

*Greater Morning Star Apostolic Ministries*  
*Ministerial Alliance Training*

# Parliamentary Procedure Based on Robert's Rule of Order

**Basic Class I**

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## Brief History and Reason For The Title *Parliamentary Procedure*



The **Houses of Parliament**, also known as the Palace of Westminster, London, England

Parliamentary procedure is the body of rules, ethics, and customs governing meetings and other operations of clubs, organizations, legislative bodies, and other deliberative assemblies. It is part of the common law originating primarily in the practices of the House of Commons of the **Parliament** of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (commonly known as the United Kingdom, the UK, or Britain), from which it derives its name. The overall idea is to adopt the rule of the majority with respect for the minority. Its object is to allow deliberation upon questions of interest to the organization and to arrive at the sense or the will of the assembly upon these questions. Self-governing organizations follow parliamentary procedure to debate and reach group decisions—usually by vote—with the least possible friction.

## Brief History and Reason For The Title “*Robert’s*” *Rule Of Order*



Brigadier General Henry M. Robert

General Henry Martyn Robert, born in Robertville, South Carolina in May 2, 1837 and died in Hornell, New York, May 11, 1923, (he is buried in Arlington National Cemetery) simplified the already recognized but confusing Parliamentary Procedure. In 1876 he wrote the manual in response to his poor performance in leading a church meeting at a Baptist church in New Bedford, Massachusetts. He resolved that he would learn about parliamentary procedure before attending another meeting. The rules are loosely based on procedures used in the United States House of Representatives.

## **What Is Parliamentary Procedure?**

It is a set of rules for conduct at meetings that allows everyone to be heard and to make decisions without confusion.

## **Why is Parliamentary Procedure Important?**

Because it's a time tested method of conducting business at meetings and public gatherings. It can be adapted to fit the needs of any organization. Today, Robert's Rules of Order is the basic mode of operation for most clubs, organizations and other groups. So it's important that everyone know these basic rules!

## **The President or Chairman's General Parliamentary Protocol during a Business Session**

The President or Chairman using the parliamentary procedure usually follows a fixed order of business. Below is a typical example:

The President or Chairman will (or can assign/deputize someone to):

1. Call the meeting to order.
2. Roll call of members present.
3. Reading of minutes of last meeting. (Adoptions/ed as read with all necessary corrections)
4. Officer's reports (If necessary). (Adoptions/ed as read with all of the necessary corrections)
5. Committee/ Auxiliaries reports. (Adoptions/ed as read with all of the necessary corrections)
6. Address Old/Unfinished business.
7. Present/Address new business.
8. Announcements.
9. Move for Adjournment (of the meeting). Response by the assembly: "So moved"

# **THE TWO COMMONLY USED PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE TYPES EMPLOYED BY CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS**

1. Nomination for the Election of Officers by Hand Raising or by Standing Vote
  
2. Making (presenting) a Motion to the floor (aka: the House) and Moving on the existing Motion.

## Nomination for the Election of Officers by Hand Raising or Standing Vote

**The President or Chairman will:**

1. **Call the meeting to order.**
2. **Announce the meeting protocol (by raised hands or by standing vote)**
3. **Announce to the members that all elected offices are declared vacant.**
4. **“Nominations are now in order for the office of \_\_\_\_\_”**

Member will state: “Mr. Chairman” (or raise your hand- which ever the chairman chooses) I nominate Bro. Sam Smith for president.

**Chairman: Bro. Sam Smith has been nominated. Are there any other nominations?”**  
(After a pause) **“If not, then I will entertain a motion that the nomination is closed on this one name.**

Member #1: Mr. Chairman, I move that the nomination closes on this one name.

Member #2: I second (If there is no “second” declared, the nomination must remain open by the chairman for the nominating of an added name)

**Chairman: It is properly moved and second that the nomination closes on this one name. Are you ready for the question?**

Members: “Question!”

**Chairman: All in favor of the election of the one name let it know by saying “aye” (or “by the raising of your hand”)**

(The Chairman should wait for the resounding “aye” or completed counting of the voting members.)

**Chairman: “All opposed?” (The chairman should again wait for a possible resounding “nay” or completed count of the opposing members.)**

**Chairman: If the majority voted favorably, the chairman will state: “The “ayes” have it and the motion is carried (final). Or if by hand count, the chairman can state: “The number of “ayes” is (state number of hands raised), while the number of “nays” are (state number of hands raised). Therefore, the “ayes” have it and the motion is carried (final).**

Final note: In case of a tie vote, the election should be decided by lot unless the organization adopts a motion to do otherwise.

## **Presenting a Motion to the floor (aka: the House) and Moves on the existing Motion.**

**(At a glance)**

The method used by members to express themselves is in the form of moving motions. A motion is a proposal that the entire membership take action or a stand on an issue. Individual members can:

1. Make (or presenting to the floor) a motion.
2. Move on an existing motion. (I **Move** that...)
3. Second a motion. (It has been properly moved and second {Needs no thirds})
4. Question a motion (Are you ready for the question? Response: Question...or, Unready...)
5. The debate or discussion in detail a motion that is presented.
6. Vote on motions. (All in favor let it be known by saying "aye", all opposed "nay")

If an opposition of "nays" out number the "ayes", then the Chair must orderly address/discuss the concerns of the "nays" with the body with the goal to bring a conclusion to the issue with all modifications and revisions attached if such is necessary. Then, the vote on the motion is addressed again (All in favor let it be known by saying "aye", all opposed "nay").

7. Finally, conclude/close on a successful motion due to a majority of "ayes". (The "ayes" have it and the motion is carried. {issue is confirmed/adopted respectfully by the body}).

