

GUIDELINES FOR PROPOSALS AND RESOLUTIONS

PROPOSALS

Definition

A Proposal is a formal suggestion made by one church court to a higher church court, that a specific action be taken, within its jurisdiction.

“Every member of the Church has direct access to the Session . . . of the congregation.” (505(b)i)

Process

In order for concerns to be clearly heard and adequately discussed, the following sequence of hearing must be followed.

Session (or equivalent) Official Board -----> Presbytery -----> Conference -----> General Council

A Proposal may originate at any of these levels and proceed upwards through the church court system.

Any member of a church court may make a Proposal to that court directly, however, Proposals which come to it from a Division or a Presbytery will usually carry greater weight.

- (d) Where a Court is disposing of a Proposal asking a higher Court to take action, it must transmit the Proposal with or without concurrence (except as provided below), together with any recommendations that the Court may make in respect of the Proposal.
- (e) Where a Court is disposing of a Proposal asking the next higher Court to take action, it may decide not to transmit a Proposal with which it does not concur. (The Manual (2004) Section 099 d, e)

If the court refuses to transmit a Proposal it must inform the originators of that Proposal without delay in order to allow them time to appeal the decision.

In order to preserve accurately the integrity of actions taken, a church court is not free to change the wording of a Proposal after it has been acted upon by a lower court. “A motion to amend the Proposal is out of order. Changes can be made in the Proposal only with the consent of the individual or body that submitted it. The originators of the Proposal may not change its wording after it has been dealt with by a church court. They may withdraw their Proposal if a church court votes without concurrence, but not if a court has voted concurrence.” (Minutes: General Council Executive)

HOW TO PREPARE A Proposal

- a) The WHEREAS(es) should be clear, and set forth concisely in logical sequence in the preamble. WHEREAS(es) should not be mingled with proposed action. The proposed action must be clear without reference to the WHEREAS(es).
- b) The court to whom the Proposal is ultimately addressed as the one to take action should be clearly stated. The nature of the action requested must be within the jurisdiction of that court.
- c) A Proposal should deal with only one issue. Other issues must have a separate Proposal.
- d) Action requested should not go into details of implementation.

(For further guidance regarding procedures for Proposals, see Minutes: Executive of General Council, March 22-25, 1983 as amended pp.170ff) and The Manual (2004) section 099.

RESOLUTIONS

Definition

A Resolution is a formal recommendation made by one part of a church court, that the full court take a specific action within that court's jurisdiction.

Process

- A Resolution may originate with any delegate, committee, or Division.
- Opportunity should be provided for discussion by some intermediate group of people (i.e. a Division, a Division Executive, a committee, etc.) if possible prior to presentation of the Resolution on the floor of Conference, in order for the court to have a clear debate and make faithful decisions.
- Resolutions and Proposals are printed in the Resolutions/Proposals Book. Material received in the Conference Office after the due date of **May 11, 2007** will not be printed in the book but may be presented only after all printed submissions have been dealt with. To be presented on overhead or video, material must be in the hands of the technicians by 9 a.m. on the Saturday of the Annual Meeting.