

MISSION STATEMENT

*We, the Universalist Unitarian Church of Waterville, Maine;
Promote a search for personal truth and spiritual growth,
Sustained by worship that honors a variety of traditions and rituals.
We respect diverse points of view as we create a peaceful, loving, and just community,
While serving our congregation and the world beyond.
We endeavor to build a sustainable relationship with our earth,
Through responsible action and leadership.*

Created -- 2012

BYLAWS OF THE UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF WATERVILLE, MAINE

Current Update – May 28, 2023

ARTICLE I – Name

The name of this Church shall be the Universalist Unitarian Church of Waterville, Maine.

ARTICLE II – Purposes and Principles

A. We covenant to affirm and promote:

The inherent worth and dignity of every person;

Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;

Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregation;

A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;

The rights of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregation and in society at large;

The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all;

Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

(Purposes and Principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association, adopted in June, 1985.)

B. We further covenant that the purpose and intent of these Bylaws is to encourage and foster full participation in the governance and management of church affairs by all members.

ARTICLE III – Denominational Affiliation

This Church shall be in full fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and with the New England Region of the UUA.

ARTICLE IV – Membership

A. All persons who are members at the time of the adoption of this article shall be considered members with all the rights and duties of regular members of this Church.

B. We affirm and promote the full participation of persons in all our activities including membership, programming, hiring practices, and the calling of religious professionals, without regard to race, color, gender, physical challenge, affectional or sexual orientation, age, or national origin.

C. To become a regular member of the Church with full voting rights, a person must be fifteen (15) years of age or older, must be in general agreement with the Purposes and Principles of the UUA, must indicate a desire to support the Church and must confer with the Minister and/or the Fellowship Committee. Membership is formalized by signing of the Membership Book and receiving the Welcoming Hand of Fellowship.

D. One may transfer membership from another church by conferring with the Minister and/or the Fellowship Committee, notifying the church of previous membership, signing the Membership Book, and receiving the Welcoming Hand of Fellowship.

E. Any person fifteen (15) years of age or older, in general agreement with the Purposes and Principles of this Church, but who for certain specified reasons chooses not to become a regular member may, after conferring with the Minister and/or the Fellowship Committee, become an Associate Member. Associate Members shall have all the rights and duties of regular members, except that: she/he may neither vote on amendments to these Bylaws, nor serve on any committee concerned with amending these Bylaws, nor hold any elected office.

F. Members of this Church are encouraged to attend its services of worship with reasonable regularity, enter into its other activities, and accept their share of responsibility for the successful operations of the Church, financial and otherwise.

G. Any member wishing a letter of transfer to another Church shall request same from the Minister and/or the Clerk.

H. Any person wishing to terminate membership in this Church shall file a written resignation with the Minister and/or Clerk. Church members, who for a period of two

(2) years have not communicated with the Church or contributed to its work, may be transferred to the inactive list by the Fellowship Committee in consultation with the Minister.

I. The Board of Trustees, acting on a report from an ad hoc committee formed to address allegations of abusive, harassing, or exploitive behavior by a member of the church community against another member of the church community, shall, by a majority vote, accept, reject, or request further information with regard to the allegations as contained in the ad hoc committee report. The Board of Trustees may terminate membership of the church member, suspend membership, imposing requirements that must be met before reinstatement, limit the church activities a member may be involved in, or make other adjustments or limits in church membership reasonably related to the protection of the greater church community in response to the recommendations of the ad hoc committee. The Board of Trustee's actions shall be guided by the Safety Policy as adopted and edited by the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE V – Officers and Board of Trustees

A. Officers

The officers, who must be members of this Church, shall be a President, a Vice-President, a Clerk, a Treasurer, and others to assist the Officers as the Board of Trustees find necessary.

B. Board of Trustees (hereinafter known as “Board”)

1. The Board members, who must be members of this Church, shall be the officers, and six (6) other Church members.
2. The Board shall meet monthly, or whenever it is deemed necessary.
3. At least six (6) members of the Board shall constitute a quorum of the Board.

C. Elections and Appointments

The Board and Officers of the Church will assume office on July 1, the beginning of the Church year, and shall be selected as follows:

1. The officers shall be elected annually by ballot at the Annual Meeting in May (hereinafter known as “Annual Meeting”). Voting may be by secret ballot if so requested by any member of the Church. The tenure of office for the President, Vice-President, and Clerk shall not exceed two (2) years, though the term of these officers may be extended for up to one year upon a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present

at the Annual Meeting; and the tenure of office for the Treasurer shall not exceed four (4) years. For all officers at least one (1) year shall elapse before re-election, except as provided in the next following sentence. The limit on tenure of office for the Treasurer may be waived on an annual basis if, after diligently seeking a candidate for Treasurer, the nominating committee and the trustees are unable to identify a qualified member to accept nomination.

