

**BYLAWS OF  
BUCKMAN BRIDGE  
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH  
(Adopted May 21, 2017)**

**Article I. NAME:**

The legal name of this organization shall be BUCKMAN BRIDGE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY, INC., but it shall do business as BUCKMAN BRIDGE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH (i.e., "the Church").

**Article II. PURPOSE:**

The purpose of the Church is to foster liberal religious living through worship, study, service and fellowship, as contained in the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism, outlined below:

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person.
2. Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all.
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

**Article III. MEMBERSHIP:**

**Section 1. Attaining Membership:** Any person eighteen (18) years of age or over who demonstrates commitment to the purposes and programs of the Church, and who desires to undertake the requirements of membership, may become a Member of the Church, provided the individual agrees to:

1. Complete new member orientation classes (except for individuals transferring directly from another UU congregation, individuals who were former members of the Church who wish to be reinstated as Members, or former long-term students of our religious education program who decide to join as adults);
2. Make annual recordable financial contributions to the Church;
3. Support the Church through service as able;
4. Observe the Covenant of Right Relationship (as approved and revised by the Congregation from time to time); and
5. Sign the membership book.

If the individual is reinstating or transferring membership, approval by the Board and Membership Chair(s) is required in advance. The Church embraces new Members without regard to any aspect of their Personal Identity. In addition, the Board is authorized to be understanding and compassionate in providing exemptions from the requirement(s) to provide annual financial contributions and service when individual circumstances warrant.

Only Members may:

- a. Vote at an Annual or Special Meeting of the Church;
- b. Hold elected office or be appointed as a committee chairperson; or
- c. Receive additional membership benefits as may be described in written policies and procedures adopted by the Board (such as discounted fees for the use of Church facilities).

Only Members or Church staff (such as the Religious Education Director) may be designated as official delegates or representatives of the Congregation. Individuals demonstrating commitment to the purposes and programs of the Church, but not meeting all membership requirements, will be considered Friends of the Church provided that they observe the Covenant of Right Relationship at all times. They may participate in church activities and serve on committees as determined by Church policy, but may not vote, serve as committee chairs or in elected positions.

**Associate Member:** Any person under eighteen (18) years of age, and who is at least thirteen (13) years of age, with parental or legal guardian approval, may become an Associate Member of the Church by signing its membership book. In addition, the Board of Directors may designate any formerly active Member as a Member Emeritus, who shall be an Associate Member. An Associate Member shall have a voice in the Church's proceedings, but shall not be entitled to vote at membership meetings and shall not count toward the quorum requirement of Article V. The financial or service contribution requirement applicable to Members shall not apply to Associate Members. Any reference in these bylaws to Members shall not include Associate Members, but for all other purposes, there shall be no distinction between Members and Associate Members under these bylaws. (Associate Members shall generally be able to participate in day-to-day Church activities on the same basis as Members, with such limited exceptions as the Board may deem appropriate for a particular activity.)

**Section 2. Annual Update to Membership Roster:** Each Year, the Board of Directors, after consulting with the Caring and Membership Committees, will review the participation and fulfillment of membership requirements of any Member whose membership status is in doubt. The Board of Directors at its November meeting (or its next meeting thereafter if there is no November meeting) shall designate a Board member to personally contact any Member whose status is in doubt, inquiring into the Member's interest and intentions. The Board member shall invite the Member in question to renew the Member's personal involvement by committing to fulfill membership requirements. If personal contact cannot be made, a letter shall be sent to the last known address of the Member by mail. After three (3) weeks from the date of mailing the letter of inquiry, if no reply requesting continuation has been received, the Board of Directors shall delete the Member's name from the membership rolls.

**Article IV. DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION:**

The Church shall be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations and the Southern Region of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations.

**Article V. MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERSHIP:**

**Section 1. Annual Meeting:** The Annual Meeting shall be held in May at a place and time designated by the Board of Directors. At the Annual Meeting the officers, Leadership Development Committee, and Trustees as required shall be elected, and the annual financial report and other committee reports for the current year shall be presented. The budget for the following fiscal year shall be voted on. Action at the Annual Meeting shall be limited to matters stated in the Notice for that meeting.

