

# Board Policies

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*UU Church of Greater Lynn*

*Adopted on May 19, 2008 for 2008 – 2009 Church Year*

*Revised September 22, 2008, October 24, 2009, May 24, 2010, and January 22, 2013*

The congregation of the UU Church of Greater Lynn elects a Board of Trustees to function as its governing body and a Parish Minister to serve as its spiritual, programmatic, and administrative leader. The intended style of leadership will be consultative, collegial, and inclusive. Clarity about ultimate responsibility and authority will exist along with a democratic and egalitarian spirit. All Church leaders are expected to practice transparent decision-making, healthy conflict management, and mutual support in their respective roles.

## Mission & vision

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### Mission statement

Inspired by meaningful worship, faith development and fellowship, we are a welcoming congregation committed to spiritual growth and diversity, social justice, and serving the greater community.

### Core values

We 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 congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all; and
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

### Strategic plan

The Church does not currently have a long-term strategic plan. However, the Board of Trustees has adopted and approved the recommendations of the 2010 Faith Development Task Force Report and the 2011 Membership Growth Task Force Reports as directions (but not directives) for our future.

## **Vision of ministry**

The Vision of Ministry attempts to answer the question: How do we plan to change lives in new and different ways in the next 1-5 years? Our Vision of Ministry is attached as [Appendix A](#).

## **Board governance**

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The Board's focus will be on the long-term mission and well-being of the Church, not on administrative detail. It will respect the distinction between board governance and ministry leadership, and will avoid when possible making decisions that address only a single situation.

The Board of Trustees intends to govern primarily by

- discerning and articulating the Church's mission and vision of ministry,
- setting strategic goals and making strategic choices,
- creating written policies to govern Church operations and
- monitoring and evaluating the performance of the Church's leadership, including itself.

Board members will adhere to a high standard of commitment, ethics, and accountability

Annually the Board establishes a covenant setting out the promises the Trustees make to each other and to the congregation about the way they will conduct itself as a Board. Our Board Covenant is attached as [Appendix B](#).

The President is hereby delegated the authority and responsibility to decide the Board's agenda in accordance with these policies.

The Board will appoint a Governance Committee to be responsible for keeping the Board focused on its chosen role, to recruit and train Board members, and to lead the annual Board self-evaluation process.

## **Delegation**

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### **Delegation to Minister and Senior Staff Team**

The Minister shall lead and direct the spiritual, programmatic and administrative work of the church, and is hereby delegated authority and responsibility to make operational decisions, adopt administrative policies, and allocate Church resources except as specifically limited by these policies.

The Minister shall share leadership with Senior Staff (composed at present of the Business Administrator, Director of Faith Development & Programming, Director of Music, Membership/Volunteer Coordinator, and Director of Ocean Breeze). The intended style of team leadership is consultative, collegial and inclusive. Each member is responsible for a major area of the Church's ministry, and the Team as a whole shall be accountable through the Minister to the Board. The Minister shall represent the Team at meetings of the Congregation and Board of Trustees.

As leader of the Senior Staff Team, the Minister shall be responsible for morale and productivity and for keeping the Team's work aligned with the congregation's strategy and vision.

The Senior Staff Team shall direct the work of the church through additional teams (a.k.a. Committees) of staff and volunteers responsible for achieving specific spiritual, programmatic and administrative results. The Senior Staff Team shall establish clear lines of communication and decision-making for itself, the teams and volunteers. Operational decisions, conflict management, and problem solving shall be the responsibility of the Minister, the Senior Staff Team, and the teams themselves.

## **Actions requiring special consultation or approval**

### **Personnel decisions**

The Minister and any other ministers are called according to procedures established in the church bylaws.

Prior to creating a new Senior Staff position, the Minister shall report to and consult with the Board prior to making a decision to proceed. Prior to a search for a Senior Staff member, the Minister shall consult with the Board. The Minister shall appoint a search committee which shall consult widely to determine the congregation's needs and preferences. The Minister shall work with the search committee to identify and evaluate candidates, and consult with the remaining members of the Senior Staff Team before making a hiring decision. The Personnel Committee shall assist in preparing letters of agreement, contracts and terms of offer.

Prior to discharging a staff member, the Minister shall consult with the Personnel Committee to ensure that the proposed decision adheres to accepted personnel practices and complies with applicable laws, Board policies, and church bylaws.

### **Financial decisions.**

The Minister, together with the Senior Staff members in their areas of responsibility, shall be responsible for day-to-day fiscal decisions as guided by the budget adopted by the Board, church bylaws, and restrictions of the trust and endowments.

