

FLORIDA DISTRICT  
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
ASSOCIATION

2006  
DISTRICT EXECUTIVE  
SEARCH INFORMATION

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## Florida District Executive Report April 2006

As I sit down to write this final annual report to the congregations, it is the fact that it will be my final one, which is uppermost in my mind. As you already know, I have been hired to become the District Executive in the New Hampshire / Vermont and Northeast Districts. I will be leaving in July to assume that position, so I approach this report from that reflective vantage point.

There is an amazing collection of dedicated and committed lay and professional leaders in the Florida District. I have watched all our congregations, save one or two, change their ministers during the ten years I have been here. The careful attention that the Search Committees and congregations have given to choosing new leadership has allowed our congregations to grow in terms of stability, maturity and vision. In addition, we have seen quite a few of our congregations take their first steps toward partnerships with consulting ministers after decades of being proudly lay led. This movement is a leap of faith, often fueled by compassion for pastoral needs that are not being met, and takes amazing determination and leadership to bridge these two realities. The addition of a minister raises the level of anxiety in our congregations who are suddenly facing a major disruption in the "ways they have always done church!" Our lay leaders have to find deep ground on which to stand to manage those anxieties and help their people transcend them. Thanks to all of you who said, "Yes," to the challenges of leadership in this arena: You have made a big difference.

The Florida District congregations surpassed the 5000 membership mark (5048 to be exact) this year. That is a nice symbolic number but does not represent our potential with the population increasing so rapidly in our District. I had hoped for more, if the truth be known, because our message is one that brings balance and sanity to many divisive religious and social issues in our state and country. Our district is in a place that many of you will recognize in our growth: We are a small district with very dedicated volunteers, one full time District Executive, one quarter time Program Consultant and a part time office administrator. We have dreamed big dreams here and have found ourselves able to provide a level of service that is the envy of many other, larger districts. We are always left with so much more on our plates at the end of the day than we can accomplish that we are often faced with frustration that could immobilize us if we focused on it as the "glass half empty." We have chosen not to bog down in that conversation in order to keep our service level high. Your response to funding our increasing needs has been one of abundance and graciousness and I thank you.

It is gratifying to see the extent to which our congregations understand themselves to be connected to each other at this point in our history. We have four of our five clusters working very well and providing excellent programming and opportunities for gathering UUs geographically. We have congregations who have begun to work together because their size or demographics are similar. These last two years we

have developed a pilot project, The Chrysalis Way, with the help of a grant from the Fund for Unitarian Universalism, The Unitarian Sunday School Society as well as district and new congregation funds. This program provides intensive coaching to emerging congregations in the Florida District with a goal of helping them start in the ways that have been proven healthy in studies of congregational life. We hope that healthy, values-based starts will lead to numerical growth as well. Facilitators for this program, Rev. Susan Smith and Connie Goodbread, have written a curriculum for this program which will be unveiled at General Assembly in St. Louis this year. We will be offering CDs of the curriculum to those in attendance and it will be available online for those who are not at GA. Our creative and pioneering work will be duplicated around the country.

We received another grant from the Fund for Unitarian Universalism so that Connie Goodbread can rewrite some wonderful Healthy Congregation training materials so they are user friendly and accessible for Unitarian Universalists (rather than for the Lutherans who paid to develop them.) This project will be done in the next year, but the grant has been received and Connie is hard at work now.

I would be remiss if I did not talk about the vision and dedication of the District Board who work on your behalf to find the right combination of vision and “doability” so that we can meet the needs of the future, not just maintain the status quo. Each board that has been installed in the ten years of my term here has left me feeling inspired and challenged. They have implemented a form of governance that has been a challenge, for it asks them to learn the equivalent of a new language so that we can have both accountability and vision in our work. As you know, as we age, the ability to learn new languages becomes more difficult, and the wonderful leaders you have elected have kept themselves at the table with good cheer and stubborn, dogged determination. They have just finished an amazing round of Ends development that lays out the District’s direction. My successor will be grateful for this clarity. The fruits of the board labors are inspiring. The input of the leadership in your congregations and the hard work of this board have the district poised on the brink of a new era. I will watch this future unfold with a smile on my face from northern climes! If you would like to know what those Ends are, please go to our website at [floridadistrict.org](http://floridadistrict.org). Thanks especially to all the District Presidents who have served during my term here: Joan Lund, the late Ed Porteus, Kathy Converse and Steve Helle. You are leaders of the most significant magnitude and my heroes and heroines.

