

**BYLAWS OF
EMMANUEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
EXPORT, PENNSYLVANIA**

Effective 1 July 2025
Ratified 1 June 2025

Section I
MISSION STATEMENT

- C4.05.01. Welcoming all in Christ's name.
Growing together in faith.
Sharing God's Love in the world.

Section II
MEMBERSHIP

- C8.06.01. The Congregation Council may remove inactive members from the roll of this congregation. An inactive member shall be defined as not having used the means of grace, both Word and sacraments, with this congregation, nor having made a contribution of record to this congregation, within the last three years.

Section III
CONGREGATION MEETINGS

- C10.01.01. The Annual Budget Meeting of this congregation shall be held within 30 days prior to the start of each fiscal year (C10.01.02) at a time and place to be determined by the Congregation Council. Unless required advance notice is given (C10.03, C16.03, or C17.01) of additional business items, no other business shall be conducted at the Annual Budget Meeting other than that business stated in the bylaws of this congregation (C10.01.03. and C12.06.02.).
- C10.01.02. The Annual Meeting of this congregation shall be held prior to mid calendar year (normally the third or fourth Sunday of May) at a time and place to be determined by the Congregation Council.
- C10.02.01. Persons who are not voting members (C8.02.c) of this congregation may attend meetings of this congregation and may be accorded the privilege of voice without vote at the discretion of this congregation's president or presiding officer of the meeting. Should any such visitor be disruptive, they may be removed from the meeting at the discretion of the president or presiding officer of the meeting.
- C10.01.03. The treasurer shall submit a written report to this congregation at the Annual Budget Meeting (C10.01.01.) summarizing the financial transactions and account balances of this congregation for the previous fiscal year (C11.01.04.).
- C12.02.01. Nomination of candidates for election to the Congregation Council (C12.02.02.) shall occur at the Annual Meeting (C10.01.02.) of this congregation.
- C12.02.02. Election of Congregation Council members (C12.02.04.) shall occur at the Annual Meeting (C10.01.02.) of this congregation.

- C12.06.02. The annual budget shall be presented to this congregation by the Congregation Council and adopted or amended and adopted by this congregation at the Annual Budget Meeting (C10.01.01.).
- C12.10.01. The Congregation Council shall, through reports (C12.16.05.) by the standing committees of the Congregation Council (C12.16.02.) and the called staff (Ministry Report), submit a comprehensive written Annual Report to this congregation at the Annual Meeting (C10.01.02.) on membership, work of the previous year, and, if appropriate, plans and goals for the upcoming year.
- C13.03.01. The Audit Committee shall submit a written report to this congregation at the Annual Meeting (C10.01.02.) summarizing their findings and recommendations from the financial records audit, and review of accounting, procurement and payment practices for the previous fiscal year of this congregation and organizations within this congregation (C14.01.).
- C14.01.01. Each organization within this congregation e.g., Emmanuel Lutheran Church Women (ELCW) shall submit a written report to this congregation at the Annual Meeting (C10.01.02.) concerning their membership, work, and audited finances.

Section IV

DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS OF THIS CONGREGATION

- C11.01.01. The president shall preside at all meetings of this congregation and the Congregation Council unless they choose to delegate such responsibility to the Vice President. The president of this congregation shall not vote on the election of members to committees of this congregation, except in the event of a tie vote by this congregation (C13.02.) or the Congregation Council (C13.03. and C13.04.) which precludes an election wherein the president may cast the deciding vote or shall draw lots to complete the election.
- C11.01.02. The vice president shall temporarily assume the duties of the president of this congregation (C11.01.01. and C12.17.02.) in the event of the president's inability to serve, either for absences or until such time as the Congregation Council elects a successor president of this congregation (C11.04.). The vice president shall also chair the Executive Committee (C13.01) and may preside at meetings of this congregation and the Congregation Council at the behest of the president.
- C11.01.03. The secretary shall be responsible to keep accurate minutes of all meetings of this congregation and the Congregation Council, which shall be organized and permanently preserved, along with the Annual Report of the Congregation Council (C12.10. and C12.10.01.), in the archives of this congregation. The highlights of the minutes of all meetings of this congregation and the Congregation Council shall also be published by the secretary for distribution to the congregation. The secretary shall also be responsible for tallying and recording election results (C12.02., C.13.02 and C13.05.) of this congregation. Continuing Resolutions of the Congregation Council shall be maintained by the secretary and be available for reference in the office of this congregation.
- C11.01.04. The treasurer shall keep the book of accounts for this congregation. The treasurer shall supervise and account for the receipt and disbursement of all funds on proper orders, making timely remittance of benevolence receipts (C12.06.e.). Before payments are made, all invoices should be approved by either

