

BYLAWS of the UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS OF COASTAL GEORGIA, INC.
Approved by member attendees at Business Meeting held Sunday, September 15, 2024

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this religious Congregation is: Unitarian Universalists of Coastal Georgia, Inc.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

We covenant to affirm and promote:

The inherent worth and dignity of every person;

Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;

Acceptance of the uniqueness of one another and encouragement of spiritual growth in our Congregation;

A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;

The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our Congregation and our country at large;

The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all; and

Respect for the interdependent web of all existence, of which we are a part.

We further covenant to commit to being an inclusive and welcoming congregation, affirming and promoting full participation of every person in all our activities, including membership, programming, hiring practices, and the calling of religious professionals. No one shall be excluded based on societal labels, categories or positions, or based upon race, ethnic group, color, sex, disability, affectional or sexual orientation, age, national origin or religious belief or creed.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

SECTION I BECOMING A MEMBER

1. Membership in UUCG is open to anyone who is at least 17 years old; is in sympathy with its purpose and programs; and has attended a member orientation. UUCG has no required dogma or test of religious beliefs, but all members are invited and encouraged to participate in programs about the history and principles of the UU movement.
2. A member covenants to contribute treasure, time and talent to the church. Financial contributions should be commensurate with the member's financial circumstances. The amount

of attendance and participation by each individual is also a personal decision based on current ability and circumstances.

3. Membership is formalized by signing the membership book.
4. Membership grants each person voting rights, 30 days after having signed the membership book.
5. Honorary Life Memberships may be granted by the Board, at their discretion, and will not automatically be granted. A life member should have been a “founding member” or a member in good standing (pursuant to guidelines in Section II) for a minimum of 10 years. Honorary Life Membership does not include voting privileges, nor are honorary members included in the quorum count.

SECTION II: AFFIRMATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Sixteen weeks prior to the annual meeting the Membership Chair should recommend, to the Board of Trustees, names of members with reduced involvement for the current year. The Board should contact each member, in writing, encouraging their reengagement and requiring a response within 30 days.

SECTION III: REMOVAL FROM MEMBERSHIP

The Board of Trustees is empowered to remove any person from membership for extended inactivity and lack of participation, after the Board has attempted to contact the member in writing.

Eight weeks prior to the annual meeting, and after consultation with the Treasurer, the Membership Chair should recommend names to the Board for a vote to be removed from membership and considered as an “inactive member.”

The Membership Chair, the Treasurer and the Board should consider the following when they are considering the removal of a name from membership.

BYLAWS of the UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS OF COASTAL GEORGIA, INC.
Approved by member attendees at Business Meeting held Sunday, September 15, 2024

1. Non-attendance/non-participation for the previous year.
2. Contribution of treasure, time or talent not received within at least 12 consecutive months.
3. Member does not respond to correspondence regarding interest in maintaining membership within stated timeframe.
4. Or, for reasons laid out in the UUCG Policy on Disruptive Behavior.

Within 10 days of the annual meeting, each member recommended for inactive status should be sent a letter, formally explaining removal from active membership and suspension of voting rights.

A list of inactive members will be maintained by the Membership Chair.

ARTICLE IV. DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION

This Congregation shall be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association. It is the intention of this Congregation to make annual financial contributions to [the] UUA, based on [the] “fair share” criteria as determined by the Association.

ARTICLE V. MEETINGS

The annual business meeting of the Congregation shall be held no later than mid-December at such time and place as shall be fixed by the Board of Trustees. Special business meetings may be called at any time by the Board, or at the written request of any five members.

The membership chair should have a current list of members, available to all members, at the time of any called meeting, so that a quorum can be properly established.

BYLAWS of the UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS OF COASTAL GEORGIA, INC.
Approved by member attendees at Business Meeting held Sunday, September 15, 2024

The business to be transacted at all meetings shall be set forth in the notice of the meeting, which shall be sent to all members by mail or e-mail at least twelve (12) days prior to the meeting. Thirty percent (30%) of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum. The annual budget should be presented at the annual meeting for a vote.

Motions may be passed by a simple majority of a quorum present, except for the following circumstances:

- a) that a two-thirds (2/3) vote is required for any of the following two purposes: (1) to amend these Bylaws, per Article X; (2) to purchase or sell real estate.
- b) That an 85% vote of the quorum present is required to call a minister. The board may hire an annually contracted minister with the advice of the congregation, but without a vote. (see UUA guidelines)

ARTICLE VI. FISCAL YEAR

The Congregation's fiscal year shall run the calendar year from January 1 to December 31.

ARTICLE VII. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

SECTION I. COMPOSITION

The governing authority of the Congregation shall be an elected Board of Trustees (the Board), which shall consist of four officers – President, President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer – plus at least one additional Trustee and up to three as dictated by the Board with no less than five members serving at any given time. The Minister and Immediate Past President shall serve as ex-officio members of the Board.

