

The Bylaws
of the
San Gabriel Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Georgetown, Texas
As Amended
June 9, 2024

BYLAWS

(As amended December 5, 2008/ April 12, 2009/ December 4, 2009/ December 5, 2010/ December 4, 2011/ December 20, 2013/ December 12, 2014/ December 11, 2016/ May 20 2018/ June 21, 2020/ October 18, 2020/ January 22, 2023)

San Gabriel Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

ARTICLE I NAME AND DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION

The name of this religious society shall be The San Gabriel Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Georgetown, Texas, hereinafter referred to as the "Fellowship". This fellowship is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations and of the Southern Region of the Unitarian Universalist Association or their successors.

ARTICLE II PURPOSE

This Fellowship is formed as a liberal religious fellowship, joining inquiring minds in caring community. We encourage our members:

- to find a deeper understanding of the relationship of person to person, and of the human being to the universe,
- to further individual freedom of belief and
- to participate in service to humankind.

This Fellowship affirms the freedom of all people to participate in its activities without requiring adherence to any particular interpretation of religion or to any particular religious belief or creed.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1 MEMBERSHIP

Any person who is in sympathy with the Purposes, as stated in Article II, has attained eighteen years of age, and has fulfilled the Membership Orientation requirements, may become a member of this Fellowship by signing the Membership Book in the presence of a representative appointed by the Fellowship.

SECTION 2 VOTING MEMBERS

The right to vote at Congregational Meetings or to hold elective office in this Fellowship shall be reserved for Voting Members. A Voting Member is defined as a Member who has participated in Fellowship activities and made a financial contribution of record to the Fellowship within the past twelve months. Exceptions to this Section are indicated in Policy and Procedures.

SECTION 3 MEMBERSHIP ROLLS

The Roll of Voting Members of the Fellowship shall be maintained by the Membership Chair in consultation with the Treasurer.

SECTION 4 CEASING TO BE A MEMBER

Membership is to continue until death, voluntary withdrawal, failure to make a contribution of record for a period of 24 months, or for cause in accordance with the “Destructive Behavioral Policy” as defined by the UUA.

ARTICLE IV CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

SECTION 1 ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Fellowship shall be held on a date to be determined by the Board of Trustees to fall within the last two months of the fiscal year. The meeting shall be held at such time and place as shall be fixed by the Board of Trustees. The agenda shall be:

1. Election of Officers and Trustees as presented by the Nominating Team
2. Discussions of Fellowship activities and plans
3. Presentation of a Financial Report
4. Adoption of a budget for the next fiscal year
5. Other business listed in the notification of the meeting.

SECTION 2 GENERAL MEETINGS

General Meetings shall be called by the President upon a majority vote of the Board of Trustees or upon the presentation of a written petition signed by at least twenty percent of the Voting Members of the Fellowship. A meeting called by petition shall be held within thirty days of the date of submission of the petition.

SECTION 3 NOTICE AND AGENDA

The Voting Members of the Fellowship shall be notified of all Congregational Meetings at least seven full days prior to the intended meeting. The President, with Board of Trustees confirmation, shall assemble the agenda of all Congregational Meetings. The agenda shall include those items required by the Bylaws, items from petitions, and items determined by the Board of Trustees. The agenda of the business to be transacted and any proposed amendment(s) to these Bylaws shall be included verbatim in the notice. Business at all Congregational Meetings shall be limited to the stated agenda. Appropriate written reports of the various committees, Members of the Board, and Staff shall be published on the website at least seven days before the Annual Meeting.

SECTION 4 VOTING

A number equal to thirty percent of the Voting Members of the Fellowship, either present, in person or on-line, or absentee ballot, or accounted for by proxy, shall constitute a quorum. A quorum shall be required to initiate any Congregational Meeting and must be maintained at all times to conduct business. All decisions shall require a majority vote except as otherwise specified in these Bylaws. (See Article VII, Section 1/Article X Section 2/and Article XI)

SECTION 5 RULES OF ORDER

All Congregational Meetings shall be conducted according to “Democratic Rules of Order” (Francis, 2019) except as specifically stated in these Bylaws or amended by a vote of the Fellowship.

ARTICLE V BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and a maximum of three Trustees-at-Large may be nominated by the Nominating Team. The Officers and Trustees shall be Voting Members of the Congregation. No member of the Board of Trustees may be a spouse or have a partner relationship with another member of the Board, an employee of the Fellowship, or the Minister during their term.

