

Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church	Policy/Procedure: Membership Primary Author – Gerald Bone	Document No: PP-011-00 Page 1 of 7
Approved by:	Chairperson, Board of Directors: Chloie Airoidi-Watters	Signature: _____ Date: _____
Approved by:	Chief of Staff: Rev. Chris Buice	Signature: _____ Date: _____

A. Purpose of this Policy/Procedure

This policy/procedure addresses:

1. requirements for membership in Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church
2. procedures for assimilating members into the TVUUC community
3. procedures for resigned members to rejoin the TVUUC community, and
4. the steps to be taken to complete the annual membership update

B. Scope

This policy will apply to all members and all persons who wish to become members of the TVUUC congregation.

C. Responsibility

The membership services coordinator and/or the chair of the membership committee will be responsible for seeing that the terms of this policy/procedure are carried out.

D. Policy Statements:

1. Bylaw requirements – The policy statements listed here are included in the church bylaws and repeated here, perhaps edited, for convenience. Should there be any discrepancy between these statements and the bylaws, the bylaw version shall prevail.
 - a. Membership Eligibility – A person may become a member of TVUUC who is at least sixteen years of age, who subscribes to the mission and values of TVUUC, who considers TVUUC their primary place of worship, who intends to actively participate in the activities and programs of the church community and who makes a pledge to financially support the church. The minister may waive the requirement for a pledge based on financial need and pastoral considerations.
 - b. Register of Members – There shall be a register of all members. Membership shall be reviewed annually. Members who have requested resignation shall be removed from the register immediately. Members who

do not respond to membership status inquires shall be removed after one year.

- c. Resignation of Membership – Any member may resign at any given time by giving notice to the church office.
- d. Reinstatement of Membership – Anyone who has been dropped from the Register of Members may be reinstated by requesting the Membership Coordinator for reinstatement, subject to meeting the requirements for membership.

<p>The above Policy Statements have been reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors. Board approval is reflected in the minutes of the Board and formalized below by signature of the President of the Congregation. Authority to approve any associated procedure(s) is conferred to the Executive;</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If “No”, the Board retains authority to approve associated procedures.</p>	
<p>Approved by: Chloe Airoidi-Waters, President</p>	<p>Signature/Date Signed</p>

E. Procedure

1. Becoming a member
 - a. If a person has been a member of a Unitarian, Universalist or Unitarian Universalist congregation and has demonstrated a commitment to and understanding of UU principles and values and if they agree to abide by the TVUUC bylaws and policies, that person will be offered an interview with the senior minister. After the interview, the senior minister may recommend the person for membership.
 - b. All other persons wishing to become members of TVUUC who have agreed to abide by the TVUUC bylaws and policies will proceed as follows:
 - 1) Attend one or more UU conversations, held after Sunday morning services (recommended).
 - 2) Attend a New UU class. This class will include an introduction to TVUUC, an exploration of individual spiritual journeys, an introduction to and discussion of the church’s mission statement and a commitment to serve the church as a volunteer for two hours a month.

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- 3) Having completed a New UU class, the person who wishes to continue on a path to membership will become part of a “journey group.” Under the guidance of a “journey guide” (usually a member of the membership committee) the candidate for membership will attend two more classes which will complete his/her education in Unitarian Universalism, TVUUC and the benefits and responsibilities of membership.
 - 4) When the candidate for membership has completed the two additional classes, and has satisfactorily fulfilled his/her volunteer commitment, the membership services coordinator, after consulting with the journey guide, will recommend the candidate for membership.
 - 5) Those who fail to complete the “journey to membership” in one year, as measured from the date of the New UU class attended by the applicant, will not be recommended for membership in TVUUC, nor will those who failed to fulfill their commitment to serve the community as a volunteer for two hours a month.
 - 6) It will be the responsibility of the membership services coordinator, or the membership committee chair, to inform eligible candidates of the requirement to make a pledge of financial support to TVUUC in order for them to enter into membership. If the candidate cannot pledge, the membership services coordinator, or the membership committee chair, will arrange an interview with the senior minister, who may then make a determination as to the candidate’s eligibility for membership.
 - 7) If the membership services coordinator or anyone else on the membership committee or any member of TVUUC has any concerns about offering membership to any candidate, these concerns should be conveyed to the senior minister before proceeding further.
- c. Only by signing the membership book does one officially become a member of TVUUC.
 - d. New members will then be offered an opportunity to attend a membership recognition service on a Sunday following the date they sign the membership book and become members. At this service, they will take part in a membership ritual and be officially welcomed by the congregation.