Team Leaders or Committee Chairs shall be approved by the Board. [The Immediate Past President shall assist the President in the transition and attend board meetings when requested by the President.]

As used herein, the term "ex-officio" refers to non-voting Board members who serve by virtue of another position they hold, rather than having been elected as Trustees. Ex-officio members may not offer or second motions and may not be counted for purposes of determining a quorum. Committee chairs, are not obligated to attend Board meetings unless requested, but have a standing invitation to do so, as do all the Congregation's members. When matters of personnel or other sensitive issues are to be discussed, this action will be taken into Executive Session.

SECTION II. AUTHORITY

The Board shall have general charge of the property and business affairs of the Congregation, may appoint any subordinate committees it deems necessary, and may fill any Board vacancy with a qualified member who shall serve until the last day of the current fiscal year. The presence of at least four of the seven Trustees shall constitute a quorum. Action may be taken by majority vote of a quorum present, subject to the limitations listed in Section V of this Article.

Legal documents shall be signed by the President or by another Board officer in order of the listing in Section I if the President is not available. The Board may also designate a member as agent with specific limited signature authority. The minister, serving ex-officio, plus the four officers shall constitute the Executive Committee. By vote of at least three officers, the Executive Committee is empowered to make any decision within the authority of the board that does not allow time to convene a meeting of the full board.

SECTION III. TERMS OF OFFICE

The President and President-Elect shall serve terms of one year each. The Secretary, Treasurer, and Trustees-at-Large shall serve terms of two years. Re-election to the same or a different Trustee position shall be permitted. All elections shall be held as part of the annual business meeting each year, with all terms beginning January 1 following the elections.

A board member who misses 3 out of four consecutive board meetings shall automatically be removed from the board. Additionally, board members may be removed by two thirds vote of the board for breach of trust or gross misconduct. Vacancy shall be filled pursuant to bylaws.

Term Limits. Any board member may be nominated to serve a second term. After serving a second term, the member must step down from the board for a period of at least one year before they may be nominated again.

SECTION IV. ELECTION

The election of Trustees shall be conducted as follows:

A. The Board, at its March meeting, shall appoint a nominating committee of three members of the Congregation who are not currently voting members of the Board. Their role is to cultivate throughout

BYLAWS of the UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS OF COASTAL GEORGIA, INC.
Approved by member attendees at Business Meeting held Sunday, September 15, 2024

the year potential leaders, studying the current board needs and makeup.

B. At the annual business meeting of that year, the nominating committee shall present its nominees for those Trustee positions whose terms end December 31st of the current year. Members of the Congregation shall also be allowed to nominate candidates from the floor. In the event of a contested election for any position, election shall be by secret ballot.

C. Following their election, the new Trustees shall take office January 1st.

SECTION V. LIMITATIONS

The Board of Trustees shall submit any changes in the congregation's minister, or purchase or sale of real estate, or amendments to these Bylaws, to the membership for approval at any properly called business meeting.

ARTICLE VIII. MINISTER

Upon recommendation by the Board of Trustees, the Congregation's membership may covenant with a minister, full-time or part-time. Within the parameters agreed upon, the minister shall be responsible for conducting Sunday services for the congregation and attending to the congregation's spiritual interests and affairs. The minister shall have freedom of the pulpit as well as freedom to express his or her opinions outside the pulpit. The minister shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Board and all Board-appointed committees.

A minister may be called only if approved by an 85% vote of a quorum present at a properly called business meeting. A minister may be dismissed by a simple majority vote of a quorum present at a properly called business meeting. In the event of a minister's dismissal, his or her salary shall be continued for three months after the date of dismissal. If a minister resigns, three months' notice must be given, unless the Board approves a shorter notice period.

ARTICLE IX. DISSOLUTION

In the case of dissolution of the Congregation, all its property, real and personal, after paying all just claims upon it, shall be conveyed to and vested in the Unitarian Universalist Association or its legal

BYLAWS of the UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS OF COASTAL GEORGIA, INC.
Approved by member attendees at Business Meeting held Sunday, September 15, 2024

successor, and the Board of the Congregation shall perform all actions necessary to effectuate such conveyance.

ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS

These bylaws, so far as allowed by law, may be amended or replaced by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of a quorum present at a properly called business meeting. Notice of any proposed change shall be contained in the notice of the meeting.

ARTICLE XI. RESERVES

UUCG shall maintain a Reserve Fund. The Reserve goal shall be maintained in the amount of at least 20% of the total budgeted expenses. Expenditures are subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees. In the event that the balance of these reserves falls below the minimum percentage threshold established above, the minimum balance(s) shall be restored in subsequent fiscal years by budgeting at least 1.5% of UUCG's total operating budget toward the reserve until the minimum threshold is reached.