This year I was so pleased when Debra Neil Mareci from Gainesville agreed to chair the Communication Council. I asked her to do a comprehensive review of our all our communications and make recommendations as to how to make them relevant, exciting, current and helpful. She will be unveiling the outline of the new website at the annual business meeting: This will include a vision for connecting our congregations to our district and Association of congregations at greater depths. It has been exciting to have new eyes on this important area and I think you will love

the direction her work points us toward. Our new logo is on everything here. What do you think? Thanks Debra.

Margaret Sanders has agreed to chair the Leadership Council and they are meeting for the first time in June. Marg has served as our UUA Trustee and as a Florida District Healthy Congregation Consultant in the time I have been here. This Council's charge is to develop a comprehensive strategic plan to address the needs for leadership development in order for our congregations to fulfill their missions. Marg has pulled together a high powered and wonderful group to do this work on your behalf. This will include training that you have all come to know and love as well as new initiatives that will thrill and excite you!

It is my pleasure to introduce you to the Rev. Katy Korb who is the new Ministerial Settlement Representative in the Florida District. There are at least five congregations who are in search for a new minister in the year ahead: Katy will be working closely with the Search Committees in our district to help that process go smoothly and successfully. When asked to do this important work, Katy's response intimated that she was honored and was hoping to be asked. You are in good hands, congregations!

I could not be more thrilled to have anyone on the volunteer staff than Joan Patterson. Joan, from the Tallahassee Church, is our volunteer Compensation Consultant. She is here to help congregations develop strategies to bring their staff into fair compensation status and to help them understand the sometimes confusing world of ministerial compensation. Joan has been on the job this year and the reviews of her work have been gratifying. Joan works with Search Committees as well as congregational boards, so she has more than enough to keep her busy. Thanks, Joan.

There is a wonderful group of volunteers, the Healthy Congregation Consultants, who do much of the direct service work with your congregations. The members of that team are Connie Goodbread, Marg Sanders (until she became council chair), Sharon Carrington, and Annette Pearce. If you are looking for a wise facilitator to lead your congregation in Mission, Vision, Covenant, board retreats, or other congregation-specific workshops, these are your folks. You can access their services by calling the district office. The district and your congregations are financial partners in making their services available to you.

There is always more to do than can be accomplished when our dreams are larger than our capacity to fulfill them. I would rather have it that way, than to have small dreams that can be easily accomplished. But I would be remiss not to mention the areas where I wish we had more success.

Growth: Our numbers have not kept pace with the growth in our district. While the indicators of health: trained leadership, committed boards, financial responsible

congregations; covenantal behaviors are strong, the numbers have not yet begun to reflect our increased health and vitality.

Numbers of volunteers: In order for small districts to thrive without large staff groups, it is important to have many volunteers. I have not been able to identify them as well as I would like to have. The ones who say "Yes" have been remarkable, but I have needed more than I have been able to identify. That is my failing, not yours, for you have been generous beyond belief with your time and talents when asked.

Endowment: Two years of hurricanes and the resulting traumas from them have had me put the Florida Fund endowment on the back burner for the past two years. This year we offered our first, grassroots opportunity for you, the individual members of the district congregations, to participate. The results of that participation are not complete at this time, but I will be reporting to the board and you when those numbers are final. There are so many needs that we have to help us reach our growth potential; fund staff for our campus ministry and young adult needs; develop ongoing leadership development modules, help our homeless congregations get into permanent space; start new congregations and offer long term consulting to existing congregations who need partners to "get off their membership plateaus." There is so much to do to spread the good news of this faith to all who are looking for us and do not know we exist. I hope that you will respond very generously when asked to share your gifts to fund this endowment so that in our future we can have competent, reliable and targeted assistance to meet needs of the future generations. This is important. Call the office if you see yourself able to meet a portion of those needs: We can help you learn how to do that!

