

**CONSTITUTION**  
**OF THE**  
**DUPAGE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH**  
**June 2018**

CONSTITUTION  
of the  
DUPAGE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH  
February 2014

**Preamble**

**Article I                   Name and Affiliation**

**Article II                 Purpose**

**Article III               Membership in the Congregation**

**Article IV               Business Meetings of the Congregation**

**Article V                 Officers and Trustees**

**Article VI               Nomination and Election of Officers and Trustees**

**Article VII              Board**

**Article VIII             Reserved**

**Article IX               Committees and Groups**

**Article X                Minister**

**Article XI               Committee on Ministries**

**Article XII              Public Ministry Committee**

**Article XIII             Reserved**

**Article XIV              Director/Minister of Religious Education**

**Article XV               Ordination and Sponsorship**

**Article XVI              Parliamentary Authority**

**Article XVII             Amendments**

**Article XVIII           Dissolution of the Church**

**Article XIX              Endowment Fund**

## **PREAMBLE**

The DuPage Unitarian Universalist Church is organized for the study and practice of liberal religion. Our commitment is to social responsibility and ethical values that enrich the individual and the community. Endorsing no creed, we affirm the sanctity of free thought, the inherent dignity of every person, and the universal human family. In all endeavors, our allegiance is to the discipline of reason and truth. Addresses are delivered from a free pulpit and no question relating to human values or social problems is considered inappropriate for discourse.

## **ARTICLE I: NAME AND AFFILIATION**

The name of this Church is the DuPage Unitarian Universalist Church, originally incorporated as The DuPage Valley Unitarian Society. The Church shall be affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Association and the American Humanist Association or their legal successors, and with other organizations approved by the Congregation.

## **ARTICLE II: INCLUSION**

We are an ever evolving congregation and strive to welcome all to our community. We will not discriminate based on, but not limited to: race, ethnicity, color, national origin, citizenship status, gender, gender identity / expression, affectional or sexual orientation, age, language, economic status, mental or physical capacity, or religious belief or creed.

## **ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP IN THE CONGREGATION**

Section 1. Full and equal membership in the Congregation of this Church shall be open to all persons a minimum of 16 years of age or over.

Section 2. Membership in the Congregation is attained by completing the joining process as described in the Membership Policy. Membership shall cease in accordance with the Membership Policy.

Section 3. Voting privileges shall begin 45 days after becoming a member. Voting privileges are granted to all members who are in good standing, as specified in the Membership Policy, 15 days prior to a congregational vote, provided they became members at least 45 days prior to the congregational vote, provided they became members at least 45 days prior to the congregational vote.

Section 4. Any change to the Membership Policy made by the Board needs to be published 30 days before the Board meeting where the vote is taken.

## **ARTICLE IV: BUSINESS MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION**

Section 1. A quorum at any business meeting of the Congregation consists of 15 percent of the members of the Congregation eligible to vote.

Section 2. Proxy ballots will not be permitted at business meetings of the Congregation. Absentee ballots will be permitted only for: (1) the vote called for in Article X, Section 2, to determine whether the required number of voting members of the Congregation concur in the calling of a minister; (2) the vote called for Congregational endorsement of a "statement of conscience" in Article XII, Section 6; and, (3) votes called for significant financial commitments as defined in Article IV, Section 7. In no case will absentee ballots be counted in establishing a quorum.

Section 3. The fiscal year of the Church shall begin June 1. The annual business meeting of the Congregation shall be held in the month of June, at a time and place determined by the Board. At this meeting Officers and Trustees shall be elected for the term beginning at the close of the meeting, and the operating budget for the next year shall be adopted. Reports of the committees shall be submitted to the membership, as specified in Article IX, Section 3, and other business may be transacted.

Section 4. Other business meetings of the Congregation may be called by the Board, by the President, by the Minister, or upon written application to the Clerk of the Congregation by 15 percent of voting members of the Congregation. The purpose of such meetings must be stated in the notices of the meetings.

