

# Metropolitan Community Churches Lay Delegate Manual

Updated March 2013

Congratulations on being elected as a Lay Delegate in MCC! Your ministry is an important one, as you enable the members of your local church to take part in the democratic process of our denomination. This manual is a guide to help you carry out your ministry well and will hopefully answer many practical questions.

## A. General Responsibilities

1. As the elected Lay Delegate, you are the official representative of your congregation at all levels. Lay Delegates have the responsibility to attend and to effectively represent the congregation at every General Conference. You should also participate in every Gathering of your Network. It is your responsibility to see that the information flow between the Fellowship, Network, and local congregation is both timely and accurate throughout your term of office.
  - a. **Lay Delegate:** Represents the local church. Has both voice and vote at General Conference.
  - b. **Alternate / Assistant Lay Delegates** are chosen to fulfill the responsibilities of Lay Delegates when they cannot attend required meetings.
2. **The Universal Fellowship's General Conference** occurs every three years, generally in July. General Conference is the worldwide governing body for the church. Each Network should hold a Gathering at least twice a year.
3. **It is the responsibility of each local congregation** to provide adequate funds for the Delegates to attend the General Conferences. These funds should include registration, room cost, travel, and food expenses.

## B. Specific Tasks

1. Lay Delegates serve as the communication link between the local congregation, the Network, and the Fellowship.
2. Flow of pertinent information between these bodies through the Lay Delegate is an important part of your job.
3. Remember, you may be the only link that most members have to the



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Network and/or Fellowship. Don't let them down! It is your responsibility to make sure that you have been added to the Network, Conference and Fellowship newsletter e-mail distribution lists. Make sure your Network Leader has your email address as well. For a listing of Network Leaders visit: <http://mccchurch.org/connectnow/networks/network-leadership/>

### C. Pre-conference

1. Pre-conference preparation is essential to a successful General Conference for both you and your congregation. This preparation includes:
  - a. Review of all conference materials: UFMCC and local church bylaws and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's); conference reports and the business meeting pack, and any other conference materials received. These are available on the MCC website prior to the Conference -[www.MCCchurch.org](http://www.MCCchurch.org)
  - b. Congregational input: At regularly scheduled congregational meetings, or at a specially called meeting or forum, present the information concerning the conference to the congregation. If appropriate, take a voice vote to get a clear sense of the congregation's opinion on the issues.
  - c. Be aware of the status of your church's payment of Fellowship tithes, and Board of Pension payments (USA only) and required reports for your church. If your church is behind on tithes you will not be permitted to vote at conference!
  - d. Find out from a board member, Interim Pastoral Leader or your pastor the procedures concerning financial arrangements for attendance at conferences. You will specifically want to arrange for registration for conferences, travel and hotel reservations, and per diem for food. Check to see if you will need an exact accounting of all expenses, if the church prepays those expenses, etc.
  - e. If your expenses are not in the church budget, suggest fund raising activities. Work to get conference and meeting expenses placed in the church budget.
  - f. Encourage attendance at the conference. You share in the



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responsibility of seeing to it that a large number of people from your church attend conferences.

- g. General Conference and Network Gatherings can be a great blessing to all church members. If you can attract a large number of people from your church to each Network Gathering, and/or General Conference, not only will the attendees be blessed, but your church will be blessed as well!
  - h. It is your responsibility to get the word out about General Conference and Network Gatherings and urge people to register. You can see to it that the registration forms are available and that the conference or gathering is mentioned at worship services and other church events. See to it that articles about conference and gatherings are included in your church communications before they happen and report back on them afterwards.
  - i. You can even make arrangements for carpools, buses/vans, and hotel room sharing to curb the expense. The more the merrier!
  - j. It is your responsibility to become familiar with Robert's Rules of Order before attending General Conference.
- D. At the Conference**
- 1. **Official Business Meetings:** Clergy and Lay Delegates attend business meetings at General Conference.
    - a. **HOUSES:** Usually voting representatives are divided into two "houses" (Clergy and Laity) for voting purposes. Houses vote simultaneously on all issues that affect both groups, but the votes are announced separately for each. On occasion, a vote will be taken that affects only the Clergy or only the Laity and those times will be announced. Other than elections votes are usually taken by voting cards.
    - b. **VOICE AND VOTE:** The official Lay Delegates from each church have both voice and vote. All delegates are expected to attend all forums and business meetings at each conference.
  - 2. **Workshops and Worship Services:** These are interesting, diverse and inspiring. They offer great opportunities to experience



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different aspects of our Fellowship. It is recommended that delegates attend workshops and worship services when they are not in conflict with business forums and meetings.

