

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS  
of  
LITTLE RIVER UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Adopted May 5, 1955  
as amended through January 2018



**ARTICLE I – NAME**

The name of the Church is *Little River United Church of Christ*.

**ARTICLE II – OBJECT**

The object of this Church is to bind together the followers of Jesus Christ for the purpose of sharing in the worship of God and in making God's will dominant in the lives of people, individually and collectively, especially as that will is set forth in the life, teachings, death and living presence of Jesus Christ. To that end, a program of Christian and missionary education shall be presented for all ages to teach Christ's way and to lead all to the decision to follow Him as the Lord of their lives.

**ARTICLE III – POLITY**

This Church acknowledges Jesus Christ as its head and finds in the Holy Scriptures, interpreted by the Holy Spirit through reason, faith and conscience, its guidance in matters of faith and discipline.

The government of this Church is vested in its members, hereinafter collectively called "the congregation," who exercise the right of control in all its affairs, subject in certain legal matters to Title 57 of the Virginia Code. In accordance with Article IV, Section 14, of the Constitution of Virginia, this Church shall not be incorporated.

While this Church holds to the autonomy of the local church and its independence of all external ecclesiastical control, it accepts the obligations of mutual counsel, comity, and cooperation involved in the free fellowship of the United Church of Christ, and pledges itself to share the aims and work of that fellowship.

## ARTICLE IV – DOCTRINE AND FAITH

This Church recognizes the Bible as the sufficient rule of faith and practice, and holds that living in accordance with the spirit of Jesus Christ is the true test of fellowship. Each member shall have the undisturbed right to interpret the Holy Scriptures and follow the Word of God according to the dictates of the member's own conscience, under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. The following Statement of Faith, therefore, is not a test, but an expression of the spirit in which this Church interprets the Word of God.

*We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:  
You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image, and set before each one the ways of life and death.  
You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.  
You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.  
In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and Risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.  
You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the Church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.  
You call us into your Church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.  
You promise to all who trust you forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm which has no end.  
Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.*

## ARTICLE V – RELIGIOUS SERVICES

SECTION 1, *Services*. Services of public worship shall be held as determined by the Board of Deacons.

SECTION 2, *The Sacraments*. The Sacrament of Communion shall be celebrated at such times as the Pastors or the Board of Deacons shall determine, but not less than six times a year. All persons earnestly seeking to lead a Christian life shall be invited to share. The Sacrament of Baptism for adults and children shall be administered at such times as the Pastors or the Board of Deacons may appoint.

## ARTICLE VI – CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Church shall conduct a program of Christian education through a Church School and such other organizations as may be determined by the Board of Christian Education.

## ARTICLE VII – MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1, *Admission*. Any person desiring to become a member of this Church shall submit an application to a Pastor or the Board of Deacons. Admission shall be by one of the following means:

- a. On confession of faith.
- b. On presentation of a letter of transfer from another church.
- c. On reaffirmation of faith, if a letter is not available.

Persons who desire to actively support this Church, but retain membership in some other church may be admitted as Associate Members. They shall have all the rights and privileges of members.

SECTION 2, *Reception*. A person who accepts the spirit of the Statement of Faith and whose application has been approved by a Pastor or the Board of Deacons shall be received at a worship service or such other time as ordered by the Board of Deacons. Any who are unable to attend in public, may be received by a Pastor. Upon reception, all members shall be given a copy of these Bylaws.

SECTION 3, *Termination*. Church membership may be terminated by one of the following means:

- a. The request of any member for a letter of transfer to another Christian Church may be granted by a Pastor and such action reported to the Board of Deacons and to the Membership Clerk. Alternately, the Membership Clerk shall grant such letter upon approval of the request by the Board of Deacons. Membership shall cease upon issue of the letter. Letters addressed to churches in general shall not be granted.
- b. If a member requests the termination of membership, the Church shall patiently endeavor to secure such member's continuance; but, failing such effort, the request shall be granted.
- c. Members whose addresses have long been unknown or who for a period of one year, in spite of kindly approaches, have not communicated with the Church may, by vote of the Board of Deacons and written report of such action to the congregation at the Annual Meeting, be transferred to the "Inactive List." If, after expiration of one additional year, their addresses are still unknown or they are unwilling to renew their active connection with the Church, their names may, by vote of the Board of Deacons and written report of such action to the congregation at the Annual Meeting, be removed from the roll. Upon the occasion of either report, if there should be objection to the action to transfer to the Inactive List or to removal from the roll, the action will be subject to the will of the congregation.
- d. Should a member become an offense to the Church and to its good name by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, the Church on recommendation of the Board of Deacons may censure, suspend, or terminate the membership of such members by a two-thirds vote at a special meeting; but only after due notice and hearing and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to amendment in accordance with the law of Christ (MATTHEW 18:15-17).

SECTION 4, *Restoration*. Any person whose name has been transferred to the Inactive List may be restored to full membership by vote of the Board of Deacons. Any person whose membership has been terminated may be readmitted by the usual means.

## ARTICLE VIII – CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

SECTION 1, *Annual Meeting*. The Annual Meeting of the Church shall be held on the last Sunday of January unless another date is fixed by the Church Council, to hear the yearly reports of the officers, boards, committees, and organizations; elect officers and members of boards and committees; set up plans for the new year and adopt the budget; transact such business as may come before it.

SECTION 2, *Special Meeting*. Special meetings may be requested by a Pastor, the Moderator, any three officers or board members, or any ten members, and shall be called by the Church Clerk. The nature of the business to be transacted and the time and place of the meeting shall be stated in the call.

### SECTION 3, *Rules and Regulations*.

- a. *Notices*. The call for all congregational meetings shall be issued by the Church Clerk by posting a copy near the main entrance to the Church building at least seven days before the date of the meeting and by either publishing a notice in the Church bulletin or having an announcement made at the regular worship service(s) on the Sunday immediately preceding the meeting.
- b. *Quorum*. A quorum shall consist of fifteen members of the Church, but if at least ten are present the meeting may be adjourned to a fixed date.
- c. *Presiding Officer*. The presiding officer at congregational meetings shall be the Moderator. In the Moderator's absence, a presiding officer shall be elected by the members present.
- d. *Voting*. All members are entitled to vote. Unless otherwise specified herein, all elections and all business questions shall be decided by majority vote of those present and voting.
- e. *Procedural Rules*. Congregational meetings shall be conducted in general conformance with Robert's Rules of Order, except that no motion "to reconsider and have entered on the minutes for action at the next meeting" shall be permitted, and any motion to reconsider must be made at the meeting at which the vote to be reconsidered was taken.
- f. *Qualification for Office*. Church membership is a prerequisite to the holding of elected Church office.

- g. *Official Year.* The fiscal year of the Church shall conform to the calendar year. Unless otherwise specified herein, all officers, boards, and committees shall assume their duties at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting at which they are elected and continue in office until their successors take office.
- h. *Open Meetings.* All meetings of the Church, including meetings of Boards and Committees, shall be open to any member of the Church, except that a Board or Committee may close a meeting, or portion of a meeting, as necessary to protect the privacy of individuals being discussed or interviewed or as the congregation may authorize. Members may be permitted to speak as time and circumstances permit.
- i. *Transparency.* Records of all meetings of the church, including meetings of Boards and Committees, except for closed portions of meetings as authorized above, shall be available to any member of the church. All policies of the church shall be publicly available, including on the website.
- j. *Additional Rules.* The congregation may, by resolution, adopt additional rules for the conduct of Church business, provided they do not conflict with these Bylaws, and provided further that such rules shall automatically terminate at the end of the next Annual Meeting, unless re-adopted at that meeting.

## **ARTICLE IX – OFFICERS**

SECTION 1, *The Senior Pastor* shall be called for an indefinite time by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting. When a vacancy occurs, the Church Council, or a committee appointed by it, after seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and with the cooperation of the Conference Minister of the Central Atlantic Conference and others, shall make a canvass of available ministers, settle upon the one who in their judgment should be called, and propose that person's election at a special meeting.