Section 5. Notice of all business meetings of the Congregation shall be given at least two weeks in advance of the meeting date, in the following manner: Notice will be mailed to each member of the Congregation as an announcement in the Newsletter or under separate cover. Additionally, two Sundays prior to the date of the meeting, notice will be made during the pulpit announcements and will appear in the printed announcements distributed in the Sunday Order of Service. Notice also will be available on the official Church Website.

Section 6. Business meetings shall be conducted according to the rules contained in "Robert's Rules of Order" most current edition in all cases to which the rules are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this Constitution and any special rules of order the Church may adopt. (Article XVI)

Section 7. Significant financial commitments shall be defined as those exceeding the approximate value of the most recent annual budget. Passage shall require a simple majority of at least one-third of the membership including absentee ballots cast.

#### **ARTICLE V: OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES**

Section 1. Officers of the Church shall consist of a President, a Vice President, a Clerk, and two Financial Officers. They shall be elected from the Congregation as prescribed in Article VI. President, Vice President, Clerk and Trustees at Large will have three year terms. Financial Officers will have a four year term, the first two years of which will be served as Controller and the second two of which will be served as Treasurer. A new Financial Officer will be elected every two years. Paid staff may not serve as elected officers. No person shall serve more than two consecutive terms in any one of these offices.

Section 2. The President shall preside at all business meetings of the Congregation and of the Board. The President shall be an *ex officio*, non-voting member of all other organizations of the Church, excluding the Committee on Ministries. (Article XI).

Section 3. The Board shall assign portfolios of oversight responsibility to all Trustee(s) at Large and to the Vice President. Other officers may accept assignments. The scope of responsibilities of the Board shall be as follows.

(1) Ministry to other members of the church community. It seeks to maintain a community that intentionally models a nurturing and intellectually stimulating spiritual home that is warm and inviting for all ages.

(2) Ministry to members as individual seekers. It provides resources for the members in their searches for value and meaning in their own lives, and for gaining respect for diverse religious views.

(3) Ministry to society beyond our church community. It addresses the aim given in our Vision Statement to serve as a "beacon of liberal religion." It provides opportunities for members' participating on local, national or international levels.

(4) Administration serving the personnel, finances, and facilities of the Congregation. It seeks to develop effective and efficient processes in these support areas.

Section 4. Each Officer and Trustee shall have a vote at meetings of the Board and of the Congregation. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall preside at meetings of the Board and Congregation.

Section 5. The Clerk shall serve as secretary of the Congregation and of the Board, and shall keep minutes of the business meetings of each. These records shall be open to examination by any member of the Congregation.

Section 6. The Controller shall keep records of all funds of the Church, i.e., operating funds, capital funds, and those in the Endowment Fund. The Controller shall also maintain all records of pledged giving. All disbursements shall be initiated by or under the supervision of the Controller for execution by the Treasurer or by another member designated by the Board. The Controller is responsible for preparing the staff payroll, payroll tax filings and all tax payments associated with that activity. The Controller shall render a monthly

report to the Board showing income, disbursements, balances and unpaid bills, a quarterly report to the Congregation, and an annual report at the annual business meeting. The Controller shall exhibit the books of account at any reasonable time upon request of any member of the Congregation. The accounts of the Controller shall be audited according to the process stated in the Policy and Procedures Repository. For a more complete account of the duties and responsibilities of the Controller, see the Controller job description in the Policy and Procedures Repository.

Section 7. The Treasurer shall have custody of all but the Endowment fund and shall maintain these funds on deposit in a bank and/or other financial instrument approved by the Board in the corporate name of the Church. The Treasurer shall also have custody of all deeds, evidence of title, securities and documents relating to the property of the Church not otherwise provided for. The Treasurer shall execute all payments. The Treasurer shall sign all contracts approved by the Board. The Treasurer is responsible for preparation of the annual operating budget and other special budgets as circumstances may require. For a more complete account of the duties and responsibilities of the Treasurer, see the job description in the Policy and Procedures Repository.

