

DENTON UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP BY-LAWS

rev 040100 , parts, Dec 2003, amended May 21, 2006

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ARTICLE I - NAME AND LOCATION

1.01 The Name of the Organization, the Denton Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (DUUF). DUUF incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas insofar as they relate to tax exempt organizations. The words “church,” “congregation,” or “church fellowship” as they appear in these bylaws are interchangeable with “fellowship” as referring to our corporate organization.

1.02 The Principal Office of the corporation shall be fixed by the Board of Trustees (currently 1111 Cordell St., Denton, TX 76201) as provided in the Articles of Incorporation of the Fellowship.

1.03 Records of membership, finances, donations, corporate minutes, etc. shall be maintained at the principal offices of the corporation. Official church documents are to be available to church officers and senior minister and/or co-minister(s) at all times.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

2.01 The purpose of the Denton Unitarian Universalist Fellowship is to further individual freedom of belief and to bring Unitarian Universalists and seekers into community, for the study and practice of religion and for the diffusion of the knowledge of Unitarian Universalism.

2.02 Denton Unitarian Universalist Fellowship declares and affirms its responsibility to promote the **full participation** of all persons without regard to race, color, gender, disability, affectional or sexual orientation, age, or national origin in all matters relating to membership, hiring practices, and the calling of religious professionals.

ARTICLE III - DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION

3.01 This fellowship shall be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association, the Southwest Unitarian Universalist Conference, the North Texas Association of Unitarian Universalist Societies, and such

other Unitarian Universalist groups as determined by the Board of Trustees. It is the intention of this Fellowship to participate as fully as possible in the responsibilities and programs of these organizations.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP updated as of May 2006 at Congregational Meeting

Definitions:

Pledge - Submitting a pledge card during the canvass, or upon joining the Fellowship, indicating a promise to support the Fellowship financially, through work, and / or service on a committee or on the Board.

Contribution of Record - (a) checks or cash in envelopes, in the collection basket or mailed in; (b) work or service on a committee, previously approved by the Board.

4.01 A **Member** of this fellowship is any person in sympathy with its principles and Purposes, goals and programs who (1) signs the Membership Book, (2) makes a pledge and contribution of record, and (3) has attained the age of 16. A member shall furnish an address, phone and e-mail and be responsible for keeping this information current.

4.02 **Voting**. A member who has made a pledge and a verifiable contribution of record in the previous 12 months (at least 24 hours prior to voting) has the right to vote in the business meetings of the Fellowship. Voting members shall comprise the list of members reported to the Annual Program Fund.

4.03 **Inactive members**. Members may be ruled inactive if they: (a) are absent from participation in Fellowship activities for the previous 12 months, (b) make a request to the Secretary that they be made inactive, c) have not turned in a pledge card in the previous 12 months, or (d) have not made a contribution of record in the previous 12 months. Those ruled inactive will be notified according to 4.04. They may not vote and they will not be reported to the Annual Program Fund.

4.04 **Review of membership status**. The Board of Trustees shall review and establish the membership list annually in December. The Treasurer is responsible for furnishing the Board with a roster of members who have made a pledge and a verifiable contribution of record in the previous 12 months. The Secretary shall notify any members whose status has changed by certified mail (or its e-mail equivalent) within twenty (20) days. The Board may suspend membership in individual cases.

4.05 **Removal**. Removal from the membership roll of any member whose qualifications are in question requires at least a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Board of Trustees. Prior to action concerning removal, the member must be given the opportunity for a hearing before the Board. This action should be done within a reasonable amount of time agreeable to both parties.

4.06 **Reinstatement**. Inactive members may regain full voting membership status by fulfilling the appropriate requirements in 4.01 and 4.02 above and notifying the Secretary.

4.07 **Friends**. A Friend of the fellowship is a person who participates in programs and activities, contributes by pledging or other means, but who has not signed the Membership Book. Friends may not vote or serve in elected offices.

