

UUSJ MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

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Submitted by:
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Below are six proposals put forward by the UUSJ Membership Committee for the UUSJ Board to consider and lead to the adoption of a preferred means regarding UUSJ membership. The proposals include both criteria for membership and the cost of membership. The first three proposals are three different, mutually-exclusive approaches to tiered memberships. Yellow highlighting indicates wording taken directly from the UUSJ bylaws. The Membership section of the bylaws is included at the end of this Report for reference and comparison purposes.

Proposal #1: Tiered Memberships

For purposes of organization there are three categories for UUSJ Membership. Membership in UUSJ is open:

1. To all Unitarian Universalist congregations;
2. Unitarian Universalist associated non-profit entities, and other organizations that sympathize with its purpose and programs; and,
3. Individuals that sympathize with its purpose and programs.

• Member Congregations

Member congregations shall be those UU congregations, recognized by the UUA, in and outside the Washington D.C. metropolitan region, who choose to be members, contribute a “fair share” donation to UUSJ (see Article XVI Section 16-3 of the UUSJ bylaws) and meet such other criteria, as the board may set from time to time for such membership. The fair share donation amount is based on a UUSJ Board of Trustees (Board) agreed upon funding formula. Member congregations shall have equal standing and Board representation.

Note: The Governance Committee is expected to address Board structure, which may affect the member congregation voting entitlement.

• Affiliate Organization Members:

Affiliate organization members shall be those organizations that contribute an annual membership fee and meet such other criteria as the Board may set from time to time for such affiliated organization membership. An affiliate organization member shall not be entitled to a voting seat on the Board, but may designate a representative to attend Board meetings and to be heard on issues before the Board.

- **Individual Members:**

An individual may become a UUSJ member in five ways. These five individual memberships vary in cost and benefits. The five individual memberships are:

- **Regular Membership:** A UUSJ Regular Individual Membership costs \$40 a year. This membership entitles the individual to receive all UUSJ news and notices, and website recommended links. The individual may also attend UUSJ Board meetings as an Ex-officio member having no voting authority, but shall be given an opportunity to **be heard on issues before the Board**, provided they give prior notice to the UUSJ President of the Board before attending and are allocated a place on the agenda.
- **Activist Membership:** A UUSJ Activist Individual Membership costs \$100 a year. This membership receives all the benefits of a Regular Membership plus receipt of all UUSJ Advocacy Corps notices and materials, and may participate in all UUSJ Advocacy Corps activities.

Special dispensation shall be made available to those who may not be able to afford the UUSJ Activist Membership, but desire to participate at that level. Such members need not provide proof of inability to pay UUSJ Activist Membership fee.

- **Special Stewards Membership:** A Special Steward Membership requires a contribution of \$500 or more to the UUSJ. This Special Stewards Membership is entitled to the benefits of both Regular and Activist UUSJ Memberships. In addition, this membership will be part of a Special Advisory Council to the UUSJ Executive Director, to provide direct advice and recommendations to the UUSJ.
- **Activist Sponsor Membership:** For a contribution of \$2,500 or more, based on the cost of the Advocacy Corps making a visit to Capitol Hill, this Individual Activist Sponsor Membership receives all the benefits of both Regular and Activist memberships. Also, the individual may suggest which of the UUSJ priority issues will be the focus of the Corps' Capitol Hill visit, and submit ideas in writing regarding the development of and the plans for the visit and request of Congress. The issue and plans for the visit will be at the discretion of UUSJ leadership.
- **Issue Sponsor Membership:** For a contribution of \$1,250 or more, based on the costs of producing a UUSJ issue paper (e.g. Write Here/Write Now Appeal), the Individual Sponsor Membership receives all the benefits of both the UUSJ Regular and UUSJ Activist Memberships. This qualified individual may also suggest the UUSJ priority issue that will be the subject of the issue paper, and submit ideas in writing about the research, development, and drafting of the document. The timing of the issue paper and final content will be at the discretion of UUSJ leadership.

Proposal #2 Tiered Memberships (Same as Proposal #1, but without Activist Sponsor and Issue Sponsor Memberships)

For purposes of organization there are three categories for UUSJ Membership. Membership in UUSJ is open:

1. To all Unitarian Universalist congregations;
2. Unitarian Universalist associated non-profit entities, and other organizations that sympathize with its purpose and programs; and,
3. Individuals that sympathize with its purpose and programs.

• Member Congregations

Member congregations shall be those UU congregations, recognized by the UUA, in and outside the Washington D.C. metropolitan region, who choose to be members, contribute a “fair share” donation to UUSJ (see Article XVI Section 16-3 of the UUSJ bylaws) and meet such other criteria, as the board may set from time to time for such membership. The fair share donation amount is based on a UUSJ Board of Trustees (Board) agreed upon funding formula. Member congregations shall have equal standing and Board representation.

Note: The Governance Committee is expected to address Board structure, which may affect the member congregation voting entitlement...

• Affiliate Organization Members:

Affiliate organization members shall be those organizations that contribute an annual membership fee and meet such other criteria as the Board may set from time to time for such affiliated organization membership. An affiliate organization member shall not be entitled to a voting seat on the Board, but may designate a representative to attend Board meetings and to be heard on issues before the Board.

