

Notes for Annual Congregational Meetings (ACM) in communities of faith of Conseil régional Nakonha:ka Regional Council

1. The United Church Manual 2019 at section B.5.1 requires that all congregations hold a meeting annually as early as possible. This earliness depends on the ability of the Congregation's leadership to provide a full report of its leadership, including financial data, and would normally be from late February to early June of the year following. For example, an April 15, 2020 date is fully compliant for ACM 2020 as it gives the Finance Committee or Stewards and the Board of Trustees the time to complete their financial report for 2020 and the budget for 2021.
2. The ACM must deal, under Manual section B.5.2 with:
 - a) Electing a Chair and a secretary
 - b) Receiving the annual reports from the governing body, committees (including Trustees), and other groups in the congregation,
 - c) Electing the governing body, Regional Council representatives, and members of the committees (including Trustees)
 - d) Considering and making a direction on the annual budget as proposed by the Governing body, the stewards or finance committee and/or Trustees
3. Notice of the ACM with accompanying documentation as per the above (normally the Annual Report booklet for the prior year) must be emailed or mailed or otherwise given to all full members at least two full Sundays prior to the time fixed – the last Sunday is ok as well after the service.
4. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the meeting may not be able to be held in person. There are a few videoconferencing options available now (e.g. Zoom, Skype) in addition to audio-only teleconference calls. Any electronic method is acceptable as long as the participants have the ability to communicate with each other orally or through typed messaging at the same time. As long as most members have and can use the needed technology, it is reasonable to proceed with a meeting. We recognize this will not be an option for congregations where electronic capacity is limited. The requirement for a minimum number of members to be present at the meeting still applies to meetings held by electronic means. See section B.5.5 The best option may be to postpone the meeting until later in the year.
5. Minutes are taken as normal. The minutes should record how notice was given along with the rationale for choosing that method—for example: "Notice of the meeting was given via e-mail to all members for whom we have e-mail addresses, which is 90 percent of the congregation's membership."

6. By exception, if due to the COVID-19 pandemic no meeting was held last year, the meeting can be for 2 years (e.g. 2019 and 2020), however, the earlier year 2019, must be completed prior to the next year 2020 being considered, although this may occur at the same meeting.
7. By exception, the Regional Council respectfully recommends that the Annual Report 2020 – held in 2021 - include stories of how the Congregation and its leadership are dealing with the challenges of the pandemic in their faith journey.