

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF CHATTANOOGA

BYLAWS

I. NAME

The name of this religious society shall be the Unitarian Universalist Church of Chattanooga, hereinafter referred to as “UUCC” or “Congregation.”

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the UUCC is embodied in the mission statement, adopted in 2017, to CARE:

Create beloved community.

Awaken hearts and minds.

Resist injustice and act with compassion.

Embrace life and care for the earth.

This statement shall be complemented by specific goals adopted periodically by the Congregation, on recommendation of the Board of Trustees.

III. DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION

UUCC is affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA), its

subsidiary divisions, and their respective successors.

IV. NON-DISCRIMINATION

UUCC supports diversity. The congregation declares and affirms its responsibility to invite the full participation of all persons in all its activities and in the full range of human endeavor without regard to arbitrary criteria or protected characteristics. One of the strengths of the Congregation is its diversity of cultures and beliefs. In this spirit, we attempt to compose our official statements and literature using words that affirm the inherent worth and dignity of all people.

V. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Eligibility All persons who are members of the Congregation on the adoption of these Bylaws, or who thereafter are entered into the Register of Members and maintain a continuing interest in its congregational life, shall constitute its membership. Membership is open to any individual who supports the principles and purposes of this Congregation, engages in its congregational life, and agrees to make a commitment of their resources.

Section 2. Requirements A prospective member must meet with the minister or other member designated by the governing board. An individual becomes a member by signing the Membership Book in the presence of the minister or other member designated by the Governing Board. Their name will then be entered in a Register of Members.

Section 3. Register of Members There shall be a register of all members which will be reviewed annually. Deceased members will automatically be removed from the register. Members who have requested resignation shall be removed from the register immediately. Members who do not respond to membership inquiries shall be removed after a period of one year.

Section 4. Voting Rights An individual is eligible to vote in congregational meetings 30 days after becoming a member.

Section 5. Authority Members of the Congregation participate in congregational polity and shall have the right and privilege to take part in the democratic processes of UUCC including:

- Electing members of the Board of Trustees, members of the Nominating and Leadership Committee, and members of a Search Committee for a Minister

- Voting on calling or dismissing a Minister
- Voting on amending these Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation
- Voting on a budget for the following fiscal year
- Voting to dissolve the Congregation
- Acting as outlined elsewhere in these Bylaws

Section 6. Continuation Membership shall continue as long as an individual continues to support the principles and purposes of this Congregation, engages in congregational life, and agrees to make a commitment of their resources or until the individual resigns by giving notice

to the church office, the minister, or a Trustee. The Minister may grant an exemption to these requirements based on individual circumstances and pastoral concerns.

Section 7. Removal and Reinstatement The Board shall establish policies regarding membership termination and reinstatement, including termination due to actions by a member that threaten the well-being of the Congregation. All members are expected to abide by the *Agreement for Fellowship*.

VI. CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Section 1. General Specifications

- Congregational meetings, including the annual and special congregational meetings, shall be held at a time and place determined by the Board of Trustees.
- Notice of the meeting shall be posted at the church and be communicated electronically or by postal mail to every member at least two (2) weeks before the meeting. The notice shall state the business to be transacted.
- Twenty percent (20%) of voting members shall constitute a quorum at all meetings of the Congregation other than those to call a minister or to dissolve the Congregation. ● Each member shall be allowed one vote.
- All decisions are made by majority vote.
- Proxy votes are not permitted

Section 2. Annual Congregational Meeting The annual congregational meeting shall be held

each year at least two weeks before the end of the fiscal year at a time and place determined by the Board of Trustees. At the annual meeting, the congregational shall:

- Elect new members to the Board of Trustees
- Elect new members to the Nominating Committee
- Elect delegates to the General Assembly of the UUA for the current calendar year
- Approve a budget for the following fiscal year.
- Consider other matters the Board of Trustees brings to the Congregation.

Section 3. Special Congregational Meeting A special meeting can be called by the President, or in their absence another member of the Board, or when 20% of the Congregation calls for it. When such a meeting is called, the Board shall have the duty to schedule the meeting within thirty (30) calendar days of having received the call for the meeting. The notice of the meeting must be sent within seven (7) calendar days of having received the call for the meeting. The business transacted in the special congregational meeting is limited to what was stated in the call.

VII. GOVERNING STRUCTURE

Section 1. The Board of Trustees shall be the governing body of the Congregation. The Board of Trustees shall consist of:

- The President, The President-Elect, The Treasurer and The Secretary (The Officers)
- The Past President
- At least 3 (three) At-Large Members, with additional members as needed for special projects considered, whose duties are outlined in the Administrative Policy Manual

Section 2. Qualification for Office All Board members shall have been voting members of the Congregation for at least one year. In certain circumstances, this requirement may be lifted by consent of the Board of Trustees. Members of the Committee on Ministry cannot serve on the Board of Trustees.

Section 3. Terms & Limits Terms of office of Trustees shall coincide with the fiscal year, July 1 – June 30. Each year the Congregation shall elect a President-Elect who serves in that position for one year and as President the following one year and Past President the next year. In

alternate years, the Congregation shall elect either a Secretary or a Treasurer and about one-half of the Trustees-At-Large. The Treasurer, Secretary and Trustees At-Large shall each serve two year terms and may be reelected for one additional term.