3. **New Issues:** It is the responsibility of the Lay Delegate to accurately represent the local congregation's view at the business meetings. If new or amended issues arise that have not been discussed by the congregation, it is the duty of the Lay Delegate to vote as you feel the congregation would have voted had they been able to discuss the issue as presented.
4. **Expenses:** Always keep a detailed record of your expenses for General Conference or Network Gathering, including receipts. Submit this information to your church treasurer. If you are paying the bill yourself, it is even more important to do this so that your board can hopefully begin to anticipate these expenses and budget accordingly. In some countries, you can deduct expenses paid personally from your taxes.
5. **First Time Delegates:** If you are attending a conference for the first time it is a good idea to attend the Lay Delegate orientation. This will help you connect with other Lay Delegates and get a better understanding of how the Business Meeting is conducted.

**E. Post-Conference:**

1. At the first congregational meeting following the conference, the Lay Delegate is to report to the congregation the highlights of the conference. This should include a report of all meetings attended, the outcome of major issues (e.g. elections, votes, bylaw changes etc.) as well as any workshops and worship services attended. Rationale on all voting by the delegate that was not consistent with the input from the congregation should be explained at this time.
2. A report should also be presented in writing to the local Board of Directors/Local Church Administrative Body and communicated to the congregation within 60 days following the conference.
3. Be sure to submit an expense report with receipts to your church treasurer.



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4. The same type of report to the congregation and board should be given for Network Gatherings, as well, although there is no business meeting at these events.

a. The outline of a sample report could look like this:

#### **CONFERENCE or NETWORK GATHERING ATTENDED**

##### **A. Business Meetings**

1. Election Results
2. Structure changes
  - a. Bylaws
3. Resolutions
4. Impact on local congregations

##### **B. Workshops Attended**

##### **C. Worship Services**

Themes / Features Speakers

##### **D. Local Congregation's Participation**

1. Clergy
2. Delegate(s)
3. Attendees

##### **E. Personal Insights**

#### **F. Additional Suggested Responsibilities of a Lay Delegate:**

1. Save, read and organize all Network and Fellowship mailings throughout the year. Share this information with your congregation as it becomes available.
2. The Lay Delegates should be in regular contact with the Network Leader, or their designated representative either by telephone or by email. It is your responsibility to see that the leadership has your current address, email address and day and evening telephone numbers.



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3. Attend all open board and congregational meetings. You may be asked to assist in the preparation of bylaw changes or resolutions for presentation at conference.
4. Attend church services and activities as much as possible. In order to best represent your congregation, you need to be in touch with the people.
5. In addition to periodic reports, there are a number of important resources you might want to keep with your Network and Fellowship records. These include the latest directories, the Fellowship Bylaws, and your local church Bylaws and Standard Operating Procedures. As a Lay Delegate, you make policy when you exercise your vote at conference. You need to be able to refer to the resources that enumerate the policies of your church and the Fellowship.
6. **Head Delegate:** Should more than one Lay Delegate be mandated by membership numbers, normally the senior delegate shall be recognized as Head Delegate or shall be designated, by mutual agreement, among the delegates. Under these circumstances the Head Delegate shall:
  - a. Coordinate in a timely fashion all efforts to inform the congregation of issues that will be dealt with at conferences (based upon pre-conference materials).
  - b. Assure that all delegates and alternate / assistant delegates have access to Network and Fellowship pre and post- conference material and any other materials relevant to delegates.
  - c. Keep the local Board of Directors/Church Administrative Body and Ministry leaders informed of any changes in information and materials from the Network and the Fellowship as it becomes available.
7. Aside from conferences and being an information source, you may have an even greater responsibility. That is to empower lay people in your local church. Help them to ascertain their spiritual gifts and to decide to which areas of ministry and service they are called.



