

**6th Edition January 2016 as approved by the Congregation at the January 17th, 2016 Annual Meeting
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF STOCKTON
219 North Pearl Street
Stockton, Illinois 61085**

Constitution and By-laws

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this religious organization shall be the “Unitarian Universalist Church of Stockton, Illinois.”

The original name of this church, The First Universalist Church of Stockton, Illinois, which was organized in December, 1899, may be used for public relations purposes.

ARTICLE II - SEAL

The church shall have an official seal bearing the words, “Unitarian Universalist Church of Stockton, Illinois.”

ARTICLE III - FELLOWSHIP

This church shall be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association and its MidAmerica Region, and pledges itself to cooperate and support measures which will foster and extend the interests of the denomination. At the same time this church maintains its congregational independence.

ARTICLE IV - PURPOSE

The purpose of this church shall be:

- a) To maintain a place of worship in accordance with Universalist and Unitarian traditions,**
- b) To provide opportunity for the study and practice of liberal religion,**
- c) To promote the spiritual and moral health of its members and the community in general,**
- d) To encourage and maintain freedom of religious thought and expression,**
- e) To advance the cause of liberal religion, and particularly the Unitarian Universalist denomination,**
- f) To promote social justice for the development of an economically just, multi-cultural, sexually equitable, and environmentally conscious democratic society.**

ARTICLE V – NONDISCRIMINATION

This congregation affirms and promotes the full participation of persons in all our activities and endeavors including membership, programming, hiring practices, and the calling of religious

professionals, without regard to race, color, gender, physical or mental challenge, sexual orientation, class, or national origin.

ARTICLE VI - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - Requirements

Any person who has attained the age of 16 may become a member of this church, provided that the person is in sympathy with its purpose as stated in Article IV and has signed the parish register in the presence of the minister or two members of the Board of Trustees.

Section 2 - Voting

Any individual who has been a member for 90 days shall have the right to vote on all questions at any business meetings of this church.

Section 3 - Records

It shall be the duty of the minister and a member of the Board of Trustees to maintain accurate records of the church membership.

Section 4 - Active and Inactive

Active members shall be those who attend services, or contribute to the financial support of the church, or give other evidence of their interest in the church.

Inactive members shall be those who for a period of one year or more have not attended services, or contributed to the financial support of the church, or given other evidence of their interest in the church.

Membership records will be updated by the minister and a member of the Board of Trustees in time for each annual meeting or any congregational meeting.

Section 5 - Termination

Any member may dissolve his/her membership by given written notice of his/her intention to do so to the Board of Trustees.

Membership in this church shall be terminated by withdrawal, transfer, death or by an inactive member joining another church.

The membership of any inactive member may be dissolved when in the opinion of the Board such action should be taken but only after the secretary has mailed to the member at his/her last known address a letter asking if she/he wishes to retain his/her membership and the reply is in the negative. No response to this inquiry after thirty days shall be deemed to be a resignation; and inability to mail such a letter to a member because their address is unknown, after a reasonable effort has been made to discover it, shall result in the termination of their membership.

ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS

Section 1 - Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of this church shall be held on a Sunday in January or at such time and place as shall be fixed by the Board of Trustees.

Section 2 - Special Meetings

Special meetings of this congregation may be called by the secretary upon request of the Board of Trustees, or by petition of ten members.

Special meetings shall consider only those questions specified in the call of the meeting.

Section 3 - Notice

All members of the church shall be notified in writing of the annual or special meetings at least 14 days prior to the date of said meeting. Such notice may be incorporated in a mailing of the church.

Section 4 - Quorum

Thirty per cent of the membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at the annual meeting, but a lesser number may meet and adjourn to another date.

Section 5-Voting

A majority of the qualified members present shall be required to carry any motion at a regular meeting. A sixty-six per cent vote of the qualified members present shall be required to carry any motion at a special meeting.

Election of a new minister shall be at a congregational meeting called for that purpose.

Election shall be by eighty-five per cent of those members present and voting.

Dismissal of a minister shall be at a special congregational meeting called for that purpose.

Dismissal shall be by seventy-five per cent of voting members present and voting by ballot.

