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| First Unitarian Universalist Church Columbus, Ohio |  | |
| Chapter: II. Congregational Responsibilities | Source: | |
| Title: Governance Documents | Approved by: | |
| Effective Date: July 1, 2004 | Last Review Date: | |

A. Policy:

Our church needs written documentation, in addition to our articles of incorporation and constitution, expressing our principles, goals, policies and procedures in order to communicate and function effectively. These written standing rules, policies and procedures shall be made available to all members and employees of the church. Standing rules, policies and procedures shall be monitored regularly and revised as necessary to ensure compliance with our goals. Church members and staff shall be encouraged to participate in the formulation of standing rules, policies and procedures.

B. Definitions:

Articles of Incorporation: the document establishing our church as a legally recognized entity.

Constitution: the basic document on church governance approved by the congregation.

Governance Documents: all official written descriptions of how the church is to govern itself, including the articles of incorporation, constitution, standing rules, and policies and procedures.

Master Manual: A collection including the articles of incorporation, constitution, all standing rules, policies and procedures that are currently in effect, together with historical documentation of rules, policies, etc., which have been revised, replaced, or removed.

Policies: These documents describe in general terms the way we choose to conduct ourselves and the business of the church and provide a brief rationale for the policy.

Procedures: These documents may describe the specifics of how a policy will be implemented or they may exist independently as operational procedures, describing a process not directly connected to any policy.

Standing Rules: This document describes the structures and processes of church governance, and is approved by the Board of Trustees.

C. Procedure:

A. Governance Documents Committee. An appointee of the Board of Trustees will serve as chair of the governance documents committee, whose membership shall be appointed by the Board. The committee shall include the Board Secretary and another Board member, the Church Administrator and two other church members with experience in church governance. The Governance Documents Committee will meet at least quarterly. (See the description of the functions of the Governance

Documents Committee in the Standing Rules.) The following summarizes its responsibilities:

- i. Review and evaluate all current governance documents and their adequacy in implementing the principles, goals and priorities of the church, documenting date of review
- ii. Consider proposals for additional documents and/or revisions to current documents
- iii. Make non-substantive changes in grammar, format, or updated language
- iv. Devise ways to encourage the involvement of members and staff in the review process
- v. Prepare recommendations regarding governance documents.

B. Recommendations for Changes to the Constitution.

The Governance Documents Committee may initiate and propose changes to the Constitution, and review proposals from other sources upon recommendation from the Board of Trustees.

C. Recommendations for Changes to the Standing Rules.

The Governance Documents Committee may initiate and propose changes to the Standing rules, and review proposals from other sources.

D. Development of Policies and Procedures. Church members and staff will be encouraged to participate actively in the development of policies and procedures. During the developmental process, new and/or revised documents shall be distributed to persons and committees affected. Timely returned comments and concerns shall be considered and evaluated prior to preparation of a final draft. When a new policy is passed that takes the place of a previous policy, documentation will be added at the end of the policy noting which policy it supercedes, and that superceded policy will be moved to the historical record. Policies and procedures shall be divided into chapters as follows:

- i. Conduct
- ii. Congregational Responsibilities
- iii. Fiscal
- iv. Personnel
- v. Property and Facilities
- vi. Social Concerns
- vii. Religious Education
- viii. School for Young Children

E. Approval Policies and Procedures.

- i. The Board has the authority to approve or make changes to policies (with or without attached procedures). Generally, the Board will consider proposed additions or changes after the Governance Documents Committee has reviewed the proposed document and forwarded it to the board with its recommendation for consideration. However, when quick action is required, the Board may act directly, providing appropriate notice to the membership. When an addition or change is approved, the Board Chair shall sign the document and return it to the Board Secretary for publication and distribution.

- ii. Committees, work groups, staff, and individuals conducting church business may develop operating procedures in their area of responsibility. These are to be forwarded to the Governance Documents Committee, preferably in advance of the effective date, for review. The Governance Documents Committee will review the procedure for any conflict with current policy or application beyond the area for which it was developed. If any problem is identified, the Governance Documents Committee will work with the originator to identify a way to resolve the issue. If there are no such problems, the Governance Documents Committee will ensure that the operating procedure is included in the master manual. Operating procedures are to be signed by the chair of the committee or individual originating the procedure and the Board Chair documenting Governance Documents Committee review and approval.

F. Distribution. The Board Secretary will distribute copies of any changes in the Constitution, Standing Rules or policies (with or without attached procedures) within 14 days to each Board member and to the chair of each standing committee, and will post the revised Constitution, Rules or Policies in a location accessible to the membership and include the latest dated revised version in the master manual. The Board Secretary will ensure that operating procedures are readily available and accessible to members and staff, and once a year no later than September, will distribute a listing of all operating procedures to the Board members, staff and chairs of standing committees, and to the archivist team, and post it in a location available to members.

G. Master Manual. The board secretary shall ensure the maintenance of a Master Manual in the church office. This manual shall include the following in the three volumes indicated:

- i. Volume 1
 1. A copy of the Articles of Incorporation
 2. A copy of the Church Constitution
 3. A complete set of all current Standing Rules
- ii. Volume 2
 1. Current Church policies and procedures
- iii. Volume 3
 1. A complete set of all policies previously in effect
 2. A record of policies not approved by the Board of Trustees