

01 - CLERGY UFMCC BYLAWS AMENDMENT PROPOSAL # 01

Sponsor of this Amendment Proposal: **Rev Aaron Miller & Rev Marie Alford-Harkley**

Supporter of this Amendment: Rev. Francisco Ferreira, Jr. ICM Fortaleza (Brazil)

Supporter of this Amendment: Rev. Jeff Rock, MCC Toronto (Canada)

Article to be amended (Example: Article VIII.A.4): **Article III.B.2**

Affected Section	Article III.B.2 - The RITE OF ATTAINING MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHURCH
Original Language	The RITE OF ATTAINING MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHURCH shall be conducted by the Pastor or Interim Pastoral Leader before a local congregation at any regular worship service. In accordance with criteria established by the local church, a baptized Christian may become a member in good standing of the local church group through a letter of transfer from a recognized Christian body or through affirmation of faith.
Strikethrough Language	The RITE OF ATTAINING MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHURCH shall be conducted by the Pastor or Interim Pastoral Leader before a local congregation at any regular worship service. In accordance with criteria established by the local church, a baptized Christian may become a member in good standing of the local church group through a letter of transfer from a recognized Christian body or through affirmation of faith.
Final Proposed Language	The RITE OF ATTAINING MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHURCH shall be conducted by the Pastor or Interim Pastoral Leader before a local congregation at any regular worship service. In accordance with criteria established by the local church, a person who expresses a sincere desire to become a part of a local church community, intends to support its ministries and mission, and meets criteria established by the local church may become a member in good standing of the local church group.
Rationale	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Some local church communities have already made this change by not asking about baptismal status before conferring the Rite of Membership. Some local churches have changed their bylaws to reflect this. It would be good for the denomination to have similarly inclusive bylaws. 2. For many churches, refusing membership to people who are not baptized amounts to outright rejection of people who

	<p>want to be a part of the community. This is antithetical to MCC's values.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. This bylaw change does not preclude a local church group from making a baptism a prerequisite for membership if that is the will and desire of the particular church group. 4. Those who were baptized (or not) as infants did not do this by choice, faith or commitment- technical advantage/disadvantage by default. 5. A person who is denied membership due to baptismal status may feel wounded and leave. It would be far better for them to feel welcomed in the church and this could lead to a later desire for the sacrament of baptism
<p>Impact Statement</p>	<p><u>COE:</u> A majority of COE members have responded to this request for input. The concern seems to lie around local churches retaining baptism as a requirement for membership, and the thought that local bylaws cannot contradict denominational bylaws.</p> <p><u>Financial:</u> N/A</p> <p><u>Values/Mission/Vision compatibility:</u> Consistent</p> <p><u>Other bylaw articles impacted:</u> N/A</p>