The Minister and Senior Staff may not, without obtaining Board approval:

- Exceed the total budgeted spending for the year.
- Exceed budgeted spending in any top-level budget category by more than \$10,000.
- Spend more in a year than the church receives in operating revenue, unless the Board has adopted a deficit budget.
- Incur new debt on behalf of the church. The Board may approve credit cards, lines of credit, or other ongoing borrowing in advance.
- Accept any gift that is restricted by the donor as to use or purpose.
- Prior to changing the compensation of any staff position, the Minister shall consult with the Personnel Committee. When these changes are part of the annual budget

process, the Minister shall consult with the Personnel Committee regarding compensation issues prior to the release of any preliminary budget proposal.

Requests for changes to the Minister's compensation, not covered by contract provisions, shall be submitted to the Personnel Committee. The Board of Trustees shall, after receiving a recommendation from the Personnel Committee, determine adjustments to the Minister's compensation.

## **Delegation to others**

Boards and committees not under staff direction, e.g. Investments: The Charges to Committees of the Board are attached as Appendix C.

## **Fiduciary policies**

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### **Stewardship of resources**

#### **Financial controls**

Appropriate safeguards will be observed for the handling of cash.

Two persons will count and sign for any cash collections.

Accounting, record-keeping & document retention will be the responsibility of the Church Business Administrator. The Church Business Administrator will provide financial statements, which include the Budget and the Balance Sheet, to the Finance Committee quarterly. The Treasurer will make a report to the Board on the Church finances quarterly. An annual audit of all Church finances will be conducted by an independent public accounting firm. The congregation shall maintain adequate insurance to protect against property losses and liability for injuries to others.

#### **Capital reserves and endowments**

It is the Church's policy to spend endowment funds within the legal constraints stipulated by the donors. Furthermore, the policy is to invest and spend so that the long-term purchasing power of the endowment is preserved in perpetuity. It is the current policy to spend each fiscal year an amount equal to 4% of the trailing 3-year average December 31 balance of the endowment (in addition to investment fees, which are deducted directly from the endowment balance). However, if it is determined that this level of spending impairs the long-term purchasing power of the endowment, the Board of Trustees, in consultation with the Investment Committee, reserves the right to change this spending level.

#### **Care for persons**

Personal safety – Our Safe Congregations Policy is attached as Appendix D.

Grievances & whistle-blowers – Our employee Grievance Policy is attached as Appendix E.

## **Goal-setting and budgeting**

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Each spring the Board shall adopt a Vision of Ministry (see above, under "Strategy and Vision.") The Vision shall be a major focus of the Board's work throughout the year, and shall reflect wide consultation with staff, lay leaders, and the congregation. The Vision of Ministry may be for one or more years; goal-setting and budgeting shall cover the same period as the Vision of Ministry.

After the Board approves the Vision of Ministry, the Senior Staff Team shall make plans and goals for itself that will support the VoM, and coordinate goal-setting by the rest of the staff, volunteer leaders, and ministry teams. The Minister shall summarize the results of this goal-setting process in writing to the Board.

As part of the goal-setting process, the Senior Staff Team shall convene a Budget Team to prepare the budget in consultation with appropriate staff and lay leaders. The Board Finance Committee shall review the proposed budget and advise the Board on whether it is realistic and financially prudent. In presenting the recommended budget to the Board, the Minister shall affirm his/her belief that the budget represents a realistic plan for accomplishing the Vision of Ministry. The Board shall make the final decision on the Budget.

The goals and budget shall be presented to the Board no later than May 30 for the coming fiscal year.

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

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The staff, ministry teams, committees, and Board of Trustees shall engage in a continual process of monitoring and evaluation. The purposes include:

- . Fostering excellence in ministry work by encouraging open communication and regular feedback among all whose work contributes to achieving the church's mission.
- . Helping the church to focus on its goals as adopted by the Board.
- . Ensuring that all church leaders adhere to Board policies.

## **Reports to the Board**

The Senior Staff Team shall produce written reports to the Board that cover financial performance compared to budget and highlight significant financial or operational issues. Financial reports shall be provided to the Finance Committee quarterly, for its review and for the Treasurer to submit to the Board. The Board shall devote a major portion of its time to learning and reflection on major areas of the church's mission, such as worship, religious education, social justice, membership development, and stewardship of congregational property and wealth. To maximize the value of these meetings, the Board may call on the Minister, Senior Staff, or church members to report more fully on the church's work in a given area, and to contribute expertise, information, and leadership.

From time to time, the Board may inquire into specific questions of policy compliance, organizational concerns, or other serious issues by appointing a committee or outside consultant to assess some aspect of church program or organizational functioning.

Annually, the Board shall engage a qualified professional to conduct an audit of the church's financial records, including the Minister's Discretionary Fund, and report in writing to the Board.

