

# UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST WOMENSPIRIT BYLAWS

Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit is a Unitarian Universalist women's organization.

## **Purpose**

Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit is a volunteer organization created for the purpose of enhancing the religious and spiritual development of women of the Unitarian Universalist community. This purpose shall be addressed by Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit creating, conducting, and supporting activities that encourage and enable women to explore their religious and spiritual origins, experiences, and beliefs. Such activities shall be designed to promote spiritual development and growth by:

- Fostering communication, connectedness, and support;
- Pursuing, nurturing, and affirming creativity and diversity;
- Promoting awareness of the challenges women face;
- Developing ways to meet challenges and overcome obstacles to spiritual and religious growth;
- Encouraging leadership skills through participation in planning the organization's development, growth, and activities; and
- Developing the use of consensus decision making.

## **ARTICLE I. Procedure**

We affirm our commitment to the consensus process in all Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit actions. We consider the processes through which we guide our meetings and other events to be as important as any goal to be achieved. We strive to conduct the affairs of Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit to assure that everyone may speak and be heard. The membership shall be kept informed in semi-annual newsletters and have the right and obligation to challenge or affirm decisions at the next meeting of the membership.

## **ARTICLE II. Membership**

- A. An individual member is any woman who supports the purpose of Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit and who pays dues, the amount of which shall be determined by the Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit Coordinating Council.
- B. Membership may be renewed by paying dues.
- C. Membership shall not be transferable.
- D. A membership list shall be maintained and updated.
- E. New members will be given information about Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit's history, purpose, and activities.

## **ARTICLE III. Affiliations.**

- A. Affiliations with Unitarian Universalist organizations may be established by the Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit Coordinating Council.
- B. The Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit Coordinating Council may act to disaffiliate Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit from any affiliations established under paragraphs A of this Article.

## **ARTICLE IV. Meetings of Membership**

- A. There shall be at least one membership meeting per year. The time and location of membership meetings shall be determined by the Coordinating Council. Matters to be addressed annually shall include:
  - (1) An annual report by the Coordinating Council to the membership. The annual report shall include financial information concerning the organization, and any other information pertaining to the organization that the Coordinating Council deems appropriate;
  - (2) The presentation of the proposed Coordinating Council and Search Committee. The membership shall affirm or not affirm each proposed Council member. If the membership does not affirm a proposed member, the Search Process shall be repeated and a special membership meeting shall be held at the next event to complete the process.
  - (3) Agenda items submitted by the membership provided that such items have been received in writing by the Coordinating Council at least thirty (30) days prior to the membership meeting. Written correspondence suggesting agenda items must briefly describe such items and be signed by the member or members submitting them.
- B. A membership meeting shall consist of a minimum of fifteen percent (15%) of the total membership and include at least three (3) societies of the Unitarian Universalist Association. The fifteen percent (15%) shall include at least two (2) members of the Coordinating Council.
- C. Additional meetings may be called at the discretion of the Coordinating Council or by 15% of the membership.
- D. Notice shall be provided in writing to the membership at least thirty (30) days in advance of all membership meetings.

## **ARTICLE V Fiscal and Membership Year**

- A. The fiscal year is from January 1 through December 30. All members of the Coordinating Council, the Search Committee, and Coordinating Council Committees, except the Event Planning Committees, will serve terms that have these beginning and ending dates, even though these terms vary in one, two, or three year increments. The Event Planning Committees will serve for twelve months, beginning with the tenth month before the event and continuing two months after the event.
- B. The membership year will be determined by the Coordinating Council. If the membership year changes, no members will be required to renew before one calendar year has elapsed since their last renewal date.

## **ARTICLE VI. Program**

- A. The program of Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit shall include any programs and activities deemed by the Coordinating Council to be necessary and appropriate to carry out the purpose and goals of Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit.
- B. Each Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit event shall be developed and administered by that event's Planning Committee and, following all Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit policies set forth by the Coordinating Council, shall strive to further the purpose, goals, and philosophy of Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit.

## **ARTICLE VII. Coordinating Council Membership and Functions**

- A. The Coordinating Council shall consist of six (6) members, all of whom shall be selected by the membership in accordance with the procedures set forth in Article XI of these bylaws. All Coordinating Council members shall serve staggered three (3) year terms. No member may serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. Members of the Coordinating Council shall serve until the expiration of the term or until successors are selected by the membership.
- B. In compliance with legal requirements, Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit shall list officers of record.
- C. Qualifications to serve on the Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit Coordinating Council are:
  - (1) Membership in Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit; and
  - (2) Membership in a society of the Unitarian Universalist Association or membership in the Church of the Larger Fellowship. This qualification may be waived so long as the majority of the CoCo members meet this qualification.
  - (3) Attendance at two (2) Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit events in the thirty (30) months preceding the beginning of the proposed term.
  - (4) Active leadership involvement in Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit within the past three calendar years. This includes, but is not limited to, an active role on an Event Planning Committee, Search Committee, Coordinating Council or any of its appointed positions or committees such as membership chair, newsletter editor.
- D. If a position on the Coordinating Council becomes vacant before the term for that position expires, the Search Committee shall select a woman to fill the vacant position. Candidates must possess the qualifications for Coordinating Council membership. The Coordinating Council shall affirm the candidate by consensus. If the Coordinating Council does not affirm the candidate, the process shall be repeated until the position is filled. The woman affirmed by the Coordinating Council to fill the vacant position shall serve for the duration of the unexpired term. If the time remaining in the unexpired term is one (1) year or less at the time the vacancy is filled, then for purposes of eligibility to serve the maximum number of terms on the Coordinating Council, the time served by the selectee shall not be considered a full term.
- E. The duties and responsibilities of the Coordinating Council shall include:
  - (1) Examining periodically the purpose of Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit in order to establish and modify, as needed, Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit programs and long-range goals;
  - (2) Establishing policy consistent with and in furtherance of Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit's purpose;
  - (3) Maintaining the financial accountability, integrity, and viability of Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit. Maintaining financial accountability shall include but not be limited to: maintaining accurate books and records, reviewing and approving the budget of the organization and its programs, and establishing fees and dues;
  - (4) Providing guidance, as needed, to Committee Coordinators;
  - (5) Promoting Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit programs and events;
  - (6) Removing any Committee Coordinator from her position prior to the end of her term, as the Coordinating Council deems necessary, appropriate, or in the best interests of the organization.
  - (7) Setting the time and place for the membership meetings;
  - (8) Maintaining an up-to-date membership list;
  - (9) Holding the position of Registrar for four (4) consecutive events, as deemed necessary by the Coordinating Council. The Registrar will apprentice one (1) event, conduct 4 (four) and train the new Registrar at her last event. The division of duties between the Planning Committee and their scribe and the Coordinating Council Registrar will be established as appropriate by the Coordinating Council.
- F. Membership on the Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit Coordinating Council necessarily requires a

