

**PIEDMONT  
UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST  
CHURCH**

**BYLAWS**

June 3, 2001

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## **Article I**

### **Name**

#### ***Section 1. Name.***

The name of this religious society shall be The Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church.

## **Article II**

### **Purpose**

#### ***Section 1. Purpose.***

- The Covenant of this religious community shall be:
- We encourage and support individual freedom of religious beliefs for all.
- We share in a loving ministry each for the other; and thereby provide for our emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being.
- We are dedicated to providing religious education for our children which will enhance the positive worth of each child.
- We strive toward social responsibility with the purpose of strengthening an individual commitment to self, congregation, and community.
- We will seek the truth to enlighten and acknowledge human accomplishments and possibilities.

## **Article III**

### **Membership**

#### ***Section 1. Admission to membership.***

Any person fourteen years or older, who is in sympathy with the spirit and purpose of the covenant of this Church as stated in Article II of the Bylaws; who pledges to support this religious community, realizing that its growth, development and success depend on a personal commitment to participate in congregational matters, and provide financial support within their means; and who is in general agreement with the Principles and Purposes of the Unitarian Universalist Association may enter its fellowship by signing a membership card in the presence of the minister, a member of the Board of Trustees, or a U.U. spokesperson. Membership in this church shall be open to anyone meeting these Bylaw requirements.

#### ***Section 2. Withdrawal of membership.***

Any member may withdraw from membership in this Church upon written notice given or mailed to the Secretary, who shall make a record of such withdrawal.

#### ***Section 3. Removal from membership.***

Any person may be removed from the membership list if, for one year, there has been no interest or support demonstrated for this church. Prior to any meeting of the membership, the Secretary shall compile a list of such persons. However, no person shall be removed from the membership list until an attempt has been made by the Board to secure from the individual a statement of interest or disinterest.

## **Article IV**

### **Denominational Affiliation**

#### ***Section 1. Denominational Affiliation.***

This Church shall be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association and of the Thomas Jefferson District. It is the intention of this Church to make annual financial contributions to the Association and the District equal to its full fair share.

## **Article V**

### **Meetings of Membership**

#### ***Section 1. Election Meeting.***

There shall be an election meeting of the church each year in the month of March. The purpose of this meeting shall be to elect new officers, a co-chair of the canvass committee and nominating committee members.

#### ***Section 2. Annual Meeting.***

The annual meeting of the church shall be held each year in the month of June. Included in the agenda shall be the presentation of the annual report and the adoption of the annual budget.

#### ***Section 3. Special Meetings.***

Special meetings of the Church will be called by the Board at its discretion or by the written request of at least ten percent (10%) of the membership.

#### ***Section 4. Notice of Meetings.***

The business to be transacted at all meetings of the membership shall be set forth in the notice of the meeting, which shall be sent to all members by mail at least ten days prior to the date of the meeting by the Secretary. The date, place, and hour of the meeting shall be fixed by the Board, and included in such notice.

#### ***Section 5. Quorum.***

A quorum at any meeting of the Church shall consist of twenty percent (20%) of the membership as defined in Article III, Section 1.

#### ***Section 6. Decisions.***

All decisions made at a legal meeting of the Church shall be by a majority vote of the members present unless specifically indicated to be otherwise in these bylaws and shall be binding upon the Board, the officers of the Church and all its agencies and organizations.

## **Article VI**

### **Board of Trustees**

#### ***Section 1. General Powers.***

The Board shall have general charge of the property of the Church, the conduct of its business affairs, the power to receive and administer gifts and trusts, and the control of its administration. Long-range planning, policy making, public relations, leadership development, and ultimate authority over church personnel shall be vested in the Board except as stated otherwise in these Bylaws. The Board shall authorize committees as it may deem necessary, specifying their purpose and duration. The Board shall report at each annual meeting on Church activities for the past year, present an annual operating budget and make any recommendations deemed desirable. The Board shall be responsible for developing a working agreement with the minister as stated in Article X, Section IV.

#### ***Section 2. Membership.***

The Board of Trustees shall consist of ten members: the President, President-Elect, Secretary and Treasurer, who shall be the officers of the Church; the Past President, and two Trustees-at-Large. All of these shall be voting members. In addition there shall be three non-voting members serving as representatives of the Religious Education Council, Membership Council, and Religious Services Council. All members of the Board shall be members of the Church.

