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18 **By-Laws**  
19 **of the Unitarian Universalist Church**  
20 **of Muncie, Indiana**

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22 **ARTICLE I**  
23 **Purpose and Objectives**

24 SECTION 1.

25 The Universalist Church of Muncie was founded in 1859, incorporated in  
26 1956 and, following the national merger, became a Unitarian Universalist Church in  
27 1962.

28  
29 SECTION 2.

30 The purpose of this church is to provide an environment in which we, the  
31 members, unite to secure for ourselves, our posterity, and our fellow human beings a  
32 communion and faith, a tradition and heritage of ever greater freedom, justice, love,  
33 and mercy, and do voluntarily bind ourselves together to support and maintain one  
34 organization and government of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Muncie,  
35 Indiana. Therefore, this church shall devote its resources to religious, educational and  
36 charitable purposes.

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SECTION 3.

Our church is autonomous and concerned with humankind's conception of the ultimate, or universe, and with human relationships. With mutual good faith and good will we seek:

- to strengthen one another in the search for truth;
- to cherish and spread the values of our heritage as discovered by the prophets and teachers of humanity in every age and tradition;
- to affirm, defend and promote the supreme worth of every person, the dignity of humanity, and the use of the democratic process in human relationships;
- to implement our ideals of beloved community, justice and peace by encouraging appropriate action through which each member, in accordance with personal convictions, may serve fellow humans and cooperate with persons of good will in every land;
- to help other Unitarian Universalist churches and fellowships; and
- to extend our own church in order to make membership available to all who would find the way of liberal religion an enrichment of life.

SECTION 4.

Systems of power, privilege, and oppression have traditionally created barriers for persons and groups with particular identities, ages, abilities, and histories. We pledge to do all we can to replace such barriers with ever-widening circles of solidarity and mutual respect. We strive to be a congregation that truly welcomes all persons, and commit to structuring congregational life in ways that empower and enhance everyone's participation.

SECTION 5.

No Statement in these by-laws is to be used as a creed or doctrinal test. No committee, group or individual may speak for the congregation without its authorization.

**ARTICLE II**  
**Allegiance**

SECTION 1.

72           This church is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA),  
73 acknowledging the organization and purposes of that Association; however, this  
74 church remains fully autonomous and independent. Congregational polity cannot be  
75 infringed upon by the UUA or any other organization to which this church may be  
76 joined; and further, this church regards itself as pledged to its own conference and  
77 district organization and shall cooperate with each in extending the interests of this  
78 church.

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80 SECTION 2.

81           This church shall contribute each year, according to its ability, to the funds of  
82 the Unitarian Universalist Association, its own district and such other conferences  
83 and/or organizations as are deemed appropriate by the congregation.

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**ARTICLE III**

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**Membership**

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90 SECTION 1. **Admittance to Membership**

91           Any person sixteen (16) years of age or older who expresses sympathy with the  
92 Principles and Purposes of the Unitarian Universalist Association and is willing to  
93 support and advance the purpose of our church as stated in our by-laws, may become  
94 a member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Muncie. Membership is effected  
95 by: following our membership procedure (as outlined in the Policy and Procedure  
96 Manual) to learn about Unitarian Universalism and the responsibilities of  
97 membership; and signing the membership book witnessed either by the minister or by  
98 a member of the Board of Trustees (here and after defined as Board.)

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100 Section 2. **Definition of Membership**

101           A. Persons who have been admitted to membership for at least thirty (30)  
102 days, who make a financial pledge to the church and make a good-faith effort to pay  
103 it, who donate their time and services, and who attend church services and activities  
104 are deemed to be voting members with all rights and privileges. Members who by  
105 reason of health have not been able to participate in church affairs and members who  
106 by reason of financial hardship have not been able to make a monetary contribution,  
107 are nonetheless viewed by the church as being members.

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B. UUA--With regard to assessing the church's financial obligations to the Unitarian Universalist Association, membership will be deemed to be equal to the number of members in the year previous to the current assessment.

C. A membership list will be updated annually by a group comprising church staff, members of the Board of Trustees, and members of one or more appropriate committee(s). A member's name shall be removed from the membership list in case of: (1) the member's death, (2) written request by the member to the Board Secretary, (3) non-fulfillment of the membership obligations as defined above (section 2A), (4) removal by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board for actions that threaten the well-being of the Congregation.

**Section 3. Rights and Privileges**

A. All members shall have the right to vote in all matters concerning the life of the church where voting is required by the by-Laws. Only members of this church may be officers or trustees. All members of this church may attend any meeting of the church standing committees and the Board and any member may make proposals, suggestions and criticisms and present them to the Board, the minister or the appropriate committee at any time.

B. All members of the church will receive preferential consideration regarding facility uses and services associated with church property and staff in accordance with the Unitarian Universalist Church of Muncie policy.

