

GA-2518

**PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE SPECIAL RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)**

(OPERATIONAL, POLICY AND ORGANIZATIONAL)

WHEREAS the General Assembly adopted GA-2343 AMENDMENTS TO THE DESIGN OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) in Louisville, Kentucky in 2023, thereby enacting substantial changes to the meetings and the operations of the General Assembly at the conclusion of the 2025 meeting of the General Assembly; and,

WHEREAS the Special Rules of Procedure for the General Assembly define its organization and prescribe additional procedures for the conduct of its business; and,

WHEREAS the changes enacted by GA-2343 require changes to the procedures of the General Assembly,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the 2025 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting July 12-15, 2025, in Memphis, Tennessee, adopt the following ***PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE SPECIAL RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)***; and,

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that these changes be implemented following the conclusion of the 2025 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada.

General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

BACKGROUND

Following several years of work by the Governance Committee of the General Board, along with opportunities for conversation across the church, the General Assembly meeting in Louisville, Kentucky in July 2023, adopted GA-2343, making significant changes to the Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. These changes, which will be implemented at the conclusion of the 2025 meeting of the General Assembly, call for the General Assembly to move to a three-year meeting cycle. Every three years, there will be a hybrid meeting, with opportunities for participation in person and online; in the other two years of the cycle, the Assembly

will meet in online-only gatherings. Congregations will appoint three **representatives delegates** to serve three-year terms, in which they will engage in dialogue, discernment, and prayer.

In fall 2023, the Moderator of the General Assembly appointed an Implementation Team, as called for in GA-2343, to work toward enacting these changes. Part of their work including revising the Special Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly to align with the changes. The Special Rules of Procedure govern the business of the General Assembly and can only be changed by the General Assembly.

The proposed changes to the Special Rules of Procedure include:

- Definitions of the three-year session known as the Triennium, which includes an Annual Meeting during each of the first two years and a Triennial Meeting during the final year which includes a traditional in-person component;
- The process by which business items shall be submitted to the General Assembly;
- The classification of business items into three categories: Reports; Operational, Policy, and Organizational Items; and Statements of Witness;
- The process for determining Topics of Education, Discussion, and Prayer;
- The role of the Executive Committee and the General Board in preparing business items and Topics for Education, Discussion, and Prayer;
- Introduction of Alternate Perspective Reports, which express an interpretation that contrasts with a proposed Statement of Witness;
- The process by which the business and agenda of the General Assembly is made available;
- The procedures by which the Office of the General Minister and President shall plan, coordinate, and administer the programs of the General Assembly;
- Plans for including Worship, Education, and Discussion at meetings of the General Assembly;
- Procedures for acting on business items during meetings of the General Assembly;
- Procedures for amending the Special Rules of Procedure for the General Assembly

SPECIAL RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Note that all references to The Design are to the proposed further amendments.

***Proposed insertions are indicated with underlined text;
proposed deletions are indicated with strikethrough text.***

(Adopted by the General Assembly 1969, Revised 1979, 1981, 1989, 1995, 2009, 2011)

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Introduction

The following special rules of procedure for the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada (hereafter the “General Assembly”) define further its organization and prescribe additional procedures for the conduct of its business.

As provided in ~~paragraph 48d~~ Paragraph 49e of *The Design* ~~for of~~ the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the current edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised*, shall govern the General Assembly in all other cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with *The Design* or special rules adopted by the General Assembly.

In addition, the General Assembly may, from time to time, adopt standing rules as needed for the effective conduct of its business.

The General Board and its ~~Administrative~~ Executive Committee shall likewise adopt standing rules for the guidance of their operations.

1. General Provisions

1.1. The General Assembly shall organize its meetings and work as a three-year session known as the Triennium. Each Triennium shall consist of three Annual Meetings of the General Assembly, the last of which shall be known as the Triennial Meeting of the General Assembly.¹ The Triennium shall begin upon the adjournment of the Triennial Meeting and end at the adjournment of the ensuing Triennial Meeting.

1.1.1. When reference is made to an “Annual Meeting” in these rules, it shall include both the Annual Meeting and Triennial Meeting of the General Assembly.

1.2. Prior to the start of the Triennium, the General Board shall set the dates for the Annual and Triennial Meetings of the General Assembly for each year of the Triennium. The Office of the General Minister and President shall make the dates available among the expressions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)² as well as the business submission deadlines for each Annual Meeting.

1.2.1. The General Board may schedule additional, regular meetings of the General Assembly as it deems necessary or advisable.

1.3. Upon approval of the Executive Committee of the General Board, the Moderator of the General Assembly may call a Special Meeting of the General Assembly. If business is to be transacted, the Office of the General Minister and President shall make the business submission deadlines for the Special Meeting available among the expressions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

¹ See Paragraph 42 of *The Design*.

² For the purposes of these rules, the “expressions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)” are defined as the entities listed in Section 2.2.1–2.2.5 of these rules.

- 152 1.4. All deadlines in these rules shall be determined from the date of the first scheduled
153 business session of a meeting of the General Assembly.³
- 154 1.5. Communication for the fulfillment of these rules shall occur through a method as
155 determined by the Moderator of the General Assembly and the General Minister and
156 President.
- 157 1.6. Upon recommendation of the General Minister and President, the Executive
158 Committee shall establish policies and procedures for the processes by which:
- 159 1.6.1. Congregations and regions notify the Office of the General Minister and
160 President of the selection of new delegates to the General Assembly; and
- 161 1.6.2. Congregations and regions notify the Office of the General Minister and
162 President of alternates named to replace delegates who are unable to
163 attend a meeting of the General Assembly.⁴
- 164 1.6.3. The Office of the General Minister and President shall make these
165 policies and procedures available among the congregations and regions.

166 **2. Classification and Ordering Submission of Business Items ~~to be Considered by for~~**
167 **the Consideration of the General Assembly**

- 168 2.1. All business items to be considered by the General Assembly, ~~except in cases of~~
169 ~~emergency,~~ shall be ~~received by submitted to~~ or shall originate with the General
170 Board.⁵
- 171 2.2. Business items, as defined by Section 3 of these rules, may be ~~filed with the General~~
172 ~~Board submitted~~ by the corporate body or the governing structure of any:
- 173 2.2.1. ~~e~~Congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ);
174 2.2.2. ~~r~~Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); ~~organization with a~~
175 ~~recognized relationship;~~
- 176 2.2.3. ~~i~~Institution of higher education affiliated with the Christian Church
177 (Disciples of Christ); ~~or~~
- 178 2.2.4. ~~g~~General ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ);
- 179 2.2.5. Recognized ministry partner of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ);⁶
180 or
- 181 2.2.6. Organization with a recognized relationship with the general expression of
182 the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) ~~or by the governing structure of~~
183 any such body. An organization affiliated with an expression of the

³ See Section 9.1 of these rules.

⁴ See Paragraph 40 of *The Design*.

⁵ See Paragraph 46 of *The Design*.

⁶ See Paragraphs 75–79 of *The Design*. A list of the current recognized ministry partners is available online at disciples.org/general-ministries/recognized-ministry-partners/.

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) may submit items through the expression with which they are affiliated.

- 2.3.** Business items must be received by the Office of the General Minister and President at least ~~180-150~~ days in advance of a meeting of the General Assembly in order to allow sufficient time for the Executive Committee and the General Board to review and refer them with appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly.⁷

~~All business items shall be circulated among the congregations and regions by the Office of the General Minister and President at least 60 days in advance of the General Assembly.~~

~~Upon recommendation of the General Minister and President, the Administrative Committee shall determine whether each item qualifies for consideration and its classification.~~

~~When an item is disqualified or reclassified or combined, the Office of the General Minister and President shall notify the submitters and in the case of a resolution submitted by a congregation, the regional minister.~~

~~The notification shall include the Administrative Committee's rationale.~~

- 2.4.** The Office of the General Minister and President shall assist those who are considering filing business items ~~and provide upon request guidelines and an interpretation and~~ shall make written guidelines for the preparation of business items publicly accessible. The guidelines shall include definitions and interpretations of the classifications of business, these rules, and The Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

- 2.5.** The General Minister and President, working pastorally and collegially, may counsel to limit the number of business items and urge submitters to combine items on a single subject.