Hurricanes: I know I have no control over the weather but, I want to highlight just how much these last two years have given to us and taken from us. We know now that we are not alone and that the larger UU world of which we thought we MIGHT be a part, is in fact, surrounding us with love, care, concern and money. We have been able to help many of our members and the farm workers in Florida as well, because of the outpouring of support from our co-religionists around the country. On the other side, the local leaders who have faced threats and hits for two seasons now, all the while trying to lead their congregations, need to be honored. These leaders have shown up; done the work to help their congregations stay whole and together; and found ways to help others as soon as they could. They have been rocks for these last two years. At a time of high stress, such as we have experienced since the summer 2004, the tensions in our congregations have often escalated. A chronic level of stress and anxiety cannot be sustained by everyone in our midst. My hats are off to our ministers and dedicated lay leaders who have crawled over debris to find missing parishioners; who have shown up at the bedsides of those who are driven to their beds by the stress; have counseled our lovely, fragile individuals and couples; tried to talk down those whose response to the stress has been magnified and has been dangerous. We have seen all sides of human nature in the past two years. Thank goodness for the steady leaders who often forget their

own immediate needs to help us keep safe; physically, spiritually and emotionally. The complete reality of their work cannot be known by everyone, but has been real and significant.

Thanks to Connie Goodbread for her willingness to step into the Program Consultant role vacated when Laurel Amabile moved into the Interim DE position in our sister district. We could not even focus on replacing Laurel until after we thought the hurricanes were past and Connie has done an outstanding job of pulling together our district response to the Consultation on Ministry To and With Youth (your congregation HAS signed up, haven't they?) and all the other tasks associated with supported our religious educators, youth and young adult programs. Connie is a learner's learner. She has huge capacities to grow and learn and then a wonderful capacity to help move congregations through the change processes that are the fruits of her learning. She is a valued colleague.

Finally, I could not have done this work without the kind, competent, wise and organized presence of our office manager, Jessica Curren. You have come to know her if you have ever called the office. If she says something will be done, you can take it to the bank. Not only is the work done, though, it is done with a grace and sense of excellence that is awe inspiring. Be sure to thank her in person for all she has done to smooth the way for our common work: I certainly count myself as extremely lucky and honored to have worked with her.

There is always more to say and more people to thank. Thanks to each of you who have invited me into the life of your congregation. Thanks to you for allowing me to coach you through some of the most difficult transitions I have ever experienced. Thank you for daring to be vulnerable in pursuit of your congregation's deepest yearning. Thank you for forgiving me when I was not all you needed and thanks for your willingness to risk yourselves on behalf of this faith we love so much. I will watch you as the years go by in gratitude for your gifts and for the gifts you encouraged in me.

In faith,

Mary Chulak Higgins

## **Florida District Unitarian Universalist Association Global Ends Policy**

The Florida District of the UUA will be a community of healthy, interdependent, self-governed congregations that lives our UU Purposes and Principles and increases our Unitarian Universalist presence in the world.

- Members and leaders of healthy congregations are spiritually mature, able to articulate UU values and are moving past their fear of growth.
- Healthy congregations are fiscally sound and effectively managed and led.
- Healthy congregations are inviting communities characterized by respectful, compassionate, and deep engagement.
- Florida District UU Congregations will be interdependent with each other and the larger community to enhance the impact of UU values personally, congregationally, and communally, while balancing their internal and external focus.
- Manifest the governance forms and structures appropriate to their size and culture so as to establish the mechanisms which empower members to deepen commitment and promote right relations in congregational life.

Ends Interpretation  
June 4, 2005

Global End:

**"The Florida District of the UUA will be a community of healthy, interdependent, self-governed congregations that lives our UU Purposes and Principles and increases our Unitarian Universalist presence in the world."**

"Health" is a relative word that can relate to emotional, moral, spiritual, physical or fiscal realities. Congregations that are healthy are those whose:

Commitment to the "burning coal at their center" or their mission is the core around which their congregational life revolves;

Values are in line with the tenets of their faith as articulated in the Principles and Purposes of the UUA and as made real in congregationally developed covenants of behavior that make those values explicit in each individual context;

Vision is not only internally focused but also looks to the articulation and action necessary to take their Unitarian Universalist message beyond the walls of the congregation and incarnate their religious values in the larger world they inhabit;

Ability to manage conflict allows for speaking **and** hearing in a system open to being changed for the good by the encounter.

Hospitality is evident in the open, spiritual way the members of Florida District congregations welcome and embody the values of Unitarian Universalism in the presence of the stranger;

Leadership is effective and allowed to lead;

Stewardship of the congregation considers programmatic, organizational and fiscal needs as integral to the expression of religious community.

