

SPECIAL MEETING STANDING RULES OF THE THIRTY-FIFTH GENERAL SYNOD

As approved by the United Church of Christ Board, March 14, 2026

THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

1. The General Synod is the representative body of the United Church of Christ and is composed of delegates chosen by the Conferences, from among the members of its Local Churches, the 52 members of the United Church of Christ Board, and 40 delegates, four each, from the Historically Underrepresented Groups: Council for American Indian Ministry, Colectivo de UCC Latinx Ministries, Ministers for Racial, Social and Economic Justice, Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries, United Black Christians, UCC Disabilities Ministries, Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries, the Open and Affirming Coalition of the United Church of Christ, United Samoan Ministries, and the UCC Mental Health Network; these shall constitute the Voting Delegates. There are also Associate Delegates and Ecumenical Delegates who have voice without vote (United Church of Christ Constitution, paragraph 59, and Bylaws 199-200).

**ACCREDITATION AND SEATING OF VOTING DELEGATES AND
ASSOCIATE DELEGATES**

2. Delegates' credentials will be verified by the General Synod Registrar or the Assistant Registrar or their agents during the online registration process.
3. Due to the short duration of the Special Meeting, delegate vacancies that occur during the meeting will not be filled.
4. Composition of delegations can be challenged by Voting or Associate delegates only. Delegate seats that are contested will remain vacant until the General Synod Credentials Committee (Bylaw 212) makes a recommendation to the General Synod and a decision is made by majority vote of the General Synod.
 - A. A challenge to the composition of a delegation shall be made to the General Synod immediately after the report of the Credentials Committee in the opening plenary and must specify what particular delegate seats are being contested.
 - B. In the event of a challenge to the composition of a delegation, the Moderator shall declare the Special Meeting in recess while the Credentials Committee resolves the matter on the basis of, the (1) provisions of the Conference for electing its General Synod delegates and, (2) the provisions as described in paragraph 195 of the Bylaws for the composition of the Conference delegations.
5. Voting Delegates (Bylaws 194-198) will be supplied with access to a voting platform. Voting delegates shall not share their access credentials and no other person shall use a voting delegate's

credentials for any purpose.

6. All Voting Delegates, Associate Delegates, and Ecumenical Delegates (Bylaws 199-200) shall have access to a videoconference platform that allows Delegates to communicate with the General Synod in real time, in accordance with these Rules.

**ACCREDITATION AND SEATING OF NON-DELEGATES HAVING
VOICE WITHOUT VOTE**

7. When the interests of their respective institutions or groups are before the General Synod, the Chief Executive Officers of the institutions related to the Council for Higher Education shall have the privilege of voice without vote.
8. A group composed of at least 25 members of the United Church of Christ which has come together as a particular constituency or is interested in a specific issue may have voice without vote under the following conditions:
 - A. The General Synod may vote, on recommendation of the Business Committee, to grant to not more than two non-delegate representatives of a group the privilege of voice without vote and of seating with the Associate Delegates, if the group meets the following criteria:
 1. The group must consist of at least 25 members of the United Church of Christ and more than one Conference must be represented in its membership.
 2. The group must show cause to the Business Committee why elected Delegates cannot effectively represent its cause or concern to the General Synod. The two non-delegate representatives given voice without vote must hold membership in a Local Church of the United Church of Christ.
 - B. Any request for voice without vote privileges at the Thirty-fifth General Synod must be sent to Joshua Baird, General Synod Administrator, at generalsynodadministrator@ucc.org, **on or before April 9, 2026**. A list of at least 25 current members including verifiable Local Church membership reflecting membership in more than one Conference must accompany all requests.
 - C. For groups not formally related to the United Church of Christ, privilege of voice without vote ends with the adjournment of the General Synod.
9. The 14 members of the Nominating Committee elected by the General Synod, Honored Guests, Former Officers of the United Church of Christ, Moderators of past General Synods, Chief Executive Officers of formerly Recognized and Established Instrumentalities, and the Commission for Racial Justice, and Ecumenical Guests who are not Associate Delegates may be

accorded the privilege of voice without vote and of seating with the Associate Delegates by vote of the General Synod.