ARTICLE V-FELLOWSHIP MEETINGS

5.01 **Annual Meetings**. Two annual meetings of the Fellowship are required. The Spring Meeting shall

be held in April or May to elect officers and trustees (who serve June 1 - May 31) and approve a tentative budget to be used for canvassing purposes; the Winter Meeting shall be in November or December to adopt the budget for the following fiscal year (Jan. 1 - Dec. 31).

- a. In addition, the Fellowship shall conduct other business as may be put before it in accordance with the terms of these bylaws.
- b. Individual expenditures of more than \$3,000 require the affirmative vote of the congregation.

5.02 Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Fellowship may be called by the President:

- (a) upon his or her own initiative,
- (b) upon the written request of two members of the Board of Trustees, or
- (c) upon the written request of any ten Active Members.

The business to be transacted shall be clearly stated in the agenda notice.

5.03 The agenda, time, and place of Fellowship Meetings shall be announced seven (7) days in advance of the meeting. Fourteen (14) days notice is required when the agenda includes (1) sale or purchase of real property, (2) the hiring, firing, or extension of a minister's contract, or (3) dissolution of the fellowship.

5.05 Quorum for Fellowship Meetings shall be twenty percent (20%) of Voting Members unless otherwise provided for in these by-laws. A quorum, once established, shall remain in effect until the meeting is adjourned.

5.06 Decisions will be made by a simple majority of those present and voting. Matters specified in **Article 6.09(b)** [Removal of Elected Officer] and **7.09(b)** [Removal of Elected Trustee], however, require a sixty percent (60%) majority; those in **11.06** [Dismissal of Minister] and **14.0** [Amendment of Bylaws] require a two-thirds (2/3) majority.

5.07 The power to interpret the by-laws shall reside in the President or a parliamentarian appointed by the President. In all matters of procedure not covered in the By-laws, **Robert's Rules of Order for Churches, Clubs, Organizations and Businesses** shall serve as a guide.

5-08 Members qualified to vote but under the age of eighteen (18) may vote in all matters coming before the congregation except those relating to the purchase or sale of real property. On those issues, their participation shall be limited to discussion.

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS

6.01 The Fellowship shall elect annually (at the Spring Fellowship Meeting) a President, a Vice President, and a Secretary, all of whom shall hold their offices for one year or until their successors have been elected. In addition, a Treasurer shall be elected every other year for a two-year term. These officers shall perform the duties usually pertaining to these offices, including the specific duties listed in Section 6.04 through 6.07 below.

- (a.) No person may simultaneously hold more than one of the above elected positions (except on a temporary and emergency basis, subject to approval by the Board of Trustees).
- (b) **Terms of office** shall be from **June 1 - May 31**.

6.02 The officers shall all be members of the Board of Trustees of the Fellowship as specified in Sec-

tion 7.01 below.

6.03 All officers of the Fellowship must be Voting Members of the Fellowship (as defined in 4.02).

6.04 The **President** shall:

- (a) function as chief executive officer of the Fellowship,
- (b) preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees and Fellowship meetings,
- (c) appoint committees as specified in Article 9.01 or as authorized by the Board of Trustees. In making committee appointments the President may consult with officers, trustees and others deemed necessary in order to best further the interests of the Fellowship. Such appointments shall be ratified by the Board of Trustees as provided in Article 7.04(h).
- (d) serve as an ex-officio member of all standing committees except the Nominating Committee.
- (e) sign such papers and documents, upon proper authorization, as may be necessary to further the work of the Fellowship, including approval of emergency expenditures, execution of such notes, contracts and other instruments as directed by the Board of Trustees.
- (f) establish Ad HOC committees as needed and appropriate to carry out the Purpose of the Fellowship. These Ad HOC committees shall terminate at the end of their work or the end of the church year, whichever comes first.

6.05 The **Vice President** shall:

- (a) perform the duties of the President in the absence of the President, or when the President is for any reason unable to act.
- (b) become the President if the office of the President should become vacant. In such cases a new Vice President shall be elected by the Board from among the remaining trustees to fill the remainder of the term. [See **Article 7.08** regarding filling Board of Trustee vacancies.
- (c) give attention and effort to the functioning of the committees with the goal of achieving diverse participation and quality output. The Vice President shall coordinate and facilitate communication between the Board and committees.

