

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS.

Ecclesiastical bodies act under the ordinary rules for the transaction of business in deliberative assemblies. These are collated in manuals, like those of Cushing and Roberts, and are a kind of common law. It is to be assumed that they are in force unless special rules or by-laws interfere.

Permanent organizations, holding stated meetings, commonly have a prescribed method for entering on business. If the officer whose duty it is to call the meeting to order is not present, any member can do it, but the oldest member present may consider that the duty devolves on him.

ECCLESIASTICAL TRANSACTIONS.

Formation of a Church.

When several persons desire to form themselves into a church, they may appoint a committee to call a council to which the question shall be submitted. They should present to the council their reasons for forming a new church, among which should be their ability to sustain stated worship, the creed which they propose to adopt, and the covenant into which they propose to enter. If the council approve the movement it can constitute the church and admit it to Christian fellowship. The following is a proper form for a letter missive on such an occasion:

Place and date To the Congregational Church in

Beloved Brethren:—The Great Head of the Church having inclined a number of believers here to think it their duty to associate themselves as a Congregational Church, they request you by pastor and delegate to meet in council at [house of meeting designated] in [locality designated] on the day of 19.... at [hour of day] to review the action which has already been taken, and to consider the expediency of the further action proposed. Should you deem it expedient you