

Business Process at GC43

The General Council Executive has given approval in principle to a new approach to business at the 43rd General Council 2018:

- **Pre-GC conversations:** Topics of conversation of interest to the wider church will be solicited from the commissioners to GC43 in early 2018. These conversations may help to inform proposals to the General Council or identify conversations the church wishes to hold.
- **New proposal format:** The template for proposals is designed to encourage naming an issue without specifying the outcome. “Conversation proposals” requesting a conversation on a particular issue are also encouraged.
- **Priority agenda set by GC43 commissioners:** Proposals will be reviewed and grouped by theme/issue. The top 10 proposal themes/issues will serve as the priority agenda for the General Council. Other proposals will be referred to the GCE or dealt with in other ways.
- **Three-phase decision-making:** Commissioners will engage in a three-phase process for all General Council business:
 1. **Listening:** presentation of the proposal, questions, and answers to clarify issues and implications
 2. **Discussion:** exchange of ideas, thoughts, arguments, and pros and cons; suggestions for refining proposal, affirmations, naming principles/parameters
 3. **Decision:** final debate and refinement of proposal in plenary; working toward consensus, voting

More detail on the new approach follows.

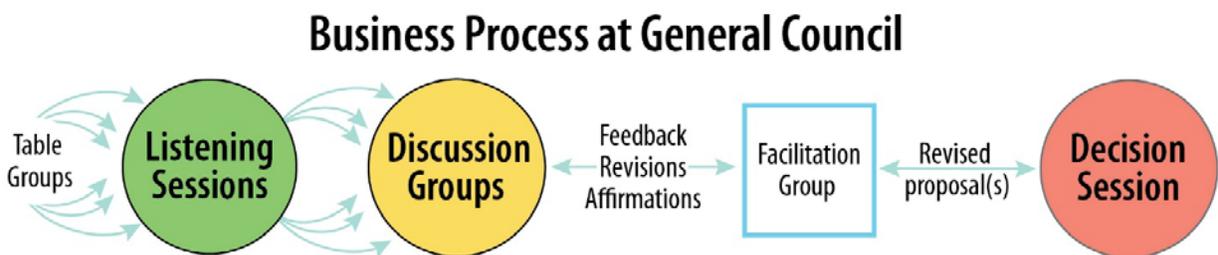
Three-Phase Process		
Listening	Discussion	Decision
Learn Clarify Understand	Thoughts Insights Refinements Affirmations	Debate Final refinements Toward consensus Vote

Before General Council

To engage as much of the denomination as possible in pre-GC43 conversations, proposals from 2017 Conference General Meetings and work initiated by the General Council Office will be presented well in advance of GC43. Mainly the Listening and Discussion phases will take place at this time.

Proposals from 2018 Conference General Meetings will be available to commissioners by late June. After reading them, commissioners will decide on the 10 themes/issues to focus on. These 10 themes/issues will be the basis for the agenda for the General Council meeting, subject to the approval of the General Council.

At General Council



Facilitation Group: Respected church elders (former Moderators and others), who are not commissioners, deliberate on comments and suggestions from Discussion Groups. Facilitation Group decides on the recommended way forward for each proposal and drafts a refined proposal as necessary.

While a consent motion will be used for some items, the majority of business the General Council discusses—the 10 identified themes/issues—will follow the three-phase decision-making process:

- 1. Listening phase:** Information sessions inform commissioners about the issues on the agenda. This continues the pre-GC Listening phase.

Information sessions may be held in plenary or concurrently in breakout rooms, with commissioners choosing which listening sessions to attend.

If there has already been extensive coverage of an issue pre-GC, the information session for that issue will probably take place in a breakout session, since many commissioners will have already spent time learning about it.

- 2. Discussion phase:** Commissioners meet in discussion groups of approximately 30 people with a pre-named chair/host and a note-taker.

Discussion groups share what they have heard through the Listening phase so everyone is informed about all the issues.

Discussion groups deliberate on the proposals. Note-takers record comments, affirmations, and suggestions, and the groups confirm the information to be recorded and shared. The

reports from all discussion groups are available for viewing by all commissioners as well as by the facilitation group.

- 3. Decision-making phase:** The facilitation group's refined proposals are made available to commissioners.

There is final debate and refinement of the proposal in plenary, with the facilitation group returning to do more refinement as necessary. The process concludes with a motion in response to the proposal and a vote on the motion.