The Board of Trustees shall determine whether voting on a specific motion will be by voice vote or ballot.

The Board of Trustees shall also determine whether or not absentee ballots will be provided for a specific motion.

Section 6 - Guests

Friends of the church who are not members shall be welcome at all meetings and shall be given the courtesy of the floor, at the discretion of the chair, with the exception of the Board of Trustee meetings (see By-Laws, Section 2).

Section 7 - Procedure

The rules contained in "Roberts' Rules of Order" (Revised) shall govern all meetings in matters not covered by this constitution and by-laws.

ARTICLE VIII - FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year shall begin January 1.

ARTICLE IX - BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Section 1 - Number

The Board of Trustees shall consist of the officers of this church; namely, the Moderator or the Co-Moderators, Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and two Stewards. The Board may have a youth representative as an optional member. The youth representative shall serve for a one-year term with full voting privileges.

Section 2- Term of Office

A moderator will be elected to a two-year term. Co-moderators will be elected to staggered two-year terms, with the understanding that one of them stand for a second term. Neither the moderator or the co-moderators shall serve more than four years.

The financial secretary shall be elected for a two-year term in the odd numbered years.

The secretary and treasurer shall be elected for a two-year term in the even numbered years.

The stewards shall be elected for two-year terms, one being elected each year.

Section 3 - Nomination and Election

The Board of Trustees shall appoint a nominating committee of three members who shall select a slate of nominees to be presented at the annual meeting. Other nominations may be made from the floor. The officers and stewards shall be elected at the annual meeting and shall hold office until their successors have been properly chosen.

Any trustee may resign by giving notice in writing to all trustees. Any trustee may be removed, with cause, by action of two-thirds of the trustees.

Section 4 - Vacancies

Vacancies shall be filled by the Board of Trustees until the next annual meeting when the congregation shall fill any unexpired terms by election.

Section 5 - Function

The Board shall have the general management of the affairs of the church. It shall authorize the payment of bills by the treasurer. It shall report the affairs of the church to the annual meeting and provide for the maintenance of the church's historical records. The Board shall have care and control of all property of the church, both real and personal, providing that the vote of two-thirds of the entire membership at any regular meeting, or at any special meeting called for that purpose, shall be required to affect the sale or other disposition of real estate. Membership may be represented in person or by written proxy for this purpose.

The Board shall be responsible for the appointment of committees and staff except the minister. The Board can hire an interim minister for one or two years, and for one year any other time-limited minister. After one year, the limited minister's contract must be renewed by a vote of the congregation.

All Board meetings are open to all members of the church. In order to address the Board, advanced approval is required.

ARTICLE IX - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1 –Moderator/Co-Moderators

The moderator/co-moderators shall preside at all business meetings of the church and Board, and represent the church on all appropriate occasions. During the absence of the moderator/co-moderators, the position shall be filled by the stewards in order of length of service on the Board. The moderator/co-moderators shall be ex-officio members of all committees except the nominating committee.

Section 2 - Secretary

The secretary shall keep records of all meetings of the church and of the Board of Trustees. She/he shall prepare the Official Notice of all meetings; prepare the reports which the church may be required to make to the denomination; have custody of all records, books, papers, etc. belonging to the church care of which is not otherwise provided for; and shall perform all other duties pertinent to the office of secretary. The secretary shall also maintain records covering all services provided by the church and the minister, and provide an update of membership status at the annual meeting and as requested throughout the year.

Section 3 - Treasurer

The treasurer shall hold in custody all funds of the church in such repository as the Board shall designate; keep an account of all receipts and expenditures; pay all bills duly approved by the Board; and report on the financial condition at the Board meetings and at the annual meetings. She/he shall keep a complete account of the finances of the church on books which shall remain the property of this church and which shall be open to inspection by the Board. His/her annual statement shall be audited by persons designated by the Board. The treasurer shall assume the role of Finance Committee chairperson.

Section 4 - Financial Secretary

The financial secretary shall receive all monies of the church, pay same to the treasurer and take his/her receipt therefore. She/he shall record contributions and other income, and keep confidential all records of individual pledges.