**Section 2. Special Meetings:** Special meetings of the membership may be called by the Board of Directors. When requested by petition signed by a minimum of twenty-five (25) percent of the Members of the Church, a special meeting must be called within four (4) weeks by the Board of Directors upon receipt of such petition. Action at any special meeting shall be limited to matters stated in the notice of such meeting.

**Section 3. Notice:** Written notice of Annual and special meetings of the Church stating the time, place and agenda of the meeting shall be mailed to the Members not less than ten (10) days prior to the meeting.

**Section 4. Quorum:** Twenty-five (25) percent of the Members qualified to vote shall constitute a quorum for all matters except the amendment of the By-Laws or Articles of Incorporation, the appointment or dismissal of the Minister and the purchase of land or a building. The quorum for these exceptions shall be forty percent (40%) of Members and a 4/5 majority of Members present is required to pass issues related to these exceptions.

**Section 5. Voting:** There shall be no voting by proxy at membership meetings. A simple majority of Members present may decide any question except as noted in Section 4 above.

**Section 6. Procedure:** Except as provided herein and in the Articles of Incorporation, Roberts Rules of Order shall govern all matters of parliamentary procedure.

## **Article VI. OFFICERS, TRUSTEES AND THEIR DUTIES:**

**Section 1. Officers:** The officers shall be a President, a Vice President, a Secretary and a Treasurer elected annually, to commence serving July 1st, and shall not be related by blood, marriage, or domestic partnership.

**Section 2. President:** The President shall preside at meetings of the Church and the Board of Directors and shall be an Ex Officio member of all committees. The incoming President shall appoint chairs to the standing committees and ministries, subject to approval by the outgoing Board of Directors, and shall perform the usual duties of the office.

**Section 3. Vice President:** The Vice President shall assist the President in the performance of that office and shall perform the duties of that office in the absence of the President (or if the President shall become unable to fulfill the duties of the office). In the event of the President's resignation from that office, the Vice-President shall assume the office of President for the remainder of the term.

**Section 4. Secretary:** The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of the transactions of all official meetings of the Church and the Board of Directors. The Secretary shall maintain a roster of the Members of the Church, and shall carry out the customary duties of the Secretary. The Secretary (or another Member designated by the Board) shall act as Parliamentarian.

**Section 5. Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall disburse funds under the direction of the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall keep a complete account of the finances of the Church in books, which shall remain the property of the Church. The confidentiality of all personal pledges and payments shall be respected. The Treasurer shall render a current statement at each regular meeting of the Board of Directors, and shall make such statement available to Members of the congregation. In absence of the Treasurer, the Finance Committee Chair will assume the duties of this office.

**Section 6. Trustees:** The Trustees shall keep abreast of the business and programs of the church; participate in meetings of the Board of Directors; and perform such other functions as assigned by the Board. Trustees shall be elected annually to commence serving July 1st, and shall not be related to one another or any officer by blood, marriage, or domestic partnership. The Leadership Development Committee is authorized to nominate individuals for the position of Trustee for terms of one (1) or two (2) years.

**Section 7. Term of Office:** Officers and Trustees shall serve until their successors have been elected and qualified and no person, except the Treasurer, shall be elected to the same office for more than two consecutive terms.

#### **Article VII. COMMITTEES:**

**Section 1. Standing Committees:** Standing Committees of the Church are: Caring, Facilities, Finance, Lifespan Religious Education, Membership, Hospitality, Programming, Public Relations and Communications, Social Action, Stewardship, and Worship. These committees shall consist of three or more persons and shall meet at least one time in any ninety-day period. A standing committee may organize and appoint temporary subcommittees to assist with the work of that standing committee without the approval of the Board of Directors. Any such temporary subcommittee shall dissolve automatically at the end of each fiscal year, but may be reinstated by the standing committee in the new fiscal year. The Board of Directors retains the discretion to supervise and dissolve any temporary subcommittee created by a standing committee. The formation, reinstatement, and dissolution of any such temporary subcommittee shall be promptly recorded in the minutes of that standing committee.

