

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF THE SOUTH FORK, INC

Bylaws as amended October, XX, 2015

1. NAME

- 1.1. The name of this religious organization shall be Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Fork, Inc. (UUCSF). **[1.1] [Note bold type references the portion of the original bylaws which the section has changed.]**

2. PURPOSE

We are a spiritual community. We honor every individual's search for truth and meaning. We act against exclusion, oppression and violence. We nurture the health of the earth. We strive for peace in our hearts and in the world around us. When fear strikes, we stand on the side of love. **[2.1]**

3. MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1. Any person 13 years of age or older, who is in sympathy with its purposes, has signed the membership book, and makes an annual contribution of record, may become a member of the Congregation. The right to vote commences 30 days after a member signs the membership book. A current Board member must witness the new member's signing of the membership book. Membership is open to anyone whose beliefs are in accord with Unitarian Universalist Principles and Purposes. **[3.1]**
- 3.2. Withdrawal of membership may be made by written request to the Secretary of the Congregation, and approved by the Board of Trustees. **[3.2]**
- 3.3. Another category of participation in the Congregation is that of "contributing friends". Contributing friends are individuals who participate in the life of the Congregation and make an annual contribution of record to the Congregation.

4. DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION

This Congregation is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations and the Metro New York District of the Unitarian Universalist Association. It is the intention of this congregation to make annual financial contributions equal to its full Fair Share as determined by the Association and the district. **[4.1]**

5. MEETINGS **[5.1 thru 5.4 & 15]**

- 5.1. The Annual Business Meeting shall be held each year in May or June, at a time and place to be fixed by the Board of Trustees, to elect Trustees officers, and committee Chairs to fill any vacancies and approve an annual budget. Other agenda items may be added at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.
- 5.2. Other business meetings may be called by vote of the Board of Trustees or by petition of 15% of the voting members of the Congregation.
- 5.3. Members of the Congregation shall be notified at least 14 days prior to any business meeting of the place, time and agenda of the meeting. Unless otherwise specified a quorum is required for action at a business meeting. Between business meetings of

the Congregation, the Board of Trustees shall act on behalf of the Congregation in all matters of business.

- 5.4. A quorum shall be 40% of the whole membership, and a simple majority of members present and voting shall be sufficient to adopt a motion.
- 5.5. A quorum shall be 50% of the whole membership, with at least a three quarters majority of members present and voting shall be required to adopt a motion regarding
 1. Purchase, sale, or mortgaging of real estate.
 2. Change in denominational affiliation.
 3. Dissolution of the congregation.
 4. Dismissal of the minister or a reduction in salary.
- 5.6 Proxy voting and absentee ballots are not permitted.
- 5.7 Meetings are open to the members of the Congregation, contributing friends, and to other interested parties who participate in the life of the Congregation. Non-members may speak but not make motions or vote. Meetings may be restricted to members of the Congregation to discuss personnel matters or to receive legal advice.

6. OFFICERS AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES [6]

- 6.1. The Board of Trustees consists of six members of the Congregation who shall be elected to hold office for three years. Officers of the Congregation, namely a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer, shall be elected from within the Board of Trustees for a term of one year.
- 6.2. Midyear vacancies in the Board shall be filled by the Board until the next Annual Meeting, when a member shall be elected to the unfulfilled portion of the term. Trustees completing a three year term may be re-elected for one additional consecutive three year term. Re-election to the Board may occur only after at least one year following the second consecutive three year term. Trustees may be removed by a two thirds vote of the members of the Congregation present, but not less than a majority of the total membership at a meeting called for that purpose.
- 6.3. The governance of the Congregation shall be vested in the Board of Trustees which shall have general charge as to all matters not otherwise specified in these bylaws. These matters shall include management of its business and property, as well as the conduct of its business.
- 6.4. Monthly meetings of the Board of Trustees will be announced publicly at least five days in advance.
- 6.5. Meetings are open to members of the Congregation, contributing friends, and other interested parties who participate in the life of the Congregation. Non-members may address the Board by prior arrangement but not make motions or vote. The Board may meet in executive session at its discretion.
- 6.6. Minutes shall be kept of all meetings of the Board excluding Executive Sessions. A set of final approved minutes, signed by the Secretary of the Board, shall be kept at a place determined by the Board to be safe from loss or damage. A second set of

such minutes shall be kept in the meetinghouse to be readily available to all members of the Congregation membership.

7. COMMITTEES [New language]

The Board of Trustees may establish committees as required to fulfill its mission and continue its functioning. Committee Chairs and members may be members or contributing friends of the Congregation and will be selected by the committee Chairs from volunteers. Chairs of Standing Committees will be elected at the Annual Business Meeting.

8. STANDING COMMITTEES

8.1 NOMINATING COMMITTEE [Revision of 7 thru 8]

Purpose: The Nominating Committee shall present a slate of candidates for election at the Annual Meeting for the following positions: Members and Officers of the Board of Trustees and the chairs of the Standing Committees named in Section 8.2, 8.3, 8.4 and 8.5.

