



Delegate Resources

Welcome to the Covenant Annual Meeting! The purpose of the Covenant Annual Meeting is the same as the purpose of the Church of Jesus Christ—at all times and in all situations—to discern and do the will of God. A lot must happen at an Annual Meeting and a lot of people participate. At the Annual Meeting, we:

- Ordain, license, and commission pastors and global personnel
- Elect persons into leadership positions (administrators and board members)
- Receive new churches into our fellowship (and say farewell to some)
- Review the stewardship of the resources God has blessed us with, and approve projected investment of resources
- Review our efforts in accomplishing God’s mission in the previous year
- Chart a course for the future, trusting God for the outcomes
- Approve amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws
- Make other decisions necessary to the mission and ministry of the Evangelical Covenant Church, regional conferences, and affiliates
- Celebrate what God is doing in and through us
- Connect with those committed to a common mission
- Pray for the mission and ministry of the Evangelical Covenant Church
- Worship

To make sure that everyone is clear about what is happening when and how, several documents are used to govern the Annual Meeting:

- The Constitution and Bylaws of the Evangelical Covenant Church
- *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised (most recent edition)*
- Standing Rules of Order (approved at a meeting to guide that specific meeting)

These rules help us:

- Protect the right of the majority to decide
- Protect the right of the minority to be heard
- Protect the rights of the individual members, both those present and those absent
- Prevent a “railroad” of the meeting by manipulation
- Prevent an emotional “stampede” of the meeting

At first some of the language and protocols used during the meeting may seem strange to you, but we have provided resources in this section to help your engagement, as a brief glossary of some common parliamentary terms.

There are three key participants at the Annual Meeting:

I. THE DELEGATES

Delegates represent churches, Covenant administration, and related affiliates, Boards, Commissions, and Associations. Everything that happens at the Annual Meeting requires the delegates’ participation. Delegates receive the reports, approve recommendations, question and debate the issues to vote on motions. Our delegates, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the leadership of Jesus Christ, ultimately determine the course for the Covenant Church’s future.

Delegates need to do the following:

1. **Keep alert.** The leaders of the Annual Meeting work very hard to make sure that everyone is “on the same page,” but they can’t do it alone. Please be aware of what is happening, and if you are unsure, please ask! *The order of the printed agenda is not the order in which items are addressed, given time required for various agenda items and given the schedule to allow for regular breaks from technology.*
2. **Listen carefully and think about the motion before the group.** Read up on the motion and resolutions prior to the start of the meeting.
3. **Engage!** There are many ways of participating: ask questions, make comments, and actively listen. Remember that silence generally means agreement.

Every delegate has the right to speak in the meeting. Here are some guidelines:

1. Make sure the subject you want to talk about is under discussion.
2. Utilize the *Ask a Question* feature on the digital platform to speak for any reason.
 - a. You will need to choose whether you want to *Type Your Question* or *Queue for Video Call*. For all items, apart from privileged motions, you will select *Queue for Video*.
 - b. You will then need to type in your name and church/entity you represent (there is a 160-character limit). Then you will click *submit* and *ok*. You will now be in the queue and you will wait your turn to be recognized.
 - c. For privileged motions (i.e., “Move to extend the time limit on the debate”; “Call the previous question”; “Point of Order,” etc.), you will select *Type Your Question* to input your privileged motion and that will alert the Moderator.
3. When you have been recognized, unmute your mic, speak to the Moderator, and state your name and the church or entity you represent, and the city and state. Say what is on your mind.
You do not make a speech to the Assembly; you are speaking to just one person, the Moderator, and the others are listening in.
4. If you have a question, the Moderator may know the answer, or the Moderator may ask someone else to provide the answer.
5. If you have a point to make, you may speak once to an issue and not again on the same issue as long as someone else, who has not yet had a turn, is seeking the floor.
6. Once you have spoken a second time, you have used up your rights of debate on that issue.

If you have a matter for discussion that is not on the Agenda, please write a description of it and submit to the Moderator. Due to the nature of our virtual meeting, it is strongly requested that such items be submitted electronically by delegates to the Moderator at governance@covchurch.org prior to the start of the 135th Covenant Annual Meeting. The Moderator will decide whether to present it to the Annual Meeting; if the response is “yes,” it will come to the assembly for vote to place on the agenda. If you submit it before we adopt the agenda, it requires a majority vote to add it to the Agenda. If you submit it after we adopt the agenda, it requires a 2/3 majority vote or a simple majority of all registered delegates. At the appropriate time, the Moderator will invite you to present your matter to the Annual Meeting.

