

SWEDENBORG: ENVISIONING THE FUTURE

200TH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH

Two Proposed Bylaw Amendments for Annual Convention

Bylaws: Proposed Amendment: Add Standing Committee for Ministry Development

The General Council endorses the proposal of the Structure Review Committee (p. 9 in 2023 Journal) consisting of Paul Martin, Kit Billings, Gard Perry, and Alice Henderson, an amendment to Article 10 in the denomination's bylaws to create a new Section 4 establishing a Standing Committee for Ministry Development.

If adopted, the current Article X, Section 4, Standing Committee for Nominations, will become Section 5 and the current Section 5 will become Section 6.

Article X

Standing Committees

Add new

Section 4. Standing Committee for Ministry Development

There shall be a Standing Committee for Ministry Development (SCMD) whose central focus shall be facilitating ministries within the Swedenborgian Church. The SCMD shall serve as a sounding board for ministries and programs in the denomination and shall be concerned with resources, counsel, and spiritual support for ministry efforts throughout the Church. To this end, the SCMD shall assess ministry and programming grant proposals and offer advice and counsel to the Standing Committee for Financial Accountability for decisions on grant applications. It shall consist of three to six members, the number to be determined annually by the President of the Swedenborgian Church based on the needs of the Church at that time but shall always include at least three ordained ministers or licensed pastors with five or more years of professional leadership in a denominational ministry.

Bylaws: Proposed Amendment: Common Fund

A study of the history of the Investment Committee language in our annual Journal over the past twenty years reveals vagueness and variance regarding the number of members and whether there are specific terms for those serving on the Investment Committee of the Swedenborgian Church of North America. The current language in Article XVIII in the Bylaws says, "The General Council, at its first meeting following each annual session of the Swedenborgian Church, shall appoint an Investment Committee of not less than three members, one of whom may be the Treasurer of the Convention, which shall be charged with the general oversight and care of the investments and securities of the Swedenborgian Church Common Fund, with full power to purchase and sell and to invest and reinvest as in their judgment and discretion may seem advisable."

After discussion in the fall meeting of the General Council considering practical issues for best governance, the following amendment for Article XVIII was unanimously voted to be placed on the agenda during our business session at next summer's annual convention at Michigan State University:

Article XVIII

Common Fund Investment Committee

Amended

An Investment Committee of five members shall be appointed by the General Council for a term of five years, and each member may be reappointed without term limits. The Treasurer of the Convention shall serve as Chair of the Investment Committee *ex officio* with voting rights. ☒