

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Phoenix

Bylaws

Adopted by the Members on June 4, 2000

Most recent revision approved January 27, 2013

Previously revised June 2002, January 2005, June 2006, and January 2008

I. NAME, AFFILIATION, COVENANT, AND AFFIRMATION

- A. The name of this religious organization is the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Phoenix, in these bylaws called the “Congregation.”
- B. This Congregation is affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations and its Pacific Southwest District.
- C. The Covenant of this Congregation is: “Love is the doctrine of this congregation, the quest for truth is our sacrament, and service is our prayer. To dwell together in peace, to seek knowledge in freedom, to share our strength in fellowship; thus do we covenant.”
- D. It is hereby affirmed that there will be no discrimination against anyone affiliated (or considering affiliation) with this Congregation on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender orientation, national origin, disability or age (with the exception that membership shall be open only to those 16 years of age or older unless they have completed the Coming of Age Program). This affirmation shall apply (but is not limited to) Members, officers, committee members, teachers, ministers and other employees of the Congregation.

II. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- A. Authority. The Board, subject to the prime authority of the Members of the Congregation, is the principal policy and governance-framing body of the Congregation. In the intervals between meetings of the Members of the Congregation the Board has full authority and responsibility, except as limited by these bylaws, to act on the business affairs and programs of the Congregation.
- B. Number and Term. The Board of Trustees shall include nine voting members, including the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and youth representative. The Trustees shall serve two year terms, except the youth representative will be appointed to a one-year term. No trustee of the UUF Board shall serve on the Congregation Board of Trustees at the same time, except the President of the Congregation Board.
- C. Election. The Board shall be elected by Members of the Congregation at its Annual Elections Meeting from among the candidates nominated by the Nominating Committee and by petition, except that the youth representative shall be selected by the YRUU or its successor designated high-school-age youth group. There is no limitation on the number of terms an individual may serve. Nominees must be voting members of the Congregation.
 1. Nominating Committee – Number, Term, and Election. The Nominating Committee shall consist of six persons elected for two-year staggered terms, three beginning and ending in even-numbered years and three beginning and ending in odd-numbered years. No member of the Nominating Committee may be a candidate for or member of the Board or an employee of the Congregation. No member of the Nominating Committee shall serve successive terms. The Nominating Committee shall itself be elected in accordance with procedures set forth below for election of the Board of

- Trustees. The Nominating Committee shall seek and consider input from the Minister and Board, but the Committee is not bound by such input.
2. Procedures for Selection of Candidates. Each year the Nominating Committee shall nominate a number of qualified candidates at least equal to the number of vacancies and as many more as they determine are appropriate. All nominees shall be Members of the Congregation who have agreed to serve if elected. By the end of February of each year the nominating committee shall provide notice to the congregation of those Board of Trustees and Nominating Committee positions for which it will be making nominations, as well as information on how members of the congregations can offer themselves as candidates for nomination. By April 1 of each year the names of these nominees shall be published in the Congregation's newsletter or other mailing to the Members. Additional nominations may be made by petition of any ten Members, provided the Petition is accompanied by a signed statement expressing the nominee's willingness to serve if elected. Such petition must be filed with the Chair of the Nominating Committee by May 1 for inclusion in the list of nominees.
 3. Election Procedures. The names and biographical statements of all nominees shall be published in at least two issues of the Congregation's newsletter or other mailing to the Members, preceding the Annual Elections Meeting, and notice of the election shall be published in those same issues, or mailing to the Members. The published list of nominees shall inform the Members of their right to make additional nominations and shall state the procedure to do so. The election shall take place at the Annual Elections Meeting, and those nominees who receive the highest number of votes in a secret ballot shall be declared elected. Ballots shall be counted under the direction of the Nominating Committee. If there is only one nominee for each position, a secret ballot is not required.
 4. Vacancies. If there is a vacancy on the Board of Trustees occurring more than six weeks prior to the Annual Elections Meeting, the Nominating Committee shall propose one or more names from which the Board shall fill the vacancy. All Members appointed to fill vacancies shall serve only until the next Annual Elections Meeting, at which time the position shall be filled in accordance with regular election procedures.
- D. Officers. The Congregation's officers shall be President, Vice-president, Secretary, and Treasurer who shall be elected pursuant to Article 5 of the Articles of Incorporation and these bylaws. The officers shall themselves or designate Board members to:
1. preside over the meetings of the Board of Trustees and the meetings of the Membership of the Congregation;
 2. maintain and disseminate an accurate record of the Board proceedings;
 3. ensure the receipt and disbursement of the Congregation's funds and the keeping of all Congregation accounts.
- E. Meetings. The Board shall meet monthly a minimum of ten times annually on such dates as the Board shall from time to time determine. Meetings shall be open to the Members of the Congregation. Provision shall be made at meetings for non-Board Members to address the Board. The Board may meet in executive session only to discuss personnel matters or to receive legal advice. Special meetings other than organizational meetings of the Board may be called by the President or by any two Members of the Board with twenty-four hours' notice to each member of the Board and to the Minister.

- F. Procedures at Meeting. The Board may adopt its own rules of procedures for Board meetings, except that there shall be no proxy voting. A quorum to do business at a Board meeting shall consist of a majority of currently sitting members of the Board.
- G. Execution of Instruments. Checks, drafts and orders upon the funds or credits of the Congregation, bills, notes and other obligations for payment of money by the Congregation, and all contracts and instruments in writing by the Congregation shall be valid and binding upon the Congregation only when executed by such executive officers as shall be designated and authorized by the Board.