Remember that you represent yourself, your church or entity you represent, and Jesus Christ. Motives

should not be called into question during a debate. The merits of the motion are the issue. Motives are not. We are brothers and sisters in Christ, and while brothers and sisters may argue, we remember our relationship in Christ.

II. THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AND MINISTRIES

1. The Executive Board is the Board through which the recommendations of other elected Boards (with the exception of the Board of the Ordered Ministry) and the Commissions must pass in order to reach the floor of the meeting. The Executive Board is the mover of almost all the recommendations that arise from the Agenda, which it approves before it comes to the Annual Meeting. This process, established by the Covenant Bylaws, ensures a coordinated mission and avoids possible contradictory recommendations from various official sources. All recommendations are subject to the amendment, referral, or rejection of the meeting. As the mover of most of the recommendations on the Agenda, a spokesperson for the Board is usually granted what the Rules call “preference in recognition.” This is the privilege of a mover to speak first to a motion. (Please note that motions arising from a Board, Commission, or Committee do not require a second; they already have more than one supporter.)
2. The Board of the Ordered Ministry reports directly to the Annual Meeting after obtaining the approval of the Covenant Ministerium to its recommendations.
3. Commissions and Committees are basically study groups who formulate statements which may become the official statements of an Annual Meeting. All of these are reported through the Executive Board, though the Board may allow statements to reach the floor without agreeing to them, submitting them directly to the judgment of the meeting.

III. THE MODERATOR

The Moderator of the Annual Meeting is the presiding officer of the meeting. This important role as Moderator is this person’s only function.

The Moderator:

- interprets and applies the rules of the meeting
- expedites the business of the meeting

- ensures that everyone involved in the meeting is treated fairly
- clarifies what is happening
- advises delegates in the procedures of the meeting
- maintains the discipline and joy of Christian fellowship

ELECTRONIC VOTING FOR THIS ANNUAL MEETING

We have partnered with AGM Convene to assist us during this year’s virtual Annual Meeting. The interface is not like a traditional Zoom meeting interface, and therefore, it may require learning a little about the software before you use it to cast your vote and participate in the meeting.

This software is designed specifically for virtual Annual General Meetings (AGM) like ours.

We strongly recommend that you use a computer for the entirety of the meeting, rather than a tablet or phone. While the system *can* function on a table or phone, it will run more smoothly on a computer and you will be able to more easily see the screen throughout the meeting. Delegates are expected to have reliable means for participation, including a strong internet signal to support engagement in the meeting. Delegates will be credentialed according to the principle of “one delegate, one device.” This is a security feature that is tied to AGM Convene to help ensure that the voting process stays safe and accurate.

Along with a reliable internet connection, we strongly recommend that you have a headset for you to easily hear the audio and a microphone for when you wish to speak to the Moderator. This will allow the delegation to hear you more clearly without any background noise.

