

# Fellowship X Bylaws

{Updated 8/2/05}

## About Fellowship X

Fellowship X is a community within the Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington (UUCA) that is open to all who wish to attend. Most of our members are Unitarians in the Generation X age range (born in the '60s and '70s), and many of us are former members of the Young Adult Group. We offer: spiritual activities such as our Friday night service and annual retreat; social action activities such as the blood drives and feeding the homeless; as well as activities such as our monthly potluck, weekly games night, ultimate frisbee, and interesting adventure/exploration events. We also maintain electronic communication through the FXchatboard and our weekly email events list.

## Membership

### Membership Rights and Responsibilities

The general membership of Fellowship X shall consist of any person who identifies with the organization. All people have the right to attend and participate in any Fellowship X activity, and they also have the responsibility to behave in a manner to allow all people to enjoy the activity. Activity organizers have the right to establish and enforce behavior expectations. Any person who does not meet these expectations should be notified of the problem. If the behavior continues, that person may be excluded from the activity. The Fellowship X group is a part of the greater Arlington church, and is therefore subject to the behavioral guidelines of the UUCA covenant.

As a self-sustaining community, Fellowship X is dependent on the energy and involvement of its members. Therefore, all members are encouraged to participate to the highest degree they are able. There are no specific membership requirements, but members are encouraged to participate in a variety of ways; from attending events to organizing activities and assuming leadership responsibilities.

## Leadership Team

### Leadership Positions

The leadership team has the authority to set policy, procedure, and the organizational structure for Fellowship X. Each leader is responsible for certain duties, and may perform the duties directly or may delegate responsibility to others. Leaders may take responsibility for, and contribute to, the tasks concerning multiple positions. In addition to their specific duties, leaders collectively serve as a decision-making body for issues that arise within the group. The leadership team has periodic meetings to deal with the issues. The team will hold meetings that are not open to the public when the issues are of a sensitive and confidential nature. In contrast, the leadership team will hold meetings that are open to the public when the issues do not require confidentiality. Not every leadership position needs to be filled at all times. There shall be no greater than 8 members on the leadership team at any one time, and this restriction is designed to ensure that communication is effective, decision-making is efficient, and that confidentiality is honored regarding sensitive issues. Volunteer opportunities, other than those described below, can also be created outside of the leadership team. The leadership team is comprised of the following positions with accompanying duties:

**Activities Coordinator** - Organizes activities such as major parties, weekly games nights, ultimate frisbee, and adventure/exploration activities. Also assists members with advertising their events.

**All Church Liaison** - Serves as the contact point for members of the general church, books meeting rooms at the church, and is responsible for Hospitality and the greater church's newsletter (the Arlingtarian).

**Events List/Moderator** - Distributes the weekly events list and moderates the FXchatboard.

**Friday Worship Coordinator** - Leads worship associates in scheduling Friday Night Services.

**Potluck Coordinator** – Arranges monthly potlucks, and assists with other duties on the leadership team.

**Retreat Coordinator** – Organizes the annual retreat, as well as any other possible retreats such as mini-retreats or silent retreats. {This seasonal position is not open for election, and instead is appointed by the leadership team to either one leader or a combination of leaders who are already on the team.}

**Social Action Coordinator** - Organizes new social action projects and assists others who coordinate the blood drives and the feeding of the homeless (A-SPAN).

**Treasurer** - Collects, distributes, and handles money. {The treasurer is appointed by the leadership team and is not open to election. This individual must have served on the team for one year because the position requires proven trust regarding such an important role in handling funds.}

**Webmaster** - Modifies and updates the Fellowship X website. {This position is appointed by the leadership team and is not open to election, due to the fact that the webmaster maintains the files on a server and pays for the administrative costs.}

### Leadership Team Rights and Responsibilities

The leadership team will ensure that Fellowship X is a safe and social community. This community needs both spiritual and social activities, effective communication, and a way to address grievances. While there is no specific time commitment for each member of the leadership team, members of the leadership team are expected to put in enough time and energy to effectively perform the duties of their position.

