

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION  
OF GRAND TRAVERSE**

**BYLAWS**

Adopted at the Annual Meeting, April 23, 1979.  
Amended 1980, 1981, 1986, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1996, 1997,  
1998, 2000, 2001, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2010, 2011, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2022

**ARTICLE I. NAME**

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Grand Traverse

**ARTICLE II. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Congregation shall be to encourage and strengthen each other in the search of free minds toward a valid experience of liberal religion. To further this purpose this Congregation declares and affirms its special responsibility to promote the full participation of all in our community in activities and endeavors without regard to race, color, gender, disability, affectional or sexual orientation, age, gender expression, class or national origin.

**ARTICLE III. DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION**

This Congregation shall be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association and of the Unitarian Universalist Mid America Region. It is the intention of this Congregation to make annual financial contributions equal to its full fair share as determined by the Association and the District.

**ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP**

**A.** Membership is open to all sixteen (16) years of age or older who find value in the purpose of this Congregation and have signified their commitment by signing the membership book in the presence of the Spiritual Leader or a Board member. Membership is open to all without regard to race, color, gender, disability, affectional or sexual orientation, gender expression, class or national origin. Membership entails a covenantal relationship with the Congregation by actively supporting its mission through attendance, service, and financial contributions.

**B.** Membership carries with it the privileges of voting on matters affecting the Congregation, serving in any elected or appointed leadership positions, and serving as a delegate to the annual meetings of the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Mid America Region. These privileges take effect after four weeks of membership. All persons are welcome to take part in Sunday services, serve on committees, and participate in activities of this Congregation without regard to membership.

C. Members shall be entitled to all rights and privileges of membership immediately, except that the right to vote shall take effect four (4) weeks after signing the register.

D. The annual membership count reported to the UUA shall be determined in January of each year according to the Board's Membership Policy.

## ARTICLE V. MEETINGS

A. **Sunday Services.** The time and place of the regular services of the congregation shall be determined by the board of Trustees.

B. **Annual Meeting.** The Annual Meeting shall be held each year before or no later than the first Sunday in June at the time and place fixed by the Board of Trustees, which shall give the membership written notice ten (10) days from the date of mailing. Notice may be by email if the Member has agreed to be notified in this way. The notice of the meeting shall include a slate of candidates for the elected positions to be filled, proposed Bylaw amendments, a proposed annual budget, and such other agenda items as the Board determines. The Annual Meeting shall elect officers and trustees. Twenty percent (20%) of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

C. **Special Meetings.** Special meetings may be called by the Board, or by petition to the Board, of 20% of the membership. Notice for the special meeting shall be in writing and mailed to each member of the Congregation ten (10) days in advance of the meeting, and shall include an agenda of the meeting. Notice may be by email if the Member has agreed to be notified in this way. A majority vote of those members present and voting shall be required to transact business unless otherwise specified by the Bylaws.

Thirty percent (30%) of the membership shall constitute a quorum for a special meeting except in instances regarding the calling or dismissing of a Spiritual Leader and incurring indebtedness, which require a quorum of 40%.

D. **Procedures.** Points of order raised in any meeting shall be resolved in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order unless contrary to present law and these Bylaws.

E. Members may request an absentee ballot from the Office Administrator if they will be unable to attend a Congregational meeting held to conduct business. The ballot must be returned to the office before the meeting commences. The absentee ballots shall be opened, counted, and included in the official count to establish a quorum.

## ARTICLE VI. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

A. **Method of election, composition, terms of office and removal from office.** A Board of Trustees, consisting of four Officers (President, President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer) and three Trustees at Large shall be elected by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting. The Members of the Board shall be elected as Trustees from the membership by a majority vote of a quorum. The Board shall select from among themselves the positions

of President, President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer. Terms of office begin July 1. Trustees may serve sequential terms. Trustees shall serve three-year terms. However, the offices of President and President-Elect shall be occupied for one year each, the President-Elect automatically proceeding to the position of President the second year and remaining as Trustee for the third. The Spiritual Leader shall serve as ex-officio member of the Board without a vote. Elected Members of the Board may be removed from office at the Annual Meeting or at a Special Meeting by a majority vote of a quorum.

**B. Purpose and Responsibilities.** The purpose of the Board of Trustees shall be to realize the mission statement and goals of the Congregation through visioning, goal setting, and oversight of the staff and committees. The responsibilities of the Board of Trustees shall be to

- Act as fiduciary in managing the property of the Congregation,
- Ensure proper management of the business affairs of the Congregation,
- Set annual Congregational goals in consultation with the Spiritual Leader,
- Establish processes for the assessment of the Congregation's goals,
- Approve all UUCGT policies, and
- Establish standing and ad hoc committees as needed to meet Congregational needs.

The duties of the Officers and Trustees shall be stated in the *Manual on Board, Staff, and Committees*, and shall undergo a formal review in even-numbered years.

**C. Meetings.** The Board shall meet at least nine (9) times a year. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the Board.

**D. Vacancies.** A vacancy in an office of the Board may be filled by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Board, for a term that shall continue until the next Annual Meeting.

**E. Staff Appointments.** The Board shall approve any appointments to staff positions, including but not limited to the Director of Lifespan Experience, the Office Administrator, and the Business Administrator. The Spiritual Leader shall oversee the staff with the exception of the Business Administrator, who will report jointly to the Treasurer and Spiritual Leader.

**F. Standing Committees.** The purpose and responsibility of standing committees shall be approved by the Board and set forth in the *Manual on Board, Staff, and Committees*. Standing committees shall submit a report to the Board annually, or more frequently if requested by the Board.