Section 5 – Stewards

The stewards shall serve as liaison to standing committees and any special committees.

ARTICLE X - THE MINISTER

The term minister may apply to a settled minister, acting minister, interim minister, or consulting minister (part-time minister). The Board of Trustees can hire an interim minister for one or two years. The Board can hire for one year any other time-limited minister; after one year's time, the time-limited minister's contract must be renewed by congregational vote.

Section 1 - Fellowship

The settled minister shall be in fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association, or be an applicant for such accreditation.

Section 2 - Length of Ministry

The settled minister shall be chosen for an indefinite period and an annual salary determined by a 85 per cent of the members present at any meeting of the congregation called for that purpose.

Section 3 - Termination of Ministry

The relationship between minister and church may be terminated by either upon three months notice.

Section 4 - Dismissal

A vote of 75 per cent of the members voting shall be necessary for his/her dismissal.

Section 5 - Committee Membership

The minister shall be a member ex-officio without vote of the Board of Trustees, all committees and organizations, with the exception of the Worship Committee, for which the minister has full authority and responsibility.

Section 6 – Recording of Rites and Passages

She/he shall inform the secretary of all new church members, of all christenings, dedications, marriages, funerals, and other services performed for the church and be responsible to the Board of Trustees for such records. These records shall include activities performed by the minister even if the participants are not members of this church, whether or not held on church premises.

Section 7 - Free Pulpit

This church shall maintain the tradition of a free pulpit and shall place no restrictions upon the teachings of its minister save those of an honest and scholarly search for truth.

Section 8 – Annual Review

The Moderator/Co-Moderators and the Committee on Ministry shall schedule an annual review, based on the agreed goals and objectives, on the each anniversary of employment.

ARTICLE XI - DISSOLUTION

Upon dissolution of this church, or in the event of non-use of the church for one year, title to all property shall automatically pass to the Unitarian Universalist Association of America of Boston, Massachusetts, or its successor.

ARTICLE XII - AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be adapted or amended by vote of two-thirds of its members at a duly convened meeting.

However, no alteration or amendment affecting the manner of voting on the disposition of church real property shall be valid unless two-thirds of the entire membership of the church concur therein.

ARTICLE XIII - BY-LAWS

By-laws may be adapted or amended by a simple majority of the votes cast at a duly convened meeting. A quorum for this meeting is as defined by the annual meeting requirement

ARTICLE I-BY-LAWS

Section 1 - Annual Budget

The Board shall prepare an annual budget and present it for the consideration of those present at the annual meeting.

Section 2 – Board of Trustee Meetings

The Board of Trustees shall meet monthly except during the vacation period, and at such other times as the moderator/co-moderators shall determine. Board meetings shall be open to members of the congregation.

Permission for non-Board members to address the Board must be made in advance with the moderator/co-moderators. The Board may meet in executive session only to discuss personnel matters or to receive legal advice.

Section 3 - Quorum

A majority of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum.

Section 4 - Convention Delegates

Delegates to conventions shall be selected by the Board.

ARTICLE II - MINISTER

Section 1 - Use of Church Building

Arrangements for all use of the church shall be made through the minister. In case of his /her absence, this duty shall be carried out by the moderator/co-moderators.

Section 2 – Rites of Passage

The Rites of Passage shall be administered to all who desire them.

ARTICLE III - STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1 - The Buildings and Grounds Committee shall:

- a)Consist of a minimum of three members,**
- b)Have immediate supervision and care of the real and personal property of the church, and**
- c)Be responsible for the repair and maintenance of all buildings and grounds.**

Section 2 - Music

The music committee shall arrange all matters pertaining to church music.