III. CONGREGATION

- A. Definition of Membership: Members are individuals who support the mission of the congregation by participating as fully as possible in the life of the congregation. This includes giving generously of one's time, finances, talents and service.
- B. Qualifications for Membership.
 - 1. Any person who has attended an orientation meeting with the minister and/or the appropriate Congregation committee or class, has signed the Membership book, and is over 16 years of age shall be a Member of the Congregation. No subscription to creed shall be required of a person in order to become a member.
 - 2. Youth who have completed the Coming of Age Program may sign the Membership book and become Members of the Congregation regardless of age.
 - 3. Members are required to make an annual financial contribution to the congregation or request a hardship waiver for that fiscal year.
- C. Withdrawal and Termination. A Member may withdraw from Membership by written notice to the congregation office. A member's name may be withdrawn from membership if the member has failed to meet the qualifications for membership for two consecutive fiscal years or has not been able to be reached by letter or phone to clarify the condition of membership.
- D. Authority. The ultimate authority of this religious organization is in the Congregation as expressed in Annual and Special Meetings. The following powers may not be delegated but may be dealt with only by the Congregation:
 - 1. Statement of the Covenant.
 - 2. Employment or release of the Minister and the amount of his or her annual salary.
 - 3. Location of any Congregation buildings and grounds and their purchase and sale.
 - 4. Requirements of Membership.
 - 5. Approval of the Annual Budget.
 - 6. Ratification and amendment of Bylaws.
- E. Congregational Overrides of Board Action. The Congregation may override an action of the Board at a meeting called for that purpose. Such a meeting may be called by twenty-five members of the Congregation in compliance with section F(2) below. The notice shall state the provision sought to be overridden and shall be published in the Congregation's newsletter or other mailing to the Members of the Congregation at least once before the date of the meeting. The contested Board action shall be held in abeyance until that meeting. A majority vote of those present at the Congregational Meeting is necessary to override the Board action. The Congregation cannot override the Board under the following circumstances:
 - 1. Any expenditure previously authorized by the Congregation;

2. An expenditure which has been declared an emergency expenditure by the Board and which has been approved by two-thirds of those present at a Board meeting; or
3. An expenditure of less than \$10,000.

F. Meetings.

1. Regularly Scheduled Meetings. There shall be two regularly scheduled meetings of the Congregation held at times and places selected by the Board of Trustees.
 - a. The Annual Elections Meeting shall be held between May 15 and the following June 30, with an agenda that includes election of members of the Board of Trustees and of the Nominating Committee.
 - b. The Budget Review Meeting shall be held annually between May 15 and the following June 30, with an agenda that includes the approval of the budget for the coming fiscal year.
 - c. Both agendas shall include such other business as the Congregation desires to undertake. Proxy voting shall not be permitted.
 - d. The Annual Elections and the Budget Review may be addressed in a single meeting.
2. Special Meetings. A Special Meeting may be called by the Board or upon the petition of twenty-five Members. At least two weeks' notice shall be provided by publishing the notice in the Congregation's newsletter or other mailing to the Members of the Congregation. The notice shall specify an agenda for the meeting and the meeting shall be limited to those topics. Proxy voting shall not be permitted.
3. Quorum. Fifty Members shall constitute a quorum for all meetings of the Members of the Congregation.

IV. THE MINISTER

- A. Responsibilities. The Minister is the religious and spiritual leader of the Congregation. He or she shall have freedom of the pulpit and of speech. The Minister shall be in fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. The Minister's detailed authority and limitations shall be set forth in the Minister's Ministerial Agreement and in Board policies. The Minister is an ex-officio member of all committees. The Minister is a non-voting member of the Board.
- B. Calling and Termination
 1. Calling the Minister. A search committee consisting of at least seven persons shall be elected by the Members. This committee shall work in cooperation with the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations to select a ministerial candidate. The candidate shall then be recommended to the Members in a special meeting of the Members of the Congregation called for that purpose. Notice of such meeting shall be sent to all Members by first class mail at least 14 days before the meeting. A vote of two-thirds of those present shall be necessary to act.
 2. Termination. The Minister's services may be terminated only by a majority vote by secret ballot at a special meeting of the Members of the Congregation called for that purpose. Such a meeting may be called by the Board of Trustees or upon petition of twenty-five Members. Notice of such a meeting shall be the same as that for the calling of a Minister.
- C. Sabbatical Leave. Sabbatical leave shall be for the furthering of the ministry. For every year of full service to the Congregation the Minister shall accrue the right to take one

month of paid sabbatical leave. Sabbatical leave shall be taken and allowed pursuant to the terms of the Minister's Ministerial Agreement.

V. AMENDMENT

Amendments to these Bylaws may be proposed by the Board of Trustees or by a petition of twenty-five Members. A proposed amendment shall become a part of the Bylaws when approved by two-thirds of the membership in attendance at the congregational meeting of the Congregation. Notice of such meeting and text of the proposed amendments shall be published in at least two issues of the Congregation's newsletter or other mailing to Members of the Congregation at least six weeks immediately preceding the meeting.

VI. EFFECTIVE DATE

These Bylaws shall become effective when approved by a majority vote of the Members present at a regular or special meeting of the Members of the Congregation.

VII. MAIL AND PUBLICATION

Any reference to "mail" includes electronic mail and other forms of reliable, written electronic communication as well as paper delivered by the postal service or other messenger. Any requirement that information shall be published is satisfied by using such paper and/or electronic methods as is in customary use by staff and leadership for widespread communication in writing to the Congregation, except that paper copies shall be provided to any member who requests to receive paper rather than electronic communications.