

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF TALLAHASSEE

2810 North Meridian Road
Tallahassee, FL 32312

BYLAWS
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ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this society shall be the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tallahassee, Florida, Inc.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tallahassee is to be a liberal religious presence that supports individual spiritual quests and service to others in a community of open hearts, minds, and doors.

ARTICLE III. DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION

This church shall be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association and of the appropriate Unitarian Universalist regional organizations.

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP

A. Requirements for Membership

Any person eighteen years old or older may become and remain a member of this church if he or she is in sympathy with its purposes and programs, has made a recorded financial contribution for the current fiscal year, and has signed the membership book or other specified form. The president may waive the requirement for a recorded financial contribution for the current fiscal year. It is especially understood that membership is open to all persons who meet the requirements outlined above, regardless of race, color, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, or national origin. Members of the church are alternatively referred to as the *Congregation*.

B. Requirements for Youth Membership

Any person younger than eighteen years old may enroll as a youth member and shall be encouraged to make a recorded financial contribution.

C. The Right to Vote; Qualified Members.

The right to vote at meetings of the Congregation shall be reserved to members eighteen years old or older who have been members for a minimum of thirty days. In these bylaws such individuals are designated as *Qualified Members*. The number of Qualified Members shall be used as the basis for determining whether a quorum is present.

D. Determination of Membership Status

The president of the Congregation may at any time delete a member from the roster of the church if the member has requested that his or her name be removed, if the member has moved from the Tallahassee area, if the member has died, or if the member has not made a financial contribution or received a waiver. If possible, the president shall send written notice of the action to such member.

E. The Membership Roll

The Executive Board shall confirm the roll of members of the church within six months of the beginning of the fiscal year.

ARTICLE V. EXECUTIVE BOARD

A. Composition

The Executive Board of the church shall consist of ten voting members: president, president-elect, immediate past president, secretary, vice president for finance, vice president for religious education, vice president for management, vice president for worship, vice president for social justice, and vice president for church community. The Minister, if a minister is in place, shall be a non-voting ex-officio member.

B. Election of Members of the Executive Board

Procedures for election of members of the Executive Board are described in Article VII, Section B.

C. Terms of Office of Members of the Executive Board

1. The president, the president-elect, and the immediate past president shall each serve for one year. The terms of office of the other members of the Executive Board shall be two years. Terms of these latter members shall be staggered, with the secretary and two members elected in one year and the other four members in the alternate year. A president-elect shall be elected each year; the previous president-elect shall automatically succeed to the position of president, and the previous president shall become immediate past president.

2. Except for the president and the president-elect, members of the Board may be re-elected for a second consecutive term, but not a third consecutive term in a particular office. Any Board member may be elected to any number of non-consecutive terms.

3. The Executive Board, by an affirmative vote of eight members, may waive the two-term limit for making an interim appointment or for authorizing nomination by the regular nominating procedure for a position on the Executive Board. This waiver shall be valid for one time only and must be renewed for a succeeding appointment or nomination. At any one time no more than two positions shall be filled under the waiver process. The Board shall follow the procedures in Article V, Section E.3 below for interim appointment and in Article VI, E and in Article VII, B for nomination and election.

D. Eligibility for Membership on the Executive Board

Before election or appointment to the Executive Board, a candidate must have been a member of this church for a minimum period of one year. The Executive Board by an affirmative vote of eight members may waive this requirement.

E. Responsibilities of the Executive Board

1. The Executive Board shall set policies and shall oversee the property of the church, the conduct of the business of the church, and the fulfillment of the purposes of the church. It shall review the performance of the staff of the church at least once a year.

2. The Executive Board shall annually meet with the Minister and the Committee on the Ministry to discern the Congregation's leadership needs and to identify specific leadership goals and objectives for the Board, the Minister, the Committee on the Ministry, and other groups. An annual assessment of progress on those goals and objectives shall be facilitated by the Committee on the Ministry as specified in Article VI, Section B.

3. The Executive Board shall establish and disband such committees as it deems necessary in addition to those committees specified in Article VI, Section A., and shall detail the term and responsibility of each committee as specified in Article VI.

4. The Executive Board shall make interim appointments to any vacancies in elected positions that occur before expiration of the normal term of office.

5. The Executive Board shall recommend for adoption by the Qualified Members of the church an asking budget and a final annual budget which shall be presented at separate regularly scheduled meetings of the membership, as outlined in Article VII, Section A.

