

CHRIST IS RISEN INDEED

Standing Rules Explained

A print-friendly delegate report for the 69th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

July 18-23, 2026 | Phoenix, Arizona

Purpose

This report turns the proposed Convention Standing Rules in Today's Business, Issue 1, pages 14-17, into plain language, delegate watch points, and practical next steps. The rules are procedural. They do not define doctrine, but they shape how doctrine, governance, elections, and mission business are discussed and acted upon.

Source boundary: Primary source is Today's Business, Issue 1, June 5, 2026. The issue itself notes that five later daily issues of Today's Business may include revised resolutions, proposed amendments, substitute resolutions, changes to candidate information, and other official notices. Treat this as a pre-convention study aid, not final convention action.

Brand note: Designed for low-ink printing: white pages, thin rule lines, minimal shading, and no full-page color floods. Your printer may still act like a tiny dragon, but this report tries not to feed it gold coins.

Prepared for LCMS 2026 Convention study

LCMS 2026 Convention Field Guide

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1. The Standing Rules in One Page

The simplest summary: the standing rules are the convention's traffic pattern. They determine how minutes are corrected, how resolutions are presented, how debate is managed, how amendments and substitutes work, how floor nominations happen, how votes are counted, and what devices delegates may use on the floor.

The big watch items

Rule 10 creates a daily consent calendar. Rule 17 creates a microphone kiosk queue. Rules 19-22 control debate length and closure. Rule 21 governs substitute motions. Rule 26 governs floor nominations. Rule 30 limits electronic communications in delegate areas.

Rules	Area	Plain-English focus
1	Minutes	Only substantive corrections from the floor. Send typos and minor fixes to the Secretary.
2-11	Resolutions	Order, rationale, amendments, omnibus handling, consent calendar, and unfinished business.
12-25	Process	Robert's Rules backup, chair discretion, advisory participation, microphone queue, debate limits, substitutes, and final-day limits.
26	Floor nominations	No floor nominations for First VP or regional VPs. Certain other nominations may be made under tight rules.
27-29	Voting	Electronic voting is normal. Invalid votes are excluded. Recorded votes require majority permission.
30	Devices	Delegate areas allow devices with communications disabled. No electronic communications from delegate areas.

2. Why These Rules Matter

They shape what gets debated. Omnibus and consent-calendar rules can move many items quickly. That is efficient when items are truly routine. It is risky when substantive issues are tucked into a procedural basket.

They shape how delegates speak. The microphone queue, pro-con sequence, and two-minute limit reward preparation. A delegate with one clean sentence may carry more weight than a delegate with five fog machines running.

They shape how resolutions are repaired. The rules make the rationale and whereas sections amendable. That matters because a convention may accidentally adopt questionable claims if delegates only read the resolves.

They shape elections. Floor nomination rules matter especially if a resolution creates or restores positions to be filled during convention.

They shape trust. Good process will not create the Gospel, but it can keep the church's public deliberation honest, orderly, and charitable.

Law and Gospel lens

The Law exposes confusion, haste, overreach, and disorder. The Gospel keeps the assembly from making procedure into a savior. These rules serve the church's confession and witness. Christ is risen. The convention is not.

3. Rule-by-Rule Explanation

Each rule below includes plain meaning, why it matters, and what a delegate should do next.

Minutes

Rule 1. Approval and correction of minutes

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 14

Plain meaning: Minutes are distributed each next morning and approved at the first item of afternoon business. Final-day minutes are approved later by the Board of Directors. Only substantive corrections should be offered from the floor.

Why it matters: The floor is not for fixing commas, misspellings, numbering, or titles. It is for corrections that affect the meaning or effect of convention action.

Delegate next step: If a correction changes substance, be ready to state it clearly. If it is editorial, send it in writing to the Secretary.

Resolutions

Rule 2. Resolution order and priority

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 14

Plain meaning: Floor committees prioritize resolutions and normally present them in numerical order. Resolutions affecting nominations or elections may be taken earlier.