2. The Board at large shall be elected at the Annual Meeting. Voting may be by secret ballot if so requested by any member of the Church. Two (2) new Board members shall be elected each year for a term of three (3) years. After a Board member has served a full three (3) year term, a lapse of one (1) year shall precede his/her being eligible for re-election to any office. A Board member appointed and/or elected (in accordance with Art. V, section E) to fill an unexpired term of more than eighteen (18) months of another Board member, shall not be eligible for re-election to a full term as a Board member until after a lapse of one (1) year.

D. Powers, Duties, and Limitations of the Board

1. The Board shall have, on behalf of the Church, general charge of the property of the Church and conduct of all of its business affairs. The Board shall not expend more than two thousand, five hundred dollars (\$2,500) on any one project not previously approved in the annual budget without the approval of the majority of the members present and voting at a regularly called annual or special meeting of the Church. The Board may, in case of an emergency where health, safety, or protection of property is required, exceed this limitation, provided that its action be explained and ratified as expeditiously as possible.

2. The Board shall appoint annually a Collector, an Assistant Collector, an Assistant Treasurer, a Financial Reviewer, Representatives to the New England Region and General Assembly of the UUA, and the representatives to other organizations in which this Church is entitled to representation. The Board shall establish standing and such other committees as they find necessary. The Board shall appoint a Nominating Committee.

E. Vacancies

The Board shall be empowered to fill vacancies on the Board which occur by death or resignation of an Officer or Board member. Such appointment shall be effective until the next Annual or Special Meeting of the Church.

F. Duties of Officers, Investment Management Committee, Collector, Assistant Treasurer

1. President

- a. Shall preside at all annual and special meetings of the Congregation at which business is considered and acted upon, and at all meetings of the Board; and shall sit ex-officio on all committees except the Nominating Committee.
- b. Shall present, at Board and Congregational meetings, such reports as are necessary and sufficient for the conduct of stated business.
- c. Shall render a yearly report on the status of the Church at the Annual Meeting.
- d. Shall represent the Church at all other meetings at which matters pertaining to the Church are to be discussed.
- e. May depute to another member any of these duties except the presentation of the yearly report on the status of the Church.

2. Vice-President

- a. Shall assist the President in the performance of the duties of that office as directed by the President or the Board.
- b. Shall preside at Congregational meetings when the President is absent.
- c. Shall be expected to assume the office of President upon its vacancy by expiration of the President's tenure or due to any other circumstances.

3. Clerk

- a. Shall record the minutes of actions taken at all meetings of members of the Congregation and of the Board at which formal business has been discussed and acted upon.
- b. Shall issue calls to meetings in accordance with Article VI of these Bylaws.

4. Treasurer

- a. Shall maintain records of receipts and disbursements.
- b. Shall pay accounts due creditors.
- c. Subject to Board approval, shall maintain appropriate insurance coverage.
- d. Shall render monthly reports to the Board and an Annual Report to the Church.

5. Assistant Treasurer

Shall have authority to act in the absence or unavailability of the Treasurer with the full authority of the Treasurer.

6. Investment Management Committee

Shall manage all invested and special accounts of the Church. It shall operate according to rules adopted by the Board. Every second year beginning September 15, 2015, the Investment Management Committee shall submit to the Board of Trustees an Investment Policy describing the classification of investments, how and when said funds may be accessed and what action must be taken by the Board of Trustees or Congregation, as indicated in the said Investment Policy, in accessing the said funds. The Board of Trustees shall vote to accept or reject the said Policy and instruct the Investment Management Committee accordingly.

7. Collector and Assistant Collector

a. The Collector shall, with the Assistant Collector, any Board member, or Board designee, gather the Sunday collections and record them as pledge or plate contributions.

b. Shall deposit the moneys received and submit the deposit receipts to the Treasurer for incorporation into the Church's financial accounts.

c. A Board member may be designated as a replacement in the case of the absence of the Collector or the Assistant Collector.

