



25 April 2014

Dear Member:

Please let this letter serve as your official notice for the upcoming Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, 18 May at noon. We will be considering the following items at the meeting:

- The minutes of the 2013 Annual Congregational Meeting
- By-laws amendments
- Election of Trustees
- Election of Endowment Committee members
- Resolution on Covenant Renewal
- Budget for FY 2014–2015
- Other business as required

Appended to this notice please find the Annual Report to the Congregation, the minutes of the 2013 Annual Congregational Meeting, the proposed By-laws amendments, the CoRR resolution wording, and reference documents (Covenant of Right Relations, Membership Covenant, current By-laws, and the draft Board policy on covenant renewal).

Please note that a quorum for this meeting will be 33 members. A congregation's decision by vote is the highest expression of its authority. All members are encouraged to attend and participate as a responsibility of membership.

Details, agenda and lunch plans will be forthcoming. Please review the materials in this packet prior to the meeting. Thank you in advance for your willingness to participate in the governance of the Church.

Sincerely yours,

Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald G Zeilman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Donald G Zeilman  
Clerk of the Church 2013–2014

ALLEGHENY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH  
416 West North Avenue • North Side • Pittsburgh

CHURCH OFFICE Unitarian House • 1110 Resaca Place • Pittsburgh PA 15212 • 412 322-4261 • [www.alleghenyuu.org](http://www.alleghenyuu.org)

# Annual Report to the Congregation

## Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church May 2014

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### Ministry .....

#### MUSIC MINISTRY

*Jesse Landis-Eigsti – Director of Worship Music*

Like the church as a whole, music both celebrates familiar traditions and welcomes change and discovery. Throughout the year, our congregation, instrumental group, and choir have explored new musical works, from the layered complexity of *O Magnum Mysterium* to the jazzy, free-floating *Sankofa* to the gospel-tinged *Shine Your Light*. We have enjoyed the talents of people like Bryan Fazio, who leads a monthly drum circle, Brad Yoder, who regularly fills in for me when I am away, and Lara Herscovitch, who recently shared her social justice-inspired songs.

In the last year, our congregation has begun to focus on a “song of the month,” which is a chance for the

congregation to connect with a song on a deeper level. It has been gratifying to me to discover new harmonies and meanings in the gems in our hymnals; my hope is that by learning a song well, we can get out of the hymnals and sing from our hearts.

This congregation uses music to support each other. We have sang as we welcomed new members, and we have sang at funerals. We have taught songs to our children and greeted guest speakers with songs chosen just for them. It is my goal to have the music of this church be a reflection of the people in it: welcoming, sincere, and uplifting. As always, I’m grateful for the opportunity to lead music at this church and for your willingness to collaborate with me.

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#### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

*Brian Byers – Director of Religious Education*

Religious Education at Allegheny is so much more than “Sunday School” or child care. RE is important to the life of a faith community because it serves many functions some of which are to connect the children and youth to the community and to foster familiarity with how “church” looks and feels both to younger generations and to older generations. Successful all-ages worship is not always easily achieved for congregations. However, the children and youth of Allegheny have become an integral and celebrated part of the life of Allegheny. Allegheny has made it a priority that the children and youth be part of the weekly Service and from time to time as participants in full weekly Services. From a learning perspective, this continues to be a source of strength of the RE program at Allegheny.

In recent reports, it was stated that the RE program has grown significantly. With such growth, the RE program has been grateful to have a Youth Advisor for our youth, Ms. Sonia Reed. “Ms. Sonia” brings a wealth of professional expertise and personal engagement with youth. We are grateful to have her!

Another significant but perhaps less visible aspect of a successful RE program has been the commitment the Board has made to the professional development of the Director of Religious Education. The professional association of Religious Educators states that “strong RE programs begin with strong leaders.” This year Allegheny sent James-Brian Byers, DRE, to the Ohio Meadville District’s LREDA chapter annual retreat. The retreat was a time of professional connection, collegial learning and sharing as well as a time of spiritual refreshment. I thank the Board for this investment and the opportunity to attend.

In closing, the children, youth and volunteers of the RE Committee and congregation as a whole are growing more confident in the history of Unitarian Universalism and the legacy of social justice this entails. The children and youth are learning to be active agents of change in their homes, their communities and the world. We invite everyone to join with us as we learn and grow!

## INREACH MINISTRY

Ellen Kerr – Team Member

InReach has gained insight into what a community of people may experience and need and accomplish in a short period of time. Each of our lives is complex and full of meaning, adventure, uncertainty, failure, success and creativity. As a community, all of this comes together and we create a parallel community life that is complex and full of the same things.

The Church created the InReach Ministry Team with the help of Rev. Dave in the Fall to address the needs that might arise during our sabbatical and to continue into the future. We, Constance, Jane S, Suzanne, Camillia, Linda, Katie and Ellen, have worked with James-Brian Byers, our staff leader, to connect with each other and with the rest of the congregation.

We thank you for coming forward and engaging with us about your struggles and accomplishments. Alone we would have bonded with each other but with you we have added to the compassion, oneness, trust, hope and love of the whole community. We have listened and recorded the joys and sorrows so that we can give them to Rev Dave as a kind of journal of our experiences during our sabbatical. And we have written and called and offered to meet with members.

Allegheny has a rich, full life. We have seen in these few months tragic loss in the death of Linda Johnson, which brought the community together in mourning and celebration of her life; new life in Micah, Andrew and Isabella's new baby who creates new roles for Josh and Elaine and their children; the experience of violence and opportunity for renewal through the justice system; search for a new home; search for new work; search for answers to unexpected and emerging health problems; and new opportunities of school and job. We have also been present to members of the North Side Community as friendly, compassionate listeners. Through all of this we think we are surviving together with strength and hope for a bright future.

*May we be reminded here of our highest aspirations, and inspired to bring our gifts of love and service to the alter of humanity.*

*May we know once again that we are not isolated beings but connected, in mystery and miracle, to the universe, to this community and to each other.*

— Anonymous

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## RAINBOW CONNECTIONS CIRCLES

Jane Dirks – Lead Coordinator

The Allegheny Rainbow Connections Circles completed one full year of operations in March, 2014, and will begin a new cycle in April. Circles helped to provide refreshments, set up and clean up every Sunday; greeters every Sunday; children's snack for the Religious Education program; and washing of the kitchen towels. Many of the groups got together socially to strengthen the bonds of fellowship and friendship, and several completed service activities for the church and community, such as cleaning and organizing Religious Education classrooms and helping to insulate windows in the U House. Two of the Circle Leaders were unable to complete their terms, but their Circles continued to serve the church and function as best they could. As a first-year effort, the Rainbow Circles established a model for maintaining small-group connections within the church and providing needed services.

