

Membership

Statement of Purpose:

The Concord UU Earth-Centered Spirituality Group is dedicated to providing a physically and emotionally safe environment for members and participants to practice and explore earth-based and pagan worship as well as relate socially with others who have similar interests. Membership in the group is an important commitment. Individuals should be well informed about the group before joining, and existing members should have an opportunity to get to know potential members before they join.

The ECSG recognizes that certain individuals who have been convicted of criminal offenses may benefit from the spiritual community that a membership in the ECSG can provide. In concert with Unitarian Universalist principles, the ECSG wishes to meet those needs, in a humane manner, under conditions that provide for the safety of the group's voting members and their families.

Policy

General Membership

Becoming a General Member

In order to earn membership in the group, individuals will

1. Attend at least two of the group's public rituals/events before seeking membership.
2. Attend a formal class or individual meeting with at least two group members appointed by the Membership Committee, for the purpose of learning more about the group, its expectations of members, and the benefits of membership.
3. Assist with the planning and presentation of two public rituals.

Members who are leading public rituals are encouraged to create opportunities for non-members to earn membership in the Group.

Rights of General Members

General Members may

1. take part in all Group activities that are open to all members, including worship, social, and community service activities.
2. lead public and private rituals
3. vote in elections for Organizational Roles.

Maintaining General Membership

1. General Membership is maintained through leadership and/or service activities. Each member must accumulate 6 points each year, by participating in any of the following activities:

- Leading a public ritual – 6 points
- Assisting with a public ritual – 3 points
- Leading a full or new moon circle – 3 points
- Leading a bardic circle – 3 points
- Spring and Fall Grove Cleanup – 2 points
- Hosting a Pagan Dinner Table – 2 points
- Assisting with a bardic circle – 2 points
- Participating in a UU Church service presented by the group – 2 points

Other types of activities may be assigned point values as they are created.

2. All membership activity points are calculated and tallied during the calendar year that runs from the day after Yule (Winter Solstice) to the following Yule.
3. The two ritual assists completed while earning membership are not counted toward maintenance of membership.
4. An individual who gains their initial membership the day after Midsummer or later, needs only to complete 50% (3 points) of the General Membership requirements for that year in order to maintain membership.
5. An individual who participates in the planning of an event, but does not follow through with his/her commitment at the event itself, may not count the activity toward his or her membership requirements.
6. A member who does not fulfill membership requirements during his/her membership year will be given a 3-month grace period in which to complete that obligation. If, after the grace period, the member has not fulfilled the leadership requirement, his/her membership will be terminated. The Membership Committee is responsible for informing members of any impending termination, providing enough notice for the member to complete their requirements before the beginning of the grace period.

Voting Membership

Becoming a Voting Member

Members who earn 15 points for leadership and service during a calendar year will be Voting Members during the following year.

Rights of Voting Members

In addition to the rights of General Membership, Voting Members may

1. Run for and be elected to any of the Organizational Roles or elected committees of the Group.
2. Vote in the day-to-day business of the Group, including but not limited to changes to policy, procedures and by-laws.
3. Participate in any activities that may be organized for voting members only.

Maintaining Voting Membership

1. Voting Membership is maintained through leadership and/or service activities. Each member must accumulate 15 points during a year, in order to maintain Voting Membership for the following year.

In addition to the activities listed for General Membership, Voting Members may earn points by occupying one of the Organizational Roles or being an elected member of a committee – 3 points per individual. Members who hold more than one role only earn three points during the membership year.

2. An individual who participates in the planning of an event, but does not follow through with his/her commitment at the event itself, may not count the activity toward his or her membership requirements.
3. A Voting Member who does not fulfill Voting Membership requirements during a calendar year will be a General Member during the following year, provided he/she has met the requirements for General Membership.

Regaining Membership

Any former member who wishes to regain membership must assist with two rituals.

Youth Membership:

1. A youth, age 16 or 17, whose parent or guardian is an adult member of the Group, may become a member if he or she has completed the leadership requirements for membership. If the parent or guardian resigns or is terminated from membership, the membership of the youth will also be terminated. He or she may rejoin the Group at the age of 18 if desired.
2. A youth's membership is maintained through leadership and service/or activities, as described for adult members. However, youth members will not be given responsibility for leadership of any public ritual.
3. The youth member's parent or guardian will remain responsible for determining whether it is appropriate for the youth to participate in each of the Group's public or private functions.
4. Youth members may participate in events without the parent/guardian, if the parent/guardian so permits.

Sexual Offenders and Felony Parolees

1. Any potential member who is required to register as a sexual offender or is on parole for a felony conviction must disclose his/her status to the chair of the Membership Committee *before* becoming a member of the group.

2. The potential member must meet with the Membership Committee to provide background information and a copy of his/her parole conditions.
3. The potential member must allow the Membership Committee to communicate with his/her parole officer and/or other community resources that may have an understanding of his/her level of risk to the community.
4. After weighing all information gathered from the potential member, parole officer and/or other community resources, the Membership Committee may, by unanimous vote, admit the individual as a member.
5. Registered sexual offenders and felony parolees may be required to sign a limited access agreement, at the discretion of the Membership Committee, and/or upon recommendation of the parole officer.
6. The limited access agreement will be developed by the Membership Committee and the potential member, based upon the specific recommendations of the parole officer and the needs of the group.
7. The Membership Committee may modify a limited access agreement to provide greater security or less restriction, as meets the needs of the member and the group.
8. Members who have signed a limited access agreement may be excluded from social/ritual gatherings that occur in group members' homes, upon the recommendation of the parole officer or decision of the membership committee.
9. Upon admission to the group, the Membership Committee will inform all group members of the new member's terms of limited access, if any.
10. The member's offender status and limited access agreement will be shared with the church minister and board chair, and/or other individuals as required by church policy. The group's Church Liaison will assist with this process, as needed.
11. Any parolee who cannot, because of their terms of parole, complete the requirements for earning or maintaining membership, may not become a voting member of the group.

Addressing concerns about non-offender potential members

1. If, during the process of becoming a member, serious concerns are raised about the appropriateness any individual to be a member of the group, the Membership Committee may meet with the individual to discuss the individual's pending membership, and to gather additional information about his/her suitability and "match" with the group's values and goals.

Concord UU Earth-Centered Spirituality Group
Policy Manual

2. The Membership Committee may deny membership to an individual only upon unanimous vote to exclude.