While the term of the Senior Pastor shall be indefinite, the congregation may at any time, at a special meeting, request the Senior Pastor's resignation with the expectation that it will be presented within 60 days. Likewise, the Senior Pastor shall give 60 days notice in case of a desire to leave voluntarily; but in the case of loss of

ministerial standing on the part of the Senior Pastor, ministerial relations shall cease at once.

The Senior Pastor shall have charge of the spiritual welfare of the Church, with the assistance of the Associate Pastor(s) and the Board of Deacons. The Senior Pastor shall seek to enlist followers of Christ, preach the gospel, administer the sacraments, have responsibility for all services of public worship, and guide the activities of the Church in cooperation with the various officers, boards, and committees. The Senior Pastor shall be *ex officio* an advisory member of all boards and committees.

An Interim Senior Pastor may be employed to fill a vacancy temporarily. The duties, manner of employment, and conditions as to dismissal shall be the same as for the Senior Pastor, except that the employment shall not be for an indefinite term.

SECTION 2, *The Associate Pastor(s)* for general or specialized ministries, as the Church may determine, shall be called in the same manner as the Senior Pastor. Conditions as to term and dismissal shall also be the same.

The Associate Pastor(s) shall perform such duties as determined by the Church, under direction of the Senior Pastor. The Associate Pastor(s) shall act for the Senior Pastor in the Senior Pastor's absence or disability, in conjunction with the Board of Deacons, and as directed by the Senior Pastor.

One or more Interim Associate Pastors may be employed to fill vacancies temporarily. The duties, manner of employment, and conditions of dismissal shall be the same as for an Associate Pastor, except that the employment shall not be for an indefinite term.

SECTION 3, *The Moderator* shall be elected for a term of three years, the first year to be served as Moderator-Elect, the second year as Moderator, and the third year as Past-Moderator. The Moderator shall preside at all meetings of the congregation and the Church Council. In the absence of the Moderator, the Past-Moderator shall serve as Acting Moderator. The Moderator shall be ineligible to hold any other position of Church officer or to chair any board or

committee while in office. After serving one full term, the Moderator shall be ineligible for re-election as Moderator or Moderator-Elect for one year.

SECTION 4, *The Church Clerk* shall be elected for a term of one year, and shall perform the following functions: keep a record of the proceedings of the meetings of the congregation and Church Council; issue notices of congregational meetings; and perform any other duties enumerated in these Bylaws or usually performed by the clerk of an assembly.

SECTION 5, *The Membership Clerk* shall be elected for a term of one year, and shall perform the following functions: Keep a record of the Church membership, together with dates of admission, transfer or death; grant letters of transfer; keep a record of baptisms and marriages; prepare, with the concurrence of the Senior Pastor, the list of Inactive Members, as specified in Section 3 of Article VII, for presentation to the Board of Deacons and perform any other duties enumerated in these Bylaws.

SECTION 6, *The Comptroller* shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees and is responsible for monitoring disbursement of funds. Subject to such limitations as the Board of Trustees or the Council may establish, the Comptroller may authorize the Treasurer to make disbursements.

SECTION 7, *The Treasurer* shall be elected for a term of one year and shall have charge of all moneys of the church except as otherwise voted by the Congregation. Under the general supervision of the Board of Trustees, the Treasurer: (a) shall implement routine procedures for receiving funds for the operating budget and for designated funds, for recording and acknowledging contributions to the Church, and for reporting the financial condition of the church; (b) shall keep accounts of all receipts and disbursements and shall pay all bills approved by the Board of Trustees or the Comptroller; (c) shall have charge of the bank accounts, the invested funds, and the endowments of the Church and the income therefrom; and (d) shall also maintain all records necessary for employee benefit plans and Federal and state tax requirements.

SECTION 8, *An Assistant Treasurer* may be appointed by the Board of Trustees for a term of one year, to work with and assist the Treasurer, and to act for the Treasurer in the Treasurer's absence. In the absence of an Assistant Treasurer, the Chair of the Board of Trustees shall act for the Treasurer in the Treasurer's absence.