#### ***Section 3. Election.***

At each election meeting of the Church, a President-Elect shall be elected for a term of three years, the first to be served as President-Elect, the second as President, and the third as Past President. Elected to three-year terms shall be a Trustee who serves as Secretary and two Trustees who serve at Large. Elected to a four year term shall be an Assistant Treasurer, the first two years to be served as Assistant Treasurer and the last two years as Treasurer. To the degree possible, the terms shall be staggered with those of the Secretary, Assistant Treasurer and Trustees At Large elected in different years. No Trustee who has served a full three-year term shall be reelected until after the expiration of one year. Trustees shall be elected from among the nominees presented by the Nominating Committee or from nominations from the floor, provided written consent has been obtained from the nominee.

#### ***Section 4. Vacancies.***

A vacancy during a term of office on the Board shall be filled by a majority vote of the remaining Trustees. The person so appointed shall serve until the next election meeting, at which time the vacancy shall be filled by election, as stated in Section 3, for the balance of the unexpired term. A vacancy may be declared by the Board upon receipt by the President of a letter of resignation or when a Board member misses three consecutive meetings without prior notice to the President or Minister.

#### ***Section 5. Removal.***

Any Trustee shall be removed upon a vote of two-thirds of the members present at any meeting of the Church called pursuant to the provisions of the Bylaws.

#### ***Section 6. Succession.***

The new Board shall take office July 1 following the annual meeting and shall be convened by the President within the month of July.

#### ***Section 7. Regular Meetings.***

The Board shall meet at least every other month, beginning in July, on a regular date prescribed in advance by it, at a time and place designated by the Board. All regular Board meetings shall be open, and the minutes shall be promptly posted for examination by the membership.

#### ***Section 8. Special Meetings.***

Special meetings of the Board shall be called by or at the request of the President or any two Trustees. The time and place of any special meeting shall be specified in the notice of such meeting which shall be given at least three days prior to its taking place. The minutes of special meetings shall be promptly posted for examination by the membership.

#### ***Section 9. Executive Sessions.***

The Board may go into executive session at any regular or special meeting, provided that any action taken is reaffirmed at an open meeting of the Board.

#### ***Section 10. Quorum.***

A majority of the Trustees eligible to vote as fixed by these Bylaws shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board.

***Section 11. Informal Action.***

Action taken by a majority of the Trustees without a meeting is nevertheless Board action. The action will be subject to review at their next regularly scheduled meeting or any special meeting. A resolution of the action and the recorded vote shall be entered into the minutes.

***Section 12. Religious Services Council Representative.***

There shall be one Religious Services Council Representative serving on the Board as a non-voting member. The term of office shall be one year. The qualifications for this position shall be determined by the Religious Services Council with the concurrence of the Board. Any vacancy shall be filled as prescribed by the Religious Services Council with concurrence by the Board.

***Section 13. Religious Education Council Representative.***

There shall be one Religious Education Council Representative serving on the Board as a non-voting member. The term of office shall be one year. The qualifications for this position shall be determined by the Membership Council with the concurrence of the Board. Any vacancy shall be filled as prescribed by the Religious Education Council with concurrence by the Board.

***Section 14. Membership Council Representative.***

There shall be one Membership Council Representative serving on the Board as a non-voting member. The term of office shall be one year. The qualifications for this position shall be determined by the Membership Council with the concurrence of the Board. Any vacancy shall be filled as prescribed by the Membership Council with concurrence by the Board.

## **Article VII**

### **Officers**

#### ***Section 1. President.***

The President shall be the principal officer of the Church and the Board; shall be subject to the control of the Board; shall supervise and control management of the Church in accordance with these Bylaws; shall, when present, preside at all meetings of the Church, and of the Board, shall, sign, with other proper persons, any deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments which may be lawfully executed on behalf of the Church, except where required or permitted by law to be otherwise signed and executed and except where signing and execution thereof shall be delegated by the Board to some other person; and, in general, shall perform all duties as may be prescribed by the Board from time to time.

#### ***Section 2. President-Elect.***

The President-Elect, in the absence or incapacity of the President, and subject to the control of the Board, shall supervise and control the management of the Church in accordance with these Bylaws; at the specific direction of the Board, shall sign, with other proper persons any deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts or other instruments which shall be lawfully executed on behalf of the Church; shall preside over the joint Board of Trustees and Council Directors meetings; and shall in consultation with the Councils, recommend to the Nominating Committee nominees for Council Directors to fill vacancies for the coming year; shall serve as chairperson of the Long Range Planning Committee; and shall perform such other duties as the President or Board may direct.

