

# **Bylaws of the Marquette Unitarian Universalist Congregation**

As accepted by congregational vote on May 21, 2017

## **Article I: Name**

The name of this organization is the Marquette Unitarian Universalist Congregation (MqtUU).

## **Article II: Purpose**

This congregation exists to serve the human needs of its members and friends, to stimulate individual development of a positive and ethical philosophy of life, and to provide a common shelter for everyone's personal growth.

## **Article III: Congregational Principles**

We subscribe to the Unitarian Universalist Association's covenant to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person; justice, equity, and compassion in human relations; acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregation; a free and responsible search for truth and meaning; the right of conscience and democratic process within our congregation and in society at large; the goal of a world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all; and respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

## **Article IV: Membership.**

1. Any person 16 years of age or over who (1) concurs with Article III, (2) signs the membership roll with a trustee of the board as witness, (3) makes a written pledge of financial support, and (4) makes a payment in any amount toward that pledge, becomes a member of the congregation for the fiscal year for which the member made the pledge.
2. Only those who have satisfied the criteria for membership as defined in Article IV.1 have voting privileges in Congregational matters.
  - a. Payments made in a fiscal year before pledging are applied retroactively to the pledge for that fiscal year.
  - b. Voting privileges are effective 10 days after meeting the requirements of membership.
  - c. Membership and voting privileges expire at the end of each fiscal year.
3. Any member may relinquish membership by written notice.
4. Membership is renewed as follows:

- a. For Article IV.2.c: Make a written pledge of financial support, and make a payment in any amount toward that pledge. The 10-day period of Article IV.2.b does not apply.
  - b. For those whose membership and voting privileges expire for any other reasons, follow the procedures in article IV.1.
5. The Board of Trustees may limit a congregation member's participation or suspend, revoke or reinstate membership privileges with a vote of 80 percent or more of the Board of Trustees is required for such member action.

## **Article V: Meetings**

1. The annual business meeting occurs in May at a time and place the board determines.
2. Any voting member may request a special business meeting in writing at any time.
3. The board will provide written notice of each business meeting to all members 15 days prior to the meeting. The notice will include ballot issues (including but not limited to changes to the bylaws and the names of nominees for the board, if any).
4. Forty (40) percent of the voting members shall constitute a quorum for meetings of the Congregation. All votes at such meetings will be decided by a simple majority, except as stated below or elsewhere in these bylaws.
  - a. The minister shall be called by a three-fourths (3/4) majority of the qualified voting members of the Church present at a Congregational meeting legally called for that purpose and using a written ballot.
  - b. The minister may be dismissed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the qualified voting members of the Church present at a Congregational meeting legally called for that purpose and using a written ballot.
  - c. A majority at a Board or a Congregational meeting may designate other issues as requiring more than a simple majority for passage.

## **Article VI: Board of Trustees**

1. The board of trustees ("the Board") consists of the president, vice president, secretary, and two trustees at large. All trustees must be voting members of the congregation. The board assigns its members to specific positions by consensus.
2. New trustees shall be chosen by show of hands at the annual business meeting. All normally serve for two year terms. The board may adjust term length before the election to accommodate abnormal situations.
3. The board shall have general charge of the property of the congregation and the conduct of its administration, including the appointment of the treasurer and such committees it deems necessary.

4. The board shall appoint a nominating committee of two voting members by March 15. The nominating committee shall present the names of the candidates to the board by April 15.
5. Any voting member may nominate candidates from the floor at the annual meeting, but those so nominated must agree to serve if elected or the nomination is invalid.
6. Newly elected trustees assume their duties on July 1.
7. The board shall appoint delegates, if any, to denominational meetings and conventions.
8. The Board can reprogram monies from individual funds, but may not move monies between funds, except with congregational vote.
9. The Board of Trustees is able to permit the participation in our congregation of a person convicted of a sexual offense under a limited access agreement pursuant to the policy, Integration into the Congregation of a Person Convicted of a Sexual Offense. The Board of Trustees may deny a person convicted of a sexual offense access to the congregation if they are found to be in violation of the limited access agreement or at high risk of recidivism.
10. The Board of Trustees is vested with the authority to hire, supervise and terminate the employment of any employee. Termination must be by a super majority vote (4 out of 5) after the Board of Trustees has considered input from all committee chairs about the proposed action.
11. Should a vacancy on the Board occur during the year, a Nominating Committee may be appointed and propose one (1) or more names from which the Board shall fill the vacancy until the next annual business meeting. A vote of the majority of the Board of Trustees will be required to seat the new member on the Board.
12. If an officer position becomes vacant (President, Vice President, or Secretary), the currently seated Board shall appoint members of the Board to fill vacancies.

## **Article VII. Finance Committee**

1. Composition of the Finance Committee: the committee shall consist of the treasurer, the stewardship chairperson, and the Board of Trustee member who is authorized to disburse funds. Other members of the congregation may participate with voting privileges at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.
2. The Committee meets at least twice a year to review financial reports and procedures, and formulate recommendations for the BoT on how the Congregation's financial resources are being managed including all endowment and other special funds of the Congregation.

## **Article VIII: Right Relations & Conflict Resolution**

1. Defining right relations – relationships that you approach consciously; where the participants behave in a manner congruent with their values. This type of relationship is based on kindness and compassion and is mutually beneficial and satisfying.<sup>1</sup>
2. Covenant of Right Relations –see appendix 2
3. Should the need arise to intervene in situations of disruptive behavior, professionals from Marquette Alger Resolution Services offer mediation, a means of solving disputes that are unable to be resolved otherwise.
4. The disputing parties are not limited to achieving compromises. Having the parties agree and come up with solutions is preferable. As a next step, a MARS facilitator can recommend counseling and other behavior changing strategies.

## **Article IX: The Fiscal Year.**

The fiscal year is July 1 to June 30.

## **Article X: Amendments.**

These bylaws, so far as allowed by law, may be amended or replaced by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the qualified voting members of the church present at a congregational meeting legally called for the purpose and using a show of hands.

## **Article XI: Dissolution.**

Should the membership vote to disband, the board will transfer any residual assets of the congregation to the Unitarian Universalist Association or its legal successor.

## **Article XII: Effective Date.**

These bylaws become effective immediately upon approval.

## **Article XIII:**

Individual members of the Congregation acting in an official capacity are not to be held financially responsible for debt or obligations incurred by the church as a whole.

## **Appendix**

1. [www.sharecare.com/health/relationships-family/how-define-a-good-relationship](http://www.sharecare.com/health/relationships-family/how-define-a-good-relationship)

## 2. A Covenant of Right Relations

Among Members of the  
Marquette Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Building community is an ongoing spiritual practice. Inviting a spirit of love into our interactions, we each work to develop skills and promote practices that strengthen our relationships. We enter this Covenant of Right Relations with open hearts and open minds, accepting one another in all our complexity and diversity.

1. We trust one another's intentions and recognize that our behaviors have an impact, regardless of our intentions.
2. We cultivate attentive listening, understanding, a culture of gratitude, and compassionate honesty using care-filled words.
3. We communicate directly with one another, especially when we are in conflict, and when necessary, consider mediation.
4. When we are hurt or hurt others, we seek reconnection and/or forgiveness.
5. We are responsible for ourselves and are accountable to one another for creating opportunities to encourage, challenge, and connect.

Through these choices and actions, we realize the interconnected network of mutuality and responsibility to each other and our beloved community.

Adopted by the Members of  
Marquette Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
January 29, 2017