

Summary of Potential Changes to ERUUF's Bylaws Spring 2019

Introduction

As a non-profit organization, ERUUF is governed first by its bylaws and then by its policies. The current bylaws were written in 2010 when ERUUF first implemented Policy Governance. Unlike policies, which may be changed by a vote of the current Board of Trustees, bylaws can only be changed by a congregational vote. Over the past few months, the Board of Trustees has carefully reviewed our current bylaws. Our goal was to ensure that they accurately and clearly reflect how we currently operate or wish to operate in the future. In the future, we may propose editorial changes to improve the structure and enhance the readability of the full set of bylaws, but the focus for 2019 is on content.

Our review resulted in several areas that we feel need updating. At the annual meeting on June 2, we will be asking the congregation to vote on proposed amendments. We are seeking congregational input on these potential changes before we finalize our recommendations.

We encourage you to attend one of the listening sessions on **April 7 and 14 after each service** so that we can hear your input. If you are unable to attend either of these sessions but would like to provide input, please email board@eruuf.org. Thank you!

Thank you for your support!

The ERUUF Board of Trustees

Bob Brown, Kristi Chilton (Chair), Julie Edmunds (Secretary), Albert Hardy, Lenora Harris-Field, Bonnie LaCroix (Finance Liaison), Barb Sheline, Joan Tilghman, Helen Wolfson, and Rev. Deborah Cayer (ex-officio)

Key to reading this chart

Bolded text under “potential revisions” is new or modified language.

Strike-outs or re-arrangements are indicated in ***bold italic***

| ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP | |
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| Current bylaws | Potential revisions |
| <p>Article II (introductory paragraph) Membership in ERUUF is an affirmation of support for the Mission and Ends of the Congregation</p> | <p>Article II (introductory paragraph) Membership in ERUUF is an affirmation of support for the Mission, Vision, Covenant, and Ends of the Congregation.</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> ERUUF’s vision (in-process) and covenant define us as much as our Mission and Ends.</p> |
| <p>Section 2 (Admission to Membership) Any person who:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. has reached the age of 16 or has completed a Coming of Age program; and 2. is in sympathy with the purpose of the Fellowship as stated in Article I; and 3. agrees to join in the activities of the Fellowship and make a financial pledge or recordable contribution <p>may become a member by signing the Membership Roll.</p> <p>Sect. 3 (Waiver of Financial Requirement) The lead minister, or his/her delegates, may waive the requirement for a financial contribution by any current or prospective member upon request.</p> | <p>Section 2 (Admission to Membership) Any person who:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. has reached the age of 16 or has completed a Coming of Age program; and 2. is in sympathy with the purpose of the Fellowship as stated in Article I; and 3. agrees to join in the activities of the Fellowship; and 4. agrees to make a good-faith financial pledge or recordable contribution; and 5. completes the membership process <p>may become a member by signing the Membership Roll.</p> <p>Strike section 3 in its entirety.</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> ERUUF’s Strategic Plan for 2016-19 called for engaging members as a Beloved Community to live our UU Principles. To that end, the actual practice of retaining members has been modified regarding stewardship. Although financial support of ERUUF is an expectation for membership, a lack of financial support is not currently used as grounds for removal from membership. The Board clearly recognizes that ERUUF cannot operate without adequate funding, and that it is the responsibility of the members to provide that funding. The Board also recognizes that there are members who</p> |

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| | <p>at times may not be able to contribute financially. We prefer to trust that members will know when they are able to pledge and feel that requiring a waiver from the Lead Minister erodes the trust that is the cornerstone of Beloved Community. Finally, we now have a membership process that is required and our bylaws should reflect that.</p> |
| <p>Section 4. Removal from Membership</p> <p>Names may be removed from the Membership Roll for any of the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) request of the member concerned; b) lack of a financial pledge or recordable contribution, without a waiver, following a process clearly described in policy. | <p>Now Section 3. Removal from Membership</p> <p>Names may be removed from the Membership Roll:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) upon request of the member concerned; or b) after following the established process for maintaining the list of active members. <p><i>Strike “lack of a financial pledge or recordable contribution, without a waiver, following a process clearly described in policy” (see Rationale above)</i></p> |
| <p>Section 5. Healthy Congregation Committee</p> <p>(The full language of this section is below under new Article VIII.)</p> | <p><i>Move this section under new Article VIII.</i></p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> this isn’t really about membership, it’s about conflict.</p> |

| CURRENT ARTICLE VIII. OTHER PROVISIONS | |
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| Current bylaws | Potential revisions |
| <p>Section 3. Non-Discrimination. The Fellowship declares and affirms its special responsibility to promote the full participation of persons in all of its activities and in the full range of human endeavor without regard to race, color, sex, disability or handicap, affectional or sexual orientation, age, national origin, or political persuasion, and without requiring adherence to any particular interpretation of religion or to any particular religious belief or creed.</p> | <p>Renumber as Article VIX (see new Article VIII)</p> <p><i>We believe that we should update and expand the existing clause. We would like congregational input on what is missing (e.g. gender).</i></p> |