**G. Ad Hoc Committees.** Single purpose, temporary ad hoc committees, advisory groups, and work groups, may be established by the Board or by the various committees as needed. The appointer is responsible for determining an appropriate charge and duration, and this information should be promptly added to the *Manual on Board, Staff, and Committees*.

## **ARTICLE VII. FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION**

**A. Fiscal year.** The fiscal year of the Congregation shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30.

**B. Annual budget.** The Board of Trustees shall present a budget for consideration by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting. The annual budget is a fiscal document and may be amended by a majority vote of the Board so long as the result does not exceed the adopted budget by more than 15%.

**C. Indebtedness.** The Board shall not incur any debt in the name of the Congregation without an 80% vote of those members present at a properly convened meeting of the Congregation. The quorum for a meeting at which indebtedness is considered shall be 40% of the membership of the Congregation.

**D. Endowment Fund Committee.** The Congregation shall elect Directors of the Endowment Committee as provided in the amended resolution establishing the Endowment Committee.

## **ARTICLE VIII. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

The Leadership Development Committee shall present a slate of candidates for a vote at the Annual Meeting. The slate shall include candidates for open positions to be nominated from the congregation's voting membership. The Leadership Development Committee will present its slate on each of three (3) Sundays prior to the Annual Meeting. Any two (2) members of the Congregation may nominate, in writing to the Leadership Development Committee, not later than twenty-eight (28) days before the Annual Meeting, additional candidates for open positions.

## **ARTICLE IX. THE SPIRITUAL LEADER**

**A.** The Ministerial Search Committee shall recommend candidates for the position of Spiritual Leader to the Congregation. The Ministerial Search Committee shall consist of seven members, four elected by the Congregation and three appointed by the Board.

**B.** The Spiritual Leader shall be called upon recommendation of the Ministerial Search Committee by an 80% majority of the voting members of the Congregation present at any meeting legally called for the purpose as outlined in Article V, Section C. The quorum for such a meeting is 40% of the voting members.

**C.** The terms of employment shall be agreed upon by the Spiritual Leader and the Board of Trustees.

**D.** The Spiritual Leader may be dismissed by an eighty percent 80% majority vote of the qualified members of the Congregation present at any meeting legally called for the purpose as outlined in Article V, Section C. Quorum for such a meeting is 40% of the voting members.

E. The Spiritual Leader shall be responsible for nurturing, facilitating, and leading the Congregation's diverse intellectual and spiritual life, pastoral care and educational program. He/she shall serve as a consultant and professional resource for organizational matters and community outreach efforts of the Congregation. The Spiritual Leader shall have freedom of the pulpit as well as freedom to express his or her opinions outside the pulpit.

#### **ARTICLE X. THE COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY**

A Committee on Ministry of at least three (3) members shall be appointed by the Board in consultation with the Spiritual Leader for staggered terms of three years.

#### **ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENTS**

The Bylaws, so far as allowed by law, may be amended or repealed at a Special or Annual Meeting of the Congregation by a **67%** vote of members present and voting. Notice of any proposed change shall be contained in the notice of the meeting.

#### **ARTICLE XII. DISSOLUTION**

In the event of the dissolution of the Congregation, all outstanding debts shall be paid and the remaining assets, both real and personal, and including all property heretofore and hereinafter donated to said Congregation, shall become property of the Unitarian Universalist Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts, or its successor, subject to all applicable laws.

#### **ARTICLE XIII. ENDOWMENT FUND**

The UUCGT Endowment Fund (hereafter called the Fund) is hereby established **to create a reliable source of income in perpetuity** to enhance the mission of the Congregation **apart from the general operation of the congregation.**

- A. The Fund shall be administered by Five (5) Directors (hereafter called the Committee). Directors, nominated by the Leadership Development Committee, shall be elected for three (3) year staggered terms at the Annual Meeting. All Directors shall be voting members of the Congregation and shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive three (3) year terms.
- B. The Committee shall meet at least quarterly with a quorum consisting of three (3) Directors.
- C. A chairperson, financial secretary and recording secretary shall be elected from its members.
- D. In the event of a vacancy, the Board of Trustees may appoint a congregational member to fill the vacancy on an interim basis until a member is elected at the next Annual Meeting to fulfill the term of vacancy.

- E. The Committee shall give a financial report of the Fund at each Annual Meeting.
- F. Decisions to hold, sell, exchange, rent, lease, convert, invest, reinvest, and in all other respects to manage and control the assets of the Fund, are to be made by the Committee.
- G. Unrestricted gifts are encouraged. Restrictions designated by the donor will be reviewed and approved by the Committee before acceptance of the gift.
- H. Any bequest or memorial contribution, not otherwise specified, that comes to the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Grand Traverse shall be added to the UUCGT Endowment Fund.
- I. All assets are to be held in the name of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Grand Traverse Endowment Fund.

#### Distribution of Income

- A. The Principle of the FUND shall not be distributed but will be re-invested for Fund growth.
- B. Ninety percent (90%) of the income generated from the investment of the principle may be distributed annually by the Committee to enhance the mission of the Congregation **apart from the general operation of the congregation**. The recommendation of the Endowment Committee for the distribution of funds must be presented to the Board for their approval prior to disbursement.
- C. Exigency Clause  
In the event of temporary, difficult circumstances, the congregation may vote to use Fund monies for emergency expenditures. Such emergency expenditures would require a vote of 2/3 of the membership.