Members understand the significance of this faith tradition enough to include in their vision a deep need to extend and promote it;

Understanding of good process includes explicit rules that govern the life of the congregation which are adequate to make every member's access to decision-making fair and holds people accountable for their presence and functioning in the congregational system;

Ability to have good personal boundaries fosters an environment open to the depth of relationships Unitarian Universalists seek in their lives;

Interdependence is such a part of the culture of UU congregations that they view their knowledge of and relationship with their UU neighbors as integral to their sense of themselves as healthy and fully alive. Interdependence further means that congregations combine their resources with those of other religious organizations when their values align and result in mutually beneficial outcomes. To this end they:

Reach out to neighboring congregations who are in times of success, crisis or need with the same confidence they anticipate being reached out to themselves in similar circumstances;

Understand that what is good and healthy for one congregation impacts the whole of their faith community. They are not isolated congregations, but are responsible to the whole UU community for the good of the whole.

Share their leadership and knowledge with other congregations to make congregational life more meaningful and healthier. They understand that it is an honor to work for the whole and share the wisdom and skill attained in working in one's own congregation with others;

Understand the traditional foundation on which Unitarian Universalist interdependence rests and how it strengthens, deepens and emboldens all of them;

Recognize that to strengthen their faith and their communities, they need allies and they seek alliances with others in different faith communities for their mutual benefit;

Self governed congregations are those who:

Understand the roots and implications of congregational polity well enough to be flexible and boundaried in living out the challenge of this polity and the creativity and limits it can engender;

Educate themselves in the various ways the "democratic" process is exercised so that governance decisions are appropriate to fulfilling the vision and mission of the congregation;

Use their knowledge of polity and the ministerial call process to forge dynamic and healthy relationships with their ministers which allows mutual freedom and mutual responsibility for the spiritual well being of the congregation;

DE Interpretations  
E2G,E2H, E2I

**E2G Members and leaders of healthy congregations are spiritually mature, able to articulate Unitarian Universalist values and are moving past their fear of growth.**

Spiritually mature leaders understand that their leadership roles are fulfilled in a system of shared ministry between the members and the professional leadership in our congregations. They are seeking the fulfillment of UU principles and purposes by developing their own openness to new people, ideas and religious understanding. These leaders understand UU polity and its place in spiritually grounded leadership: They lead through their non-anxious presence and deep listening to the concerns of others. These leaders recognize that effective leadership transcends the differences of their members to find common ground in those areas where goals are the same, but methods may differ. In those areas where an individual member's identity cannot be compromised, they insure that a climate of respect for the differences inherent in our pluralistic and diverse communities is honored.

UU leaders and members are conscious of the fact that growth has a dynamic and exciting edge, but includes a component of change which often produces a sense of loss, also. Leaders are able to articulate the saving message of Unitarian Universalism in their official capacities and are able to call people back into covenantal relationships when anxiety would threaten their congregational dynamism and hinder their capacity for growth. Leaders can articulate the imperative for growing this religion and hold that vision when the forces of change cause stress in their systems. They have skills and confidence in their ability to manage the conflicts that can threaten their ability to promote the vision of this faith to transform lives.

**E2H Healthy congregations are fiscally sound and effectively managed and led.**

One of the indicators of health in UU congregations is a spirit of abundance and generosity on the part of their members to support the vision and mission of their congregation. In other words, they fund what they say they envision. Their budget reflects this mission focus.

In addition, healthy congregations agree to pay their minister and staff a fair wage and commensurate benefits. If they are not paying that fair wage at this time, they have a realistic plan in place to do so within the next five years. Leaders have the training and spiritual maturity necessary to lead their congregations in discussion, education and adoption of fair compensation practices.

Leaders hold themselves accountable for the clear articulation of the goals they are trying to achieve. Leaders are able to hold the board and committees accountable for the success of their mission based programs.

**E2I Healthy congregations are inviting communities characterized by respectful, compassionate, and deep engagement.**

Healthy congregations recognize the power of their behaviors to enhance the appeal of their congregation to the guests who visit them as well as to the members and friends who already know them. These congregations realize their obligation to put boundaries around behavior that would make it impossible for anyone attending their congregation to feel emotionally, spiritually or physically safe inside the community. Leaders in such congregations focus on the behaviors of the people when determining who is in healthy, respectful relationship to the community, not on the ideas or beliefs they hold.

Healthy congregations recognize the value of compassionate relationships with every person but also recognize that compassion does not excuse behavior that breaks community or makes it unsafe for others to enter into the fullness of congregational life.

