

Mother Grove Bylaws

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ARTICLE I Membership

Section 1. Admission into membership.

a) Application for membership. A written application for membership shall be placed with the Secretary of the Circle of Council. The application form is to be made available in print, audio, and electronic format. Applicant shall provide name, pertinent contact information, acceptance of the Bylaws, Ethics Statement, and Spiritual Philosophy of the Temple (q.v.) and transfer of membership from previous spiritual community, if applicable.

b) Welcoming new Members. New members of the church shall be welcomed at the next open event at the Temple, at which the new Member is present.

c) Children of Members. Children of the members of the Temple shall be nurtured under its spiritual care when so desired by the child's parents or legal guardian. At the time they choose to do so, children may make application for membership as specified in Article 1, Section 1, a above.

Section 2. Associate membership.

Any person desiring an association with the Temple, yet not wishing to be a full member, may make application in the manner of Article I, Section 1, a above for associate membership. Associate members are granted all rights and privileges of members with the exceptions that they may not become staff clergy, may not hold office in the Temple, and may not vote.

Section 3. Responsibility of membership.

All members accept responsibility for their own actions and those of their dependents and guests as they reflect upon the Temple. Members shall conduct themselves in a safe and courteous manner with respect to other members, the Temple, and its spiritual space and physical property. Members are encouraged to attend rituals, ceremonies, meetings, and other Temple events with the requirement of doing so once per year. Members will be required to provide thirteen (13) stewardship hours per year. "Stewardship hours" are defined in Article V. All members in good standing shall have the right to vote at temple meetings.

Section 4. Membership Anomalies.

a) Non-Active Members. Members who no longer attend the Temple events or who have moved from the area shall be considered non-active members. The Circle of Council shall have the responsibility of contacting non-active members prior to each annual meeting to determine their intention with regard to membership. Further action may be taken at the annual meeting. All members of the church are required to have contact with the Temple at least once each year. "Contact" is defined as physical attendance at a ritual or membership meeting.

b) Members who no longer adhere to the Spiritual Philosophy of the Temple Any member known to conduct herself or himself in a manner which brings discredit to the Temple shall be counseled by members of staff clergy. If he or she does not heed this counsel, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the Circle of Council. If she or he fails to heed the counsel of the Circle of Council, the matter shall be brought before a congregational business meeting. Discipline shall then be administered with due regard for the welfare of the individual as well as the Temple.

c) Dismissal of members. Dismissal of a member under paragraphs a) and b) of this section must be acted on by the voting membership of the Temple, which alone has the authority. A two-thirds vote of those present and voting at a congregational business meeting is necessary for such action.

d) Forfeiture of rights. A member who has been properly dismissed from the Temple, or has withdrawn membership, has forfeited all rights and privileges of membership in the Temple.

Section 5. Removal of membership.

Request for withdrawal from membership in the Temple shall be made in writing to the Secretary. All requests for removal from membership of any member will be verified with the member and will be so honored. Membership may also be withdrawn from non-active members who have not had contact with the Temple for a period greater than one year, as stated in Section 4 a.

Section 6. Non-member friends.

The Temple as a part of its total constituency shall enroll non-member friends. The Temple and its clergy shall serve them in their spiritual needs, and they shall be encouraged to consider this their spiritual home. They shall be kept informed of the events of the Temple.

ARTICLE II The Circle of Council

Section 1. Size, composition, election, and tenure.

The Circle of Council is the governing body of the Temple. It shall consist of no fewer than nine and no more than thirteen members, which number does not include representatives of the Elder clergy of the College of Celebrants (see ARTICLE IV), who act as ex-officio members. Members of the College of Celebrants may serve as elected members of the Circle of Council. Those Circle of Council members shall include the Triskele (q.v.), the Treasurer, the Secretary, and the Visionkeeping Wheel, who shall be elected in accordance with Article III, Section 3 of these bylaws. Other members of the Circle of Council may include but are not limited to the leaders of the Facilitating Circles (as defined in ARTICLE V) and people drawn from the membership of the Temple, who have chosen to give of their time in this manner. Members shall serve for terms of three years in such a manner that the terms of approximately one-third of the members shall expire each year. They shall not be elected to more than two consecutive full terms.