SECTION 1 POWERS

The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for policy and procedures, finances, facilities, staffing, compliance with all applicable laws, and shall function as the executive power of the Fellowship, always subject to the Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation and the congregation. The Board of Trustees serves as the fiduciary of the Fellowship and shall have general charge of the property and funds, conduct business affairs, negotiate contracts, and control the administration of the Fellowship. No person may perform official acts in the name of the Fellowship except as authorized by the Bylaws or the Board of Trustees. Policies indicating the responsibilities and duties of each Board of Trustee member shall be reviewed and approved by the Board as necessary.

SECTION 2 RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of Trustees will:

1. Call Annual or General Meetings as required.
2. Manage the finances of the Fellowship.
3. Approve the proposed budget prior to the Congregational Vote at the Annual Meeting.
4. Keep records of all Board and Congregational Meetings.
5. Keep the official record of church membership.
6. Keep all policies and records of congregational business.

SECTION 3 TERMS OF OFFICE FOR OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

The terms of office, and restrictions thereon, for all Officers and Trustees-at-Large are one year.

- At the end of the term of service of each Member of the Board, the Nominating Team may ask outgoing Officers and Trustees-at-Large to serve in their same position or a different position for one additional year.
- In addition, any Board Member resigning prior to the end of their term, may be queried by the Nominating Team as to the circumstances of their resignation. If appropriate, the Nominating Team shall report any pertinent findings to the President of the Board of Trustees, the Fellowship, or a staff member, at their discretion.

SECTION 4 PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION

In the absence of the President, the Vice President or another Board member may be selected by the Board to assume the duties and fulfill the term of the President.

SECTION 5 VACANCY

Should a vacancy arise in the position of any Officer or Trustee, other than the President, the position shall be filled by a Voting Member of the Fellowship, selected by the Nominating Team, and elected by the Board of Trustees, to serve the remainder of the term.

SECTION 6 REMOVAL

Any Officer or Trustee may be removed by two thirds vote of the Voting Members present at a legally called General Meeting. Any board member missing three or more meetings without prior notification shall be considered as resigned from their position.

ARTICLE VI TEAMS

The Board may establish or abolish teams as necessary to support and carry out the mission, purpose and goals of the congregation.

SECTION 1 AUTHORITY, MEMBERSHIP, ACCOUNTABILITY

The duties, responsibilities, membership eligibility, selection process, terms of office, accountability, and other relevant declarations for all Teams will be addressed through policy developed and approved by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 2 TASK FORCES

The President may select a task force to explore alternatives and gather information on specific issues when deemed necessary and important. Task forces will have no authority, and may take no action, beyond consultation and administrative support on behalf of the President.

ARTICLE VII MINISTRY

In the event of a vacancy in the position of minister, the search for a new minister shall follow UUA guidelines. The Board shall contact the UUA to determine the initial steps and the process will continue under the guidance of the UUA. The guidelines as established in the Settlement Handbook of the Unitarian Universalist Association are all-inclusive and shall be followed as described unless revisions seem necessary or appropriate for our Fellowship and circumstances.

SECTION 1 CALLING A SETTLED MINISTER

The Minister of the Fellowship shall be called by 97% of those members voting in person or on-line or by absentee ballot at a Congregational Meeting called for such purpose. Fifty percent of the Voting Members eligible to vote shall constitute a quorum at such Congregational Meeting.

SECTION 2 THE SEARCH AND HIRING OF CONTRACT MINISTER

The Board shall appoint a small committee to find, evaluate, and recommend a Contract Minister to the Board. A Contract Minister is hired directly by the Board. This is done outside of the Ministerial Search Process that is outlined in the Settlement Handbook of the Unitarian Universalist Association. A Contract Minister can serve part-time or full-time and is employed per the terms of a written contract.

SECTION 3 DUTIES AND TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT OF SETTLED MINISTER AND CONTRACT MINISTER

Each Minister shall have responsibility for the conduct of worship services and shall serve as spiritual leader and advisor to church members. The minister shall have freedom of the pulpit. The minister shall also have the freedom to express their opinions outside the pulpit, but not to represent the church without authorization from the Board or the membership. The minister shall be an ex officio, non-voting member of the Board of Trustees.

