



**BYLAWS OF THE
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH AT WASHINGTON CROSSING**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--------------|--|
| ARTICLE I | NAME/AFFILIATION |
| ARTICLE II | PURPOSE |
| ARTICLE III | MEMBERSHIP |
| ARTICLE IV | CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS |
| ARTICLE V | BOARD OF TRUSTEES |
| ARTICLE VI | COMMITTEES/MINISTRIES |
| ARTICLE VII | CHURCH COUNCIL |
| ARTICLE VIII | THE MINISTRY |
| ARTICLE IX | FISCAL YEAR |
| ARTICLE X | PUBLIC EXPRESSION |
| ARTICLE XI | DISSOLUTION OF THE CHURCH |
| ARTICLE XII | AMENDMENTS, REVISIONS, AND REPEAL OF BYLAWS |



**BYLAWS OF THE
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH AT WASHINGTON CROSSING**

**ARTICLE I
NAME/AFFILIATION**

The name of this religious organization shall be the “Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing,” hereafter referred to as “UUCWC” or the “Church.” This Church shall be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association, hereafter referred to as “UUA.”

**ARTICLE II
PURPOSE**

Members of the Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing unite to create a welcoming, caring, religious community. Within this Church, we encourage and affirm the individual's quest for authenticity, wisdom and spiritual deepening.



ARTICLE III
MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Requirements for Membership

An individual can become a member of this Church, if the individual:

- is at least 18 years of age
- agrees with the mission of the Church
- agrees to act in accordance with the Church's Eight Principles
- agrees to abide by the Covenant of Right Relations
- completes the procedures for membership as established by the Minister
- signs the membership book
- makes and contributes toward a recorded financial pledge each year.

Section 2. Youth Member

A person under 18 who has the approval of the Minister and has met all procedures established by the Minister for membership, may become a youth member. There is no financial expectation for youth members. Youth members may vote at congregational meetings.

Section 3. Benefits of Membership

The following benefits are available to members:

- voting rights at congregational meetings
- ability to hold leadership positions (some positions may have additional requirements)
- the services of the Minister and the Church
- the benefits provided by the UUA.

Section 4. Termination of Membership

An individual shall no longer be a member in case of:

- the member's death
- a request by the member
- a period of inactivity of more than one year.

The Board of Trustees (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") may expel from membership any member whose acts are deemed inimical to the interests of the Church. *(See policies and procedures for specific procedures for termination and the appeal process.)*



**ARTICLE IV
CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS**

Section 1. Annual Meeting

The Board shall convene a congregational meeting annually ("Annual Meeting"). This meeting will normally occur in the last quarter of the fiscal year.

The purposes of the Annual Meeting are:

- for the Board to report to the congregation on its activities during the year
- to adopt a budget for the following fiscal year
- to vote on elective positions
- to address other matters as determined by the Board.

Section 2. Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called to vote upon one or more specific items of business. The only items that can be transacted at such a meeting are those announced in the published

agenda for that meeting. A special meeting may be called by the Board or when requested by written petition stating the purpose of the meeting and signed by at least 10% of the members.

Section 3. Notice of Meetings

The business to be transacted or considered at any congregational meeting shall be described in the notice of the meeting. All members shall be sent written notice at least 10 days in advance of such meeting. All supporting documents shall be made available to each member as soon as possible prior to the meeting (every effort should be made to make the materials available at least 48 hours prior to the meeting). Only business on the agenda will be considered.

Section 4. Quorum

A quorum for the transacting of business shall be 25% of members for the Annual Meeting or for calling or discharging a minister. At all other congregational meetings, the quorum shall be 15%, unless otherwise specified in these bylaws. If there is no quorum at a congregational meeting, any and all matters that were to be decided by a vote will either be deferred to a future congregational meeting or decided by the Board, at the Board's discretion.



UUCWC BYLAWS

Section 5. Voting

A majority vote of those members attending and voting shall determine all questions unless a greater percentage is specifically required under these bylaws. For elections, voting shall be by written ballot if there are more nominees for a given position than there are positions, and the results shall be tallied in the presence of at least three Board members. Otherwise, voting may be by show of hands or voice vote. The Board has the right to authorize virtual attendance and voting. In addition, the Board may authorize members who cannot attend the Annual Meeting the ability to vote on elected positions if a slate has been published prior to the meeting.

