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**ARTICLE I: NAME**

The Church shall be known as “The First Spiritualist Church of Quincy”

**ARTICLE II: OBJECTIVE**

The object of this Church shall be to understand and serve Infinite Spirit according to the precepts of the Spiritualist Religion, and to teach the Religion, Philosophy and Science of Spiritualism through services, lectures, development classes and other educational measures.

**ARTICLE III: MEMBERS**

Definition of scope and requirements of membership

**Section 1: Age**

Members must be at least eighteen (18) years of age before application for membership can be made.

**Section 2: Attendance**

Applicants seeking membership in this Church are required to have attended a minimum of twelve (12) services in this Church within a period of six (6) consecutive months. After the required attendance, the applicant may submit a formal, written application for membership on the prescribed form.

**Section 3: Copy of By-Laws**

All prospective members shall receive a copy of the by-laws of this Church upon submitting application for membership, whether the applicant is transferring from another Spiritualist Church or is applying for membership in a Spiritualist Church for the first time.

**Section 4: Examination**

All prospective members shall be interviewed to determine their understanding of the by-laws of this Church, the Declaration of Principles and the Definitions (as described in the First Spiritualist Church of Quincy by-laws). This interview will be conducted to be

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sure that the applicant understands the tenets of Spiritualism as defined in this document and not to explore the personal beliefs and interpretations of the applicant.

This interview shall be conducted by a committee consisting of two – three members of the Pastoral Committee.

A less than unanimous vote of the committee entitles the applicant to an executive session meeting before the committee. This meeting will be held immediately following the voting. The agenda of the meeting is to present applicant with the tally of the vote, and the committee reasons(s) of disagreement. At this time the applicant has the opportunity to respond to the committee's concerns. At the end of this discussion, the applicant has the following three options available:

1. a re-vote of the examining committee within a week of this date;
2. a withdrawal of the application;
3. a submission to the full membership for consideration with full disclosure of the committee's concern against said applicant.

If the applicant chooses option 2 (withdrawal of application) the applicant may resubmit for re-examination.

**Section 5: Reexamination**

If the interview has not been successful, the applicant must wait a period of two (2) months before another interview can be scheduled.

**Section 6. Resignation of Previous Church Member**

At the time of the Application for Membership, the applicant agrees to have relinquished any other church membership.

**Section 7. Good Standing**

No members shall be considered in good standing who have not paid their dues by March 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year.

Members who default into the 'not in good standing' category forfeit voting privileges, and in the case of Board Members, their position on the Board as well.

**Section 8: Rights and Privileges**

New members may participate in any and all discussions at the members meetings and have full voting privileges.

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**Article IV**  
**Officers**

**Section 1: Definition**

The officers of this Church shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, each of whom shall be an ex-officio Trustee, and together with the Pastor, the Assistant Pastor, and the four (4) others shall constitute a board of ten (10) Trustees. These Officers shall perform the duties prescribed by the by-laws of this Church and by the Parliamentary Authority adopted by this Church (Roberts Rules of Orders, See Article X).

**Section 2: Election**

All officers and trustees shall be elected by secret ballot by eligible members present and voting at the annual meeting. Newly elected officers shall assume their office as of January 1<sup>st</sup> of the next calendar year.

**Section 3: Term of Office**

A term of office shall consist of three (3) years. The board members shall hold office for not more than two consecutive terms, plus any portion of unexpired term to which they were elected or appointed.

In the event that there is not a qualified nominee to replace a board member who is required to vacate an office under the terms of this Section, the incumbent may continue in office until the next election. Each year that an incumbent serves will count as one year of the unexpired or full term that was open for election.

If a board member position is vacated for any reason, the Board shall appoint pro-tem trustee to fill that vacancy until the next annual meeting.

**Section 4: Scope of Offices Held**

No member shall hold more than one (1) elected office at a time.

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**ARTICLE V**  
**Duties of Officers and Other Elected Officials**

**Section 1: President**

The President shall preside at members meetings and at meetings of the Board of Trustees and shall countersign membership cards, certificates, checks drawn on this Church and legal documents.

