

Bylaws of the Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Inc.

Article I – Bylaws

These are the Bylaws of the Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Incorporated, hereafter referred to as the Fellowship. They have been adopted by members of the Fellowship present at a special meeting called for the purpose of considering such bylaws. Due notice of said meeting was given to all members of the Fellowship, an incorporated association.

Article II – Purpose of Fellowship

The purpose of this Fellowship is to conduct a religious society for the free and tolerant quest of truth in religion and life. 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, affectional or sexual orientation, age, class, or national origin.

Article III – Congregational Authority

1. This Fellowship shall have a congregational form of government, which means that ultimate authority resides with the members. In practice the congregation delegates specific authority to named entities within the Fellowship (the Board of Trustees, the Ministerial Relations Committee and the Endowment Committee), while having the authority to override any decision made by these entities. In addition the congregation always reserves some decision-making authority to itself.
2. The decisions that the congregation reserves for itself include, but are not limited to, the following:
 1. The right to elect all persons holding elected positions.
 2. Final approval of the annual operating budget.
 3. The selection or termination of a minister.
 4. The right to amend the bylaws of the Fellowship.

Article IV – Membership

Section 1

1. Members, individually and collectively, are responsible for the work and activities of the Fellowship (except that work which the minister does) and for financial support of the fellowship.
2. Each member shall have one vote in the conduct of the affairs of the Fellowship. The Congregation shall strive to make decisions by consensus. If, after much discussion, it appears that consensus will not be reached, 90% of those present may agree by ballot, to vote by ballot, upon the matter being decided. A simple majority will carry the vote on the issue.
3. Any person sixteen years or older who is in sympathy with the purpose and programs of this Fellowship may become a member by signing the membership book in the presence of the minister or a member of the Board of Trustees.

Section 2

Names shall be removed from the roster of members for the following reasons:

1. A member asks to be removed
2. A member moves out of Humboldt County, unless on request the Board of Trustees votes to retain that person in membership
3. The Membership Committee is unable to obtain a positive response regarding membership intentions from a member who has not been active in the Fellowship in any way for over one year

Section 3

1. Those persons who do not fulfill the duties of membership but wish to maintain an affiliation with the Fellowship may be designated Inactive Members upon request or upon recommendation of the Membership Committee and vote of the Board of Trustees.
2. Inactive Members do not have a vote in the affairs of the Fellowship.

Article V – Affiliations and Meetings

1. This Fellowship shall be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and of the Pacific Central District of the UUA or its successor.
2. The regular meetings of the Fellowship for religious purposes shall be determined by the Fellowship itself, or by any person or persons designated by the Fellowship to do so.
3. The Annual Meeting shall be held each year sometime during the first fifteen days of March at such time and place as shall be fixed by the Board of Trustees.
4. Special congregational meetings may be called by the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees must call a special congregational meeting upon the written request of any five members of the Fellowship. The Business to be transacted at a special meeting shall be mentioned in the call of the meeting.
5. Informational meetings may be called by the Board when it is necessary to relay to the congregation urgent information. These meetings may be called by giving as much notice as possible and stating the topics to be discussed. The purpose of these meetings is to relay information only; no quorum is necessary and no consensus will be sought. These meetings must be followed by sending out the presented informational material to all members (i.e. by email, newsletter or a special mailing).

Reasonable notice shall be given of the time and place of the annual and any special meetings. Said meetings shall be held in Humboldt County, California, and if possible at the same place as the regular meetings of the Fellowship. Twenty percent of the voting members of the Fellowship shall constitute a quorum at such annual or special meetings.

ARTICLE VI – Board of Trustees and Fellowship Officers

1. The Board of Trustees shall be constituted of at least six members of the Fellowship, all of whom shall hold office for a term of two years and until their successors have been elected and qualified. The officers of the

Fellowship shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, all of whom shall hold their offices for two years and until their successors have been elected and qualified. The remainder of the Board shall be made up of Trustees at large. Their term of office shall commence on July 1 and end June 30.

2. The offices of the Fellowship may be filled by more than one person, if the individuals agree to share the position.
3. The offices of President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be trustees of the Fellowship by virtue of their election to those offices for a term of two years.
4. The office of President shall be shared by two members. One Co-President shall be elected in even-numbered years, and one Co-President shall be elected in odd-numbered years. The outgoing Co-President may serve an additional year, in an advisory role, as President Emeritus.
5. The office of Secretary shall be elected in even-numbered years; the offices of Vice President and Treasurer shall be elected in odd-numbered years.
6. If a Board member resigns or misses three meetings without prior notification, the position will be declared vacant. The Board is then empowered to appoint a replacement who shall hold office until the end of the current fiscal year. If the vacated term would have extended for another year, a replacement shall be elected for the remainder of that term at the annual meeting.
7. The congregation delegates to the Board of Trustees administrative responsibilities that include being in general charge of the property of the Fellowship, conducting all of its business affairs and controlling its administration, including the appointment of such committees as it may deem necessary. The Board of Trustees shall be responsible to the members and a decision of the members on any matter concerning the Fellowship shall be binding upon the trustees and they shall follow such decision.
8. The Co-Presidents of the Board are responsible for ensuring that the Board uses consensus decision-making in all of its deliberations. Should the Board be unable to reach consensus, they are subject to the provisions of Article

IV, Section 1 of these Bylaws. Co-Presidents shall review and discuss the consensus process at the first meeting of the Board following the special sessions described below.

