

**First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh**  
**Annual Congregational Meeting – May 23, 2021**

**Background information on Proposed Bylaw Amendments**

**1. Amendment to Article IV, Section 6 (Online, absentee, and proxy votes)**

**Question:**

Shall Article IV, Section 6, of the Bylaws be amended by adding the words in bold italics as follows: ***“At the discretion of the Board of Trustees, as announced in advance of any Congregational Meeting,*** Members may vote by secure online ballot, absentee ballot, or proxy. Voting procedures will be explained in the meeting notice. A Member may hold up to two (2) proxies at a given Congregational Meeting.”?

**Background:**

Article IV, Section 6 of the Bylaws currently reads as follows:

***“A Member may submit a vote by secure online ballot, absentee ballot, or proxy.*** Voting procedures will be explained in the meeting notice. A Member may hold up to two (2) proxies at a given Congregational Meeting.”

The Board has accepted the opinion of Kyle Gracey (our consultant on procedural matters) that “A Member may submit a vote by secure online ballot, absentee ballot, or proxy” mean that members must be offered all of these options (secure online ballot, absentee ballot, and proxy) for every vote. This was an oversight by the Bylaws Working Group, which intended to preserve the element of discretion in voting procedures conferred in Article III, Section 7 of the **2017 Bylaws**, as follows:

***“At the discretion of the Board of Trustees, as announced in advance of said meetings,*** voting members may elect to participate in congregational meetings by absentee ballot or proxy.”

The Board therefore proposes to revise Article IV, Section 6, of the Bylaws by adding ***“At the discretion of the Board of Trustees, as announced in advance of any Congregational Meeting,”*** before “Members may vote by secure online ballot, absentee ballot, or proxy. Voting procedures will be explained in the meeting notice...”

**2. Technical Correction to Article IX, Section 3 (Call of a settled minister)**

**Question:**

Shall Article IX, Section 3, "as specified in Article IV, Section 3" be corrected to read "as specified in Article IV, Section 4."?

**Background:**

Article IX, Section 3 of the Bylaws currently reads as follows:

“The President of the Board of Trustees will convene a Special Congregational Meeting to call a Minister when so requested by the Chair of the Search Committee. ***Notice of this meeting will be given as specified in Article IV, Section 3.*** A quorum for this meeting is 40% of Members eligible to vote, as described in Article IV, Section 5. Voting will be by secret ballot. An affirmative vote by 90% of those voting will be required to call a Minister.”

“Article IV, Section 3” is incorrect. Notification procedures for congregational meetings are specified in Article IV, Section 4, as follows:

***“Notice of all Congregational Meetings will be given by email or U.S. mail to all Members at least 14 days before the meeting date.*** The notice will include a statement of the purpose(s) of the meeting and the required quorum. The business transacted at the meeting will be confined to the purposes stated in the notice.”

The Board therefore proposes that in Article IX, Section 3, "as specified in Article IV, Section 3" should be corrected to read "as specified in Article IV, Section 4."