**Section 2. Additional Committees:** The Board of Directors may organize and appoint temporary committees to assist with the work of the Board. Any such committee shall dissolve automatically at the end of each fiscal year unless affirmatively reinstated by the Board of Directors in the new fiscal year. The formation, reinstatement, and dissolution of any Board- appointed temporary committee shall be promptly recorded in the Board minutes.

**Section 3. Council of Committees:** The committee chairs shall assemble as a Council of Committees at least once per quarter, presided over by the Board-appointed person, to network, review, and discuss church activities, and to identify any issues that would require support by the Board of Directors or Congregation.

#### **Article VIII. MINISTRIES:**

**Section 1. Standing Ministries:** Ministries of the Church are: Beacon, Welcoming Congregation, and Young Adults. These ministries shall meet at least one time in any ninety-day period. All ministries are under the direction of the Board of Directors, and new Ministries may be created with Board approval.

**Section 2. Ministry Chair:** The ministry chairs shall assemble with the Council of Committees.

**Article IX. BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

**Section 1. Composition:** The Board of Directors shall consist of the following members: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and three Trustees. The Minister shall be an Ex Officio member of the Board of Directors.

**Section 2. Powers and Duties:** Subject to the direction of the membership at duly called meetings, the Board of Directors shall have charge of the property of the Church and the conduct of its business affairs and the control of its administration (including the hiring and supervision of any employees in a manner consistent with the terms of these bylaws). The Board of Directors is entrusted with the responsibility of making policies that are consistent with and help to further implement the congregation's mission and stated direction. It shall fill vacancies in elective offices and elective committees until the next regular election, and shall determine who shall preside over the Council of Committees. Committee Chairpersons, with the exception of the Leadership Development Committee, shall be appointed by the incoming President annually with the approval of the outgoing Board of Directors.

**Section 3. Meetings:** Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at least quarterly at the discretion of a majority of the Board of Directors. All Members of the Church may attend and have the right to speak at Board Meetings.

**Section 4. Voting:** A majority of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum, and a majority of those present shall decide any vote. There shall be no voting by proxy at Board Meetings.

**Article X. FISCAL YEAR:**

**Section 1. Term of the Fiscal Year:** The fiscal year shall be July 1 through June 30.

**Section 2. Audit or Financial Review:** The yearly audit or financial review will occur by the end of September.

**Article XI. HIRING PRACTICES:**

Eligibility for Minister of the Church or employees shall not be restricted on the basis of any aspect of personal identity. We make reasonable accommodations for the known physical and mental limitations of otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities. A written contract or other agreement regarding the terms of employment is not required except when specified by the bylaws. The Director of Religious Education ("DRE") shall serve pursuant to a written agreement and at the direction of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall review the performance of all employees annually in accordance with Board policies and procedures for that purpose.

**Article XII. MINISTER:**

**Section 1. Permanent Minister:**

- a. **The Role of the Minister:** The Minister shall be responsible with the Members for the guiding of worship and the spiritual interests within the Church. The Minister shall have freedom of the pulpit as well as freedom to express her or his own opinion outside the pulpit.

- b. **Board of Directors and Committees:** The Minister shall be an Ex Officio member of the Board of Directors and of such committees as the Board shall designate.
- c. **Appointment of the Minister:** The Minister shall be called upon recommendation of a Ministerial Search Committee by four-fifths (4/5) majority of the Members present at any meeting called for the purpose (refer to Article V, Section 4). Conditions of employment are established at the time of employment by creation of a written contract.
- d. **Dismissal:** The Minister may be dismissed by a four-fifths vote of the Members present at any meeting called for the purpose (refer to Article V, Section 4). Should the Minister resign, three (3) months' notice shall be given at the time the resignation is made unless the Board of Directors allows an interval of less time.