### **Performance evaluation**

At least once a year, Board members shall evaluate their individual and collective contribution to the church's mission.

The Senior Staff Team shall be responsible for creating and carrying out an annual cycle of evaluation that will produce, at minimum, a written evaluation of each staff member by his or her supervisor, which shall be available for review by the Board or its authorized representatives. The primary purpose of staff and program team evaluation is to recognize achievement, build morale, identify improvement areas, and enhance communication and working relationships.

### **Minister's triennial performance review**

Every three years, the Board and Minister shall together appoint a Triennial Review Committee of three persons respected by the congregation and mutually acceptable to the Board and Minister. The Committee shall facilitate a review of the Minister's performance, gathering data and feedback from the congregation and other sources, and producing a written report. The report, together with a written response from the Minister, will be published to the congregation.

The goals of the Triennial Review are to call the congregation's attention to the mutual, relational nature of ministry and the respective responsibilities of all who contribute to its success; to assist the Minister to remain motivated, creative, and flexible; and to equip the Minister and Board to correct any problems and maintain an effective partnership in the future.

Each spring, as part of the creation of the Vision of Ministry, the Minister and Board shall together review their mutual progress in the light of the Annual Ministry Goals.

**Appendix A**  
**Vision of Ministry**  
**2012/13**

- Continue to discern and move toward fulfillment of the Membership Growth Task Force recommendations.
- Continue efforts toward fulfillment of our Faith Development Vision.
- Improve outreach efforts and service in our wider community.
- Be thoughtful and intentional about the ministerial transition process

**2013/14 UUCGL Vision of Ministry**

**“Community with Purpose”**

- Involve the whole congregation in faith development.
- Engage the whole congregation in our contributions and actions in the wider communities we serve.
- Articulate our history and identity in order to strengthen ourselves as a community and attract new members.

## **Appendix B**

### **UUCGL BOARD OF TRUSTEES COVENANT**

In recognition of the crucial importance of how we work with one another, we, the members of the 2012/13 UUCGL Board of Trustees agree to:

Insist on process and procedures that provide for:

- Timely distribution of and review by members of Agendas and other relevant materials including lists of ongoing discussion questions.
- Full and open discussion without rushing decisions, so that everyone knows each other's thinking, and that ideas expressed in outside conversations come back for board discussion
- Timely and appropriate follow up and communication regarding open issues
- Clear formulation and communication of policies

Work to maintain a setting and atmosphere in which:

- Members communicate openly and honestly, speaking in simple and honest ways that do not patronize or assume another's motives
- All who wish to speak are recognized
- Members feel free and comfortable to express opinions that may disagree with the majority view
- Members will support and not undermine Board decisions
- Respect, good will and patience toward one another are exercised
- Members feel comfortable asking for help and, in turn, fellow members offer support as needed and appropriate.
- All share responsibility for the use of time, attendance, punctuality, and sticking to the agenda
- Meetings begin and end on time unless otherwise negotiated and agreed upon by all those present
- Trustees who are unable to attend will notify the President or, in turn, the VP in advance. For issues which these individuals wish to share a viewpoint, trustees are welcome to email the Board in advance or engage another Trustee to share their feedback.

Strive to make decisions that are:

- Made for the good of the Congregation, based on a clear understanding of the work to be done and the vision of ministry
- Sensitive to Minister and staff needs
- Rooted in realistic responses to the challenge of balancing finances and program

We further acknowledge our individual and collective responsibility for observing this Covenant.

adopted by the UUCGL Board of Trustees, 9/25/12



## Appendix C

### Charges to Committees of the Board

Approved March 2009

**Finance Committee:** The Finance Committee shall assist the board in its oversight of the congregation's finances, giving attention to both financial resources and expenditures and shall coordinate the annual audit. It shall promote adequate understanding of the congregations' financial status by holding educational sessions from time to time and by ensuring that routine financial reports are clear and helpful. The committee has no management authority, and shall not participate in day-to-day financial decision making. The committee is appointed by the Board.

**Governance Committee:** The Board shall appoint a Governance Committee to be responsible for keeping the Board focused on its chosen role, to recruit and orient Board members, and to lead the annual Board self-evaluation process. (The Board has already affirmed this charge as part of our board policies.)

**Grants Committee:** [Except as otherwise provide by any applicable trust or testamentary instrument, disposition of funds of any charitable trust managed by the Parish shall be subject to the recommendations of the Grants Committee which shall be designated by the Board of Trustees.] Bracketed section is taken from Church By-laws, Article V, Section 6

**Investment Committee:** [The Investment Committee shall have charge of the investment and reinvestment of all funds and securities of the Parish and (except as otherwise provided by any applicable trust or testamentary instrument) all funds and securities of any charitable trusts managed by the Parish. Proper accounts of all funds and securities and investment income shall be maintained by the Investment Committee, and within forty-five days after the close of each fiscal year for the Parish, the Investment Committee shall present to the Board of Trustees a detailed report detailing the investment income during the fiscal year....]. . The committee is appointed by the Board.