Jane Dirks took over as Coordinator from Tim Nuttle at the beginning of Rev. Dave's sabbatical, and

recruited five new Circle Leaders (John Engberg is generously continuing as Leader for another year) for the April 2014–April 2015 period. The six Leaders met at Jane's house for dinner and discussed issues and ideas concerning the Circles, including increased use of Google Groups for communication within Circles, and the use of Doodle polls for scheduling task sign-ups. Ideas for social gatherings and social justice projects were also shared. It was stressed that all Circle participants should hear regularly from their Leaders, whether by e-mail or phone, even if their Circle's task month is not immanent. The colored stickers on all church name tags have now been changed to reflect the new Circle groups. The bulletin board near the refreshment table in Founders Hall has posted the names of Circle Leaders, the months each Circle is responsible for, and the current month's Circle membership, with room for updating contact information.

*continued*

Ideally, Rainbow Connection Circles can become venues for Leaders, members and friends to bring forth and nurture their faith in action. We hope that each Circle can generate unique and organic projects which may serve both the church and the wider community. We also hope that the Circles can serve to enrich and strengthen our sense of community, fellowship and friendship within Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church.

## 2014–2015 CIRCLE LEADERS

Red Circle—Charlie Snowden  
Orange Circle—Kathy Kozachenko  
Yellow Circle—Karl Kunkle  
Green Circle—Joy Gero  
Blue Circle—John Engberg  
Purple Circle—Kelly Blaise

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## SABBATICAL TEAM

*Ellen Kerr – Coordinator*

This year has been full in every way.

The fall was spent planning for a smooth transition into Rev Dave's sabbatical. We had a series of evening soup and discussion groups about many aspects of the church. He left with snapshots of where we were then. And he left us with a detailed and well developed plan for worship services, administrative support and pastoral care. Brian Byers, Director of Religious Education, and Jesse Landis-Eigsti, Director of Worship Music, each accepted an additional role to help the church through the sabbatical. Brian is the staff support of the InReach Team and available to help resolve any staffing issues. Jesse is responsible for the Sunday worship services.

We celebrated the holidays and welcomed in the winter months with each other. The weather outside has been cold and full of snow but we have held warm, welcoming and inspirational services. Jesse Landis-Eigsti has solidly guided the Sunday mornings working with the visiting speakers and the worship hosts to create services that follow a familiar pattern and combine thought-provoking words and music.

We did suffer the tragic loss of member, Linda Johnson. And, as promised Rev. Dave was available to come back to help us mourn together and to celebrate her life.

We continue to see new children arrive eager to join our RE program. Sometimes they have even dragged their parents out of bed to bring them. Brian Byers has shared stories and experiences with us during the children's part of our Sunday services. It's a joy to watch the children feel free to participate with him and some of the visiting speakers who also engaged with the children as well as with the adults.

The Rainbow Connection Groups finished up a successful year of getting to know each other better and serving together. Leaders met and discussed what worked well and what improvements might be tried. The best parts of year one will be carried on and be built upon in this new year. Under the direction of Jane Dirks new groups were formed with new leaders. We are already off to a successful start of year two.

We have continued our social justice missions of weekly donations to the Northside Common Ministries' food pantry, monthly dinners at the men's shelter, sharing our plate with a social justice partner, making sandwiches for and visiting the homeless. In addition, we had a second successful year of offering our home to students from Vanderbilt who share a desire to be of service to others. And we have drummed together, stopped to write together, to meditate together, to dine together, to create a quilt together and to play together.

The Sabbatical Support Team members are Mark Tomlinson, Jane Dirks, Devon Woods, and Ellen Kerr.

## ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

*John Luff – Chairperson*

Though the Endowment Committee has not been very active in the last 12 months, we have a good base from which to move towards action this year. The Board moved a portion of the Church's long-term assets to the Endowment, raising the balance to over \$25,000. In addition we have Letters of Intent for some significant gifts that would be delivered in the future. This year marketing materials need to be finished and the committee needs to begin conversations with members about participating in the Endowment.

## COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

*Jay Poliziani—Chair, Jane Dirks, Greg Blackman*

The Committee on Ministry thanked Charlie Snowden for his dedicated three years of service to the team. At the same time we welcomed Greg Blackman to the team for his three-year term.

The first few months of the year were spent on discussing and planning for Rev Dave's sabbatical. The group wanted to be sure that in his absence the congregation's needs continued to be met and that a structure was in place to help address concerns as they arose. To meet this primary goal the team made several suggestions and changes. The first change was to add pictures of the members of the team with a description of what we as a team do to the Sunday slide program in Founders Hall. We also shared a community moment to inform congregants that we are here to be a resource if they have concerns. We worked on the creation of a Conflict Resolution document that is a follow-up to the Covenant of Right Relations. The document was reviewed by the Board and is currently in the approval process. Additionally we made several suggestions that were passed on to other teams based on observations and discussions we heard at church. One such suggestion was the clear verbal lead-in to joys and concerns asking that they be brief and well thought out.

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## NOMINATING REPORT

The Nominating Committee is pleased to present the following candidates for two-year Trustee positions.

### GREG BLACKMAN (FIRST TERM)

A native of Western New York, Greg Blackman has been a member of Allegheny for close to ten years. He now lives in Squirrel Hill, teaches photography at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, and is Allegheny's unofficial photographer. Greg is the proud father of four great kids who currently live in four different states: Alexandra is in grad school in California; Jan is a junior at the University of Oregon, and twin sons Jonah and Tobias are involved in the education-focused City Year program in Milwaukee and Seattle and will start college this fall. A member of Allegheny's Purple Circle and the Committee on Ministry, Greg believes that he fits better in a church that doesn't make him feel like he needs to think a specific way.

### JOHN LUFF (FIRST TERM)

"Betty and I were married in a Universalist church in Florida and felt very much at home in that setting. In 2007, after leaving another church in the area where I had been a member since 1980, I began coming to Allegheny. Over time I began to feel the kind of connection that draws one in, and gives purpose to the relationships I was forming. I strongly feel that commitment to a religious family requires a willingness to roll up your sleeves and do what is necessary to assure a thriving, vibrant community. After serving on the Stewardship and Finance Committees, I now feel I have enough understanding of the workings of this church to step up my commitment."

### JAY POLIZIANI (FIRST TERM)

Jay came to Allegheny in 2006 in search of a church that met his theological views. With degrees in Education, Communications and Theology, Jay says he has been active in the social service field "anywhere between 20 and 100 years," the exact number depending on what kind of day it's been. Jay has served as the Director of Northside Common Ministries for the past three or four years, chaired Allegheny's Racial Justice Committee for about three years, has been on the Committee on Ministry for the past three years, and has one son (he is sure of that number.) Jay's interest in being a member of the Board of Trustees is based on his commitment to social justice and his desire to see Allegheny as active as possible in those efforts.

