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STANDING RULES

APRIL 2024

IMAGINE

PREPARED FOR THE 2024 FREE METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA
GENERAL CONFERENCE | APRIL 25-28 - TORONTO, ON

**The Twelfth Canadian General Conference
The Free Methodist Church in Canada
STANDING RULES OF ORDER**

1. Schedule

The first session of the Twelfth Canadian General Conference convenes at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, April 25, 2024 at the Marriott Toronto Airport Hotel, Toronto, Ontario. The continuing schedule of the Conference is as contained in the published Agenda and distributed to the members of the Conference prior to the Conference convening.

2. Roll

Credentials for all elected delegates were to be submitted to the Canadian Ministry Centre prior to the Conference. The list of all such elected delegates having submitted credentials forms the roll of elected delegates. All ministers who are full members of the Canadian Conference are eligible voting members of General Conference. A list of all registered delegates and eligible voting members of General Conference constitutes the roll of General Conference for purposes of establishing a quorum. The roll is taken by inspection in each session by the Network Leaders and appointees of the Secretary of the Conference. Members of Conference and registered delegates (i.e. eligible voting members of General Conference) are to attend all sessions of the Conference except for those scheduled to be in the prayer room. Those who need to be excused for other reasons need to inform the bishop.

3. Honorary Seats

The following persons are granted honorary seats at the Conference:

- Commissioned Ministers
- Ministerial Candidates
- Appointed (supply) pastors
- Members of the Board of Administration who are not elected delegates
- Special invited guests of the Conference who shall be recognized by the Chair
- Denominational Executives
- Missionaries of the Canadian Church

All persons granted an honorary seat have a voice but not a vote.

4. Bar

All voting members of General Conference are seated at tables in designated seats. This area constitutes the bar of the Conference.

5. Presiding Officers

The bishop shall preside at the sittings of the General Conference with primary responsibility for spiritual leadership and managing the agenda. The Chair of the Board of Administration shall assume the chair to process motions and conduct voting. There shall be a parliamentarian, appointed by the Board of Administration, to assist the presiding officers. When electing the bishop, arrangements will be made for a visiting Free Methodist bishop or a former bishop or the chair of the Board of Administration to preside over the conference for this specific agenda item only.

6. Minutes

The Secretary of the General Conference prepares the minutes of the Conference and these minutes are reviewed and adopted by the Board of Administration. Copies of the adopted minutes of the General Conference are made available to all members of the General Conference within 60 days of the conclusion of the Conference.

7. *Robert's Rules of Order*

The current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* is the standard of parliamentary procedure.

8. Resolutions

The deadline for submitting resolutions to the General Conference was December 30, 2023. All resolutions received by that date have been submitted to the Study Commission on Doctrine which reports to the Conference on the disposition of the resolutions so that all issues receive due consideration. No new resolutions are accepted on the floor of General Conference.

9. Resolutions Committee

The Study Committee on Doctrine (SCOD) will act as the General Conference Committee on Resolutions. It will evaluate the resolutions submitted to the General Conference, and may refer them to a Study Team or to the Board of Administration. SCOD, the Study Team, or the Board of Administration may recommend adoption, amendment, merging (combining two or more related resolutions) or rejection of the resolutions. The rationale for amendments, mergers, or rejection shall be reported to the General Conference. A recommendation to reject a resolution may be overturned by a 75% vote of the General Conference. Such action would then permit the resolution to be considered by the General Conference. The recommendation to reject takes precedence; neither the original resolution, nor any other motion can be considered until the recommendation to reject has been overturned.

Where resolutions propose substantive changes (changes which are extensive or involve significant changes in meaning) to *The Manual*, SCOD will consult with the body responsible for the related section of *The Manual* (e.g. Board of Administration, Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement) or appropriate subject matter experts regarding the wording of the proposed revised text. Following the General Conference, SCOD will collect and prepare changes to *The Manual* approved by the General Conference and submit the edits to the Board of Administration for final approval (to ensure consistency with the direction of the General Conference) prior to publishing and distributing them.

10. Debate

Before debate begins, the Chair shall ask if there any who wish to ask clarifying questions of the presenter. After clarifying questions have been answered, debate shall begin. Debate is limited to three minutes per speaker and speakers are heard alternately for and against the motion, recommendation or resolution, up to a limit of three for each side. The Chairperson of the group reporting may use up to three minutes to close the debate. This privilege is not cancelled by ordering the previous question. No member may speak a second time on the same issue except to provide clarification at the request of the

Chair. The three-minute limit on debate may be amended by a majority vote of the Conference at any time and for any period of duration.

11. Demonstrations out of order

Any demonstrations approving or disapproving positions expressed by speakers during debates are considered out of order.

12. Quorum

Two-thirds of all registered delegates and eligible voting members of the Conference constitute a quorum to do business.

13. Tellers

The General Conference is served by Tellers.

14. Voting

- Only the members of the Conference within the bar of the Conference at the time of voting are allowed to vote on any matter.
- A majority vote is considered the approval of any proposal, unless otherwise specified.
- All ballot votes are counted by Tellers outside the body of the General Conference. The results of votes are reported to the Secretary of Conference who reports to the body.
- All ballots are to be retained by the Secretary of the General Conference for one month after General Conference and then destroyed.

15. Suspension of Standing Rules

The Standing Rules of Order may be suspended by a two-thirds vote of the Conference Body present and voting.

16. Effective Date

All legislation of the General Conference becomes effective at the close of the Conference, unless otherwise specified.

17. Business Overlooked

Any matters overlooked by the General Conference are referred to the Board of Administration with power to act until the next sitting of the General Conference.