

UUFA Committee/Group Charter

Membership Committee

1. Name of Committee or Group: Membership Committee

2. General Purpose: The Membership Committee, a standing committee of the Fellowship, strives to help those seeking a liberal religious home to feel welcome and comfortable and encourages their interest in becoming members of the Fellowship.

3. Membership: Fellowship By-laws require that the Membership Committee has a minimum of five members. Per the By-laws, all members of the committee must be voting (Active) members of UUFA. By-laws require that new committee members be appointed by the committee chair. New committee members are recruited by current members, or through an announcement to the congregation that the committee is soliciting additional members. There is no set term or length of service on the committee. A member of the Board of Trustees is a Board liaison to the committee. The minister is an ex-officio member of the committee and often attends and participates in committee meetings.

4. Leadership: By-laws stipulate that the chair of the committee be appointed by the Board of Trustees. The Chair is responsible for overall leadership of the committee including scheduling and conducting committee meetings, planning and coordinating committee activities and guiding the work of committee members.

5. Meetings. The committee currently meets monthly. Meetings are open to anyone interested in attending. Establishing a regular meeting date that is convenient to all committee members has been difficult so an agenda item for each meeting is scheduling the next meeting. The Chair sends meeting reminders, and other items of committee business, to committee members by e-mail. The Chair usually prepares an agenda, or at least a list of discussion topics, for each meeting. Meetings are informal and conducted in an open and cordial manner with free discussion and exchange by all members. Decisions usually are by consensus.

6. Specific duties and responsibilities of the committee: The committee's duties include staffing the Visitors/Membership Table in the foyer; compiling and distributing to visitors an information packet about UUFA; providing brochures and other materials that convey information about the UU denomination and UUFA; recruiting and training greeters/ushers for Sunday Services; producing and distributing permanent name tags; conducting the New UU class for those interested in learning more about the Fellowship; compiling information about new members and conducting periodic New Member Recognition Ceremonies; and maintaining contact with members and long-time friends who irregularly attend services or other activities of the congregation. The By-laws currently require that the committee chair, in conjunction with the minister and treasurer, help prepare lists of active and associate members of the congregation—a task that in practice would also involve other members of the Membership Committee.

7. Annual goals and objectives: The committee is working on several projects and activities designed to help achieve our mission, but it has not set specific annual goals and objectives. Those projects and activities include developing a better procedure for connecting visitors and New UU participants with committees/groups/activities in which they are interested; developing stronger retention of new members by more quickly involving them in the life of the Fellowship; establishing a protocol for name tags that will distinguish Active Members from Associate Members and visitors/friends; revising and updating the packet of information given to new members; creating a more formal and dignified procedure for new members to sign the Membership Book; and creating a Visitors Page on the UUFA Web site. Committee members continuously review and assess our work in an effort to be more efficient and productive.

8. Accountability: As a standing committee, the Membership Committee is accountable to the Board of Trustees.

9. Reporting requirements: The Committee communicates and coordinates as necessary with the Board of Trustees and with other Fellowship committees and groups. Communication with the Board of Trustees is through the Board liaison to the committee. Other communication usually occurs informally and generally is the responsibility of the Chair.

10: Relationship to professional staff and other committees/groups of UUFA: The committee works with the minister in terms of setting the Fellowship's "membership philosophy" and the overall direction and focus of the committee's work, and in scheduling activities that involve the minister. The committee works with the Fellowship administrator on such tasks as scheduling activities, producing and disseminating printed materials and purchasing brochures and other items related to the committee's work. The By-laws require that the Membership Committee maintain communication with the Stewardship Committee to help initiate contact with new members regarding financial and time/talent support to the Fellowship. To this end, the Membership Committee provides prospective new members of the Fellowship with a letter that sets out requirements for signing the Membership Book, including the requirement of a financial pledge. The letter is accompanied by a pledge form that the prospective member must complete and submit to the Fellowship office before signing the Membership Book.

11: Communications: The committee's communications with other committees/groups is usually via informal person-to-person discussions with leaders of other committees/groups. The committee's communications with the congregation are through the Tapestry newsletter, the weekly e-mail newsletter and announcements in the Order of Service. A presence on the Fellowship Web site is essential and creating such a presence is one of the committee's ongoing goals.

12: What decision-making authority does the committee have? The committee functions in an advisory capacity regarding Fellowship policies. It makes recommendations/requests to the Board of Trustees but has no authority to set policy or to represent the Fellowship with groups outside UUFA.

13. Spending authorities: The committee submits an annual budget request and is allotted a set amount of funding that is part of the overall Fellowship budget. The committee does not have to request approval for expenditures within its budget.

Proposed charter submitted by:

Larry B. Dendy, Chair