### MARK TOMLINSON (SECOND TERM)

Mark Tomlinson feels deeply connected to Allegheny and the folks who make up this church community. He has great pride in Allegheny's history and accomplishments and optimism for its future. He has served as President of the Allegheny Board of Trustees since June 2012. He also serves on the Stewardship, Worship, and Sabbatical Teams and as technology liaison for the office and minister. As a Worship Ministry member he trains and coordinates worship hosts for Sunday worship. He has previously served as chair of the Stewardship and Worship Committees, and as a Trustee from 1999–2001 and 2011–2014. He was part of Allegheny's founding small group ministry team and he and wife Kate hosted a small group from 2007 until 2010. Mark became a member in 1999. He, his wife Kate, and daughter Emeline moved to the Manchester neighborhood in 2007.

# Board Administration .....

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

*Mark Tomlinson – President 2013/2014*

As my second year as President concludes, I am proud of the state of the church and how we have handled the last couple of years of church life. We've been able to make advances on a number of strategic and long-term goals while dealing with the surprises and detours that arise along the way. The Board is grateful to all of the members and friends and staff whose efforts combine to make this church a place we all are proud to consider our religious home!

The Ministerial sabbatical has certainly been a milestone in the life of our church. Planning over the year ahead of the sabbatical was extensive and time-consuming for both Rev. Dave and other church staff and lay leaders. As we pass the two-thirds mark with the finish in sight, together we have done an amazing job of keeping the church running smoothly. Worship services have continued to be rich and varied, made even more so by the contributions so many of our local ministers have made by speaking to us. Music, RE, and the church office have all kept humming along. The new Inreach Ministry team has faced challenges and risen to the occasion.

We invested considerable effort during 2013–14 on the selection and implementation of a new church management software system which will go “live” for July 2014, and will improve our ability to manage church information and improve financial reporting and decision-making. We've worked with the Rainbow Connection Circles as they moved from an experimental first year and incorporated lessons learned into year two. We've written revisions to the By-laws that provide our governance ground rules. We've had presentations and discussions around a proposed partner church agreement with First Unitarian Church. We have begun initial discussions with the UUA around Unitarian House ownership and a new relationship around the Gilliford Trust. We transferred \$15k from savings into Allegheny's new Endowment Fund to kick start that effort.

In February, Allegheny hosted the Ohio-Meadville District Board meeting and an open forum on UUA regionalization. In March myself, Liz Dell, and John Luff attended the first Pittsburgh cluster organizational

meeting. Also in March myself, Liz Dell, and Donald Zeilman attended the joint Ohio-Meadville and St. Lawrence District Assembly in Erie.

In March we hosted 12 college students from the Vanderbilt Alternative Spring Break program for the second year as they again volunteered with Gwen's Girls.

In July 2012 we made a two-year commitment to building capacity and creating and supporting growth while striving to conserve our cash reserves. While we have managed to keep annual deficits relatively low, under \$10k last fiscal year, we still face the challenge that every year our expenses exceed our income. As that window closes the Board will need to re-evaluate how much deficit spending we will tolerate going forward. The only sustainable path for us remains a combination of 100% of us giving, increasing our personal giving, and finding more folks ready to become stewards.

I would like to thank Liz Dell, Gail Ward, and Jane Schwarz for their first year of board service. I want to especially thank our departing trustees: Matt Merriman-Preston, who a few years ago volunteered during a crisis to stabilize a board that had empty seats. Mac McMahan, who became Treasurer not because he already knew how to do it but because the church needed someone and he figured he could learn how to perform the job. And Donald Zeilman, who has served the church in so many capacities for so many years, and has been a tremendous personal confidant and resource and whose knowledge of Allegheny history and broader religious affairs is unmatched. Thank you for all you have done for Allegheny!

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

*Donald Zeilman – Clerk of the Church 2013/2014*

As of this report, Allegheny Church membership stands at 83 members. There are 82 qualified to vote, requiring a quorum of 33 members present to conduct business at the Annual Meeting on 18 May.

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

*Peggy Thompson – Chairperson*

We wanted to thank Mac McMahon who has been Treasurer for the past seven years. We're grateful to him for the hours he has spent making sure the church finances are in order and running smoothly. John Luff will be our new Treasurer. Both Mac and John have been working together on the transition. ICON was the new software chosen to run financial and membership data. Thanks to John and the committee for their efforts in selecting the software.

The Finance Committee has prepared a budget for the coming year. It will be finalized with the Board.

The Finance Committee has looked into investing in the UUA Common Endowment Fund. A CD from ESB bank that had matured was closed out. We're waiting to invest that money along with other church monies into the fund.

Finance Committee members: Jill Brethauer, John Luff, Mac McMahon and Betty Schwarz.

## CHURCH MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE UPDATE

*John Luff – Task Group Lead*

In the last several months a task group was formed to evaluate church software management systems and pick one which would suit the needs of Allegheny. We have chosen ICON CMO (Church Management Online). Implementation planning has consumed the last 90 days, and recently we began inputting data mirroring our current membership database and finance software. The goal is to be fully converted to the new system at the end of this fiscal year (June 30th), which is on schedule to be completed on time. It is a fully web-based system, allowing leaders access from any computer or web capable device, even smart phones. When completed members will be able to see the status of their pledges at any time, and make changes to their personal information themselves to make it easier to stay in touch. It provides plenty of capability for us to grow into, and will allow us to be better stewards of donor dollars.

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## [MEETING] HOUSE COMMITTEE

*Donald Zeilman – Chairperson*

The House Committee retained Coffey Contracting Co. to do the annual roof inspection and prepare estimates for maintenance and repair. As evidenced by the damaged plaster in the Emerson Room, some repair work to the flashing on the church roof was required. In concert with the Board, the estimate for roofing work on both buildings was divided into multi-year segments. In the summer of 2013, overall slate tile and flashing repairs were completed. The cost for this work was not anticipated in the annual budget.

This coming summer, maintenance work associated with Unitarian House box gutters and porch roof is being considered. If undertaken, the cost will be included in the proposed budget.

Following the flashing work, the plaster in the Emerson Room was repaired by Charlie Snowden. Charlie also did initial repair to the plaster ceiling in the church kitchen.

We completed a full year with the new cleaning contractor for the church interiors. We continue to be satisfied with the work. The scheduled twice-a-year stripping and finishing of the flooring in the lower level of the church has also been fulfilled.