2.5.2.5.1. Regional Ministers shall be informed when items are received from congregations in their regions and may be enlisted in extending interpretation and pastoral care.

- 2.6.** In receiving proposed business items and following them through the processes of the Executive Committee, the General Board, and the General Assembly, the Office of the General Minister and President shall see that the identity of the entity or group first submitting an item is preserved even if the item eventually is transmitted to the General Assembly by a different entity such as a region, a general ministry, or the General Board.

- 2.7.** The Office of the General Minister and President shall invite each submitting entity or group to designate a spokesperson to attend the portion of the meeting of the

⁷ Items postmarked ~~or e-mailed~~ with a delivery receipt requested or emailed on the ~~180th-150th~~ day before a meeting of the General Assembly shall be regarded as meeting the deadline requirement.

Executive Committee and/or the General Board in which business for the General Assembly is discussed.

2.7.1. The designated person shall may participate digitally or in person attend at their own expense. or may participate digitally.

2.7.2. The Office of the General Minister and President may request that each entity or group submit a description of its business item as a video or other medium.

2.7.3. If an entity or group does not have a person attend a meeting, the Office of the General Minister and President shall inform the entity or group in writing of the Executive Committee and the General Board's decisions and rationales on the business item it submitted.

~~The classifications of items shall be included in the General Assembly Docket.~~

3. Classification of Business Items

3.1. Reports

3.1.1. Reports are summaries of ministries performed, plans for ministry, and audited financial statements made by the general ministries, commissions, or other entities established or recognized by the General Assembly (hereafter a "reporting entity") of each general ministry, commission or other entity established or recognized by the General Assembly.

~~Annually the General Board shall review such reports and make whatever comments or recommendations it deems advisable.~~

3.1.2. ~~In the year in which the General Assembly meets, the General Board shall forward the Reports to the General Assembly. In consultation with the General Cabinet, the Executive Committee shall determine when and in what manner each reporting entity reports to the General Assembly.~~

3.1.2.1. During a Triennium, each reporting entity shall make at least one report to the General Assembly.

3.1.2.2. Reports may be made to the General Assembly during plenary sessions which are not business sessions.

3.1.2.3. ~~When requested by the Executive Committee, t~~The most recent audit of a reporting entity's financial statements shall be included in its report to the General Assembly.

3.1.3. ~~If a Report contains only an account of work done and is primarily for information, after appropriate General Assembly consideration, no action shall be required. The General Assembly accepts Reports by virtue of their inclusion on the docket and no other action is considered or taken.~~

257 **3.1.4.** If a Report contains recommendations for action by the General
258 Assembly or if the General Board proposes recommendations for action
259 by the General Assembly, such recommendations shall be submitted
260 separately as an Operational, Policy, and Organizational Item.

~~When the timing of the General Assembly prohibits a General Ministry
from including an audit of its financial statements in its report, such an
audit shall be provided for the next meeting of the General Board. The
most recently completed audit shall be provided to the General Assembly.~~

265 **3.1.5.** Covenantal relationships of regions are demonstrated by annual
266 informational reports of regions made to the General Board ~~and. In~~
267 consultation with the College of Regional Ministers, the Executive
268 Committee may request that the regions provide brief updates to the
269 General Assembly and shall further determine when and in what manner
270 such updates are shared with the Assembly.

271 **3.1.6.** Covenantal relationships of congregations are demonstrated by annual
272 statistical reports of the congregations in the *Year Book and Directory* of
273 the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).⁸ The reports of ~~regions and~~
274 congregations are not business items for the General Assembly.

275 **3.2. Operational, Policy, and Organizational Items**

276 **3.2.1.** Operational, Policy, and Organizational Items are those which establish
277 policy or procedures, institute or revise structures, ~~or procedures,~~
278 authorize programs, approve directions, or mandate actions.

279 **3.2.2.** An Operational, Policy, and Organizational Item may be originated by the
280 General Board or submitted by any ~~other~~ entity eligible to file-submit
281 business items for the consideration of the General Assembly.⁹

~~Actions called for in Reports whether recommended by the submitter or
by the General Board, shall be transmitted to the General Assembly
separately as Operational, Policy and Organizational Items.~~

~~The General Board shall submit a substitute Operational, Policy and
Organizational Item when the substance of multiple items cover the same
subject.~~

288 **3.2.3.** The submitter of an Operational, Policy, and Organizational Item shall be
289 encouraged, through guidelines provided by the Office of the General
290 Minister and President, to attach a financial estimate of the item and how
291 the expenses will be underwritten, if adopted.

~~The General Board shall review proposed Operational, Policy and
Organizational Item(s) make whatever amendments or comments it~~

⁸ Since 2022, ALEX is the name of the online *Year Book and Directory*.

⁹ See Section 2.2 of these rules.

deems advisable, and refer the items to the General Assembly with recommendation for appropriate action: adopt, not adopt or refer to a designated place for further investigation.

Study Documents

A Study Document is a study and analysis of a subject which involves ethical, moral or religious elements and on which it is deemed important that members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) be more thoroughly informed as an aid to the formation of Christian opinions and judgments, or on which the judgment of individuals or groups is desired.

A Study Document should clearly and fairly set forth various points of view held by competent and sincere Christians.

Study Documents for General Assembly consideration may be developed by administrative units, committees, task forces, commissions or panels only after authorization by the General Assembly or General Board.

The General Board shall review proposed Study Documents, determine whether they meet the criteria above, make whatever amendments or comments it deems advisable, and refer the Study Documents to the General Assembly with recommendations as to whether or not they should be issued for study.

When a Study Document is issued by the General Assembly for study, the following statement shall appear as a part of it: "This document is issued by the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). It is a study document only. It is not to be construed as an official statement of attitudes or policies of the General Assembly." The introduction to the document shall include the substance of the definition of a Study Document as set forth in 2.3.1 above.

Studies not intended for the General Assembly may be conducted by general administrative units or other recognized entities with special interests or capabilities.

Items for Reflection and Research

Items for Reflection and Research introduce critical issues that require further exploration before they could be addressed in resolutions, study documents, or items dealing with church policies or operations, and those that may never lend themselves to "yes-no" votes.

When an item is accepted for reflection and research, the Administrative Committee of the General Board shall in its next meeting establish, in consultation with the submitting entity, a process for moving the reflection and research forward. One element in the process shall be an interest

group during the next General Assembly. Other options might include, but not be limited to:

- Encouragement of individual inquiry and reflection
- Organization of response from local study groups
- Incorporation into ongoing educational programs
- Suggestions of input feedback in retreats
- Enlistment of constituted bodies in regions
- Preparation of articles for denominational publications
- Assignment to an existing group
- Formation of a task force
- Proposal of a study document
- Request for research by particular scholars
- Consultation with ecumenical/non-denominational agencies
- Arrangement of seminars or conferences

The General Board shall review all proposed Items for Reflection and Research, make whatever amendments or comments it deems advisable, and refer the items to the General Assembly with recommendations for appropriate action.

3.3. Sense of the Assembly Resolutions Statements of Witness

3.3.1. A Sense of the Assembly Resolution Statement of Witness is an expression of the General Assembly concerning a moral, ethical, or religious matter confronting the church, the nation our nations, or the world. Adoption of a resolution must represent agreement by a majority of an assembly's voting representatives. By adopting a Statement, the Assembly declares that the conviction or view expressed is based on Christian insights and is a part of their witness-witnessing to Jesus Christ. Resolutions Statements are developed for the guidance of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in its program operation work through its various ministries, for the consideration of the members and congregations and members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and for a Christian witness to the world. The text of a proposed resolution should be so phrased as not to bring into question the Christian commitment of those who do not agree.