The President, along with the Treasurer, shall countersign all orders for payment against the Church after payment is approved by the Board of Trustees. Exceptions are routine bills, which may be countersigned by the President and Treasurer without the board's approval. Those exceptions designated as "routine bills" are heating, electricity, gas, water, insurance, any regular newspaper advertising that has been decided upon by a majority vote of the Board, supplies and payment of mediums. The President shall have power of attorney on all other papers, authorized with written approval of the Board of Trustees. In the event of an emergency requiring expenditure for the well-being of the Church, the President shall take an e-mail vote of all available Trustees and proceed with a majority vote.

**Section 2: Vice-President**

The Vice President shall perform all duties of the President in his/her absence. The Vice President works hand in hand with the President for all of the functions needed at the church.

**Section 3: Secretary**

The Secretary shall have charge of the secretarial work at all members meetings of the Church, all meetings of the Board of Trustees and all Pastoral Committee meetings. The secretary will provide a written copy of the minutes of each meeting at the next meeting. A report of the members, and open board meetings shall be made available to members of this Church upon ten (10) days notice.

The Secretary shall attend to the correspondence of the Church as assigned by the Pastoral staff or the President and shall sign all certificates commissions, powers of attorney and all other papers required, when authorized by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Trustees.

**Section 4: Treasurer**

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The Treasurer shall be the custodian of all funds, bonds, notes, securities, and evidence of property belonging to this Church. This officer shall receive all monies from the Secretary and shall invest them in such property or securities, or deposit them in such banks, as a majority of the members may direct. The Treasurer shall pay all bills against the Church. Payment of all bills and shall keep a separate account for each of the several funds, including the endowment funds, and shall use such systems of accounting as the Board of Trustees may direct, and shall furnish a statement of the accounts whenever requested by the President or three (3) members of the Board of Trustees. The Treasurer shall make a full report at each business meeting of the activities of the office, setting forth the conditions of the several funds, the nature and extent of the investments, the disbursements, accompanied by vouchers, invoices or receipts, the cash on deposit and the cash on hand. The Treasurer shall be bonded for the faithful performance of the duties of the office in such amount, conditions, and securities as the Board of Trustees may direct. All Treasurer's records may be inspected by any member of this church upon ten (10) days notice.

**Section 5: Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees shall be charged to carry out the will of the members of enforcing all resolutions and votes enacted by the Church. Said Trustees shall appoint the heads of all departments and all other appointive officials of the Church, except such standing committees or special committees as the President shall be given the power to appoint; shall fill all vacancies on the Board and in the appointive offices; and shall have the general management and control of all affairs and activities of the Church not otherwise provided for the by-laws. All Members of the Board of Trustees are required to attend the majority of the scheduled Board Meetings per year.

Said Trustees shall have general care of the property but shall not contract any debt or make any expenditures or dispose of any property belonging to this Church without the vote of the membership. Exception is made in the event of an emergency as noted under Section I of this Article.

Any member of the Board of Trustees designated by the President and without other elective officers, shall serve and perform the duties of either Secretary or Treasurer in the absence of any, making full report of their activities to be included in the regular report and accounting of the Secretary and/or Treasurer.

**Section 6: Auditors**

The Board, excluding the Secretary and Treasurer, will appoint two (2) auditors at the Fall quarterly Board Meeting. They shall be responsible for auditing the Treasurer's and

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Secretary's accounting on an annual basis and making a full report at the Members' meeting. The audit shall consist of a verification of the Treasurer's and Secretary's accounting or any corrections where indicated. This report shall be kept on file by the Secretary and shall be made available to members of this Church for inspection upon ten (10) days notice.

**ARTICLE VI**  
**Meetings**

Definition of meeting types, quorums:

**Section 1: Board Meetings**

The Board meetings of this Church shall be held at least once during each quarter of the year, at which copies of the officers reports shall be distributed to all members present.

**Section 2: Annual Meeting**

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the officers reports shall be distributed to all members present.

**Section 3: Special Members Meeting**

The President or any four (4) members of this Church may call a special members meeting. All members must be given seven (7) days notification of meeting and its purpose.