REPORTS TO THE GENERAL SYNOD

10. Reports relevant to the business of the Special Meeting shall be sent to the General Synod Administrator at generalsynodadministrator@ucc.org, **on or before April 9, 2026.**

CONDUCT OF THE BUSINESS OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

11. A quorum for the conduct of business at General Synod shall consist of one-third of the voting delegates; provided that in this number at least two-thirds of the Conferences are represented by at least one Delegate each (United Church of Christ Constitution, paragraph 59).
12. All proceedings of the General Synod shall, unless otherwise provided for, be governed by the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order (United Church of Christ Bylaw 191).
13. The Special Meeting agenda is limited to the business specified in the call.
14. Debate shall conform to the following provisions:
 - A. Delegates and others wishing to be recognized shall follow the protocols given by the Moderator, address the Moderator, and identify themselves by name and Conference or other represented body.
 - B. A Delegate may not speak on an issue and conclude by moving the previous question.
 - C. A Delegate may not present a combined motion to close debate on an amendment to a motion and the main motion.
 - D. No one may speak to the same debatable motion more than twice except to answer questions from the floor or the Moderator.
 - E. Unless brought by a committee of the General Synod, a maximum of two minutes for the first speech is allowed the maker of the motion. The maker of a motion coming from a General Synod committee will have three minutes for the presentation. Subsequent speakers are limited to one minute each.
 - F. When time restrictions on speakers are required by these Standing Rules, an extension of time may be granted by the presiding Moderator to the following persons:
 1. Speakers requiring translation into English from another language (time needed for the translation shall not be counted in the time allotment) and speakers who require sign language translation;

2. Speakers whose fluency in English is limited and for whom translation is not available;
3. Speakers with disabilities that affect mobility and/or speech.

A request for an extension of time shall be made to the presiding Moderator.

- G. Opportunity will be provided for two Delegates speaking in favor and two Delegates speaking in opposition to a motion before an amendment can be made.
 - H. A motion to limit or extend the limits of debate is, itself, undebatable; such motion requires a second and two-thirds vote unless decided by general consent.
 - I. Non-delegates, not otherwise authorized to speak, may speak only by two-thirds vote of the General Synod.
15. Voting shall conform to the following provisions:
- A. Votes shall be decided by the Delegates present and voting. Abstentions shall not be counted in the total.
 - B. Voting shall be by electronic means.

PROCEDURE AND CALL FOR ELECTION

16. In the General Synod year in which an Associate General Minister is to be called by election or reelection as an Officer of the Church, a candidate will be presented to the General Synod by the United Church of Christ Board. A single presentation for each candidate may be made, each to be no longer than 10 minutes.
17. Candidates for the Offices of General Minister and President and Associate General Minister may each make a speech no longer than 20 minutes prior to the call by election.
18. An affirmative vote of at least 60% of the votes cast is necessary for each candidate to be called and elected by the General Synod to serve as an Officer of the Church. The results of the vote for each candidate shall be announced to the delegates in a timely manner.

GENERAL RULES

19. Recording the proceedings of General Synod is the responsibility of the Office of the General Minister and President.

*UCCB-26-03-GOV-02 FINAL Special General Synod Standing Rules
Adopted by United Church of Christ Board on March 14, 2026*

20. Any rule(s) may be amended, rescinded, or suspended by a two-thirds vote of the General Synod.

21. The Office of the General Minister and President will have the authority to change reference, within these rules, to specific paragraphs of the Constitution and Bylaws should paragraph numbering change in the event of Conference ratification of General Synod-adopted amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws. Upon such editorial change, these rules will be recirculated in the prescribed manner. The Office of the General Minister and President will also have the authority to make minor editorial corrections to these rules, such as spelling, grammar and punctuation correction with no additional distribution required.