#### ***Section 3. Secretary.***

The Secretary shall keep accurate records of the acts and proceedings of all meetings of the Trustees and the annual and special meetings of the membership; shall promptly post the minutes of these meetings for examination by the membership; shall give all notice required by law and these Bylaws; shall have general charge of the corporate books and records and of the corporate seal, and shall affix the corporate seal to any lawfully executed instrument requiring it; shall compile for the Board a list of members who have shown no interest or support of the Church as stated in Article III, Section 4; shall report the number of members enrolled in the Church at each meeting of the membership; shall sign such instruments as may be required; shall compile the annual report of the Board and Church Councils, and in general, shall perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as may be assigned, from time to time, by the President or the Board.

#### ***Section 4. Treasurer.***

The Treasurer is the chief financial officer of the Church, and, as such, shall keep or cause to be kept a full and accurate account of the finances of the Church in books especially provided for that purpose; and shall cause to be published a true statement of its assets and liabilities as of the close of each fiscal year, all in reasonable detail. The Treasurer shall serve on the Business and Operations Council acting as a liaison between the Council and the Board and shall, in general, perform all duties incident to the office and such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the President or the Board.

#### ***Section 5. Assistant Treasurer.***

The Assistant Treasurer assists the Treasurer in performing their duties as outlined in Section 4. Treasurer. In the event of the vacancy of the position of Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer shall automatically assume the position of Treasurer and a special election shall be called to fill the position of Assistant Treasurer. Furthermore, at the end of the specified period of service of the Treasurer the Assistant Treasurer shall automatically become Treasurer. The Assistant Treasurer shall be a non-voting member of the Board.

## **Article VIII**

### **Standing Committees and Agents**

#### ***Section 1. Nominating Committee.***

The Nominating Committee shall consist of four members of the Church each serving two-year terms. In addition, the previous year's Past President shall serve for a one-year term as non-voting chair of the Nominating Committee. At each election meeting two new members will be elected to the Committee to be chosen from those present at the meeting and from those who have submitted to the Secretary written consent to be elected, none of whom may be either present or newly elected members of the Board of Trustees. The duty of this committee shall be to present nominees for open terms and for vacancies on the Board of Directors, Council Directors, and the Canvass Committee. On or before the first day of February the nominating committee shall notify the membership in writing of the elective positions to be filled at the next election meeting. At least thirty days prior to the election meeting the committee shall submit in writing to the Secretary a nomination for each elective position to be filled.

If a Nominating Committee member should accept a Board position, then that person shall resign from the Nominating Committee. Vacancies on the Nominating Committee shall be filled by the Board of Trustees until the next election meeting, at which time the vacancy shall be filled by election for the remainder of the unexpired term.

#### ***Section 2. Committee on the Ministry.***

There shall be at least four members of the Committee appointed by the Board with staggered terms of at least two years. The Board in consultation with the Minister and the Committee of the Ministry shall determine the number of members, the length of term, and the timing of staggered terms. The Minister shall submit a list of two names for every available position to the Board from which the Board shall select one. The Committee shall meet on a regular basis with the minister; shall be available for counsel, shall keep the minister advised concerning conditions within the congregation as they affect relations between the minister and members, shall help interpret to the members the nature and scope of the work of the minister, shall work with the minister on his/her continuing education program, sabbatical planning and other professional development, shall in consultation with the minister submit annually to the Board recommendations to assist in the development of a working agreement as stated in Article X, Section 4, and shall submit to the Board an annual evaluation of the minister's performance.

### ***Section 3. Canvass Committee.***

Each year the Nominating Committee in consultation with the Business and Operations Council shall present a nominee for Canvass Co-Chair who, if elected, shall serve a two-year term and shall become the Canvass Chair the second year of that person's term. Additional members of the Committee may be selected by the Chair. The Canvass Committee shall be a committee of the Business Council and shall be responsible for the major fund-raising event each spring which solicits yearly membership pledges to finance the proposed annual operating budget.

### ***Section 4. Long Range Planning Committee***

This committee shall be responsible for the periodic review and update of the Long Range Plan. The committee shall consist of the President, the President-Elect, the Past President, the Directory of the Business Council, the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, and any other interested persons appointed by the Board. The President-Elect shall serve as the chairperson of the committee. The Committee shall convene at least once a year prior to the annual meeting to review the congregation's progress on the implementation of the Long Range Plan. A report to the Board regarding accomplishments during the past year and suggested adjustments for the next year will be offered. A copy of that report shall be included in the annual report to the congregation with the approval of the Board, the Committee shall recommend updates and changes to the Plan which will be submitted to the congregation for approval at the annual meeting. At least every five years, the Committee, with the assistance of the Board, shall lead the congregation in a review of the mission, vision, and goals of the Long Range Plan. Any revisions shall be approved at a congregational meeting.