Section 4. Board Meetings At any meeting of the Board, a majority of its members shall constitute a quorum. Board action requires a majority of the votes cast at a meeting at which a quorum is present. Subject to decisions of the Congregation, the Board shall have general charge of the property and business affairs of the Congregation and shall establish or approve policies to govern the operating practices of the Congregation. The Board of Trustees shall act in the interests of the Congregation whom it represents, shall provide leadership to the Congregation consistent with the purposes specified in Article I, and shall be responsible for compliance with these bylaws. Board meetings should comply with the Open Meetings Act of the State of Tennessee. A record of all Board Meetings should be available to all members of the Congregation.

Section 5. Vacancies Any vacancy occurring on the Board of Trustees shall be filled by a vote of the Board after consultation with the Nominating & Leadership Committee. Any Trustee elected by the Board to fill a vacancy shall be elected to serve the remainder of the position term as outlined in these bylaws. A trustee who resigns shall notify the Board in writing. A trustee may be removed from the Board for cause by a two-thirds vote of the Board. Written notice shall be given to the challenged trustee at least seven (7) days prior to the date of the special Board meeting called for that purpose. The trustee shall have the opportunity to be heard at the meeting prior to the vote.

VIII. COMMITTEES ELECTED BY AND RESPONSIBLE TO THE CONGREGATION

Section 1. Nominating & Leadership Committee The Nominating & Leadership Committee shall nominate candidates for the Board, the Nominating & Leadership Committee, and for other positions when directed by the Board of Trustees. The Nominating & Leadership Committee shall provide guidance and encouragement in identifying and developing potential church leaders. The composition of the Nominating & Leadership committee is outlined in The Administrative Policy Manual.

Section 2. Ministerial Search Committee In the event of a vacancy in the position of minister, a Search Committee shall be established as a Special Committee. The composition of the Ministerial Search Committee is outlined in The Administrative Policy Manual.

IX. STAFF COMMITTEES

Staff Committees are formal groups that play a critical part in the life of the Church, support the Church's yearly program activities and are supported by its annual budgeting process. Each Staff Committee shall be supervised by and work with a Church staff member.

X. OTHER COMMITTEES

The creation, purpose, structure and composition of all other congregational committees and/or task working groups shall be at the discretion of the Board, the minister, or the Congregation as a whole. Their responsibilities and composition should be outlined in the Administrative Policy Manual.

XI. MINISTRY

Section 1. Duties The duties of the Minister shall be as prescribed in the Letter of Agreement as signed upon initial hiring and renewed at the beginning of each fiscal year. In general the Minister shall provide overall religious leadership and guidance in accordance with the established purposes of the Congregation and shall be guaranteed freedom of the pulpit. The Minister is an ex officio and non-voting member of the Board of Trustees and all committees.

Section 2. Filling a Ministerial Vacancy Upon notification of an immediate or future vacancy of the ministerial office, the Board of Trustees shall initiate processes to search for a new minister. The Board may follow current procedures recommended by the UUA as a guide. The President shall call a special congregational meeting for the selection of a minister when so requested by the Chair of the Search Committee. Notice of such Special Meeting shall be given as specified in these Bylaws. A quorum for such a Special Meeting is forty percent (40%) of the Members.

An affirmative vote by at least ninety percent (90%) of those present and voting by secret ballot shall be required to call a Minister.

Section 3. Resignation or Termination The Minister is considered to have indefinite tenure. Conditions and procedures regarding the resignation or termination of a minister shall be included in their Letter of Agreement.

XII. FISCAL MATTERS

Section 1. Fiscal Year The Fiscal Year of the UUCC shall be from July 1st through June 30th.

Section 2. Budget Process At each annual congregational meeting, the Board of Trustees shall submit an operating budget for the coming fiscal year. A budget is adopted by a simple majority vote of the eligible voting members present at the Annual meeting of the UUCC.

XIII. DISSOLUTION

A quorum for voting on dissolution shall be forty percent (40%) of the Members. Any action to dissolve the Congregation must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members of the church present at a meeting called to specifically consider such action, for which meeting written notice has been issued to all members eligible to vote in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws. If the church at its own option shall cease to exist, all property real or personal shall be transferred to the Unitarian Universalist Association or its successors.

XIV. RULES OF PROCEDURE

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the church in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws and any special rules of order the church may adopt.

XV. INDEMNIFICATION

The Congregation shall indemnify its Trustees, Volunteers, & Staff to the fullest extent permitted by the laws of the State of Tennessee and shall purchase and maintain insurance on their behalf.

XVI. AMENDMENTS These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds (67%) vote at the annual meeting or a special congregational meeting of the UUCC provided the proposed amendments shall have been mailed or electronically submitted to all members at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting at which time they are to be voted on. Amendments may be proposed by the Board of Trustees or by written petition signed by twenty (20) or more members of the UUCC.

Adopted by UUCC Congregation on March 5, 2023