

MEMO

To: CAC CHURCHES, ASSOCIATIONS AND COMMITTEES
From: ANNUAL MEETING BUSINESS COMMITTEE
Subject: **RESOLUTIONS PROCESS FOR THE CAC ANNUAL MEETING,
JUNE 10-12, 2016**
Date: March 1, 2016

Our Annual Meeting is our one opportunity each year to meet together to decide what things are important to us, what we should do about them, what the united voice of the UCC should be saying, and how we should run our affairs. These things deserve careful thought and discussion in our churches and preparations should begin now. To that end, please find enclosed our guidelines for the preparation of resolutions for action at the Conference Annual Meeting in June, 2016

Conference Bylaws require that resolutions be in the hands of the Conference Minister at least **sixty days** prior to the meeting at which the action is to be taken. **April 10, 2016** is the deadline, though it might be wise **to make April 1, 2016** your goal in order to provide ample time for last minute editing, duplication and distribution.

There is a special provision for consideration of resolutions resulting **from Association meetings**. These proposals must be received by the Conference office at least **30 days** prior to the Annual Meeting. If you plan to present a resolution through your association, we encourage you to send a draft copy to be included with the advance mailings, so delegates can prepare to act in the event the resolution is forwarded by your Association.

Resolutions that do not meet the deadline and do not come from Associations **may still be added to the agenda by a two-thirds vote of the delegates present and voting**. Resolutions should be sent to the Conference office, 916 S Rolling Rd., Baltimore, MD 21228 **Attention: Arnetta Jones** or via email to ajones@cacucc.org

**Central Atlantic Conference
PREPARING AND READING RESOLUTIONS**

I. THE NATURE OF RESOLUTIONS

A RESOLUTION is a STATEMENT which declares the "Resolve" of an assembly. Really, "be it resolved" says "be it determined" or "be it decided."

When people of a church are gathered, such as at the Annual Meeting of the Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ, they frequently want to express the feeling of the assembly on a concern or issue. This results in making a resolution which becomes a statement of policy, stance or intention. The Central Atlantic Conference Bylaws define a Resolution as a statement of concern with recommendation for action, approved by the Conference and directed primarily to local churches and the public; also a formal proposal or request by the Conference to the General Synod for legislation or change of policy or doctrine. (CAC Bylaws, III, Sect. 5 a)

II. THE ORIGIN OF A RESOLUTION (CAC Bylaws, III, Sect. 5)

- (b) Initiation. Any local church which is a member of the Conference, any group of ten or more members of one or more such local churches, any Association, within the Conference or the Board of Directors may propose a resolution to be acted upon at a meeting of the Conference. Each proposal shall be accompanied by the name of the sponsor and the name and address of one or more advocates who could defend the proposal before appropriate committees or task forces of the Conference, the Board of Directors or the assembled Conference in session. For the purpose of this section, the term "local church" shall be construed to mean the congregation or any person or organized body authorized by that congregation to act in its behalf.

- (d) Distribution. A copy of each proposal received by the Conference Minister as indicated above, revised as necessary, shall be distributed with the call of the meeting. Any proposals received after the deadline date must be received in sufficient copies for further distribution to the committee, task force, or person having cognizance of the subject matter, and to any other person or group suggested by the sponsor, and shall be distributed by mail, other electronic means, or shall be distributed at the meeting.

- (e) Adoption. Resolutions shall be adopted upon the affirmative vote of a majority of the voting members present and voting.

III. THE WRITING OF A RESOLUTION

WRITING A RESOLUTION calls for clarity of purpose and precision of language. Questions to ask before writing a resolution include:

1. What is the issue?
2. Why should the church address this issue?
3. What should be the church's position on this issue?
4. Who should be urged, directed, or instructed to act on this issue?
5. What action should result?

After probing these questions, the writer should present the following:

1. Title of the Resolution
2. Name of the presenter(s) and/or church, Association, or committee which is proposing the resolution.
3. A summary. A very brief (one or two sentence) summary of the intent of the resolution.
4. Background. A brief statement of the biblical and/or theological basis for believing the subject of the resolution is important to the church.
5. Text of Resolution. In two sections, in formal language (1) the reasons for proposing action (with each phrase beginning with WHEREAS) and (2) the specific action to be taken (with each phrase beginning with BE IT RESOLVED). Details on the preparation of this portion of a Resolution can be found in Roberts Rules of Order.
6. Each line of the entire Resolution should be numbered in the left-hand margin.

IV. THE ROUTING OF RESOLUTIONS.

Proper ROUTING OF A RESOLUTION once it has been prepared enhances the chance of passage by the Conference Annual Meeting. CAC Bylaws require that a copy of a resolution to be presented must be in the hands of the Conference Minister sixty days before the date of the Annual Meeting.

The local congregation should be involved from the beginning in the creation of the resolution and should give formal approval before it is forwarded. If there is time before the deadline for submission to the Conference Minister, the resolution may be submitted to the Association, to generate wider support for the proposal.

Resolutions to be considered at the Annual Meeting in June 2015 must be received in the Conference office by April 10, 2016 to comply with the Bylaws requirement and to permit duplication and distribution prior to the meeting. Resolutions emanating from an

Association meeting, and received at the Conference Office at least 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting may be considered without special permission of the Conference body, but it is to the advantage of the proposers to have the resolution in the hands of the delegates at the proper time, if at all possible, to permit careful consideration by the delegates prior to attendance at the meeting.

V. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- A. Any proposal that affects the Conference finances, or staff time, to the extent of an amount equal to one-half of one percent or more of the proposed budget, either as a Budget item or outside the budget, shall be brought to the attention of the Board of Directors for review and recommendation prior to action at the meeting where such action is required. Such proposal shall be submitted to the Conference office at least 60 days prior to such meeting, and shall be distributed at least 20 days prior to the meeting, preferably with the Call of the Meeting. Any such proposal submitted too late to meet this schedule may be introduced on the floor of the Conference in session, and may be considered upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the voting members present and voting. (CAC Bylaws III, Section 6)

- B. Resolutions being submitted for possible forwarding to a General Synod should conform to the standing rules of the Synod which may be found at www.ucc.org.

VI. READING RESOLUTIONS AND PREPARING FOR VOTING

Reading a Resolution thoughtfully takes as much skill as writing one. Delegates should read proposed resolutions several times before voting. Keeping the following questions in mind will help in understanding the questions and issues addressed.

- 1. Are you interested in the subject matter of the proposal? Why or why not?

- 2. Do you feel this is an important item for the Annual Meeting to consider? Why?

- 3. In your opinion, does the background information and data support this resolution? If so, how? If not, why not?

- 4. What is the biblical basis for this resolution? Are the reasons given by the

proposer consistent with the faith and mission of the Central Atlantic Conference? Why or why not?

5. Imagine that the Annual Meeting is now in session and you have two minutes to address the body on the resolution. What will you say?
6. The proposers have listed what they believe to be the consequences for the church and society of adopting this resolution. Do you agree with their appraisal? What other consequences might you predict? How do these consequences affect your position on the proposal?
7. If necessary, how would you change the resolution to make it more acceptable to you as a delegate?
8. Imagine you have just voted on a resolution in a session of Annual Meeting. A reporter from your hometown newspaper asks you to explain your vote. What would be your response? Why?
9. As delegate, you are a representative of your congregation. Would other members of the congregation agree with your assessment of this resolution? Would they join you in commitment or future action should this resolution pass?