Section 2. Qualifications.

Members of the Circle of Council shall be members in good standing of the Temple who are active in the works of the Temple and have shown their commitment to the programs and to the Spiritual Philosophy and Ethics Statement of the Temple.

Section 3. Duties.

The Circle of Council bears administrative responsibility (in co-operation with the clergy and facilitation circle leaders) to fulfill the functions defined by the Articles of Incorporation, the Bylaws, Ethics Statement, and the Spiritual Philosophy of the Temple, including the following:

- a) Supervise Temple membership
- b) Assist the clergy and lay volunteers in nurturing the spiritual life of the Temple.
- c) Establish administrative and program policies in conformity with the Bylaws, Ethics Statement, and the Spiritual Philosophy of the Temple.
- d) Evaluate the Temple programming and vision (including both long-range and short-range planning) on a continuing basis.
- e) Recommend the annual budget, as proposed by the Treasurer, and to review and enhance stewardship opportunities for the Temple and its programs.
- f) Review and approve the schedule of activities and personnel.
- g) Appoint Facilitating Circles and recruit Temple volunteers as defined by the Bylaws and as the Circle of Council may deem appropriate.

Section 4. Facilitating Circles

Implementation of policies and programs established by congregational or council action may be accomplished through the Facilitating Circles, each of whose chairs may be a member of the Circle of Council as established under Section 1 above:

The Temple member who serves as leader of a Facilitating Circle assumes responsibility for directing activities that fall within that functional category, in cooperation with the clergy. The circle shall consist of members of the Temple in good standing and nonmember friends, which may be members of the community at large chosen for their particular expertise. See ARTICLE V for specific duties & responsibilities of the Facilitating Circles.

ARTICLE III Partners in the Circle of Council

Section 1. Qualifications.

The Circle of Council shall be composed of up to thirteen members in good standing who are active in the support of the total works of the Temple. They shall elect from this body a three-person facilitation team, called the Triskele, a Secretary, a Treasurer and a Visionkeeping Wheel, to oversee the operations of the Circle of Council and the Temple.

Section 2. Duties.

a) the Triskele. The Triskele (or a 2/3 majority of it) shall preside at all business meetings of the Temple and at meetings of the Circle of Council. The Triskele shall confer with the senior clergy and the Facilitating Circle leaders in preparing the agenda for such meetings.

b) the Secretary. The Secretary shall keep and preserve the minutes of all congregational business meetings of the Temple and meetings of the council, and shall conduct and preserve all official correspondence as shall be delegated. The Secretary shall also be responsible for the official seal and documents of the Temple, as well as the records of membership.

c) the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be responsible for all funds committed to her or him and shall make disbursements as authorized by the Circle of Council. The Treasurer shall also present a written report of the receipts and expenditures at each regular meeting of the Circle of Council and at each congregational business meeting. The Treasurer shall also serve as an ad hoc member of the Stewardship and Finance Circle.

d) the Visionkeeping Wheel. The Visionkeeping Wheel shall be responsible for the history of the Temple and charged with the memory of that history, so that they may bring that to bear in decisions and planning of the Circle of Council.

Section 3. Election and tenure.

The Triskele, the Secretary, and the Treasurer shall be elected at an annual congregational business meeting for terms of three years. They shall not be elected to serve more than two consecutive full terms in the same office. The Visionkeeping Wheel shall consist of no more than three, whose terms of service shall be organized as is the Triskele. The initial term of the Triskele is three years. Upon re-election, members do a one-, two- or three-year rotation, so that the Wheel keeps moving.

Section 4. Vacancies.

Such vacancies as occur among the Partners of the Circle of Council may be filled by appointment of the Triskele, with the concurrence of the Circle of Council. The appointee will serve until the next annual congregational business meeting; if an un-expired term continues beyond the date of that meeting, the position will be filled by election as under Section 3 above. Such appointive service will not disqualify a person from serving two full terms under the terms of Section 3.

Section 5. Consequences.

