

General Council 44 Business Outline Summary

General Council 44 will be an entirely virtual event taking place over six months from February through July 2022. The meeting will be constituted in February 2022. All Commissioners are expected to attend the various sessions of General Council in the same way that they would attend if it was an in-person meeting. Some material will be provided as written documentation, some as pre-recorded video for viewing on one’s own schedule. Some non-decision-making sessions will be recorded for possible later viewing as well.

The following is an outline of the process General Council 44 will be using for its business.

Key concepts

Building on what was learned from the business model used at GC43, GC44 will use a similar model with the following key concepts:

Proposal format

There is a [template for proposals](#) to encourage naming an issue rather than a specific outcome. “Conversation proposals” are also encouraged—that is, a proposal may also request a conversation on a particular issue as an end in itself.

Agenda limited to priorities set by GC44 Commissioners

Commissioners will review proposals and name the issues in which they have the highest level of interest. Proposals on these issues will serve as the priority agenda for the GC meeting. Other proposals will be referred to GCE or dealt with in other ways, as decided by Commissioners.

Three-phase decision-making

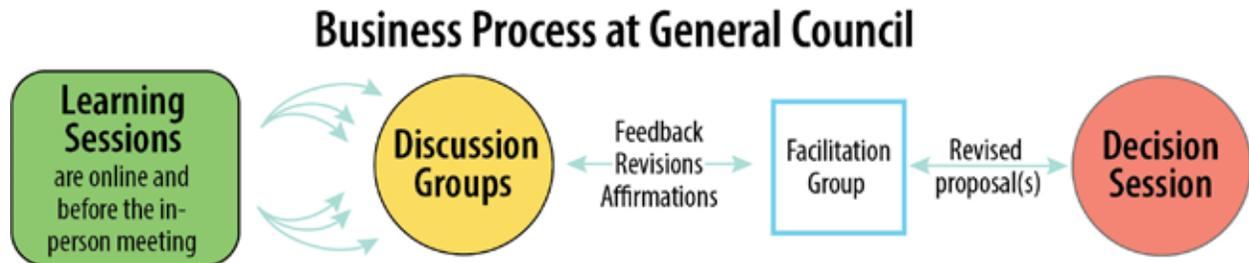
Commissioners will engage in a three-phase process for all General Council business:

1. **Learning and receiving information** (February through May): presentation of the proposal, questions, and answers to clarify issues and implications
2. **Discussion and deliberation** (June 16–18): exchange of ideas, thoughts, arguments, pros, and cons; emergence of suggestions for refinement of proposal, affirmations, naming of principles/parameters
3. **Discernment and decision** (July 22–26): final debate and refinements of proposal in plenary; working toward consensus, voting

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

Outline of business process

While a Consent Motion will be used for some items, the majority of business (identified themes/issues) the General Council discusses will follow the three-phase decision making process.



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 process as necessary.

1. Learning phase

Learning will happen in a variety of formats, including pre-recorded videos and live webinars (with recordings available). Commissioners should treat these learning sessions as they would any other session of Council. This is also a great time to ask questions either of the proposal originator or the Business Committee. The purpose is to be able to enter the Discussion sessions with the best possible understanding of the material.

Proposals will be added to the online workbook provided to Commissioners as they become available. After having read the proposals contained in the workbook and participating in or viewing the online learning sessions, Commissioners will decide on the issues in which they have the highest level of interest. They will then complete and return a response form to the General Council Office to indicate their priorities. The Proposal Group will review the response forms and identify the issues (likely made up of multiple proposals) of greatest interest to Commissioners. These issues will form the focus of the agenda for the General Council meeting (with the agenda being subject to the approval of the General Council).

2. Discussion phase

Commissioners will meet in Discussion Groups of approximately 30 people with a pre-named host/chair and a note-taker. These groups will remain the same throughout the Council.

Discussion Groups will start by ensuring everyone has an understanding of the items under discussion. A means to seek clarification will be provided for each Discussion Group.

Discussion Groups will deliberate on all the themes and proposals before the Council. They will decide on comments, affirmations, or suggestions for refinement. The note-takers will record these comments, affirmations, and suggestions. After discussing a theme, each Discussion Group will confirm the information to be recorded and shared. The reports from all Discussion Groups will be available for viewing by all Commissioners as well as the Facilitation Group.

A Facilitation Team, made up of respected church elders (former Moderators and others) and not Commissioners, will meet to deliberate on the comments and suggestions from Discussion Groups. The Facilitation Team will decide on its recommended way forward for each proposal and draft a refined proposal to reflect that recommendation as necessary.

3. Decision-making phase

The Facilitation Team's report will be made available June 27 for review and comment.

There will be final debate and refinement of the proposal as necessary in plenary, with the Facilitation Team returning to do more refinement as necessary. The process will conclude with a motion in response to the proposal and a vote on the motion.