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2. Reinstatement of Membership

- a. If the former member resigned, moved out of the region, and has had his/her record expunged from the rolls, the first step to be taken by the responsible staff person will be to determine when the former member resigned. Next, the staff member should familiarize the applicant with any changes which may have taken place in the applicant's absence. Particular emphasis should be put on any changes which affect the membership status of the applicant, such as the requirement that a pledge is required from each member. The staff member will then, with the applicant's permission, notify the senior minister and the church administrator of the applicant's wish to be reinstated.
- b. If the former member voluntarily resigned or was 'resigned' as the result of failing to fulfill the pledge requirement, the responsible staff person will begin by clarifying the pledge requirement with the applicant. When the requirement has been stated and acceptance of the requirement has been demonstrated by the applicant, the staff person will notify the applicant that someone from the canvass committee will be in contact with him/her and that a pledge will be required in order to maintain 'member' status. The staff person may ask the applicant at this time if s/he would like to speak to the senior minister before reinstatement.
- c. When the membership services coordinator or other staffer has consulted with the senior minister, the church administrator, the chair of the canvass committee or any other member or staff person s/he deems appropriate, s/he may then reinstate the applicant to membership.

3. New Member Assimilation

- a. As soon as possible after the new member signs the membership book the membership services coordinator will present the new member with a new member packet. Contained in the packet may be letters of welcome from the senior minister, the president of the congregation and the chair of the Finance Committee. Also included in the packet may be a statement of Unitarian Universalist principles and purposes; instructions on how to access a Skills and Interest survey from the TVUUC website; a list of Board of Directors members and Program Council coordinators and instructions on how to contact the church administrative assistant for the

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purpose of signing up for the newsletter, the discussion and announcement lists and any other resources which may be accessible.

- b. The membership services coordinator will send an email notice to the senior minister, president and president-elect of the Board of Directors, and the chairs of the Canvass, Caring, Finance, Membership and Religious Education committees. The notice will contain the name(s) of new members, contact information, and signing date. Within two weeks after a new member joins, a member of the membership committee will phone (and meet, if possible) the new member and request the completed new member survey. A copy of the survey will be provided to the President-elect.
 - c. Within two weeks (if there are children in the new member's family) the Religious Education committee will phone the new member and make him/her aware of programs offered.
 - d. Within the second two-week period the caring committee chair or his/her delegate will phone (and meet, if possible) the new member.
 - e. At the end of one month, the President-elect will ask the Program Council chair(s) of committee(s) the new members has expressed an interest in to contact the new member.
 - f. Finance chair and Canvass chair will contact the new member after a month has elapsed, first assuring that the above mentioned contacts will have been made.
4. Annual Review of Membership
- a. Each fiscal year, before the beginning of the annual canvass of members, the Membership Services Coordinator (MSC) will compile a list of members who did not make a pledge of financial support for the current fiscal year.
 - b. This list will be provided to the Senior Minister, the Church Administrator, the chair of the canvass committee and other staff and members, as selected by the senior minister and church administrator. Those who review the list may elect to remove certain non-pledging members from the list at this time.

- c. The MSC will convene a meeting of the membership committee. The committee will divide up the names on the list and begin calling the non-pledging members.
- d. Callers will attempt to reach members by telephone. If the attempt is successful, the caller will ask the member if s/he is willing to pledge for the coming year. If the answer is 'yes', the caller will inform the member that someone from the canvass committee will be contacting him/her about the pledge. If the answer is 'no', the caller will ask if the member wishes to talk to a minister of his/her choice. An interview will be arranged if requested. If an interview is not requested, the member will be informed of the 'pledge' requirement for membership and informed that his/her status will become 'resigned member' as of the beginning of the next fiscal year.
- e. If the caller cannot reach a member by phone, an email will be sent to the member. The email will remind the member of the pledge requirement and ask the member to respond and indicate his/her wishes as to the retention of his/her membership status.
- f. If, after a reasonable interim, there is no response to the email, the Membership Services Coordinator will send a letter to the member, again informing the member of the pledge requirement and requesting a response. The letter will also indicate that NO reply will result in a change in the member's status to 'resigned member.'
- g. Legacy Member Exception
 1. Long-standing members who have been actively engaged in the TVUUC community over the years and who, because of their age, changes in health, etc. may be exempted from any and all membership requirements and designated as a "Legacy" member.
 2. These members will continue to have full membership status though they will not be included in the annual member certification numbers provided to the UUA.
 3. The Senior Minister or the Minister of Pastoral Care, in consultation with the individual, their family or caregiver, will determine when it is appropriate to assign a member this status.

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