

**BY-LAWS OF THE FIRST UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF WAKEFIELD
WAKEFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS**

ARTICLE I NAME

The organization shall be known as the First Universalist Society of Wakefield, Massachusetts, hereinafter referred to as “church” or “society.”

ARTICLE II PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSES

We, the members of this society, together with other member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
2. Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregation;
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregation and in society at large;
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all;
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

We further affirm and promote the full participation in all our activities and endeavors, of any person, without regard to race, color, gender, physical or mental challenge, affectional or sexual orientation, age, class, or national origin. This affirmation includes any otherwise qualified persons serving as minister or staff.

The living tradition we share draws from many sources:

1. Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
2. Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion and the transforming power of love;
3. Wisdom, from the world’s religions which inspire us in our ethical and spiritual life;
4. Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God’s love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
5. Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against the idolatries of the mind and spirit;
6. Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

Grateful for the religious pluralism which enriches and ennobles our faith, we are inspired to deepen our understanding and expand our vision.

As members of a free congregation we enter into this covenant, promising to one another our mutual trust and support.

ARTICLE III DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATIONS

The church shall be affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Massachusetts Bay District of Unitarian Universalist Churches, Inc.

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 Requirements for Membership

This society shall welcome as members any person who is in sympathy with its purposes and program, has reviewed these by-laws, and has signed the membership book in the presence of the minister or an officer of the church.

Section 2 Rights of Members

Subject to the laws of the Commonwealth, all members present shall be entitled to vote at any meeting of the society except that votes concerning purchase or sale of real property shall be reserved to members who have attained eighteen years of age.

Section 3 Maintenance of List of Members

The Clerk and Church Administrator shall maintain the current membership and voting membership records. The clerk and Church Administrator shall terminate the membership of those persons requesting resignation or letter of transfer. Members who have not participated in the activities of the church for a period of two years shall be asked by the Clerk and Church Administrator if they wish to continue their membership. In the absence of a clear affirmative answer, the Clerk and Church Administrator may remove the person's name from the rolls.

Section 4 Certification of Membership List

A certification committee consisting of the Clerk, Collector, and Church Administrator shall certify the list of voting members at least once a year prior to the Annual Meeting and update the list prior to any special meeting.

Section 5 Report to the Unitarian Universalist Association (U.U.A.)

Membership of the society for the purpose of reporting to the U.U.A. shall be the number of those members who have made a contribution of record during the church year; such number to be determined by the certification committee (See section 4).

Section 6 Right of Appeal

The Board of Management shall rule on any membership dispute.

ARTICLE V OFFICERS

Section 1

The officers of the church shall be President, Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Collector, three Trustees, two Directors, and five Deacons.

Section 2

The Board of Management of this Society shall consist of the President, Clerk, Treasurer and the two Directors, each of whom shall be entitled to vote on all questions before the Board of Management, voting by proxy being prohibited. The Board of Management shall act in behalf of the church in the conduct of all regular business between Annual Meetings of the church except for such business as hereinafter specifically requires action at the Annual Meeting or shall require a Special Meeting of the church. The President of the church shall serve as Chairperson of the Board of Management.

Section 3

The President, Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, and Collector shall be chosen at annual meetings of the Society to serve for terms of one (1) year each beginning at the close of the meeting at which each is elected and continuing until the close of the next Annual Meeting or until their successors shall have been chosen.. The President, Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer and Collector shall serve for no more than three consecutive terms in the same office.

Section 4

The Directors shall be elected for terms of two (2) years each. One Director shall be elected each year and shall serve until the expiration of their term or until successors have been elected. Directors shall serve for no more than two consecutive terms.

Section 5

The Board of Trustees shall consist of three persons who shall not hold any other office in the Society other than that of Deacon. One (1) Trustee shall be elected at each Annual Meeting for a term of three (3) years. The Trustees shall serve for no more than two consecutive terms.

Section 6

The Deacons shall be elected at the Annual Meeting and shall continue in office until written notice of resignation shall have been received by the clerk and a successor elected.

Section 7

All officers of the Society must be certified members of the Society.