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Help them to build programs and ministries in the local church. Find ways, working with your pastor, to develop the ministry skills of the laity.

Empowering people to do ministries to which God is calling them is an exciting and challenging job. The Lay Delegate is in a key position to assist in this wonderful task.

#### **G. Alternate**

1. The Alternate position can provide an individual with the opportunity to begin learning about the workings of the local church, the Network and the Fellowship before running for the position of Lay Delegate.
2. Alternate Lay Delegates play an important role in the life of the church. They can help divide the workload both within the local church, Network Gathering and at General Conference, and are encouraged to work as a team with the Lay Delegate.
3. The position is not viewed as just a “substitute” delegate, only to be used when the Lay Delegate is not available. The Lay Delegate and the Alternate must work together to see that their job is done efficiently and effectively.
4. It is the responsibility of the Lay Delegate to ensure that the Alternate has copies of all conference materials and that the Alternate is fully trained to assume the duties of the Lay Delegate when required.

#### **H. Responsibilities of the Congregation**

1. Lay Delegates represent the congregation at the conference business meetings. It is, therefore, in the best interest of the congregation to insure that the most qualified person or persons be elected, supported and affirmed in their position as Lay Delegate. This should include financial support, including registration, transportation, meals and housing.

#### **I. Summary**

1. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask your Pastor or to contact your Network Leader. Contact other Lay Delegates to get



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their input. Remember the local congregation is not sending you to conferences for a vacation.

2. You have an important responsibility to represent the congregation to the Network and Fellowship and upon your return be able to represent the meetings, workshops, and worship services to your congregation. Communication is the key!
3. The following abbreviations may be useful in reading through Fellowship materials:

ABBREVIATIONS

NAME OF GROUP

COE	Council of Elders
BOP	Board of Pensions
GC	General Conference
GBNC	Governing Board Nominating Committee
MNC	Moderator Nominating Committee
UFMCC / MCC	Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches



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## PROPOSED UFMCC 2013 GENERAL CONFERENCE XXV VOTING PROCEDURES MANUAL

As approved \_\_\_\_\_

Note: All Times Shown are CST. [Click here](#) to convert your time zone.

### A. VIRTUALLY JOINING THE BUSINESS FORUM AND MEETING

1. In order to virtually join the Business Forum and Meeting, you will need to log on to Adobe Connect at least 30 minutes before the beginning of the Business Forum and Meeting. On or before 28 June 2013, the log in URL will be sent to all registered Virtual Delegates.
2. On Monday 01 July 2013 at 3:30 p.m. the Business Meeting Forum will begin. It is advised that you log in at least 30 minutes in advance of the scheduled start so that we can verify that you can hear and see the proceedings.
3. Immediately following the Business Forum, if your church is eligible to vote, your Lay delegate(s) will receive a unique link from our Ballot Tabulation Service at which they will be allowed to vote in the **FIRST BALLOT (only)** of the **Governing Board election**.
4. Virtual Voting will close on 02 July 2013 at 11:00 a.m. CST
5. On Tuesday 02 July 2013 at 11:00 a.m. the Business Meeting will convene. Again, log in at least 30 minutes early.
6. Your delegate(s) will be counted in order to establish the quorum.

### B. SPEAKING ON THE FLOOR OF GENERAL CONFERENCE

1. All questions are due to the Clerk of the General Conference on or before 01 June 2013 by email at [GoverningBoard@MCCchurch.net](mailto:GoverningBoard@MCCchurch.net) . This allows for translation and an opportunity to post answers to the General Conference website.
2. Address your emailed question to "Mr./Ms. Moderator."
3. When submitting your question, please provide your name, the name of your church, and the location of your church home, including country.
4. If your question is selected to be read during General Conference, the Moderator will read your question and provide a response.
5. In order to speak to a motion, you will type your question into the Adobe chat box.
6. Generally, a delegate may speak only once to any given motion.



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7. The Chair may limit the time for all speakers.
8. The Chair ordinarily will only vote during a business meeting if there is a tie or if the Chair wishes to record his/her vote after the vote of the Conference is finalized.
9. The Chair requests that each of us pray and ask God's guidance in the business to come before the body.

