

BYLAWS PORTLAND SPIRITUALIST CHURCH

ARTICLE I

NAME

SECTION 1. NAME. The name of this Religious Society is the Portland Spiritualist Church; and having duly incorporated under the laws of the State of Maine on January 1, 1954; and holds Charter Number ME 32 of the National Spiritualist Association of Churches (hereafter referred to as NSAC), a religious body, incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia.

ARTICLE II

PRINCIPLES-DEFINITIONS-HEALING PRAYERS

SECTION 1. DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. The following Declaration of Principles is published to the world, not as a creed binding on the conscience of the individual, but as the consensus of a large majority of American Spiritualists on the fundamental teachings of Spiritualism. The Declaration of Principles shall be recited at all devotional services.

1. We believe in Infinite Intelligence.
2. We believe that the phenomena of nature, both physical and spiritual, are the expression of Infinite Intelligence.
3. We affirm that a correct understanding of such expression and living in accordance therewith constitute true religion.
4. We affirm that the existence and personal identity of the individual continue after the change called death.
5. We affirm that communication with the so-called dead is a fact, scientifically 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 individuals, and that we make our own happiness or unhappiness as we obey or disobey 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.

SECTION 2. SIMPLIFIED DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. The following Simplified Declaration of Principles is published for use in the Spiritualist Lyceum of this auxiliary.

1. We believe in God.

2. We believe that God is expressed through all Nature.
3. True religion is living in obedience to Nature's Laws.
4. We never die.
5. Spiritualism proves that we can talk with people in the Spirit World.
6. Be kind, do good, and others can learn to do likewise.
7. We bring unhappiness to ourselves by the errors we make and we will be happy if we obey the Laws of Life.
8. Every day is a new beginning.
9. Prophecy and healing are expressions of God.

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS. The following Definitions are published to the world, not as all-inclusive or all-exclusive, but as comprehensive and concise statements having the sanction of this Society for use in court and practical affairs:

- **Spiritualism** is the Science, Philosophy and Religion of continuous life, based upon the demonstrated fact of communication, by means of Mediumship, with those who live in the Spirit World.
- **A Spiritualist** is one who believes, as the basis of his or her religion, in the communication between this and the Spirit World by means of Mediumship, and who endeavors to mold his or her character and conduct in accordance with the highest teachings derived from such communication.
- **A Medium** is one whose organism is sensitive to vibrations from the Spirit World, and through whose instrumentality intelligence in that world is able to convey messages and produce the phenomena of Spiritualism.
- **A Spiritualist Healer** is one who, either through one's own inherent power or through Mediumship, is able to impart vital, curative force to pathologic conditions.
- **The Phenomena of Spiritualism** consists of Prophecy, Clairvoyance, Clairaudience, Clairsentience, Gift of Tongues, Laying on of Hands, Healing, Visions, Trance, Apports, Levitation, Raps, Automatic and Independent Writings and Paintings, Voice, Materialization, Photography, Psychometry and any other manifestation proving the Continuity of Life as demonstrated through the Physical and Spiritual senses and faculties of humanity.

SECTION 4. ASPECTS OF SPIRITUALISM.

- **Spiritualism is a Science** because it investigates, analyzes, and classifies facts and manifestations demonstrated from the spirit side of life.
- **Spiritualism is a Philosophy** because it studies the Laws of Nature both on the seen and unseen sides of life and bases its conclusions upon present observed facts. It accepts statements of observed facts of past ages and conclusions drawn therefrom, when sustained by reason and by results of observed facts of the present day.
- **Spiritualism is a Religion** because it strives to understand and to comply with the Physical, Mental, and Spiritual Laws of Nature, which are the Laws of God.