the pastor, the responsible Congregation Council committee chairperson, or their designee (C12.16.04.). The treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the Stewardship Committee (C12.16.02.e.) and make written report of all financial transactions to the Congregation Council monthly and to this congregation at its Annual Budget Meeting (C11.01.01.). The treasurer shall cooperate with the Audit Committee (C13.03.), providing requested financial records and documentation, in order that a satisfactory audit of all financial transactions of the previous fiscal year can be presented by the Audit Committee at the Annual Meeting (C13.03.01.).

- C11.01.05 The Council may appoint an assistant treasurer. The assistant treasurer shall be trained in the book keeping and financial reporting procedures of the congregation. The assistant treasurer shall be permitted to perform the following duties at the request of the treasurer:
- Maintain the financial records of the congregation
 - Prepare and present monthly financial reports to the Congregation Council
 - Assist the treasurer in preparation of the annual financial reports of the congregation
- The assistant treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the Stewardship Committee with voice but without vote.

Section V

THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- C12.01.01. The number of lay voting members of the Congregation Council shall be no less than 6 and no more than 9, dependent upon the membership level and including the President, Vice President, and Secretary.
- C12.02.03. Nominations for Congregation Council membership shall be made by the Nominating Committee (C13.06.02.) and can be made from the floor by any voting member (C8.02.c) of this congregation at the scheduled Annual Meeting (C12.02.01.) for nominations of candidates for election to the Congregation Council. Nominees from the floor shall meet the constitutional requirements to serve on the Congregation Council (C12.01. and C12.02.) and agree, if elected, to serve as a member of the Congregation Council (C12.04.). Non-called staff are not eligible to be members of the Congregational Council.
- C12.02.04. Elections of layperson members to the Congregation Council (C12.02.02.) shall be by written ballot and the result recorded in full by the secretary. The persons receiving the highest number of votes, up to the number of Congregation Council members to be elected (C12.01.01.), shall be deemed elected to the Congregation Council. The election of Congregation Council members to fill the remaining terms of any vacated positions (C12.03.), terms of less than three years) may be from (1) a separate slate of specific nominees for the remaining term(s) with the specific nominee(s) receiving the most votes deemed elected, or (2) shall be that person, or those persons for multiple vacated positions, receiving the next highest number of votes deemed elected to the Congregation Council sequentially filling vacated positions with the longest remaining terms. Should the Congregation Council decide to use the separate slate method of election for the remaining term(s) of any vacated position(s) on the Congregation Council, this election method must be declared to this congregation prior to nominations for election to the Congregation Council (C12.02.02.). In the event of a tie vote by this congregation precluding an election of the remaining member(s) to the Congregation Council, a run-off election shall be conducted

between only those candidates receiving the tie votes which precluded their election on the first or subsequent ballots.