#### C. SEATING AT GENERAL CONFERENCE

1. Clerk of the General Conference
  - a. The Moderator shall appoint a qualified person to serve as the Clerk of the General Conference. At the start of the first business session, the Clerk of the General Conference will certify that the General Conference quorum has been met. Once the quorum is established, no other votes on quorum will be taken during the General Conference.
2. Voting Delegates
  - a. **Lay House** - Members of the Lay House are Lay Delegates; the Interim Pastoral Leader of each affiliated church when that Interim Pastoral Leader is a Lay Member of UFMCC; and the members of the Council of Elders who are not clergy or Lay Delegates and **are** members of UFMCC. Members of the LAY HOUSE will have VOICE AND VOTE.
  - b. **Clergy House** - Members of the Clergy House are ordained UFMCC clergy with a License to Practice and honorably retired UFMCC clergy. Members of the CLERGY HOUSE will have VOICE AND VOTE.
  - c. **Governing Board**- Members of the Governing Board who are not Clergy or Lay Delegates are seated in a special section with VOICE AND VOTE.
  - d. **Virtual Delegates** of either HOUSE will be acknowledged in their appropriate HOUSE and will have VOICE (through their submitted questions) and VOTE.
3. Official Observers
  - a. **Transfer Clergy** - Transfer Clergy who are registered with UFMCC are seated behind the Clergy House with VOICE BUT NO VOTE.
  - b. **Clergy Candidates** - Those who are registered In Care with MCC and those clergy candidates who have been approved for ordination are seated behind the Lay House with VOICE BUT NO VOTE.



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- c. **Programmers** - Chairs of UFMCC Commissions, Committees, Boards, and Institutions who are not Clergy or Lay Delegates are seated behind the Lay House with VOICE BUT NO VOTE.
- 4. **Conference Participants**
  - a. **Registrants** - Registrants (those who are not Lay House or of the Clergy House or Official Observers) are seated behind the Official Observers with NEITHER VOICE NOR VOTE.
  - b. **Special Guests** - Guests of the Conference are seated with Registrants with NEITHER VOICE NOR VOTE.

**SEATING CHART FOR GENERAL CONFERENCE**

Moderator and Clerk of the Business Meeting [VOICE and VOTE]
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<b>Clergy House</b>  (Clergy who are Ordained with a License to Practice and Honorably Retired)  [ VOICE and VOTE]	<b>Laity House</b>  (Lay Delegates, Lay Interim Pastoral Leaders, Lay Council of Elders, Lay Governing Board Members)  [ VOICE and VOTE]
Transfer Clergy  [VOICE BUT NO VOTE]	In Care, Approved for Ordination, and Programmers  [VOICE BUT NO VOTE]

Alternate Lay Delegates, Registrants and Special Guests [NEITHER VOICE NOR VOTE]
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**D. NATIONAL MEETINGS**



1. Given that the laws of some nations, including the United States and Canada, require that a business meeting be conducted for Lay Delegates and Clergy from those nations, a reasonable period during the General Conference is set aside for the Lay Delegates and Clergy from such nations to conduct a business meeting.

**E. FORUMS**

1. Forums held during the General Conference will pertain to the items on the business agenda. Decisions made during a forum are not binding on UFMCC.

**F. AGENDA**

**1. Agenda Items**

- a. **Approval of General Conference Procedures** - Proposed amendments to the UFMCC General Conference Procedures Manual shall be presented to the General Conference for approval.
- b. **Report from the Moderator** - The Moderator's Report will be received by the General Conference and will include a summary of the actions taken by the Council of Elders and Senior Leadership Team.
- c. **Report from the Governing Board** - The Report from the Governing Board will be received by the General Conference and will include a summary of UFMCC financial reports, Strategic Plan, and the report from the International Task Force Report to the Governing Board.
- d. **Report from the Governing Board Bylaw Team** - The Report from the Governing Board Bylaw Team will be received by the General Conference and any amendments recommended by same will be voted on by the Delegates to General Conference.
- e. **Report from the Governing Board Nominating Committee** - The Report from the Governing Board Nominating Committee will be received by the General Conference. and shall include a separate forum with the nominees for election to the position of members of the Governing Board.
- f. **Actions from National Meetings** - Items of interest to the whole denomination that arise due to actions of any national caucus meeting held as part of the World Jubilee may be brought to the floor of General Conference. After limited discussion, the only motion in order would be a motion to refer the item to the Governing Board for study and to report



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back to the next General Conference on action taken on the referred item.