## **How are Motions Presented? (More detailed descriptive)**

1. Obtaining the floor
  - a. Wait until the last speaker has finished.
  - b. Rise and address the Chairman by saying, "Mr. Chairman, or Mr. President."
  - c. Wait until the Chairman recognizes you.
2. Make Your Motion
  - a. Speak in a clear and concise manner.
  - b. Always state a motion affirmatively. Say, "I move that we ..." rather than, "I move that we do not ...".
  - c. Avoid personalities and stay on your subject.
3. Wait for Someone to Second Your Motion
4. Another member will second your motion or the Chairman will call for a second.
5. If there is no second to your motion it is lost.
6. The Chairman States Your Motion
  - a. The Chairman will say, "it has been properly moved and seconded that we ..." Thus placing your motion before the membership for consideration and action.
  - b. The membership then either debates your motion, or may move directly to a vote.
  - c. Once your motion is presented to the membership by the chairman it becomes "assembly property", and cannot be changed by you without the consent of the members.

7. Expounding on Your Motion

- a. The time for you to speak in favor of your motion is at this point in time, rather than at the time you present it.
- b. The mover is always allowed to speak first.
- c. All comments and debate must be directed to the chairman.
- d. Keep to the time limit for speaking if one has been established.
- e. The mover may speak again only after other speakers are finished, unless called upon by the Chairman.

8. Putting the Question to the Membership

- a. The Chairman asks, "Are you ready for the question?"
- b. If there is no more discussion, a vote is taken.
- c. On a motion to move the previous question may be adapted.

## When to Motion and When to Move

1. Because only one subject should be entertained on the floor at a time, A **motion** on the subject is offered by a member when first presenting the subject matter to the floor, while a **move** is attached or added thereafter to the same existing subject of discussion until the subject is finalized/concluded.

EXAMPLE: Elder Hickman says; Brother Chairman- I'd like to make a **motion** that our next auxiliary meeting is held at the Red Lobster restaurant\*. Elder Richard replies; Brother Chairman I just had a son graduate from college and a daughter that is getting married soon, so unless somebody at that next meeting is going to pay for my food...I aint gone make that meeting. To which Elder Fletcher responds, Brother Chairman -I think Elder Richard has a point, and in the day of tighter budgets for everyone we should consider a place less economically challenging to the auxiliary members. So I **move** that another restaurant is considered as well. Elder Michael responds, Brother Chairman-considering all that has been said, and to accommodate cheaper eating prices at the next meeting, I **move** that we consider also the Golden Corral restaurant in Alexandria. For which Deacon Holland replies; well I **move** that we have the meeting without paying for eating, save everybody money and meet here at the church.

Member: "I second the motion."

Chairman: It is properly moved and second...all in favor....

## Basic Procedural Church Leadership Protocol Exercise

(Call of the assembly to order, reading of Secretaries minutes, reports, financial reports, old business, new business, oral business discussions, adjournment)

1. Chairman or president shall officially *call-to-order* the business event that is about to take place.

**Example: I will now call-to-order our official business session.**

2. Chairman or president shall state to the body the matter/s of business that is about to be presented to the body. (Chairman or president may also choose to have a sitting secretary or designated announcer state the matter/s that is about to be presented).

**Example: We will begin with the reading of our financial report.** <sup>1</sup>

3. After the announcement, the chairman or president will extended the matter to the designated person assigned who is related to the matter, for presenting in detail the issue by reading and/or discussion to the floor.

**Example: In our financial report...after a 5% increase in revenue in tithes and offerings from our last session; as of today, Friday, November the 3rd our organization retains a steady balance of \$150,000 in our overall operations account, while another \$10,000 remains in our foreign missions account. Totaling an overall amount of \$160,000 currently held under the organizations name by Nations Bank and Trust, USA. And we are happy to report there are no outstanding debt's owed by the organization at this time. (reading of a report should be thorough and complete)**

4. Once the document or statement has been read or the oral statement presented, the chairman or president will then say to the floor;

**Chairman: You have heard the reading of our financial report, what is your pleasure? Or; you have heard the reading of our financial report, what is the pleasure of the house?**

House Member #1 response: We move that the financial report is adopted as read with all of the necessary corrections. Member #2: I second

**Chairman: It has been properly moved and second that the financial report is adopted as read with all of the necessary corrections. Are you ready for the question?**

House Members: Question!

**Chairman: All in favor of the said motion let it know by saying "aye."(The Chairman should wait for the resounding "aye") "All opposed- nay?" The "ayes" have it and the motion is carried (final).**

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<sup>1</sup> The topic selection/s of the day and the order by which they are called in a meeting, is up to the choosing of the chairman or president.

## The Five Methods Used to Vote

The method of vote on any motion depends on the situation and the by-laws of policy of the organization. There are five methods used to vote by most organizations, they are:

1. By Voice -- The Chairman asks those in favor to say, "aye", those opposed to say "nay". **Note:** Any member may move for an exact count.
2. By Roll Call -- Each member answers "yes" or "no" as his name is called. This method is used when a record of each person's vote is required.
3. By General (Common) Consent -- When a motion is not likely to be opposed, the Chairman says, "if there is no objection ...is there a Common Consent" The membership shows agreement by responding "Common Consent", however if one member says, "I object," the item must be put to a vote.
4. By Division -- This is a slight verification of a voice vote. It does not require a count unless the chairman so desires. Members raise their hands or stand.
5. By Ballot -- Members write their vote on a slip of paper; this method is used when secrecy is desired.

- Nomination for the Election of Officers by Standing Vote Exercise
- When to Motion and When to Move Exercise

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