



## Meetings Matter: A Crash Course for Church Leaders

Thank you for joining today's webinar  
with attorney and professional  
parliamentarian, Sarah E. Merkle.

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### Overview:

- Foundational Principles
- Hierarchy of Rules
- Motions 101
- Productive Discussion
- Voting
- Troublesome Motions
- Virtual & Hybrid Meetings

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# Foundational Principles

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## Foundational Principles

### **1. Every Member Has Basic Rights**

- Right to Information
- Right to Discussion
- Right to Vote

### **2. The Majority Rules**

### **3. The Minority Must be Protected**

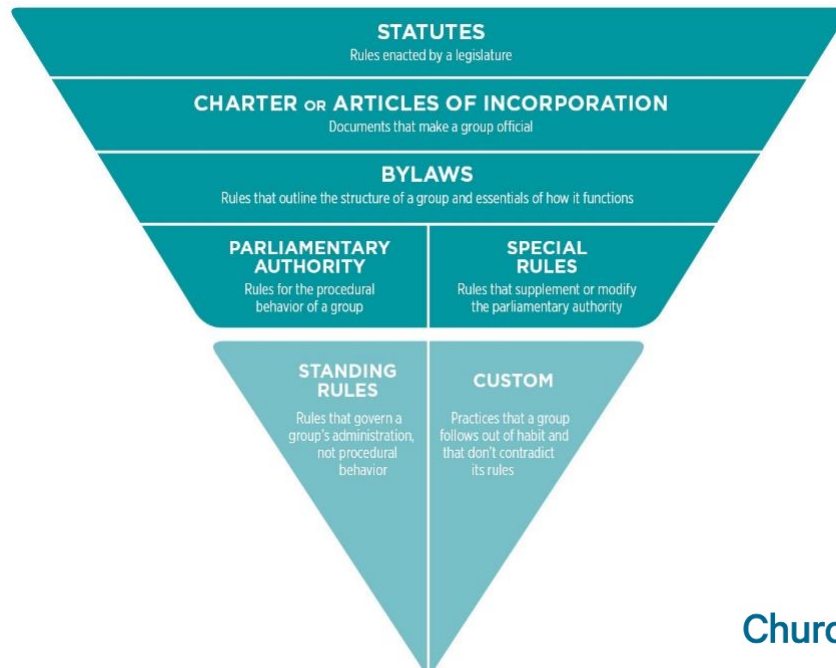
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## Which Rules Matter... And When?

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## Preparing for a Meeting

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## Preparing for a Meeting

- Set Meeting Goals
- Calendar Key Dates
- Calculate the Quorum Needed
- Develop the Agenda
- Decide Whether to Hold a Members Forum
- Write a Script
- Practice & Contingency Plan

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# Motions 101

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## Motions 101

### **A motion is**

- a formal proposal
- by a member
- that a group take action

### **A motion starts with the words**

- “I move that . . . .”

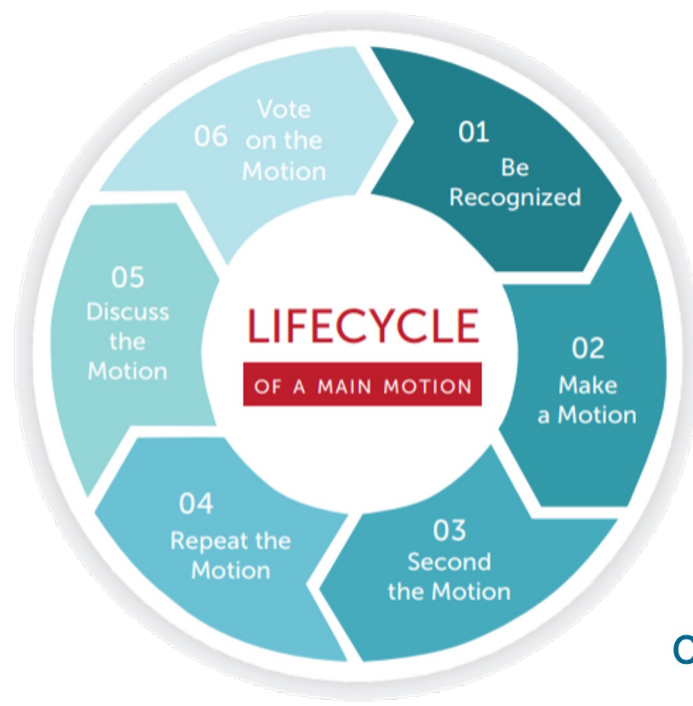
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## Main Motion