Section 6. Meeting Minutes

Congregational meeting minutes will be published for membership comment and then approved by the Board. All minutes shall be treated as corporate records.

Section 7. Meeting Procedures

The Board shall determine and announce which procedures will be utilized in each congregational meeting.



**ARTICLE V
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Section 1. Composition

The Board shall consist of nine members: a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer (hereinafter referred to as “the officers”) and five other trustees. All trustees must have been members of the Church for at least two years when their term starts.

Section 2. Purposes and Limitations

The Board shall have charge of all property owned by the Church and shall have fiduciary responsibility for the Church's funds. The Board shall have jurisdiction of the business affairs of the Church, and shall formulate and implement Church policy, subject to the limitations imposed by these bylaws.

The Board’s priorities shall include but not be limited to:

- Setting and monitoring Church policy in accordance with applicable laws, the Church’s mission, vision, and principles, and UUA best practices
- Setting and monitoring strategic direction and progress on goals
- Maintaining financial sustainability
- Evaluating the Minister
- Annually
 - contracting with the Minister
 - reporting to the congregation on its activities
 - recommending an annual budget at the Annual Meeting.

The Board may consider any other matters that are in the interest of the Church.

Section 3. Policies and Procedures

The Board shall review and approve all policies of the church, and delegate development of procedures as appropriate. The Church’s policies and procedures shall describe the functions and responsibilities of the various committees, ministries and other organizational entities and state the specifics as to how they and the Board will operate. The Board will make significant changes only after consultation with appropriate entities, the Church Council, and/or the congregation.



UUCWC BYLAWS

Section 4. Situations Requiring Immediate Action

In the event of a situation requiring immediate action, the Board may make a decision on a matter ordinarily requiring a membership vote. In such cases, seven affirmative votes would be required. The Board shall inform the congregation of that decision within 10 days.

Section 5. Authority to Allocate Funds

A. The Board shall have the power to buy, sell, encumber, or transfer real property of the Church, after receiving a recommendation from the Finance Committee. Furthermore, the approval of the membership will be required, unless the value of the real property is less than 5% of the operating budget total income.

B. The Board shall have the authority to revise the operating budget after receiving a recommendation from the Finance Committee. Furthermore, the approval of the membership will be required, unless the overall increase or decrease to the budget is equal to or less than 15% of the operating budget total income.

C. The Board may reallocate funds to accommodate unanticipated expenses and under expenditures. The Board shall first consult any committee, ministry, organizational entity, or individual(s) with responsibility for a specific function whose budget would be reduced through reallocation or overall budget reduction.

Section 6. Election of Trustees and Officers

A. Terms: Trustees and officers shall be elected for staggered terms to the Board by majority vote at the Annual Meeting:

- Officers
 - President and Treasurer are elected for two year terms
 - Vice President and Secretary positions are filled by the Board from the elected trustees for one-year renewable terms
- Trustees: seven positions elected for staggered two-year terms. When needed, a one-year term can be created for one of the elected positions.
- All officers and trustees shall take office on the first day of the next Church year following the Annual Meeting at which they were elected.
- These persons shall serve for a period of two consecutive years.
- They may be re-elected but shall not serve more than two consecutive terms (total of four consecutive years).
- No nominations will be accepted from the floor.



UUCWC BYLAWS

- B. **Presidential Vacancy.** In the event of death, resignation, or prolonged incapacitation of the President, the Vice President shall assume the duties of the President for, at most, the remainder of the fiscal year. When the Presidency is filled in this manner, the Board shall select a new Vice President.
- C. **Other Interim Appointments.** In the event an officer or trustee leaves a position on the Board for any reason, the Board shall appoint a replacement for the remainder of that Church year:
- from among the remaining members of the Board in the case of an officer
 - from among eligible Church members in the case of a trustee
 - At the next Annual Meeting, an election shall be held as in Article IV (above) for the remainder of the unexpired term, if any, of the Treasurer or trustees. The replacement may serve two consecutive terms in addition to the one fulfilled on an interim basis.

Section 7. Officers' Duties

- A. **President.** The President shall:
- preside at all Board and congregational meetings
 - serve as chair of the Board
 - sign all contracts on behalf of the Church
 - perform all other duties usually incident to the office.
- B. **Vice President.** The Vice President shall:
- assume the duties of the Presidency in the President's absence
 - assume the position of President until the next Annual Meeting in the event the President is unable to serve out the term
 - serve as chair of the Church Council.
- C. **Secretary.** The Secretary shall:
- keep and post records of the proceedings of all Board and congregational meetings
 - see that each member is sent a written notice of all congregational meetings at least 10 days before the meeting that states the purpose of the meeting
 - maintain all of the Policies and Procedures documentation.