SECTION 9, *The Receiving Financial Secretary* may be either a member of the paid staff or a member of the Congregation appointed by the Board of Trustees. The Receiving Financial Secretary shall process and record all revenues consisting of cash and checks and deposit the funds into the bank under procedures established by the Finance Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees. All work done by the Receiving Financial Secretary up through the point of preparing a traceable permanent record shall be done together with one other unrelated person.

SECTION 10, *The Recording Financial Secretary* may be either a member of the paid staff or a member of the Congregation appointed by the Board of Trustees. The Recording Financial Secretary shall be the person principally responsible for recording financial information (e.g., pledge, budget, accounts payable, electronic funds transfer, etc.), except that involving receipt of cash revenues under procedures established by the Finance Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 11, *The Historian and Archivist* shall be elected for a term of one year and shall keep a record of the historical events of the Church, together with a file of historical documents.

SECTION 12, *Delegates* to meetings of the Central Atlantic Conference, Potomac Association, ecclesiastical councils, and similar bodies shall be, unless otherwise provided for by the congregation: the Moderator; the presiding officers, or other representatives, of the Boards of Deacons, Outreach and Social Justice, and Trustees; and delegates-at-large elected for a term of one year.

## ARTICLE X – BOARDS

SECTION 1, *The Board of Deacons* shall consist of eighteen members elected for a term of three years, six being elected at each Annual Meeting. Deacons shall be ordained for life, but their service

on the Board shall be for the term for which they are elected. After serving two full terms, they shall be ineligible for re-election for one year.

The Deacons shall cooperate with the Pastors in the spiritual welfare of the Church. They shall assist in the responsibilities of worship, including the preparation and serving of the communion, and provision of the supply of the pulpit in case of a vacancy and in the absence of the Pastors; they shall promote the concerns of evangelism and fellowship, and shall be responsible for special care and ministries in the parish. They shall perform the duties prescribed in Article VII of these Bylaws in connection with Church Membership.

SECTION 2, *The Board of Christian Education* shall consist of twelve members elected for a term of three years, four being elected at each Annual Meeting. After serving two full terms, they shall be ineligible for re-election for one year. The Board shall have supervision of the educational program of the Church. It shall recommend its financial requirements for inclusion in the Church budget, and shall apportion the funds allocated.

SECTION 3, *The Board of Outreach and Social Justice* shall consist of twelve members whose term shall be three years, four being elected at each Annual Meeting. After serving two full terms, they shall be ineligible for re-election for one year. The Board shall oversee the outreach ministry of the Church, shall organize the outreach to the local community, nation, and the world, and shall make recommendations for missionary apportionments and the allocation of benevolences. The Board shall promote social justice by engaging the congregation in meaningful dialog, mission work, and faith-based action. The Board shall also oversee the use of the income from the Thelma Morris Fund, which shall be used to pay the costs of participation, by members or friends of the church, in mission projects, or for such other purposes as the congregation may authorize.

SECTION 4, *The Board of Commonwealth Trustees* shall consist of three members, each appointed for an indefinite term. The congregation may, at any congregational meeting, nominate candidates to fill any vacancies. The congregation may also nominate candidates to replace any or all of the existing Trustees, provided

notice of such action was included in the call of the meeting. Once nominations have been made by the congregation, any Church officer is authorized to petition the Circuit Court of Fairfax County, Virginia, for the appointment of such nominees as Trustees in accordance with Section 57-8 of the Virginia Code. The congregation may also authorize others to submit such nominations to the Court on behalf of the Church.

In accordance with statute, the Commonwealth Trustees shall hold title to all Church property, including real estate, buildings, and the contents and appurtenances thereof. They shall not have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or in any way encumber the Church property, except when so authorized by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a congregational meeting; however, such restrictions shall not apply to the transfer, purchase, or sale of relatively minor Church property transferred in the normal course of the business of the Church.

SECTION 5, *The Board of Trustees* shall consist of twelve members elected for a term of three years, four being elected at each Annual Meeting. After serving two full terms, they shall be ineligible for re-election for one year.