Section 8

Any vacancy in an elective office shall be filled upon the occurrence of the vacancy by the Board of Management for that period until the next Annual Meeting at which time a successor shall be elected by the membership to fill the unexpired term.

Section 9

There shall be a Nominating Committee of three members, one of which shall be elected at each Annual Meeting for a term of three (3) years. No member of the Nominating Committee shall serve consecutive terms. The Nominating Committee shall present a slate of nominees, each of whom has consented to being nominated, to the Annual Meeting consisting of one person each to fill any vacancies among the officers, the Ministerial Relations Committee, the Nominating Committee, and for the posts of delegates to the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Annual Meeting of the Massachusetts Bay District of Unitarian Universalist Churches, Inc. In addition to the nominees of the Nominating Committee, opportunity shall be given for nominations "from the floor" to any elective office at the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE VI DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1 Clerk

The duties of the Clerk shall be to:

- a) Keep minutes of all meetings of the Congregation and the Board of Management and within a month after each Annual or Special Meeting make an account of same meetings available for perusal and comment by the members of the Society;
- b) Keep a correct roll of the members with dates of joining and withdrawal;
- c) Notify members of the society of special and annual meetings of the congregation in the manner specified in Article VII, Section 4;
- d) Keep in custody all official documents of the church unless otherwise specified by the By-laws;
- e) Keep a record of all dedications of children, weddings and funerals and other information which the Society or Board of Management shall require.

Section 2 Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be responsible for receiving from the Collector and/or the Trustees all church funds and depositing same, maintaining proper account of and disbursing all church funds except for funds in trust, all as directed by the Board of Management. In addition the Treasurer shall have custody of insurance policies and all evidences of church property.

Section 3 Collector

The Collector shall receive such money for the Society as the Board of Management may designate, shall turn over to the Treasurer all such monies received, shall keep an accurate record of all financial pledges made to the Society and shall give proper credit for all payments made in pledges.

Section 4 Trustees

The Trustees shall have sole responsibility for the management of the investments of funds left to the Society in trust unless otherwise provided by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting concerning an alternate method at a meeting of the Society. The Trustees shall, at stated times, pay or cause to be paid, to the Treasurer, the income from such funds unless otherwise directed. The Trustees shall maintain a safe deposit box for the purpose of safekeeping all pertinent records and papers relative to the funds held in trust by the Society.

Section 5

The Board of Management shall be responsible for and have control of all business affairs and management of church property and funds, excepting funds held in trust, subject to decisions and directions approved at Annual or Special Meetings. The Board of Management shall hold its first meeting within thirty (30) days of the Annual Meeting and a first order of business at this meeting shall be to allocate among the Directors the presiding at the meeting in the absence of the President, Liaison to the Worship Committee, Liaison to the Property and Shared Space Committees, and the Committee Coordinator of other Committees.

Section 6

The Board of Deacons shall assist the Minister in the administration of the ordinances of the church and in such matters relative to the personal and spiritual life of its people as shall be requested by the Minister.

Section 7 Directors

[Deleted in May 2015 since the duties are specified in Section 5 above.]

Section 8

The Treasurer, Collector and members of the Board of Trustees shall be bonded at the expense of the Society insofar as the Society or the Board of Management shall require.

Section 9

The Moderator shall preside at all meetings of the Society, appointing such temporary committees as are necessary for the conduct of the meeting. In the event of the absence of the Moderator from any meeting of the Society, A Moderator Pro-Tempore shall be elected to serve at that meeting.

ARTICLE VII MEETINGS

Section 1

The Annual Meeting of the Society shall be held in the month of May, the specific date, time and place to be determined by the Board of Management. Special Meetings may be called by vote of the Board of Management and must be called within ten (10) days of the Clerk's receiving a written request signed by any five (5) Members of the Society. Thirty (30) per cent of the members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Society, but a lesser number may adjourn the meeting to another specific date, time and place. All questions shall be decided by a majority of those present and voting at a meeting unless otherwise herein provided.