UUCWC BYLAWS

D. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall:

- have custody of the moneys and securities of the Church
- deposit all moneys and valuables in depositories approved by the Board
- disburse the funds of the Church in accordance with the approved budget and/or as directed by the Board
- keep detailed and regular accounts of the moneys and securities of the Church
- report on the same at each Board meeting
- report to the congregation at least once a year.

The Treasurer shall be bonded and may delegate responsibilities.

Section 8. Board Meetings and Quorum

The Board shall meet at least six times a year.

A quorum will consist of no fewer than six members attending.

Votes taken at all meetings will be recorded by the secretary. Any decision of the Board will be made by majority vote of the Board members attending, provided a quorum is present.

Board meetings are open to any member of the Church except during specifically designated Executive Sessions called by the President to discuss confidential matters.

Except for the procedures noted above in this Section, the Board shall determine which procedures to utilize in its own meetings.

Section 9. Removal of a Board Member

Consideration of the removal of a Board member may be initiated by a majority of the Board.



ARTICLE VI
COMMITTEES/MINISTRIES

Section 1. Purpose

The purpose of committees, ministries, and other organizational entities is to further the work of the Church in accordance with its mission. These bylaws establish standing committees and describe other entities, which include, but are not limited to, ministries, committees, ad hoc committees, and task forces.

Section 2. Standing Committees

A standing committee:

- is any committee designated by these bylaws
- reports to the Board
- can have its name change approved by the Board without requiring a bylaw change if the group's function remains basically the same.

B. Selection of Chairs and Terms. Standing committee chairs shall:

- be members of the church
- be appointed by the Board, based upon recommendations from the Nominating Committee
- serve for a two-year term with a maximum of two consecutive terms.

When a chairperson is unable to complete the term of office or the Board determines that a chairperson should be replaced, the Board shall appoint a replacement based upon a recommendation from the Nominating Committee. The replacement will serve until July 1 following the next Annual Meeting. A chairperson shall take office on July 1 following the Annual Meeting.

C. The Standing Committees

- Nominating Committee
 1. This committee shall:
 - produce a slate of candidates for Board officers and trustees to be elected at the Annual Meeting
 - identify candidates for committee chairs and other positions in response to Board requests
 2. The Board shall appoint its members.
 3. Its members will be eligible to be nominated for or appointed to office or positions.



UUCWC BYLAWS

- Endowment Committee
 1. This committee shall:
 - ensure that donations to the endowment are deposited into the endowment funds
 - ensure that endowment funds are invested with the objective of growing the principal value
 - distribute endowment fund income to grant requests that benefit the mission of the church.
 - meet at least four times in a church year. Virtual meetings are possible.
 - keep precise records of all finances and decisions.
 2. It shall have at least five members with one member being from the Board.
 3. The Board shall appoint its members with a member of the Endowment Committee selecting its chair/co-chairs.
 4. A quorum shall consist of half of its members, plus one (rounded up if the committee has an odd number of members).
- Finance Committee
 1. This committee shall:
 - be responsible for all financial matters for UUCWC with the exception of the endowment
 - create an Annual Budget and present it to the Board for review
 - regularly monitor the Church's financial and budgetary activity
 - arrange for audits, conducted either internally or externally, no less than every five years
 2. It shall be composed of representatives of Stewardship, Fundraising, the Treasurer, and may include other members appointed by the committee chair.
- Personnel Committee
 1. This committee shall:
 - ensure that sufficient policies and procedures exist to meet the Church's legal and ethical responsibility for the treatment of staff
 - develop and monitor the Personnel Manual to codify those legal and ethical responsibilities
 - work with the Minister and Finance Committee to identify the optimal staffing arrangement within the available resources.
 2. Its members will include the Finance Committee chair and the Minister.
 3. The Board will appoint the remaining members.



UUCWC BYLAWS

Section 3. Other Committees, Task Forces, and Organization Entities

The Board can maintain, merge, re-purpose, rename, or terminate other existing committees, task forces, and other organizations and create new ones. These entities shall report to the Board. They may be tasked to accomplish a specific goal for a finite time or

maintain responsibilities for indefinite periods. The Board shall be responsible for identifying leaders for these entities.