- C12.04.01. It shall be the duty of all non-officer members of Congregation Council to chair a committee.
- C11.02.01. The Congregation Council shall, at the first council meeting following the election of members to the Congregation Council (C12.02.02.), by prayerful consideration, elect the officers of this congregation.
- C13.08.01. The Congregation Council shall, at the regular council meeting immediately following the Annual Meeting of this congregation (C10.01.02.), by prayerful consideration, approve the appointments and elect members to those congregation committees (Audit and Mutual Ministry Committees) whose constitutional duty (C13.03 and C13.04) belongs to the Congregation Council.
- C12.06.01 The Congregation Council shall set the month and day of the start of the congregation's fiscal year, and record the month and day in a continuing resolution.
- C12.06.03. The Congregation Council shall, at the regular council meeting immediately following the election of members to the Congregation Council (C12.02.02.), by prayerful consideration, appoint a financial secretary. The term of service shall be one year or until a successor is appointed. The term of service shall begin at the close of the meeting at which the financial secretary is appointed. The financial secretary shall be a member of the congregation, may be an officer of the congregation, need not be a member of the Congregation Council, and may serve for indefinite consecutive terms. The financial secretary shall keep the records of all contributing members, with an accurate account of their individual pledges and contributions, and shall, at least annually, send statements and receipts of contributions to the members of this congregation as authorized by the Congregation Council. The financial secretary shall also be an ex-officio member of the Stewardship Committee (C12.16.02.g.). The position of financial secretary shall not have signatory authority for either payments or purchases on behalf of this congregation.
- C12.06.04. Any offerings received designated for a budgeted special benevolence will be sent directly to that designated benevolence above and beyond the amount in the adopted budget (C12.06.02.) of this congregation.
- C12.09.01. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the hiring and discharging of this congregation's salaried non-called staff.
- C12.09.02. The Congregation Council shall ensure that the performance of each member of this congregation's salaried non-called staff is evaluated by the Committee appropriate to each staff member at least annually. The Executive Committee shall ensure that the performance of each member of the administrative staff is evaluated at least annually. The Congregation Council shall have the right to review and amend any and all such evaluations.
- C12.09.03. The Congregation Council shall annually review and appropriately adjust compensation and benefit packages of this congregation's salaried non-called staff for the next fiscal year budget recommendations to this congregation.

- C12.09.04. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for addressing non-called staff concerns and resolving any non-called staff problems that may arise.
- C12.09.05. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the monitoring and support of the training and professional development of this congregation's salaried non-called staff.
- C12.09.06. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for church office operations and efficiency.
- C12.17.01. The Congregation Council, as authorized by this congregation in this bylaw, shall, by prayerful consideration, either elect, appoint, or approve the appointments of official representatives of this Congregation for participation in local, regional, national or international meetings, assemblies, convocations, or conventions of the NALC or other bodies or organizations of which this congregation is a member. Such representatives shall be drawn from this congregation's roll of voting members.
- C12.17.02. Council meetings shall be open to all members of congregation, who shall have voice at the discretion of the president or presiding officer, but without vote. Disruptive visitors may be asked to leave at the discretion of the president or presiding officer of the meeting.
- C12.17.03. The Congregation Council shall assist and work cooperatively with all congregation committees and organizations of this congregation.
- C18.01.01. Duties of the Congregation Council and the committees of the Congregation Council may be further specified in the continuing resolutions (C18.01).

Section VI **COMMITTEES**

- C12.16.01. The Congregation Council shall have overall responsibility for the effectiveness of the Congregation Council's committees. Each committee shall be chaired by a designated member of the Congregation Council, normally excluding the President, Vice President, and Secretary, who shall be responsible for the effective functioning of the team.
- C12.16.02. The Standing Committees of the Congregation Council and their duties shall be as follows:

a. Worship

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ~ Acts 2:42

We join with those first three thousand disciples, believing that the crucified and risen Jesus is Christ and Lord, and worship one God, revealed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We therefore gather together for the Word of God, Holy Communion, and Prayer.

What is worship? Worship is sacrifice—the offering of prayer, praise, service, thanksgiving, and incense.^[1] To that end, our liturgy brings us together as the body of Christ to hear God's Word, to share

in the family meal of Holy Communion, to offer our prayers & thanksgiving, our songs & praise, and sends us out to *remain faithful* and *be fruitful*.

What is the liturgy? The liturgy is the work of the people led by the pastor. Every single person who joins the service serves, together with the whole congregation, uniting their time, prayers, voice, and—guided by the organist—their song and praise. What work is to be done by the people? In addition to the time, prayers, voice, song, and praise, the people join together in serving in these and other ways: the assisting minister, acolyte, crucifer, altar guild, lector, cantor, greeter, usher, bread baker, musician, vocalist, audio technician, livestreaming technician, nursery attendant, etc. The organist enriches the liturgy through inspiring music.