ARTICLE VI – Meetings

A. The Annual Meeting of the Church shall be held during the month of May of each year. At the Annual Meeting, elections shall take place, reports shall be given, and such other business as may legally come before the congregation shall be conducted. The Board of Trustees may, however, in the event of extraordinary circumstances – such as natural disaster, governmental declaration of emergency, and the like – alter the month, site, and method of conduct of the Annual Meeting, so long as such change does not alter the basic intent of any other Bylaws.

B. The Warrant for the Annual, Special, or re-opened meetings of the Church shall be posted on the outer door of the Church at least fourteen (14) days before such meetings. Announcements shall be made at the two previous regular Sunday services.

C. Special meetings of the Church may be called at any time upon a majority vote of the Board, and shall be called upon the written request to the Board of at least seven (7) voting members of the Church.

D. For the final approval of a settled minister and ministry agreement, or for removal of a settled minister, a quorum will be a minimum of fifty (50) percent of those eligible to vote. At least thirty (30) percent of those eligible to vote shall constitute a quorum for conducting all other legal matters of this Church.

ARTICLE VII – Ministry

A. The Church shall exercise the exclusive right to call and ordain its own minister, as guaranteed in the Bylaws of the UUA (Article III, Section C, 3.2) as existing on April 6, 2010.

B. The minister shall be responsible to the Church, through the Board, for the effective performance of the minister's work. The minister shall render such reports as the Board shall require.

C. In the search for a settled minister, the Congregation shall meet as early as necessary to approve a range for a total compensation package and an outline of a ministry agreement. A quorum for this meeting shall be thirty (30) percent of those eligible to vote and approval will be by a simple majority of those present at the meeting and eligible to vote.

D. Final approval of a settled minister according to the terms agreed upon with the Board shall be by a vote of at least ninety (90) percent of those eligible to vote and present at a legal meeting of the Congregation, following the candidate's nomination by a duly appointed Search Committee. One candidate only shall be presented for consideration at a time.

E. The relationship between this Church and the incumbent minister shall continue until one or the other requests the dissolution of the same, with three (3) months' notice in writing being given, or by mutual agreement in exceptional cases. Removal of a settled minister shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those eligible to vote and present at a legal meeting of the Congregation. Unresolved disputes shall be referred to the New England Region or UUA for mediation.

E. The minister shall be an ex-officio member, without vote, of the Board, and of all standing committees.

F. During a period between Pastorates, the Board may appoint, subject to Congregational approval, an interim or part-time minister to provide for the ministry of the Church until a new minister is settled. The Board shall consult with the New England Region and the UUA in this process.

G. In the event of a vacancy in the ministry, a Settled Minister Search Committee shall be established, consisting of seven (7) members of the Church, but not less than one (1) nor more than (2) shall be members of the Board. The Board President shall be ineligible to serve on the Settled Minister Search Committee. The Settled Minister Search Committee shall be selected by the Board after requests for nominations from the floor at a special meeting of the Church, called and conducted in accordance with Article VI of these Bylaws. The Settled Minister Search Committee shall proceed in accordance with procedures recommended in the Transitions section of the Leaders' Library of the UUA, and shall work in consultation with the Ministerial Settlement Representative and the Transitions Office.

ARTICLE VIII – Fiscal Year

The fiscal year shall be from July 1 to June 30.

ARTICLE IX – Fully Integrated Auxiliaries

A. The Evening Sandwich Program, which is operated within the church facilities by members of the Church and volunteers from other churches, organizations, and the community, is a fully integrated auxiliary of the Church. In the event that the Evening Sandwich Program is dissolved or otherwise terminates, any assets being managed by the Evening Sandwich Program to support its mission, shall be disbursed to the Church for its charitable purposes.

ARTICLE X – Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended (with the exception of Article III on Denominational Affiliation, and Article VII, section A on the fellowship of the minister) by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the regular members present at any legal meeting of the Church, provided that the proposed amendment or change has been included in the Warrant for such a meeting. To amend Article III and Article VII, section A, in substance and

not for the correction of these Bylaws, a four-fifths (4/5) vote of regular members present at a legal meeting shall be required.

ARTICLE XI – Rules of Procedure

In all cases not provided for in the Bylaws of this Church, all procedures shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.

ARTICLE XII – Dissolution

Any action to dissolve the Church must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of eligible Voting 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, after paying all just claims upon it, shall be transferred to the Unitarian Universalist Association or its successors. The Board of Trustees of the Church shall perform all actions necessary to effect such conveyance.

These Bylaws Amended: May 19, 1996, November 14, 2010, May 19, 2013,
May 18, 2014, June 14, 2020, July 26, 2020, May 28, 2023