Bracketed section is taken from Church By-laws, Article V, Section 2

**Personnel Committee:** The Personnel Committee shall assist the board in developing its personnel policies, ensuring compliance with applicable laws, and carrying out the staff grievance process as defined by these policies. The committee reports to the board, has no staff management authority, and shall not participate in day-to-day personnel decision making. The committee is appointed by the Board.

## **Appendix D**

*On agenda for approval May 23, 2011*

**Safe Congregations Policy:** The overarching policy of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Greater Lynn regarding Safe Congregations practices is to act in ways that are reasonable and prudent to ensure the safety of all persons who come on Church property or participate in Church-sponsored programs or events off site.

## Appendix E

### Unitarian Universalist Church of Greater Lynn

#### *The Grievance Process*

Adopted September 22, 2008

It is the Board's hope that issues which arise between employees will be addressed informally and immediately. However, the Board recognizes that there will be, from time to time, a need to resolve issues by using a formal Grievance Process. The goals of this process are:

- To allow all employees ample opportunity to air grievances concerning their work situations, and to quickly and equitably resolve alleged infractions of Personnel Policies in an orderly manner.
  - To assure the Personnel Committee, the Board of Trustees, and grievants that they have adequate information to arrive at reasonable and just decisions regarding working conditions at the Church.
- A. Definition: A grievance consists of a change of an alleged improper application of Board or Personnel Policies of the UU Church of Greater Lynn.
- B. Time Limits: All relevant parties in a grievance action shall adhere to the time limits prescribed in The Grievance Process unless all parties agree to different schedules prior to the expiration of the next time limit. It shall be assumed that any party not abiding by the prescribed or negotiated time limit shall have conceded the other party to be in the right. Under such a condition, the Personnel Committee shall negotiate the terms and conditions of resolving the grievance.
- C. Who May File a Grievance: All non-temporary employees who have passed their 90-day probationary period.
- D. Representation: Employees may represent themselves or designate an authorized representative or legal counsel who may or may not be an employee or member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Greater Lynn.
- E. Steps of the Grievance Procedure:
1. Step One – Informal Resolution: The grievant shall present to his/her supervisor a written request for An Informal Resolution Meeting. Within five working days after receiving the request, the supervisor shall hold a meeting to attempt to resolve the grievance. Within five days following the meeting, the supervisor will give a response to the grievant. If the response is satisfactory to all parties, the grievance will be considered resolved with no further grievance steps to be taken. If the grievant remains unsatisfied she/he has five working days to move to Step Two.
  2. Step Two – Formal Resolution: The grievant shall, within five working days of receiving the results of Step One, submit a written request for a Step Two Hearing with the Minister of the Church who will attempt to resolve the grievance. (If the grievance includes a minister in the complaint, the grievant shall move immediately

to Step Three.) The request must include a full description of the circumstances and ramifications of the grievance and citation of the Personnel Policy's alleged infractions. Following a Step Two Hearing, the Minister will provide a written response to the grievant within five working days. If the response is satisfactory to all parties, the grievance will be considered resolved with no further grievance steps to be taken. If the grievant remains unsatisfied, he/she has five working days to move to Step Three.

3. Step Three – Personnel Committee Review: If Step Two does not occur because of ministerial involvement, or if its results are unsatisfactory, the grievant has five working days to submit a written request to the President of the Congregation for a Step Three Personnel Committee Review. This will be a hearing with the grievant and other involved parties before the Personnel Committee at which the President will preside. The written request must include the nature of the grievance, circumstances surrounding the grievance, what actions the employee has taken to resolve the issues, the alleged injuries sustained by the grievant, and a citation of the alleged infractions of the Personnel Policy. The President shall hold the hearing within ten working days after receiving the Step Three request. The President will respond in writing to the grievant within ten working days giving the resolution arrived at by the Personnel Committee.
4. The Personnel Committee's decision will be final.

## Appendix F

### Other Policies Adopted by the Board of Trustees

*Adopted March 30, 2009*

**Affiliations and Official Representation:** The Board of Trustees shall have the exclusive power to affiliate the church with other organizations and to appoint delegates or other official representatives of the church.

*Adopted March 30, 2009*

**Interim Personnel Policies:** Where the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual is in conflict with the church's trial governance structure, as adopted by the congregation at its June 2008 Annual Meeting, the governance structure will prevail.