What worship services has this congregation consistently offered? The weekly Sunday service of Holy Communion is the critical infrastructure of the Christian disciple. Midweek services of Advent and Lent and the services of Holy Week further ground and enrich the Christian. When appropriate, services of Holy Baptism, Funeral, Marriage, Confirmation, First Communion, and Council Installation further enrich this congregation. These services aim to bring all glory, honor, thanks, and praise to God.

What is the work of this committee? This committee seeks to organize and train those who serve in the liturgy, provide for the adornment of the sanctuary, keep the vessels of Holy Communion, and maintain all equipment & licenses for worship. This committee also seeks to assist in pastoral care, provide additional services of prayer and worship, and support the pastor in his ministry of Word & Sacrament. Our goal is that this congregation be drawn to worship God, to bring him all glory, and then depart to *remain faithful* and *be fruitful*.

b. Discipleship

[18] And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. [19] Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." ~ Matthew 28:18–20

A disciple is a follower of Jesus *for life*, one who is baptized and who believes that Jesus is the risen Christ and Lord.

This committee derives from the Christian Education team. There, the focus was educating the youngest disciples (especially through Sunday School, First Communion, and Confirmation)—a good and worthy focus. This committee therefore grows naturally out of that team, where our main shift is a focus on Christian education *for life*.

The goal of the disciple is to become like Christ (Luke 6:40). In what ways are we to become like Christ? We are to pray as Christ prayed (Luke 11:1-4); we are to keep his commandments (John 15:8-10); we are to love as Christ has loved us (John 13:34-35); we are to bear fruit (Mark 4:20); we are to lay down our lives for one another (John 15:12-13); and we are—daily—to deny ourselves, take up our crosses, and follow Christ (Luke 9:23) *for life*.

How does discipleship take place in this congregation? Discipleship begins with prayer. We pray individually and as a congregation. We worship individually and as a congregation. We learn about our

Lord through Holy Scripture, keep his commandments, love him and others, bear fruit, lay down our lives, and daily deny ourselves. We follow Christ individually and as a congregation *for life*.

What are some of the discipleship opportunities this congregation has offered? We have offered Sunday School for all, Bible Study, Prayer Ministry (Prayer Group, Prayer Chain); and Classes (First Communion, Confirmation, New Members). This committee seeks to offer these and similar opportunities. These opportunities aim to foster an environment where we, both individually and as a congregation, learn the teachings of Jesus and imitate his example, love and remain faithful to him, and grow into mature, fruitful disciples *for life*.

c. Stewardship

[14] *"But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you."*^[2] ~ 1 Chronicles 29:14

What is stewardship? God has given us "our selves, our time, and our possessions."^[3] God gives dominion over the earth, vocation, the Sabbath, gifts, riches, and talents.^[4] All things have been given for us to maintain, oversee, and use well. Accordingly, we give thanks for all we have received, keep nothing from God, and are generous with what we have been given, using our gifts for God and others, especially when need arises. None of us can serve two masters, and so we seek, with all that we have been given, to serve the Lord so that we may be found faithful in our accounting to God.

What does this committee steward? This committee stewards our members, our property, and our finances.

Our members give of themselves—their time, talents, and possessions.

Our property is our sanctuary, buildings, grounds, and equipment.

Our finances involve monetary and physical gifts, accounts management, expenditures, and benevolence.

How does stewardship take place in this congregation?

In terms of our members, we maintain membership records, discern the gifts and talents of members, provide opportunities for giving and benevolence, and provide opportunities for members to serve & employ their gifts and talents.

This includes collecting for NALC Disaster Response, Blackburn Center, mission support, etc.

In terms of property, we seek to maintain and improve our property. To that end, we maintain qualified contractors and provide emergency or rapid repair services for the structures, utilities, and environmental controls of this congregation's facilities.

This includes physical plant operations; facility cleaning and refuse disposal; helping to coordinate the work of volunteers and contractors; grounds beautification; maintaining this congregation's equipment (i.e., office, kitchen, etc.) and warranty information; furnishings;

technology; and security & safety of the premises (including fire detection and extinguishing systems, and snow/ice removal from walkways and parking areas).

