

## **UCH Policy on Membership**

Approved by the Board of Trustees

December 1, 2015

### **Purpose**

Membership in the Unitarian Church of Hinsdale is open to all who subscribe to and are willing to support the Church's mission and programs, regardless of race, color, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, or physical or mental challenge. This policy addresses the requirements for membership, the privileges and responsibilities of membership, and the process for terminating membership.

### **Definitions**

**Member.** A member is a person who subscribes to and is willing to support the mission of the Church and meets all of the "Requirements for Membership" described below.

**Contribution of record.** As distinguished from money put in the collection plate, a contribution of record is a monetary donation, made via check or other financial vehicle, that is personally traceable to the donor and is submitted to the Church office during each Church fiscal year.

**"Signing the book."** Signing the Membership Book is the act by which a member signifies his or her agreement with the mission of the Church. It is an act of personal and public commitment to the life and work of the Church and to the religious tradition in which it stands.

**Friend.** A friend is any person who subscribes to the mission and supports the programs of the Church but who chooses not to sign the Membership Book. A friend who participates in Church activities is requested to make a contribution of record.

### **Requirements for Membership**

Any person who is at least 16 years of age may become a full, voting member of the Unitarian Church of Hinsdale by:

1. Demonstrating sympathy with and willingness to support its mission and programs.
2. Providing annual financial support, through either a pledge or a contribution of record.
3. Signing the Membership Book.

Any person who is less than 16 years of age may become a full, voting member by:

1. Application to and approval by the Board of Trustees; OR completing the Coming of Age program of the Church.
2. Providing annual financial support, through either a pledge or a contribution of record.
3. Signing the Membership Book.

It is generally expected that prospective members will have gained an exposure to the history, mission, and goals of the Church and the Unitarian Universalist tradition by attending New UU classes or through discussion with the Minister.

### **Privileges and Responsibilities of Membership**

The Unitarian Church of Hinsdale has only one category of membership: full, voting members.

- A member becomes entitled to vote in congregational meetings 45 days after signing the

Membership Book. Only full, voting members are entitled to vote at congregational meetings, including the Annual Meeting and special membership meetings.

- Full, voting membership must be maintained by a recorded financial contribution to the Church, which must be submitted to the Church office each fiscal year (July 1—June 30).
- Although the Church does not have a formal requirement for personal participation in its programs, members are strongly encouraged to give generously of their time, talents, and treasure to support the Church's mission.

#### Process for Terminating Membership

- Members may terminate their membership through a written request to the Church.
- Members who have died, moved away, or cannot be located may have their membership terminated by the Membership Committee. In extraordinary cases, the Board may vote to terminate membership.
- Members who have failed to maintain membership by making a recorded financial contribution to the Church during each fiscal year may be removed from the membership rolls. The Minister or the President of the Board of Trustees may waive this.