Through the initiative of John Luff, a pro-bono analysis of the acoustic challenges in Founders Hall was

completed. The Board approved a special fund raising effort to help cover the cost of acoustical dampening for the ceiling. A layout for the panels and cost estimates for the work have yet to be completed.

Annual projects completed include the inspection of the fire extinguishers and emergency lighting, re-installation of the storm window units and boiler maintenance. Due to changes in the laws governing steam boiler safety, we have engaged Johanssen & Sons to undertake some minor upgrades to the boiler.

Charlie Snowden also took responsibility for snow removal during the unusually snowy winter. Our thanks to all who assisted in that effort over the course of the winter months.

Andy Schwarz takes responsibility for facilities rental & use, and continues to be the primary coordinator of that effort.

With other more immediate needs, the renovations to the second-floor bathroom at Unitarian House and the process of making the building's hot water system more efficient were not begun as planned. We will be considering those projects again for the coming year.

Our thanks to all of the volunteers that helped and led projects, initiatives and planning — without you our facilities would not be as clean, safe and appealing as they are.

## STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Betty Luff – Co-Chairperson

It has been a busy year for Allegheny's Stewardship Committee. Anticipating lots of activity, we were pleased to recruit David McLaughlin to our ranks; he has been a wonderful addition and has made many important contributions.

The Committee began the year by developing a mission statement, finding that the process of creating the statement was at least as important as the final product. Simply stated, our new mission statement is: *The Stewardship Committee of Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church fosters generosity, empowers congregational responsibility and commitment, builds financial sustainability, and actively promotes the Allegheny Church mission to celebrate life, nourish the spirit and promote justice.*

We continued our year by expressing our appreciation to Allegheny's largest donors. All of our donors are vitally important to our financial well-being; the largest donors, however, are the engine that drives the donation train; as such they deserve particular recognition and appreciation. We then moved into what has become our traditional End-of-Year drive in December.

This year's drive brought an additional \$9500 into the budget, which has proved especially important because of the important roof repairs required this year.

January found us working hard to produce important information relating to both our donors' calendar-year and fiscal-year contributions.

Canvass planning also begins in January and then it's a sprint to the finish line (otherwise known as the Annual Meeting), encompassing many hours of planning, celebrating and implementing. Betty Luff, John Luff, and Mark Tomlinson attended the annual OMD Stewardship workshop in March.

We continue to encourage and support church-wide efforts to promote generosity, financial responsibility and good management. With improved financial health, so many more things are possible, making us able to more effectively live out Allegheny's mission to nourish the spirit, celebrate life, and inspire a commitment to justice.

Committee Members: Betty Luff, Chairperson; Tiffany Merriman-Preston, Mark Tomlinson, David McLaughlin and John Luff.

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## SOCIAL JUSTICE REPORT

Mark Tomlinson – President 2013/2014

Allegheny has long had a deep commitment to social justice, with justice work being not just a rich thread of our church life, but also deeply personal in many of our lives. We live out this commitment through making and serving food at the monthly shelter meal at the Pleasant Valley Shelter of Northside Common Ministries, and through weekly sandwich making for the homeless population through Operation Save a Life. We live this commitment by participating in the Pennsylvania Interfaith Impact Network. We live this commitment by organizing the whole Pittsburgh UU Cluster for a Pride Day worship service, then walking together in support of the LGBTQ community in the Pride March. During 2013–14 we have collected and given away almost \$4,500 through Share the Plate, helping this year's justice partners—the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, PIIN, the Young

Men's and Women's African Heritage Association, the American Field Service Centennial Scholarship program, the UU Congregation of Charleston WV, and the Thomas Merton Center—do important work. We also made direct financial contributions to support the Food Pantry at Northside Common Ministries and the state-wide advocacy and legislative work of UUPLAN—the Unitarian Universalist Pennsylvania Legislative Advocacy Network. With these and many other involvements, large and small, we remain committed to social justice as central to our mission and part of this church's DNA. We are especially grateful to Chris McKeever for doing awesome work on the shelter meal, to Liz Dell, Andy & Betty Schwarz and Charlie Snowden for their work making sandwiches, to Liz with PIIN and Pride Day, and to everyone who has been involved with social justice projects at Allegheny this past year!



## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Betty Schwarz – Chairperson

The Membership Committee continued its role of welcoming guests and guiding those who are interested in membership. We identify and explain *Pathways to Membership*, articulating what it means to be a member, and how to become a member, and discuss *Members' Expectations of Members*, a description of how we interact with and treat each other as members in order to help newcomers in the transition to membership. We want to be sure that those entering into membership are aware of and have an opportunity to discuss these ideas before joining. During fiscal year 2014, we happily welcomed seven new members. We also organized community events in the course of the year: Ingathering Potluck, Thanksgiving Potluck, the Summer Picnic, and the New Members Dinner. We are in the process of transitioning from our on-line directory on congregationbuilder.com to the new church management system, ICON CMO, being adopted for the financial business of the church.

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ALLEGHENY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH  
416 West North Avenue, North Side, Pittsburgh

Church Office  
1110 Resaca Place, Pittsburgh, PA 15212  
412 322-4261

[alleghenyuu.org](http://alleghenyuu.org)

Rev. David V. McFarland, Minister

## **Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church Annual Meeting of the Congregation**

The 107th Annual Meeting of Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church was held at the church in Founders Hall on Sunday, 17 May 2013 with the following Officers in attendance: Mark Tomlinson, President; Betty Luff, Vice President; Mac McMahon, Treasurer; Donald Zeilman, Clerk.

### **I Call to Order**

Mr. Tomlinson called the meeting to order at 12:08 PM, Reverend David McFarland provided opening words and the chalice was lit. Mr. Tomlinson shared words of welcome with the assembly. The Clerk determined that there was a quorum present at the call to order.

### **II Minutes**

The Minutes of the May 20, 2012 Annual Meeting were distributed beforehand for review. There were no changes or correction, the Minutes stand as written.

### **III Election of Trustees**

Chair calls upon Matt Merriman-Preston, Nominating Committee chair, to present the Committee's slate of candidates for Trustee positions. The slate as presented and published includes: Liz Dell, Jane Schwarz and Gail Ward, all for two-year terms.

The Chair takes nominations from the floor. None are offered.

The ballots are cast and collected by the Tellers. Poll is closed. Ballots are counted and Tellers report the tally. Clerk reports that all candidates received majority votes and are elected.

### **IV Election of the Endowment Committee**

Chair called upon the Clerk to read the nominations as proposed by the Board and the Endowment Committee. They are: Kate Tomlinson, three-year term; Karen Zoller, one-year term.

The Chair takes nominations from the floor. None are offered.

The Clerk moves the slate of candidates as presented. No discussion.