| ARTICLE V: BOARD OF TRUSTEES | |
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| Current bylaws | Potential revisions |
| <p>Section 7. Removal from Office Failure of a trustee to attend three (3) consecutive regular Board Meetings, or any five (5) regular meetings of the Board of Trustees in a business year, shall be deemed an automatic resignation from the Board, without further action or notice, unless the Board of Trustees votes otherwise.</p> | <p>Failure of a trustee to attend three (3) consecutive regular Board Meetings, or any four (4) regular meetings of the Board of Trustees in a business year, is deemed an automatic resignation from the Board, without further action or notice, unless the Board of Trustees votes otherwise.</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> This was done because 4 meetings in a given year is a substantial number ($\frac{1}{3}$ of all monthly meetings).</p> |

| ARTICLE VI. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS | |
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| Current bylaws | Potential revisions |
| <p>Section 1. The Nominating Committee. a. <i>Purpose.</i> The Nominating Committee is elected by and reports to the Congregation for the purpose of nominating candidates for all elected positions of the Fellowship and for coordinating leadership development.</p> | <p>a. <i>Purpose.</i> The Nominating Committee is elected by and reports to the Congregation for the purpose of nominating candidates for all elected positions of the Fellowship. The Nominating Committee appraises candidates and presents the Committee's nominees to the Congregation for a vote at the annual meeting.</p> <p><i>(Strike: and for coordinating leadership development.)</i></p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> We now have a separate team responsible for leadership development, and we added a brief job description.</p> |
| <p>Section 1b, Composition ...in order to establish the transition to 7 members, the Nominating Committee is authorized to set a transitional schedule of terms for a period of not more than three business years following the approval of this provision of the Bylaws.</p> | <p><i>Strike this entire sentence.</i></p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> The transition to 7 members has already occurred.</p> |

CHANGES RELATED TO THE HEALTHY CONGREGATION COMMITTEE

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| <p><u>Introduction:</u> The Board proposes moving current Article II, Section 5 to a separate article which would enumerate roles and responsibilities for handling all forms of congregational conflict. The potential revisions preserve the essential role of the HCC while clarifying responsibilities for various types of conflict. And since the HCC does ministry work rather than governance, we propose a change to the appointment process.</p> | |
| <p>***NEW*** ARTICLE VIII: GRIEVANCES</p> | |
| <p>Current bylaws</p> | <p>Potential revisions</p> |
| <p>Current Article II, Section 5. Healthy Congregation Committee</p> <p>The Healthy Congregation Committee shall serve as a standing committee to be a resource for ERUUF members, friends, and staff to help manage all conflicts and grievances which include, but are not limited to, the following: members, friends of the Fellowship, hired staff of the Fellowship, members of the Board of Trustees, and Ministers. Conflicts between and among hired staff of the Fellowship shall be addressed by personnel policies. The organization and structure of this committee shall be managed through Board policies.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Healthy Congregation Committee is a standing committee to promote healthy relationships and help manage conflicts between members of the Fellowship. The organization and structure of this committee is managed through Board policies. 2. Conflicts between and among hired staff of the Fellowship are addressed by personnel policies, which include a grievance procedure. 3. Conflicts between and among member(s) of the Fellowship and a member of the staff, other than the Lead Minister, are handled by their immediate supervisor and/or the Lead Minister. 4. For significant conflicts between a member(s) of the Fellowship and the Lead Minister, members have the right to use the grievance procedure(s) outlined in Board policies. |

CHANGES RELATED TO THE HEALTHY CONGREGATION COMMITTEE (con't)

| ARTICLE IV. GOVERNING STRUCTURE | |
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| Current bylaws | Potential revisions |
| <p>Section 1. The Congregation.</p> <p>Under “specific powers are reserved solely to the Congregation”.....</p> <p>d. To elect the members of the Boards of Trustees, Nominating Committee, Ministerial Search Committee for a called minister, and members of the Healthy Congregation Committee as defined in the policies.</p> | <p>Under “specific powers are reserved solely to the Congregation”.....</p> <p>d. To elect the members of the Boards of Trustees, Nominating Committee, and Ministerial Search Committee for a called minister, as defined in the policies.</p> <p><i>Strike “and members of the Healthy Congregation Committee”</i></p> <p>Rationale: Since the HCC is a ministry committee, it should be filled the same way as other ministry committees. As a safeguard against potential abuse by the Lead minister, our policies require that the Board of Trustees vote to approve the committee appointment. This policy would not change.</p> |