The Nominating Committee shall consist of three voting members, representative of the diversity of the congregation, to serve in a three year rotation, with one person nominated by the board to be elected at each Annual Meeting. The Minister of the Congregation shall serve in an ex officio capacity. At its first meeting, commencing at least four months prior to the Annual Meeting of the Congregation, the committee shall elect one of its members to serve as Chair. The Committee shall deliver its nominations to the Board at least two months prior to the Annual Meeting.

8.2 FINANCE COMMITTEE

Purpose: The Committee's scope encompasses stewardship, management of the Endowment Fund, maintaining the financial records of the Congregation, and assisting in the annual budget process.

The Finance Committee shall be composed of three to five members or contributing friends of the Congregation, one of whom shall be the Treasurer, who may vote but who shall not serve as the chair. The other committee members shall be proposed by the Nominating Committee subject to election by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting. All terms shall be for three years.

8.3 COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY [9.3]

Purpose: The Committee focuses on all aspects of the congregation's ministry, including professional leadership, music, social justice, religious education, pastoral care, and so on to ensure its ministries are serving its mission and vision. At times it may be called upon to mediate discussion regarding the relationship between the Minister and the Congregation.

The Committee on Ministry shall be composed of three members: one selected by the Minister, one by the Board, and the third member by the other two members.

8.4 WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Purpose: The Worship Committee works with the minister to develop and present worship services to support the spiritual life of the congregation. The committee assists in developing worship themes, coordinating music, and coordinating lay and guest speakers for worship.

Members of the worship committee are approved by the minister. Members of the worship committee may serve as Worship Associates, assisting in the Sunday service.

8.4 BUILDING AND GROUNDS

Purpose: The Building and Grounds Committee addresses all activities associated with the operation, maintenance, safety and security of the meetinghouse, grounds, furnishings and equipment owned by the congregation. It may review requests regarding repair and maintenance and determine what, if any, action should be taken. When funds are needed for expenditures beyond the approved budget, the Committee will submit a request to the Board of Trustees for assistance.

9. MINISTER [9]

9.1 The Minister and the members of the Congregation share the responsibility for the spiritual life of the congregation and its activities. The Minister shall be responsible for the conduct of worship within the Congregation and the Congregation's spiritual interests and affairs. The Minister shall have freedom of the pulpit as well as freedom to express his or her opinion outside the pulpit. The Minister shall be an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees and Nominating Committee and shall be free to attend any committee meetings.

9.2 A Minister may be called or hired by a two-thirds vote of the membership of the Congregation at a duly called meeting of the Congregation.

9.3 To initiate a search for a Minister, the membership of the Congregation shall elect a committee of five members to serve as a Ministerial Search Committee, and budget funds sufficient to support the position.

9.4 The Ministerial Search Committee shall interview potential candidates for the position and recommend to the Congregation a single candidate for the Ministry.

9.5 A Minister who accepts such a call or offer shall serve with indefinite tenure. The Congregation and/or the Minister may sever the relationship, without cause or redress, with three months notice.

9.6 Only those persons who are in good standing with the Unitarian Universalist Association Ministerial Fellowship Committee shall be considered for the position of Minister.

10. INDEMNIFICATION [10]

The Congregation shall maintain an insurance policy to protect any person who is or was an employee, agent, representative, member of the Board of Trustees, or Committee member of the UUCSF against any liability asserted against such person and incurred in

the course and scope of his or her duties or functions within the UUCSF to the maximum extent allowable by law, provided the person acted in good faith and did not engage in an act or omission that is intentional, willfully or wantonly negligent, or done with conscious indifference or reckless disregard for the safety of others. The provisions of this paragraph shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which such person may be entitled under any bylaw, agreement, insurance policy, vote of members or otherwise.

11. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Congregation shall be July 1st to June 30th.

12. DISSOLUTION

Should this Congregation cease to function and the membership to disband, any assets of the Congregation will be transferred to the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations for its general purposes. This transfer is to be made in full compliance with applicable laws.

13. AMENDMENT

These bylaws may be amended in whole or part by a three quarters majority of those voting at a meeting of the membership duly called for that purpose at which a quorum is present. The text of all amendments must be included in the notice of meeting. All bylaw amendments shall take effect at the close of the meeting in which they are enacted.

14. ENDOWMENT FUND

14.1. Should the Congregation receive a gift designated as an endowment or should the board determine that it is holding excessive cash, the board shall create an investment account separate from the ordinary operation accounts of the UUCSF shall be established. The name of the account shall be the UUCSF ENDOWMENT FUND (FUND).

14.2 The purpose of the FUND shall be to provide income for long-term benefit and capital improvements of the UUSF.

14.3 Management of the FUND shall be in accord with an enabling resolution adopted at the Congregation's Annual Meeting on June 3, 2012, which is incorporated into these bylaws by reference.

14.4 Amendments to this resolution shall be permitted under the provisions in Article 13. Any such amendments, when approved, shall be incorporated into these bylaws by reference.