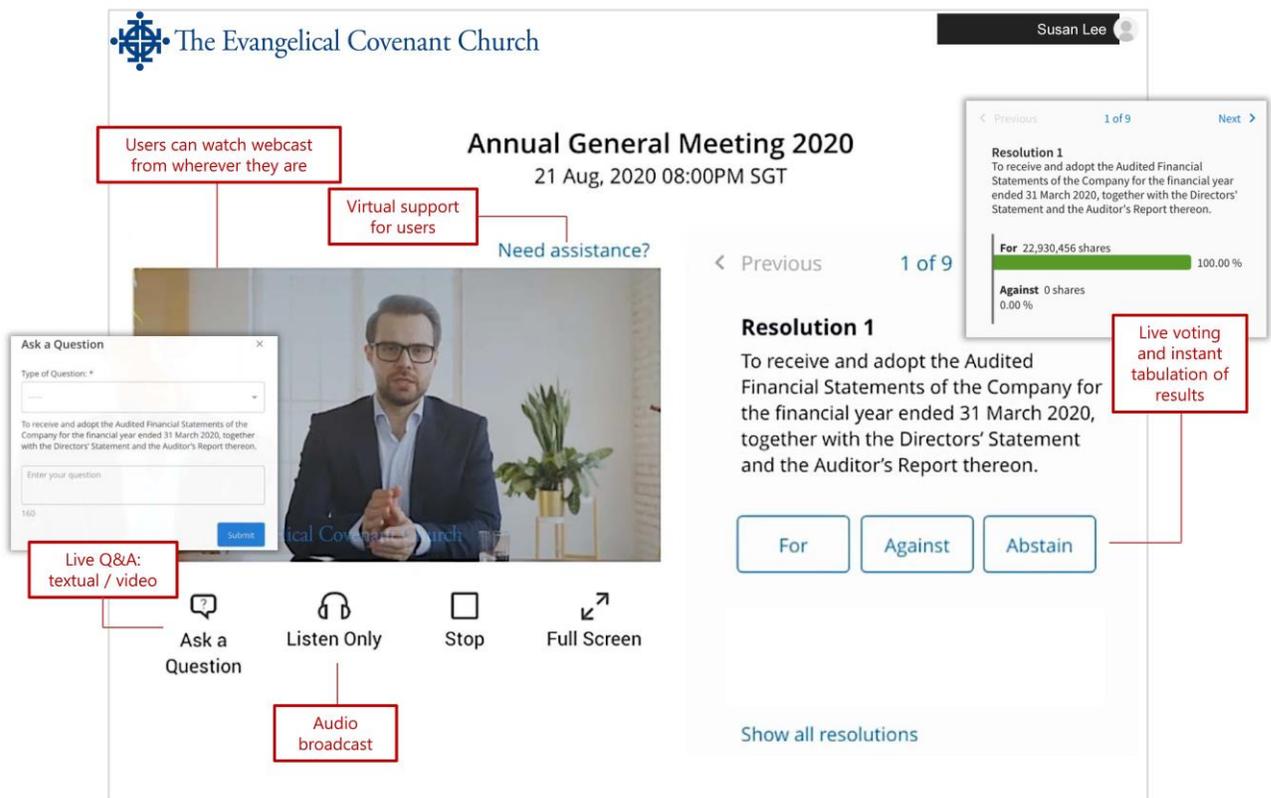
We have held multiple Delegate Orientation sessions throughout May and June to provide you with the training you need to get comfortable with the software. You can find a recording of those sessions on the gather.covchurch.org website if you would like to watch at your own pace and at a time that is



<p> Registration</p> <p>Your admin registration with reference number 1000001 was received on 7 May 2021 and is verified.</p> <p>Members with verified registrations will be able to watch the meeting proceedings through a live webcast, ask questions and cast votes from this page on 22 Jun 2021 8:00 AM CDT.</p>	<p> About the Meeting</p> <p>General information and documents relating to the AGM.</p> <p>About the Meeting</p>
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convenient for you. We will also be holding Live Technology Demos for Delegates during the week of Gather 2021. They will be held “open house” style, meaning you can join as you are available. The sessions will be held Tuesday, June 22 from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Central and Thursday, June 24 from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Central. You will hear more details about these sessions as we get closer to Gather. They will be demonstrations by staff of the portal and the sessions will allow you to log in and test the platform on your computer to ensure you feel confident navigating the software prior to the start of Gather 2021.

Below is a sample screenshot of some of the main features you will need to use during the meeting. Please familiarize yourself with this as you will use this screen for the majority of the meeting.



A BRIEF GLOSSARY OF COMMON PARLIAMENTARY TERMS

AMEND, MOVE TO. Most motions may be amended on the floor of the meeting, particularly when they deal with the business rather than the procedures of the meeting. All amendments must be germane to the original motion. Amendments can be made in three (3) ways: addition, deletion, or substitution. When an amendment has been seconded, it must be debated and decided, or otherwise dealt with, before the motion it seeks to amend may be further considered.

APPEAL FROM THE RULING OF THE MODERATOR. A delegate is testing the Moderator's ruling against the opinion of the meeting. The motion to appeal requires a second. An affirmative vote by the meeting sustains the Moderator's ruling.

BALLOT, TO ORDER THE VOTE ON A PENDING QUESTION TO BE TAKEN BY. The Bylaws and Rules specify that certain questions be decided by ballot. Questions other than these may also be decided by ballot if a majority of the meeting concurs with a request from a delegate for it.

CONSENT CALENDAR. Items on the Consent Agenda are routine, procedural, informational, self-explanatory non-controversial items that require action but generally don't require discussion or debate. Acting on these items move the meeting, along allowing for more time for substantive issues. Items on the Consent Agenda may be removed from the Consent Agenda at the request of any two delegates. Items removed from the Consent Agenda shall be acted upon by the assembly at a place in the agenda determined by the Moderator.