Why it matters: Election-related resolutions may need action before ballots or nominations happen.

Delegate next step: Mark any resolution that creates positions, changes election procedures, or affects nominations. Watch for agenda changes.

Rule 3. Preambles and whereas clauses count

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 14

Plain meaning: The preface, preamble, rationale, and whereas sections are integral parts of a resolution. They can be considered, amended, and adopted.

Why it matters: Delegates are not only adopting the action clauses. They may also adopt the stated reasons, claims, and assumptions.

Delegate next step: Read the rationale as carefully as the resolves. Amend overstatements, contested facts, or language that binds beyond Scripture, Confessions, Constitution, or Bylaws.

Rule 4. Printed material need not be read aloud

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 14

Plain meaning: The presenter may choose not to read prefaces, rationales, and whereas sections printed in Today's Business. The chair also need not read the whole resolution when stating the question or putting it to vote.

Why it matters: Delegates are expected to have the printed material open. What is not read aloud can still be adopted.

Delegate next step: Bring Today's Business and mark it. Do not rely only on what you hear from the microphone.

Rule 5. Extended consideration for selected resolutions

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 14

Plain meaning: The chair, in consultation with floor committee chairs, may give up to 1.5 hours to selected resolutions: 15 minutes for presentation, 30 minutes for main-motion debate, and 45 minutes for amendments, substitutes, or continued debate.

Why it matters: This identifies major or difficult resolutions and prevents both chaos and suffocation.

Delegate next step: When a rule 5 item appears, prepare focused comments and amendments in advance. This is likely not a sleepy courtesy item.

Rule 6. Submit amendments and substitutes ahead when possible

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 14

Plain meaning: Substitute resolutions and amendments should be submitted to Today's Business before debate when possible. If offered during discussion, one written copy must go to the Secretary immediately.

Why it matters: Floor language becomes official language. Fuzzy wording can create a bylaw goblin that lives for three years.

Delegate next step: Draft amendments before convention. Bring clean printed and digital copies. Keep them narrow and germane.

Rule 7. CCM review for Constitution or Bylaw language

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 14

Plain meaning: Any amendment to Constitution or Bylaw language requires advance review and approval by the Commission on Constitutional Matters.

Why it matters: Delegates cannot casually amend governing documents from the floor without constitutional review.

Delegate next step: If you want to alter bylaw text, seek review early through the Today's Business office or Secretary.

Rule 8. Only substantive floor amendments

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 14

Plain meaning: Floor amendments must affect the resolution's purpose or effect. Typographical and grammar corrections may be handled by the Secretary if substance is unchanged.

Why it matters: Floor time is for meaningful action, not group copyediting.

Delegate next step: Ask: would this change what the resolution does or means? If yes, move it. If no, send it in writing.

Rule 9. Omnibus resolutions

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 14

Plain meaning: Omnibus resolutions are considered as regular scheduled business. Omnibus A refers overtures to others. Omnibus B affirms prior convention action. Omnibus C acknowledges thanks or recognition. Omnibus D, if used by a committee, formally declines overtures. A majority vote can remove an overture from an omnibus and send it to the proper floor committee.

Why it matters: Omnibus handling saves time but can also prevent separate debate on matters that may deserve it.

Delegate next step: Before adoption, scan each omnibus list. Move to remove any item that needs direct convention discussion, reporting language, or a clearer action.

Rule 10. Daily consent calendar

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 15

Plain meaning: Remaining resolutions may be placed on a consent calendar if the chair deems them non-controversial, courtesy, or honorific. It takes 10 percent of voting delegates to remove one. Items not removed are adopted without further convention action.

Why it matters: This is efficient but powerful. A resolution can be adopted without debate if delegates do not act.

Delegate next step: Each morning, read the consent calendar first. Remove items with bylaw changes, financial impact, doctrinal weight, governance consequences, or unclear rationale.