Because they understand that deep engagement is one of the ways create understanding between people, it is a hallmark of congregational life reflected in respectful, compassionate and boundaried ways in all interchanges. Each member of a healthy congregation sees him/herself as an integral part of their congregational system. No behaviors are disconnected from the well-being of the whole. The responsibility of the individuals to hold each other accountable in this covenantal way is reflected in their daily interactions with each other and the guests, not just in a written document.

Interpretations  
E2J

**Florida District UU congregations will be interdependent with each other and the larger community to enhance the impact of UU values personally, congregationally, and communally, while balancing their internal and external focus.**

Our UU congregations understand that they are connected and related to all other congregations. The leaders understand the historical place of personal and inter-congregational peer relationships for mutual learning and growth and for those times of celebration as well. Congregations joined by geography, size, stage in their growth and maturity, among other factors, have a culture that is willing to say “yes” when asked to help another congregation or its leaders and view it as significant in their faith journey.

Our congregations do not view other congregations as competition but as support for the common journey of building the beloved community inside our congregations and externally as well. Leaders and members understand that none has a franchise on the expression of Unitarian Universalism in a geographic area and that more, diverse, congregations enhance all of us.

The members, personally and the congregations, communally realize that the free exercise of religion welcomes the “other” and protects their rights as strongly as they protect their own, because they know that the values they protect must apply to all. Freedom denied to any is freedom denied to all.

There is an organic understanding that the links between us as individuals, congregations and the world they inhabit do not exist in a vacuum: There is no way to separate the activities of one from another. This knowledge leads Florida District congregations to deep discernment and open conversations to determine the right paths to pursue to fulfill their UU promise.

Healthy congregations understand that it is by balancing the internal and external foci that they can achieve the best results for themselves and the world they live in. They need the spiritual nurture, inspiration and care as well as the call to engagement and expression of their values in the larger world to keep them appropriately grounded. They understand that each of us is on a different path to find this balance and the differences between their individual needs and the needs of the community are not exclusive of each other, but form the vision of who they want to become.

Healthy congregations realize that not everyone in a democratically run congregation has to agree on the ways the congregation moves into the larger world. The congregation as a whole needs to have a fair and open process to determine how and when its name will be used in support of a cause or an issue.

Members of healthy congregations also recognize that where their spiritual journey takes them is of interest to others and should be respected by them, but is not a condition of membership in our congregations or it becomes creedal and violates the basic tenants of our faith. Members are as open to the ways of making meaning and finding purpose as there are varied ways that they each express their individuality and uniqueness. Honor is the hallmark of our behavior when we see the world differently.

**FLORIDA DISTRICT UUA BYLAWS**  
(As revised April 17,2004)

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## **ARTICLE I -- NAME**

The name of this organization is the Florida District of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

## **ARTICLE II -- PURPOSE**

The purpose of this organization shall be:

- (a) To cultivate cooperative relationships among the societies in the Florida District and their constituents.
- (b) To promote the religious life of the societies.
- (c) To assist the societies in carrying on active and effective programs within their respective communities.
- (d) To support the Unitarian Universalist Association and to assist in formulating and implementing its policies and programs.

## **ARTICLE III -- MEMBERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION**

**SECTION 1 - COMPOSITION:** Membership shall be comprised of societies within the Florida District which are members of the Unitarian Universalist Association and which indicate their wishes to assume the privileges and responsibilities of membership in this District.

**SECTION 2 - VOTING DELEGATES AT DISTRICT MEETINGS:** Each member society in good standing shall be entitled to three (3) voting delegates and any member society with membership of more than fifty (50) persons shall be entitled to one (1) additional delegate for each additional one hundred (100) members, or fraction thereof, to a maximum of eight (8). Each minister professionally serving a society shall be entitled, if he or she so chooses, to be one of the voting delegates for that society.

**SECTION 3 - GOOD STANDING:** In order to maintain good standing, a society must have made contributions to the UUA Annual Program Fund and to the Florida District for the fiscal year ending the preceding June 30. Only delegates from societies which are in good standing shall have the right to participate in meetings of this District.

## **ARTICLE IV -- OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

**SECTION 1 - COMPOSITION OF BOARD:** The Board of Directors shall consist of the Officers of the District, the Directors elected-at-large, and the District Executive Ex-Officio without vote. Beginning with the election in the year 2000, no congregation may have more than one (1) member serving on the Board.