**ARTICLE IV  
Auxiliary Organizations**

The church through its Board may provide for or recognize any auxiliary organizations that may be deemed appropriate for the purpose of worship, instruction, service, recreation or the general development of the church. All such organizations shall be regarded as integral parts of the church and shall designate a liaison responsible for communication with the Board and shall prepare a report for the May semi-annual meeting. The Board may withdraw recognition of organizations it deems inappropriate.

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**ARTICLE V**

**Dissolution**

In any case of the dissolution of this Church, all of its property, whether real, personal, or mixed, subject to all just and legal claims upon it, shall be vested in the appropriate regional and/or district organization of the Unitarian Universalist Association to be held in trust for the benefit of a future Unitarian Universalist Church in the vicinity of Muncie, Indiana.

**ARTICLE VI**

**Amendments**

The By-Laws may be altered or amended by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present at any business or special meeting. Proposed changes and notice of the meeting shall be published and mailed 30 days prior to a business or special congregational meeting.

**ARTICLE VII**

**Annulment**

By-Laws in force previous to the adoption of these By-Laws are hereby annulled.

**ARTICLE VIII**

**Congregational Meetings**

**SECTION 1. Business Meeting**

The congregation shall meet in May and October of each year at the times and dates set by the Board. The purpose of the May meeting is to elect all officers and personnel whose election is called for by these By-Laws, to receive presentation of all annual reports, to approve the budget of the church and to transact other business as necessary. The purpose of the October meeting is to receive the final financial report of the previous fiscal year, to make budgetary adjustments, if needed, and to transact other business as necessary.

**SECTION 2. Special meetings**

Special meetings shall be called by the President, by a majority of the Board or by a petition duly presented to the President or a Board member by fifteen (15) or more members of the congregation.

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**SECTION 3. Notice of Meetings**

Notice of all meetings of the congregation shall be announced from the pulpit the two Sundays preceding the meeting and shall be published and mailed to each member of the church at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting date, except as stated in ARTICLE VI. The agenda shall be prepared by those calling the meeting and shall be included in the notice. The Secretary of the Board shall be responsible for the time requirement of such notice.

**SECTION 4. Quorum**

At all business and special meetings of the congregation, twenty (20) percent of the members shall constitute a quorum. A quorum is required for the transaction of any business of the congregation.

**SECTION 5. Rules of the Meetings**

Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all business and special meetings of the congregation when not in conflict with these By-Laws. The Board President shall preside over all official meetings and shall appoint a parliamentarian. In the absence of the President, the President-Elect shall preside. In the event of the President-Elect's absence, the Vice-President shall preside.

**SECTION 6. Voting at Congregational Meetings**

Decisions shall be made according to Robert's Rules of Order, unless otherwise specified in the By-Laws. An absentee ballot, deposited with the Board Secretary a minimum of two (2) days prior to the meeting, shall be permitted on all agenda proposals.

**ARTICLE IX  
Church Officers**

**SECTION 1. Number and Election**

The officers of the congregation shall be six: President, President-Elect, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Past-President. The officers shall be elected at the May semi-annual meeting and shall hold office beginning July 1. The President and President-Elect shall be elected every year for a one (1) year term. The Secretary shall be elected in even numbered years for a two (2) year term.; the Vice-President and Treasurer shall be elected in odd numbered years for a two (2) year term. With

216 the exception of the Treasurer, an officer may not hold the same office for more than  
217 two (2) consecutive terms. If an officer cannot complete a term, the Board, upon the  
218 recommendation of the Nominating Committee, shall appoint a replacement to  
219 complete the expired term. A Vice-President or Secretary appointed to fill a vacancy,  
220 who serves half of a term or more, shall have that term counted as a full term and will  
221 be eligible for one (1) additional term, after which there must be an elapsed period of  
222 one (1) year before being eligible for another term. A Vice-President, or Secretary  
223 appointed to fill a vacancy and who serves less than half a term will be eligible for the  
224 election to two successive terms.

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## 226 SECTION 2. **Duties of the Officers**

### 227 A. President

228 The President shall:

- 229 1. preside at all meetings of the congregation and the Board;
- 230 2. supervise activities of the Board to ensure thorough and effective operation;
- 231 3. facilitate the work of and be an ex-officio member of the Program Council  
232 and all committees;
- 233 4. ask the Nominating Committee to recommend nominees for Board and  
234 committee vacancies, including ad hoc committees;
- 235 5. be empowered to countersign all checks;
- 236 6. be responsible for the preparation of the annual report; and
- 237 7. perform such other duties as the congregation, Board, or Program Council  
238 may require.