Watch for: A friendly title can hide a governance engine under the hood. Lift the hood.

Rule 11. Unfinished resolutions die

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 15

Plain meaning: Any resolution not acted on before adjournment dies. The topic may return only through an overture to the next convention.

Why it matters: Delay can become decision by exhaustion.

Delegate next step: Watch the agenda late in convention. Important items near the end may need timely attention or priority.

Process

Rule 12. Robert's Rules as backup

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 15

Plain meaning: If the special standing rules do not cover something, the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised governs.

Why it matters: The convention rules are first. Robert's fills the gaps.

Delegate next step: When unsure, ask a point of order or request parliamentary clarification rather than guessing loudly.

Rule 13. Chair follows agenda but may deviate

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 15

Plain meaning: The chair should follow the agenda closely but may deviate when necessary or helpful.

Why it matters: The printed schedule matters, but the chair has flexibility.

Delegate next step: Track chair announcements and daily Today's Business issues. Bring snacks of patience.

Rule 14. Advisory participants may debate but not act

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 15

Plain meaning: Nonvoting advisory delegates and representatives may participate in debate but may not nominate, make motions, or vote.

Why it matters: Advisory voices can shape deliberation but cannot perform assembly action.

Delegate next step: Listen carefully to advisory voices, especially when they bring expertise or direct responsibility.

Rule 15. Speaker identification

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 15

Plain meaning: Recognized speakers must state name, district or represented entity, and whether voting delegate, advisory delegate, or advisory representative.

Why it matters: This keeps the record clear and helps the assembly understand the speaker's role.

Delegate next step: Practice a one-sentence introduction before speaking. Save your two minutes for substance.

Rule 16. Microphone queue and pro-con debate

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 15

Plain meaning: A microphone queue is used for every debatable motion. Debate uses a pro-con method as much as possible, with secondary motions in queue order. If a floor committee member speaks in favor, it counts as a pro speech and should be followed by a con speech.

Why it matters: This creates a more balanced hearing of both sides.

Delegate next step: Sign up with the right purpose. Decide whether you are speaking to the main motion, amendment, substitute, point of order, or request for information.

Rule 17. Microphone kiosk registration

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 15

Plain meaning: Delegates and representatives seeking recognition must register at the nearest microphone kiosk and indicate their general purpose. Queue entrants are addressed in order unless the chair gives preference under rules of order or another reason explained to the body.

Why it matters: This is a major practical change. It shifts floor access from a footrace to a managed queue.

Delegate next step: Learn the kiosk process during orientation. Check your queue position and withdraw if your point has already been made.

Rule 18. Questions of privilege in writing

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 15

Plain meaning: Questions of privilege or personal privilege should ordinarily be addressed in writing to the chair or designee.

Why it matters: This keeps the floor from being interrupted for issues that can be handled off-mic.

Delegate next step: Use writing for personal comfort, room, sound, or similar concerns unless immediate floor action is necessary.

Rule 19. Two-minute debate limit

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 15

Plain meaning: Speeches are limited to two minutes. No one may speak more than twice on the same motion on the same day, and no one speaks a second time until all first-time speakers have had opportunity. The chair may make exceptions. Committee answers are exempt.

Why it matters: The rule rewards clarity and limits repetition.

Delegate next step: Write your point in 125-175 words. Lead with the ask. End with the action.

Rule 20. Speaking and calling the question

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 15

Plain meaning: A delegate who speaks on an issue may not move to call the question at the close of that speech.

Why it matters: A delegate should not use debate time and then immediately try to shut debate down.

Delegate next step: Choose one role: speak to persuade, or move to close debate when it is your turn.

Rule 21. Substitute motions

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, pp. 15-16

Plain meaning: If a substitute motion is offered and seconded, the presenter gets two minutes to explain it, a floor committee member gets two minutes to defend the original, and the convention votes without further debate on whether to consider the substitute. If considered and later adopted, the original dies. If not, the original remains pending.

