

EKOJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE

By-Laws

(As amended November 22, 2015)

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## **ARTICLE I: NAME AND AFFILIATION**

The name of this Buddhist institution is Ekoji Buddhist Temple. Ekoji is a Jodo Shinshu Temple affiliated with the Buddhist Churches of America.

## **ARTICLE II: PURPOSES**

The purposes of Ekoji Buddhist Temple are:

- Section 1. To establish and maintain a place or places for Buddhist worship and meditation, teaching and learning the Buddha-Dharma, and conducting Buddhist religious, educational and cultural programs;
- Section 2. To promote understanding of the Buddha-Dharma, emphasizing the teachings of Shinran Shonin and the Jodo Shinshu tradition;
- Section 3. To promote the sense and meaning of the Sangha; and
- Section 4. To promote and foster mutual understanding of the world's religions.

## **ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP**

- Section 1. Any person who wishes to become a member of the temple may register with the Secretary and be placed on the membership list so long as he or she accepts the commitments of membership. No one will be denied membership on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, or sex.

There are three categories: Ekoji Member, Ekoji Associate and Ekoji Affiliated Organization.

- Section 2. Ekoji Member
  - a. Membership in the temple requires the following commitments and actions:
    - 1. To seek the Buddha-Dharma earnestly as taught in the Jodo Shinshu tradition;
    - 2. To maintain the Ekoji Buddhist Temple as a Jodo Shinshu temple affiliated with the Buddhist Churches of America;
    - 3. To support the temple financially. This includes the member's share of the temple's annual payment to the Buddhist Churches of America, an annual pledge to donate a defined amount of money to the temple (as defined by the member – including family membership), and dana. The Board will suggest a minimum financial contribution required for membership based on the annual budget. In the case of financial hardship, a member may substitute temple work for the annual pledge by discussing the need in confidence with the President.

4. To contribute to the intellectual, social, and religious life of the temple including its upkeep; and
  5. to vote in any election of the Directors or Trustees of the temple, and on any matter placed before the Sangha for consideration and approval, provided that the member has been registered as a member for at least 90 days at the date of the election or vote, and is otherwise in good standing.
- b. Membership in the temple confers the following benefits:
1. Full participation in the operation and management of the temple;
  2. Subscription to the Wheel of Dharma, a publication of the Buddhist Churches of America;
  3. Subscription to the Kalavinka, a publication of the Ekoji Buddhist Temple;
  4. Borrowing privileges at the temple library;
  5. Opportunity to acquire an interment space in the temple's columbarium (for the standard fee);
  6. Attendance by the member's children at the temple's Dharma school; and
  7. Participation in adult education activities.

Section 3. Ekoji Associate

- a. Associate requires the following commitments and actions:
1. to seek the Buddha-Dharma as taught in the Jodo Shinshu tradition;
  2. to maintain the Ekoji Buddhist Temple as a Jodo Shinshu temple affiliated with the Buddhist Churches of America;
  3. to support the temple financially. An annual pledge to donate a defined amount of money to the temple (as defined by the associate) and dana. The Board will establish the financial contribution level required for associate category based on the needs of the Sangha.
  4. an Ekoji Associate is a non-voting membership category.
- b. Associate category in the temple confers the following benefits:
1. subscription to the Kalavinka;
  2. borrowing privileges at the temple library;
  3. opportunity to acquire an interment space in the temple's columbarium (for the standard fee);
  4. attendance by the associate's children at the temple's Dharma school;
  5. participation in adult education activities.

Section 4. Ekoji Members and Ekoji Associates shall be known collectively as the Sangha.

Section 5. Affiliated Organizations

- a. The “Affiliated Organizations “membership category establishes that the Affiliated Organizations will operate, as is consistent with the Ekoji Buddhist Temple by-laws. The Affiliated Organization is a nonvoting membership category.
- b. The Board of Directors may approve categories of non-voting Affiliated Organizations by the following:
  1. The Board of Directors may establish procedures and criteria to recognize an Affiliated organization by motion and adoption by a simple majority vote.
  2. The Board may, consistent with those procedures and criteria, recognize an Affiliated organization by motion and adoption by a simple majority vote.
  3. Termination of Affiliated Organization’s membership status can take place provided that:
    - (a.) The Board may remove the Affiliated Organization by a simple majority vote.
    - (b.) Ekoji or an affiliated organization gives the other 30 days’ notice of intent to sever the affiliation.