Section 4. Ministries

The Minister can maintain, merge, re-purpose, rename, or terminate existing ministries and create new ones. These entities shall report to the Minister or an individual designated by the Minister. They may be tasked to accomplish a specific goal for a finite time or maintain responsibilities for indefinite periods. The Minister shall be responsible for identifying leaders for these entities.



**ARTICLE VII
CHURCH COUNCIL**

Section 1. Purpose and Limitations

The Church Council shall assist in coordinating and implementing general programs of the Church. It shall have no decision-making authority but shall be advisory to the Board.

Section 2. Membership

The Church Council shall consist of all members of the Board, the Minister, chairpersons or representatives of standing committees, other committees, ministries and organizational entities, and any others designated by the Board.

Section 3. Meetings

The Church Council shall meet at least twice a year. The Vice President shall chair the meetings. Meetings shall be open to all members of the church.



ARTICLE VIII
THE MINISTRY

Section 1. Duties

A. The minister shall be responsible for furthering the religious and spiritual life of the church and Unitarian Universalist principles. The Minister shall have freedom of expression and freedom of the pulpit. The Minister shall be a non-voting member of the Board and shall bring to the attention of the Board such matters as seem pertinent to the welfare of the church.

B. Should there be other called ministers (such as Associate Minister or Minister of Lifespan Religious Education), they shall also have similar freedoms of expression and be non-voting members of the Board.

C. The Minister, with input from the Board, shall be responsible for hiring and supervising Church staff. Hiring should be consistent with the approved operating budget. Church staff may include titles such as Assistant Minister, Director of Lifespan Religious Education, Office Administrator, Sexton, and Director of Music Ministry.

Section 2. Employment

Called ministers (see section B above) shall be elected by at least 90% of the members present at a congregational meeting. The vote shall be by written ballot.

Such ministers can be dismissed by a 2/3 vote of members by written ballot at a congregational meeting called specifically for that purpose. Prior to employment, and annually thereafter, a mutually agreeable contract shall be drawn up between the Board and the Minister. The contract shall state terms of employment, duties, salary, allowances, termination procedures, and other relevant components. The Personnel Committee will draft the employment contract between the Minister and the Church, to be approved by the Board. The same procedures will apply to any other called ministers.

Section 3. Minister Vacancy

In the event of a vacancy in the position of a called Minister, a Search Committee for a new settled minister will be formed. The timing and procedures regarding its formation and procedures will be based on the current UUA Guidelines. The Search Committee will consist of seven Church members who have been members for at least two years. All interested applicants shall submit their names to the Board Secretary who will prepare a list for consideration. No nominations will be taken from the floor. The seven candidates receiving the most votes at a congregational meeting shall fill the positions.



UUCWC BYLAWS

**ARTICLE IX
FISCAL YEAR**

The Church fiscal year shall be July 1 through June 30.

**ARTICLE X
PUBLIC EXPRESSION**

In keeping with the mission of the Church and the Church's Eight Principles, the Church may express itself publicly (*see policy and procedures for details*). The congregation may wish to display on church property its views on current issues. Such expression intended for public view may include, but not be limited to, placing a sign or banner on Church property. Such a display shall require a majority vote at a congregational meeting.

|

**ARTICLE XI
DISSOLUTION OF THE CHURCH**

To dissolve the Church, a special congregational meeting shall be held. The required quorum shall be 50% of the Church's members and the motion to dissolve will require no less than 2/3 of the members voting affirmatively.

If the Church is dissolved, all moneys and property, except such funds as are otherwise dedicated, shall be placed in the possession of the UUA.

**ARTICLE XII
AMENDMENTS, REVISIONS, AND REPEAL OF BYLAWS**

These bylaws, so far as allowed by the laws of the State of New Jersey, may be amended, revised, or repealed at a congregational meeting by a 2/3 vote of a quorum of members present. The proposed change(s) shall be sent to members at least 30 days prior to the meeting.



UUCWC BYLAWS

BYLAWS REVISION HISTORY

First adopted in 1916.

Revised:

- 1964
- 1984
- 1991
- 1998
- May 23, 2010
- May 22, 2011
- February 26, 2012
- April 2, 2017
- June 3, 2018
- June 2, 2019

Endowment Committee Revision Proposed: May 2025; Adopted June 11, 2025