3.3.2. A Statement of Witness may be originated by the General Board or submitted by any entity eligible to submit business items for the

consideration of the General Assembly.¹⁰ ~~Not~~ No entity shall submit more than one ~~Sense-of-the-Assembly Resolution~~ may be presented by any congregation, region, institution of higher education, organization with a recognized relationship or administrative unit (or by the representative governing board of any such body) ~~Statement of Witness~~ to a meeting of the General Assembly. The General Board may initiate ~~resolutions as many Statements of Witness~~ as it deems necessary or advisable.

~~The General Board shall submit a substitute Sense-of-the-Assembly Resolution to replace multiple resolutions on the same subject.~~

3.3.3. Statements of Witness (previously referred to as Sense-of-the-Assembly) shall be disqualified and not be eligible for consideration by the General Assembly if:

3.3.3.1. ~~A Sense-of-the-Assembly Resolution shall not be eligible for consideration if a resolution~~ Statement of Witness (previously referred to as Sense-of-the-Assembly) on the same subject has been ~~acted upon by either of the two immediately previous General Assemblies considered by the General Assembly in the previous four years,~~ unless its content, or the circumstances leading to its submission, are substantially different. ~~In preparing the docket for the General Assembly, the General Minister and President shall determine whether a resolution qualifies under this rule. If the General Minister and President determines that a resolution does not qualify, this fact and the reasons for the decision shall be made known to the submitting organization and reported to the moderator. If the submitting organization is dissatisfied with the decision, it may appeal to the Administrative Committee of the General Board for final decision (see par. 66 of The Design).~~

3.3.3.2. ~~Sense-of-the-Assembly Resolutions~~ The Statement of Witness is of a self-congratulatory, ~~or~~ promotional nature; ~~are ineligible for consideration. As in 2.5.4 above, the determination shall be made by the General Minister and President, and an appeal may be made to the Administrative Committee of the General Board.~~

3.3.3.3. The text of the Statement of Witness brings into question the Christian commitment of those who do not agree; or

3.3.3.4. ~~A Sense-of-the-Assembly Resolution is out of order and shall not be considered by the General Assembly when it~~ The text of the Statement of Witness contains doctrinal statements

¹⁰ See Section 2.2 of these rules.

406 used as “a “test of fellowship.”¹¹ in its “Therefore, be it
407 resolved” text. Doctrinal content may be included in all other
408 parts of a resolution (and in other business items for the
409 General Assembly) a Statement if it does not imply a “test of
410 fellowship” for participation in the Christian Church (Disciples
411 of Christ). ~~Determination of a Sense of the Assembly~~
412 ~~Resolution's eligibility for consideration shall be made by the~~
413 ~~Executive Committee of the Administrative Committee of the~~
414 ~~General Board upon recommendation of the General Minister~~
415 ~~and President. An appeal of a determination of ineligibility may~~
416 ~~be made to the Administrative Committee (see par. 66 of The~~
417 ~~Design).~~

418 **3.3.3.5.** The text includes hate speech or uses theological or biblical
419 language to disparage, belittle, or dehumanize any individuals
420 or communities.

421 **3.3.3.4.**

422 **3.3.4.** The submitter of a ~~Sense of the Assembly Resolution Statement of~~
423 ~~Witness~~ shall be encouraged, through guidelines provided by the Office of
424 the General Minister and President, to attach an estimate of the item's
425 financial impact, if any, if it were adopted, and to suggest how any new
426 expense could be underwritten.

427 ~~The General Board shall review all Sense of the Assembly Resolutions,~~
428 ~~make whatever amendments or comments it deems advisable and refer~~
429 ~~the resolutions to the General Assembly with recommendations for~~
430 ~~appropriate action.~~

431 **4. Alternate Perspective Reports for Statements of Witness**

432 **4.1.** Alternate Perspective Reports (APR) express a theological and/or ethical
433 interpretation which contrasts with the theological and/or ethical interpretation found
434 in the Statement of Witness being considered at that meeting of the General
435 Assembly. Alternate Perspective Reports shall inform the General Assembly of
436 theological and/or ethical viewpoints found in the Christian Church (Disciples of
437 Christ). Alternate Perspective Reports shall not be used to consider all perspectives
438 on an issue as equally valid, as certain positions may be considered outside the
439 boundaries of the historical and contemporary witness of the Christian Church
440 (Disciples of Christ).

¹¹ Any statement of belief, so worded, that would place those in disagreement outside the bounds of fellowship, membership, or participation in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). "Test of fellowship" as a practice that should be avoided was first articulated by Thomas Campbell in the *Declaration and Address* (1809).
https://digitalcommons.discipleshistory.org/all_foundationaldocuments/7/

- 441 4.2. At least 120 days before a meeting of the General Assembly, the Office of General
442 Minister and President shall make available among the expressions of the Christian
443 Church (Disciples of Christ) all Statements of Witness which have been forwarded to
444 the General Assembly by the General Board.¹²
- 445 4.3. An Alternate Perspective Report for a Statement of Witness may be originated by the
446 Executive Committee or submitted by any entity eligible to submit business items for
447 the consideration of the General Assembly.¹³ No entity shall submit more than one
448 Alternate Perspective Report to a meeting of the General Assembly. The Executive
449 Committee may initiate as many Alternate Perspective Reports as it deems
450 necessary or advisable.
- 451 4.4. Alternate Perspective Reports shall be submitted to the Office of the General
452 Minister and President at least 90 days before a meeting of the General Assembly.
- 453 4.5. Upon recommendation of the General Minister and President, the Executive
454 Committee shall determine whether each Alternate Perspective Report qualifies to
455 be considered by the General Assembly. Upon recommendation of the General
456 Minister and President, the Executive Committee may submit an Alternate
457 Perspective Report on behalf of the General Board to replace multiple Alternate
458 Perspective Reports on the same perspective.
- 459 4.5.1. An Alternate Perspective Report shall be disqualified and not be eligible
460 for consideration by the General Assembly if:
- 461 4.5.1.1. The Alternate Perspective Report does not reflect the historical
462 and/or contemporary witness, theology, and/or ethics of the
463 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ);
- 464 4.5.1.2. The Alternate Perspective Report brings into question the
465 Christian commitment of those who do not agree or includes
466 hate speech or uses theological or biblical language to
467 disparage, belittle, or dehumanize any individuals or
468 communities.
- 469 4.5.1.3. The text of the Alternate Perspective Report contains doctrinal
470 statements used as a “test of fellowship.” Doctrinal content
471 may be included in an Alternate Perspective Report if it does
472 not imply a “test of fellowship” for participation in the Christian
473 Church (Disciples of Christ).
- 474 4.5.2. When an Alternate Perspective Report is disqualified or replaced by a
475 substitute, the Office of the General Minister and President shall notify the
476 submitting entity and, in the case of an Alternate Perspective Report

¹² For Statements of Witness replaced by a substitute, only the substitute Statement of Witness is forwarded to the General Assembly by the General Board.

¹³ See Section 2.2 of these rules.

submitted by a congregation, the regional minister. The notification shall include the Executive Committee's rationale.

4.5.3. If an entity is dissatisfied with the disqualification or replacement by substitute of an Alternate Perspective Report it has submitted, it may appeal to the Executive Committee for reconsideration.¹⁴

4.6. At least 60 days before a meeting of the General Assembly, the Executive Committee shall forward to the General Assembly up to two qualified Alternate Perspective Reports for each Statement of Witness.