- g. **Election of Members of the Governing Board.**
- h. **Consideration of Bylaw Amendments**
- i. **Introduction of the Moderator Nominating Committee.**
- j. **Motions of Courtesy and Appreciation** - Motions of courtesy and appreciation will be presented to the Clerk of the General Conference for review and presentation as the last item of business on the General Conference agenda.

## **G. ELECTIONS FOR THE GOVERNING BOARD**

### **1. Governing Board Nominating Committee**

- a. **Procedural Changes** - The Governing Board Nominating Committee may propose changes to the election process and procedures. Proposals for changes must be submitted to the Governing Board for approval no later than seventy-five (75) days prior to General Conference.
- b. **Upcoming Vacancy** - The Governing Board Nominating Committee will announce at each General Conference whether the term of the Moderator and Governing Board are to expire at the following General Conference.

### **2. Nominating Forum**

- a. A Governing Board Nominating Forum will be held during General Conference.
- b. The Chair of the Governing Board Nominating Committee will introduce the members of the Governing Board Nominating Committee.
- c. The Chair of the Governing Board Nominating Committee will explain the election process.
- d. The Governing Board Nominating Committee will introduce each nominee, each of whom will be granted an equal amount of time to respond to his/her nomination. The Governing Board Nominating Committee will determine the amount of time available for the responses.

### **3. Election Procedures On Site**

- a. **Official Ballot** - The Chair of the Governing Board Nominating Committee will ensure that the Official Ballot is printed and available on the day of election.



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- b. **Ballot Tabulation Committee** - The Governing Board Nominating Committee will appoint a Ballot Tabulation Committee prior to General Conference.
  - c. **Collection of Ballots** - The collection of ballots will be monitored carefully. All ballots cast and collected will be handed to the Chair or Assistant Chair of the Ballot Tabulation Committee. The Chair and Assistant Chair of the Ballot Tabulation Committee will certify all ballots.
  - d. **Security of Ballots** - A security person from the floor of General Conference will accompany the ballots to and from the floor and stand outside the counting room to provide security.
  - e. **Valid Ballots** - Valid ballots are those ballots submitted by voting delegates that (1) contain the specified number of votes or less or (2) are blank and (3) valid Virtual Ballots.
  - f. **Invalid Ballots** - Invalid ballots are (1) those ballots submitted by voting delegates that contain write-in names, more votes than are permitted for that ballot, or inappropriate markings and (2) those ballots submitted by anyone who is not a voting delegate.
  - g. **Ballot Results** - The Chair of the Ballot Tabulation Committee will show the tally sheet to the Moderator and then report all names with their ballot counts to the General Conference. Once the results have been announced, nominees who receive less than twenty-five percent (25%) of the total votes cast will automatically be eliminated. After the results have been announced, the Chair of the Governing Board Nominating Committee will ask if any remaining nominee wishes to withdraw his/her name. Balloting will then continue until election has been achieved.
  - h. **Post-Election** - When the ballots are counted, the ballots are to be sealed in an envelope. The envelope of ballots, counting sheets, and tally sheets are then delivered to the Clerk of the General Conference. The ballots, counting sheets, and tally sheets are to be destroyed following the adjournment of General Conference.
4. **Election Procedures for Virtual Voting**
- a. **Official Ballot** - The Clerk of the Business Meeting will ensure that the Official Electronic Ballot is available on the day of the virtual election.



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b. Ballot Tabulation

1. Collection of Ballots - The collection of ballots will be monitored by the Balloting Service. All ballots cast and collected will be tabulated and certified by the Balloting Service. Virtual Delegates will **only** vote in the **first** round of balloting.
2. Valid Ballots - Valid ballots are those ballots submitted voting delegates that (1) contain the specific number of votes or less or (2) are blank.
3. Invalid Ballots - Invalid ballots are those ballots submitted by voting delegates that contain more votes than are permitted for that ballot.
4. Ballot Results - The Virtual Ballot Tabulation Service will provide the tally sheet to the Clerk of the Business Meeting, who will then report all names with their ballot counts. These ballots will be added to the On-site Tally Sheet.