In terms of our finances, the committee works with the Treasurer to oversee the financial affairs of the congregation.

This includes accounts, cash reserves, loans, investments, optimization, insurance, and annual budget.

This committee seeks to ensure that our sanctuary is fit for worship & that our property is ready for the activities of the church, that members and their gifts are known and encouraged, and that our finances enable us to worship, serve, grow, and give.

d. Fellowship and Evangelism

That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. ~ 1 John 1:3

Our goal is to gather with Christians for the strengthening of our friendship and our faith, and to make the name of Jesus known in our communities.

How does fellowship take place in this congregation? We worship together; welcome each other; pray together; share meals together; learn together; serve together; and have fun together. Some consistent, historic activities have been Shrove Tuesday, Easter Breakfast, Dinners for 8, Receptions, and the annual Christmas Party.

How does evangelism take place in this congregation? Evangelism begins with prayer. We pray for each other in this congregation and for others outside this congregation. We share our faith with each other, and we share our faith outside of this congregation. We invite visitors to have fun together; to serve together; to learn together; to share meals together; to pray together – with the hope that we become fellow worshippers together. We therefore also invite visitors to worship. Out of the fellowship, discipleship, and worship opportunities, we strive specifically to invite visitors to Bible Study, to Lenten Lite Meals, to Game Days, and to other opportunities as this team deems appropriate.

This committee seeks to foster fellowship and evangelism through specific opportunities and activities for this congregation. These opportunities aim to create an environment where individuals experience the love of Christ, build meaningful relationships, and share their faith.

^[1] See Gen 8:20-21; 12:6-7; Psalm 113:1-3; Psalm 95:6, Exodus 33:10; Psalm 146-150; Isaiah 25:1; Psalm 149:3; Psalm 100:2; Leviticus 21:6; Psalm 138; Psalm 44; Psalm 28:2; Leviticus 23, 2 Samuel 6:14; Colossians 3:17; 1 Chronicles 25:6; Malachi 1:11.

^[2] *1 Chronicles 29:11–16*

^[3] Refer to the LBW for this wonderful offertory prayer: *Most Merciful Father, we offer with joy what you have first given us—our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of our gracious love for you. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.*

^[4] Genesis 1:26-28, 2:15; Leviticus 25:1-7; Deuteronomy 8:17-18; 1 Chronicles 29:10-19; Psalm 24:1-2, 50:10-12; Proverbs 3:9-10, 11:24-25; Malachi 3:8-10; Matthew 6:19-21, 25:14-30; Luke 12:13-21,

12:40-48, Luke 16:1-13; Acts 4:32-35; Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8; Ephesians 4:28; Colossians 3:23-24; 1 Timothy 6:17-19; 1 Peter 4:10-11; James 1:17

C12.16.03. Additional committees:

- a. Other committees may be formed by decision of the Congregation Council.
- b. The committees of the Congregation Council may form subcommittees to help fulfill their stated mission. The subcommittee will be responsible to the committees and need not have Congregation Council representation. The leader of each subcommittee shall be approved by the responsible standing committee of the Congregation Council.
- c. Special committees or task forces to fulfill specific purposes, which will be dissolved upon completion of their stated purposes, may be formed by decision of the Congregation Council. Each special committee or task force shall have Congregation Council representation. The leader of each special committee or task force shall be approved by the Congregation Council.

C12.16.04. Each committee of the Congregation Council shall supervise and approve (C11.01.04.) the expenditure of funds by the committee and any of its subcommittees consistent with the adopted budget of this congregation (C12.06.d.). Each committee shall also participate in the preparation of the annual budget for this congregation (C12.06.d.) by reviewing team expenditures and making recommendations to the Congregation Council for necessary and planned expenditures for the next fiscal year. Each committee leader (or their designee) or the Pastor shall authorize expenditure of funds for budgeted items.

C12.16.05. Each committee of the Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive written report for the Annual Meeting of this congregation (C12.10.01.) concerning its membership, work of the previous year, and, if appropriate, plans and goals for the upcoming year. Such reports shall also include the same information for any subcommittees reporting to each of the committees of the Congregation Council.