SECTION 5. PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL HEALING. The following is for use at all public services:

I ask the great unseen Healing Force
To remove all obstructions from my mind and body
And to restore me to perfect health

I ask this in all sincerity and honesty and I will do my part
I ask this great unseen Healing Force
To help both present and absent ones who are in need of help
And to restore them to perfect health
I put my trust in the love and power of God

SECTION 6. CHILDREN'S HEALING PRAYER. The following is for use at all Children's Lyceums:

I ask God's Healing Power to make me whole and well
I know that I work with God, through my thoughts and actions
To make this healing happen
I ask God's Healing Power to heal other people near and far away
I trust that God will answer this healing prayer

ARTICLE III

OBJECTIVE

SECTION 1. OBJECT. The object of this Auxiliary shall be to more thoroughly organize; for the purpose of holding services and meetings for the promulgation of the Science, Philosophy and Religion of Spiritualism in accordance with the Bylaws and usage of the NSAC of the USA, a Hierarchical Religious Society incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia.

SECTION 2. PROPERTY. This Auxiliary may acquire by purchase, bequest, gift, or otherwise such real and personal property as may be necessary or useful to its purposes; and may hold control or convey such property in accordance with such objectives; shall accept and hold in trust for their respective chartered membership, such real and other properties as such membership may acquire and deposit titles with, or repose in, this Auxiliary.

ARTICLE IV

ALLEGIANCE

SECTION 1. SUBJECT TO. This Auxiliary organization is subject to the Bylaws of the Maine State Spiritualist Association of Churches (hereinafter referred to as MSSAC) and NSAC to the extent that this Auxiliary's Bylaws shall not be inconsistent with the society or corporation laws of the United States of America or of the State of Maine. We further agree on behalf of ourselves, our associates and successors, to incorporate our organization under the civil laws of the jurisdiction in which we are located, and that the articles of this incorporation shall contain the statement of NSAC Bylaws, Article IX, Section 1. Legal Incorporation.

SECTION 2. WITHDRAWAL. Any motion of this Auxiliary to withdraw from NSAC can be voted on only at the Annual Convention of the MSSAC and enacted by a majority of three-fourths of the total voting members of the MSSAC delegation.

ARTICLE V

MEMBERS

SECTION 1. MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA. A person may become a member of this Auxiliary if he or she:

- Is at least eighteen (18) years of age
- Declares their acceptance and belief in the Science, Philosophy, and Religion of Modern Spiritualism
- Subscribes to the Declaration of Principles
- Acknowledges proof of the continuity of life through satisfactory demonstration
- Completes and signs an application form prescribed by the NSAC Board of Trustees

SECTION 2. DEFINITION OF MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING. A member in good standing is defined as being a member of the Auxiliary for a period of at least three (3) months with any required dues, fees or assessments of the society being current.

SECTION 3. MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS/LIMITATIONS.

- Membership in this Auxiliary is effective upon majority approval of the Board of Directors, or membership in a duly called Board or Membership meeting.
- If an applicant has previously been a member of NSAC or a chartered church society and membership has lapsed, the membership application shall be submitted to the NSAC Board of Trustees for review and approval prior to any action by the Auxiliary. The NSAC Board, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, may reinstate members who have been expelled by the Disciplinary Procedures.
- No member of the Auxiliary shall be allowed to vote on questions before such society, or be allowed to hold office until the person has been a member for at least three (3) months immediately preceding the date of voting.
- An individual shall not hold membership in more than one society affiliated directly or indirectly with the NSAC with the exception of camp associations, state associations, Lyceums, service clubs and educational auxiliaries.
- No chartered church society shall permit in its own articles of incorporation, constitution/bylaws, or standing rules, recognition as a member an individual holding membership in any other religious denomination. Such an individual shall be considered to be in dual membership.
- An individual shall be considered to be in dual membership if they:
 - (1) Hold credentials and/or membership in any church or religious organization other than NSAC, which issued credentials for, or comparable to: Ordination, Licentiate Minister, Certified Medium, Commissioned Spiritualist Healer, or the National Spiritualist Teacher Degree.

- (2) Hold membership in more than one NSAC church society.
- Members of this Auxiliary in conjunction with NSAC practices are prohibited from using fortune telling cards, crystals, crystal balls, ouija boards, tea leaves, palmistry while acting in their capacities as NSAC members as these practices do not prove the continuity of life.