6.06 The **Secretary** shall:

- (a) keep, or cause to be kept, an accurate record of minutes of all Board of Trustee and Fellowship meetings.
- (b) hold in custody and be responsible for all reports, contracts, other legal papers, minute books, and the corporate seal, which items shall be kept in the Fellowship office at all times, or in a depository as may be prescribed by the Board of Trustees.
- (c) attend to all official business required by the Board of Trustees.

6.07 The **Treasurer** shall:

- (a) keep, or cause to be kept, records of all financial transactions, and maintain them according to the principles of Fund Accounting. Records for the General Fund relative to the ongoing operations of the Fellowship shall be separate from such other Funds as may be authorized by the Board of Trustees, or created by the Congregation.
- (b) serve as custodian of the funds of the Fellowship, and pay out, or cause to be paid out, funds authorized by the Board.
- (c) submit a monthly financial report to the Board of Trustees
- (d) submit a financial report at the annual Fellowship meeting in accordance with the "Fund" reporting requirements specified in Article **6.07(a)** covering the last complete fiscal period.
- (e) count, or cause to be counted by the appointment of qualified persons, all funds received, and are responsible for their deposit.

- (f) place, or cause to be placed, the funds of the Fellowship in the bank or other depository approved by the Board of Trustees.
- (g) keep records of all verifiable member contributions and make such records available to the Board as required to meet the requirements of **4.01** regarding verification of the Membership List.
- (h) serve on the Finance Committee, such committee having general oversight of financial matters of the Fellowship as specified in **Article 9.05**.

6.08 No person shall hold the same office longer than two consecutive full terms. In making the determination of tenure, one half of the term plus one-day constitutes a full term. Exception may be made by vote of the Fellowship at an Annual or Special Meeting.

6.09 **Officers may be removed** for the following reasons:

- (a) Failure of an Officer to attend three (3) consecutive regular Board meetings or four of any six consecutive regular Board meetings shall be deemed an automatic resignation without further action or notice.
- (b) Any Elected Officer may be removed from office at a Fellowship Meeting called for that purpose. Removal from office of an Elected Officer, shall be by a sixty percent (60%) vote of the Members present and voting at the meeting,
- (c) Same as **7.09(c)**. [Removal of Trustees]

ARTICLE VII – TRUSTEES

7.01 The **Board of Trustees** shall consist of the Officers designated in Article 6.01, two additional Trustees, and the immediate Past President; all shall be Voting Members of the Fellowship.

(a) The minister shall be an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees.

(b) If at any time a Trustee (or Officer) ceases to be an Voting Member, such officer or trustee shall automatically be terminated from the elected position held, and the vacancy will be filled as prescribed in Article 7.08 below.

7.02 Two Trustees (who are not Officers) shall be elected to terms of two years each. One Trustee shall be elected in an even numbered year and the other in an odd numbered year. In the case that either resigns from the position before expiration of the term, the replacement shall serve only the remainder of the term.

7.03 Elected Trustees may serve in the same position for no more than four (4) years in any six-(6) year period.

7.04 The Board of Trustees shall:

- (a) uphold the highest interests of the congregation in conducting the business of the Fellowship;
- (b) be conversant with these Bylaws;
- (c) establish and maintain Fellowship policies consistent with the Bylaws, the Mission Statement, and membership approved long-range goals and objectives;
- (d) make determinations of the business needs of the Fellowship and authorize payment of monies for those purposes; [Individual expenditures of more than \$3,000 require the affirmative vote of the congregation.]
- (e) take charge of and be responsible for the property and physical assets of the Fellowship;
- (f) ensure sound business practices are applied to the conduct of business and fiscal affairs.
- (g) employ and dismiss employees other than the Minister.