### Main motion is

- a formal proposal
- by a member
- that a group take **substantive** action

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### 01 BE RECOGNIZED

**SAY THIS:** Member A: "Mr./Madame President?"  
Chair: "The Chair recognizes Member A."

### 02 MAKE A MOTION

**SAY THIS:** Member A: "I move that we organize an event in March to raise awareness and funds for our capital campaign."

### 03 SECOND THE MOTION

**SAY THIS:** Member B: "Second."

*The second is impromptu. The chair doesn't have to invite it by asking, "Is there a second?" Nor does the member making the second have to be recognized.*

### 04 REPEAT THE MOTION

**SAY THIS:** Chair: "It has been moved and seconded that we organize an event in March to raise awareness and funds for our capital campaign."

### 05 DISCUSS THE MOTION

**SAY THIS:** Chair: "Is there any discussion?"

### 06 VOTE ON THE MOTION

**SAY THIS:** Chair: "If there is no further discussion, we will take a vote."

*"All those in favor of organizing an event in March to raise awareness and funds for our capital campaign say, 'aye.' All those opposed say, 'no.'"*

*The 'ayes' have it and the motion is adopted. We will organize an event in March to raise awareness and funds for our capital campaign."*

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## Presiding Tips: Facilitating Discussion

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## Facilitating Discussion

- Who should be recognized?
- When should they be recognized?
- How should they be recognized?
- How long do they get to speak?
- What if someone speaks without seeking recognition?
- What about statements that are factually misleading?

## Presiding Tips: Steps for Taking a Vote



## Steps for Taking a Vote

Steps	Language
<b>Step 1:</b> Tell the Members that it's Time to Vote	<b>Say this:</b> "There is no further discussion. We will now take a vote."
<b>Step 2:</b> Tell the Members What Motion They are Voting On	<b>Say this:</b> "The motion on the floor is that we organize an event in March to raise awareness and funds for our capital campaign."
<b>Step 3:</b> Ask the Members Who is in Favor of the Motion and Who is Opposed	<b>Say this:</b> "All those in favor, say 'aye.' All those opposed, say, 'no.'" OR "All those in favor, please rise. Be seated. All those opposed, please rise. Be seated."
<b>Step 4:</b> Announce the Results of the Vote	<b>Say this:</b> "The 'ayes' have it, and the motion is adopted."
<b>Step 5:</b> Announce the Effect of the Vote	<b>Say this:</b> "We will organize an event in March to raise awareness and funds for our capital campaign."

## Troublesome Motions

## Previous Question

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## Previous Question

- May be made by a member who is recognized
- The maker does not get priority in recognition
- May be made by a member who is debating at the close of his/her comments
- Not debatable
- Requires two-thirds of the votes cast to be adopted
- Effect = No more discussion either (1) on all of the pending motions or (2) on some of the pending motions

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## Previous Question

- Say “close debate” instead of “previous question”
- Processing a motion to close debate:
  - **Step 1:** Take the vote on the motion to close debate.
  - **Step 2:** If the motion to close debate is adopted, take a vote on the immediately pending motion.

## Postponing Motions

## Postponing Motions

Postpone Indefinitely	Postpone to a Time Certain	Table
The main motion is permanently disposed of for the near future	The main motion will return to the assembly at a specific time in the future	The main motion is temporarily disposed of for the near future
Majority Vote	Majority Vote	Majority Vote
Debatable & Opens the Main Motion to Debate	Debatable as to the Time & Merits of Postponing	Not Debatable

## Virtual & Hybrid Meetings

## Virtual & Hybrid Meetings

- Do Your Governing Documents Permit Virtual Meetings?
- Verifying a Quorum
- Facilitating Virtual Discussion
- Facilitating Virtual Voting
- Virtual Meetings ≠ Absentee or Electronic Voting

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**Q & A**

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