

CHARTER OF THE RIVER ROAD UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION
 EARTH MINISTRY 

I. MISSION

The Earth Ministry's mission is to support RRUUC in actualizing the UUA seventh principle (respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part) and RRUUC's values as a Green Sanctuary. Key focus areas include helping the congregation reduce climate change impacts in the congregational building and at home. **The Earth Ministry will call upon all, in a loving and respectful way, to take the actions necessary to preserve the earth as a sustainable home for humanity and all living beings.**

II. TASKS

The tasks of the Earth Ministry include:

- Ensuring Sustainable Operations at RRUUC: Periodically reviewing church operations to determine if they are being performed in an environmentally sustainable manner; and recommending improvements in operating practices where indicated. This includes spearheading the effort to improve the energy efficiency of the building, the shift to running the building on renewable electricity already generated elsewhere and managing the exploration of generating new additional renewable electricity on our roof via onsite solar.
- Supporting Green Sanctuary Re-Accreditation: Supporting the Green Sanctuary Team in encouraging the actions required of RRUUC and its members to qualify RRUUC for green sanctuary re-accreditation.
- Supporting Worship Services As Needed: Providing support, when requested, to the ministers, religious educators, and RRUUC staff in planning and providing worship services.
- Educating the Congregation on Key Sustainability Topics: Offering or supporting environmental workshops or presentations at RRUUC's annual retreat, for Contemporary Issues Forum (formerly CC&C) events, and other events as needed.
- Offering Advocacy Opportunities on Sustainability Topics: Informing RRUUC members about local, state, and national legislation supported by the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministries, encouraging support for and providing steps towards effectively advocating for recommended legislation.
- Engaging with local, regional, and national sustainability focused organizations: This includes participating in the Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions (MC-FACS).
- Promoting environmental justice.
- Providing an annual report of Earth Ministry activities to the Board of Trustees.

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III. MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Earth Ministry is open to all members and friends of RRUUC.

IV. LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

The Earth Ministry will be led by one or more Co-Chairs (the “Chairs”) who are Voting Members. The Earth Ministry will choose the Chairs by consensus for terms of one (1) year, starting at the beginning of the congregation’s fiscal year (July 1) and ending at the end of the fiscal year (June 30). No person shall serve as a chair for more than six consecutive years.

The Earth Ministry shall also have a Communications chair, who shall be responsible for maintaining the Earth Ministry’s membership list, assuring that the Earth Ministry’s email list at RRUUC is kept up-to date, posting notices of the Earth Ministry’s meetings in RRUUC’s eWeekly, and maintaining minutes of the Earth Ministry’s meetings on a Google drive.

Duties of the Chairs include:

1. Setting the meeting agenda for Earth Ministry meetings and presiding at meetings.
2. Recruiting new members of the Earth Ministry.
3. Assigning and overseeing tasks and projects required to carry out the work of the Earth Ministry.
4. Representing the Earth Ministry in dealings with RRUUC staff, the RRUUC board, other RRUUC committees and ministries, the Green Sanctuary Task Force, and members of the Congregation.
5. Preparing a report of the Earth Ministry’s activities for presentation at RRUUC’s annual meeting.

The Chairs will divide responsibility for leading the Earth Ministry’s tasks and projects in such manner as they may agree.

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V. SUBCOMMITTEES, TEAMS OR TASK FORCES

The Chairs may establish subcommittees, teams, or task forces to carry out the projects and initiatives approved by the Earth Ministry. The leader of each subcommittee, team or task force shall report on its activities at each regular meeting of the Earth Ministry.

VI. MEETINGS

Regular Meetings. The Earth Ministry shall meet monthly from September until June of each year. Unless otherwise decided by the members, the meetings will be held the third Sunday of each month between services. The Chairs shall determine the time for the meetings, which must not conflict with RRUUC's regular Sunday worship services. Effort will be made to select meeting times which work for the majority of Earth Ministry members, including those working day jobs.

Notices of Regular Meetings: The Earth Ministry, through the Communications Lead, will publicize upcoming Earth Ministry meetings in the eWeekly immediately prior to the meeting and in the preceding edition of the eWeekly.

Other Meetings. The Chairs may call other meetings of the Earth Ministry as they deem appropriate and will endeavor to give the members reasonable advance notice of such meetings. Effort will be made to select meeting times which work for the majority of Earth Ministry members, including those working day jobs.

Subcommittee, Team and Task force Meetings: Subcommittees, teams and task forces may schedule meetings or operate informally using electronic communications.

VII. DECISION MAKING

In General: The Earth Ministry will make most decisions by a consensus of the individuals attending the Earth Ministry meeting at which an issue is raised. Everyone who attends will be encouraged to actively participate in discussions to help shape the consensus. In the absence of a consensus, a decision may be made by a simple majority of the voting members present at the meeting.

Between Meetings: Matters requiring a decision between regular meetings shall be made by the Chairs, who shall report the decision at the Earth Ministry's next regular meeting.

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For core decisions as determined by the Chair(s) requiring a vote of the Earth Ministry's members, only Voting Members (defined below) will be allowed to vote.

A Voting Member is an Earth Ministry member who is entitled to vote at the next annual meeting of RRUUC members.

VIII. CHARTER AND AMENDMENTS

Effective Date: This charter will become effective upon: (1) presentation and discussion at a regular monthly meeting of the Earth Ministry, followed by (2) adoption by a simple majority of the voting members at the Earth Ministry's next regular meeting.

Expiration Date: This charter has no expiration date.

Amendments: Amendments to this charter require:

1. Submitting the proposed amendment in writing to the Earth Ministry Chairs at least four (4) weeks prior to the regular meeting at which the proposed amendment will be considered; and
2. Placing the proposed amendment item on the regular monthly meeting agenda least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting at which the proposed amendment is scheduled for consideration; and
3. Adoption of the amendment by a simple majority of the voting members present at the meeting in which the amendment is considered.

IX. AUTHORITY

The Earth Ministry is a member-created committee, as defined in §6.4 of the RRUUC By-Laws (amended June 4, 2017) and §I.B. in the Board of Trustees' Guidance on "Committees and Councils at RRUUC" (rev'd and app'd Mar. 15, 2011). Authority for creating a charter and recommended contents of the charter may be found in §§ II., III., and IV. of the Guidance.