Why it matters: A substitute is a full replacement, not a word tweak.

Delegate next step: Use a substitute only when the resolution needs a new structure or direction. Use an amendment for surgical repairs.

Rule 22. Closing debate

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, pp. 15-16

Plain meaning: A voting delegate may move to close debate when it is his or her turn to speak. Closing debate requires a two-thirds vote. The chair puts closing debate to a vote after every 20 minutes of main-motion debate, except Rule 5 items, and may also do so when both sides have been sufficiently heard.

Why it matters: This keeps debate from becoming a procedural treadmill.

Delegate next step: If the room has not heard both sides, vote against closing debate. If the debate is repeating itself, vote to close.

Rule 23. Non-contiguous word amendments

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 16

Plain meaning: Delegates may amend scattered words in a pending question as long as the result is not effectively a substitute motion.

Why it matters: This allows clean edits across a resolution without dozens of separate motions.

Delegate next step: Use this for repeated terms, such as changing several instances of "require" to "encourage," if the total effect remains an amendment rather than a rewrite.

Rule 24. President may call urgent items in final two days

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 16

Plain meaning: During the last two days, the President may call up resolutions he judges must be acted on before adjournment.

Why it matters: This gives a path for urgent business that would otherwise die under the clock.

Delegate next step: Watch late agenda shifts. Ask why an item is being prioritized if the reason is not clear.

Rule 25. No reconsider or rescind on final day

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 16

Plain meaning: No motion to reconsider or rescind may be made or called up on the final day.

Why it matters: The final day is for finishing, not reopening yesterday's battles.

Delegate next step: If something needs reconsideration, raise it before the final day.

Floor Nominations

Rule 26. Floor nominations

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 16

Plain meaning: No floor nominations are accepted for First Vice-President or regional vice-presidents. For Secretary and board or commission members, floor nominations are allowed at the Committee for Convention Nominations report. Floor nominees usually must come from the previously submitted pool unless the convention orders otherwise by simple majority. Floor nominations are not debatable and are voted on immediately before being added to the ballot. Allowable nominations are open for 40 minutes unless closed earlier by two-thirds vote, then extended in 20-minute intervals until two-thirds vote to cease.

Why it matters: This rule matters for elections and especially for any new or restored board or commission positions.

Delegate next step: Prepare forms, consent, eligibility, and a 100-word statement before the floor window opens. Do not improvise nominee paperwork under fluorescent lights. That way lies sadness.

Voting

Rule 27. Electronic voting

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 16

Plain meaning: An electronic response system is ordinarily used. If unavailable or at the chair's discretion, votes may be by voice, show of hands, or rising vote. The chair may order a count if unclear. Tallies are recorded when possible.

Why it matters: Electronic voting improves clarity but backup methods remain available.

Delegate next step: Pay attention during voting-system orientation. Confirm when voting opens and closes.

Rule 28. Invalid votes

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 16

Plain meaning: A keypad vote is invalid if it uses a number not offered or is entered before voting opens or after it closes. Invalid votes are not counted in total votes cast.

Why it matters: Mistimed or wrong-number votes do not count.

Delegate next step: Look at the displayed options. Vote only after the chair opens the vote. This is not the moment for button-mashing like a 1990s arcade cabinet.

Rule 29. Recording votes in the minutes

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 16

Plain meaning: The assembly may grant delegates the right to record their votes in the minutes on a particular resolution by majority vote without debate. If granted, votes of record must be submitted in writing to the Secretary within 15 minutes after that day's business closes.

Why it matters: This creates a limited way for delegates to place their vote in the official record.

Delegate next step: Use this only for resolutions where public record matters. Have written vote information ready if the privilege is granted.