4.7. The Executive Committee shall not make recommendations on Alternate Perspective Reports. By forwarding an Alternate Perspective Report to the General Assembly, the Executive Committee does not necessarily approve of it or recommend to the General Assembly to attach it to the Statement of Witness.

4.8. The General Assembly may attach Alternate Perspective Reports, which have been forwarded to it by the Executive Committee, to a Statement of Witness to indicate the diversity of theological and/or ethical interpretation in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) on the subject.

4.8.1. If attached, the Alternate Perspective Report shall be considered an integral part of the Statement of Witness and the text of the Alternate Perspective Report shall be included when the Statement of Witness is published.

4.5. Topics for Education, Discussion, and Prayer

4.1.5.1. The General Assembly shall engage in learning, dialogue, formation, discernment, and prayer on matters of social witness and other matters deemed essential to the witness and ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).¹⁵

4.2.5.2. The General Board shall approve at least one Topic for Education, Discussion, and Prayer (TEDP) for each Annual Meeting of the General Assembly.¹⁶ The General Board may approve Topics for other meetings of the General Assembly,¹⁷ but it shall not be required.

4.3.5.3. Annually the General Minister and President and the Moderators of the General Assembly¹⁸ shall consult the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) about potential Topics.

4.3.1.5.3.1. The congregations shall be consulted through a questionnaire which shall remain open for at least 30 days and shall be completed at

¹⁴ See Paragraph 64e of *The Design*.

¹⁵ See Paragraph 38 of *The Design*.

¹⁶ See Paragraphs 55a and 55b of *The Design*.

¹⁷ "Other meetings of the General Assembly" are additional regular meetings as defined in Section 1.2.1 of these rules and Special Meetings as defined in Section 1.3 of these rules.

¹⁸ The "Moderators of the General Assembly" include the Moderator, First Vice Moderator, Second Vice Moderator, and Moderator-Elect (see Paragraph 49 of *The Design*).

510 least 180 days before an Annual Meeting of the General Assembly. The
511 Office of the General Minister and President shall administer the
512 questionnaire.

513 **4.3.2.5.3.2.** The General Board, the General Cabinet, and the College of
514 Regional Ministers shall also be consulted.

515 **4.4.5.4.** The General Minister and President and the Moderators of the General Assembly
516 shall reflect upon the consultations and propose one or more Topics to the Executive
517 Committee.

518 **4.4.1.5.4.1.** The General Minister and President and the Moderators of the
519 General Assembly shall prepare a written description for each proposed
520 Topic (hereafter the “Topic Overview”).

521 **5.6. Duties of the Executive Committee of the General Board**

522 **5.1.6.1.** The Executive Committee of the General Board shall review all business items
523 on behalf of the General Board.

524 **5.2.6.2.** Upon recommendation of the General Minister and President, the Executive
525 Committee shall determine whether each item qualifies for consideration and its
526 classification. Upon recommendation of the General Minister and President, the
527 Executive Committee shall submit a substitute business item on behalf of the
528 General Board to replace multiple items on the same subject.

529 **5.2.1.6.2.1.** When an item is disqualified, reclassified, or replaced by a
530 substitute, the Office of the General Minister and President shall notify the
531 submitting entity and, in the case of an item submitted by a congregation,
532 the regional minister. The notification shall include the Executive
533 Committee’s rationale.

534 **5.2.2.6.2.2.** If an entity is dissatisfied with the disqualification, reclassification,
535 or replacement by a substitute of an item it has submitted, it may appeal
536 to the Executive Committee for reconsideration.¹⁹

537 **5.3.6.3.** The Executive Committee shall make recommendations and forward all qualified
538 business items to the General Board and, as needed, other actions for approval by
539 the General Board.

540 **5.4.6.4.** The Executive Committee shall set debate time of 12, 24, or 48 minutes for each
541 qualified Operational, Policy, and Organizational Item and Statement of Witness. For
542 Reports presented to Triennial Meetings, Executive Committee shall set debate
543 times of 12, 24, or 48 minutes. For Reports presented to Annual Meetings or other
544 meetings of the General Assembly, the Executive Committee shall set debate time
545 as it deems advisable.

¹⁹ See Paragraph 64e of *The Design*.

546 5.5.6.5. The Executive Committee shall consider all Topics proposed by the General
547 Minister and President and the Moderators of the General Assembly and make
548 recommendations on the Topic(s) to the General Board.

549 5.5.1.6.5.1. The Executive Committee may amend the Topic Overview for
550 each proposed Topic as it deems advisable.

551 **6.7. Duties of the General Board**

552 6.1.7.1. At least 120 days before a meeting of the General Assembly, the General Board
553 shall review the recommendations of the Executive Committee on all submitted and
554 qualified business items, make whatever amendments or comments it deems
555 advisable, and forward the items to the General Assembly with recommendations for
556 appropriate action.

557 6.1.1.7.1.1. When the General Board recommends to the General Assembly
558 to refer an item for further investigation, the General Board shall make a
559 contingent recommendation to adopt or not adopt the item.

560 6.1.2.7.1.2. When the General Board has replaced an Operational, Policy, and
561 Organizational Item with a substitute, the General Board shall make a
562 contingent recommendation to adopt, not adopt, or commit for further
563 investigation.

564 6.2.7.2. The General Board shall review the debate time for each business item as set by
565 the Executive Committee and make whatever modifications it deems advisable.

566 6.3.7.3. At least 120 days before a meeting of the General Assembly, the General Board
567 shall review all Topic(s) as recommended by the Executive Committee, make
568 whatever amendments or comments it deems advisable to the Topic Overview(s),
569 and approve or reject the Topic(s) for engagement by the General Assembly.

570 6.4.7.4. The General Minister and President and the Moderators of the General Assembly
571 shall work with general ministries and other ministry partners to provide the General
572 Board with educational material regarding General Assembly business items.

573 6.5.7.5. When a counted vote is taken on a General Assembly business item in a plenary
574 session of the General Board, the Office of the General Minister and President shall
575 record the count and report the count with the item in the General Board minutes.

576 **7.8. Responsibilities of the Office of the General Minister and President (OGMP)** 577 **Preparations for a Meeting of the General Assembly**

578 ~~The General Minister and President, working pastorally and collegially, may counsel~~
579 ~~to limit the number of business items, urge submitters to combine resolution on a~~
580 ~~single subject, and offer aid in the drafting of items. Regional Ministers shall be~~
581 ~~informed when resolutions are received from their regions and may be enlisted in~~
582 ~~extending interpretation and pastoral care.~~

583 Upon request the Office of the General Minister and President shall provide printed
584 guidelines for the preparation of business items. The guidelines shall include
585 definitions and interpretations of the classifications of business, the standing rules,
586 and *The Design*.

587 The General Minister and President shall support the Administrative Committee in its
588 preparation of the docket of business by making recommendations concerning the
589 eligibility of items to be considered and the classification of items. Submitters shall
590 receive appropriate and timely notification if their items are ruled ineligible or placed
591 in classifications other than those under which they were filed and informed that
592 appeals for final decisions may be made to the Administrative Committee.

593 In receiving proposed business items and following them through the processes of
594 the Administrative Committee, the General Board and the General Assembly, the
595 General Minister and President shall see that the identity of the group first submitting
596 an item is preserved even if the item eventually is transmitted to the General
597 Assembly by a different entity such as a region, a general ministry or the General
598 Board.

599 The General Minister and President shall invite each submitting entity to designate a
600 spokesperson to attend the meeting of the portion of the Administrative Committee
601 and/or General Board in which business for the General Assembly is discussed.

602 The designated person shall attend or participate at his or her own
603 expense.

604 Communication may occur through the use of technology at the discretion
605 of the Moderator of the General Assembly and the General Minister and
606 President.

607 If the entity does not send a person, the General Board through the Office
608 of the General Minister and President shall inform the submitting
609 organization in writing of the General Board's decision and rationale.