### Leadership Team Election Process

Every effort during the election process should be made to work together, support each other, and create a fair and quick resolution that will require no formal voting procedure.

Leadership positions last one calendar year, extending from the period January 1 – December 31. By each November 1<sup>st</sup>, the leadership team provides its members with a description of the annual election process and solicits its members as to who would like to assume responsibility for the next year's leadership positions; at the same time, the leadership team also notes which leaders would like to continue for another year with their duties. {Note that there are three positions that are appointed by the leadership team and are not open to election: (1) the webmaster position, due to the fact that the webmaster maintains the files on a server and pays for the administrative costs; (2) the treasurer must be an individual who has served on the leadership team for one year, since this position requires proven trust regarding such an important role in handling funds; and (3) the retreat coordinator position is seasonal, and therefore is covered by either one leader or a combination of leaders that are already on the team.} Members must communicate their interest in the leadership position to the FXchatboard or directly to the leadership team by November 11<sup>th</sup>, at which time the results are published. If both a newly

interested member and the existing leader desire the same position, then every effort should be made for these individuals to work together to achieve a harmonious resolution by November 21<sup>st</sup>. If a resolution occurs, then the leadership team is set and the rest of the process as set forth in the following paragraph is not needed.

However, if an acceptable resolution is impossible to achieve by that date, then a vote by the members on one day between December 5<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> will take place to decide who will assume the leadership position (notice of this vote -- including the date, time, and location -- must occur 10 days prior to the actual vote). Those who desire to vote absentee may do so via a written ballot delivered to the UUCA church office prior to close of the office on the Friday before the election. The absentee vote should be in a sealed envelope with the voter's name clearly printed on the outside of the envelope, and it should be labeled, "Fellowship X Election Ballot." These sealed envelopes will be opened during the voting procedure at the in-person vote, so as to ensure that no one will know the results of the absentee ballots until the time of the in-person vote. A simple majority of people who vote is required for a person to be elected to the leadership team.

Communication of the entire election process shall occur through the FXchatboard and the weekly events list, and the Annual Meeting in January will announce the new leadership team. Again, informal and cooperative resolutions – as opposed to the more formal and competitive voting procedures -- are strongly encouraged.

#### Other Changes to Leadership

If a member of the leadership team chooses to step down from their position at a time other than during the end-of-the-year election process noted above, then the leadership team can appoint a member to fill the vacancy until the next end-of-the-year election process. The leadership team shall have the authority to add and remove positions from the team. All changes shall immediately be published through the FXchatboard and the weekly events list.

#### Rule of 5

A group of 5 or more members may challenge the leadership team's decisions, policies, or actions through the "Rule of 5." In order to challenge, the nominating individual in the group of 5 must contact the leadership team in writing -- through the FXchatboard or by directly contacting any member of the leadership team -- regarding how the group of 5 would like things changed. The challenging group will be appointed as an election committee, and the leadership team will schedule a vote within 40 days. The election committee will publish details of the vote -- including the date, time, and location -- at least two weeks prior to the vote. A simple majority of people who vote is required for changes, and absentee ballots are allowed in the same manner as described in the Election Process section above. Communication of the Rule of 5 process shall occur through the FXchatboard and the weekly events list. The Rule of 5 ensures that the leadership team is representative of, and responsive to, Fellowship X as a whole.

### **Amending Bylaws**

The Fellowship X bylaws are a living, breathing document that are subject to review and modifications. Any modifications to these bylaws will occur through the Rule of 5 process as set forth in the preceding paragraph. Similar to other group processes, communication of the amendment process shall occur through the FXchatboard and the weekly events list. As time naturally progresses and contexts change, the Fellowship X bylaws are expected to keep pace with evolving circumstances.