**Section 2. Acting Minister (such as a consulting, interim, contract or supply minister):** An Acting/Interim Minister may be selected with the approval of the Board of Directors and approval of a majority of Members at any Congregational Meeting. This arrangement may be extended or terminated by a majority vote of the Board of Directors and a majority vote of the Members at any Congregational Meeting, or by resignation of the Acting/Interim Minister. Conditions of employment are established at the time of employment by creation of a written contract.

### **Article XIII. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS:**

**Section 1. Leadership Development Committee:** A Leadership Development Committee of three (3) Members shall be elected by the Members of the congregation at the Annual Meeting. The term of office shall be one year, but at least one committee member shall be encouraged to serve a second term to promote continuity from one year to the next. No person may be elected to serve for more than two consecutive terms, but a person who is appointed as a mid-year replacement may thereafter be elected for two full consecutive terms.

**Section 2. Duties of the Leadership Development Committee:** The Leadership Development Committee shall prepare from the roster of Members a slate of candidates for election as officers, trustees, and as members of the Leadership Development Committee for the following year, and shall place the names in nomination at the May Annual Meeting. Nominations shall be submitted in writing to the congregation at least ten (10) days prior to the Annual Meeting. (At the annual membership meeting, the President shall also ask for any additional nominations from the floor.) Nominees must be Members, be notified in advance, and consent to having their names placed into nomination prior to the submission of the Leadership Development Committee's slate. The President may also request the Leadership Development Committee to assist in the identification of Committee Chairs.

**Section 3. Terms of officers and trustees:** Each officer shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of one (1) year, taking office effective July 1st. Each trustee shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of one (1) or two (2) years, taking office effective July 1st. Trustee terms shall be staggered. No person, except the Treasurer, may be elected to serve for more than two consecutive terms in the same position on the Board of Directors, but a person who is appointed to a position on the Board as a

midyear replacement may thereafter be elected for two full consecutive terms into that same position.

#### **Article XIV. AMENDMENTS:**

**Section 1. Adoption of Amendments:** Having been ratified, these By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation, so far as allowed by Law, may be amended or repealed at any regular or special meeting of the Church by four-fifths of the Members present and voting at any meeting called for the purpose, advance notice having been made as per Section 2 following.

**Section 2. Proposals and Meetings:** Amendments may be proposed by the Board of Directors or by petition to the Board of Directors by ten (10) Members. Notice of the meeting shall contain in full the proposed change and shall be mailed to each member not less than ten (10) days prior to the meeting. Further changes to the Article or Bylaw under consideration may be proposed and acted upon at any such meeting.

#### **Article XV. DISSOLUTION**

In the case of dissolution of the Church, all of its property, real and personal, after paying all just claims upon it, including any outstanding promissory notes to members/friends, shall be conveyed to and vested in the Unitarian Universalist Association, a UUA District, a UUA member society/church/congregation, the Canadian Unitarian Council, an associated member organization of the UUA or an independent affiliate of the UUA. The Board of Directors of the Church shall perform all actions necessary to effect such conveyance.

#### **Article XVI. RATIFICATION OF BYLAWS:**

These By-Laws shall become the rules for the governing of this Church, effective immediately upon ratification by a two thirds vote of members qualified to vote in attendance at the congregational meeting designated for this purpose.

#### **Article XVII. CONSTRUCTION AND INTERPRETATION OF BYLAWS:**

**Section 1. Mail:** The term "mail" shall mean any currently recognized form of notification including, but not limited to: carriers such as USPS, UPS, FedEx, DHL, etc., dated facsimile (fax), or e-mail.

**Section 2. Personal Identity:** Any reference to "personal identity" means any characteristic of such person's personal identity, such as (but not limited to) race, creed, national origin, gender, age (except for any minimum age requirement), ability, gender identity, or sexual orientation. The examples given in the previous sentence of certain aspects of personality identity are specifically included in these bylaws to emphasize that they, in particular, officially have no relevance to determining membership or employment status.