**Section 4: Quorums**

A members quorum shall consist of fifty (50) percent of the active and attending members of the Church. An active member is defined as an individual who has paid their annual dues. (If an individual cannot afford to pay their dues, please contact the President or the Treasurer and a scholarship will be provided.) It is our hope that each church member will attend church services as frequently as possible and will be involved in all activities of the church. A board quorum shall consist of six (6) Board Members. Both board and member quorums shall be necessary to conduct a Special Members Meeting.

**Section 5: Failed Quorum**

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In the event a quorum is not present, the members present shall select by majority vote an alternative date not later than fourteen (14) days from the original meeting date. All members must be given seven (7) days notification of this alternative date.

**Section 6: Vote by Proxy**

Any member in good standing unable to attend a Members Meeting may give their vote to another church member, other than the President, to vote in their stead by proxy vote.

**ARTICLE VII**  
**Election of Officers and Trustees**

**Section 1: Date of Election**

This election shall take place at the annual members meeting. Those elected shall begin their terms at the start of the next calendar year.

**Section 2: Nomination**

Nominations for each office shall be made from the floor and seconded.

**Section 3: Nominee Criteria**

Those nominated for office shall have been members in good standing for at least one (1) calendar year.

**Section 4: Voting**

Officers and Trustees shall be elected by majority vote in secret ballot. When running unopposed a secret ballot is unnecessary. It is hereby provided for that if among the candidates there is none with a majority vote of those present and eligible for voting, the lowest scoring candidate shall be eliminated from contention, and the vote shall be retaken until one candidate has a majority vote of the membership.

The President shall appoint two (2) Tellers to tally votes.

**Section 5: Board Tenure Sequence**

The election of Officers and Trustees will occur in a staggered sequence so as to provide for continuity of experience of the Board.

**ARTICLE VIII**  
**Pastor**

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**Section 1: Qualifications**

The qualifications of a person for consideration for the position of Pastor are as follows:

- A. Have successfully completed the Morris Pratt Institute educational program for the ministry **or** the Journey Within Spiritualist Church Ministerial Program.
- B. Be an ordained Spiritualist Minister **or**
- C. Hold a Licentiate Minister's certificate in good standing.
- D. If item C applies – complete the minister's course and be ordained within one year of appointment to the pastorship.

**Section 2: Search Committee**

The search committee for pastoral candidate will be comprised of the Pastoral Committee. Any Member of the Pastoral Committee may nominate a candidate. All nominees will be invited to sit with the Pastoral Committee, or its quorum, to be interviewed.

Pastoral Committee selected nominees will conduct one or more services. The test service(s) will include the following service elements; Invocation, Lead in Reading the Principles, Conduct the Healing Service along with the Reading of the Healing Prayer, Lecture, Announcements, and Benediction. Candidates may or may not serve as Medium during the Message Portion of the Service.

Election of a new Pastor will be done by secret ballot vote by members at the annual meeting or a special members meeting. Voting will still occur even if only one candidate is presented and a two-thirds vote of acceptance is necessary for election.

**Section 3: Pastoral Duties** (Or in the absence of a Pastor the Pastoral Committee)

The duties of the Pastor shall include but not be limited to the following:

- A. Set the spiritual direction and make the spiritual decisions for the Church within the guidelines set forth in these by-laws and the Declaration of Principles.
- B. Conduct the scheduled services.



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- C. Schedule workers for services, seminars, workshops, healing or special services.
- D. Visit the sick when invited.
- E. Conduct marriage, funeral, memorial and naming services, when asked.
- F. Officially welcome new members into the Church in a brief ceremony during a scheduled service.
- G. Sign, along with the President and the Secretary, all credentials issued to Healers, Mediums, Licentiate Ministers and Ministers.
- H. Act as ordained official at a special public service when original credential (See item G) is issued.
- I. Sign, along with the President and the Secretary, annual travel and membership cards.
- J. Appoint and dismiss Assistant Pastors as needed.
- K. Authorize non-credentialed members to serve churches and church related events, i.e., a regular service, mediums day, seminar, workshop or healing service when invited by the Pastor.
- L. Only the Pastor shall provide spiritual counseling, maintaining strict confidentiality. All other counseling needs will be referred to an appropriate professional agency, organization, or individual, if known.
- M. Exercise strict confidentiality regarding disbursements of the Pastor's Discretionary Fund, which will be funded by the Church at the rate of Twenty five (25) dollars per week with a strict cap of one thousand (1,000) dollars.
- N. Establish and maintain friendly and cooperative relationship with all Religious and charitable organizations when possible.
- O. Appoint all teachers.