Should a Partner neglect her or his duties or become a hindrance to the work of the Temple, that Partner shall be admonished by the Circle of Council and/or the Triskele in a manner consistent with Article I, Section 4 of these bylaws. Should such admonition not be heeded, a vote of two-thirds of the Circle of Council, with the concurrence of the membership by a two-thirds vote of those present, will be sufficient to remove that person from office, the vacancy to be filled as under Section 4 above.

ARTICLE IV The College of Celebrants

Section 1. Qualifications.

The clergy of the Temple shall include those members that have studied within the Temple for a period of one year and one day, or whose experience, within the Temple or as an individual, is deemed by the College of Celebrants to be sufficient, and have accepted a calling to the clergy. On request of any member of the Temple that meets that requirement, the College of Celebrants may give an examination. Such examination may be written or oral, shall include at least one personal interview and may include any such material as the College of Celebrants may from time to time establish as requisite knowledge of the clergy of this Temple. Any member requesting admission to the clergy that does not meet the requirements of the examination will be guided and aided by the Triskele and elder members of the College of Celebrants. They shall by virtue of their call be members of the church and will be known as Priestess or Priest.

Section 2. Duties.

The clergy shall be devoted to the service of the Temple, teaching what they know, administering ceremony, and faithfully giving themselves to the needs of the Temple. They shall provide the Temple with an accurate record of their ministerial acts and present a written report to the congregational annual business meeting. They shall practice good administrative procedures and cooperate with the Circle of Council. Elder members shall act as ex officio members of the Circle of Council and all committees of the church, as required or deemed necessary by the Circle of Council. All clergy of the Temple are expected to perform those rites and services expected of ministers when asked to do so or to recommend an appropriate substitute.

Section 3. Co-operation.

The clergy shall, both in word and precept, work in harmony with the Triskele, the Circle of Council, and the membership of the Temple.

Section 4. Ordination.

The clergy shall be ordained at regular or special Temple ceremonies, the purpose of which shall be announced two weeks in advance. The clergy shall be nominated and accepted by the College of Celebrants.

Section 5. Charges against a Priestess or Priest.

Charges against a clergy-person shall be submitted in writing to the Circle of Council and the College of Celebrants, charging a clergy-person with indiscretion, immorality, doctrinal error, unethical behavior, or disloyalty to the Temple. If, in the judgment of both governing Circles of the Temple as previously defined, there is substance to the charges, the Circles will offer a joint hearing where the accused and accuser may state their points. Once the case is stated by the accused, the accuser, and any available witnesses, and all relevant accounts are heard, the Circles will make a decision regarding what action to take. The decision of the Circles will be final.

Section 6. Guests Celebrants.

Guests of the College and Guest Celebrants must be respectful of the Spiritual Philosophy of the Temple, adhere to the Ethics Statement of the Temple (q.v.; a separate document) and shall be treated as other members of the College.

ARTICLE V Temple Facilitating Circles

- a) Ritual Circle
- b) Stewardship and Finance Circle
- c) Outreach Committee and Community Service Circle
- d) Long-Range Planning Circle
- e) Nominating Circle
- f) Special Circles
- g) Physical Stewardship

Section 1. Ritual Coordination Circle.

The Ritual coordination circle shall consist of the elder clergy of the College of Celebrants, two members of the congregation, two members of the Circle of Council and others as may seem advisable for special events and functions. It shall meet at least semiannually in keeping with the program and purpose of the Temple. The appointive members shall serve terms of two years.

Section 2. Stewardship and Finance Circle.

The Stewardship and Finance Circle shall consist of members of the Circle of Council, as well as members of the congregation, with the Treasurer serving in an ad hoc capacity. This circle is charged with resource development for the Temple and its programs, including but not limited to: fundraising through annual giving drives and programs, offerings and collections from the membership at regular and special events, Temple accounting and fund distribution and Federal and State tax reporting.

Section 3. Outreach and Community Service Circle

The Outreach and Community Service Circle shall consist of members of the Circle of Council, as well as members of the congregation, with a member of the Triskele serving

in an ad hoc capacity. This circle is charged with outreach into the congregational and general communities and its scope includes but is not limited to: faith-based charitable programming (food pantry, Room in the Inn, street clean-ups, etc), interfaith work, liaison with the Coalition of Earth Religions for Education and Support/CERES, speakers bureau and other educational programs about the Temple.