### **Motion Carries**

### **V Delegates to General Assembly**

Mr. Tomlinson introduces the process and states that Allegheny is entitled to 2 (two) delegates at General Assembly. Board nominates member-in-good-standing, Sarah-Wade Smith, who has accepted the nomination.

The Chair takes nominations from the floor. None are offered.

Betty Luff moves that Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church designate Sarah-Wade Smith as its delegate to UUA General Assembly 2013.

### **Motion Carries**

## VI Summary Reports

1. Minister's Report: Rev. McFarland made a brief presentation. He would like the assembly to realize the importance of its being able to participate in all aspects of church life, and with the sabbatical upcoming, to think deeply on why we are here, are we serving our mission, do we need to change.

He wants the church to not only survive, but to thrive, serving people who are not yet here. Asks who are the next 25 members? Are they already through the door and part of the vision? Further, how are we reaching out, connecting and living into our mission? Can we envision what we might become.

Rev. McFarland thanks the congregation.

2. Board Report: Mr. Tomlinson, President made a brief presentation. He reviewed some positive benchmarks. Spoke about lower member numbers but greater generosity; lower deficit; increased stewardship (both financial and participatory). Noted the Connection Circles project as an effort to connect us and engage new members.

He states that the congregation has lived with the Covenant of Right Relations for one year and notes that there is much yet to discover in that process.

States that the church website has been redesigned and launched.

Would like the congregation to continue to focus on growth through re-initiating strong programming, increasing commitment to social justice, and improving communications (including acquiring a monitor for Founders Hall).

Mr. Tomlinson thanks out-going trustees, Ellen Kerr, Betty Luff and Andy Schwarz.

3. Sabbatical Report: Ms. Kerr provided a brief report and introduced the planning process for sabbatical. She notes that the move to full-time ministry caused the postponement of the sabbatical until the proposed period January to June 2014, with planning beginning six months before.

States that a Sabbatical Team has been established that includes herself, Mark Tomlinson, Devon Wood, Jane Dirks and Rev. McFarland. She notes that the sabbatical is an opportunity for inspiration and growth for both the minister and the congregation.

**Work Group Session:** Assembly divided into groups to discuss various aspects of sabbatical through a series of questions posed by the Sabbatical Team.

4. Stewardship Report: Mr. Luff provided a brief report and encouraged the assembly to contribute financially and be involved. He notes that 21% of members account for half of the giving. He is positive about the current campaign, with \$74k in pledges so far, and \$85k expected. He thanks the members of the Stewardship Committee for their hard work.

5. Endowment Report: Mr. Luff provided a brief report, reviewing the history of the fund and the progress over the last year since establishment. He distributed an Endowment Fund brochure and answered specific questions.

## VII Budget

Jill Brethauer, from the Finance Committee, made a brief presentation on the proposed Budget for FY14 and reviewed the process for arriving at the proposal. That process included establishing priorities which were then presented and discussed with the Assembly. She presented a preliminary budget summary for the current year, noting that end-of-year fund raising was very helpful in reducing the deficit. Also notes that the current \$200k in savings helps the church to continue in its efforts.

A separate budget presentation is planned to discuss the budget in detail and answer specific questions.

## VIII Adjournment

Rev. McFarland made closing remarks. Chair adjourned the meeting at 1:50 pm and the chalice was extinguished.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald G. Zeilman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "D".

Donald G. Zeilman, Clerk 2012–2013



## Report on Proposed By-Laws Revisions for 2014 Annual Meeting

Periodically the Board of Trustees considers whether the governing by-laws of Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church should be revised to better reflect and support the organization and rules of how the church operates. We took last year off. This year the Board has prepared a set of proposed revisions that we think will strengthen the church for the future. We've spent a considerable amount of time researching best practices, UUA recommendations, and by-laws of other congregations. And considering how the religious landscape is changing and how Allegheny can respond. The whole set is enclosed, but we wanted to add a short cover letter to explain some of the big changes and why we feel these are important to make. By the way our current by-laws are always available on our website.

1. Membership – Requirements, responsibilities, privileges, and removal. Some of this is just matching our current practices, such as the meeting with the minister or designate. Some is clarifying things which currently aren't clear or aren't explained, like following the covenants. The removal section has criteria that will support a new Covenant Renewal Policy currently in development with the Committee on Ministry.
2. Requiring an annual contribution of record for members – Our by-laws have never explicitly required this, and currently 1 of 3 of our members does not make such a donation. It seems reasonable to expect that a financial commitment—of any amount—is a requirement our members should be able to meet. To cover members who don't give, we are borrowing from funds given by those who came before us, and taking away funds that could be needed for our future.
3. Opening full membership to 14–17 year olds – Our current by-laws do not contain a minimum age for members but do require members to be 18 to vote. RE is working to rebuild Allegheny's youth program. We propose to open this window to youth who feel ready to join the church and see what gifts they may bring. Youth do a lot of interacting with youth from other churches, and several in our cluster—including First Unitarian of Pittsburgh—also have an age 14 member threshold. Age 14 equates with “Coming of Age,” and growing churches like UU Kent and UU Boulder use age 14 also. Perhaps a youth board seat would be a further possibility.
4. Making it easier to join and participate – As we are constantly reminded, the “rise of the nones” and the movement away from organized religion will make it increasingly difficult to maintain or grow the size of our congregation. Removing barriers to participation should be our goal whenever possible. We propose reducing the waiting period for new members to be able to vote, making it possible for non-members to serve on committees, and for eliminating the waiting period for board service so that we can better utilize the talents in the congregation.
5. Board post-budget spending – As Allegheny does not require annual fiscal year budgets be approved by a congregational vote, the inclusion of this threshold is curious. We propose changing the current \$5k threshold to 5% of budgeted expenses so that it adjusts as the annual budget changes. The word “discretionary” is added so that—as has been practice—the Board is trusted to make expenditures deemed as urgent or emergency, like the boiler replacement a number of years ago, or the roof repairs this year, without the need for a specially called meeting. Almost any foreseeable spending that would exceed this amount would be related to our buildings.

Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church

Mark Tomlinson  
President

## PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

### **Article III PURPOSE**

The Church shall be a welcoming, urban congregation that puts Unitarian Universalism into action by celebrating life, nourishing the spirit and inspiring a commitment to justice.

### **Article IV AFFILIATION**

The Church shall be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, and of the affiliated regional association appropriate to the Church's geographic location.

### **Article V MEMBERSHIP**

#### 1. INTENTION

Membership provides institutional and communal support for the making of a free covenant in the historic tradition of Unitarian Universalism.

#### 2. REQUIREMENTS FOR BECOMING A MEMBER

A. Be in sympathy with the Church's purpose and honor the Church's Covenant of Right Relations and Membership Covenant. Membership shall be one's privilege regardless of race, color, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, national origin, economic status, or religious conviction.

