

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY: EAST
CONSTITUTION, Amended to May 21, 2017

Article I – Name

The corporate name of this organization shall be:

Unitarian Universalist Society: East.

It may be referred to herein also as UUS: East, UUS: E, or the Society.

Article II – Mission

Unitarian Universalist Society: East is a welcoming, liberal religious community. Through shared ministry, we care for one another and nurture the search for truth and meaning as part of lifelong spiritual growth. We are committed to living our Unitarian Universalist Principles in our daily lives, including working for justice and peace, and living in harmony with the earth.

Article III – Affiliation

UUS: East shall be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and of the Unitarian Universalist district in which it is located.

Article IV – Membership

Section 1. Any person may become a member upon satisfying the conditions set forth from time to time by the Policy Board upon advice of the Membership Committee.

Section 2. All Active and Student members, as defined by Membership Committee Guidelines, having been members for a period of one month, shall have the right to vote at all duly called meetings of the Society (may be referenced to herein as ‘Voting Members’). Only Active members may serve as committee chairpersons and in elected positions. The Society shall report only Active members to the UUA.

Article V – Inclusion

UUS: East affirms and promotes the full participation of all persons without regard to race, color, gender, physical or mental challenge, affectional or sexual orientation, class, or national origin.

Article VI – Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Society shall be July 1 through June 30.

Article VII – Meetings of the Society

Section 1. The Sunday services and other religious meetings of the Society shall be open to the public.

Section 2. The Society shall hold its Annual Meeting prior to June 1 to do the following:

- Hear reports
- Elect officers, elect members-at-large and chairpersons to the Policy Board
- Elect chairpersons to the Program Council
- Approve the annual budget
- Attend to any other business

A quorum consists of fifteen percent (15%) of the Active Members.
(Updated 21 May 2017)

Section 3. The Policy Board shall meet monthly. A quorum is a majority of the Board in office. The President or a majority of the Board may call special Board meetings.

Section 4. The Program Council shall meet at least quarterly. A quorum consists of a majority of the Council Chairs in office.

Section 5. The Society shall hold Congregational Meetings from time to time to hear and/or act on specific policies or issues that may require full membership participation. These normally called Congregational Meetings, which include the Annual Meeting (Article VII, Section 2), must be announced in writing at least twenty days prior to the scheduled meeting date. A quorum consists of fifteen percent (15%) of the Society's Active Members.
(Updated 21 May 2017)

Section 6. Special Congregational Meetings may be called by the Clerk at the request, in writing, of at least ten percent (10%) of the Society's Voting Members. Notice for all special Congregational Meetings must be announced at least ten (10) days prior to the scheduled meeting date. This notice shall specify the reason for the meeting, and no business other than that specified shall be transacted.

Section 7. The Society shall publish all notices of the Congregational Meetings and Board nominations by posting a notice prominently at the entrance of the place where the services of the Society are held, and mailing a copy of said notice and/or nominations to each member of the Society separately or placing such notice on the first page of the Newsletter.

Section 8. All Congregational Meetings of the Society shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. All other meetings as outlined within Article VII may be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order as agreed to by the facilitator and attendees. All meetings of the Society as outlined within Article VII are open to all members of the Society.

Section 9. Members may opt to receive meeting notices electronically in lieu of regular mail notification by notifying the Society's office administrator. If a valid electronic mail address is not on file, then a hard copy will be mailed to that member.

(Approved 21 May 2016)

Article VIII – The Policy Board

Section 1. There shall be a Policy Board with the responsibility for the program and property of the Society. The Policy Board shall consist of the four officers (President, Vice President, Clerk, and Treasurer) the Chairperson of the Building and Grounds Committee, the Chairperson of the Personnel Committee, the Chairperson of the Communications and Technology Committee, and three (3) Members-at-Large. Each Board member may vote on matters that come before the Policy Board. The Minister, the Director of Religious Education, the Music Director and the Chairperson of the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee shall be ex-officio members without the right to vote. The Society shall elect the Policy Board at its Annual Meeting (Article VII, Section 2).

(Updated 21 May 2017)

Section 2. Board Members and officers are elected to the Policy Board for two-year terms with the exception of one Member-at-Large who is elected annually. All terms of office shall follow the Society's fiscal year.

- Elected in even numbered years: Vice President, Clerk, and one Member-at-Large.
- Elected in odd numbered years: President, Treasurer, Chairperson of the Personnel Committee, Chairperson of the Building and Grounds Committee, Chairperson of the Communications and Technology Committee, and one Member-at-Large.
- Elected annually: one Member-at-Large.

(Updated 21 May 2017)

Section 3. Board Members may serve on the Board for up to six (6) consecutive years. Board Members may serve in one office for up to four (4) consecutive years.