6. The Executive Board shall be responsible for development and revision of a Manual of Policies and Procedures. The Manual shall detail the responsibilities of individual members of the Board, the composition and responsibilities of the committees of the church, and shall include such other matters as are necessary or desirable to define the organization of the church and to conduct the business and implement the programs of the church. Changes to the Manual of Policies and Procedures shall require an affirmative vote by at least eight members of the Executive Board. Within three months of the beginning of the fiscal year the Executive Board shall make copies of a revised Manual available to the Congregation.

7. The Executive Board shall not have the authority to purchase or dispose of any real estate nor shall it have the authority to enter into any contract or authorize any expenditure that exceeds the budgeted amount by ten percent (10%) or more without action by the Qualified Members of the church at a meeting called as provided in these bylaws.

8. Concerns that affect the ministerial-congregation relationship that are brought to the Executive Board shall usually be referred by the Board to the Committee on the Ministry for appropriate assessment and response pursuant to Article VI, Section B.

F. Meetings of the Executive Board

1. The Executive Board shall have a scheduled meeting at least once each month.

2. A special meeting may be called by the president or upon request of three voting members of the Board. All members of the Board shall be notified of the meeting and of the business to be discussed at least three days prior to the meeting. This time interval may be waived upon agreement of two-thirds of the voting members of the Board.

3. Except for special meetings held on limited notice, the date, time, and place for all meetings of the Executive Board shall be announced to the Congregation at least one week in advance of the meeting.

4. A quorum for a meeting of the Executive Board shall be six voting members of the Board.

5. The Executive Board may elect to go into closed session to discuss sensitive matters concerning an individual member, supporting friend, visitor, staff person, or the Minister, or to meet with legal counsel.

6. Any action taken at meetings held on limited notice or in executive session shall be ratified at the next scheduled meeting of the Board, as provided in Article V, Section F.1.

7. Except for closed sessions (Article V, Section F.5 above), members of the church may attend all meetings of the Executive Board as observers. Members of the church may address the Board, provided they have in advance made a request to the president or to the presiding officer to be placed on the agenda for the meeting and have identified the topic to be presented.

G. Responsibilities of Individual Members of the Executive Board

1. The President

The president shall preside at all business meetings of the church and of the Executive Board. The president, with advice and consent of the Board, shall assign responsibilities to members of the Board for oversight of specific committees and for managing specific areas and activities necessary for carrying out the business of the church.

2. The President-Elect

The president-elect shall serve as president pro tempore during absence of the president. The president-elect shall perform such other duties as are specified by the Executive Board. In the absence of both the president and the president-elect, the other members of the Board shall select a president pro tempore.

3. The Immediate Past President

The immediate past president shall have the responsibilities specified by the Executive Board.

4. The Secretary

The secretary shall keep an accurate record of all decisions made at business meetings of the membership and at meetings of the Executive Board. The secretary shall assume such other responsibilities as are specified by the Board.

5. The Vice President for Finance

The vice president for finance shall serve as chair of the Finance Committee (Article VI, Section C) and shall assume such other responsibilities as are specified by the Executive Board.

6. The Vice President for Religious Education

The vice president for religious education shall be responsible for all religious education programs of the church.

7. The Vice President for Management

The vice president for management shall be responsible for maintenance of the physical properties of the church and shall assume such other responsibilities as are specified by the Executive Board.

8. The Vice President for Worship.

The vice president for worship shall be responsible for committees and activities involving planning worship, including music, and shall assume such other responsibilities as are specified by the Executive Board.

9. The Vice President for Social Justice.

The vice president for social justice shall be responsible for the committees devoted to social justice issues and shall assume such other responsibilities as are specified by the Executive Board.

10. The Vice President for Church Community

The vice president for church community shall be responsible for the committees devoted to creating and maintaining a sense of community in our Congregation and shall assume such other responsibilities as are specified by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VI. CHURCH COMMITTEES.

A. Method of Establishing Committees

These bylaws describe the responsibilities and the membership of the Committee on the Ministry, the Finance Committee, the Endowment Fund Committee, and the Nominating Committee. The Executive Board has the exclusive authority to establish additional committees or disband them and to specify their responsibilities. Each additional committee is to be under the oversight of a designated member of the Executive Board, who shall have responsibility for appointing the chairs of the committees under his or her oversight. Only persons who have been a member of the Congregation for a year or more can be appointed as chair of a committee.