**Section 4: Dismissal of Pastor**

The Board or its quorum will meet with the Pastor to discuss and identify problem(s). A date will be set to allow time for corrective goals defined in the initial meeting to be achieved. Since both the Pastor and the Board have mutual goals, i.e., spiritual service to Church Members, attendees and the community. The Board Members will cooperate and actively assist the Pastor in achieving the established goals. At midpoint to the goal date, a progress meeting will be held to evaluate progress. At this time the Board may vote to extend the goal time, allow progress to continue, or vote to dismiss. A majority or two-thirds vote of the Board confirming dismissal will be required. Voting will be done by secret ballot, with the Pastor and the Assistant Pastor absent from the Board. If the vote result affirms dismissal, the Pastor will be notified immediately and be given the

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opportunity to submit a letter of resignation. All Board meetings regarding dismissal will be held in executive session.

**Section 5: Dismissal of Church Member**

When an individual joins the First Spiritualist Church of Quincy they are officially welcomed into the Church with a Fellowship Ceremony. During this time they are asked to commit to the essentials of a Spiritualist life, the principles of charity and the spirit of harmonious conduct. When any Church Member's conduct is no longer in keeping with the agreed upon commitments made at the time of admission to the church, their church membership will be called into question. They will be asked to meet with the Pastor and members of the Pastoral Committee to determine if they will continue to be a Member of The First Spiritualist Church of Quincy.

If a member's actions are deemed to be undermining the harmony of the Church community, they may be asked to leave.

**ARTICLE IX**  
**Committees**

The following committees shall be considered standing committees, and the Committee Chairs will be appointed by the President. Ways and Means, Music, Repair and Maintenance, and Public Relations. Committee Chairs shall give a report at the annual meeting on the activities of their committee.

The Committee Chair may appoint members to each committee as needed.

The committees will each be responsible for the following:

Ways and Means: Responsible for Church fundraising.

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The Chairperson shall coordinate activities with the President and the Pastoral Staff.

Music: Responsible for building and maintaining a Spiritual Song book.

Repair and Maintenance: Responsible for assessing and reporting the building and grounds and repair and maintenance needs. The Chairperson shall coordinate activities with the President and the Pastoral Staff.

Public Relations: Responsible for flyers and media communications for all suitable events. The Chairperson shall coordinate activities with the President and the Pastoral Staff.

**ARTICLE X**  
**Amending These By-laws**

These by-laws may be amended at any members meeting by a two-thirds vote of the voting members, if notice has been given of the amendments proposed at a previous meeting.

**ARTICLE XI**  
**Parliamentary Authority**

Roberts Rules of Order shall be the authority and will govern all matters not otherwise provided for in these by-laws.

**ARTICLE XII**  
**Date of Effect**

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**DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES**

1. We believe in Infinite Spirit and that God is Infinite Spirit.
2. We believe that the phenomena of nature, both physical and spiritual, are the expression of Infinite Spirit.
3. We affirm that living in harmony with one's understanding of Natural Law constitutes true religion.
4. We affirm that the existence and personal identity of the individual continues after the change called death.
5. We affirm that communication with the so called dead is a fact, proven by the phenomena of Spiritualism.
6. We believe that the highest morality is contained in the Golden Rule: "Whatsoever ye would that others should do unto you, do ye also unto them".
7. We affirm the moral responsibility of the individual, and that we create our own happiness or unhappiness by choosing to live in harmony with nature's physical and spiritual laws.
8. We affirm that the doorway to reformation is never closed against any soul here or hereafter.
9. We affirm that the precepts of Prophecy and Healing are divine attributes proven through mediumship.