• Individual Members:

An individual may become a UUSJ member in two ways. These two individual memberships vary in cost and benefits. The individual memberships are:

- **Regular Membership:** A UUSJ Regular Individual Membership costs \$40 a year. This membership entitles the individual to receive all UUSJ news and notices, and website recommended links. The individual may also attend UUSJ Board meetings as an Ex-officio member having no voting authority, but shall be given an opportunity to be heard on issues before the Board, provided they give prior notice to the UUSJ President of the Board before attending and are allocated a place in the agenda.
- **Activist Membership:** A UUSJ Individual Activist Membership costs \$100 a year. This membership receives all the benefits of a Regular Membership plus receipt of all UUSJ Advocacy Corps notices and materials, and may participate in all UUSJ Advocacy Corps activities.

Special dispensation shall be made available to those who may not be able to afford the UUSJ Activist Membership, but desire to participate at that level. Such members need not provide proof of inability to pay UUSJ Activist Membership fee.

Proposal #3: No Tiered Memberships

For purposes of organization there are three categories for UUSJ Membership. Membership in UUSJ is open:

1. To all Unitarian Universalist congregations;
2. Unitarian Universalist affiliated non-profit entities and other organizations that sympathize with its purpose and programs; and,
3. Individuals that sympathize with its purpose and programs.

- **Congregational Members**

Member congregations are those UU congregations, recognized by the UUA, in and outside the Washington D.C. metropolitan region, who choose to be members, and contribute a “fair share” donation to UUSJ (see Article XVI Section 16-3 of the UUSJ bylaws). The fair share donation amount is based on a Board agreed upon funding formula. Member congregations are to meet other criteria, as the Board may set from time to time for such membership. Member congregations shall have equal standing and Board representation.

Note: The Governance Committee is expected to address Board structure, which may affect the member congregation voting entitlement.

- **Affiliate Members:**

Affiliate members are those organizations that contribute an annual membership fee and meet such other criteria as the Board may set from time to time for such affiliate organization membership. An affiliate organization member shall not be entitled to a voting seat on the Board, but may designate a representative to attend Board meetings and to be heard on issues before the Board.

- **Individual Members:**

- Individuals who support UUSJ’s purpose and programs may become a UUSJ member by donating \$40 or more to the UUSJ. These individuals will receive the benefits of UUSJ membership by being provided all UUSJ news and notices and website recommended links. The individuals may also attend UUSJ Board meetings as Ex-officio members having no voting authority, but shall be given an opportunity to be heard on issues before the Board, provided they give prior notice to the UUSJ President of the Board before attending and are allocated a place in the agenda.
- Individual UUSJ members will be asked to provide additional financial support in several ways. They will be made aware of other giving options including bequests and living trusts. They will also be made aware of opportunities to fund specific UUSJ activities and initiatives, such as the following examples:
- An individual member may fund a Write Here/Write Now (WHWN) campaign for a contribution of \$1,250. This contribution covers the cost of researching issues and status of legislation, selecting the issue and the “ask” of Congress, summarizing the WHWN in the document to be sent to member congregations,

partner congregations, and affiliated organizations, distributing documents to all appropriate recipients, and organizing and reproducing the letters that come in.

- A member may fund a trip of the Advocacy Corps (AC) to Capitol Hill for \$2,500. This contribution covers the cost of issue research and selection, Congressional office visitation logistics, coordination of AC team meetings, arrangements for expert briefings, and effective follow up on all identified visitation actions.

Proposal #4: Change the Cost of UUSJ Membership

Prospective members will be encouraged to pay \$40, but will be enrolled as UUSJ members for any donation they are able to provide.

Rationale: Some would-be members may find it hard to donate \$40 at first, but may decide as they learn more about UUSJ through membership that they want to donate the full \$40, or more. Sending the newsletter and other emails to small donors costs us nothing and will likely grow the membership. Also, this way no one is priced out of membership.

Proposal #5: Make the Fair Share Amount fairer

The median income in the DC/MD/VA region varies, and is somewhat higher than outside the region, generally. Currently, the UUSJ fair share funding formula is based on the number of members of a UUSJ congregation. This may not be a “fair” determinant regarding a UUSJ congregation’s ability to pay its fair share. Therefore, as an alternative to the existing fair share funding formula, it is proposed that the fair share formula be based on a percentage of a UUSJ congregation’s operating budget.

Attached is a spreadsheet comparing fair share amounts based on existing UUSJ congregation membership, with fair share amounts based on three fractions, 1/4, 1/3, and 1/2, of one percent of UUSJ congregational operating budgets. In most cases, UUSJ churches in the DC area would pay about the same fair share amount as they are now. However, as stated before, this alternative may be a better indicator of the UUSJ congregation’s ability to pay its fair share amount. This new fair share formula may also be less burdensome on UUSJ congregations outside the DC area, which are likely to have lower member medium incomes. Note the data is from 2018.