### ***Section 5. U.U. Spokesperson***

The Board of Trustees may appoint on an annual basis one or more Unitarian Universalist Spokespersons. The U.U. Spokesperson shall assist the minister in providing information about the Church to newcomers and groups outside the Church, may witness the signing of membership cards, in accordance with Article III, Section 1, and perform other activities as the Board may designate but which do not conflict with the duties of the minister.

### ***Section 6. Other Agents***

Other agents elected or appointed by the Board shall, in general, perform all duties incident to their respective offices and such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the President. Any such agent may be removed upon a majority vote of the Board membership.

### ***Section 7. Bonds***

The Board may by resolution require any officer or agent of the Church to give bond to the Church, with sufficient sureties, conditioned on faithful performance of the duties of their respective offices or positions and to comply with such other conditions as may from time to time be required by the Board

## **Article IX**

### **Contracts, Loans, and Deposits**

#### ***Section 1. Contracts.***

No contract involving expenditure of money exceeding five percent (5%) or \$2,500.00 whichever is less, of the current year's operating budget shall be made or entered into by any officer of the Church or by the Board without a vote of the Church authorizing such expenditures.

#### ***Section 2. Checks and Drafts.***

All checks, drafts or other orders for payment of money issued in the name of the Church shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents, of the Church and in such manner as shall from time to time be determined by resolutions of the Board.

#### ***Section 3. Deposits.***

All funds of the Church not otherwise employed shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the Church in such depositories as the Board shall direct.

# **Article X**

## **Church Councils**

### ***Section 1. Number and Purpose.***

There shall be seven church councils to develop and implement the programs and services of the Church, including: Religious Services, Religious Education, Business and Operations, Social Responsibility, Congregational Fellowship and Care, Denominational Affairs, and Membership Development.

### ***Section 2. Council Directors.***

Each church council will be under the leadership of a council director or co directors who shall coordinate the activities of their respective committees, coordinate the program of the Church with the other council directors, and shall inform the Board of Trustees of priorities, short range plans, new program initiatives, and funding needs. Council directors shall submit an annual report of the programs, activities and plans of their council to the Board at least three weeks prior to the annual meeting so as to be included in the annual report. Council directors are nominated by the Nominating Committee with the approval of the Board of Trustees and are elected by the congregation along with other church officers. A director may be reappointed for a second two-year term.

### ***Section 3. Council Committees.***

Each church council may have as many committees as deemed necessary to implement the various programs and activities for which it is responsible. The creation or elimination of each committee shall be approved by the Board of Trustees. A committee chairperson may be selected, if desired, by the council director for a term not to exceed three years.

### ***Section 4. Business and Operations Council.***

The Business and Operations Council shall be responsible for advising the Board of Trustees on financial policy and operational management. This council shall direct and oversee the yearly budget preparation and approval cycle assisting the Board, the church councils and their committees in developing an annual operating budget to be presented at the Annual Meeting. Members of the Business and Operations Council shall include the Treasurer, Canvass Chair and Co-Chair and the Chairs of the Fundraising Committee, the Building and Grounds Committee, and any other committees whose primary function is raising funds. The chair of the Business and Operations Council shall be the immediate Past President.

### ***Section 5. Council Meetings.***

Each church council shall meet at least every other month beginning in July. A meeting of the Board of Trustees and the council directors, called and chaired by the President-Elect, shall take place at least four times each year. The Secretary shall give at least ten days notice of these joint meetings and shall promptly post the minutes for examination by the membership.

## **Article XI**

### **Minister**

#### ***Section 1. Duties.***

Recognizing that this is a church which shares responsibility for the ministry among its members, the minister shall be responsible for the conduct of worship within the Church and the spiritual interests and affairs of the Church as designated by the congregation with the minister. The minister shall have freedom of the pulpit as well as freedom to express his or her opinion outside the pulpit. The minister shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of Trustees, church councils, council committees and other such groups and agents as the Board shall designate. The minister shall have daily authority over non-ministerial church personnel. The minister shall at all times be sensitive and responsive to the needs and desires of the congregation regarding these duties.