Section 4. The Policy Board is responsible for the general operation, program, and property of the Society and shall:

- Direct the Society's business affairs and ensure compliance with all local, State and Federal laws.
- Manage all human resource functions relevant to the Society's employees in accordance with applicable labor laws and UUA guidelines, except the Society's minister.
- Negotiate and execute the contract with the Society's minister, subject to the approval of the Congregation.
- Hire an interim minister, if needed, to fill a vacancy in the position of Minister.

- Establish guidelines for the use of Society buildings or facilities, including the portion of the property established as a memorial garden for the interment of cremated remains.
- Establish operating policies, priorities, and long-range plans.
- Authorize cumulative expenses outside of the approved budget that exceed 1% (authorized by the Finance Committee), but do not exceed five percent (5%) of the total approved budget in a fiscal year.
- Conduct, or cause to be conducted, a review of the accounts of the Treasurer at the time a new Treasurer takes office or begins a new term and may direct a full audit at any time.

Any additional expense in excess of five percent (5%) of the budget must be authorized by the Society's Voting Members at a duly called Congregational Meeting. No Society property in excess of a current market value of five percent (5%) of the current annual budget may be disposed of without the approval of the congregation at a duly called Congregational Meeting.

Article IX – Duties of Policy Board Elected Members and its Standing Committees

Section 1. The President presides at all business meetings of the Society and the Board. The President is an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee and the Ministerial Search Committee. The President shall represent the Society on all appropriate occasions.

Section 2. The Vice-President acts in the place of the President during the President's absence and performs such duties as may be delegated by the President. The Vice President shall be the Chairperson of the Program Council and shall be responsible for maintaining the Standing Committee Listing by updating this document as committee responsibilities are changed. (Article XIII)

Section 3. The Clerk shall:

- Keep minutes of all Policy Board and Society meetings.
- Receive and maintain all minutes and transactions of the Program Council.
- Assure proper notice of all Congregational and Policy Board Meetings and affairs to be voted on.
- Perform other such duties as may be delegated by the President.
- Maintain the Policy Manual by adding, removing, or modifying existing policies as they are voted on by the Policy Board. (Article XIII)

All records of the Society shall remain the property of the Society.

Section 4. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the following:

In conjunction with the bookkeeper, the Treasurer shall

- Receive and safe keep all money and other property of the Society entrusted to the Treasurer's care, and disburse it under the direction and to the satisfaction of the Policy Board.

- Keep a complete account of the finances of the Society in books which shall remain the property of the Society, and which shall be opened for inspection at any time to the Officers or duly appointed auditors.
- Render a current financial statement at each regular meeting of the Policy Board, at the Annual Meeting of the Society, and upon request at other duly called meetings as deemed appropriate.
- Each January, furnish an annual statement of contributions to each contributor.
- Be a member of the Finance Committee and serve as its Chairperson.

The Treasurer shall be bonded at the expense of the Society.

If the Board appoints an Assistant Treasurer or collector, such appointee shall not be an officer of the Society. Bond shall be furnished such appointee at the expense of the Society.

Section 5. The Finance Committee shall propose financial ways and means. It shall prepare and present the annual budget to the Policy Board and then to the Society at the Annual Meeting. It may authorize non-budgeted expenditures of up to one per cent (1%) of the annual budget.

Section 6. The Buildings and Grounds Committee shall care for the Society's property and grounds.

Section 6A. The Memorial Garden Committee is empowered to draw up and implement policies and fees for the use of the Memorial Garden and to enter into contracts related to the interment of cremated remains.

Section 7. The Personnel Committee shall perform all Human Resource tasks for the Society.

Section 8. Members-At-Large may chair ad hoc committees and perform such other duties as delegated by the President, Vice President, or the Policy Board.

Section 9. The Communications and Technology Committee shall maintain all technology equipment and manage internal/external communications.
(Approved 21 May 2017)

Article X – The Program Council and its Standing Committees

Section 1. There shall be a Program Council which promotes communication among committees and the Policy Board. It initiates, coordinates, and promotes special Society programs. It shall be composed of the Vice President, the Program Council Member-at-Large, the Program Council Clerk, and the chairpersons of standing committees as defined on the Standing Committee List. The Vice President shall preside over its meetings. Each of these persons, including the Vice President, shall have the right to vote on Program Council matters.

(Approved 30 May 2009, updated 3 August 2010, and 6 November 2010)

Section 2. Changes to the Standing Committee List may be proposed to and approved by the Policy Board from time to time. However, no committee will become a voting member of the Program Council until its chairperson has been elected by the Society or appointed by the Policy Board prior to the next Congregational Meeting. Program Council committee chairpersons must be members in good standing of UUS: E. Terms shall be staggered to assure Program Council continuity. Terms of co-chairs will be staggered so that only one co-chair is elected in a given year.