SECTION 4. DELINQUENT MEMBERSHIP. Any member of this Auxiliary who shall become delinquent for the non-payment of dues (Article VI, Section 3) for three (3) months shall be notified in writing by the Secretary. When in arrears for a period of six (6) months the member shall be notified in writing that their membership has been terminated.

SECTION 5. TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP. A member may transfer membership to another NSAC church society by following NSAC Bylaws governing membership transfers (Article III Section 9. Transfer of Membership). Should this Auxiliary cease to function and return it's charter to MSSAC and NSAC, all members in good standing upon request through NSAC may transfer membership to another auxiliary through the process of Transferring Membership.

SECTION 6. REINSTATEMENT OF MEMBERSHIP. Any member who has become delinquent may be reinstate upon the payment of all – past required dues, and upon approval of the Board of Directors, or the membership in a duly called meeting.

ARTICLE VI

FEES – DUES - ASSESSMENTS

SECTION 1. NSAC AUXILIARY ASSESSED FEES. This Auxiliary shall submit its NSAC annual reports and charter fees to the MSSAC Secretary no later than April 15th of each year.

SECTION 2. NSAC ASSESSED FEES TO INDIVIDUALS. All fees assessed by NSAC to individuals for Ordination, National Spiritualist Teacher Degree, Licentiate Minister, Certified Medium and/or Commissioned Healer shall be collected by this Auxiliary and forwarded to MSSAC. All fees and supporting reports (including Ordained Minister, NST and Missionary) are due and payable to the MSSAC Secretary no later than April 15th of each year for approval and then forwarded to NSAC.

SECTION 3. MEMBERSHIP DUES. The amount and categories of the annual church dues shall be set by a majority vote of the voting members present at the Annual Membership Meeting. All membership dues within this Auxiliary are due and payable January 1st of each year. In order to secure representation and eligibility to vote at the Annual MSSAC convention, dues must be paid no later than March 1st of that same year.

SECTION 4. FREE RENEWALS. All certified workers of this Auxiliary having reached seventy years of age are exempt from payment of dues and/or fees.

ARTICLE VII

OFFICERS

SECTION 1. ELECTIVE OFFICERS. The elective officers of this Auxiliary shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer, and who together with three (3) other Directors all elected at the Annual Membership Meeting shall constitute a board of seven (7) Directors.

SECTION 2. BOARD ELIGIBILITY.

- Officers shall be domiciled in the State of Maine.
- No person shall be elected or appointed to the Auxiliary until they have been a member in good standing for a period of three (3) months.

SECTION 3. ELECTION GROUPS SCHEDULE. The first Board of Directors will be elected by the founders of the Auxiliary, with the Officers and Directors serving until the annual membership meeting. Beginning in the year 2002, the Officers shall be elected, along with three (3) Directors, by a majority vote at the Annual Meeting of the membership in three (3) groups as follows:

- a. Treasurer and two (2) Directors for a term of three (3) years.
- b. Secretary and Vice President for a term of two (2) years.
- c. President and one (1) Director for a term of one (1) year.

SECTION 4. TERM LIMITS. There are no limitations regarding consecutive terms of service applied to executive officers providing they have met the eligibility requirements as described in Section 2 above and are duly elected by the membership at the Annual Membership Meeting.

SECTION 5. BOARD ATTENDANCE. If an Officer and/or Director is absent from three (3) consecutive scheduled Board meetings within a one year period, the Board, at their discretion, and by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, may declare the position vacant and appoint a Director to fill the position until the next Annual Meeting. If extenuating circumstances exist, such as illness, the Board may elect to excuse such absence.

SECTION 6. TRANSFER OF RECORDS. It shall be the final duty of all outgoing officers and directors of this Auxiliary to deliver to their successors in office all papers, reports, books, correspondence, money, securities and property which may be in their possession.