#### ***Section 2. Selection.***

In the event of a vacancy or intended vacancy, a Ministerial Search Committee shall be selected consisting of five to seven members. Two members shall be appointed by the Board, and the remaining members shall be elected by the congregation from a slate chosen by the Nominating Committee at a special congregational meeting designated for that purpose. The new minister shall be called upon the recommendation of the Ministerial Search Committee by a four-fifths (4/5) majority of the church members present at an annual or special meeting. The regular calling procedure may be suspended in the event the congregation votes to participate in a special program requiring that a professional leader be placed for a limited period of time rather than called by the congregation.

#### ***Section 3. Tenure.***

The tenure of the minister shall be indefinite, subject to the provisions of Section 7 of this article.

#### ***Section 4 Working Agreement.***

Based in part on the recommendations of the Committee on the Ministry, the Board and the minister shall develop a working agreement which shall include but not be limited to the minister's compensation, employment benefits, vacation and sick leave, congregational and denominational responsibilities, and sabbatical time. This agreement shall be reviewed yearly.

#### ***Section 5. Annual Evaluation.***

An annual review of the minister's performance shall be submitted to the Board by the Committee, as stated in Article VIII, Section 2, and shall be made available to any member upon request.

#### ***Section 6. Reports.***

The minister shall present at the annual meeting a yearly report of the activities and business relevant to his or her responsibilities; shall submit to the Board at the time of their regular meeting a report of any weddings, dedications, funerals and other such events conducted by the minister; and shall inform the Board of any matters which may be pertinent to the general welfare of the Church. The minister shall make such recommendations as may seem proper, but the final authority in matters of policy and procedure shall remain with the' Church.

#### ***Section 7. Dismissal.***

Upon request by the minister, the Board, or a petition signed by not less than twenty percent (20%) of the members of the Church, the Secretary shall call a special meeting to vote upon the question: "Shall be retained as the minister of this Church?" If two-thirds (2/3) of the members present vote in the affirmative, no action shall be taken. If shall not be an affirmative vote, then the tenure of the minister shall be terminated in such a manner as the Board shall prescribe. The minister's salary and allowance shall be continued for three months after the date of termination.

#### ***Section 8. Resignation.***

In the event that the minister resigns, the Church shall be given not less than three months' notice, unless the Board shall waive this requirement.

## **Article XIII**

### **Amendments**

#### ***Section 1. Amendments.***

These Bylaws may be amended or repealed at any lawful meeting of the Church by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting. The proposed change(s) shall be contained in the notice of the meeting, along with the name(s) of the proposer(s) and signed by a minimum of 10% of the current church membership. To be in order, an amendment shall be submitted to the Secretary at least 30 days before the meeting.

## **Article XIV Dissolution**

### ***Section 1. Dissolution.***

If the Church ceases to function as a Unitarian Universalist Church and the membership votes to disband, all property of the Church, whether real or personal, shall be transferred to the Unitarian Universalist Association, its successors or assigns, on the understanding that the said property will be used by the Association for its general purposes; and this bylaw shall apply to all property donated to the Church whether by will or in some other manner, unless the donor expressly provides otherwise.

## **Article XV**

### **Affiliated and Sponsored Groups**

#### ***Section 1. Definition.***

Voluntary organizations which are largely made up of church members and friends who support the same values as the Church, may be recognized as affiliated groups. Voluntary organizations which are largely made up of non-church members of the community-at-large who support the same values as the Church, and whose existence and function benefit both the Church and the community may be recognized as sponsored groups.

#### ***Section 2. Recognition.***

The recognition of an affiliated or sponsored group shall be made by the Board of Trustees, upon a written application from such groups stating its purposes and programs, if in the Board's judgment and discretion, the purposes and programs of such group continue to support the purposes and values of the Church.

#### ***Section 3. Responsibilities.***

Each affiliated or sponsored group shall direct its own programs and functions; shall be responsible for its own finances, including fund raising and the cost of its activities; shall pay for direct expenses incurred on its behalf, and at its request, by the Church.

#### ***Section 4. Representation.***

Each affiliated or sponsored group shall appoint a representative to the Church to provide information and communication on the activities and programs of the group. The Board of Trustees may appoint a liaison to the group for its purpose of information and communication.

## **Article XVI**

### **Other Provisions**

#### ***Section 1. Rules of Procedure.***

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, as revised, shall guide this Church in the conduct of its meetings to the extent that they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws. Any dispute involving interpretation of the provisions of these Bylaws shall be decided by a majority vote of the full Board. Such decision shall be final unless appealed to a legal meeting of the Church and overruled by a majority vote.

#### ***Section 2. Review of Bylaws.***

The Bylaws shall be reviewed by the Board or a designated committee each fiscal year. Any recommended changes shall comply with Article XIII.