Section 4. Long-range Planning Circle

The long-range planning circle shall consist of not less than seven (7) members, including at least one member of the Triskele. The circle facilitator shall be a voting member of the council, and the elder clergy of the College of Celebrants shall be ex-officio members of the planning committee. No member shall remain on the committee for more than three years, and its designated representatives from the Triskele shall serve no more than two years. The responsibilities of the circle shall include the following:

- a)** Annually formulate, update, and/or revise a five-year plan for the Temple, presenting a report and plan to the congregation for its review and approval at the annual meeting or at a special meeting that has been called for the purpose.

- b)** After such approval has been obtained, annually prepare an implementation strategy for the then-current five-year plan, delivering it to the semi-annual meeting of the Temple for its review and concurrence.

- c)** Provide advice and support to the Circle of Council and to the Organizing Circles of the Temple, which shall have the responsibility for implementation; and incorporate into each subsequent review of the five-year plan such changes as have been deemed necessary or undertaken by those other facilitating circles.

Section 5. Nominating Circle.

The nominating circle shall consist of not less than three (3) members, including at least one member of the Circle of Council and one non-member of the Council. These members shall be elected at a business meeting at least three (3) months prior to the annual meeting. The elder clergy shall be ex-officio members of the committee. After being convened by the Triskele, committee members shall elect their own chair and secretary. The responsibility of the committee shall include the following:

- a)** Prepare a ballot for the annual meeting of the congregation listing at least one qualified candidate for each office to be filled.

b) Confirm the willingness of each candidate to serve before listing her or his name on the ballot.

c) Present a complete ballot to the annual meeting of the congregation. This shall constitute completion of the committee assignment, unless it be given specific responsibilities at said annual meeting.

Section 6. Special Circles

Special circles for specific purposes may be appointed at any duly constituted business meeting of the congregation or by the Circle of Council according to need, but shall be automatically terminated at the next annual meeting unless specifically extended by said annual meeting.

Section 7. Physical Stewardship Circle

The Physical Stewardship Circle shall consist of members of the Circle of Council, as well as members of the congregation, and is charged with maintaining or causing to be maintained the Temple and its physical environs, including but not limited to the grounds and gardens, physical structures and maintaining records of Stewardship hours required of the congregational members.

ARTICLE VI Meetings

Section 1. Public services.

Public services shall be conducted regularly when deemed appropriate.

Section 2. Celebrating the Sabbats and Esbats.

The congregation of the Temple will come together as a whole on each of the Sabbats for the purpose of celebrating the day. The Ritual Circle is charged with planning the location, activities and liturgy of the celebration. The celebration of Esbats will be coordinated by the Ritual Circle and will occur approximately once a month at such time and place as determined by the Ritual Circle members.

Section 3. Congregational business meetings.

Congregational business meetings shall be held regularly and not less than semiannually. The Triskele may call special business meetings with the elder clergy or with the Circle of Council.

Section 4. Circle of Council and administrative meetings.

Regular meetings of the Circle of Council shall be held not less than monthly. Administrative committees, special committees, and task forces shall meet as specified by the Circle of Council. Their respective facilitators may call special meetings if deemed necessary.

Section 5. Organizational meetings.

Meetings and activities of the organizations of the Temple shall be planned and conducted regularly under the direction and supervision of the Circle of Council.

ARTICLE VII General Provisions

Section 1. Quorum.

a) Seventy-five percent of the membership present and voting at a business meeting properly called shall constitute a quorum.

b) The quorum for the Circle of Council, Facilitating Circles or other Special Circles shall be a majority of their respective memberships.

Section 2. Rules of Order.

All business meetings of the Temple, the Circle of Council and of the Organizing Circles shall be conducted through a modified consensus process.

ARTICLE VIII Amendments

Section 1. Amendments.

Amendments to these bylaws not in conflict with the other governing documents and principles may be adopted at any regular congregational business meeting, or at a special

business meeting called for that purpose, by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting, providing that such amendments have been presented in writing to the council and at a preceding regular congregational business meeting.