Section 8. Four Trustees at Large to the Board shall be elected from the Congregation as prescribed in Article VI. No person shall serve more than two consecutive terms or partial terms as a Trustee at Large, and no Officer of the Church shall serve concurrently as a Trustee at Large. Each Trustee at Large shall serve to represent the interest of the Congregation in matters before the Board and, in addition, shall accept a portfolio assigned by the Board

#### **ARTICLE VI: NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES**

Section 1. The Nominating Committee shall consist of six members. The Congregation shall elect two members at its annual business meeting to serve for three-year terms.

Section 2. The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one member of the Congregation for each of the offices in Article V as their terms end. The election will take place at the annual business meeting of the congregation.

Section 3. In all elections by the Congregation, the candidates nominated by the Nominating Committee shall be announced at least two weeks before the election. Such announcement will be made during the pulpit announcement, in the printed announcements distributed in the Sunday Order of Service and in the Newsletter mailed and accessible online at the official Church website.

Section 4. In any election of Officers or Trustees, and other elected positions, excluding Search Committee, nominations may also be made from the floor, but only with the prior consent of the nominee.

Section 5. When more than one nomination has been made for any of the positions, election shall be by written ballot. Each Officer and Trustee shall be elected by a plurality vote of the members of the Congregation present and eligible to vote.

Section 6. Vacancies in any Officer position, Trustee at Large position, Nominating Committee position, elected Committee on Ministry Position, or Public Ministry Position shall be filled by vote of the Board for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Section 7. At any business meeting of the Congregation, on written petition of 15 percent of the members eligible to vote, a resolution may be considered to remove any Officer or Trustee. A two-thirds vote of the membership present and eligible to vote shall be necessary to adopt this resolution. The Minister, the President, and the Clerk of the Congregation must be notified of the proposal in writing 30 days in advance of the meeting. The Clerk shall cause notice of the proposal to accompany all announcements of the business meeting at which it will be considered.

#### **ARTICLE VII: BOARD**

Section 1. Subject to the direction of the Congregation, the Board shall exercise the corporate power vested in the Church by the State of Illinois.

Section 2. The Board shall consist of nine members, will be chaired by the President and include the Vice President, the Clerk, the Controller, the Treasurer, and four elected Trustees at Large. Additional *ex officio*, non-voting, members shall include the Minister, the Intern Minister and the Director/Minister of Religious Education. The immediate past president shall be an *ex officio*, non-voting member for one year immediately after leaving office as President. No person shall hold more than one voting position on the Board simultaneously. Normally, the Board shall meet monthly, Board responsibilities include: setting policy, assessing the financial health and congregational needs for both long-term and short-term planning, and establishing annual goals. A quorum at any meeting of the Board shall consist of 50 percent of the voting members. No proxy or absentee votes will be permitted.

Section 3. The Board shall consider and evaluate the work of the Minister and determine the Minister's compensation package including salary for the annual budget as prepared by the Treasurer. The Board shall oversee evaluation and compensation for all Church staff. The Board must approve a budget proposed by the Treasurer, with or without modification, before that budget is submitted to the Congregation for final approval, with or without further modification. The Board must approve any unbudgeted expenditures up to a maximum of \$10,000. Unbudgeted expenditures greater than \$10,000 must be approved by vote of the Congregation.

Section 4. The Board is responsible for any use of the Church building, grounds, or other facilities by groups consisting wholly or largely of non-members of the Church. The Board may delegate to a special committee set up for this purpose or to staff the authority to approve particular and isolated instances of such use of the Church's facilities, but regular use by such groups must be approved by the Board.

Section 5. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the President, by the Minister, or upon written application to the Clerk by 15 percent of the members of the Congregation eligible to vote.

Section 6. The Board shall submit to a vote of the membership at a business meeting of the Congregation any matter on which it deems action necessary and on which the Board either has not the authority to act or believes a decision by the Congregation is desirable.

## **ARTICLE VIII: RESERVED**

## **ARTICLE IX: COMMITTEES AND GROUPS**

Section 1. All meetings of all committees of the Church shall be open, with the exception of the Committee on Ministries, the Nominating Committee, the Intern Lay Committee, the Personnel Committee, a Search Committee when one is constituted, and executive sessions of the Board.