	National Totals		Totals DC Area	
	Fair Share	Pct of Budget	Fair Share	Pct of Budget
Totals at 1/4 of 1%	\$714,305	\$552,498	\$32,267	\$26,242
Pct of Fair Share		77%		81%
Totals at 1/3 of 1%	\$714,305	\$736,665	\$32,267	\$34,989
Pct of Fair Share		103%		108%
Totals at 1/2 of 1%	\$714,305	\$1,104,997	\$32,267	\$52,484
Pct of Fair Share		155%		163%

DC Area Churches	State	Members	Friends	Total	Expenditures	Pledges	Current Fair Share	1/4 of 1%	1/3 of 1%	1/2 of 1%
All Souls Church, Unitarian	DC	1104	914	2018	\$1,137,506	\$1,160,711	\$5,244	\$2,844	\$3,792	\$5,688
Washington Ethical Society	DC	158		158	\$534,400	\$420,500	\$751	\$1,336	\$1,781	\$2,672
Paint Branch UU Church	MD	175	196	371	\$350,038	\$288,124	\$831	\$875	\$1,167	\$1,750
The First Unitarian Church of Baltimore	MD	195	86	281	\$252,661	\$164,828	\$926	\$632	\$842	\$1,263
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church	MD	754	314	1068	\$1,259,403	\$899,230	\$3,582	\$3,149	\$4,198	\$6,297
River Road UU Congregation	MD	541	762	1303	\$1,099,117	\$867,615	\$2,570	\$2,748	\$3,664	\$5,496
Davies Memorial UU Church	MD	52	12	64	\$111,632	\$80,934	\$247	\$279	\$372	\$558
UU Congregation of Columbia	MD	446	277	723	\$665,216	\$616,646	\$2,119	\$1,663	\$2,217	\$3,326
UU Congregation of Frederick	MD	300	127	427	\$379,805	\$263,762	\$1,425	\$950	\$1,266	\$1,899
Towson UU Church	MD	235	90	325	\$356,861	\$313,793	\$1,116	\$892	\$1,190	\$1,784
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rockville	MD	401	200	601	\$653,392	\$534,352	\$1,905	\$1,633	\$2,178	\$3,267
Mt Vernon Unitarian Church	VA	332	70	402	\$583,841	\$445,644	\$1,577	\$1,460	\$1,946	\$2,919

UU Church of Arlington	VA	800	430	1230	\$1,192,005	\$1,230,413	\$3,800	\$2,980	\$3,973	\$5,960
Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church	VA	185	27	212	\$289,556	\$237,275	\$879	\$724	\$965	\$1,448
Bull Run Unitarian Universalists	VA	240	33	273	\$296,629	\$241,036	\$1,140	\$742	\$989	\$1,483
UU Congregation of Fairfax	VA	661	499	1160	\$940,000	\$946,346	\$3,140	\$2,350	\$3,133	\$4,700
Unitarian Universalist Church in Reston	VA	214	72	286	\$394,719	\$287,100	\$1,017	\$987	\$1,316	\$1,974

Proposal #6: Have Fair Share Cover UUSJ Staff and Overhead

Increase the UUSJ congregation fair share funding amount, based on either number of members or percentage of congregation operating budget, to cover the base funding needs of the UUSJ. Base funding needs would be for staff and organizational overhead, including UUSJ meetings, events, consultants, communications, and outreach. Advocacy Corps costs and other special UUSJ activities would be covered by separate means, e.g. fundraisers, appeals, activist memberships, and grants.

This proposal reduces UUSJ's financial dependency on uncertain funding sources. It also enhances UUSJ organizational viability and its ability to make and implement more than year-to-year plans. Yes, it does place more of a financial burden on individual UUSJ member congregations, but in return, provides improved UUSJ fiscal and organizational stability.

Copy of Membership Bylaws from UUSJ Web Site

Article IV – Membership

Section 4.1 – Categories

Membership in UUSJ is open to all Unitarian Universalist congregations, Unitarian Universalist associated non-profit entities, and other organizations and individuals that sympathize with its purpose and programs. There are three categories of membership: member congregations, affiliate organization members, and individual members.

Section 4.2 – Member Congregations

Member congregations shall be those UU congregations, recognized by the UUA, who choose to be members, contribute a “fair share” donation to UUSJ (see Article XVI Section 16-3), and meet such other criteria, as the Board may set from time to time for such membership. Each member congregation shall be entitled to a voting seat on the Board of Trustees.

Section 4.3 – Affiliate Organization Members

Affiliate organization members shall be those organizations that contribute an annual membership fee and meet such other criteria as the Board may set from time to time for such affiliate organization membership. An affiliate organization member shall not be entitled to a voting seat on the Board of Trustees, but may designate a representative to attend Board of Trustees meetings and to be heard on issues before the Board.

Section 4.4 – Individual Members

Individual membership in UUSJ may be made available to individuals who elect to be associated with Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice and participate in its activities and meetings. Individual members shall meet such criteria as the Board may set from time to time for such membership. Individual membership does not convey voting representation on the Board of Trustees, but shall include the right to attend Board of Trustees meetings and to be heard on issues before the Board.