610 7.1.8.1. The Docket for a meeting of the General Assembly shall be made available
611 circulated among the expressions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) by the
612 Office of the General Minister and President at least 60 days in advance of a meeting
613 of the General Assembly.²⁰ The Docket shall include:

614 7.1.1.8.1.1. All Topics for Education, Discussion, and Prayer approved by the
615 General Board and their Topic Overviews;

616 7.1.2.8.1.2. All business items forwarded to the General Assembly by the
617 General Board, the General Board's recommendations, and their
618 business classifications; and

²⁰ See Paragraph 46 of *The Design*.

619 7.1.3.8.1.3. All Alternate Perspective Reports forwarded to the General
620 Assembly immediately by the Executive Committee after the text of the
621 related Statement of Witness.

622 7.2.8.2. At least 40 days prior to ~~the opening a meeting~~ of the General Assembly, the
623 General Minister and President shall invite each ~~submitting~~ entity or group which has
624 submitted a business item or Alternate Perspective Report on the Docket to
625 designate a spokesperson to make ~~the first affirmative a~~ speech when the item is
626 placed before the General Assembly.

627 7.2.1.8.2.1. The Executive Committee shall designate a spokesperson for
628 each business item initiated by the General Board and each substitute
629 business item submitted by the General Board.

630 7.2.2.8.2.2. For Operational, Policy, and Organizational Items which the
631 General Board has replaced by a substitute, the General Minister and
632 President shall invite the entity or group which submitted the original
633 Operational, Policy, and Organizational Item to designate a spokesperson
634 to make a speech in favor of the original item when the substitute item is
635 placed before the General Assembly.

636 7.2.3.8.2.3. In the case of reports, the designated ~~speaker~~ spokesperson shall
637 summarize or supplement the printed report.

638 7.2.4.8.2.4. Submitting entities or groups shall provide the name and contact
639 information of the designated spokesperson including mailing address
640 and email to the Office of the General Minister and President no later than
641 20 days prior to ~~the opening a meeting~~ of the General Assembly.

642 7.3.8.3. The General Minister and President ~~shall recommend an order of business to~~
643 ~~and~~ the Moderators of the General Assembly shall propose an order of business,
644 which shall be made available to the members of the General Assembly prior to the
645 first business session of a meeting of the General Assembly ~~the Presiding Moderator~~
646 ~~shall propose to the General Assembly as the first item of business.~~

647 ~~When a "division of the house" or counted vote is taken on a business item in a~~
648 ~~plenary session of the General Board, a responsibility of the Office of the General~~
649 ~~Minister and Presidents to record the count and report the count with the item in the~~
650 ~~General Assembly minutes.~~

651 7.4.8.4. The Office of the General Minister and President shall plan, coordinate, and
652 administer the programs of the General Assembly.

653 7.4.1.8.4.1. The Office of the General Minister and President shall convene
654 the General Assembly Triennial Meeting Program and Arrangements
655 Task Force to plan the in-person program of the Triennial Meeting of the
656 General Assembly.

657 ~~7.4.1.1.8.4.1.1.~~ The Task Force shall be comprised of at least ten
658 (10) persons ~~or more~~ appointed by the General Minister and
659 President in consultation with the Moderators of the General
660 Assembly, and. The Task Force shall additionally include staff
661 from the Office of the General Minister and President.

662 ~~7.4.1.2.8.4.1.2.~~ The ~~40 or more persons~~ Task Force shall include
663 the ~~host~~ Regional Minister(~~s~~) and at least one member from
664 ~~the Region~~ each region hosting the ~~next Triennial Meeting of~~
665 the General Assembly.

666 ~~7.4.1.3.8.4.1.3.~~ ~~The First Vice Moderator~~ One of the Moderators of
667 the General Assembly shall chair the Task Force.

668 ~~7.4.2.8.4.2.~~ The General Board shall maintain additional policies and
669 procedures for planning, coordinating, and administering the programs of
670 the General Assembly.

671 ~~The Task Force shall assist in the planning and preparation of the~~
672 ~~program of worship, education and business for the General Assembly as~~
673 ~~directed by the General Minister and President and the Moderators.~~

674 ~~In developing the program of the General Assembly, the General Minister~~
675 ~~and President and Moderators shall consult with general ministries,~~
676 ~~regions, the Administrative Committee and other church leaders as~~
677 ~~appropriate.~~

678 ~~The Office of the General Minister and President shall:~~

679 ~~Coordinate and administer the implementation of the General~~
680 ~~Assembly including all program and mechanical preparations~~
681 ~~in the host city.~~

682 ~~Coordinate and supervise the Local Arrangements~~
683 ~~Committees.~~

684 ~~Execute all contracts serving the General Assembly including~~
685 ~~the coordination and subletting of space.~~

686 ~~Survey all hotels and eating establishments contracted for use~~
687 ~~to assure compliance with General Assembly established~~
688 ~~standards.~~²¹

689 ~~The full Task Force shall normally meet once with ongoing responsibilities~~
690 ~~being supervised by the staff of the Office of the General Minister and~~
691 ~~President, the Moderators of the General Assembly and meetings of Task~~
692 ~~Force sub-groups.~~

²¹ ~~See the Office of the General Minister and President's Event Planning Manual.~~

Staff members of the Office of the General Minister and President with responsibilities for program arrangements, promotion and interpretation shall attend Task Force meetings.

Regular reports on General Assembly planning and preparations shall be made to the Administrative Committee.

Responsibilities of the General Minister and President and the Moderators of the General Assembly

Prepare the agenda for the General Assembly to be approved by the Moderators, including scheduling “orders of the day”.

Determine appropriate classification of business items.

Work with the Administrative Committee in the event of an appeal of the classification.

Work with ministry partners to provide the General Board with educational material regarding General Assembly business items.

Responsibilities of the Administrative Committee of the General Board

Receives and reviews all business items on behalf of the General Board including communication with the submitting organizations.

Forwards recommendations regarding Reports and Operational, Policy and Procedure business items, Sense of the Assembly Resolutions, Study Documents, and Items for Research and Reflection to the General Board including debate times (12, 24 or 48 minutes) and other actions as needed for approval by the General Board.

Receives and makes final decisions concerning appeals regarding eligibility of business items or classification of business items.

Serves as the Committee on Reference and Counsel at the General Assembly as defined in 7.3.

Responsibilities of the General Board

All business items²² for consideration by the General Assembly, except in cases of emergency, shall originate with or be presented to the General Board.²³

The General Board shall review the recommendations of the Administrative Committee and present a docket of business to the General Assembly including: recommendation(s) for appropriate action and designation of the length of time for debate (12, 24 or 48 minutes).

²² Section 2 of this Document defines business items.

²³ Paragraph 44 of *The Design*.

726 **8.9. Worship, Education, and Discussion at Meetings of the General Assembly**

727 **8.1.9.1.** The Annual Meeting of the General Assembly may include worship services,
728 education sessions, discussion sessions, and business sessions. Worship services,
729 education sessions, and discussion sessions may occur before the business
730 session.

731 **8.2.9.2.** The General Assembly Committee shall appoint several persons to provide an
732 introduction during worship to each Topic from various theological and ideological
733 viewpoints, striving to represent the diversity of opinions on each Topic in the
734 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

735 **8.3.9.3.** The General Assembly Committee shall organize education sessions for the
736 Assembly to engage the Topic(s) and Statements of Witness on the Docket.

737 **8.3.1.9.3.1.** Each Statement of Witness on the Docket shall have at least one
738 education session dedicated to it, which shall be organized by the
739 submitters of the Statement of Witness. The Office of the General
740 Minister and President shall provide guidance for submitters in organizing
741 and creating the education session.

