

The **secretary** will be informed about the program and the total involvement of the local unit in order to perform the responsibilities assigned to her and to assist the president.

She will:

- a. Keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the unit and its leadership team and give notice of these meetings.
- b. Serve as custodian of all records and official documents.
- c. Sign all official, legal and financial documents, making certain each is properly dated.
- d. Keep an accurate roll of membership.
- e. Send a list of elected leaders of the unit, including addresses, ZIP codes, telephone numbers and e-mails, to the secretary of the district organization immediately upon their election and interim changes, and send the name of the new president to the resource center: United Methodist Women Mission Resources.
- f. Serve on the leadership team and other committees as necessary.

Source:

United Methodist Women Bylaws
as written in the

*united methodist women
handbook 2013-2016*



How to write minutes in the meeting

It is essential that minutes are recorded accurately. This not only serves as a reminder of issues that need to be followed up but also prevents arguments about previous decisions. Minutes are also a guide for the secretary and chairperson when drawing up the agenda for the next meeting.

Minutes help the organisation to learn from its past failures and successes. This is done when the secretary reflects on the minutes of the past year when drawing up an annual report.

There are three aspects to taking good minutes:

1. Listening

This is a very important skill to develop. You must not only listen to what is being said but you have to ensure that you understand as well.

2. Taking notes

Write down only the main points and the decisions taken. It is impossible to write down everything that is being said.

- Always try to identify the main points

What is the main aim of the discussion?

What information is important?

Use your own words. If you do this you will find that your minutes are more accurate and complete than if you try to jot down everything a speaker says.

- Pay special attention to decisions. If necessary, ask for the decisions to be repeated.
- Ask for clarification. Do not hesitate to stop the meeting if you are not clear about any decisions or issues being discussed.

3. Writing the minutes

The following information should be included:

- Nature of meeting, date, time, venue
- Names of those present
- Names of visitors
- Apologies
- Summaries of decisions and discussions

This includes work to be followed up and who have taken responsibility for certain tasks. The minutes should be written neatly in a special minute book or file; avoid jotting down minutes on scraps of paper. The book or file should be kept safely and always available for consultation at any time.

Source: <http://www.etu.org.za/toolbox/docs/building/webmeetings.html>

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Develop Skills - Minutes

Minutes are a part of the history of your organization. Taking accurate and useful minutes is **one of your most important responsibilities**. You can practice and hone the skill of writing minutes throughout your term of office. In addition, you might purchase the book *The Art of Taking Minutes* by Delores Dochterman Benson. It is available on Amazon in paperback and Kindle formats. It is a very good reference and resource book for secretaries.

Ms. Benson states that taking minutes will be easier by following these suggestions:

- Use the agenda as a framework.
- Choose a style for the minutes: formal, modified formal, or informal. Style depends on how the president and attendees follow parliamentary procedure and rules of order.
 - + A formal agenda may list the following items of business: Attendance, Call to Order, Announcement of Quorum, Minutes of Previous Meeting, Treasurer's Report, Committee Reports, Old Business, New Business, Adjournment.
 - + An informal agenda may have the following items: Welcome, Minutes of Previous Meeting, Treasurer's Report, Announcements, Adjournment.
- At the beginning of the meeting note the following: the time presence of a quorum, names of those present and absent, and opening remarks of presiding officer.
- Motions must be recorded exactly as stated. A motion is a formal proposal made by a member of the group, seconded by another member, and passed or defeated by a vote. List the names of those making and seconding motions.
- Be sure that speakers who are presenting reports provide you with copies. In the minutes you can refer to these reports by saying, "The speaker's report is attached and becomes a part of the minutes."
- Write minutes in formal form as soon as possible after the meeting.

Remember: Always head minutes with the name of the group, place of meeting, and date. Note persons present and absent Write in third person.

Record actions, not opinion: State motions in full, including maker of motion, action taken, and passed or failed. Do not include all discussion, but do include sufficient discussion to clarify the action taken.

Never hesitate to ask the maker of a motion to put the motion in writing to provide you with an exact wording of the motion.

Source: Virginia Conference United Methodist Women Annual Meeting
Officers' Training for Secretaries



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United Methodist Communications
<http://www.umcom.org/learn/privacy-and-permissions>

United Methodist of the Dunes in Grand Haven, MI
<http://umcdunes.org/media/copyrightprivacy-policies-4-ways-you-can-help-us-avoid-lawsuits-and-fines/>

Copyright Guidelines for Churches
http://leaderresources.org/sites/default/files/LR_Copyright_Guidelines_010711.pdf

A Resource from LeaderResources www.LeaderResources.org

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ISBN: 978-1-940182-24-7

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Photos by Paul Jeffrey, missionary and photojournalist for the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church and senior correspondent for **response** magazine of United Methodist Women. The photos reflect the places and work of The United Methodist Church and its ecumenical partners in the United States and around the world.

The Program Book is produced by the Communications Department of United Methodist Women National Office. Program contributors are named at the end of each program.

Printed in the United States of America.

