

PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGES WITH FIRST-YEAR APPROVAL

Note: Article XV of the Bylaws requires that certain Bylaws (designated by a “C” in front of the section number) can be amended only by action of two successive regular General Assemblies. The 2011 General Assembly gave preliminary approval to amendments to several of these “C” Bylaws. The amendments will be on the agenda of the 2012 General Assembly; a 2/3rds vote will be required for their final adoption.

FIRST-YEAR VOTE ON THE DEFINITION OF THE WORD “CONGREGATION”

The Assembly voted to give first-year approval to amendments to the Bylaws that broaden the definition of the word “congregation.” The effect of the vote is to place these Bylaw amendment proposals on the Final Agenda of the 2012 General Assembly for final adoption which will require a two-thirds vote. The proposed text is as follows.

Section C-3.1. Member Congregations.

The Unitarian Universalist Association is a voluntary association of autonomous, self-governing member congregations, which have freely chosen to pursue common goals together.

***Section C-3.3. Admission to Membership.**

A congregation becomes a member upon acceptance by the Board of Trustees of the Association of its written application for membership in which it subscribes to the principles of and pledges to support the Association. The Board of Trustees shall adopt rules to carry out the intent of this Section.

Section C-3.6. Termination of Membership.

A member congregation upon written notification to the Association may withdraw from the Association at any time. The Board of Trustees may terminate the membership of any congregation that, pursuant to the provisions of Section C-3.5, has been placed in an "inactive congregation" category maintained by the Association but shall do so only after consultation with:

- (a) the congregation in question, whenever possible; and
- (b) the President of the district in which the congregation is located or such other authorized official as the district designates in writing to the Association.

FIRST-YEAR VOTE ON AMENDMENTS TO ARTICLE XV

The Assembly voted to give first-year approval to amendments to the Bylaws that retain the current process for amending Article II, with a study commission followed by votes at two General Assemblies. The new process, however, lets the first General Assembly propose amendments to the study commission's Article II language using a mini-assembly process similar to the one used for many other business actions. The effect of the vote is to place these Bylaw amendment proposals on the Final Agenda of the 2012 General Assembly for final adoption which will require a two-thirds vote. The proposed text is as follows.

Article XV Amendment

Section C-15.1. Amendment of Bylaws.

- (a) Amendments to Bylaws. These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote at a regular General Assembly if a proposed amendment has been placed on the agenda; provided, however, that proposals to amend, repeal, or add a new section of these Bylaws whose section number is preceded by a "C" (hereinafter a "C Bylaw") shall be governed by subsections (b) or (c) hereof.

- (b) Amendments to C Bylaws Other Than in Article II. A proposal to amend, repeal or add a new C Bylaw, other than those C Bylaws in Article II of these Bylaws, shall be subject to a two-step approval process.
 - (1) Such proposals must be placed on the agenda of a regular General Assembly and approved preliminarily by a majority vote at such regular General Assembly. Following such preliminary approval, the proposal to amend, repeal or add a new C Bylaw shall be placed on the agenda of the next regular General Assembly for final adoption. Final adoption shall require a two-thirds vote.
 - (2) The text of a proposed amendment which has been approved by one General Assembly, may be amended at any time prior to final adoption. If the Moderator rules that the amendment to the proposal is substantive, final adoption shall only be by a subsequent General Assembly except that any such proposal that has been under consideration for final approval at three successive regular General Assemblies shall not be subject to substantive amendment and shall be submitted to a vote for final approval at the third such regular General Assembly.
 - (3) Such a proposal which, on any vote for final adoption, receives a majority but not a two-thirds vote, shall be placed on the agenda of the next regular General Assembly, at which it may be finally adopted if it receives the requisite approval. If the proposal is not passed by a two-thirds vote at the third regular General Assembly at which it is considered for final approval, neither the proposal nor another proposal that is substantively similar shall be placed on the agenda of the next regular General Assembly.