B. Committee on the Ministry

1. Responsibilities

a. The Committee shall be responsible for educating itself about ministry in general, for monitoring and nurturing all aspects of the church's ministry, for working with the Minister, the Executive Board, and the Congregation to develop and realize a vision of shared ministry, and for making regular reports to the Board on the state of the church's ministry.

b. The Committee shall seek to promote and facilitate relationships between the Minister and the Congregation. The Committee shall not be an advocate for either the Congregation or the Minister.

c. The Committee shall listen to persons with concerns affecting the ministerial-congregation relationship that may threaten the health of that relationship and that cannot be resolved among the concerned parties. The Committee shall work cooperatively with the Minister and the concerned parties toward an appropriate response to such concerns in light of the Minister's calling and the Congregation's values, mission statement, and understanding of right relations. The Committee shall advise the Executive Board on such matters.

d. The Committee, in consultation with the Minister, shall each year develop and recommend to the Executive Board the compensation package for the Minister pursuant to the guidelines of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

e. The Committee, in consultation with the Minister, shall each year recommend to the Executive Board any appropriate modifications to the Congregation's covenant and working agreement with the Minister pursuant to Article IX, Section E.

f. The Committee shall support the Minister in ensuring that s/he has sufficient personal and collegial support mechanisms outside the Congregation.

g. The Committee shall work with the Minister in planning for his or her continuing education and in planning for sabbatical leave or other professional or spiritual development. The Committee shall advocate implementation of such plans to the Executive Board and to the Congregation.

h. The Committee, in consultation with the Minister, shall develop and recommend to the Executive Board a process for annually assessing the progress of the church leadership in achieving the leadership goals and objectives established pursuant to Article V, Section E.

i. The Committee, in consultation with the Minister, shall develop and recommend to the Executive Board a process for conducting an overall assessment of each aspect of the ministerial-congregational relationship at intervals to be specified by the Board.

2. Meetings

The Committee shall meet at least monthly or more frequently if so specified by the Executive Board or by the Committee itself. The Committee may meet in closed session to hear the concerns of individuals who wish to address the Committee, or at the request of the Minister to discuss matters concerning an individual member, friend, visitor, or staff person.

3. Membership

a. The Committee shall consist of three members selected for staggered three-year terms. Members shall be appointed by the Executive Board using a procedure to be specified in the Manual of Policies and Procedures.

b. Members should be individuals who have the confidence of both the Minister and the Congregation. Before appointment to the Committee, a candidate must have been a member of this church for a minimum period of one year immediately prior to appointment. No individual should serve on the Committee and on the Executive Board at the same time. Committee members may be appointed for no more than two consecutive terms.

c. The Executive Board by an affirmative vote of eight members may waive these membership requirements as appropriate and necessary.

C. Finance Committee

1. Responsibilities.

a. The Committee shall be responsible for monitoring the financial resources of the church and shall arrange for an annual audit of the financial records of the church.

b. The Committee shall have responsibility for preparing the annual budget for presentation to the Executive Board before presentation to the Congregation.

c. The Committee shall oversee the planning and conduct of the annual canvass.

d. The Committee shall assume such other responsibilities as are assigned by the Executive Board.

e. The Committee shall make all financial reports available to the Congregation.

f. The Committee shall make recommendations to the Board concerning finances of the church.

2. Membership

The Committee shall be chaired by the vice president for finance and shall include the treasurer and at least four other Qualified Members of the church.

D. Endowment Fund Committee

1. Responsibilities

a. The Committee shall be responsible for managing the endowment fund of the Church. It shall have the authority to invest endowment funds, including authority to purchase and sell stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and other similar financial instruments. It shall not engage in real estate investments.

b. The Committee shall present an annual report to the Finance Committee, to the Executive Board, and to the Congregation on the status of the endowment fund at dates specified by the Executive Board. It shall present such other reports as may be specified by the Executive Board.

2. Membership

The Committee shall consist of three members appointed for three-year staggered terms. The incoming member shall be appointed at the beginning of the calendar year. A member of the Committee may serve no more than two consecutive terms, except for a member who has served for fewer than two years as an interim appointment. Members of the Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Board from a list of candidates prepared by the Finance Committee.

E. Nominating Committee

1. Responsibilities

The Committee shall prepare a slate of candidates for any position that is to be filled by vote of the Congregation. This includes the Executive Board and the positions on the successor Nominating Committee. Nominations shall also be made for the unexpired portion of an interim appointment if the unexpired portion is for one year or more. Names of nominees shall be presented to the Congregation at least two weeks before the time designated for the election.

2. Membership

The Committee shall consist of four elected members who shall serve two-year terms and one appointed member. Two members shall be elected each year on the same date as for the election of officers. To be eligible to serve on the Nominating Committee an individual shall have been a member of the church for at least one year. The chair of the Committee shall be one of the continuing members, selected by vote of the Committee. Each year the Committee shall select an individual who has previously been a president of the church to serve as the appointed member of the Committee.