- (h) ratify committees and their chairpersons when appointed by the Board President. Receive and act upon recommendations of Standing Special Committees and any other committees authorized by the Board.
- (i) cause to be prepared annually a complete financial statement with disclosures, which will set forth the fiscal condition and operation of the Fellowship.
- (j) When deemed advisable, secure a fidelity bond for the Treasurer, the amount to be set by the Board.
- (k) establish and maintain mission statements for Standing Committees.
- (l) determine items to be acted upon by the Board of Trustees, and the Voting Members of the Fellowship.
- (m) Establish special "Funds" for the segregation of property, assets or investment, such funds to be accounted for by the Treasurer under the principles of "Fund Accounting."
- (n) The Board of Trustees shall meet each December to review and maintain the Membership List.
- (o) Keep or cause to be kept accurate records of gifts or contributions to the Fellowship in compliance with Internal Revenue Service regulations; and acknowledge in writing contributions in compliance with Internal Revenue Service regulations.

7.05 **Regular Meetings:** The Board of Trustees shall meet at least bimonthly (every other month). The members of the Fellowship shall be notified at least one week in advance of such meetings, and they shall be open to members and invited guests.

7.06 **Special Meetings:** Special meetings of the Board of Trustees may be called by the President or at the request (in writing) of any two-(2) members of the Board of Trustees. At least twenty-four (24) hours notice of such meetings shall be given.

7.07 A **Quorum** for Board of Trustee meetings is a simple majority of the Board positions actively occupied at the time of the meeting. Decisions at a Board of Trustees meeting shall be made by a simple majority of the Board members present and voting.

7.08 A **vacancy** on the Board of Trustees, other than the President, shall be filled by appointment by the Board of a Voting Member of the Fellowship, to serve until such vacancy can be filled at the next Annual Meeting. Should such vacancy relate to the Board of Trustee position designated for the Immediate Past President, such vacancy shall be filled from those members who have previously served as President, or if such person is unavailable, by a member who is a past Trustee.

7.09 **Removal** of Trustees

- (a) Failure of a Trustee to attend three consecutive regular Board meetings or four of any six consecutive regular Board meetings shall be an automatic resignation without further action or notice.
- (b) Any elected Trustee may be removed from office at a Fellowship meeting called for that purpose. Removal from office of an elected official (other than the Minister) shall be by a sixty (60%) vote of the Voting Members present and voting at a Fellowship Meeting.
- (c) If any Board of Trustee member is unable to perform the duties of the office during that person's term of office, the position will become vacant and must be filled in accordance with Article 7.08.

ARTICLE VIII -NOMINATING COMMITTEE AND TERMS OF OFFICE

8.01 A **Nominating Committee** shall be responsible for proposing nominees for the elected positions of the Fellowship; namely, President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer, Trustees (see 7.02 for terms), and Endowment Fund Trustees (see Endowment Fund Bylaws).

8.02 The Nominating Committee shall consist of at least three Voting Members, one of whom shall be the immediate Past President, but may not include any other incumbent Officers and Trustees.

8.03 The Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the President at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of the Spring Annual Meeting. A Chairperson shall be elected by the members of the Nominating Committee.

8.04 The report containing the recommendations of the Nominating Committee shall be presented at the Annual Meeting of the Fellowship.

8.05 At the annual meeting, nominations for elected positions may be made from the floor, with the consent of the nominee.

ARTICLE IX STANDING COMMITTEES

9.01 **STANDING COMMITTEES** perform actions necessary for the normal functioning and operation of the church. They are appointed by the President and/or the Board of Trustees and shall report to the Board of Trustees. These shall include but not be limited to Strategic Planning, Sunday Worship/Program, Membership, Finance, Community Outreach, Caring, and Buildings & Grounds. The Board of Trustees will review existing Standing Committee mission statements within sixty (60) days after the beginning of the fiscal year, and provide an approved mission statement for any new Standing Committee within ninety (90) days of its establishment. These committees shall report to the Board semi-annually each year or more often as needed or requested by the Board.

9.02 The Sunday **Worship/Program Committee** is responsible for the regular Sunday service on the days when the minister is not in attendance.

9.03 The **Membership Committee** shall be responsible for the enrollment of new members. It shall schedule orientation meetings periodically. In conjunction with the Minister, Treasurer, and Secretary, it shall be responsible for the maintenance of the list of active members. It shall provide for the registration of visitors and the follow-up to interest them in becoming members.