SECTION 2 - OFFICERS: The Officers of the District shall be a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. Beginning with the election in the year 2000, the term of office shall be three (3) years.

SECTION 3 - ELECTIONS: All District-wide elections shall be held at the Annual Meeting each year. All newly elected officers and directors elected-at-large shall assume office at the close of the Annual Meeting at which elected, except for the Treasurer who shall assume office at the beginning of the next fiscal year.

SECTION 4 - DIRECTORS ELECTED AT-LARGE: The number of Directors to be elected at-large each year is the number needed to bring the number of such Directors on the Board up to five (5). No more than one (1) such Director from the same society is eligible to serve on the Board at the same time. The regular term will be for three (3) years. If any Director vacates the position before completing the term, a replacement is to be elected at the next Annual Meeting. As needed, the Board may waive timelines for nominations in order to nominate such replacements.

SECTION 5 - TERMS OF OFFICE: Officers and Directors elected at-large will be limited to the greater of two (2) consecutive terms or a maximum of eight (8) consecutive years. Individuals who have served the limit will be eligible for re-election after being out of office at least one (1) year. The election in the year 2000 will elect the Treasurer, the Secretary, and one (1) Director to three (3) year terms. The election in the year 2001 will elect the President, the Vice-President and one (1) Director to three (3) year terms. The election in the year 2002 will elect three (3) Directors to three (3) year terms. If necessary to insure a smooth transition to 3 year terms while establishing this progression and with the agreement of the individual involved, the Nominating Committee is authorized to nominate individuals for the position of Director for terms of less than three (3) years.

SECTION 6 - NOMINATION OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS: The Nominating Committee shall nominate the Officers and Directors as candidates for election at large. The Committee shall make every effort to insure that the Board is composed of members who are broadly representative of the Florida District. All candidates shall be active members of affiliated societies which are in good standing according to these and UUA Bylaws.

SECTION 7 - BOARD MEETINGS: Meetings of the Officers and Directors shall be held not less than twice a year. Special meetings may be called by the President or upon the request of three (3) members of the Board. Notices shall be sent to members at least ten (10) days before the time of the meeting. A quorum shall consist of fifty percent (50%) plus one (1) of the current Board membership. A report of the actions of the Board shall be submitted to all member societies and to the District Annual Meeting.

SECTION 8 - GENERAL AUTHORITY OF THE BOARD: The general direction of the affairs of this organization and the general authority necessary to exercise such

direction, together with the authority to adopt all measures necessary for promoting the interests of this organization, shall be vested in the Board of Directors, subject to annual review by the delegates of the member societies. The Board is authorized to fill any Officer or Director vacancy (except that of the President) until the next Annual Meeting when an unexpired term can be filled by election.

SECTION 9 - PRIMARY FUNCTION OF THE BOARD: The primary function of the Board is the making of policy and plans. The Board is hereby empowered to determine its own procedures in order to expedite routine business so that proper attention can be given to policy and planning.

### **ARTICLE V -- DISTRICT MEETINGS**

SECTION 1 - ANNUAL MEETING: The Annual Meeting of this organization shall be held at least fifty (50) days before the date of the UUA General Assembly at a place within the Florida District to be specifically selected by the Board of Directors.

SECTION 2 - SPECIAL MEETINGS: Special meetings of the District may be called by the Board of Directors and shall be called at the written request of five (5) or more member societies. At any such meeting, consideration may be given only to business for which the meeting has been called as stated in the notice of the meeting.

SECTION 3- NOTICE OF MEETINGS: The Secretary shall provide notice of any meeting of delegates by depositing the same in the United States mail, regular first-class postage prepaid, not less than twenty-one (21) days before the date of the meeting, with a separate copy of the notice to be addressed to the minister, Board Chair, or President, and the Secretary or Clerk of each member society.

SECTION 4 - VOTING ENTITLEMENT: At all meetings of the District, those entitled to vote shall be the Officers and Directors of this organization and the delegates from each society in good standing.

SECTION 5 - QUORUM: At meetings of the District, a quorum shall require at least thirty (30) delegates representing at least ten (10) separate member societies. In determining a quorum, Officers and Directors of the District shall be counted as delegates and as representing the society of which the Officer or Director is a member.

SECTION 6 - PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR: At the discretion of the Chair, the privilege of the floor shall be extended to those in attendance who are not voting delegates.