9. The Board, including newly elected officers, shall meet in one or more special sessions in May and June each year to set goals, to make general plans, to establish a calendar, and to organize committees for the coming year.

Article VII – Elections and Nominating Committee (headline, numbering and changes in #1, #2, #3)

1. All persons elected by the membership shall be elected at the annual congregational meeting, except those who are elected to the Nominating Committee and those who are appointed in a special meeting by the Board of Trustees to fill a vacancy
2. A Nominating Committee of three members shall be chosen by the members of the Fellowship at a regular or special meeting in the month of October preceding the annual meeting. Reasonable notice of such meeting shall be given to the members of the Fellowship, and the Nominating Committee shall report to the membership at the annual meeting, or before, its selection of all candidates that are to be elected that year.
3. No elected officer or trustee shall hold the same office successively longer than two full terms, unless, under special circumstances, the congregation approves an extension.

Article VIII – Minister

1. A minister may be selected by the membership to serve the Fellowship. To the minister is delegated the usual professional responsibilities including, but not limited to, preaching, pastoral care, adult religious education, counseling and the spiritual growth of the congregation. The minister may organize committees to help expand her/his capacity to conduct pastoral work or expand other areas of ministerial responsibility.
2. A Ministerial Relations Committee shall be created as a means for the minister or ministerial team to address their concerns to the congregation

and its entities, and for the members to convey to the minister or ministerial team their concerns about the minister or ministerial team. The Committee will consist of three or more members: one put forth by the Nominating Committee and elected by the congregation, one chosen by the minister or ministerial team, and one or more chosen by the minister or ministerial team and the other committee members.

3. The minister is directly responsible to the congregation but will meet with the Board for program planning and other overlapping areas of responsibility.

Article IX – Endowment Fund

An Endowment Fund, along with an Endowment Committee, has been established to provide funding for special purposes. Committee members are elected for staggered three-year terms and may be re-elected for a second term. The membership delegates to the Committee authority to receive, invest and ultimately decide how income from the Fund will be spent. The Fund has its own operating document that was approved by the membership.

Article X – Social Action Committee (Formerly Article VIII-a change in #2)

1. The Social Action Committee shall keep abreast of conditions and problems affecting human welfare, including local ones, and shall help the Fellowship as a whole to do so.
2. The Committee may make public statements and take action on behalf of itself as a committee by consensus of its members. It may speak for the Fellowship after the active members of the Fellowship have discussed the issue of concern in a regular or special congregational meeting and have passed an appropriate resolution; members will seriously aim for consensus.
3. The Board of Trustees may take action on matters of social concern based on such resolutions of the Fellowship or on general resolutions of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Article XI – Fiscal Year and Pledge Drive (formerly Article IX)

1. The fiscal year of the Fellowship shall commence on July 1 and end on June 30 of each year.
2. The annual pledge drive, in which annual pledges are solicited for the following fiscal year, shall be held during the period of April 1 through May 31 of each year by a standing Canvass Committee appointed by the Board.

Article XII – Non-Profit Status and Property Dedication (Formerly Article X)

1. This Fellowship is not organized or operated for profit and no part of the net earnings of this Fellowship shall inure to the benefit of any private individual or party.
2. The property of this Fellowship is irrevocably dedicated to religious and charitable purposes and upon liquidation, dissolution, or abandonment of this Fellowship, the property of the Fellowship shall be conveyed and assigned to the Pacific Central District of the UUA or succeeding body of the UUA of the area in which Humboldt County is located.
3. No substantial part of the activities of this Fellowship shall be designated for disseminating propaganda or influencing legislation.

Article XIII – Bylaws Process (Formally Article XI-a change of Roman numeral in #1)

1. Except for article XII which may not be amended, these Bylaws may be amended or repealed so far as allowed by law at any annual or special meeting of the Fellowship.
2. Notice of any proposed change in the Bylaws at any meeting shall be contained in the notice of the meeting.

Authentication

This is a true and complete copy of the Bylaws of the Fellowship as amended through December 10, 1989, Florence Chafee, Secretary; and, as amended October 20, 1996, Beverly Morgan Lewis, Secretary; and as amended October 11, 1998, February 6, 2000, March 25, 2007, John Sloane, Secretary; June 3, 2007, Bert Taylor, Administrator, and October 22, 2023, Margaret Emerson, Board Co-President.