9.05 The **Finance** Committee shall provide oversight and advice for all financial matters concerning the Church. It shall plan, organize and direct the Annual Canvass. It shall assist the Board in the formulation of the goal budget and assist in the periodic adjustment of the budget in terms of actual income.

9.06. The **Outreach** Committee shall be responsible for various projects of social concern undertaken by the Church as outreach to the community, and will propose, from time to time, projects to be sponsored by the Fellowship.

9.07 . The **Caring** Committee shall be responsible for outreach to members who are celebrating joys or experiencing sorrows and concerns.

9.08 The **Building and Grounds Committee** shall be responsible for maintenance of the church building and grounds. This committee will propose necessary repairs or suggested improvements to the Board.

9.09 The **Strategic Planning Committee** shall be responsible for issues beyond the normal one year operating cycle of the Fellowship, including, but not limited to achieving the Mission and Vision Statements of DUUF. This committee shall issue a report identifying progress or lack thereof in the

previous work toward the long term goals of DUUF and highlighting the primary focus of their work for the current year. Such report and plan shall be due at the first Board Meeting following August 1st. There shall be a minimum of five members (5) of this committee, of whom no more than two members can be currently serving on the Board of Trustees and one of whom shall be member of the Endowment Fund Board of Trustees. The members of this committee shall serve two (2) terms with staggered (three in even years, two in odd years) renewals. At formation, the Board of Trustees shall determine which places shall serve one-year terms and which shall serve two-year terms. In June of each church year, the President shall appoint and Trustees shall approve or disapprove such appointments as need be considered for that June through May cycle.

ARTICLE X - FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEES

10.01 **Fellowship Committees** are responsible to and elected directly by the Fellowship. These committees are: the Endowment Fund Committee, the Ministerial Search Committee, and such others as may be established.

10.02 The **Endowment Fund Committee** shall be responsible for overseeing the Endowment Fund and encouraging donations to the Fund. Members shall be nominated by the Nominations Committee and shall be guided by the Endowment Fund By-laws approved by the Fellowship in December 1999. They will report to the Fellowship at the Annual Meeting in the spring.

10.03 **Ministerial Search Committee** shall be elected by the Fellowship when necessary. Rules and procedures concerning the committee's composition and operation shall be approved when it is established.

ARTICLE XI MINISTER

11.01 The **Minister** shall be responsible for the religious interests and affairs of the Fellowship, and, in conjunction with the Sunday Worship/Program Committee, the conduct of worship. The Minister shall have the freedom of the pulpit as well as freedom to express opinions outside the pulpit. In addition to Sunday programs, the minister's duties may include; assisting in the development of the Religious Education program; ministerial care; visitation and counseling; dedication; union and marriage; funeral and memorial services; and participation in denomination and community activities. The Minister should be expected to participate in activities which will help the Fellowship achieve its Mission and Vision Statements. Further definition of the role of the Minister shall be found in the Contract adopted by the Fellowship governing the call of the minister.

11.02 The Minister is responsible to the Fellowship and shall present an annual report to its members as well as regular reports to the Board of Trustees.

11.03 The Minister shall be an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees and of such Standing Committees as the Board of Trustees and the Minister shall designate.

11.04 The Minister shall be CALLED upon the recommendation of a Ministerial Search Committee by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Voting Members of the Fellowship at any meeting legally called for the purpose; a Quorum of thirty per cent (30%) of the Voting Members shall be required at this meeting.

11.05 The Fellowship may, however, be served by an interim or extension Minister selected by other means by the Fellowship's voting at any legally called meeting. The quorum and voting requirements in Article 11.04 apply to this meeting.

11.06 The Minister may be dismissed or the Minister's contract may be extended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Voting Members at any meeting legally called for the purpose; a quorum of thirty percent (30%) of the Voting Members shall be required at this meeting.

11.07 In the event of the Minister's dismissal or resignation, three-month's notice must be given, and salary and allowances shall continue for three months after the date of notice, unless a shorter period is mutually agreed upon.

11.08 In the event that this Fellowship is a partner in a shared ministry, full cooperation with the other Fellowship shall be maintained.

11.09 The two Fellowships shall make a written agreement on procedures for search, call, contract, review, and resignation or dismissal.