B. Be at least 14 (fourteen) years of age.

C. Meet with the Minister (or the Minister's designate) to discuss the meaning and responsibilities of membership.

D. Sign the Congregational Register of Members as witnessed by the Minister or the President.

#### 3. MEMBERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

A. An annual financial contribution of record to support the Church is required of all members.

B. The Minister or President may grant an exemption to members who cannot meet the requirement for an annual financial contribution of record.

C. Attendance at Congregational Meetings and a contribution of time in service to the Church is expected of all members.

## EXISTING PROVISIONS

### **Article III PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Church shall be to maintain a liberal religious congregation dedicated to intellectual and spiritual growth.

### **Article IV AFFILIATION**

The Church shall be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, the Ohio Meadville District.

### **Article V MEMBERSHIP**

[ NO EQUIVALENT TEXT ]

#### [ REQUIREMENTS FOR BECOMING A MEMBER ]

1. Persons in sympathy with the purpose outlined in Article III may become members of this church by signing the Membership Book in the presence of a Church officer or the Minister.

2. At no time shall the Church adopt articles of faith or a creed as a condition of membership, nor shall it require its members to acknowledge authority in matters of doctrine or faith subversive of the sacredness of personal conviction and the light of conscience.

3. Membership is open to all qualified persons regardless of race, color, sex, affectional or sexual orientation, age, or national origin.

#### [ MEMBERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES ]

4. The Church depends on the efforts and support of its members and friends. Members are encouraged to attend Services and Church activities and to make a financial contribution. ... The responsibility of a member to make a financial contribution may be waived at the discretion of the Board.

## PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

## EXISTING PROVISIONS

### 4. MEMBERSHIP PRIVILEGES

- A. Vote at all Congregational Meetings 30 (thirty) days after becoming a member.
- B. Serve as a Trustee or Officer of the Church.
- C. Serve as a Chairperson of committees as defined in Article VI §8 below, or Chairperson of a committee and/or task force established by the Board of Trustees.
- D. Ministerial services following the guidelines of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (UUMA).
- E. Member rates for facilities use and program fees.

### 5. REMOVAL FROM MEMBERSHIP

- A. Persons having become a Member shall continue in membership until either:
  - (1) The person is deceased; or
  - (2) The person has given written notice of resignation to the Church.
- B. A Member may be removed from membership by a majority vote of the Board of Trustees in the following circumstances:
  - (1) The person has resigned without written notification;
  - (2) The person has failed to meet the Responsibilities of Membership (Article V §3), including the required financial contribution;
  - (3) The person has failed to honor the Church Covenant of Right Relations and has refused to participate in a process to restore those relations;
  - (4) The person has engaged in disruptive behavior or has endangered congregants or church property.
- C. A person who has been removed from membership shall receive notice of the termination, and has the right to appear before the Board. Persons removed from membership retain the right to appeal termination to a called meeting of the Congregation.

### [ MEMBERSHIP PRIVILEGES ]

- 6. The right to vote at business meetings of the Church shall be reserved for those 18 years and older who have been members for at least 90 days.  
*(Article VI §2 ... Only a voting member of the Church who has been a member for at least one (1) year, may serve as a Trustee. ...)*  
*(Article VI §8 ... Membership of all committees with the exception of Nominating Committee and Committee on Ministry, shall be open to all church members. ...)*  
[ now redundant ]

### [ REMOVAL FROM MEMBERSHIP ]

- 5. A member desiring to withdraw from membership shall present her or his resignation to the Clerk or President.
- 4. ... Members who have failed to attend Services or other activities of the Church for one year **or** who have failed to make a contribution of record may, at the discretion of the Board of Trustees, be dropped from the membership roll. ... (see Section above)

## PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

### Article VI BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2. The Board of Trustees shall consist of seven (7) Trustees and such ex officio members as are provided for in these Bylaws.

(2)B. The beginning of terms of office for the Trustees shall alternate, with terms for three (3) Trustees beginning in one year and terms for four (4) Trustees beginning in the following year.

7. The Board shall have general charge of the conduct of all business affairs of the Church. No discretionary contracts involving the expenditure of money exceeding 5 (five) percent of the total operating budget for the current Fiscal Year shall be made without a vote of the congregation.

8. The Board may appoint standing and temporary committees and task groups as it deems necessary. All committees and task groups shall report to the Board at the time and in the form determined by the Board. All chairpersons shall be approved by the Board. The Board may organize the committees into councils as it determines will best meet the needs of the Church.

## EXISTING PROVISIONS

### Article VI BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2. The Board of Trustees shall consist of seven (7) Trustees and such ex officio members as are provided for in these Bylaws. Only a voting member of the Church who has been a member for at least one (1) year, may serve as a Trustee.

(2)B. Terms of office for four (4) Trustees shall begin in odd numbered years. Terms of office for three (3) Trustees shall begin in even numbered years.

7. The Board shall have general charge of the conduct of all business affairs of the Church, but no contracts involving the expenditure of money exceeding \$5,000 shall be made without a vote of the congregation.

8. The Board may appoint standing and temporary committees as it deems necessary. All committees shall report to the Board at the time and in the form determined by the Board. All committee chairpersons shall be approved by the Board. Membership of all committees with the exception of Nominating Committee and Committee on Ministry, shall be open to all church members. The Board may organize the committees into councils as it determines will best meet the needs of the Church.



# BYLAWS OF THE ALLEGHENY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

(Amended by vote of the Congregation 20 May 2012)

## Article I

### NAME

The name of this Church shall be the Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church.

## Article II

### ADDRESS

The Church is located at 416 West North Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

## Article III

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this Church shall be to maintain a liberal religious congregation dedicated to intellectual and spiritual growth.

## Article IV

### AFFILIATION

The Church shall be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, the Ohio Meadville District.

## Article V

### MEMBERSHIP

1. Persons in sympathy with the purpose outlined in Article III may become members of this church by signing the Membership Book in the presence of a Church officer or the Minister.
2. At no time shall the Church adopt articles of faith or a creed as a condition of membership, nor shall it require its members to acknowledge authority in matters of doctrine or faith subversive of the sacredness of personal conviction and the light of conscience.
3. Membership is open to all qualified persons regardless of race, color, sex, affectional or sexual orientation, age, or national origin.
4. The Church depends on the efforts and support of its members and friends. Members are encouraged to attend Services and Church activities and to make a financial contribution. Members who have failed to attend Services or other activities of the Church for one year or who have failed to make a contribution of record may, at the discretion of the Board of Trustees, be dropped from the membership roll. The responsibility of a member to make a financial contribution may be waived at the discretion of the Board.
5. A member desiring to withdraw from membership shall present her or his resignation to the Clerk or President.
6. The right to vote at business meetings of the Church shall be reserved for those 18 years and older who have been members for at least 90 days.