commitment to Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit purposes beyond the specific duties imposed upon Coordinating Council members in these bylaws. Such commitment means that members of the Coordinating Council are expected to attend and participate in all Coordinating Council meetings. Members of the Coordinating Council are encouraged to attend events which further the goals, growth, and development of Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit directly or indirectly. Moreover, service on the Coordinating Council implicitly confers the responsibility of ambassadorship on its members.

## **ARTICLE VIII. Coordinating Council Positions**

- A. There shall be six (6) Coordinating Council members selected through the Search Process, as described in Article XI in these bylaws.
- B. The Coordinating Council will designate three (3) of its members who shall act as signatories on all Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit bank accounts.
- C. The roles of the individual Coordinating Council members will be determined by Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit policies.

## **ARTICLE IX Removal of Coordinating Council Members.**

- A. Members of the Coordinating Council may be removed for conduct detrimental to the interests of Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit, for lack of sympathy with its goals, or for refusal to render reasonable assistance in carrying out its purpose. Any such member proposed to be removed shall be entitled to at least ten (10) days written notice of the meeting at which such removal is to be determined, and shall be entitled to appear before and be heard at such meeting.
- B. The Coordinating Council shall have final authority for the removal of any woman on the Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit Coordinating Council.

## **ARTICLE X Coordinating Council Meetings**

Coordinating Council meetings must be open to the membership. That is, any Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit member may attend any Coordinating Council meeting. Any member may fully participate in the meeting's discussion. No member who is not a Coordinating Council member may block consensus on a Council decision.

## **ARTICLE XI. The Search Committee**

- A. The Search Committee shall be comprised of not less than four (4) current members of Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit. One member shall be a former Coordinating Council member OR a former PC member. One member shall be the current Volunteer Coordinator of the Coordinating Council. The third and fourth members of the Committee shall be from the membership at large.
- B. All members of the Committee, except for the CoCo Volunteer Coordinator, shall serve a three (3) year term. The current CoCo Volunteer Coordinator shall serve as a member of the Search Committee during her entire term on the Coordinating Council. The other three members shall serve staggered terms, with a new member rotating on each year. Members of the Committee shall serve until expiration of their term or until their successors are affirmed.
- C. If a position on the Search Committee becomes vacant before the term for the position expires, the Search Committee shall nominate a woman to fill the vacant position. Nominees must meet

the qualifications for Committee membership. The Coordinating Council shall affirm or not affirm the nomination. If the Coordinating Council does not affirm the nomination, the process shall be repeated until the position is filled. The woman affirmed by the Coordinating Council to fill the vacant position shall serve for the duration of the unexpired term. If the time remaining in the unexpired term is six (6) months or less at the time the vacancy is filled, then for purposes of eligibility to serve the maximum number of terms on the Search Committee, the time served by the selectee shall not be considered a full term.

- D. Members of the Search Committee shall be chosen in accordance with the Search Process as delineated in the Sacred Text.

## **ARTICLE XII Indemnification**

Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless anyone acting in furtherance of our purpose against liability and against expenses incurred in connection with any action suit, or proceeding to which such individual or individuals shall be made a party by reason of being or having been acting in furtherance of our purpose, except with regard to such actions or matters that such individual shall be finally adjudicated in such action, suit, or proceedings to be liable for willful misconduct.

## **ARTICLE XIII. Amendments**

These bylaws may be amended by consensus at any Membership Meeting, provided that the text of all proposed amendments has been provided to the membership on the UUWomenspirit website at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which such amendments are to be considered or in writing (by special request to a Coordinating Council member after announcement in the newsletter). During this time members may submit written comments on proposed amendments. If a member submits written comments and such member is not present at the meeting, her written comments shall be heard and considered at the meeting at which such amendments are presented.

## **ARTICLE XIV Dissolution**

Upon the dissolution of Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit, the Coordinating Council shall, in compliance with State and Federal law and after paying or making provision for payment of all of the organization's liabilities, distribute all of the assets of the organization as follows:

- (1) Fifty percent to the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation, and
- (2) Fifty percent to The Mountain Retreat and Learning Centers, Inc.

The assets of the organization shall be distributed to the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation and The Mountain Retreat and Learning Centers, Inc. on the conditions that

- (1) The assets shall be used for purposes consistent with the purposes of Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit, and
- (2) That the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation and The Mountain Retreat and Learning Centers, Inc. qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

In the event the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation and/or The Mountain Retreat and Learning Centers, Inc. are unable to meet the conditions for receiving the assets herein designated, such assets shall be distributed in accordance with the dissolution provisions of the Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit Articles of Incorporation.