11.10 A Shared Ministry Committee, consisting of at least one person from each Fellowship, will cooperate with the minister and the Ministerial Relations Committees to present to the Board the joint recommendation for changes in the Minister's salary or other matters of joint interest.

11.12 A **Ministerial Relations Committee** shall be established through a combined effort on the part of the Board and the Minister. The Board shall submit to the Minister a list composed of five (5) members, the Minister shall select three (3) members to serve as this committee.

(a) This Committee shall promote and facilitate the relationship between the Minister and the Congregation and shall receive, investigate and respond to all matters affecting the ministerial-congregational relationship.

b) The Ministerial Relations Committee shall meet with the Ministerial Relations Committee of the partner Fellowship as often as is deemed necessary.

11.13 **Sabbatical.** After completion of four years of active ministry, the minister shall have the right to one month of sabbatical (paid leave) for each year of service for no more than a total of six months.

ARTICLE XII - RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

12.01 **Mission Statement.** The mission of religious education at DUUF is to inspire and support persons of all ages on their spiritual journeys in the Unitarian-Universalist tradition.

12.02 **The Religious Education Council** shall be responsible for the philosophy, content, and implementation of the Religious Education Program and will be appointed by the Board of Trustees. The Minister and the Religious Education Director shall be ex officio members of this committee. The RE Council shall:

(a) Provide a conduit for communication between the RE Director, the Board of Trustees, and the Fellowship;

(b) Provide structure and support for the RE Director in carrying out her/his responsibilities;

(c) Serve as a resource for the RE Director;

(d) Recruit volunteers to assist with RE programs;

(e) Assist the RE Director in planning/reviewing RE curriculum

12.03 **Tasks and Responsibilities.** Members of the RE Council shall:

(a) Plan and promote special events

(b) Communicate with parents

(c) Produce an annual information brochure and other promotional materials as needed for RE

- (d) Supervise children's participation in adult Sunday worship programs
- (e) Develop and promote adult RE programs
- (f) Develop and promote youth RE programs

12.04. The **Chair** of the RE Council shall:

- (a) Prepare materials and agenda for Council meetings and chair those meetings,
- (b) Represent the Council at Board Meetings and other meetings with the Minister,
- (c) Serve as a resource for the director
- (d) Serve as mediator between the Council and others
- (e) Recruit volunteers for RE
- (f) Assist the Director as needed.

12.05 A **Director of Religious Education** may be hired by the Board of Trustees to be administrator of the program developed by the Religious Education Council. Terms of employment, responsibility, and supervision will be spelled out in a contract submitted by the RE Council and approved by the Board.

ARTICLE XIII - FISCAL YEAR

13.01 The fiscal year extends from January 1 to December 31.

ARTICLE XIV – AMENDMENTS

14.01 These By-laws may be amended by two-thirds (2/3) of the Voting Members present at any regular or special meetings of the Fellowship, provided that any change shall have been submitted to the members in writing at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting. Unless indicated otherwise, all By-laws amendments will be effective immediately upon passage.

ARTICLE XV – DISSOLUTION

Should the corporation dissolve:

15.01 All property and funds remaining after payment of the debts of the corporation shall be delivered to the Unitarian Universalist Association, a nonprofit corporation, ("The Association" an organization exempt from Federal Income Tax under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) or its legal successor.

15.02 Such funds or property shall be for the use and benefit of The Association as may be determined by the Board of Trustees, in alignment with their current policies and procedures.

15.03 Responsibility for the dissolution and transfer of assets to The Association shall be the Board of Trustees of the Denton Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in office at the time of dissolution.

15.04 Should the Association or its legal successor no longer exist, any assets remaining of this corporation after dissolution shall be disposed of by The Board of Trustees of Denton Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in office at the time dissolution, provided that the recipient of such assets shall be an organization organized exclusively for purposes set out in Section 501[c](3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

Approved December 10, 2000, by the Fellowship at Winter Meeting
Amended December 14, 2003, by the Fellowship at Winter Meeting
Amended May 21, 2006, by the Fellowship at the Spring Meeting