

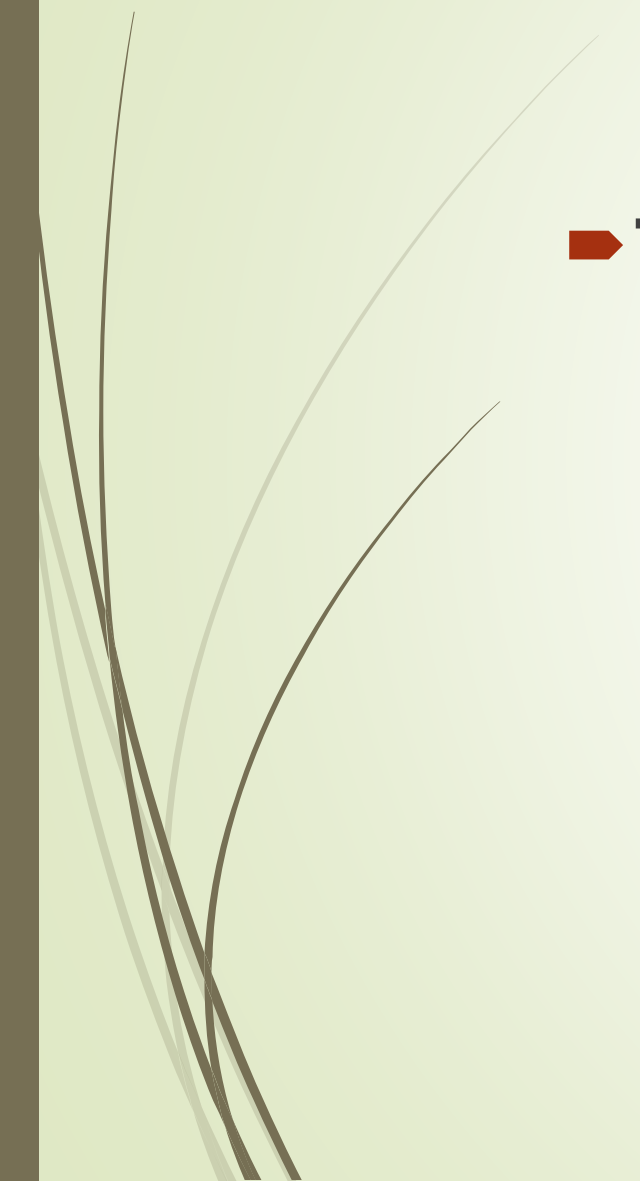



Annual Meetings

The “How To” in the midst of a Pandemic!



What does the Manual tell us

- **The Community of Faith is responsible for:**
 - Governance and Administration
 - Spiritual Life
 - Ministry and other Leadership
 - Participation in Regional and Denominational Life
 - Election of Regional Council Representatives
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Meetings of a Community of Faith that is a Congregation or Pastoral Charge


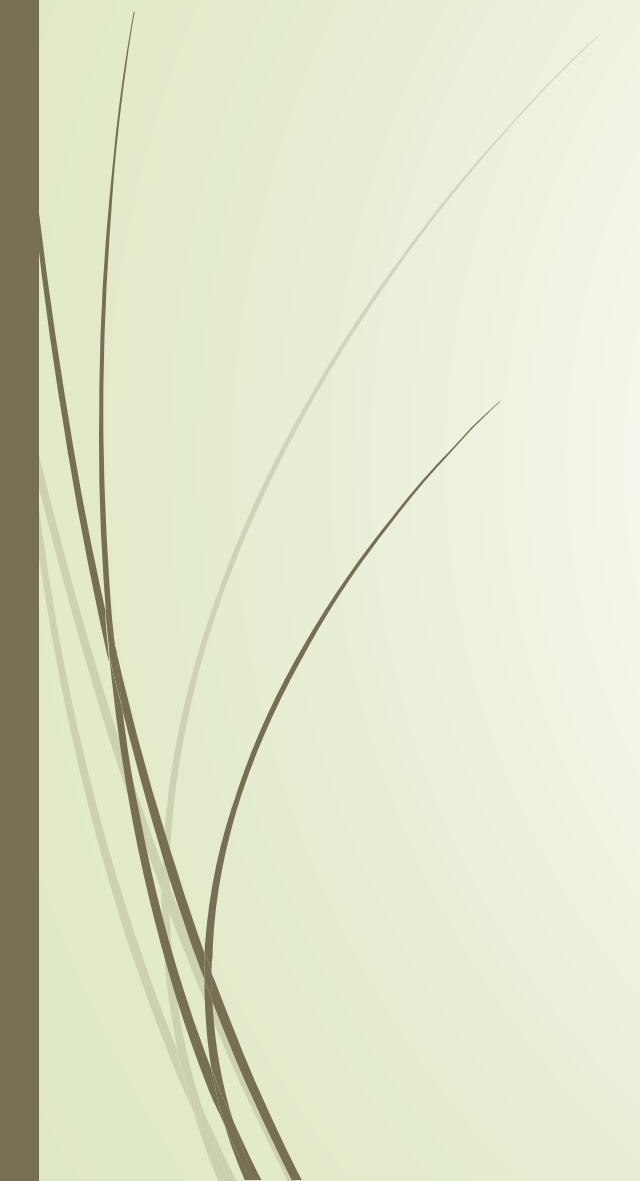
Frequency:

The congregation or pastoral charge must meet annually. This meeting must be held as early as possible in the calendar year. The congregation or pastoral charge may also decide to meet more often than annually.



Annual Meeting Responsibility

- ▶ At the Annual Meeting, the congregation or pastoral charge is responsible for:
 - ▶ Electing a Chair and a Secretary of the Annual Meeting
 - ▶ Receiving the annual reports from the governing body, committees, and other groups in the congregation or pastoral charge;

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- Electing the governing body, regional council representatives, and members of the committees; and
 - Considering and making a decision on the draft annual budget.
 - The congregation may also appoint trustees for the congregation at the annual meeting if the congregation has set the trustees term of office for one year.



Notice of Meeting – For an Annual General Meeting

- ▶ There are different processes for giving notice:
Given one of the responsibilities is electing the governing body, the notice means:
- ▶ Notice of the meeting must be read during public worship on two Sundays. After notice has been read on the second Sunday, the meeting may take place on the next day (Monday) or on any other day after that.




Minimum Numbers of Members Present

- ▶ A meeting of the congregation or pastoral charge may take place only if a minimum number of full members is present;
 - ▶ For congregations or pastoral charges with 100 or more members, at least 20 full members must be present;




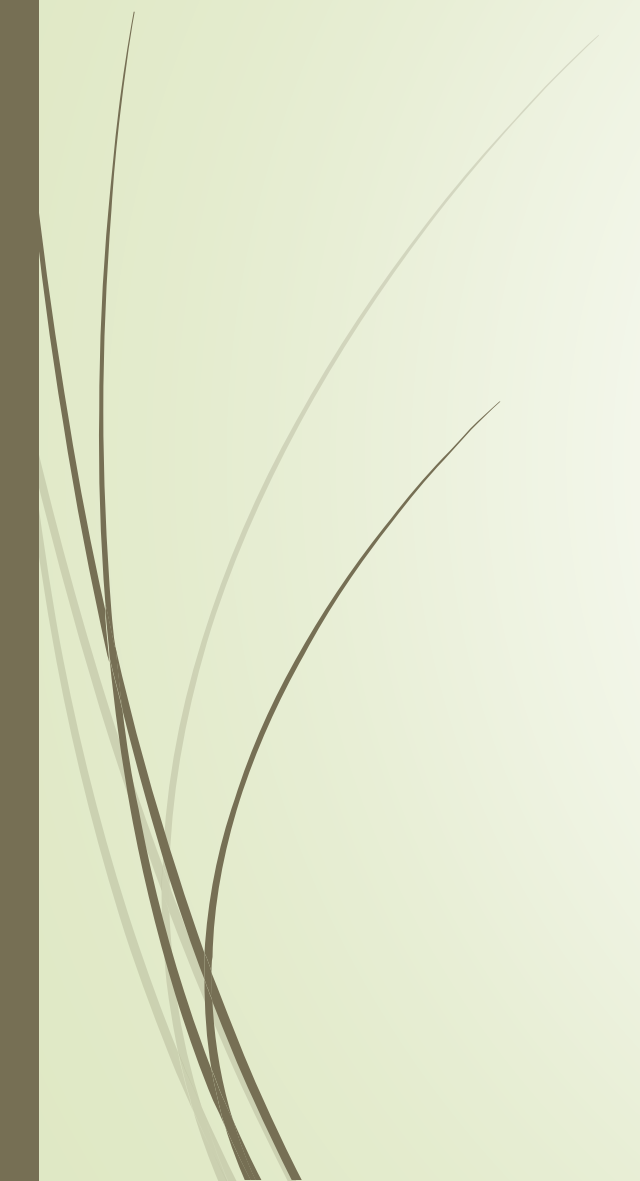
Minimum Numbers of Members Present


- For congregations or pastoral charges with between 30 and 99 full members, at least 10 full members must be present;
- For congregations or pastoral charges with fewer than 30 full members, at least 1/3 of the full membership must be present.



