

SPEAKING TO RESOLUTIONS OR OTHER MOTIONS

Parliamentary procedure and rules of order are simply ways in which 400 people can talk without resulting in chaos. Above all else, please remember that we are gathered in Christian fellowship and should at all times be open to the Holy Spirit. Remember, 400 people are never going to agree on anything, and all views are to be respected and given a chance to be voiced.

There are three microphones available for the use of members of convention. If you have the right to vote or to seat and voice, you are entitled to speak.

Wearing your name tag, go to a mic, and when recognized by the chair, address the chair and state your name and congregation (or position that gives you your rights, such as committee chair, Standing Committee, *etc.*). You would begin, “Thank you, Bishop Budde, my name is John Doe, a delegate from St. Swithin’s”.

Speak into the microphone so that all can hear you. Speak for yourself, using “I” statements, and be concise and focused, always addressing your remarks respectfully to the chair.

Our Rules of Order allow the principal sponsor of a resolution to be the first to speak to it. That person may do so for up to five minutes the first time, and up to three minutes the second time. All other members may speak up to three minutes twice in any single debate. Remember that you must wait your turn each time you speak. Be aware that our Rules of Order state that if you make a motion with financial implications, you must identify a funding source.

If you are making a motion, begin your motion with “I move that we do...” Someone will need to second the motion. If it is seconded, then it is on the floor (open for discussion), otherwise the motion will not be considered.

When a vote is called for in debate, it is our custom to do a show of hands.

SOME FREQUENT SOURCES OF CONFUSION IN DEBATE

The most common confusion occurs when there have been many amendments on a particular resolution. If there is an amendment on the floor, it is the amendment only that is then under debate. At any one time there may be one, but no more than one, amendment to that amendment, and it is not proper to make an amendment to some other part of the resolution until the current motion has been decided. When debate has ended on the amendment to the amendment, a vote is taken on that, in which case, one of two things happens:

- if it passes, then that becomes the amendment on the floor and debate re-opens; or
- if it doesn’t pass, then the original amendment is what is on the floor. If you remember that you are only voting on one layer at a time, then it makes it easier to understand.

If you are unclear as to what’s under vote at any time, you have the right to ask for clarification, and the chair will explain.

To “call for the question” is an extraordinary procedure for terminating debate and requires an affirmative vote of $\frac{2}{3}$. It is improper to make this motion other than by waiting your turn to be

recognized. Thus it is improper (and bad manners) to shout from your seat, “I call the question.” It should only be made when the debate has wound down and asks that debate be terminated and the vote taken. Please note that this should not be used to prevent or squash debate, but rather to be helpful when it is clear that there is nothing new to add.

To “lay the motion on the table” (often stated as “move to table”) is a motion that is often misused. It is correctly used to lay something aside temporarily to take care of a more urgent matter, and after that urgent matter is taken care of, it is generally taken from the table and the matter will resume consideration.

You can ask to postpone the discussion either until a time certain, or indefinitely. Again, a caution that this should not be used to prevent or squash debate, but to be helpful in identifying a possible different path to take.

SUBMISSION OF AMENDMENTS

You will find an amendment form for each resolution in your registration packet. Any amendment must be written down and submitted to the Secretary at the Convention. These changes will be typed and shown on the overhead screen. Procedurally, you have two choices:

- At any given time, turn it over at the A/V table, remain there while it is typed to answer any questions and verify the result, or let them know where you will be sitting and plan to check back in to assist in this process. It is, of course, possible that by the time you reach the microphone that your amended language, or part of it, will no longer be applicable.
- Wait until you speak and turn it over at the A/V table, remain there while it is typed to answer any questions and verify the result, which will be then given to the head table and shown on the screen (this means the whole convention has to stop and wait).