742 **8.3.2.9.3.2.** The General Assembly Committee shall appoint several persons
743 to create and lead several education sessions on each Topic, striving to
744 represent the diversity of opinions on each Topic in the Christian Church
745 (Disciples of Christ). The General Assembly Committee shall work with
746 general ministries and other ministry partners to help organize, create,
747 and lead these education sessions.

748 **8.3.3.9.3.3.** Each person attending the Assembly shall be encouraged to
749 attend at least one workshop on a Topic and at least one workshop on a
750 Statement of Witness.

751 **8.4.9.4.** The General Assembly Committee shall organize several discussion sessions for
752 the General Assembly to engage Topics.

753 **8.4.1.9.4.1.** These discussion sessions shall be offered concurrently, with
754 each person with floor privileges²⁴ encouraged to attend a session.
755 Persons without floor privileges shall not participate in discussion
756 sessions.

757 **8.4.2.9.4.2.** The General Assembly Committee shall appoint and train
758 facilitators to lead discussion groups, striving to represent the full diversity
759 of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), including opinions on each
760 Topic.

761 **8.5.9.5.** Facilitators shall provide a written summary on the discussions in their groups to
762 the Office of the General Minister and President.

²⁴ See Paragraphs 39 and 41 of *The Design*.

763 8.5.1.9.5.1. The Office of the General Minister and President shall compile
764 these summaries into a discussion report for each Topic.

765 8.5.2.9.5.2. The report(s) shall be made available among the expressions of
766 the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) by the Office of the General
767 Minister and President no later than 30 days after the adjournment of the
768 meeting of the General Assembly during which the Topic was engaged.

769 8.6.9.6. After the General Assembly has engaged a Topic through education, discussion,
770 and prayer, the General Minister and President and the Moderators of the General
771 Assembly shall reflect on the discussions and discernment of the Assembly and call
772 the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to action in one of the following ways:

773 8.6.1.9.6.1. Call upon the General Board to take action and/or adjust mission
774 priorities of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) related to the
775 Topic;²⁵

776 8.6.2.9.6.2. Call upon the expressions of the Christian Church (Disciples of
777 Christ) to submit Statements of Witness or Operational, Policy, and
778 Organizational Items addressing the Topic to an ensuing meeting of the
779 General Assembly;

780 8.6.3.9.6.3. Call upon the members, congregations, and ministries of the
781 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to witness to the Topic in their
782 communities;

783 8.6.4.9.6.4. Call upon the General Board to approve the Topic for further
784 education, discussion, and prayer at an ensuing meeting of the General
785 Assembly.²⁶

786 8.6.5.9.6.5. The call shall be communicated to the expressions of the Christian
787 Church (Disciples of Christ) no later than 60 days after the adjournment of
788 the meeting of the General Assembly during which the Topic was
789 engaged. The General Minister and President and Moderators shall detail
790 their rationale in the communication.

791 8.7.9.7. Persons appointed under this section shall not bring into question the Christian
792 commitment of those who do not agree with a position on the Topic or Statement of
793 Witness or discuss doctrinal statements as a “test of fellowship.” The Office of
794 General Minister and President shall be able to review all prepared material for such
795 content.

796 **9.10. Business Rules for the General Assembly**

797 9.1.10.1. The General Assembly shall receive all business items submitted to it by the
798 General Board, consider their comments and recommendations, and, after

²⁵ See Paragraphs 55c and 55d of *The Design*.

²⁶ Pursuant to this call, the General Minister and President and the Moderators of the General Assembly shall propose the Topic again through the process described in Section 4 of these rules.

appropriate discussion and debate, take action. The General Assembly shall not initiate new business items.

9.1.1.10.1.1. Action on Reports:

9.1.1.1.10.1.1.1. ~~R~~received by virtue of inclusion in the Docket of the Assembly; no action is required. The General Assembly shall allow the time designated by the General Board for presentation and discussion of each report.

9.1.1.2.10.1.1.2. A motion to receive all Reports as a group shall be ruled out of order unless the allotted time has passed for discussion and review of all reports.

9.1.1.3.10.1.1.3. A motion to receive a single Report without allowing the designated time for discussion shall be ruled out of order.

9.1.2.10.1.2. Actions on Operational, Policy, and Organizational Items ~~and Sense of the Assembly Resolutions:~~

9.1.2.1.10.1.2.1. Adopt or not adopt;

9.1.2.2.10.1.2.2. Commit to the ~~Administrative~~ Executive Committee, serving as the Committee on Reference and Counsel, for revision and ~~reported~~ returned back to the current meeting of the General Assembly, as feasible;

9.1.2.3.10.1.2.3. ~~Commit to the Administrative Committee for designation to the appropriate body or~~ Refer for further investigation to an appropriate body determined by the Executive Committee and reported to the ensuing meeting of the General Board. If the General Board recommends this action, the item shall be referred directly by the General Assembly to the body designated by the General Board in its recommendation.

~~On Study Documents:~~

~~Issue for study or not issue for study;~~

~~Commit to the Committee on Reference and Counsel, either for consideration of revising and reporting or for designation of a place to which the item may be referred. The item is to be reported back to a subsequent session of the current General Assembly;~~

~~Refer for further investigation to a place designated by the General Board or the Committee on Reference and Counsel.~~

~~On Items for Reflection and Research:~~

~~Accept or not accept.~~

There will be one speech in favor of acceptance and one speech opposed, followed by the vote. (Speeches in this classification will be limited to five minutes and cannot be reduced by action of the assembly.)

If an item is committed in the closing business session of an assembly, the item will automatically be referred to the General Board.

9.2.10.2. The General Assembly shall use a meeting software as recommended by the Office of the General Minister and President and designated by the Executive Committee.

9.2.1.10.2.1. All persons with privileges of the floor²⁷ shall have equal access to speak, regardless of their method of attendance.²⁸ Areas around the microphones in the Assembly business meeting hall may not be blocked or have access impeded in any way.

9.2.2.10.2.2. Upon recommendation of the Office of the General Minister and President, the Executive Committee shall establish the process by which persons seek the recognition of the presiding Officer to address the Assembly. Persons attending the in-person portion of a Triennial Meeting who are seeking recognition of the presiding Officer shall not be privileged above persons attending digitally, nor shall any person attending digitally be privileged above persons attending in-person.

9.2.3.10.2.3. Persons addressing the Assembly digitally shall be visible and audible to persons attending the in-person portion of the meeting and those attending in-person shall be visible and audible to those attending digitally.

9.3.10.3. All votes on all motions shall be taken through a digital system as recommended by the Office of the General Minister and President and designated by the Executive Committee.

9.3.1.10.3.1. The digital voting system shall provide equal access to persons with voting privileges,²⁹ regardless of their method of attendance.³⁰

9.3.2.10.3.2. Votes in no way shall be taken by voice to ensure equal access of digital participants.

9.3.3.10.3.3. The digital voting system shall include a way to determine the vote is cast by a credentialed person with voting privileges who is actively attending the meeting.³¹

²⁷ See Paragraphs 39 and 41 of *The Design*.

²⁸ See Paragraph 42 of *The Design*.

²⁹ See Paragraph 39 of *The Design*.

³⁰ See Paragraph 42 of *The Design*.

³¹ For example, a code displayed during the meeting that voting members must enter into the digital system to verify their active attendance. As provided in Paragraph 40 of *The Design*, voting *in absentia* or by proxy is not permitted.

871 ~~9.3.4.10.3.4.~~ Votes on main motions shall remain open for five (5) minutes.

872 Votes on subsidiary motions shall remain open for two (2) minutes.

873 ~~9.3.4.1.10.3.4.1.~~ If a voting member has technical difficulties in
874 casting their vote, they shall bring the issue to the attention of
875 one of the persons designated by the Office of General
876 Minister and President, who shall communicate the issue to
877 the presiding Officer. The presiding Officer may pause, extend,
878 or reopen the voting period if the technical difficulty could
879 prevent a proper count of the Assembly.