SECTION 7 - ACTION TAKEN: Action taken at the Annual Meeting of the District shall constitute the final authority in all policy matters and shall constitute general direction to the Board on budgetary matters. A majority vote of those present and voting shall decide all substantive questions presented at meetings of the District, except as otherwise provided herein.

## **ARTICLE VI -- DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

**SECTION 1 - PRESIDENT:** The President shall:

- (a) Exercise general supervision over the activities and programs of the District.
- (b) Preside at all meetings of the District and of the Board of Directors.
- (c) In consultation with the Board, appoint all committee chairs not otherwise chosen.

**SECTION 2 - VICE PRESIDENT:** The Vice President shall:

- (a) In the absence or inability of the President to serve, be vested with the powers of the President and perform those duties. In the event of the death, resignation or permanent inability of the President to serve, the Vice President shall assume the office of President.
- (b) Perform such other duties as the President and the Board may assign.

**SECTION 3 - SECRETARY:** The Secretary shall:

- (a) Keep minutes of all meetings of the District and of the Board of Directors, and send copies of minutes to the appropriate member groups and individuals.
- (b) Provide all required notices of the meetings of this organization.

**SECTION 4 - TREASURER:** The Treasurer shall:

- (a) Monitor all District financial transactions to ensure that they:
  - 1. Serve the purposes of the District.
  - 2. Are in accordance with accepted accounting practices.
- (b) Sign and submit required tax and other legal documents.
- (c) Advise the Board of the appropriateness of District financial activities.

## **ARTICLE VII -- COMMITTEES AND APPOINTMENTS**

**SECTION 1 - APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS:** The Board of Directors shall recommend to the President the appointment of committee chairs for such periods as they may deem appropriate and shall specify the duties of each committee at the time of appointment.

**SECTION 2 - COMMITTEE REPORTS:** Each committee shall make a written report to the Board of Directors for inclusion in the Annual Report to delegates.

### **SECTION 3 - NOMINATING COMMITTEE:**

- (a) The Nominating Committee shall consist of six (6) persons who shall serve for three (3) years each. The number of members to be elected each year is the number needed to bring the membership up to six (6). No member may serve for a second consecutive term. No Committee member is eligible to be nominated for any position by the Committee. Efforts should be made to have at least two (2) members who have served on the District Board and to have members on the Committee who are broadly representative of the Florida District.
  
- (b) The Committee shall present at least one (1) nomination for each position to be filled. No person shall be nominated by the Committee nor from the floor at the Annual Meeting without the nominee's consent. It is recommended that the report of the Committee include biographical material for each nominee. The report shall be submitted to the Board of Directors at least sixty (60) days before the Annual Meeting and copies shall be included in the Notice of the Annual Meeting.

**SECTION 4 - COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS:** There shall be a Committee on Credentials composed of at least three (3) members, to be appointed by the Board of Directors before the Annual Meeting. It shall be responsible for determining the credentials for voting members and the supervision of elections and balloting procedures at the Annual and Special Meetings of the District and shall make such reports to each meeting as the delegates or the Secretary shall direct. In order to be recognized as a voting delegate, a representative must be certified as a delegate or an alternate by the society being represented. Proxy voting will not be honored. The certification should be in writing over the signature of an officer of the society. However, the Committee on Credentials shall have the authority to use other reasonable criteria in determining credentials.

**SECTION 5 - YOUTH COUNCIL:** There shall be a Youth Council. The purpose of the Youth Council shall be to promote and coordinate youth programming. It is the governing body for YRUU (for ages 12-20) throughout the District. The Youth Council shall be composed of the continental Youth Council representative and other youth and adults appointed by the District Board.

## **ARTICLE VIII -- ADMINISTRATION**

In cooperation with the UUA, the Board is authorized to employ a District Executive to administer district programs and services. The District Executive is to maintain a district office with a mailing address and supervise the office staff

## **ARTICLE IX -- GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**SECTION 1 - FISCAL YEAR:** The fiscal year of this organization shall be from July 1 through June 30.

**SECTION 2 - RULES GOVERNING MEETING BUSINESS:** The business of each District Meeting shall be conducted in accordance with these By-Laws and the latest edition of *Roberts Rules of Order*.

**SECTION 3 - BUDGET:** The annual budget of this organization shall be supported by its member societies, together with such funds as may be secured from other sources. The "fair share" of member societies shall be determined at the Annual Meeting preceding the fiscal year in which it is to be collected.

**SECTION 4 - INCORPORATION:** The Florida District of the UUA shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Florida.