1. In the case of a Settled Minister, other specific duties shall be negotiated between the minister and the designated member or members of the Board in a Letter of Agreement. Negotiating the initial Letter of Agreement should be facilitated by the Search Committee.
2. In the case of a Contracted Minister, the Contract Minister will be employed under a written contract negotiated between the Minister and a designee of the Board. The contract will be written by the Board of Trustees, in collaboration with the Contract Minister and other appropriate committees with approval of the board, which clearly stipulates the duties, roles, compensation and other conditions of employment and is approved by the Board.
3. Contract Termination: The contractual relationship between the minister and the Fellowship may be dissolved by either party for any reason upon three (3) months written notice. Such provision shall be incorporated in any contractual agreement.

ARTICLE VIII FINANCES OF SAN GABRIEL UU FELLOWSHIP

SECTION 1 EXPENDITURES

No person or team shall have the power to incur expenses on behalf of the Fellowship except as authorized specifically by the Board of Trustees, or the Congregation at a General Meeting.

SECTION 2 CANVASS

The Stewardship Task Force shall plan and conduct the annual pledge drive upon direction from the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 3 BUDGET

A tentative budget shall be provided to the membership prior to the annual meeting. Budget allocations may be revised by the Board of Trustees to meet the needs of the congregation. The budget may be increased by the Board of Trustees by no more than 10% of the approved budget amount, if revenue is available, without approval from the congregation.

SECTION 4 INCOME

All receipts and monies received by individuals and teams on behalf of the Fellowship shall return to the general fund, unless specifically authorized by the Board of Trustees or directed by the donor to be used for a specific purpose. All fund-raising efforts including those of affiliated and sponsored groups must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 5 FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial records of the Fellowship may be reviewed by an audit task force established by the Board of Trustees within three weeks of the Treasurer's submission of the financial records, and at such other times as may be deemed appropriate by the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE IX CONGREGATIONAL EMERGENCIES

In the case that normal functioning of the congregational life is interrupted by emergency situations, the Board has the authority to make provisional changes to the by-law rulings, provided approved by a quorum of the board members.

ARTICLE X LEGAL

SECTION 1

This Fellowship shall be a non-profit religious, charitable, and educational Fellowship incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas. The legal address of the Fellowship shall be San Gabriel Unitarian Universalist Fellowship 1322 East University Avenue, Georgetown, Texas, 78626.

SECTION 2

Church dissolution must be approved by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of Voting Members of the Fellowship either present, in person or on-line, or absentee ballot, or accounted for by proxy, at a congregational meeting called to specifically consider such action. Notice must be distributed at least 30 days prior to the meeting.

SECTION 3

If the Fellowship will cease to exist, all accrued assets, after paying all just claims upon it, must be assigned to the Unitarian Universalist Association or its successor to be used for the extension of liberal religion.

ARTICLE XI AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended or revised at any legally called Congregational Meeting by a two-thirds vote of the Voting Members either present, in person or on-line, or absentee ballot, or accounted for by proxy. Proposed amendment(s) to these Bylaws must be included verbatim in the notice to the Voting Members. Proposed amendments shall be passed or rejected verbatim.

ARTICLE XII IMPLEMENTATION

These bylaws, if adopted, will take effect at the close of a General Meeting of the Fellowship whereby such approval is given.

APPROVED:

These Bylaws were approved at the General Meeting on December 7, 2007

Amended December 5, 2008

Attest: President Roe Mackey and Secretary Bobbie Wooll

Amended April 12, 2009

Attest: President Roe Mackey and Secretary Bobbie Wooll

Amended December 4, 2009

Attest: President Roe Mackey and Secretary Bobbie Wooll

Amended December 5, 2010

Attest: President Roe Mackey and Secretary Bobbie Wooll

Amended December 4, 2011

Attest: President Brue Barker and Secretary Shirley Wentworth

Amended December 20 ,2013

Attest: President Genie Barnes and Secretary Kay Walker

Amended December 12, 2014

Attest: President Caroline Mackey and Secretary Sharon Covey

Amended December 11, 2016

Attest: President Jennifer Van Buren and Acting Secretary Kay Walker

Amended May 20, 2018

Attest: President Sean McClurkan and Acting Secretary Keith Hutchinson

Amended June 21, 2020

Attest: President Mary L Abbey and Secretary Kathryn Williams-Platt

Amended October 18, 2020

Attest: President Marissa Gomez-Palmer and Secretary Kelly McGinty

Revised January 22, 2023

Attest: President Molly Hornbuckle and Secretary Linda Mueller

Revised June 9, 2024

Attest: President Sarah Smith and Secretary Joe Nesheim