

From: Fellowship National <office@fellowship.ca>
Date: Fri, Sep 19, 2025 at 7:19 AM
Subject: Motion out of Order - September 2025
To: <info@fairviewbaptistchurch.ca>



September 19, 2025

Dear Fellowship Prairie Churches,

We bring greetings to you in the name of Jesus. We trust this letter finds you all experiencing the wonderful grace and mercy of our Lord.

We are writing to inform you that our National President cannot grant the delegates' request that came out of your recent Equip Regional conference (May 1-2, 2025), namely, the motion directing Steve to find a Christian mediation ministry to conduct an investigation of the conflict between three member churches and your Regional Board and Director.

The Fellowship Prairies Leadership Board highlighted for our President and the National Council the sections in your Regional bylaws (Sections 3,5,7,9) outlining the process for conflict resolution. The President only became aware of his name being attached to the motion shortly before the Equip conference took place, we had no opportunity to study the Prairies' bylaws in advance. National Council has concluded that the motions passed on the floor at the Equip Regional Conference are problematic in nature. A Charity lawyer was consulted for clarity and confirmation. No motion can override your bylaws even if the delegates seek to suspend that bylaw itself.

One of the bylaws in question is Section 9.02 (c): "... if the parties are not successful in resolving the dispute through mediation, then the parties agree that the dispute **shall be** settled by arbitration before a single arbitrator, who **shall not** be any one of the mediators The parties agree that all proceedings relating to arbitration **shall be** kept confidential and there **shall be** no disclosure of any kind. The decision of the arbitrator **shall be** final and binding and **shall not** be subject to appeal on a question of fact, Law, or mixed fact and Law."

The wording of the Fellowship Prairies Region's bylaw Section 9.02 (c) confirms that if mediation fails, the parties must move to arbitration. The use of the word "shall" in legal language specifically indicates an obligatory action. In other words, the bylaw **requires** that action; it does not merely suggest or permit it. When mediation fails, the Region and aggrieved member churches are required to move to arbitration. No motion passed by the delegates can dismiss nor circumvent the clear application of your bylaws.

We have sought confirmation of this fact from our own lawyer. He has confirmed in two letters dated June 30 and August 27, 2025 that the motions passed at the recent Equip Conference are problematic. He states, "Therefore, if provincial legislation doesn't say otherwise in overriding the entirety of bylaws or overriding specific provisions of bylaws, disputes are then governed by the bylaws alone, including the provision allowing 'as otherwise agreed upon by the parties to the dispute.' In this case, where provincial legislation does not override bylaw provisions and allow for an alternate process, the motion brought forward at the Regional Conference was in contravention of the bylaws..."

We believe that it is appropriate and legal for this dispute to be resolved through the due process clearly stated in the Prairies' bylaws. Each Prairies church agreed to this process when:

- the church became a member of the Fellowship Prairies Region and agreed to follow the Region's bylaws, and
- all member churches are to enter into a mediation process knowing that the arbitration process will follow if mediation fails.

Mediation failed, and so arbitration should follow.

We send this letter to our beloved member churches of our Prairies' Region with the endorsement of our Fellowship National Council. Our National President also remains committed to find a third-party arbitrator (if you request his support) to arbitrate between each party in question.

Feel free to connect with the President (sjones@fellowship.ca) or our Fellowship National Council chair, Dr. Rev. Jon Stairs (stairsj@templebaptistchurch.ca), in the event you need clarification, or support in finding an arbitrator.

Grace and Peace,



Steven Jones
Fellowship President



Jonathan Stairs
Chair of Fellowship National Council



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