ARTICLE VII. MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERSHIP, ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A. Annual Meetings

Qualified Members shall meet annually in the spring on dates specified by the Executive Board. There shall be a meeting to adopt an asking budget and a subsequent meeting to elect officers, to elect members of the Nominating Committee, and to adopt a final budget. Officers may be elected and the budget may be adopted at separate meetings.

B. Procedures for Election of Officers

1. The Nominating Committee shall present the slate of nominees that it has previously announced. (Article VI, Section E.1)
2. Any Qualified Member of the Congregation may present a nomination from the floor. The nominee must meet the qualifications for the designated office and must have consented to the nomination.
3. For each office having more than one nominee, election shall be by written ballot and shall require a majority of those voting. To achieve a majority vote may require more than one ballot.

C. Special Elections

The Executive Board may call special meetings of the membership for elections for other positions, as required. Election shall follow the procedures outlined in Article VII, Section B.

D. Special Meetings

Except as specified in Article IX, Section F, special meetings of the membership may be called by the president, upon request of at least three members of the Executive Board, or upon request in writing by at least five percent (5%) of the Qualified Members. The purpose for the meeting shall be clearly specified in the notice of the meeting. The business of the meeting shall be limited to the subject(s) specified in the notice of the meeting.

E. Notification of Meetings

Notice of all meetings of the membership shall be given in writing to Qualified Members of the church at least fourteen and not more than forty days in advance of the meeting. Action taken at a meeting for which proper notice has not been given shall be void.

F. Quorum

Unless otherwise specified, a quorum shall consist of twenty-five percent of the Qualified Members. Proxies shall not be permitted.

ARTICLE VIII. FINANCES

A. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the church shall be from July 1 through June 30. Terms of office of elected officers and terms of appointed positions shall coincide with the fiscal year unless otherwise specified in these bylaws.

B. Management of Contributed Funds and Gifts

1. The contributed funds and gifts referred to in this section are other than the endowment fund described in Article X.

2. All contributed funds shall be managed and used within the purpose and intent of the donor. The church, as represented by the Executive Board, may decline a donation whose purpose or intent is not in accord with the policies or the mission of the church.

C. Borrowing Money, Purchase or Sale of Property

Any action involving the borrowing of money or the purchase or sale of real property must be approved by a two-thirds vote of those Qualified Members present at a duly

called membership meeting. The quorum for such purpose shall be forty percent of the Qualified Members.

D. The Treasurer

The treasurer shall be appointed by the Executive Board for a specific term.

The treasurer shall keep a record of all monies and other property of the church and shall disburse the same under direction of the Executive Board. The treasurer shall render a monthly statement of the finances of the church to the Executive Board. The treasurer shall render an annual financial report to the Congregation as specified by law. The full treasurer's reports shall be made available for inspection by members of the church.

The Board shall appoint one or more assistant treasurers to assist the treasurer.

ARTICLE IX. MINISTRY

A. Decision to Search for a Minister

The decision to search for a settled or interim minister or a minister having another special classification shall be made on recommendation of the Executive Board and by an affirmative vote of a majority of the Qualified Members of the church at a meeting called for such purpose.

B. Interim Minister or Other Type of Minister

Procedures for appointing an interim minister or a minister having another special classification shall follow those specified by the Unitarian Universalist Association to the extent that those procedures are consistent with these bylaws.

C. Procedures for Calling a Settled Minister

1. Procedures for appointing a settled minister shall follow those specified by the Unitarian Universalist Association to the extent that those procedures are consistent with these bylaws.

2. A settled minister shall be a person in fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association.

3. When the Congregation has voted to conduct a search for a settled minister, a specially constituted Settled Minister Search Committee of seven members shall be established to conduct the search. Three members shall be appointed by the Executive Board and four shall be elected by the Qualified Members of the church under the procedures of Article VII, Section B. The members of the Committee shall elect a chair. This committee shall be responsible to the Congregation and shall report regularly on its progress to the Congregation and the Executive Board. Meetings of the Committee shall be held in closed session with the exception of specially-designated sessions when members of the Congregation may be invited to converse with the Committee. The

identity of all pre-candidates shall be held in strict confidence by the Committee pursuant to UUA policies. The candidate selected by the committee shall be announced to the Congregation in conformance with UUA policies and procedures.

4. A settled minister shall be recommended by the Settled Minister Search Committee and called by a ninety percent (90%) majority vote of the Qualified Members of the church present at a meeting called for that purpose. A quorum for such a meeting shall be sixty percent (60%) of the Qualified Members.

5. The tenure of a settled minister shall be for an indefinite period, subject to the provisions of these bylaws.

D. Responsibilities and Privileges of the Minister

1. The Minister shall have freedom of the pulpit as well as freedom of expression outside of the pulpit.

2. The Minister shall be responsible for the conduct of worship within the church and shall act as spiritual leader and adviser for the Congregation.