## Article VI

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

1. The Board shall direct and administer the programs and business affairs of the Church and have general charge of its property.
2. The Board of Trustees shall consist of seven (7) Trustees and such ex officio members as are provided for in these Bylaws. Only a voting member of the Church who has been a member for at least one (1) year, may serve as a Trustee.
  - A. Trustees shall be elected to serve for a term of two (2) years, or until their successors are elected and qualified. Terms of office for Trustees shall begin at the first regular Board meeting following the Church's Annual Meeting.
  - B. Terms of office for four (4) Trustees shall begin in odd numbered years. Terms of office for three (3) Trustees shall begin in even numbered years.
  - C. Trustees may serve for up to two (2) full, consecutive terms.
  - D. In the event of the death or resignation of a member of the Board, the Trustees shall have full power and authority to fill such a vacancy.
  - E. The office of a member of the Board who has been absent from three consecutive regular meetings may be declared vacant and a successor elected if, in the judgment of the members of the Board, such absence is without valid reason or excuse and such action by the Board is in the best interests of the Church.
  - F. Church members appointed to fill vacated Board seats shall serve as Trustees until the next annual congregational meeting. Elections shall then be held for those vacated Board positions with time remaining in their terms of office. This shall be in addition to the regular annual Board elections.
3. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of five voting members of the Board.
4. The Board shall elect annually a President and a Vice President at the first Board meeting following the annual meeting of the congregation. These officers of the Board shall also be the officers of the congregation.
5. The Board shall appoint annually a Clerk and a Treasurer who are members of the congregation and are qualified to serve in their respective positions. The Clerk and the Treasurer shall be officers of the congregation. The Clerk and the Treasurer may be voting members of the Board, but voting membership on the Board of Trustees is not a requirement.
6. The Board shall hold at least ten monthly meetings during the Church year and all meetings shall be open to members of the congregation for participation in the discussions.
7. The Board shall have general charge of the conduct of all business affairs of the Church, but no contracts involving the expenditure of money exceeding \$5,000 shall be made without a vote of the congregation.

8. The Board may appoint standing and temporary committees as it deems necessary. All committees shall report to the Board at the time and in the form determined by the Board. All committee chairpersons shall be approved by the Board. Membership of all committees with the exception of Nominating Committee and Committee on Ministry, shall be open to all church members. The Board may organize the committees into councils as it determines will best meet the needs of the Church.

9. The Board shall appoint a Nominating committee consisting of one continuing Trustee as chairperson and two Church members who are not members of the Board, to present to the annual congregational meeting a slate of candidates for election to the Board of Trustees. Board officers shall not serve on the Nominating committee.

## Article VII OFFICERS

1. **President** The President shall be President of the Church and Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.

A. The President shall preside at meetings of the Church and of the Board, but shall not vote at these meetings except to break a tie. The President shall exercise the powers and perform the duties normally pertaining to the office of the President of a church unless otherwise specified.

B. The President shall sign agreements and formal instructions, except those pertaining to the office of Treasurer.

C. The President is an ex officio, non-voting member of all committees, except the Nominating committee.

2. **Vice President** The Vice President shall be Vice President of the Church and Vice Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. The Vice President shall perform the duties and exercise the powers of the President in the President's absence.

3. **Clerk of the Church** The Clerk shall be the secretary of the Church and of the Board of Trustees. The Clerk shall act as secretary, or arrange for secretarial services, at all meetings of the Board and the congregation and shall, subject to the direction of the Board, exercise the powers and perform the duties normally pertaining to the office of Clerk of a Church.

A. The Clerk shall keep a correct and faithful record of the transactions of the meetings of the Board, keep a record of all annual and special meetings of the congregation, maintain the membership roster and all papers and documents belonging to the Church.

B. The Clerk, when not serving a term as a voting member of the Board, shall be an ex officio, non-voting Board member.

4. **Treasurer** The Treasurer shall, subject to the direction of the Board, exercise the powers and perform the duties normally pertaining to the office of the treasurer of a church.

A. The Board shall select one or more depositories in which the Treasurer shall immediately deposit all funds belonging to the Church.

B. The Treasurer shall hold in custody all funds of the Church, keep a record of all receipts and disbursements, and pay such bills as may be approved by the Board. This shall not be so construed as to prevent the payment of such bills by the Treasurer as those necessitating immediate payment or those allowing a discount for payment by a given date.

C. The Treasurer shall present a financial statement at each regular meeting of the Board and at each annual meeting of the congregation. A financial statement shall also be presented at special meetings when requested by the Board.

D. The Treasurer, when not serving a term as a voting member of the Board, shall be an ex officio, non-voting Board member.

## Article VIII MEETINGS

1. Sunday Services of the Church shall be held regularly, as determined by the Board of Trustees.

2. The business meetings of the Church shall consist of an annual congregational meeting and special meetings as may be called.

A. The annual meeting of the congregation shall be held in the last quarter of the Church's fiscal year at such time as may be deemed expedient by the Board. The purpose of the meeting shall be the election of persons to be members of the Board and the transaction of other proper Church business.

B. Special meetings may be called at the order of the Board or President, or shall be called by the Board or President upon the written request of five voting members of the congregation and only for the purposes specified in the call of the meeting. Ten days' notice shall be given for such meetings.

3. Unless otherwise specified, the meetings of the Church will be conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order*. In the event of a conflict between *Robert's Rules of Order* and these Bylaws, the Bylaws shall govern.

4. A quorum at a regular or special meeting of the congregation for the transaction of business shall consist of not less than two-fifths of the current membership as determined by the Clerk.

## Article IX FISCAL YEAR

The Church's fiscal year shall end June 30th.

## Article X AMENDMENTS

1. The Bylaws may be amended by a duly called meeting of the membership where the proposed changes must accompany the meeting notice. The notice must be given at least 21 days prior to the meeting.

2. Provided a quorum of the membership is in attendance, two-thirds of the members present and qualified to vote must approve the change for it to be adopted.

## **Article XI**

### **MINISTER**

1. The Minister, when one is employed, shall perform the duties normally pertaining to the position of minister of a Church, and other related duties as may be agreed upon.

A. The Minister shall be called, and compensation determined, by a two-thirds vote of the qualified members of the Church present at a regular or special meeting legally called for the purpose. The Minister may be dismissed by a majority vote at a legally called regular or special meeting.

B. The minister shall be an ex officio, non voting member of the Board and of all committees, except the Nominating committee.

