Unitarian Universalist Church of Greater Lansing

**OPERATIONAL POLICY on REMOVING MEMBERS**

Adopted by Senior Minister Rev. Neal T. Anderson on May 3, 2023

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to identify the conditions under which a member may be removed from membership for neglecting to commit to membership annually.

**A. The relevant UU Lansing Bylaws are:**

7.3 The membership of the Congregation shall consist of all persons, age 16 or over, who:

a) express their understanding of and agreement with the purposes, covenants, and by-laws of this Church;

b) sign the Membership Book;

c) commit to membership annually

Persons under the age of majority (18 years old) shall have full membership, except that they may not serve in the governing and leadership capacities established by these bylaws.

7.4 Membership Termination

A member may be removed from membership by a 2/3 vote of the Board of Trustees if their actions are not in accordance with the purposes, covenants, and by-laws of this church.

**B. Necessity of this Policy**

1. This policy deals with only Bylaws article 7.3.c. This article provides an administrative tool to keep the membership records of the church accurate.

2. Members sometimes move away without notifying the church, or gradually drift away from the church without ever officially leaving membership. In the past, inactive members have been kept on the books for years artificially inflating the size of the church’s membership. This affects not only the size of a quorum needed for congregational meetings, but also the accuracy of our annual certification with the UUA, which in turn affects the number of delegates we are allowed to send to General and Regional Assemblies.

3. Elderly members sometimes move to be closer to family. Years later when the member dies, the family may not notify the church of the death. Again, this leads to inaccurate membership records.

**C. Commit to Membership Annually**

1. Each year, the church asks members and friends of the congregation to respond to the annual pledge drive. The response can:

1. Be in the form of a financial commitment for the coming year. This financial commitment may be of any size.

b. Be a response that does not include a financial commitment but affirms the person’s desire to remain in membership in the coming year.

**D. Emeritas Membership**

Elderly members or members who are very sick may not be able to commit to membership annually. In this case, the member may be reclassified as an Emeritas Member. This status recognizes and honors the member’s longtime commitment and dedication to the congregation. Emeritas Members are not counted as active members for the purpose of UUA certification, may not vote in church elections, do not count toward a quorum for congregational meetings, and do not get canvased during the annual pledge drive. An Emeritas Member may be returned to Member status at their request at any time.

**E. Removal of Members**

1. At the conclusion of the annual pledge drive, staff shall create a list of members who have not responded in any way.

2. Staff shall make one last attempt to contact these members asking them to affirm their intention to remain members in the coming year. Staff shall notify the members that if the church does not receive a response within 30 days, the member will be removed from membership.

3. Members with no current contact information may be immediately removed from membership.

4. Staff may remove members who have not responded after 30 days.

5. Members may be reinstated at any time at their request.