3. The Minister, in consultation with the Committee on the Ministry, shall develop and recommend to the Executive Board a process for annually assessing the progress of the church leadership pursuant to Article VI, Section B.1.h.

4. The Minister, in consultation with the Committee on the Ministry, shall develop and recommend to the Executive Board a process for conducting an overall assessment of each aspect of the ministerial-congregational relationship at intervals to be specified by the Board pursuant to Article VI, Section B.1.i.

5. The Minister shall be an ex-officio member of the Executive Board and of other committees of the Church except those specified by the Executive Board.

E. Terms of the Covenant and Working Agreement

The terms of the covenant and working agreement between a newly called Minister and the Congregation shall be clearly set forth in a formal letter of agreement. The terms of such letter of agreement shall be developed by a Negotiating Team, appointed by the Executive Board for that purpose during the search process, in consultation with the Minister, and shall be recommended to the Executive Board for approval. Annual review of the letter of agreement shall be conducted by the Committee on the Ministry, in consultation with the Minister, pursuant to Article VI, Section B.

F. Resignation or Dismissal of the Minister

1. The Minister shall give at least ninety (90) days notice in writing to the Executive Board of his/her resignation or retirement. The Board and the Minister may agree on another period of notice as necessary and appropriate.

2. Dismissal of the Minister shall be by vote at a special congregational meeting called by the Executive Board for that purpose upon written request signed by at least twenty percent (20%) of the Qualified Members. Dismissal shall require a majority vote of the Qualified Members present at such a meeting. The quorum for such meeting shall be sixty percent (60%) of the Qualified Members.

3. In the event of resignation or dismissal, the ministerial salary and allowances shall be continued for a minimum of ninety (90) days after the date of written notice of resignation or the date of dismissal (defined as the date of the meeting at which dismissal was voted) in exchange for such service to the Church, consistent with the duties of the Minister set out herein, as may be agreed upon by the Executive Board and the Minister. The Board and the Minister may negotiate other terms of compensation that exceed this minimum, subject to an affirmative vote by a majority of the Qualified Members of the Congregation at a meeting called for such purpose.

ARTICLE X. ENDOWMENT FUND

A. Definition of Endowment Fund

Endowment funds are monies, securities, or other monetary instruments that have been designated or donated to provide a long-term base for church growth and improvement.

B. Categories of Endowment Funds

Endowment funds shall be treated as unrestricted. In special cases restrictions may be specified by the donor(s).

C. Withdrawal of Unrestricted Endowment Funds

Withdrawal of unrestricted endowment funds shall require a recommendation of the Executive Board by a two-thirds vote, and shall require an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Qualified Members present at a called meeting. The quorum for a meeting to authorize withdrawal of endowment funds shall be forty percent (40%) of the Qualified Members.

D. Withdrawal of Restricted Endowment Funds

Restricted Endowment Funds shall be withdrawn according to the instructions of the donor, which may not require action by the Congregation.

E. Acceptance of Gifts

The church, as represented by the Executive Board, reserves the right to decline gifts.

F. Generation of Endowment Funds

Organized plans and programs concerning the generation of endowment funds shall be specified by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

These bylaws may be amended or suspended at a membership meeting. Notice must be given not less than fourteen nor more than forty days in advance of the meeting, and a copy of the proposed amendment(s) shall be made available to all Qualified Members before the date of notice. The proposed amendment(s) must have been approved by the Executive Board or have been signed by at least ten percent of the Qualified Members. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Qualified Members who are present shall be required to adopt a change of bylaws. Unless otherwise specified at the time of adoption, amended bylaws take effect immediately upon adoption. The most recent revision of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern in all cases where applicable and not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules adopted.

ARTICLE XII. DISSOLUTION OR DIVISION

In case of division of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tallahassee, Inc. (because of growth or other cause), it shall be the responsibility of the Executive Board to recommend to the Congregation the method of division of the Church. The recommendation shall be considered by the Congregation at a meeting called for the purpose. The recommendation must be approved by fifty percent of the Qualified Members of the Church. If the division is approved, the Board shall perform all actions necessary to carry out the division.

In case of dissolution of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tallahassee, Inc., all of its property, real or personal, after paying all just claims upon it, shall be conveyed to and vested in the Unitarian Universalist Association or its legal successor, and the Executive Board of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tallahassee, Inc., shall perform all actions necessary to effectuate such conveyance. Procedures for dissolution shall comply with chapter 617 of the Florida Statutes.