880 ~~9.3.4.2.10.3.4.2.~~ Results of a vote shall not be announced until the
881 voting time period has closed.

882 ~~9.3.5.10.3.5.~~ The presiding Officer shall announce, and the minutes of the
883 General Assembly shall include, the numeric vote totals on main motions
884 and motions to attach an Alternate Perspective Report.

885 ~~9.3.5.1.10.3.5.1.~~ The presiding Officer shall not be required to
886 announce the numeric vote totals on other motions.

887 ~~9.3.5.2.10.3.5.2.~~ A call for "Division of the House" would only be in
888 order to call for a vote count to be announced and recorded in
889 the minutes.

890 ~~9.4.10.4.~~ A quorum for the transaction of business by the General Assembly shall be the
891 voting members present and voting at a business session of the Assembly.³²

892 ~~9.5.10.5.~~ The proposed order of business,³³ including all Orders of the Day, shall be the
893 first business item presented to the General Assembly for action.

894 ~~9.6.10.6.~~ The introduction of a business item, properly presented by the presiding
895 Moderator Officer, shall be regarded as the main motion and does not require a
896 second, since the motion originated with a group. After the business item's
897 introduction and allotted debated time, the action of the ~~assembly~~ Assembly is on the
898 main motion and not on the recommendation of the General Board, except when the
899 General Board's recommendation is to refer for further investigation, which is a
900 subsidiary motion.³⁴

901 ~~9.6.1.10.6.1.~~ If the motion to refer for further investigation fails, the original
902 business item is immediately brought to the floor of the General
903 Assembly. ~~The General Board shall prepare a with the General Board's~~
904 contingent recommendation ~~to adopt or not adopt the original item in case~~
905 ~~the motion to refer fails.~~³⁵

³² See Paragraph 47 of *The Design*.

³³ See Section 8.3 of these rules.

³⁴ See ~~General Assembly Special Rules 7.13~~ Section 10.16 of these rules.

³⁵ See Section 6.1.1 of these rules.

~~The Administrative Committee shall be limited to the same recommendations as used by the General Board as listed in Section 7.1 of these rules.~~

~~9.7.10.7.~~ Amendments ~~are not~~ shall not be permitted from the floor.

~~9.7.1.10.7.1.~~ A person desiring to amend an item may ~~request move~~ that the item be committed to the ~~Administrative-Executive~~ Committee, serving as the Committee on Reference and Counsel, for consideration of amending and ~~reporting returning the item~~ back to the current meeting of the General Assembly.

~~9.7.2.10.7.2.~~ When time does not permit for ~~an a committed~~ item to return to the current meeting of the General Assembly, the item shall be assigned to the General Board, which shall take action on the item on behalf of the General Assembly or refer it to an ensuing meeting of the General Assembly.

~~New business may not be initiated at the General Assembly except for an emergency item.³⁶~~

~~When the General Board presents a substitute business item³⁷ to the General Assembly, the following procedures shall apply:~~

~~The moderator shall recognize a member of the General Board to speak in support of the substitute business item.~~

~~The moderator shall recognize a representative of the group or organization submitting the original business item.~~

~~If a substitute business item fails, the original item comes immediately to the floor of the General Assembly. The General Board shall have a contingent recommendation prepared.~~

~~If a substitute business item is replacing multiple business items on the same subject and fails, the originals come before the General Assembly in the order in which they were received by the Office of the General Minister and President.~~

~~A proposed order of business shall be published, including all Orders of the Day, and is the first business item to be presented to the General Assembly for action.~~

~~A motion to receive all General Ministry reports as a group shall be ruled out of order unless the allotted time has passed for discussion and review of all reports. Similarly, a motion to receive a single Report without allowing the designated time for discussion shall be ruled out of order.~~

³⁶ ~~Paragraph 45 of The Design.~~

³⁷ ~~A substitute item of business is defined as the General Board creating a new business item based on a resolution submitted by another organization.~~

941 **9.8-10.8.** The total time for debate unless otherwise noted in these rules:

942 **9.8.1-10.8.1.** Shall be set by the ~~Administrative-Executive~~ Committee and
943 reviewed by the General Board.

944 **9.8.2-10.8.2.** Shall govern the debate on any given business item.

945 **9.8.3-10.8.3.** May be changed by the presiding Officer with the approval of the
946 ~~assembly~~ Assembly.

947 **9.8.4-10.8.4.** May be changed by the ~~assembly~~ Assembly.

948 **9.9-10.9.** Debate on Operational, Policy, and Organizational Items shall begin with a
949 speech in favor of adopting the item from the spokesperson designated by the entity
950 or group submitting the item.

951 **9.9.1-10.9.1.** When the Operational, Policy, and Organizational Item is a
952 substitute, the speech in favor shall be followed by a speech from the
953 spokesperson designated by the entity or group submitting each original
954 item. The speeches shall be in the order the original items were received
955 by the Office of the General Minister and President.

956 **9.9.2-10.9.2.** The speeches in this section shall be limited to three (3) minutes
957 each and cannot be reduced by action of the General Assembly.

958 **9.9.3-10.9.3.** Regular debate will follow these speeches according to Section
959 10.11 of these rules.

960 **9.10-10.10.** Debate on Statements of Witness shall begin with a speech in favor of
961 adopting the Statement of Witness and shall be followed by speeches advocating for
962 the inclusion of each Alternate Perspective Report forwarded by the Executive
963 Committee with the Statement of Witness.

964 **9.10.1-10.10.1.** The speech in favor of the Statement of Witness shall be given by
965 the spokesperson designated by the submitting entity or group and shall
966 be limited to five (5) minutes, except when the Executive Committee has
967 forwarded two Alternate Perspective Reports with the Statement of
968 Witness, in which case the speech shall be limited to ten (10) minutes.

969 **9.10.2-10.10.2.** The speech advocating for the inclusion of an Alternate
970 Perspective Report forwarded by the Executive Committee shall be given
971 by the spokesperson designated by the submitting entity or group and
972 shall be limited to five (5) minutes. When two Alternate Perspective
973 Reports have been forwarded by the Executive Committee, there shall be
974 one speech advocating for each Alternate Perspective Report and the
975 speeches shall be given in the order the items were received by the
976 Office of the General Minister and President.

977 **9.10.3-10.10.3.** The speeches in this section cannot be reduced by action of the
978 General Assembly.

~~9.10.4.10.10.4.~~ During the speeches in this section, the motion to attach an Alternate Perspective Report shall be ruled out of order.

~~9.10.5.10.10.5.~~ Regular debate will follow these speeches according to Section 10.11 of these rules. If no Alternate Perspective Report has been forwarded by the Executive Committee, regular debate will follow the speech in favor of the Statement of Witness.

~~9.11.10.11.~~ Each person with floor privileges,³⁸ when recognized by the presiding Officer, may speak to each business item and debatable motion once, ~~and~~ for no more than three (3) minutes, and may speak again only if all other persons desiring to speak to the motion have had the opportunity within the total time for debate.³⁹

~~9.11.1.10.11.1.~~ The length of time allotted to each speaker may be reduced by motion and approval of ~~the assembly~~ two-thirds of the voting members present and voting. The reduction does not apply to the speeches required by Sections 10.9 or 10.10 ~~designated spokesperson~~.⁴⁰

~~In the event a substitute resolution fails and an original resolution is brought to the floor, the designated spokesperson representing the original motion shall also be allowed 3 minutes.~~

~~9.12.10.12.~~ During regular debate on a Statement of Witness, the subsidiary motion to attach an Alternate Perspective Report forwarded by the General Board shall be in order. This motion shall be debatable, shall be amendable, shall require a second, may not interrupt a speaker, and shall require a majority vote to carry. All motions, except the main motion, shall take precedence over this motion.⁴¹

~~9.12.1.10.12.1.~~ A person desiring to amend an Alternate Perspective Report may move that the Alternate Perspective Report be committed to the Executive Committee, serving as the Committee on Reference and Counsel, for consideration of amending and returning the Alternate Perspective Report back to the current meeting of the General Assembly.