5. **Votes Required for Election** - In order to be elected to the position of Governing Board member, a nominee must receive at least **50%+1 of all eligible votes from the Lay House and 50%+ 1 votes from the Clergy House.**

**H. POST-GENERAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION**

1. Reports and Directives of the General Conference will be prepared by UFMCC staff and approved by the Governing Board within ninety (90) days following the General Conference. The Reports and Directives will then be posted on the MCC website. Paper copies of the Reports and Directives will be provided to any individual or church upon request.



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Robert's Rules of Order Quick Reference (11th Edition)

The motions below are listed in order of precedence. Any motion can be introduced if it is higher on the chart than the pending motion.

If You	Want to:	Say:	Interrupt?	Second?	Debate?	Amend?	Vote?
§21	Close Meeting	I move to adjourn	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§20	Take Break	I move to recess for	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§19	Register Motion	I rise to a question of privilege	Yes	No	No	No	None
§18	Make Follow Agenda	I call for the orders of the day	Yes	No	No	No	None
§17	Lay aside temporarily	I move to lay the question on the table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§16	Close Debate	I move the previous question	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
§15	Limit or Extend Debate	I move that debate be limited to...	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
§14	Postpone to a Certain Time	I move to postpone the motion to	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§13	Refer to Committee	I move to refer the motion	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§12	Modify Wording of Motion	I move to amend the motion by...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§11	Kill main motion	I move to postponed the motion indefinitely	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
§10	Bring business to main assembly	I move that [or to]...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority



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**Incidental Motions - No order of precedence. Arise incidentally and decided immediately.**

§23	Enforce Rules	Point of Order	Yes	No	No	No	None
§24	Submit matter to assembly	I appeal from the decision of the chair	Yes	Yes	Varies	No	Majority
§25	Suspend rules	I move to suspend the rules which ...	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
§26	Avoid main motion altogether	I object to the consideration of the question	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
§27	Divide motion	I move to divide the question	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§29	Demand rising vote	I call for a division	Yes	No	No	No	None
§33	Parliamentary law question	Parliamentary inquiry	Yes (if urgent)	No	No	No	None
§33	Request information	Request for information	Yes (if urgent)	No	No	No	None

**Motions That Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly - No order of precedence. Introduce only when nothing else pending.**

§34	Take matter from Table	I move to take from the table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§35	Cancel or change previous action	I move to ascend/amend something previously adopted	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3 or Majority with notice
§37	Reconsider motion	I move to reconsider the vote	No	Yes	Varies	No	Majority



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## How to Stay in the Loop

- Visit [www.MCCchurch.org](http://www.MCCchurch.org) often
- Read all the emails which come from the MCC Communications Department
- If you don't receive email publications such as action alerts, Headline News, the MCC IMPACT, and prayer alerts, then complete the quick sign up at [\\_http://visitor.r20.constantcontact.com/manage/optin/ea?v=001hAbSJWFaoM4zRKd7FIlwK5tSS6Twblr932foZ5BXdlOPfnydBzK5iWK\\_cCwAC9iJVqx5R7Tyyv8%3D](http://visitor.r20.constantcontact.com/manage/optin/ea?v=001hAbSJWFaoM4zRKd7FIlwK5tSS6Twblr932foZ5BXdlOPfnydBzK5iWK_cCwAC9iJVqx5R7Tyyv8%3D)
- Make sure you are on the mailing list for your Network Newsletter
- Attend local church Board Meetings
- Read the UFMCC Bylaws <http://mccchurch.org/how-we-work/governance/>
- Read all materials contained in General Conference business meeting pack before arriving at General Conference and bring your business pack with you
- Introduce yourself to other Lay Delegates
- If you do not have access to a computer ask someone at the local church to access the above mentioned items for you and print out hard copies



Metropolitan Community Churches

TRANSFORMING OURSELVES AS WE TRANSFORM THE WORLD.

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