth will be called Robert's Rules for purposes of this document). Robert's Rules provides that a convention or assembly of delegates such as the Covenant Annual Meeting may adopt its own standing rules to supplement the provisions of Robert's Rules and of its own documents. The Standing Rules provide guidance for this 137th Annual Meeting, setting out how items are dealt with generally. The Standing Rules require a two-thirds majority for adoption or suspension.

That the business of deliberative assemblies may be conducted by electronic means is given sanction in Robert's Rules most recent edition (the 12th ed., published in 2020, see Section 9, paragraphs 30-36). Procedures for establishing delegate credentials, obtaining the floor, discussion, and voting, have been devised with due diligence to the spirit and letter of the Evangelical Covenant Church's governing documents, to Robert's Rules, and to the tradition of the Covenant Annual Meeting as a participatory and deliberative assembly.

STANDING RULES OF ORDER FOR THE 2023 COVENANT ANNUAL MEETING

- 1. The Business Meeting Shall Be Conducted in Hybrid Format – both with Online and Onsite capabilities.**
 - a. Delegates attending onsite are credentialed and authenticated with a personalized voting card, which will be provided at registration. The voting card must be kept secure and not

shared. Voting cards will be used in conjunction with the voting device, which will be maintained by the vendor (LUMI) and provided daily to onsite delegates. For issues related to the voting card or voting device, delegates may seek assistance with the vendor's tech support team.

- b. Delegates attending online are expected to have reliable means for participation and are credentialed according to the principle of "one delegate, one login IP address." Delegates attending online are responsible for their own personal technological connectivity and devices; for elements related to engaging with the voting platform, delegates may pursue assistance with the online tech support team. A delegate's personal technology failure does not constitute a point of order, of information, or of privilege to be addressed to the whole meeting.
- c. Quorum is determined by the ratio of the number of delegates attending online who are logged in plus the number of onsite delegates present to the number of registered delegates.
- d. All individuals called upon to present an agenda item to the delegates must appear in person.

2. Obtaining the Floor

- a. Only those who have been credentialed as delegates, advisors, or resource persons can request the privilege to address the entire assembly, including on points of order, of information, and of personal privilege.

3. Voting

- a. All voting, whether delegates are attending online or onsite, is conducted electronically for this meeting, and meets the requirements stipulated in Robert's Rules for a secret ballot.
- b. Online delegates will need a personal device (LUMI requires the use of a desktop or laptop computer; phones and tablets will not function properly with LUMI) and an internet connection. Onsite delegates will be provided with a personalized voting card and a voting device by the vendor (LUMI).
- c. Onsite or online delegates who are logged in but who do not vote on a question will be tallied as abstentions.

4. Debate

- a. Recognizing that delegates will be engaging online and onsite, every effort will be made to ensure the experience is similar for a delegate regardless of the mode of participation. Within the limits of technology and/or delegate's connectivity, our hope is that no preference or priority will be given to either category of delegate. Customarily, Annual Meetings have attempted to organize debate alternating between speeches in favor and against, following the mic sequence. Seeking to uphold that custom while recognizing the differences in delegate participation, we will strive to provide online delegates with similar opportunities to engage as onsite participants.

5. Time Limits

- a. Reports that contain no proposal for action by the meeting shall be limited to ten (10) minutes, including the question period, except for the president's report, the treasurer's report, and items specified in the agenda to extend beyond the 10-minute time limit.
- b. Debate on any main motion, including its subsidiary motions, shall be limited to thirty (30) minutes, except as otherwise specified in these standing rules and the agenda. No amendment or other subsidiary motion to a main motion shall be allowed until debate on the main motion has ceased or ten (10) minutes have passed.
- c. No speech in debate may exceed three (3) minutes unless this period is extended by a majority vote at the request of the speaker.
- d. Time limits may be extended for a specific period by a two-thirds vote.
- e. Unless otherwise indicated on the schedule as a lunch or dinner break, any breaks called by the Moderator will be thirty (30) minutes long.