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### 240 B. President-Elect

241 The President-Elect shall:

- 242 1. in the absence of the President, preside over congregational and Board  
243 meetings;
- 244 2. in cooperation with the President, facilitate the work of the Program  
245 Council and church committees;
- 246 3. be empowered to countersign all checks;
- 247 4. in cooperation with the President, help prepare the annual report;
- 248 5. perform such other duties as the congregation, the President, Board, or  
249 Program Council may require.

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253 C. Vice-President

254 The Vice-President shall:

- 255 1. Serve as Chair of the Program Council
- 256 2. in the absence of the President and President-Elect, preside over
- 257 congregational and Board meetings;
- 258 3. in cooperation with committee chairs and the church staff, prepare the
- 259 annual church calendar;
- 260 4. coordinate the development and maintenance of a procedural manual which
- 261 will outline the duties of each committee, the Board, and the Program
- 262 Council, and reflect the procedural operations of the church;
- 263 5. ensure biennial review of the By-Laws;
- 264 6. be empowered to countersign all checks; and
- 265 7. perform such other duties as the congregation, Board, or Council may
- 266 require.

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268 D. Secretary

269 The Secretary shall:

- 270 1. give notice of all meetings of the congregation and of the Board and keep
- 271 the minutes of the meetings of the Board (See Article VIII Section 3);
- 272 2. together with the minister, assure the congregation that the administrative
- 273 assistant maintains accurate records of child dedications, marriages and
- 274 funerals performed in the church or conducted by the minister;
- 275 3. receive notices of membership resignations and forward such notices to the
- 276 committee which deals with membership of the congregation;
- 277 4. perform such other duties as the congregation or Board may require.

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279 E. Treasurer

280 The Treasurer shall be bonded and shall:

- 281 1. have custody of all funds of the church except those that have been placed
- 282 in the custody of the Board;
- 283 2. keep an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements; pay all bills duly
- 284 incurred for the general expense of the church and such other bills as may be
- 285 approved by the Board;
- 286 3. be empowered to countersign all checks;



- 287 4. submit a Treasurer's report at each Board meeting and, together with the  
288 committees which deal with the financial affairs of the church, submit a  
289 financial report at each semi-annual congregational meeting (See Article  
290 VIII, Section 1 of these By-Laws);  
291 5. deposit monies in the name of the church as directed by the Board;  
292 6. have custody of all insurance policies and all evidence of property  
293 belonging to the church which shall be kept in a safe deposit box provided for  
294 that purpose;  
295 7. open financial books and records to audit and examination as directed by  
296 the Board. The books and records shall be audited annually by the Internal  
297 Finance Review Committee, a special committee of the church (Article XII,  
298 Section 3.);  
299 8. may request that the Board appoint an assistant to share the responsibilities  
300 of the office. The assistant shall be bonded if the duties include receiving and/  
301 or disbursing monies; and  
302 9. perform other duties as the congregation or Board may require.

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304 F. Past-President

305 The Past-President shall:

- 306 1. chair the nominating committee;  
307 2. serve as member of the Board;  
308 3. serve on the Personnel Policies Committee.

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**ARTICLE X**

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**Trustees**

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SECTION 1.

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SECTION 2. **Meetings**

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A schedule for monthly meetings shall be set by the Board at the beginning of each fiscal year. Additional meetings may be called by the President or upon petition of one (1) or more Board members. Three (3) Board members shall constitute a quorum. In the absence of the President, the President-Elect shall preside. In the absence of the President and President-Elect, the Vice-President shall preside. Except

323 for Executive Sessions called to consider personnel and litigation matters, meetings  
324 are open to all members of the congregation.

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326 **Section 3. Responsibilities of the Board**

- 327 1. promote the welfare of the church and its constituency;
- 328 2. oversee the total life of the church, guiding and evaluating its functions;
- 329 3. be responsible for the functioning of the Program Council and committees  
330 of the church and the establishment of standing committees;
- 331 4. recommend the terms and conditions of employment for the minister  
332 according to article XIII, Section 2 of these by-laws; evaluate the performance  
333 of the minister in service to the purpose of the Church and approve  
334 employment of other Church staff as recommended by the minister.
- 335 5. appoint personnel to fill committee vacancies and other personnel as shall  
336 be desired and not otherwise provided for by these By-Laws;
- 337 6. act for and on behalf of the congregation in the discharge of business  
338 affairs; receive and administer monies, bequests and gifts; borrow money;  
339 buy, sell and mortgage church property; and execute for and on behalf of the  
340 congregation, all notes, mortgages, deeds and other documents, provided  
341 however, that the Board shall not buy or sell real estate for the congregation or  
342 enter into contract or execute any note, mortgage or other commitment  
343 involving an expenditure or obligation in an amount in excess of five percent  
344 (5%) of the operating budget, except for emergency maintenance repairs,  
345 without first obtaining the approval of the congregation at a duly called  
346 meeting at which a quorum is present. The Board may designate by resolution  
347 the person or persons who shall execute all contracts, deeds, notes, mortgages  
348 and other documents, and the signatures of such designated person or persons  
349 shall be binding upon the congregation;
- 350 7. initiate long-range planning studies of congregational needs for maintaining  
351 the physical plant, for developing the church grounds and for expanding or  
352 reviewing congregational programs;
- 353 8. secure adequate casualty, liability and other necessary insurance; and
- 354 9. approve and enforce policies and procedures.

