

# DIGITAL VOTING POLICY FOR CONVENTIONS OF THE CONFERENCE

## Preamble

A Digitally Registered Delegate is entitled participate online and vote using the digital communications technology selected by the staff of the Conference who are responsible for hosting the Convention. This technology will be provided at no cost to each registered delegate.

## Article 1. Registration Procedure

To be enrolled and participate as a Digitally Registered Delegate, the following procedure will be used:

1. Each church will register all of the names of its authorized delegates, whether in person or attending online, with the Conference staff at least 48 hours prior to the start of the Convention.
2. For each church delegate who is attending online, their name and a unique email address must be provided.
3. Each delegate must have their own digital device, such as a computer or smart phone, that is capable of running the communications software being used by the Conference. For reasons of authentication and vote tabulation, multiple delegates cannot share a single device.
4. At least 24 hours prior to the start of the Convention, each Digitally Registered Delegate will receive an email with a password and instructions on how to attend the Convention online. Delegates will have time to load and test any software before the start of the Convention.
5. Each delegate will receive a unique identifier from the Conference that must be used when logging into the online convention so that their identity can be validated. Anyone who does not have an identifier will be disconnected from the online service.

## Article 2. Voting Procedure

When a call for a vote is made by the Moderator, each Digitally Registered Delegate will indicate their vote using the method described by the Moderator. This might include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- a. Sending their response using an online chat feature. (Note: If chat responses are sent to "Everyone", the voting can be validated by all delegates as well as by the Ballot Team.)
- b. Using a voting or polling feature provided by the online software.
- c. Using a separate online survey tool provided to each delegate.

The members of the Ballot Team will be responsible to tally the result of the votes from all delegates.

## Article 3. Call for a Ballot

If a vote by ballot is required, the Moderator will indicate how responses from the Digitally Registered Delegates will be received. This might include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- a. An email with the ballot information may be sent from a member of the Ballot Team to the address provided by each Digitally Registered Delegate so that their response can be received.
- b. Each Digitally Registered Delegate may be asked to use SMS text technology to send their response to the Ballot Team.
- c. Using a voting or polling feature provided by the online software.
- d. Using a separate online survey tool provided to each delegate.

The members of the Ballot Team will be responsible tally the ballots from all delegates.

## Article 4. Motion Discussion Procedure

Prior to voting on a motion, the Moderator may open the floor for questions. The Moderator will be responsible for managing questions from all delegates in person as well as Digitally Registered Delegates. The same rules of order for the Convention, as set by the Conference, will apply to all delegates. The following guidelines apply to Digitally Registered Delegates:

- a. All microphones of online participants will be muted. (It may be required that all video be turned off excepts for the speakers.)

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- b. A Digitally Registered Delegate may send a chat message, raise a hand, or use appropriate features of the software as designated by the Moderator to signal their desire to speak to the motion on the floor.
- c. The Moderator will identify the delegate to speak next and the microphone will be unmuted.
- d. The Moderator may also ask that the delegate use video, if available, when speaking.

Note: Equipment will be put in place at the Convention location for any in person delegates to speak to the motion so that they can be seen by all online delegates.

### **Article 5. Scrutinizing Voting Results**

There can be times when technology fails. The Ballot Team will be given the discretion to request that a vote be retaken if they feel that a significant portion of the delegates were somehow prohibited from participating in the vote and would have impacted the results of the vote.

In order for the Ballot Team to evaluate if a vote was impaired, it may be necessary for each Digitally Registered Delegate to indicate a YES, NO, or ABSTAIN response to a vote so that the online results can be validated. For instance, if only 45% of the delegates vote YES and 30% vote NO, it is important to confirm that the remaining 25% abstained as it could change the outcome of the vote.

Note: Members of the Ballot Team shall be at the Convention site as well as online to confirm all results.

### **Article 6. Restarting the Online Session**

In the event that there is a failure in the online technology, the Moderator may discern the need to postpone the meeting temporarily until communication issues are resolved. Email will be used to communicate to all Digitally Registered Delegates. Rules for quorum will still apply once the online meeting is restarted.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE:**

This policy has been approved and enacted by the Executive Board on 23 April 2020.