The Trustees shall manage all the Church property to which title is held by the Commonwealth Trustees. They shall prepare the annual budget for presentation to the congregation and shall manage the financial affairs of the Church, except as otherwise provided for in these Bylaws. The Board of Trustees shall appoint the Comptroller and provide direction to that officer.

## **ARTICLE XI – CHURCH COUNCIL AND LEADERSHIP**

Responsibility and authority for ongoing church leadership shall be vested in the Officers, Boards, and Committees of the Church as provided for in the By-Laws. The Congregational officers and the chairpersons of the Boards and Committees and three Members-at-Large, shall constitute a Church Council, whose function is to consider the entire task of the Church and work cooperatively with the Pastor(s) to enable, coordinate, and implement the Church's mission and vision. At large members shall be elected by the congregation for two year terms. After serving three full terms, the Members-at Large shall be

ineligible for re-election for one year.

The Council will have two Boards to accomplish this, a Governance Board to provide an administrative and policy framework for the work of the Church and a Ministry Board to coordinate and implement the Church's programs and ministries.

The Governance Board is responsible for developing and monitoring administrative and operational policies. The Governance Board shall consist of the Moderator, the Past Moderator, the Moderator Elect, the Church Clerk, the Treasurer, the Chair of the Board of Trustees, and three Members-at-Large. The Moderator is the chair of the Governance Board and the Senior Pastor serves as an *ex-officio* member.

The Ministry Board shall be responsible for coordination and oversight of the ministries, programs, and activities of the church in order to further the Church's stated mission and vision. The Ministry Board shall consist of the Senior Pastor, the presiding officers of the Boards of Deacons, Christian Education, and Outreach and Social Justice, and also of the Stewardship, Music, and Communications Committees. The Senior Pastor shall chair the Ministry Board and the Moderator shall serve as an *ex-officio* member.

The Council shall meet as a whole at least three times annually - to review the proposed budget to be presented to the Congregation for approval at the Annual Meeting, to discuss an overall plan for the upcoming program year, and to evaluate church programs and operations late in the program year. The Governance Board or the Ministry Board may also call a meeting of the entire Council.

The Council, or the Governance and Ministry Boards individually, may operate in a manner to best accomplish other duties specified for the Council in these By-Laws.

The Council shall fill any vacancies on the Nominations and Appointments Committee and shall submit a slate of nominees for such Committee at the Annual Meeting.

## ARTICLE XII – COMMITTEES

SECTION 1, *The Nominations and Appointments Committee* shall consist of six members elected for a term of two years, three being elected at each Annual Meeting. Members may be re-elected for one additional term. After serving two full terms, they shall be ineligible for re-election for three years.

The Committee shall prepare a ballot nominating one person for each position to be filled at the Annual Meeting, except their own successors, and shall have the list of nominees distributed with the notice of the meeting. Ten members of the Church may make similar nominations. In addition, nominations may be made from the floor and names may be written in on the ballot.

The Committee shall fill any vacancies, unless otherwise provided for in these Bylaws; such interim appointments shall be reported to the congregation and shall complete the unexpired term of the position vacated.

SECTION 2, *The Stewardship Committee* shall consist of nine members elected for a term of three years, three being elected at each Annual Meeting. After serving two full terms, they shall be ineligible for re-election for one year. The Committee shall seek to inculcate the ideals of Christian stewardship, shall explain the financial program of the Church, and shall obtain pledges to cover the annual budget. The Committee shall also inform members of appropriate types of memorials and special gifts, encourage such giving, and accept or reject gifts on behalf of the Church, referring questionable cases, together with their recommendations, to the congregation. It shall acknowledge gifts, recognize donors, and maintain records of donors and gifts, including their use and disposition. Unless otherwise provided for by the donor, all unrestricted memorials and special gifts, or the proceeds from the sale thereof, shall be placed in an endowment fund, together with such bequests, planned, deferred or outright gifts as may be made to the Endowment Fund, the purpose, governance and operational procedures of which are defined by the Endowment Fund Policy.