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## ARTICLE XI

### The Program Council

#### SECTION 1. **Composition**

The Program Council shall be the chairs of standing committees as determined by the Board and the Vice-President.

#### Section 2. **Organization**

The Program Council members shall be given responsibility for stewardship and programmatic activities of the congregation.

#### Section 3. **Terms of Program Council Membership**

The committee chairs who comprise the Program Council serve a two (2) year term and shall assume office July 1 of that year. A committee chair shall be ineligible for appointment to the same capacity on the Council after having served two terms, but is eligible for appointment to the same position after at least one year has elapsed. If the chair cannot complete a two (2) year term or a new standing committee is established, the Board, upon the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, shall appoint a replacement to complete the un-expired term. A chair appointed to fill a committee vacancy and who serves a year or more will be eligible for one (1) additional term of two (2) years. A chair appointed to fill a Council vacancy and who serves for less than one year will be eligible to serve two successive terms. The maximum number of consecutive terms an individual may serve as chair of a standing committee, is two (2).

#### Section 4. **Meetings**

A schedule for meetings shall be set by the Program Council at the beginning of each fiscal year. Fifty-one per cent of Council members shall constitute a quorum. Additional meetings may be called by the Council chair or upon petition of two (2) or more Council members. In the absence of the Chair, a designated member of the Council shall preside. Program Council meetings are open to all members of the congregation.

#### Section 5. **Duties**

1. promote the welfare of the church and its constituency;
2. lead the congregation in its effort to carry out all established programs;
3. regularly evaluate and enhance the church program;

395 4. share with the Board responsibility for the functioning of all church  
396 committees.

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## ARTICLE XII

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### Committees

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#### Section 1. **Committees**

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#### Section 2. **Standing Committees**

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#### Section 3. **Special Committees**

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The two types of special committees are:

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##### 1. Long-Term Special Committees

Long-Term Special Committees are those created by the Board with no designated end date.

##### 2. Short-Term Special Committees

432 Short-Term Special Committees are those created by the Board, the Program Council,  
433 Standing Committees, or Long-Term Special Committees to serve temporary  
434 purposes.

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## ARTICLE XIII

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### The Minister

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#### SECTION 1. **Vacancy**

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#### SECTION 2. **Call and Employment**

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#### SECTION 3. **Removal**

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#### SECTION 4. **Resignation**

468           In the event the minister resigns, the ministerial relationship shall continue for  
469 at least three (3) months, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon by the Board and  
470 minister.

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#### 472 Section 5. **Qualifications**

473           Any candidate for the position of Settled Minister shall be in fellowship with  
474 the Unitarian Universalist Association.

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#### 476 Section 5. **Responsibilities**

477           The responsibilities of the Minister and obligations of the church to the  
478 minister shall be described in a letter of terms and conditions made between the  
479 Minister and the Board and ratified by the congregation per Article XIII, Section 2.  
480 In general the Minister shall provide overall religious leadership and guidance in  
481 accordance with the established purposes of the church and shall be guaranteed  
482 freedom of the pulpit. The Minister shall be an ex officio non-voting member of the  
483 Board and of all committees except for Nominating and Search Committees.

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#### 485 SECTION 6. **Powers and Limitations**

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- 487           1. The church is considered the pulpit of the called minister, who has the  
488 prerogative to determine whether or not non-members may be married in the  
489 church. The minister will officiate at all weddings that she/he may approve  
490 for the church unless she/he expressly approves the officiation by another  
491 individual.
- 492           2. The Minister shall have no power or authority to make any contracts binding  
493 upon the church, or to employ or dismiss employees. The Minister is  
494 authorized to make purchases and to undertake repairs of the church within  
495 the framework of the budget.
- 496           3. The Minister shall be charged with recommending to the Board measures,  
497 programs and policies that will enhance the life of the congregation.
- 498           4. The Minister is head of staff of the church. As such, the minister—acting  
499 within the framework of the budget and the Personnel Policy manual, and  
500 with the advice and consent of the Board—manages the administrative affairs  
501 of the church. The minister manages the training and evaluation of staff;  
502 recommends the hiring of, termination of, and salary actions for staff;  
503 recommends changes in job descriptions and personnel policy to the Board.