

UUC Congregational Meetings and Robert's Rules of Order

Our fifth UU Principle:

*The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process
within our congregation and in society at large*

Our annual congregational meeting, conducted by our elected church Moderator, brings members together at the end of the regular church year to vote on the proposed budget, elect new representatives, and hear from the Board of Trustees, ministers, and staff about the accomplishments of the last year. Our annual meetings are an essential contribution of time and attention by our voting members, and a quorum is required. With the participation and involvement of congregants, we can pursue our shared mission and vision. All are welcome to our meetings to listen and observe.

Our UUC Bylaws state that “the latest revision of Robert's Rules of Order shall be used, where applicable, to guide the conduct of business” in congregational meetings. Robert's Rules of Order offer a structure for ensuring a fair and deliberative process for decision-making. No structure works however, if not all of the participants have a working knowledge of the rules. This handout is intended to provide information on the basic procedures so that all members in good standing of the congregation can participate fairly in our congregational meetings. When additional rules need to be utilized, the Moderator, with the aid of Parliamentarian, will assure that the rules are followed and that the congregation is aware of why particular actions are being taken.

To Do This	Action	You Say This	Debate Allowed?	Vote Required
Introduce business	Main Motion	“I move that...”	Yes	Majority
Second a motion	Second	“Second!”	No	No
Change the wording or add clarity of a motion	Motion to Amend	“I move to amend the motion by...” (adding words; striking out words; substitute words)	Yes	Majority
Limit debate	Motion to Limit Debate	“I move that the debate on this motion be limited to (##) speech(es) of (##) minutes for each member.”	No	Two-thirds
Make sure the rules are being followed	Point of Order	“Point of Order!”	No	No
End debate or request an immediate vote	Motion to Call Previous Question	“I move the previous question” <u>OR</u> “I move to call the question” <u>OR</u> “I move to call the vote”	No	Two-thirds
Close Meeting	Motion to Adjourn	“I move to adjourn.”	No	Majority

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1

- Member makes a **clearly worded motion to take action or a position.**
- "I move..."
- Motion recorded in minutes

2

- **Motion must be seconded.**
- "Second!"
- A second allows discussion to occur; it does not signify approval.
- A motion without a second does not move forward.

3

- **Moderator restates the motion.**
- "It is moved and seconded that..."
- Provides clarity.

4

- **Discussion/Debate occurs.**
- Amendments may be offered – return to step 1 to amend motion: "I move to amend the motion by..."

5

- Moderator closes discussion and **states the question/asks for a vote.**
- "The question/vote is on the adoption of the motion that..."
- Motion repeated word for word.

6

- Moderator provides **voting directions:**
- "Those in favor of the motion" – shown by card, verbal, etc
- "Those opposed to the motion" – shown by card, verbal, etc
- "Abstentions from the vote" – shown by card, verbal, etc

7

- Moderator announces the **result of the vote:**
- "The ayes have it, and the motion carries/is adopted" or
- "The nays have it and the motion is lost."

At any point in the discussion, any number of actions can be made. The most common after the above are:

- **Point of Order** may be called out by any member and is a call to enforce the rules.
- **Motion to Call the Question/Call the Vote** in which a member calls for the end of discussion. This is voted on and if passed (2/3 vote) is followed by a vote on the Main Motion.