Use of Voice, Print, and Electronic Devices

Rule 30. Electronic device restrictions

Source: Today's Business, Issue 1, pp. 16-17

Plain meaning: The rule governs printers and electronic equipment, including phones, laptops, tablets, smart watches, laser pointers, and similar devices. Sounds are not allowed. Personal extension cords are not allowed in Halls AB unless approved. Delegate and advisory areas allow laptops, phones, and tablets only with communications disabled, except when required for medical devices or hearing aids.

Why it matters: The goal is an orderly and non-distracting floor, while limiting outside electronic communication from delegate areas.

Delegate next step: Download or print needed materials before session. Put devices in airplane mode in delegate areas. Do not plan on live cloud access from the floor.

4. Delegate Next Steps

Before convention

- Read Today's Business, Issue 1, pages 14-17, before reading the proposed resolutions. Rules first, then business. Otherwise you are reading the playbook after kickoff.
- Mark all consent-calendar candidates that involve doctrine, bylaws, governance authority, financial outlay, worship practice, pastoral formation, ecclesiastical supervision, or dispute resolution.
- Prepare any amendments or substitute motions in writing. For bylaw or constitutional language, seek CCM review in advance.
- Review floor nomination forms and the nominee pool if any resolution may create positions or require elections.
- Download or print Today's Business, the Workbook, nominee materials, and the Handbook sections you expect to need.

Each morning of convention

- Read the daily Today's Business first, especially revised resolutions, substitute resolutions, proposed amendments, and the consent calendar.
- Circle any item that should be removed from consent or omnibus handling.
- Check whether an amendment you planned has been published or superseded by committee language.
- Note changes in schedule, because Rule 13 and Rule 24 give the chair and President flexibility.

During debate

- Use the microphone kiosk early and accurately: pro, con, motion, point of order, or request for information.
- Speak in two minutes: identify the issue, make one argument, state the requested action.
- If the issue is factual, ask for information. If the issue is procedural, raise a point of order. If the issue is wording, amend.
- Do not repeat what has already been said. A repeated point is not holier because it gets a second vestment.

After each day

- Check minutes for substantive accuracy.
- Submit editorial corrections to the Secretary in writing.
- Track what died, what was referred, what was amended, and what awaits action.
- Pray through the hard business. Convention fatigue is real, and so is the old Adam with a name badge.

5. Motion and Microphone Phrase Cards

Use these as starting language only. The chair or parliamentarian may require exact wording, and bylaw language should be reviewed before being offered.

Need	Possible floor language	Notes
Remove from consent calendar	"Mr. Chairman, I request that Resolution [number] be removed from the consent calendar for separate consideration."	Use when a supposedly routine item needs debate.
Remove from omnibus	"Mr. Chairman, I move to remove Overture [number] from Omnibus [A/B/C/D] and refer it to Floor Committee [number] for action."	Requires majority vote.
Amend a resolution	"Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Resolution [number] by [insert / strike / replace] the words [exact words]."	Use exact written language.
Offer substitute motion	"Mr. Chairman, I move the substitute resolution now provided to the Secretary."	Use only for a whole replacement.
Request information	"Mr. Chairman, I request information from the floor committee: [specific question]."	Use for factual clarification, not argument in question costume.
Point of order	"Mr. Chairman, point of order." Then state the rule concern briefly.	Use for a possible rule violation.
Call the question	"Mr. Chairman, I move the previous question."	Requires two-thirds vote. Do not do this at the end of your own debate speech.
Record votes	"Mr. Chairman, I move that delegates be granted the right to record their votes in the minutes on this resolution."	Majority vote, no debate. Written record due to the Secretary within the stated time.

6. Red-Flag Checklist

A resolution probably deserves separate attention if...

It changes bylaws, creates a new process, directs a board or commission, changes worship or ecclesiastical-supervision expectations, has financial outlay, affects pastoral formation, alters election or nomination procedures, makes broad doctrinal claims, or treats contested facts as settled.