In these Pandemic Times, How do we conduct our Annual Meeting?

- The Sub-Executive of the General Council passed the following Motion:
 - Temporarily suspend the requirement in section B.5.1 of The Manual for congregations or pastoral charges to hold an annual meeting; and

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- Temporarily amend the responsibility of the congregation or pastoral charge to make a decision on their annual budget by allowing the governing body of the congregation or pastoral charge to fulfil this responsibility where necessary, and where permitted by the regional council;
 - With each of the foregoing to be in effect until June 30, 2021, subject to earlier cancellation or further extension by decision of the Executive or Sub-Executive of the General Council.




What does this mean for our Congregations or Pastoral Charges

- ▶ If you choose not to have your Annual Meeting until after the exception:


The annual meeting needs to be held when the exemption expires. If the exemptions are extended, once expired the Annual Meeting must happen.

- ▶ What if we did not have an annual meeting in 2020 and now 2021 is delayed:

In that case, the closer we get to the end of 2021, the more it would make sense for a congregation to hold one meeting to deal with two years at end of 2021 or the beginning of 2022.



How would we do our Annual Reports

- To be consistent with past and (hopefully) future practice, there should be a separate report for a one year period rather than 18 months.
 - It's easier for year-to-year comparison purposes in the future.
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How do we call a Meeting

- For those who are having in person or on line worship, the announcement can be made for the notice of meeting.
- Each congregation's context is a little different. Some have the email addresses for most, if not all members, so can use that capacity for notice. For others, telephone contact is the best.




How do we call a Meeting

- ▶ The important thing is that the minister/governing body/chair calling the meeting are acting in good faith, and that they choose the option for notifying members that, in their reasonable opinion, is the best way of getting in touch with the largest number of people under the circumstances.
- ▶ Notice of meeting would still apply.
- ▶ Quorum requirements would still apply.
- ▶ Then any decisions that come out of the meeting will be legally solid.




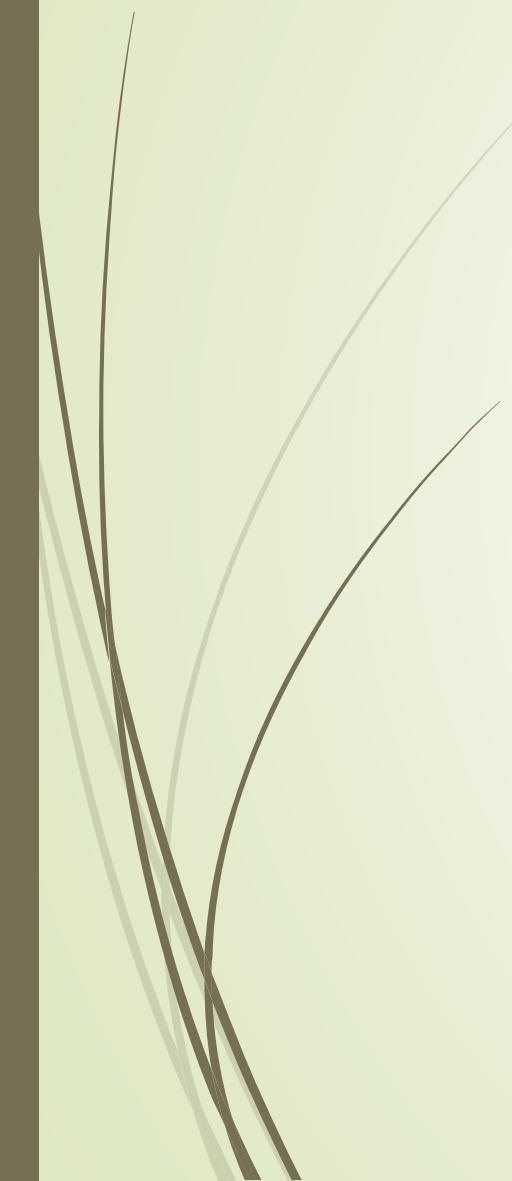
How do we call a Meeting


- ▶ It's also important for congregations to record in their minutes how notice of the meeting was given and the rationale for that e.g. "notice of the meeting was given via email to all members for whom we have email addresses, which is 90% of the congregation's membership".
 - ▶ That will answer any questions raised later about the legitimacy of the meeting.
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Governing Body

