

Bylaws of the Netherlands Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

As adopted September 5, 2021

Article 1: Name and Domicile

The name of this religious society is the Netherlands Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (hereinafter: NUUF or Fellowship). The NUUF was founded in 1982 and was registered as a religious society (kerkgemeenschap) under Dutch law on 1 July 2019, K.v.K. number 75506653. It is located in Amsterdam.

Article 2: Purposes and Values

2.1. The NUUF is a liberal religious and spiritual community grounded in love, integrity, and mutual respect. It is committed to actively supporting the spiritual growth of all members, friends, and visitors.

2.2. Spiritual growth requires a safe and welcoming space where we can allow ourselves to be emotionally open and vulnerable. The NUUF considers creating this kind of safe and welcoming space to be a religious and moral responsibility. Expectations relating to these values are spelled out in more detail in the NUUF Safe Congregation Policy.

2.3. As a Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, the NUUF affirms the following principles:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Our principles are derived from a wide range of religious and philosophical traditions, world views, and the unique insights of each individual member.

Article 3: Affiliation

The NUUF is an independent congregational fellowship. It is not subordinate to any other fellowship, church, association or organisation, religious or otherwise. The NUUF is a Member Fellowship in the European Unitarian Universalists. It also maintains friendly relationships with other Unitarian, Universalist, Unitarian Universalist, and free religious communities in the Netherlands, Europe, and around the world.

Article 4: Membership

4.1. Any individual who is 16 years old or older, is in sympathy with the purposes and values of this Fellowship, accepts these by-laws, and makes a recorded membership statement may become a member of the NUUF. Signing the membership book indicates a commitment by the new member to contribute to the NUUF by participation and by making an annual financial pledge. All members are eligible to vote in NUUF elections and at annual meetings and other official meetings.

4.2. A person who attends or participates in services and other activities of the NUUF but does not wish to become a member may be designated as a (non-voting) “Friend of the Fellowship.”

4.3. An individual shall be removed from membership in case of (1) the member’s death; (2) written request by the member; or (3) inactivity or absence from the NUUF for at least one year. Removal in case of inactivity or absence will be by vote of the Board.

4.4. An individual may be removed from membership for cause for conduct injurious to the well-being of the Fellowship or to one or more members or friends of the fellowship.

4.5. A decision to terminate membership for cause will be taken by the Board, as indicated in the NUUF Safe Congregation Policy and the NUUF Complaint Policy.

Article 5: Services

Religious services will be held on a regular schedule as determined by the Board.

Article 6: Meetings

6.1. The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the NUUF membership will be held at a time and place to be determined by the Board. The AGM will normally be held in person, but may be held online under special circumstances, as determined by the Board.

6.2. Notification of at least two weeks will be given prior to the AGM. Notice may be sent by email, letter, or any other means of communication in common and widespread use among the members of the NUUF. Items to be submitted for a vote during a meeting, including any relevant supporting information or documents, will be noted in the notification.

6.3. Other meetings of the NUUF membership may be called by the Board. Meetings will also be called upon the written request of five members, to be held within two months of the date of receiving the request. Notification will be the same as for the AGM.

6.4. The presence of ten members shall constitute a quorum. A simple majority of votes cast shall be sufficient to either approve or disapprove matters submitted for determination by vote, unless otherwise stated in these bylaws or in the motion itself. If no quorum is present, a meeting will be held within two months of the date of the original meeting, with the same agenda, at which decisions may validly be taken by simple majority of the members in attendance.

Article 7: Officers and Governing Board

7.1. The NUUF will have a Governing Board consisting of Elected Officers and other members. The Elected Officers shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, who will perform the duties that usually pertain to those offices. The Elected Officers will be elected from among the NUUF membership by simple majority of those attending the AGM. They will hold office for terms of one year from 1 July to 30 June of the following year. The President may not serve continuously for more than two consecutive terms. A former President may be re-elected after an interim period of at least one year has elapsed after having served two consecutive terms.

7.2. In the event of extraordinary circumstances or hardships that prevent or interfere with the AGM, the Board may extend the terms of the sitting Elected Officers, but only for so long as reasonably necessary. An extension must be communicated via normal channels to the membership as soon as reasonably possible, but in any event no later than two weeks before expiration of the current terms. Members may object to the extension, with reasons, and the Board will consider any such objections in its decision.

7.3. Any vacancy occurring among the Elected Officers may be filled by a majority vote of the Board. Members filling a vacancy shall serve until the next AGM.

7.4. In addition to the Elected Officers, the Governing Board will include the chairs of the standing committees. The President may appoint chairs of ad hoc committees. Chairs of ad hoc committees are not members of the Governing Board.

7.5. The Governing Board has general charge of the property of the NUUF and is authorized to represent the NUUF in the conduct of its affairs and administration. The Governing Board will keep the membership informed of its activities and actions.

Article 8: Removal of Officers or Board Members

8.1. Failure of an Elected Officer or other member of the Governing Board to attend three (3) consecutive regular Board meetings or four (4) of any six (6) consecutive regular Board meetings, without notice or adequate reason, shall constitute an automatic resignation from the Board without further action or notice.

8.2. Board members may be removed for cause by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Governing Board for breach of trust, failure to fulfill assigned duties or gross misconduct.

Article 9: Fiscal Year

The fiscal year is from 1 July to 30 June of the following year.

Article 10: Amendments to the Bylaws

These bylaws may be amended at any business meeting of the NUUF by a two-thirds vote of the members in attendance. Notice of proposed changes to the bylaws shall be given at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Notice may be sent by email, letter or any other means of communication in common and widespread use among the members of the NUUF.

Article 11: Dissolution and Disposition of Assets

Should the NUUF cease to function or the membership vote to dissolve the Fellowship, any remaining assets of the NUUF will be transferred to the European Unitarian Universalists and/or to a not-for-profit social action organisation in proportions designated by the membership at the time of the vote to dissolve.