~~9.12.1.1.10.12.1.1.~~ If an Alternate Perspective Report is committed for consideration of an amendment, there is no further consideration of the Statement of Witness until the Alternate Perspective Report is returned to the Assembly for action. Upon return, the Assembly shall resume the consideration of the subsidiary motion to attach the Alternate Perspective Report.

³⁸ See Paragraphs ~~38-a-d~~ 39 and 41 of *The Design*.

³⁹ Original Operational, Policy, and Organizational Items brought to the floor of the Assembly after the failure of a substitute item are separate business items from the substitute, resetting debate limits.

⁴⁰ See 3.5 and 3.6.2 of the Special Rules for the General Assembly.

⁴¹ See Section 10.16 of these rules.

~~9.12.1.2.10.12.1.2.~~ When time does not permit for a committed item to return to the current meeting of the General Assembly, the Statement of Witness shall be assigned to the General Board, which shall take action on the Statement of Witness on behalf of the General Assembly or refer it to an ensuing meeting of the General Assembly.

~~9.12.2.10.12.2.~~ When debate on an Alternate Perspective Report is closed, it is recommended that the presiding Officer shall say: "The motion is on the attachment of an Alternate Perspective Report. By attaching an Alternate Perspective Report, the Assembly acknowledges the diversity of theological and/or ethical interpretation present in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) on the subject of the Statement of Witness entitled _____. All those of in favor of attaching the Alternate Perspective Report entitled _____ to Business Item No. _____, vote yes. All those who are opposed, vote no." Following the vote, it is recommended that the presiding Officer shall say: "The yeses have it and the Alternate Perspective Report is attached to the Statement of Witness" or "The noes have it and the Alternate Perspective Report is not attached to the Statement of Witness."

~~9.12.3.10.12.3.~~ If this motion carries, the Alternate Perspective Report shall be attached to the Statement of Witness. The final question on the Statement of Witness shall be on the adoption of the Statement of Witness with the attached Alternate Perspective Reports.

~~9.13.10.13.~~ If there is a desire to close debate, the following procedure ~~should~~ shall be used: The chair shall receive the motion, "I move the previous question." When that motion has been seconded and carried by a two-thirds ~~majority affirmative vote of the voting members present and voting~~, the presiding Officer shall immediately put the main question without debate.

~~9.14.10.14.~~ When the debate is closed:

~~9.14.1.10.14.1.~~ On a Report, no action is required.

~~9.14.2.10.14.2.~~ On an Operational, Policy, and Organizational Item, ~~Study Documents, Item for Research and Reflection or Sense of the Assembly Resolution or Statement of Witness~~, it is recommended that the presiding Officer shall say: "The question is on adoption of Business Item No. _____ entitled _____. All those who are in favor of adopting Business Item No. _____, ~~say~~ vote yes. All those who are opposed, ~~say~~ vote no." Following the vote it is recommended that the presiding Officer shall say: "The yeses have it and the business item is adopted" or "~~the~~ The noes have it and the business item is not adopted." ~~When a counted vote is taken, the results shall be recorded in the General Assembly minutes.~~

1053 **9.14.3-10.14.3.** In a recommendation to refer, it is recommended that the
1054 presiding Officer shall say: "The question is on the recommendation of the
1055 General Board ~~(or Administrative Committee)~~ to refer Business Item No.
1056 _____ entitled _____ to _____ for further investigation. All those who are in
1057 favor of referring the business item, ~~say-vote~~ yes. All those who are
1058 opposed, ~~say-vote~~ no." Following the vote it is recommended that the
1059 presiding Officer shall say: "The yeases have it and the business item is
1060 referred" or "~~the~~ The noes have it, and the business item is not referred,
1061 and; it now comes to the floor of the ~~assembly~~ Assembly for action."

1062 **9.14.4-10.14.4.** When an Alternate Perspective Report has been attached to a
1063 Statement of Witness by floor motion, it is recommended that after saying
1064 the title of the Statement of Witness, the presiding Officer shall say: "To
1065 which the General Assembly has attached the Alternate Perspective
1066 Report entitled _____ (and the Alternate Perspective Report entitled
1067 _____)."

1068 **9.15-10.15.** If a substitute Operational, Policy, and Organizational Item⁴² fails, the
1069 original item shall immediately come to the floor of the General Assembly with the
1070 General Board's contingent recommendation.⁴³ Debate on the original item shall
1071 proceed according to Section 10.9.

1072 **9.15.1-10.15.1.** If a substitute business item is replacing multiple business items
1073 on the same subject and fails, the original items shall come before the
1074 General Assembly in the order in which they were received by the Office
1075 of the General Minister and President.

1076 **9.16-10.16.** In general, the basic rules of parliamentary procedure as described in the
1077 current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*, shall be followed. The following
1078 motions, for instance, are in order, the first taking precedence over the second, the
1079 second over the third, and so forth:;

1080 ~~To adjourn~~

1081 ~~To take a recess~~

1082 **9.16.1-10.16.1.** To raise a question of privilege;

1083 **9.16.2-10.16.2.** To call for orders of the day;

1084 **9.16.3-10.16.3.** To rise to a point of order;

1085 ~~To withdraw a motion~~

1086 **9.16.4-10.16.4.** To close debate (move the previous question);

⁴² These procedures do not apply to substitute Statements of Witness or substitute Alternate Perspective Reports so as to ensure the whole Alternate Perspective Report process can occur for any Statement of Witness coming before the Assembly (See Section 7 of these rules).

⁴³ See Section 6.1.2 of these rules.

1087 ~~9.16.5-10.16.5.~~ To limit or extend time for discussion and debate;
1088 ~~To postpone discussion to a certain time~~
1089 ~~To commit~~
1090 ~~9.16.6-10.16.6.~~ The main motion.
1091 ~~9.17.10.17.~~ Additional notes on motions:
1092 ~~9.17.1-10.17.1.~~ “Privileged” or “incidental” motions are ~~7.13.1-7.13.6~~ 10.16.1-3.
1093 ~~9.17.2-10.17.2.~~ Motions subsidiary to main motion are ~~7.13.7-7.13.11~~ 10.16.4-6.
1094 ~~9.17.3-10.17.3.~~ Debatable motions are ~~7.13.9-7.13.11~~ 10.16.6.
1095 ~~9.17.4-10.17.4.~~ The following cannot be amended: ~~7.13.1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7~~ 10.16.1-4.
1096 ~~9.17.5-10.17.5.~~ The following do not require a second: ~~7.13.3, 4, 5, 6~~ 10.16.1-3.
1097 ~~9.17.6-10.17.6.~~ The following may interrupt a speaker: ~~7.13.3, 4, 5~~ 10.16.1-3.
1098 ~~9.17.7-10.17.7.~~ Simple majority votes carry, except for a two-thirds affirmative vote
1099 required for ~~7.13.7-10.16.4~~ and ~~7.13.8~~ 10.16.5.
1100 **10.11. Procedure for Amendment**
1101 ~~10.1.11.1.~~ A two-thirds affirmative vote of the voting members of the General Assembly
1102 present and voting, a quorum being present, shall be required for any subsequent
1103 amendments to these rules.⁴⁴
1104 ~~10.2.11.2.~~ Any proposed amendments to these rules shall be ~~circulated in advance as~~
1105 ~~regular business items of the General Assembly submitted to or initiated by the~~
1106 General Board as an Operational, Policy, and Organizational Item.

⁴⁴ ~~Paragraph 46 of The Design.~~