Section 2. A Chair of each committee shall be selected by the committee. Committee chairs must be voting members of the Congregation. Paid staff may not serve as a committee chair or co-chair. The term of a committee Chair shall be no more than three years. No person shall serve more than two consecutive terms or partial terms as Chair of the same committee.

Section 3. Each officer, each committee chair and voting position, as identified in the table of organization, shall cause its annual report to be published and distributed to the members of the Congregation at or before the annual business meeting. All submissions are subject to editing for convenience of publication.

Section 4. When a Ministerial Search Committee is needed, it is the Board's responsibility to establish a process to assemble a search team.

## **ARTICLE X: MINISTER**

Section 1. A person to be called as Minister of this Church must have ministerial standing in the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Section 2. The selection of a minister requires a two-thirds vote of the members voting at a Congregational meeting for which this agenda item has been legally announced and at which a quorum shall be 40 percent of the members eligible to vote. Absentee ballots received prior to the start of the meeting shall be permitted but may not be included in the count to establish a quorum. (Article IV, Section 2)

Section 3. At any business meeting of the Church on written petition of 25 percent of the members eligible to vote the following resolution may be considered: "Resolved that the present ministerial relations with the Minister shall be dissolved and terminated 90 days from the effective date of this resolution." A two-thirds vote of the membership present and voting shall be necessary to adopt this resolution. The Minister, the President, and the Clerk of the Congregation must be notified of the proposal in writing 30 days in advance of the meeting. The Clerk shall cause notice of the proposal to accompany all announcements of the business meeting at which it will be considered. This amendment will take effect immediately upon approval.

Section 4. The Minister shall be a member *ex officio* of all Boards, committees, and organizations of the Church but shall be without vote except in the business meetings of the Church.

#### **ARTICLE XI: COMMITTEE ON MINISTRIES**

Section 1. The Committee on Ministries shall support and advance the Congregation's ministry shared by the lay leadership and Minister working collaboratively to serve the Congregation and the community. The Committee on Ministries shall report directly to the Board. The Committee on Ministries shall meet on a regular basis, with a minimum of six meetings a year.

Section 2. The Committee on Ministries shall be composed of five members. Members shall be designated as follows: one shall be selected by the Minister; one shall be appointed by the Board; and three shall be elected by the Congregation through its normal election procedures. Members shall serve for terms of three years and no more than two consecutive terms. Section 3. The Committee shall elect its Chair and Co-Chair. The Minister shall be an *ex-officio* non-voting member of the Committee.

Section 4. Upon the selection of a new or interim Minister, s/he shall, within 90 days, appoint a member to serve on the Committee on Ministries to replace the appointment made by the previous Minister. When this appointment is made, the member selected by the previous Minister shall resign. This new appointee will fulfill the term of the previous member.

Section 5. The Committee shall serve in a consulting and advisory capacity to the settled or interim Minister and, when necessary, provide a channel for congregational concerns relating to the Minister and a venue for resolving these issues. When functioning in this capacity, Committee meetings shall be closed and proceedings considered confidential.

Section 6. The Committee shall provide input at the beginning of each church year as the Board sets annual goals for the life of the congregation and as the Minister sets goals for his/her professional development, and shall provide assessment of these goals on a continuing and annual basis as an agent of the Board.

#### **ARTICLE XII: PUBLIC MINISTRY COMMITTEE**

Section 1. The Public Ministry Committee (PMC) shall coordinate the selection of actions and efforts that exercise the moral authority of DUUC and demonstrate our shared values in the larger community. The Committee shall: (1) provide education and support for public ministry within the DUUC community, including studying social justice issues with the potential purpose of reporting to the congregation for a congregational vote; (2) receive requests from individual church members or groups to endorse and/or sponsor specific social actions in the name of the church as a whole; (3) decide whether requests: (a) reflect

the shared values of DUUC and are in DUUC's best interests. (b) comply with IRS 501c3 regulations; (c) are respectful of the views and values of the community at large including potential dissenting views; and (4) approve or deny, in writing, the request.

Section 2. The PMC shall report directly to the Trustee at Large whose portfolio includes this responsibility. The PMC shall meet on a regular basis, with a minimum of six meetings a year. The committee shall publicize proposals under consideration at least one week prior to the meeting when they will be considered. The committee in consultation with the President of the Board may consider urgent matters. The committee will report regularly to the board and to the congregation on proposals received, pending, approved, or actions taken.