Section 3 - The Religious Education Committee shall:

- a)Be composed of a minimum three members, one of whom shall be the RE Director,**
- b)Become familiar with the long-range objectives of liberal religious education and some of the most important methods of realizing same;**

- c) Carry out a program for both youth and adults;**
- d) Assist in securing a RE director and teaching staff;**
- e) Together with the teaching staff develop a church school curriculum, standards and objectives;**
- f) Assist in obtaining adequate quarters, furnishings, equipment and supplies.**

Section 4 - The Worship Committee shall:

- a) Consist of a minimum three members,**
- b) Assist the minister in developing the most effective worship services,**
- c) Provide for visiting ministers or speakers during the absence of the regular minister or at such times as the church may be without the services of a regular minister.**

Section 5 – Membership Committee shall:

- a) Welcome newcomers and help them get acquainted, the minister.**
- b) Develop programs for attracting potential new members,**
- c) Assemble materials describing nature and principles of Unitarian-Universalism,**
- d) Plan programs of orientation for potential new members,**
- e) Assist the minister in developing recognition programs for new members,**
- f) Examine the membership roll, contacting those whose participation may be waning.**

Section 6 – Finance Committee shall:

- a) Consist of a minimum of the treasurer (chairman), financial secretary, and moderator/co-moderators,**
- b) Work with all standing committees to develop an annual budget to be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting,**
- c) Monitor the congregation's income, expenses, and makes regular reports to the board and the congregation,**
- d) Arrange for an annual audit by an independent individual or agency,**
- e) Obtain sufficient property and liability insurance for the church's officials and facilities.**

Section 7 – Committee on Ministry shall:

- a) Consist of a minimum of three members,**
- b) Meet regularly with the minister to review the responsibilities of the minister and the congregation in providing a mutually supportive environment,**
- c) Develop plans to ward off or repair any misunderstandings or problems,**
- d) Assist the minister in developing plans for his/her continuing education, sabbatical planning, or other professional development.**

Section 8 – Advisory Committee

The advisory committee shall consist of all available past moderators of the Board of Trustees and the current moderator/co-moderators. The senior past moderator shall preside at all meetings of this committee. All organizations of the church should feel free to seek the advice of this committee and the advisory committee should feel free to give advice discreetly as conditions warrant.

Section 9 – The Endowment, Memorial, and Gifts Committee shall:

- a) Consist of a minimum of three members, including the treasurer and two members appointed by the Board of Trustees. The appointed members will serve for a two-year term with their appointments staggered one year apart. Appointed members may serve a maximum of three consecutive years (six years) before giving up their seat on the committee for at least two years. The church Treasurer shall serve as chair of this committee.**
- b) Manage the congregation’s Endowment Fund and the Memorial Fund. The Endowment Fund will be the home for those donations intended to secure the long-term health of the congregation. The principal of this fund is to be untouchable except under the following conditions: If 75 per cent of the members present at a special meeting called for this purpose votes to withdraw funds, it shall be authorized. This meeting must meet all requirements for a special meeting of the congregation including quorum. In any given budget year, the maximum amount that can be taken from the endowment fund shall be the lesser of: 5% of the fund balance at the start of the previous calendar year, or the net earnings of the fund accrued during the previous calendar year. The Memorial Fund will be the home for those donations made for a specific near-term purpose by the donor and its principal can be used as needed, consistent with the wishes of the donor(s). The committee will establish policy documents, with board approval, to guide its gift acceptance and investment strategies for the endowment and memorial funds.**
- c) Maintain records of donations and their terms and conditions to assure that the donor’s wishes are followed.**
- d) Provide appropriate recognition for fund donors.**
- e) Meet at least quarterly; two members will constitute a quorum for conducting committee business.**
- f) Arrange for an audit of the Endowment Fund and the Memorial Fund at least every three years.**
- g) Report to the Board of Trustees at least twice a year and to the congregation at its annual meeting. Any member of the committee may request a meeting with the Board of Trustees at any of its monthly meetings.**
- h) Arrange for the distribution to local charities designated by the Board of Trustees any funds that remain in the Endowment Fund or Memorial Fund in the event of the dissolution of this church. Should title to this church pass to the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (see Constitution article XI), any monies left in these funds shall also pass to the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations or its successor.**

ARTICLE IV - OTHER COMMITTEES

The Board of Trustees is empowered to create such other special committees as they deem advisable or necessary.

This Constitution and By-Laws shall supersede our original Constitution adapted January 15, 1900, and all amendments made thereto up to and including those adopted on January 13, 1947, were read and adopted at a special congregational meeting held March 23, 1961 as well as those adopted in January, 1983 and January, 2009.