Section 3. Program Council Members may serve on the Program Council for up to six (6) consecutive years. Program Council Members may serve in one office for up to four (4) consecutive years.

Section 4. Program Council Committee chairpersons shall actively seek new committee members every year. A member may serve on up to two standing committees at one time. The chairperson of each committee shall submit to the Board a roster of committee members by the October Board meeting of each year. Each standing committee shall prepare a plan of its key objectives and activities for the church fiscal year and will present a written plan to the Policy Board no later than the 31st of October of each year. (Approved 30 May 2009, updated 4 August 2010, 6 November 2010)

Section 5. Members of the Membership Committee must be Voting Members of the Congregation. (Approved 21 May 2017)

Article XI – Nominating and Leadership Development Committee

Section 1. The Nominating and Leadership Development Committee (NLDC) shall present to the Annual Meeting a list of nominees for the Society offices to be filled that year. The Nominating and Leadership Development Committee shall meet throughout the year to fill positions designated by the Policy Board, including those that become vacant during the year. All candidates are submitted to the Policy Board for approval prior to presentation at the Annual Meeting. Appointees to positions vacated during the year shall hold office for the remainder of the term of the vacated position. The NLDC shall also support and nurture leadership.

Section 2. The Nominating and Leadership Development Committee shall consist of seven Members of the Society, all of whom shall serve for two-year terms, such that three are elected in even years and four are elected in odd years.

Section 3. The Nominating and Leadership Development Committee shall elect its own chairperson who shall consult with the President throughout the Nominating process. The President shall act as liaison to the Policy Board, staff, and committees as needed by the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee.

Section 4. No more than two members of the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee may be nominated to serve on the newly selected Policy Board and Program Council.

Section 5. The Nominating and Leadership Development Committee shall present a slate of seven Voting Members for a Ministerial Search Committee when required (Article XII, Section 2).

Article XII – Minister

Section 1. The duties of the minister include those usually associated with the office of a parish minister in fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association. Such duties generally include: leading the congregation in worship and other activities that nurture spiritual growth; providing counsel and pastoral care; and participating in membership development, religious education, and community outreach activities.

- The Society encourages the minister to continue professional development, to assist Society members in the development of leadership skills, and to encourage lay initiative and involvement in societal affairs.
- The Society shall accord the minister the freedom to express his or her viewpoint when in the pulpit or at other public venues.

Section 2. A Ministerial Search Committee shall be nominated by the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee and appointed by the congregation at a duly called Congregational Meeting to search for a candidate for the position of Minister to the Society. The Ministerial Search Committee shall consist of seven members of the Society. The Committee will limit their search to ministers in fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association and will present their candidate to a duly called Congregational Meeting.

Section 3. Election of the Minister shall be by a three-fourths vote of the Voting Members of the Society present at a duly called Congregational Meeting.

Section 4. The Minister may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the Voting Members of the Society present at a duly called Congregational Meeting called for the purpose. In this event, the Minister's salary shall be continued for three months after an affirmative vote.

Section 5. The Minister shall give three months notice before the effective date of a resignation.

Section 6. A Committee on Ministry shall be nominated by the Minister and appointed by the Policy Board to advise the minister on matters concerning the ministry of the Society and to act, as needed, as an instrument of communication between the Minister, the Policy Board and members of the Society. The Committee on Ministry shall be composed of five persons and shall meet at least quarterly. Members of this committee will be appointed for staggered two-year terms with three appointed in even numbered

calendar years and two appointed in odd numbered calendar years. The Minister shall submit names for Policy Board consideration as necessary to form the committee in a given year. Members may not serve more than six consecutive years.

Section 7. The same acquisition process shall apply to Assistant Ministers, Religious Education Ministers, Social Justice Ministers, etc., as is outlined for Parish Ministers in Section 1 through 6 of this Article.
(Updated 6 November 2010).

Article XIII – Auxiliary Documents

The Society shall retain a Policy Manual and a Standing Committee Listing. Copies shall be kept in the Society's administrative office and shall be available to any member of the Society.

The Policy Manual is a compilation of the Society's policies as approved by the Policy Board.

The Standing Committee Listing is an outline of all standing committee responsibilities.

Article XIV – Amendments

The Society may change this Constitution by a two-thirds vote of the Society at a duly called Congregational Meeting. The meeting notice shall include the proposed changes.

Article XV – Dissolution

In the event this Society ceases to function and the membership votes to dissolve the corporation at a duly called Congregational Meeting, the assets of the Society shall be distributed to the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Constitution amendment dates include 1 April 1977, 1984, August 1986, 27 October 1989, 12 January 1992, 23 October 1999, 14 October 2000, 19 May 2001, 10 January 2003, 23 October 2004, 21 May 2005, 2 February 2008, 17 May 2008, 30 May 2009, 6 November 2010, 21 May 2011, 21 May 2016, 21 May 2017.