SECTION 7. DUTIES OF OFFICERS.

A. *The PRESIDENT shall:*

- preside at all membership and Board meetings
- shall issue all papers and certificates that are official business of the Church
- shall have general supervision of the Church officers and the transaction of its business
- shall approve all bills before paid by the Treasurer
- shall be a member ex-officio of all standing meetings and committees
- countersign all certificates, commissions, powers of attorney and all other papers authorized by the Board of Directors

- submit a written report to each Annual Membership Meeting of the Auxiliary to cover the activities of his/her office, review the condition of the status of the Auxiliary, and make recommendations for its advancements.

B. The VICE-PRESIDENT shall:

- perform all the duties of the President in the absence or resignation of that officer.
- other duties as appointed by President.

C. The SECRETARY shall:

- keep the minutes of all proceedings of the Board of Directors and of all business meetings of the Church
- have charge of the membership rolls and such other books and papers as the Board may direct
- receive receipts of all fees and monies and shall keep a record of such
- perform such other duties incident to the office as approved by the Board of Directors
- make a full written report of all transactions of this office at the Annual Membership Meeting and at all Board Meetings.

D. The TREASURER shall:

- have custody of the funds and securities of the church
- endorse on behalf of the Church checks, notes, and other obligations
- deposit the same to the credit of the Church in such banks, or depositories, as the Board may designate
- keep accurate accounts of the general funds
- pay bills against the Auxiliary duly approved by the President or Secretary
- create and present to each board meeting a full written financial report of the receipts and expenditures
- close all financial books March 31st and submit all financial records, bank statements, check books and savings accounts to the Auditor as approved by the Board
- complete the finance portion of the NSAC Annual Report for the preceding year and submit it to the MSSAC Secretary by April 15th.

SECTION 8. BOARD MEETINGS. The Board of Directors shall meet monthly on the second Sunday of the month unless:

- Another day in the month is set by a majority vote of the Board of Directors
- An alternate schedule is approved by a majority vote of the Board of Directors
- It is the month of the annual Meeting.

SECTION 9. QUORUM. Four (4) members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum.

SECTION 10. VACANCIES. It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to fill by appointment all vacancies of office until the next annual membership meeting, or until their successor is duly elected and qualified.

ARTICLE VIII

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

SECTION 1. ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING. Annual meetings of the membership shall be held at the designate location of the Auxiliary on the fourth Friday of the month of April at 7 o'clock PM.

SECTION 2. SPECIAL MEETINGS. With at least ten (10) days written notice given to the membership, stating the time, place and purpose of the meeting, special membership meetings may be called by the President and at least three other Directors, or upon written request of five (5) members in good standing.

SECTION 3. ORDER OF BUSINESS. The suggested order of business at all meetings shall be as follows:

- Opening Prayer
- Roll Call
- Reading of minutes of preceding meeting and action thereon
- Reports of Officers
- Reports of Committees
- Election of Directors (when appropriate)
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Adjournment

SECTION 4. QUORUM. A quorum of eight (8) members in good standing, including the Board of Directors, shall constitute a Membership Meeting.

ARTICLE IX

COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. STANDING COMMITTEES. The following shall be the standing committees and shall report to the Board of Directors, Annual Membership Meetings and to Special Meetings when it serves the agenda.

Nominating Committee – The Nominating Committee shall consist of three (3) members appointed by the Board of Directors at the last Board meeting before the Annual Membership Meeting, who shall choose and submit in advance nominations for the various officers for which elections are to be held at the annual meeting.

Auditing Committee – The Auditing Committee shall consist of two (2) or more members and whose purpose shall be to audit the Treasurer's books prior to the Annual Membership Meeting and any other time that the Board should direct.

Bylaw Committee – The Bylaw Committee shall consist of three (3) or more members whose duty shall be to recommend amendments and revisions of the current Bylaws to the membership at the Annual Membership Meeting.

Ethics and Standards Committee – The Ethics and Standards Committee shall consist of two (2) or more members whose duty it shall be to review complaints of violations or improprieties against members, and to give recommendations to the Board concerning such.

