

Bylaws Of The Unitarian Universalist Church of Indianapolis, Inc.

**Adopted: May 2005 congregational meeting
Amended: Nov 2006, Nov 2009, Jan 2013, May 2014**

Article I Name

The name of this church shall be the Unitarian Universalist Church of Indianapolis, Inc.

Article II Purpose

The purpose of this church is to create a religious community of warm hearts, open minds and helping hands. Through worship, education, friendship and social action, we nurture our spiritual growth, help those in need and inspire one another to develop and live out our personal beliefs.

Article III Membership

Membership is open to any person eighteen years of age or older (see youth exception) who is in sympathy with the church's vision and mission as well as the principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association. Members will contribute to the church through attendance, service, and annual pledge of financial support. It is specifically understood that membership is open to all persons regardless of national origin, gender, race, color, age, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Those persons considering membership are requested to follow the "Path to Membership" formulated by the Membership Committee before signing the membership book. Voting privileges shall begin upon the ninety first day after signing the membership book and making an annual pledge.

Youth exception -- Membership is open to any youth 15 to 17 years old who is enrolled in the junior high school or high school class, has completed the Coming of Age program or is recommended by the Director of Religious Education, and makes a pledge of financial support to the church. Youth members will contribute to the church through attendance, service, and annual pledge of financial support. Voting privileges shall begin upon the ninety first day after signing the membership book and making an annual pledge.

Membership in this church may be terminated in one of three ways: (1) The member may resign by giving notice to the Membership Committee. (2) The member may request a change to Friend or Returning Visitor status by giving notice to the Membership Committee. (3) The Membership Committee shall review the church membership list annually, usually during the Stewardship campaign. Those members who have been absent from all church activities for a year or more shall then be contacted to determine if they have continued interest in the church. The Membership Committee shall report to the Board of Trustees if no interest is indicated, and no pledge is forthcoming, and the Board shall terminate the membership.

Article IV Denominational Affiliation

The church shall be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association and of the MidAmerica Region of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. It is the intention of this church to make financial contributions equal to its full fair share as determined by the Association and the MidAmerica Region of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Article V Congregational Meetings

Business meetings of the congregation shall be held each year in fall, winter and spring at such time and place as shall be fixed by the Board of Trustees provided that the Congregation is given a minimum of 30 days written notice of such meeting. Special business meetings may be called by the Board of Trustees, the minister or at the written request of 10% of the membership. The business to be transacted at all meetings shall be set forth in advance in the church newsletter, the UU Eye; specifically, the Leadership Fulfillment Committee shall publish its slate of candidates for officers and trustees prior to the spring meeting. Twenty-five (25%) percent of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

At the spring meeting the membership shall:

- Elect a President, a Vice President, a Treasurer and an Assistant Treasurer to take office.
- Elect two Trustees of six to serve three year terms on a rotating basis starting at the first board meeting after the spring meeting.
- Elect members of the Special Funds Committee for staggered terms of three years in accordance with the bylaws.
- Adopt the final budget.
- Receive reports of the past year.

Nominations for any of the above positions may be made from the floor provided the consent of the nominee has been obtained.

At the winter meeting the membership shall elect delegates and alternatives to the MidAmerica Region Annual Meeting. Delegates and alternates to the UUA General Assembly may be elected at the winter meeting, the spring meeting, or a special Congregational Meeting.

Article VI Officers, Trustees and Committee Chairs

The Board of Trustees shall have general charge of the property of the church and have authority to appoint committees and task forces not otherwise established by the Bylaws. With guidance from the congregation, the Board shall establish and monitor progress on the vision and annual goals for the church. The Board will set policy, engage in planning, and administer the affairs of the church. The Board annually will recommend a budget to the congregation. No single expenditure of money, outside of the budget, of more than 3 percent of the budget may be made without the vote of the membership.

The Board shall consist of nine members elected by the congregation: three officers and six trustees. The officers shall be the president, vice president and treasurer. The congregation shall elect persons, who shall be members of the church, to fill open positions on the board and officers at the spring congregational meeting, and those elected shall take office at the completion of the spring meeting. The officers shall serve two-year terms. Trustees shall serve three-year terms, with two trustees elected each year. At the first board meeting after the spring congregational meeting, the board shall elect a secretary from among the six trustees. The president shall have been a member of the board in the church year before being elected president. No person shall serve on the Board for more than six consecutive years, except the president may serve a seventh year if necessary to complete a two-year term. No person who has served on the Board shall be eligible to serve again until two years have passed since that person last served.

The Board shall elect a member of the church to fill the position of any Officer or Trustee who cannot complete his or her elected term, until the next congregational business meeting when a successor shall be elected to complete the unexpired term. The president shall be empowered to designate

replacement delegates to the General Assembly in the event those elected are unable to attend.

The Program Team shall implement the church's vision, supervise the church's programs, coordinate the activities and schedules of committees, and encourage innovative programs and activities that anticipate and meet the needs of the congregation. The Program Team shall recommend to the congregation annually budgets for its constituent committees.