**SECTION 5 - WAIVER OF NOTICE:** Any notice required by these By-Laws shall be deemed sufficiently given if a Waiver of Notice is subsequently signed by a majority of the members of the group entitled to the notice.

## **ARTICLE X -- NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF UUA TRUSTEE FOR THE FLORIDA DISTRICT**

**SECTION 1 - ELECTION COMMITTEE:** At least two hundred and thirty days (230) before the General Assembly in which the Trustee is entitled to take office, the District Board shall appoint an Election Committee of at least two people, shall designate a mailing address for the Committee and shall cause notice of the appointment of the Committee to be mailed to all active member congregations, together with a request for nominations. The Election Committee shall be responsible for election guidelines governing contested elections and carry out the requirements of the By-Laws in such a manner that the election will be completed at least thirty (30) days before the District Annual Assembly.

**SECTION 2 - QUALIFICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS FOR TRUSTEE:**

- a. A qualified candidate will reside in the Florida District and be a member of a member congregation located therein. A candidate who ceases to meet these qualifications shall be disqualified.
- b. Each active member congregation in the District may nominate (1) and no more than one (1) qualified candidate for the post of UUA Trustee. This nomination shall be certified by the clerk or secretary and the president of the congregation and sent to the Election Committee so that it is received no less than ninety (90) days before the District Annual Assembly. No one shall be nominated without his or her consent.
- c. The Election Committee will gather standard information from the qualified candidates which will accompany the ballot sent to member congregations.

**SECTION 3 - BALLOTS:** The Election Committee shall receive the nominations, confirm the qualifications of the candidates, prepare ballots, and mail one (1) along with information about each candidate, to each of the active member congregations in the District at least seventy-five (75) days before the District Annual Assembly. If more than two candidates are nominated, the ballots shall be prepared and the election conducted in the same manner as that provided for election of the president in the UUA By-Laws, Article IX, Section 9.10 (a).

**SECTION 4 - VOTING:** Each congregation shall vote on the candidates at a local meeting of the congregation and shall cast the number of votes equal to the number of delegates to which it would be entitled at the General Assembly based on the number of members given on the UUA Membership Confirmation Form. Ministerial and accredited DRE General Assembly delegates may be counted in the vote total when permitted by UUA by-Laws. The total number of votes allowed the congregation shall be distributed among the candidates as the society shall determine, with no fraction of a vote permitted. The vote shall be recorded on the ballot certified by an officer of the congregation, and returned to the Election Committee by US mail so that it is received no later than forty-five (45) days before the District Annual Meeting. Ballots are to remain confidential until counted and the results made public by the Election Committee.

**SECTION 5 - TABULATION AND RECORDING OF THE VOTE:** The Election Committee shall arrange to count the votes no later than thirty (30) days before the District Annual Assembly. In a timely manner, the Election Committee shall submit a proposed method for tabulating the votes to the Board of the Florida District for approval. After the election the committee shall report to the Board the approved method and persons used in tabulating the votes along with the results of the election. A letter signed by the Election Committee members shall be sent to the Secretary of the UUA giving the contact information of the newly elected trustee.

**SECTION 6 - TERM:** The trustee shall take office immediately after the close of the General Assembly in the year in which they are elected. The trustee shall serve for

terms of four years or until her or his successor is elected. No trustee may serve more than two successive terms, regardless of the length of those terms.

SECTION 7 - VACANCY: A vacancy created by death, disqualification, resignation, or removal of a trustee representing the district shall be filled by the Florida District Board of Directors in accordance with UUA bylaws ARTICLE VI. Section 6.8 (b).

### **ARTICLE XI -- RESOLUTIONS**

To be presented for adoption at a meeting of the District, a resolution must have been furnished in writing to each member society at least twenty-one (21) days before the meeting. This rule may be waived by the favorable vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the delegates present at any meeting of the membership.

### **ARTICLE XII -- AMENDMENTS**

These by-laws may be amended by the favorable vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the delegates present and voting at any Annual or Special Meeting, provided a copy of the proposed amendment has been mailed to the member societies with the call of the meeting. Proposed amendments may originate with the By-laws Committee, the District Board or by petition of at least five member societies. Additional amendments to the by-laws shall not be acted upon at the meeting.

### **ARTICLE XIII -- DISSOLUTION**

In the event of dissolution of this organization, all of its assets shall be vested in the UUA.