DIVISION OF THE ASSEMBLY. This is a vote by rising. It may be demanded by any delegate to verify a vote taken by voice or by a show of hands or may be ordered by the Moderator when a vote by show of hands or by voice has been "too close to call." If it is still not possible to discern the outcome visually, the Moderator may order a count by the Sergeants-at-Arms. A majority of the meeting may also order a count.

EXECUTIVE SESSION. According to Robert's Rules of Order, certain items require confidentiality. One of those items relates to how a society disciplines a member. When the body determines that a matter must be debated and decided in secret, a motion for Executive Session is proper. After a majority vote on the motion for Executive Session, everyone, except delegates and resource personnel, is excused from the meeting. In addition, the live stream will cease until the Executive Session is concluded.

INFORMATION, POINT OF. Asking a question about the business at hand.

MR. or MADAME MODERATOR. The traditional form for addressing the Moderator from the floor of the meeting.

ORDER, POINT OF. A delegate calls the Moderator's attention to a possible breach of the Rules. If the delegate is not satisfied with the Moderator's subsequent explanation, he or she may appeal if the point has been raised concerning an actual ruling of the Moderator.

PARLIAMENTARIAN. An advisor to the Moderator on Parliamentary Law.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY, POINT OF. Asking a question about the application of the Rules in the business at hand.

PERSONAL PRIVILEGE, POINT OF. A delegate believes that his or her rights or the rights of another are being infringed upon.

POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN TIME. A delegate may move to postpone the item under discussion until a later point in the meeting. The motion requires a second and is debatable.

PREVIOUS QUESTION, MOVE THE. A motion to cut off debate on an issue which requires a second, and a two-thirds majority. An affirmative vote merely cuts off debate and is not a vote on the motion under debate.

PRIVILEGED MOTION. A motion that does not relate to the pending question at hand but does have to do with matters of such urgency or importance that, without debate, they are allowed to interrupt the consideration of anything else.

PUTTING THE QUESTION. Taking a vote.

RECONSIDER, MOVE TO. A motion to reconsider an item previously voted upon may be made at any time, though it may have to wait until other business has been dealt with before it can be taken up. If a majority decides that the item previously voted upon will be reconsidered, debate on it re-opens, and another vote is taken (or it is otherwise disposed of, by referral, etc.) The motion to reconsider has unique characteristics: It may be made only by a delegate who originally voted with the prevailing side on the item; it may be made no later than the day following the original vote; it cannot apply to an item when provisions of it have already

begun to be carried out (such as the signing of a contract); and it cannot be itself reconsidered.

REFER, MOVE TO. (Not to be confused with a motion to table.) A referred motion goes to a Board or Committee as designated by the Motion to Refer. It requires a second and is debatable.

SECOND. A seconder need not agree with the motion or vote for it. The seconder need only agree that the motion deserves the attention of the meeting.

SERIATIM. In a series (i.e., a long motion consisting of a series of resolutions, paragraphs, articles, or sections that are not totally separate questions can be considered by opening the different parts to debate and amendment separately, without a division of the question).

STANDING RULES. These rules are prepared by the Agenda Committee to provide guidance for this particular Annual Meeting setting for how items are dealt with generally. The Standing Rules require a two-thirds majority for approval and a two-thirds majority for suspension of any part of such.

SUSPEND THE RULES. It is possible to suspend a rule that is standing in the way of accomplishing what the meeting clearly wants to do either by motion or by unanimous consent. Bylaws may not be suspended unless they are in the nature of “rules of order.” This is a complex issue, with each instance subject to the interpretation and ruling of the Moderator.

TABLE, MOVE TO. (Or “LAY ON THE TABLE”). Unlike a referred motion, a tabled motion goes nowhere. No one considers it, or studies it, or does anything with it until a motion passes to “take it from the table.” If this does not happen at this Annual Meeting, the motion is dead, i.e., we could not move to “take something from the table” that was put on the table at a previous Annual Meeting.

Original prepared in 1985. Current revision by Annual Meeting Officers (Jonathan M. Wilson, Moderator; Wes Gibson, Vice-Moderator; Nilwona Nowlin, Secretary) and Eric Filkin, Parliamentarian, 2021.