Section 3. The PMC shall be composed of five members elected by the congregation from a slate offered by the Nominating Committee and elected through congregational election procedures. Terms will be staggered. Members shall serve for terms of three years and no more than two consecutive terms.

Section 4. Statements of Conscience. Written statements intended to express the position of DUUC on matters of public concern require study and congregational dialogue before a congregational vote; approval of these position papers shall require 75 percent of the church membership to vote in favor of adopting them. Voting on the position will be by ballot with absentee ballots permitted. The statements, when released publicly, shall indicate that at least three-quarters of the congregation approved, with dissenting views noted.

### **ARTICLE XIII: RESERVED**

### **ARTICLE XIV: DIRECTOR/MINISTER OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (DRE/MRE)**

Section 1. Selection of the Director/Minister of Religious Education shall be made by the Board with consultation from the Youth RE committee.

Section 2. The DRE/MRE shall be a member *ex officio* of the Youth Religious Education Committee and shall be an *ex officio*, non-voting member of the Board. The DRE/MRE shall have a vote in the business meetings of the Church provided the DRE/MRE has met the membership requirements as defined in the Membership Policies and Procedures.

### **ARTICLE XV: ORDINATION AND SPONSORSHIP**

Section 1. Ordination is the affirmation of an individual's call, commitment and preparation for ministry in the Unitarian Universalist tradition. Historically, in the UU system of polity, the local Church is the only body empowered to perform ordination. When the Board receives a written request for ordination, the Board shall appoint an Ordination Examination Committee as specified in the Ordination Policy. Upon receipt of a positive recommendation, approval by the Board and by a majority of those present and voting at a duly called business meeting of the Congregation, a committee to plan the ordination and reception shall be formed.

### **ARTICLE XVI: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

The rules contained in "Robert's Rules of Order" most current edition shall govern the business conduct of the Church in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this Constitution and any special rules of order the Church may adopt. None of the provisions of this Constitution shall be set aside in the conduct of the business of the Church. However, Robert's Rules provides for the waiving of procedural rules by a two-thirds vote. Robert's Rules of Order pertaining to speaking shall apply.

### **ARTICLE XVII: DISSOLUTION OF THE CHURCH**

In case of the dissolution of this Church, all its properties, real and personal, after paying all just claims upon it, shall be conveyed to, and rest in, the MidAmerica Region of Unitarian Universalist Association or its successor or successors, to be used in fostering the growth of Unitarian Universalism in the MidAmerica Region.

#### **ARTICLE XVIII: ENDOWMENT FUND**

An Endowment Fund shall be established to encourage, receive, and administer special gifts in a manner consistent with the purpose of the DuPage Unitarian Universalist Church and shall be further defined by the enabling resolution adopted on January 12, 1992 as found in the Policies and Procedures Repository.

#### **ARTICLE XIX: AMENDMENTS**

Section 1. Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed by the Board or upon written petition to the Clerk by 15 percent of voting members of the Church. Amendments so proposed by the Board or by members shall be discussed at a subsequent meeting of the Board, open to all members of the Church, with the specific proposed amendments announced to the Congregation two weeks in advance of the meeting. The proposed amendments may be modified by the Board at this time but in the case of those submitted by petition, only with the approval of a majority of the petitioners present at the meeting.

Further amendments germane to the proposed amendments may then be proposed by written petition to the Clerk by 15 percent of voting members of the Church within two weeks following the meeting. All proposed amendments shall then be presented at a business meeting of the Church, with specific amendments stated in notices of the meeting. The Constitution may then be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members eligible to vote and present at a business meeting of the Church. Perfecting amendments may be approved at the same meeting, provided the resulting amendment neither violates the general intent nor extends the scope of the proposal stated in the notices of the meeting.

Section 2. Copies of this Constitution, as adopted by the Church, shall be provided upon request to members of the Church and the Constitution shall be available on the official Church website. Each person received into membership is to be notified how to access a copy of the Constitution.