6. Action on Involuntary Removals

From time to time the Executive Board recommends to the Annual Meeting that churches be removed from membership. Section 4.4 of our Bylaws, pursuant to involuntary removal of churches from membership, provides that congregations shall have the opportunity to defend themselves before the Annual Meeting and that the Annual Meeting shall vote on the recommendation of the Executive Board. At this Annual Meeting, this matter may come before us for action. To address these matters in a fair and sensitive fashion, the Annual Meeting will proceed as follows:

- a. The church seeking to defend themselves from removal shall have 15 minutes to speak. The church may designate up to four members of the church to speak on the church's behalf and may determine how to allot their 15 minutes. The Executive Board shall have up to 15 minutes to respond through its designated representatives.
- b. As these matters pertain to membership, it is appropriate for these matters to be taken up in Executive Session upon the appropriate motion to that effect. Only delegates and approved resource personnel may witness and participate in Executive Session.
- c. Due to the importance of these matters, it is necessary for each individual defending the church and the executive board members responding to be in person.
- d. On each of these actions, debate that follows the presentations shall proceed according to these Standing Rules, Section 4) Debate, and Section 5) Time Limits b), c), d).

7. Submission of Motions in Writing

All main motions and subsidiary motions shall be submitted in writing to the Annual Meeting secretary. Online delegates can submit electronically addressing the Annual Meeting secretary or via email (governance@covchurch.org) and addressing the Annual Meeting secretary. Onsite delegates can submit on paper or electronically via email (governance@covchurch.org) and addressing the Annual Meeting secretary.

8. Items of Business Not on the Agenda

The Bylaws provide in Section 7.8.a.ii that "Items of business that are not on the agenda may be submitted in writing by a delegate to the moderator. If the item submitted is in order, a majority vote of the delegates present and voting shall be required to place that item on the agenda." It is further strongly requested that such items be submitted electronically by delegates to the moderator at governance@covchurch.org prior to the start of the 137th Covenant Annual Meeting.

9. Consent Agenda

Items on the Consent Agenda are routine, procedural, informational, self-explanatory non-controversial items that require action but generally do not require discussion or debate. Acting on these items moves the meeting along, allowing for more time for substantive issues.

- a. Items on the Consent Agenda may be removed from the Consent Agenda at the request of

any two delegates.

- b. Items removed from the Consent Agenda shall be acted upon by the assembly at a place in the agenda determined by the moderator.
- c. If the Consent Agenda is not adopted as a single motion, then each of the items on the Consent Agenda shall be acted upon by the assembly as a separate motion at a place in the agenda determined by the moderator.

10. Contested election procedures for Executive Ministers

- a. *Nominations from the Floor.* A nomination from the floor shall be accepted only if the person nominated has agreed to have his or her name placed as a nominee on the ballot.
- b. Online delegates desiring to make nominations for a second candidate shall enter the online Speaking Queue to nominate from the floor via the online platform.
- c. Onsite delegates desiring to make nominations for a second candidate shall approach the microphone in the room to nominate from the floor.
- d. Once nominations are made from the floor, you will need to submit to governance@covchurch.org the nominator's name, the church or entity the nominator represents, the name of the potential candidate with an affirmation that the potential candidate satisfies the particular requirements of the office as provided in the Constitution and Bylaws, and descriptive information regarding the potential candidate similar in scope and content to that provided to the Annual Meeting by a nominating board or committee.
- e. If a second candidate is nominated and immediately following the close of nominations, the moderator will provide a sixty (60) minute recess for a candidate forum during which each candidate will have five (5) minutes to make an opening statement. Thereafter for thirty (30) minutes, each candidate will respond to questions relating to their vision for the future of our denomination. For the remaining twenty (20) minutes candidates will answer questions submitted electronically from delegates via the voting platform using the "Messaging" feature or via email (governance@covchurch.org). Parliamentarian Clarence Chan will moderate the candidate forum.
- f. Following the candidate forum, a motion will be heard to add the second candidate to the ballot. If more than one candidate is nominated from the floor, delegates will determine by ballot which candidate will be added as the second candidate to the ballot. Once the

ballot has been approved, delegates will vote.

11. Runoff Elections

In the case of an election with three or more candidates, if no candidate receives a majority of votes after two rounds of voting, then beginning with the third round, the candidate with the lowest number of votes in that round will be eliminated. In the event of a tie among the lowest vote-getters, those tied will not be eliminated in that round. A candidate may withdraw at any point. Voting rounds will continue until one candidate receives a majority of votes.

12. Modification of Agenda Order

The moderator shall have the discretion to revise the order of agenda items to accommodate scheduling needs.

Annual Meeting Officers

Moderator: Elizabeth Jensen

Vice Moderator: Rick Lindholtz

Secretary: Norma Ramos

Parliamentarian: Clarence Chan

President: Tammy Swanson-Draheim

Secretary of the Covenant: Jacqueline Sugihara