C12.16.06. Committee meetings shall be open to all members of the congregation, who shall have voice at the discretion of the presiding members of the team, but without vote.

Section VII

DUTIES OF CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

- C13.06.01. The Executive Committee shall provide general oversight and guidance to the Congregation Council and its committees. The Executive Committee shall also perform those functions as directed and authorized by the Congregation Council. Members of the Executive Committee shall be the only persons in this congregation who can be authorized by this congregation or Congregation Council, consistent with the constitution of this congregation and the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, to sign legal documents or contracts which extend calls, that offer or terminate employment, or that buy, sell, or otherwise encumber property on behalf of this congregation. In order to facilitate the carrying out of its duties, members of the Executive Committee shall be accorded the privilege of voice at all meetings of this congregation's committees, the committees and subcommittees of the Congregation Council, and any special committees or task forces of the Congregation Council, except the Audit (C13.03.), Mutual Ministry (C13.04.), and Call (C13.05.) Committees of this congregation and such other special committees specifically so stipulated by direction of the congregation. Except for the Executive Committee and Congregation Council, no member of the Executive Committee shall chair any congregation committee or committee, (C12.16.02.), subcommittee (C12.16.03.b.), or special committee/task force (C12.16.03.c.) of the Congregation Council. The Executive Committee shall also have responsibility for the management of the administrative staff. (C12.09.06)
- C13.06.02. The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one but not more than two candidates from the membership of this congregation for each vacancy to be filled on the Congregation Council. The nominees shall meet the constitutional requirements (C12.01. and C12.02.) and have been deemed qualified by the committee to serve on the Congregation Council, and have agreed, if elected, to serve as a member of the Congregation Council (C12.04.). The Nominating Committee shall also nominate qualified candidates, who meet the constitutional requirements (C13.02., C13.03. and C13.04.) and agree, if elected or appointed, to serve for the position nominated, for other congregation committees, including the Nominating Committee. A minimum of one candidate will be nominated for each vacant position on congregation committees, except as otherwise provided in the constitution. The Nominating Committee should endeavor to build slates of nominees which reflect the age, gender, and race diversity of this congregation.
- C13.06.03. The Audit Committee shall audit the financial records, and review the accounting, procurement and payment practices of this congregation and organizations within this congregation (C14.01., e.g., ELCW). The Audit Committee shall submit appropriate written reports of their findings and, if applicable, recommendations to this congregation (C13.03.01.).
- C13.06.04. The Mutual Ministry Committee shall affirm and strengthen the mission of this congregation and ministry of the called staff. The committee shall aid in the clarification of expectations between the called staff and this congregation. It shall provide a positive and constructive forum for the consideration and resolution of relevant issues. Members of this committee shall respect and maintain the personal confidences (outside of committee discussions) of any and all who request it and shall disregard without consideration anonymous correspondence. The Mutual Ministry Committee should also, at least annually, evaluate the effectiveness of the individual called staff and their ministries, and review those evaluations with the called staff. The professional development and continuing education of the called

staff shall be guided and encouraged by the committee. Further, the Mutual Ministry Committee shall make recommendations to the Congregation Council as to the compensation and benefit packages for the called staff for the next fiscal year budget

- C13.06.06. The Call Committee shall follow NALC guidelines for identifying qualified candidates for a pastoral (C5.03.a) call to this congregation.
- C13.06.07. Duties of congregation committees may be further specified in the continuing resolutions (C18.01).
- C13.06.08. Except for meetings of the Executive (C13.01.), Audit (C13.03.), Mutual Ministry (C13.04.), and Call (C13.05.) Committees, as well as special committees so stipulated by the explicit direction of the congregation, members of this congregation may attend all meetings of this congregation's committees. Non-committee members may be accorded the privilege of voice at the discretion of the presiding chairperson of the meeting, but without vote . Should any such visitor be disruptive, they may be asked to leave and then shall leave the meeting or be subject to disciplinary actions in accordance with the constitution at the discretion of the presiding chairperson of the meeting.