The Program Team shall be chaired by a member of the Board to be selected by the Board annually. Membership shall consist of one representative of each major group of church committees, as shall from time to time be established by the Board. By July 1 of each year, each group of committees represented on the Program Team shall convene to select its representative, who serves for a one-year term.

Article VII The Minister

The minister shall be called upon recommendation of the Ministerial Search Committee and the Board of Trustees and by a four-fifths (4/5) majority of the voting members of the church present at any meeting legally called for the purpose, quorum for such a vote to be constituted by 50% of the voting members rather than 25% of the voting members as specified in Article V.

The minister shall be responsible for the conduct of worship within the church and the church's spiritual interests and affairs. The minister shall have freedom of the pulpit as well as freedom to express his or her opinion outside the pulpit. The minister shall be an ex officio, non-voting member of the Board of Trustees and Program Team.

The minister may be dismissed by a majority vote of the church present and voting at any annual meeting or any meeting legally called for the purpose. A quorum for such meeting to be constituted by 50% of the voting members rather than 25% of the voting members as called for in Article V.

In the event of the minister's dismissal, his or her salary and allowance shall be continued three months after date of dismissal. Should the minister offer his or her resignation, three month's notice must be given at the time the resignation is made, except as the Board of Trustees may allow an interval of less time.

Article VIII Inclusion

The church does not discriminate on the basis of national origin, gender, race, color, age, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity but our intent is to go further and foster a climate of purposeful inclusion of all.

Article IX Fiscal Year

The fiscal year shall end June 30.

Article X Amendments

These bylaws, insofar as allowed by law, may be amended or replaced at any meeting of the church by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present and voting. Notice of any proposed change shall be contained in the notice of the meeting.

Article XI Endowment Fund

The Endowment Fund shall be administered by the Special Funds Committee. Gifts and bequests to the Fund shall accumulate until the principal amount of \$250,000 is achieved, after which the income generated may be expended.

When the congregation receives a bequest that is not designated by the testator for a specific purpose, then the funds will be divided between the church's general and endowment funds in the following ways.

- For the bequest of up to \$10,000 -- 100% goes to the general fund
- For the portion of the bequest between \$10,001 to \$40,000 -- 50% goes to the general fund, 50% to Endowment Fund
- For the portion of the bequest above \$40,000 -- 25% goes to the general fund, 75% to Endowment Fund

This policy can be overridden on a case-by-case basis by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a congregational meeting for the purpose of funding special needs that the congregation might not otherwise be able to afford, either at the recommendation of the board of trustees or as a result of a petition by at least ten members of the congregation.

The Finance Committee and Treasurer shall be the custodian of the Endowment Fund. They shall report on a quarterly basis to the Board and report to the spring congregational meeting and shall render a full and complete account of the administration of the fund during the preceding year.

Article XII Community Beacon Fund

The Community Beacon Fund shall be established to fund projects in the community proposed by friends, members, and committees of the church. One percent of the annual paid pledges shall be allocated to the fund, which may accept gifts and bequests. The Fund shall be governed by the Special Funds Committee. The Special Funds committee shall approve or recommend for approval projects based on the following criteria: number of church members and friends involved; consciousness raising for the church and Unitarian Universalism; our vision as a community beacon; and human needs. To be approved, projects must involve members and friends of the church. The committee may approve grants less than \$1,000; grants of amounts from \$1,000 to \$2,000 shall be recommended by the committee and shall be approved by the Board of Trustees; larger grants shall be recommended by the committee and approved by the congregation.

The Finance Committee and Treasurer shall be the custodian of the Community Beacon Fund. They shall report on a quarterly basis to the Board and report to the spring congregational meeting and shall render a full and complete account of the administration of the fund during the preceding year.

Article XIII Special Funds Committee

The Special Funds Committee shall solicit, receive, review and approve proposals for funding of grants from the Beacon Fund, the Endowment Fund, and other funds as designated by the congregation or the Board of Trustees. The committee shall develop guidelines for grant applications and for the approval process. The committee shall solicit and develop a list of potential grant projects for the funds. The operations of the committee and the guidelines and approval process they adopt shall conform to criteria established for the funds in these Bylaws, in Congregational Resolutions and in the Church Manual.

The Special Funds Committee shall consist of five members of the church elected by the membership for staggered three year terms. No member may serve more than two consecutive terms, but a member who has served two terms may be elected again after a one-year lapse in membership. The committee shall annually select its chairperson, who shall not serve more than one consecutive term. The minister and vice president shall be non-voting advisory members of the Special Funds Committee.

Article XIV Dissolution

Should this church cease to function and the membership vote to disband, any assets net of liabilities will be transferred to the Unitarian Universalist Association, one of its affiliate organizations or the MidAmerica Region of the Unitarian Universalist Association, to be used for general Unitarian Universalist purposes. This transfer is to be made in full compliance with whatever laws are applicable.