Question	If yes, consider
Does it amend Constitution or Bylaws?	Do not treat as routine. Confirm CCM review and exact wording.
Does it include contested factual claims?	Amend the rationale or ask for clarification before adoption.

Does it bind congregations, districts, workers, boards, commissions, or agencies?	Check authority and unintended effects.
Does it affect local ministry flexibility?	Ask whether the rule serves congregations or centralizes control unnecessarily.
Does it address doctrine or practice?	Test the wording against Scripture, the Confessions, and the Handbook.
Does it send work to another entity?	Ask whether referral includes reporting, timeline, and accountability.
Is it on omnibus or consent calendar?	Determine whether quick action is appropriate or whether the item needs debate.

Harvest Partnership Lens for Procedure

Value lens	Standing-rules question
Spirit's Sending	Does the procedure help the church deliberate for Gospel sending, or only manage institutional anxiety?
Kingdom Focus	Does this rule help delegates ask what serves Christ's mission, not merely what protects a factional win?
Open-Handed Generosity	Are we giving other faithful Lutherans enough room to be heard?
Humility	Are we willing to amend our own side's language when it overreaches?
Trust	Are we using high accountability and low control, or hiding major decisions inside procedural shortcuts?

7. Source Notes

- [1] Today's Business, Issue 1, June 5, 2026, p. 3: identifies the issue as the first of six issues, explains that it includes proposed special standing rules, and notes that later daily issues may include revised resolutions, proposed amendments, substitute resolutions, changes to candidate information, and other official notices.
- [2] Today's Business, Issue 1, pp. 14-17: contains the proposed Convention Standing Rules, including Rules 1-30.
- [3] Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 3: notes the new speaker recognition system in Rule 17 and the option of a daily consent calendar in Rule 10.
- [4] Today's Business, Issue 1, p. 8: notes the possible need for floor nominations if Resolution 4-06 restores the Commission on Worship and creates related elected positions.
- [5] 2023 LCMS Handbook, Bylaw 3.1.1, p. 100: describes the national convention as the principal legislative assembly of the Synod, which amends Constitution and Bylaws, acts on reports and overtures, establishes positions and policies, and provides overall direction and priorities.
- [6] 2023 LCMS Handbook, Article II and Article III, pp. 11-12: anchors Synod's confession in Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions and names the objectives of conserving unity in the true faith, extending Gospel witness, training church workers, mercy, education, resources, evangelical supervision, and protection of rights.
- [7] Scripture frame: 1 Corinthians 14:40, "all things should be done decently and in order." This report uses that as a pastoral frame, not as a claim that every proposed rule is beyond evaluation.

Closing Gospel Frame

Standing rules are servants, not saviors. They can help the church speak in order, listen with patience, amend with precision, and vote with clarity. They cannot raise the dead, forgive sins, or create unity in Christ. Jesus does that by His Word and Spirit. Because Christ is risen indeed, the church can do hard business with repentance, courage, humility, and hope.

8. One-Page Printable Checklist

Before the first session

- Read Standing Rules 1-30.
- Mark Rule 10 consent calendar risks.
- Mark Rule 9 omnibus items that may need removal.
- Prepare amendments in writing.
- Confirm CCM review for bylaw or constitutional amendments.
- Download or print key documents.

Each morning

- Read daily Today's Business.
- Check revised resolutions, substitutes, and amendments.
- Scan the consent calendar.
- Note schedule changes.

At the microphone

- Register at the kiosk with the correct purpose.
- State name, district/entity, and role.
- Use one point in two minutes.
- End with the action you want.

During voting

- Vote only after voting opens.
- Use a valid option number.
- Ask for clarification before voting if the pending question is unclear.
- Track tallies when possible.

End of day

- Check minutes for substantive accuracy.
- Send editorial corrections in writing.
- Record what passed, failed, was referred, or remains pending.
- Pray for wisdom, unity, and faithful witness.