Public Relations Committee - The Public Relations Committee shall consist of two (2) or more members whose duty and function shall be to create public relations projects and other promotional items for the Auxiliary with the approval of the Board of Directors.

SECTION 2. SPECIAL COMMITTEES. Other such committees may be appointed by the President or the Board from time to time to carry on the work of the Auxiliary.

SECTION 3. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS. The President shall appoint the members to all committees, with the exception of the Nominating Committee (which will be appointed by the Board). In the absence of the President, the Board may make appointments to committees.

SECTION 4. COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES. All Committees, thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Membership meeting, shall file with the Board of Directors a written report, no more than three hundred (300) words, on their activities for the past year.

ARTICLE X

PASTOR/CO-PASTOR/PASTORAL COMMITTEE

SECTION 1. ELIGIBILITY OF THE PASTOR, CO-PASTOR, AND PASTORAL COMMITTEE.

- An individual who has obtained certification as an NSAC Ordained Minister or Licentiate Minister may be elected by the membership to the position of Pastor or Co-Pastor.
- Members of this Auxiliary in good standing (Article V, Section 2) are qualified to be members of the Pastoral Committee. The Board of Directors will appoint by majority vote members to that committee.
- The Pastoral Committee shall consist of at least three (3) members in good standing that shall serve one (1) terms.

SECTION 2. DUTIES OF PASTOR/CO-PASTOR. Duties of the Pastor/Co-Pastor shall be to:

- Conduct the religious services of the Auxiliary with the assistance of other certified and recommended student workers and members of the Auxiliary in good standing.
- Act as spiritual advisor to the members of the congregation when called upon to do so.
- Officiate at weddings, namings, funerals, and all other functions normally performed by the ministry when called upon to do so.
- The Pastor shall at no time ever occupy the office of the President of the Auxiliary.

SECTION 3. DUTIES OF PASTOR/CO-PASTOR/PASTORAL COMMITTEE. Duties of the Pastor/Co-Pastor/Pastoral Committee shall be to:

- Select and schedule the platform workers.
- Recommend to the Board of Directors the teachings, seminars, and classes to be offered under the auspices of this Auxiliary.
- Recommend to the Board of Directors qualified persons for certification application and certificate renewals.

SECTION 4. REMOVAL OF PASTOR AND/OR CO-PASTOR.

- The resignation of the Pastor/Co-Pastor may be tendered by the Pastor/Co-Pastor at any time when submitted to the Board of Directors, in writing, giving due notice of not less than one (1) month.
- The Pastor/Co-Pastor may be requested to tender his/her resignation upon due notice, in writing, from the Board of Directors acting upon a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the active membership.

SECTION 5. ELIGIBILITY OF PLATFORM/SERVICE WORKERS. Only persons meeting the following requirements shall serve the public platform of this Auxiliary:

- Holding certification under NSAC or its state associations.
- Students of this Auxiliary working towards certification and recommended by the Pastor-Co-Pastor/Pastoral Committee, or students of other NSAC chartered church societies upon recommendation of their Pastor and/or Board of Directors.
- Members in good standing of this Auxiliary upon recommendation of the Pastor/Co-Pastor/Pastoral Committee.
- Guest workers as approved by the Pastor/Co-Pastor/Pastoral Committee.

SECTION 6. PLATFORM CODE OF CONDUCT. Political or other controversial subjects deemed inappropriate by NSAC shall not be discussed from the platform during any religious service of this Auxiliary.

ARTICLE XI

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

SECTION 1. SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINE. Any individual holding membership in this Auxiliary is responsible to the Auxiliaries Bylaws and is subject to discipline upon being found to have committed, or to have permitted the commission of one or more of the following:

- Willful violation of the Bylaws or Standing Rules of this Auxiliary or gross neglect of fiduciary responsibilities.
- Acts or statements which advocate doctrines antagonistic to, or inconsistent with the fundamental teachings of Spiritualism or the NSAC.

