



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are bylaws? Why does UUA need them?

Bylaws are the main governing document for any nonprofit organization, including churches and congregations. Our bylaws supplement the rules already defined by the State of Michigan regarding the running of non-profit organizations in our state (The [Michigan Nonprofit Corporation Act](#)). Our bylaws (in conjunction with [our Board Policies](#)) help guide our Board of Trustees actions and decisions.

Why are we proposing changes to our bylaws?

It is important that we periodically review our bylaws, and update and strengthen them as often as necessary to ensure they are complete and clear, and that they reflect and support the mission and goals of UUA.

What are the new proposed bylaws changes (at a high level)?

There are three smaller changes that will strengthen and clarify the bylaws without changing any structure or procedures. They will: 1) consolidate information on quorum requirements; 2) more clearly state the congregation's areas of authority; 3) specify how a decision would be made to dissolve the congregation.

The proposed bylaw addition that would make substantive changes to current procedures is a new ARTICLE IX, specifying how to adopt or rescind a congregational resolution. This new article would strengthen and better clarify the policies on congregational resolutions already adopted by the Board of Trustees (BOT) in December, 2020. (See Appendix D in the most recent BOT Governing Policies, adopted in Dec, 2020.)

For a complete understanding of the proposed changes, please read the exact wording of the proposed revisions and additions as well as the document titled "Rationale for Proposed Bylaw Changes."

Why do we need a higher quorum for certain actions?

Raising the bar for congregational involvement in decision making seems appropriate when voting on actions that have the potential for great and lasting impact on the entire community, and we believe doing so will contribute to the long term health of the congregation by ensuring that a significant proportion of our congregants share in the responsibility for approving those actions.

Why do we need a new article about Congregational Resolutions?

The Board of Trustees (BOT) adopted a new Governing Policy on congregational resolutions in December of 2020. (See Appendix D in the most recent BOT Governing Policies, adopted in Dec, 2020.) This new article would strengthen and better clarify those policies.

Why do we need a bylaw update on dissolving the congregation? Is there something I should know?

While reviewing the bylaws, The Governance Advisory Team realized this was a significant gap in our governing document. Given the huge significance of such an unlikely event they advised that it should be better specified in our bylaws. The possibility of dissolution is absolutely not a topic under consideration.