SECTION 3, *The Endowment Fund Committee* shall consist of

five members elected for a term of three years, two being elected at each Annual Meeting for two years, one being elected every third year. After serving two full terms, they shall be ineligible for re- election for one year. The committee shall manage the Endowment Fund, recommend disbursement of its income and growth, and carry out related responsibilities and duties as outlined in the Endowment Fund Policy of Little River United Church of Christ.

SECTION 4, *The Music Committee* shall consist of six members elected for a term of three years, two being elected at each Annual Meeting. After serving two full terms, they shall be ineligible for re- election for one year. The Committee shall have general supervision of the music of the Church in cooperation with the Board of Deacons. The Committee shall select a choir director, organist, and pianist, as required.

SECTION 5, *The Audit Committee* shall consist of two members elected for a term of two years, one being elected at each Annual Meeting. The Committee shall examine the accounts of the Treasurer, and any Board, Committee, or Organization maintaining a separate treasury; attest to their correctness at the Annual Meeting; and report to the Board of Trustees on the adequacy of the method and procedures used.

SECTION 6, *The Arts Committee* shall consist of nine members, elected for a term of three years, three being elected at each Annual Meeting. The Committee shall promote the arts within the life of the Church as a way to more fully appreciate the glory of God's creation.

They shall encourage artistic expression by members and friends of the Church, and through the arts, provide a more stimulating environment within the Church.

SECTION 7, *The Safe Church Committee* shall consist of three members appointed by the Moderator, plus the Senior Pastor. The Committee shall implement and oversee the Congregation's Safe Church Policy for the purpose of ensuring a caring and secure environment for all who participate in the life of the church.

SECTION 8, *The Finance Committee* shall consist of the

Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer, the Comptroller, representatives of the Board of Trustees and the Endowment Fund Committee, and one or more members at large approved by the Council. The Committee is responsible for establishing and reviewing the Church's financial policies and practices and for overseeing implementation of those policies and practices.

The Finance Committee reports jointly to the Council and to the Board of Trustees. The Committee recommends financial policies to the Council. The Committee may establish details of financial practices that are consistent with the approved policies. The Committee is then responsible to the Board of Trustees for overseeing the financial policies and practices.

SECTION 9, *The Communications Committee* shall consist of three members elected by the Congregation for a term of three years, one being elected at each Annual Meeting, plus at-large members with particular communications skills and a representative of the Evangelism Committee of the Board of Deacons. After serving two full terms, elected members shall be ineligible for re-election for one year. The at-large members shall be approved by the Ministry Board. Working collaboratively with staff and others, the Committee shall seek to provide Little River United Church of Christ audiences, including members, friends, staff, and the wider community, with consistent and comprehensive information about all aspects of church life. Understanding that the diverse audiences require diverse communication, the Committee shall oversee the use of many communication channels while striving to maintain a consistent message and brand identity for the church.

SECTION 10, *The Personnel Committee* shall consist of three members elected for a three-year term each, with one person being elected each year at the annual meeting. After serving two full terms, they shall be ineligible for re-election for one year. The committee is responsible for reviewing and recommending personnel policies, and assisting LRUCC members, lay staff, boards and committees in the administration and implementation of the personnel policies. The Committee shall report to the Governance Board.

SECTION 11, *Sub-Committees*. The various Boards and Committees may appoint sub-committees for special purposes and

functions under their cognizance.

SECTION 12, *Special Committees*. As needs arise, the congregation or Church Council may appoint temporary committees for special projects. The life of any such committee shall be for the duration of the project or until dismissed.

### **ARTICLE XIII – AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS**

All organizations connected with the Church and using its property, facilities, and equipment are regarded as integral parts of the Church and under its general supervision. All such organizations must be approved by the Church Council and shall present a report at the Annual Meeting, but this shall not apply to organizations, not otherwise connected with the Church, using the Church property facilities and equipment in accordance with rules and procedures established by the Board of Trustees.

### **ARTICLE XIV – AMENDMENTS**

These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote at any Annual Meeting or special meeting, provided that the proposed amendment shall have been stated in the call of the meeting.