(c) Amendments to C Bylaws in Article II. A proposal to amend, repeal or add a new C Bylaw in Article II of these Bylaws shall be subject to the following process.

- (1) Such a proposal shall be admitted to the agenda of a regular General Assembly for the purpose of determining whether the proposal shall be referred to a commission appointed by the Board of Trustees for study. Such a study shall involve member congregations. A majority vote at a regular General Assembly shall be required to refer such a proposal to the study commission. Once the study of the proposal is complete, which shall be completed in no more than two years, the study commission shall submit to the Board of Trustees for inclusion on the agenda of the next regular General Assembly any amendments to Article II that the study commission recommends. The Board of Trustees shall also include on the agenda any amendments that it recommends to the study commission proposal.
- (2) A motion to dispense with the study process and give preliminary approval to a proposal to amend, repeal or add a new C Bylaw in Article II shall be in order during the General Assembly at which consideration of a motion to refer the proposal to the study process is authorized. A motion to dispense with the study process shall require a four-fifths vote for passage. Such a proposal shall then be placed on the agenda of the next regular General Assembly for final adoption without amendment. Final adoption shall require a two-thirds vote.
- (3) At the first General Assembly following the completion of the study process, amendments to the Article II proposal may be considered only as follows:
 - (i) During the General Assembly there shall be a mini-assembly held during which amendments to the Article II proposal recommended by the study commission shall be considered.
 - (ii) A delegate may submit in writing at the mini-assembly an amendment to an Article II proposal. All such amendments shall be made available in writing to the General Assembly. The Moderator, in consultation with the chair of the study commission, the parliamentarian and legal counsel shall prioritize proposed amendments for consideration by the General Assembly. A majority vote of the General Assembly is required for approval of any amendment proposed in the mini-assembly.

(iii) Following the vote on any amendments proposed in the mini-assembly, the General Assembly shall vote on any amendments proposed by the Board of Trustees. A majority vote is required to adopt such amendments. Following the vote on all amendments, the General Assembly shall vote on preliminary approval of the Article II proposal. A majority vote is required for preliminary approval.

(iv) If no amendments proposed in the mini-assembly are adopted by the General Assembly pursuant to subsection (c)(3)(ii) above, the Article II proposal shall be submitted for final approval to the next regular General Assembly. Final approval requires a two-thirds vote of the General Assembly. No amendments may be considered.

(v) If one or more amendments proposed in the mini-assembly are adopted by the General Assembly, the Article II proposal shall be referred to the study commission. Within six months after the close of the General Assembly, the study commission, taking into account the decisions of the General Assembly, shall prepare the proposal to amend Article II. The Board of Trustees shall put this proposal on the agenda of the next regular General Assembly.

- (4) At the next regular General Assembly following the process described in subsection (c)(3)(v), above, the Article II proposal is subject to amendment only by a three-fourths vote in favor of an amendment submitted to the General Assembly in writing by the Board of Trustees, a district, or a minimum of fifteen (15) certified congregations, as described in Section 15.2 of these Bylaws. Final approval of the Article II proposal requires a two-thirds vote of the General Assembly.
- (5) If the Article II proposal does not receive the requisite approval at the General Assembly following the completion of the study process described in subsection (c)(3)(iv) or subsection (c)(4), above, neither the proposal nor another proposal that is substantively similar shall be placed on the agenda of the next regular General Assembly.
- (6) If no study process of Article II has occurred for a period of fifteen years, the Board of Trustees shall appoint a commission to study Article II for not more than two years and to recommend appropriate revisions, if any, thereto to the Board of Trustees for inclusion on the agenda of the next regular General Assembly. The Board of Trustees shall also include on the agenda any amendments that it recommends to the study commission proposal. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained herein, proposals to amend Article II which are promulgated by a study

commission in accordance with this paragraph shall be subject to a two-step approval process as described in subsections (c)(3) and (c)(4), above.