Section 2

Meetings of the Board of Management shall be held regularly each month as determined by the Board of Management, except that meetings may be omitted during the months of July and August if so voted by the Board of Management. The President may also call special meetings of the Board of Management and shall do so upon the written request of any member of the Board of Management. Four members of the Board of Management shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number may adjourn a meeting to a definite date, time and place.

Section 3 At each Annual Meeting the following persons shall submit written reports to the Society:

- a) Minister
- b) Board of Management's Proposed Budget for the forthcoming year
- c) Treasurer
- d) Chairpersons of Board of Management Committees' e) Board of Trustees
- f) Nominating Committee
- g) Delegates to General Assembly, UUA and to Annual Meeting, Mass Bay District
- h) Clerk

Section 4

The Clerk shall give notice of all meetings of the Society by placing either a written or printed notice specifying the date, time, place, and business of the meeting in some conspicuous place at the church building at least seven (7) days before the time appointed for said meeting and by causing notice to be published in a regular publication of the church.

ARTICLE VIII FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Society shall run from July 1 of one year to June of the following year.

ARTICLE IX MINISTERIAL RELATIONS

Section 1

There shall be a Ministerial Relations Committee, consisting of four (4) elected members which shall perform the following functions:

- a) To be available to the Minister for counsel about his or her work;
- b) To keep the Minister advised concerning conditions within the Congregation as they affect Minister Congregation relationships;
- c) To interpret to the Congregation the nature and scope of the work of the Minister;
- d) To work with the Minister on a program of continuing education, including such things as sabbatical leave planning and other activities associated with professional development.
- e) To serve as the nucleus of a Ministerial Search Committee when that need arises.

Section 2

Members of the Ministerial Relations Committee shall be elected for terms of two years each, two elected each year, commencing with the Annual Meeting of 1994, and shall serve until the expiration of their terms or until successors have been elected. One nominee shall be chosen by the Nominating Committee from a list of no fewer than three (3) persons chosen by the minister. A second nominee shall be named by the Nominating Committee itself. Nominations "from the floor" shall be permitted as alternatives to this second nominee only.

Section 3

Any vacancy on the Ministerial Relations Committee shall be filled upon the occurrence of the vacancy by the Board of Management for that period until the next Annual Meeting, at which time a successor shall be nominated and elected in a manner consistent with the procedure set forth in Section 2 of this article.

Section 4

The Ministerial Relations Committee shall meet at least four (4) times each church year, such meetings to be held during the months of June, September, January and April. Additional meetings may be called as needed. The Minister shall attend these meetings regularly. Meetings may be called without the Minister in attendance, but the Minister shall be advised in advance of such a meeting, as to its being held and the proposed agenda. Subsequent to such a meeting, the Minister shall be advised of the substance of matters discussed and any actions taken.

Section 5

Each year, at the May meeting of the Ministerial Relations Committee, a chairperson shall be elected by the members from among the personnel of the Committee.

Section 6

At the time of choosing a new Minister, if no vacancies exist, the Committee shall be augmented by two (2) members, each to be chosen by the new Minister in a procedure described above in Section 2 of this Article. Terms of the two members thus selected shall last until the next Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE X CALLING OR DISMISSAL OF PASTOR

Section 1

A special meeting of the Society shall be held and a favorable vote of at least three-quarters (3/4) of members present and voting shall be required to call a Minister who shall serve until the term of his office is terminated according to terms of these By-laws as hereinafter provided for.

Section 2

The salary of the Minister shall be fixed and from time to time adjusted by majority vote of members present and voting at duly called meetings of the Society.

Section 3

The Minister may be dismissed by a majority vote of members present and voting at a duly called special meeting of the Society, the warrant of that meeting specifically stating that the meeting is for the purpose of considering the dismissal of the Minister.

Section 4

A minimum of three months' notice of termination of employment shall be required by either the Minister or the Society, unless a shorter period be mutually agreed upon.

ARTICLE XI AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these By-Laws must be proposed in writing and the full text of any proposed amendment must be contained as a part of the warrant for the Special or Annual Meeting at which action is to be taken. Amendments shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting for adoption.