## **Article XII**

### **DISSOLUTION**

1. At such time as may be necessary and desirable, the Church may disband by a vote of the membership, as follows. By a vote of four-fifths of the current membership, the Church shall initiate a 90-day period of consideration prior to any vote for dissolution. At the end of the 90-day waiting period, a vote of four-fifths of the total current membership shall be required to officially disband the Church and begin proper legal procedures precipitated by such an action.

2. In the event of the dissolution of the Church, the assets of the Church shall be assigned to the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations or its successor, so long as it shall at that time qualify as an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law).

# Covenant Renewal Resolution and Policy Draft

## Introduction

The Covenant of Right Relations is:

- A series of promises, intentions and commitments for how we will be together
- An outgrowth of our shared values
- An acknowledgment of the complexity of community
- The means for becoming aware of our expectations of one another and how we affect one another
- An opportunity to reflect on our relationships with one another and to grow spiritually as individuals and as a congregation
- Common ground in times of conflict

The congregation accepted and established the *Covenant of Right Relations* at its Annual Congregational Meeting in 2012. Since that time we have explored the meaning and implications of the Covenant both formally through programing, and informally though integrating it into congregational life. The Covenant did not outline a procedure or policy around how we renew covenant when members fall out of covenant with one another, or with the congregation. It was necessary to “live” the covenant and understand how it fit into congregational life before making recommendations for covenant renewal.

The Committee on Ministry is recommending that policy be established by the Board of Trustees to guide this process of covenant renewal, and has proposed a draft policy along with the establishment of an integral *Right Relations Team*.

The policy would bind members to a process of covenant renewal, with implications around continued membership should members refuse to engage in the process. The Board of Trustees is recommending that the members accept the following resolution by vote, making clear the congregation's commitment to both the Covenant and the covenant renewal process.

**Resolved: We accept that conflict within our church community is both inevitable and healthy. Sometimes members fall out of covenant with one another, or with the congregation. We are guided by the principle that properly managed conflict between people in right relations can be a positive force for creativity, growth and enrichment. Disagreement is not something separate from church life, but is a normal part of beloved community. Members pledge to engage in the Covenant Renewal Process when such members of the congregation are out of covenant with one another, or with the congregation.**

## Covenant Renewal Policy [Draft]

The purpose of this process is to provide clear, written guidelines for managing conflicts and disputes, and for returning members to covenant.

### Step 1

When conflict occurs within the congregation, and members are out of covenant with one another, those persons are encouraged to come together face to face to work through their conflict or disagreements and return to covenant with one another. When one or more of the disputants refuses to engage in this step, or the interactions are not productive of renewal, the process may move to Step 2.

### Step 2

When needed, those in conflict are encouraged to contact the Right Relations Team (RRT). In some cases, such persons may be referred directly to the RRT by the Board or Minister. Confidentiality parameters and rules for interacting during a RRT-facilitated process are defined and agreed to prior to initiating this step in the process. Based on information about the conflict or disagreement, the RRT will determine whether the request for their involvement is within their scope of practice. If it is, the process will move to Step 3. If it is not, the process will move to step 4.

### Step 3

The RRT will provide a safe and structured environment by facilitating the process. In this environment, the disputants can renew their covenant and return to right relations with one another and with the congregation. If at any time in the process, mediation does not result in mutually agreeable next steps toward covenant renewal, the process will move to Step 4.

### Step 4

The RRT will refer the dispute/conflict to the Board of Trustees and Minister. Action on their part could include calling on the conflict management resources of the UUA, its regional body or of the local cluster of UU churches. Where one or more of the disputants refuses to engage in, or follow through with, the process of renewing their covenant, the Board will take action that could result in temporary or permanent removal of one or more of the disputants from church membership.

### The Right Relations Team

A minimum of three mediators will be jointly selected by the Minister and the President to participate as the Right Relations Team. Team members shall have, or agree to obtain, appropriate training as specified by the Board. Mediators with professional credentials in counseling, or training and experience in mediation, are acceptable. Team members shall be willing and available to respond to member disputes.

The RRT members shall serve as neutral parties, holding details around the dispute process in strictest confidence. A minimum of two RRT members shall be involved in every conflict management and covenant renewal process. Mediators are expected to support one another by debriefing after conflicts, and by attending continuing education events as available. The RRT shall meet with the minister at least twice per year.

# COVENANT

As we seek to build our vision of beloved community,  
We, the members of Allegheny Unitarian Universalist  
Church, covenant to affirm & promise ...

There is **LOVE** here.

I will live and embody it.

There is **SPIRIT** here.

I will kindle and sustain it.

There is **TRUST** here.

I will build and honor it.

There is **COMPASSION** here.

I will embrace and share it.

There is **FORGIVENESS** here.

I will give and seek it.

There is **HUMANITY** here.

I will accept and celebrate it.

There is **ONENESS** here.

I will recognize and cherish it.

There is **DIFFERENCE** here.

I will acknowledge and respect it.

There is **HOPE** here.

I will feed and grow it.

There is **JUSTICE** here.

I will practice and extend it.

We enter into this Covenant seeking to  
strengthen our ties to one another and  
deepen our sense of community.

# MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

**Congregation** : Gathered here as a community  
dedicated to the principles of Unitarian  
Universalism, we celebrate and honor you  
as you join us in the mission of this church.  
We rejoice in the changes you will bring, the  
friendship you will share, and the gifts that  
your presence will offer to us.

**New Members** : We join this congregation  
in affirmation and support of the work of  
this Church, and the principles of Unitarian  
Universalism. We look forward to joining you  
in the struggle for justice, the search for truth,  
and the creation of a compassionate world.

**Congregation** : We promise to be a  
community of welcome, where you can find  
opportunities for spiritual growth, creative  
expression, and loving service. We know that  
with your joining, we are now more whole.

**New Members** : We promise to join you in the  
celebration of life, sharing our energies, skills,  
and passions in pursuit of justice and peace.  
We look forward to contributing as part of this  
spiritual community.

**Whole Assembly** : Together, we promise  
to listen to each other, to learn from each  
other, and to join each other in service and  
celebration. We are grateful for this path, and  
joyful that we may walk it together.

## MISSION

We are a welcoming, urban congregation that puts Unitarian Universalism into action by celebrating life, nourishing the spirit and inspiring a commitment to justice.

## VISION

We will strive toward focusing on what we have in common, while appreciating the different ways to fulfill our mission.

We will honor our history and principles while daring to effect responsible change.

We will become more inclusive and accessible.

We will care for each other and the earth.

We will embrace the synergy between nourishing the spirit and performing our justice work as an urban congregation.

## UUA PRINCIPLES

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to 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

Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.



ALLEGHENY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

[www.alleghenyuu.org](http://www.alleghenyuu.org)