Proposed Bylaw Amendments
Underlining indicates insertion; brackets indicate deletion.

These Bylaw amendments broaden the definition of the word “congregation.” If these Bylaws are amended, corresponding Rules will be amended by the Board of Trustees. These proposed changes were given first-year approval at the 2011 General Assembly and, if approved this year, will change the bylaws.

The Mini-Assembly for this item is Thursday 3:15 pm - 4:30 pm in Room 121

Section C-3.1. Member Congregations.
The Unitarian Universalist Association is a voluntary association of autonomous, self-governing local churches and fellowships, referred to herein as member congregations, which have freely chosen to pursue common goals together.

Section C-3.3. Admission to Membership.
A church or fellowship may become a member congregation 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 local 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; and
(c) the trustee representing the district in which the congregation is located.

This proposed Bylaw amendment corresponds to new Ministerial Fellowship Committee Rules that have eliminated the category of “Associate Ministerial Fellowship.” The proposed change was given first-year approval at the 2011 General Assembly and, if approved this year, will change the bylaws.

The Mini-Assembly for this item is Thursday 3:15 pm - 4:30 pm in Room 121

Section C-10.9. Pension System.
The Association shall establish and maintain a pension system for ministers in full fellowship with the Association.
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 [to a C Bylaw, other than those bylaws in Article II,] 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[. Any] 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 [A] proposal [to amend a C Bylaw, other than those Bylaws in Article II,] 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 [a] the next regular General Assembly [for two years].

(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 [admitted to the] subject to the following process.

The Mini-Assembly for this item is Thursday 3:15 pm - 4:30 pm in Room 121
(1) Such a proposal shall be admitted to the agenda of a regular General Assembly for the sole purpose of determining whether the proposal shall be referred to a commission appointed by the Board of Trustees for review and study. Such a review 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 review and study of the proposal is complete, which shall be completed in no more than three two years, the study commission shall submit to the Planning Committee Board of Trustees for inclusion on the agenda of the next regular General Assembly following completion of the review and study process the proposal in the form originally presented to the regular General Assembly and any amendments to the proposal Article II that the study commission recommends as a result of the review and study process. The Board of Trustees shall also include on the agenda any amendments that it recommends to the study commission proposal. All proposals regarding Article II of the Bylaws that are placed on the agenda after review and study (including amendments to such proposals recommended by the study commission) shall require a two-thirds vote for adoption. If the proposal does not receive the requisite approval at the General Assembly following the completion of the review and study process, neither the proposal nor another proposal that is substantively similar shall be placed on the agenda of a General Assembly for two years.

A motion to dispense with the review and study process and give preliminary approval with respect 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 review and study process is authorized. A motion to dispense with the review and 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) After completion of the review and study process, proposals regarding Article II of the Bylaws shall not be subject to substantive amendment. The Moderator shall determine whether an amendment to such a proposal is substantive.] 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.

([4]6) If no [review and] study process of Article II has occurred for a period of fifteen years, the Board of Trustees shall appoint a commission to [review and] study Article II for not more than two years and to recommend appropriate revisions, if any, thereto to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees shall review the recommendations of the study commission and, in its discretion, may submit the recommendations of the study commission to the Planning Committee 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. [Such proposals must be approved preliminarily by a majority vote at a regular General Assembly. Following such preliminary approval, the proposal shall be placed on the agenda of the next regular General Assembly for final adoption. Final adoption shall require a two-thirds vote.]