SECTION 2. FORMAL COMPLAINT. The formal complaint shall be filed with the Secretary of the Auxiliary having jurisdiction, and a copy of the complaint, or charges, shall be sent to any person(s) against whom the complaint is made, all material to be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested.

- If the accused individual is a board member, the complaint may be settled by the Auxiliary or taken to MSSAC, the next higher level.
- If the accused individual holds a commission or a certificate issued through MSSAC, the complaint may be settled by the Auxiliary or be filed with the Secretary of MSSAC.
- If the accused individual does not get a satisfactory resolve with the Auxiliary, or MSSAC, the complaint may be submitted to NSAC, the highest authoritative level, for resolution.

SECTION 3. DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS.

- Disciplinary proceedings shall be initiated by the filing of the formal written complaint signed by the complainant. The written complaint must set forth a clear, concise statement of the alleged wrongful conduct, together with the dates and places where the conduct took place, and the names, addresses and telephone numbers of any witnesses to the alleged conduct. If a violation of the auxiliaries Bylaws is alleged, the specific Article and Section shall be cited in the written complaint. The complaint shall be accompanied by documentation and/or a statement signed by the member who supports the complaint.
- All formal charges shall be administered in accordance with the procedures set forth in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, except as specifically set forth in this Article. (Examples: mediation, timing, authority of decision by trial board having jurisdiction, appeals)
- Upon receipt of the formal written complaint as described in Section 2 of this Article, the President of the Auxiliary shall designate an Ethics & Standards Committee within fifteen (15) days. Upon receipt of the written complaint the Ethics and Standards Committee exercising jurisdiction shall make a recommendation within sixty (60) days regarding the disposition of the complaint.
- The body exercising jurisdictional control, after considering the Ethics and Standards Committee's report, if the complaint is not sustainable, provable, or is lacking in merit, the Board may dismiss the complaint or issue a letter of instruction.
- If mediation is considered appropriate by the jurisdictional body, and agreed to by the accused, then the parties to mediation may select a mediator from the membership of this auxiliary, or they may retain a professional mediator available through an alternative dispute resolution service. If the accused refuses to submit to mediation and to be bound, or if mediation is not considered appropriate under the facts or circumstances of the case, charges shall then be referred to trial.

SECTION 4. IMPEACHMENT. This Auxiliary shall be governed by NSAC Bylaws in all matters pertaining to impeachment, Article XIV Impeachment.

ARTICLE XII

PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall be the parliamentary authority and govern this Auxiliary in all matters not provided for in these Bylaws.

ARTICLE XIII

AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS. These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote at any annual Membership Meeting, or special membership meeting, a quorum being present, on a proposal submitted by any member in good standing of this Auxiliary, the Board of Directors, a committee on revision, or amendment appointed by the Board of Directors, or by the membership at an Annual Membership Meeting.

SECTION 2. FILING AND NOTICE OF AMENDMENT. The proposed amendment shall be filed with the Secretary of the Auxiliary at least forty-five (45) days prior to the time of the Annual Membership Meeting or special meeting. The Secretary shall within ten (10) days transmit a copy of such proposed bylaw amendment to all members in good standing of the auxiliary.

SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE OF AMENDMENTS. Amendments adopted shall become effective at the close of the meeting unless another time is stated.

ARTICLE XIV

RESPECT

SECTION 1. GRATITUDE DAY. The fourth Sunday of March each year, shall be known as "Gratitude Day". A special service will be held to honor the founding of Modern spiritualism and retired mediums who devoted their lives to the cause. Donations will be sent to:

- NSAC Benevolent Society
- MSSAC Mary B. Redlon Fund

SECTION 2. SPECIAL SERVICES. The following dates shall be observed with special services:

- January 25th Founder's Day (1863)
- March 31st Anniversary of Modern Spiritualism (1848)
- August 11th Andrew Jackson Davis (1826)
- September 27th Anniversary of the NSAC (1893)