- If you wait to have your annual meeting until after the exemption time, what happens to the governing body members whose terms are up?
- *First consideration is when exactly do the terms expire: when people were elected, was it specified to be for a one year term or until the next annual meeting?*
- *If it was “until the next annual meeting”, their terms would continue until the congregation is able to meet to elect a new governing body.*
- *If there was nothing actually specified, it’s implicit that they have authority to serve until the congregation can meet and replace them.*

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- *If they were elected for a specific one year term, I think Manual B.7.3.6 may be used in this situation. It gives the governing body authority to fill any vacancies on the governing body until the congregation elects a replacement. If the governing body members' terms will expire before the congregation can meet, that means there will be vacancies on the governing body. While they are still functioning (i.e. before the end of their terms), the governing body could fill the pending vacancies with the same members as currently serving on the governing body, or with new members, or a combination. In normal times, we would avoid having people elect themselves as an entire slate in that way but in a emergency situation, where it is virtually impossible for the congregation to meet, section B.7.3.6 can be interpreted generously.*




We Wish to have our Annual Meeting in Person- Can we do that?

- It depends:
- Each Congregation or Pastoral Charge must follow the Health Guidelines for your Province and area.


- Currently in NS –

Gathering Limits with social distancing for meetings and training (indoors and outdoors)- is restricted to **10 (Ten) people maximum** (no matter what the size the room or space is).



We Wish to have our Annual Meeting in Person-Can we do that?


- ▶ PEI – Currently, congregational annual meetings must follow the Gathering Guidelines. Organized gatherings are permitted to include up to **50 (fifty) people indoors or outdoors from different households with:**
 - ▶ An operational plan in place, following the measures to mitigate the transmission of COVID -19.
 - ▶ Two additional cohorts of up to 50 (fifty) people, with each cohort kept separate as per the multiple gatherings guidance, is permitted with prior approval by the Chief Public Health Officer.



We Wish to have our Annual Meeting in Person- Can we do that?


➤ NB - Orange

Faith venues can operate under a COVID-19 operational plan. In-person services are limited to 50 participants or fewer, depending upon the size of the facility, with two metres of physical distancing.



We Wish to have our Annual Meeting in Person- Can we do that?

- ▶ NL - In Alert Level 2, places of worship may host services and faith-based activities of no more than 100 people, provided physical distancing can be achieved between individuals or bubbles.
- ▶ This limit includes officiants, staff and volunteers. Large venues with a capacity of 500 people or more that wish to host gatherings of more than 100 people may submit an operating plan for review/approval by a Service NL Environmental Health Officer.



We Wish to have our Annual Meeting in Person- Can we do that?

- ▶ Quebec- Public Space Organized Activities Prohibited, except for places of worship (maximum of 10 people in attendance) and funerals (a maximum of 25 people excluding the staff of the funeral establishment and volunteers inside or outside the building. (Keeping an attendance register is mandatory). Moreover, no food or alcohol can be served.



Other Options:

- ▶ If you cannot have your meeting in person, what options are there?
 - ▶ Zoom
 - ▶ Conference Call
 - ▶ Waiting until restrictions allow the numbers needed.



Secret Ballot

- ▶ *It is important to name up front, as part of the business procedures, that a secret ballot is not possible with the technology available. That should prevent a motion coming forward. If such a motion still is made, the Chair should remind people about the limits of their technology, and that if the motion carries, the business that needs to be done via a secret ballot will have to be postponed until more sophisticated technology can be arranged.*



After the Meeting

- ▶ After your Annual meeting:
 - ▶ Complete the form letting the regional offices know your elected members to the Region. (If we do not have their names from you they will not be able to vote at the meeting)
 - ▶ Send your approved Annual Report to the Regional Office –
 - ▶ Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters and RC 15 – Tracey Rose, trose@united-church.ca
 - ▶ First Dawn Eastern Edge - Leona Laundry – l laundry@united-church.ca