**ARTICLE IV: BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The activities of the temple shall be managed, controlled and determined by its Board of Directors consisting of not less than three or more than nine persons. The Directors shall be elected as provided in Article XI hereof. No director shall receive any pay for serving as a member of the Board of Directors except that Directors may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out duties or responsibilities as an officer or director.

**ARTICLE V: POWERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Board of Directors shall have the following powers:

- Section 1. To elect officers of the Board; to appoint Acting Trustee(s) of the temple in accordance with Article X.
- Section 2. To determine, conduct, manage and control the activities of the temple, subject to approval by the Sangha on all matters that impose or incur financial or legal obligations on or in the members of the Sangha;
- Section 3. Subject to approval by the Sangha, to set the annual budgets for the temple and to set the amounts of moneys or other contributions to be assessed or requested of the members or otherwise raised to meet the financial needs of the temple and the means of collecting, receiving, or raising such assessments, contributions and other funds;

- Section 4. To hire or retain such persons as they deem necessary and proper to carry out the purposes of the temple and to appoint and dismiss agents and employees at its discretion, fix their duties and emoluments and to change them from time to time;
- Section 5. To confer on any officer of the Board the powers otherwise vested in the Board under section 4 of this article;
- Section 6. To determine by whom and in what manner the temple's bills, notes, receipts, acceptances, endorsements, checks, releases, contracts, or other documents shall be signed if by other than the president as provided in Article VII, the Trustees as provided in Article X, or the treasurer as provided in Articles IX and XIII hereof,
- Section 7. To appoint members or committees, who shall have such powers as shall be specified in the resolution of appointment, to perform (subject to approval by 'the Sangha) or assist in performing the functions of the Board of Directors or officers, and otherwise to carry out the affairs of the temple, including representing the temple at meetings of the Eastern District Council and the National Council of the Buddhist Churches of America in addition to the president as provided under Article VII, in his stead, or both;
- Section 8. To appoint any person as an advisor to the Board and to confer a title of honorary officer or honorary director on such person in the discretion of the Board;
- Section 9. To direct the audit of the financial transactions and records of the temple from time to time; and
- Section 10. To meet monthly and otherwise at the call of the president.

#### **ARTICLE VI: OFFICERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- Section 1. There shall be a president, a secretary, and a treasurer, and such other officers as may be chosen from time to time from among the Directors by the Board of Directors. Officers of the Board of Directors shall hold office until their successors are chosen and qualified in their stead. No officer shall receive pay for serving as an officer of the temple, except in the case where an officer or director is employed to provide services to or for the temple in accordance with section 4 or 5 of Article V hereof.
- Section 2. Election of officers shall take place at the initial meeting of the Board of Directors following the election of any member to the Board of Directors under Article XI. If the office of any officer becomes vacant for any reason, the vacancy may be filled only by a member of the current Board of Directors by affirmative vote of a majority of the whole Board of Directors at any meeting of the Board of Directors.

## **ARTICLE VII: PRESIDENT**

- Section 1. The president shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors and of the Sangha, shall have general and active management of the business of the temple. It shall be his or her duty to ensure that all orders and resolutions of the Sangha and the Board of Directors are carried into effect; except as provided under Article X or otherwise designated by the Board of Directors, to execute all contracts, agreements, bonds, and other obligations and instruments, in the name of the temple. He or she shall submit a report of the operations of the temple to the Sangha at the annual meetings.
- Section 2. He or she shall serve as the official representative of the temple to the Eastern District Council (Eastern Buddhist Coordinating Council) and the National Council of the Buddhist Churches of America.

## **ARTICLE VIII: SECRETARY**

- Section 1. The secretary shall record the proceedings of the official meetings of the Board of Directors and of the Sangha.
- Section 2. He or she shall maintain the official files and records of the proceedings of the Board of Directors and meetings of the Sangha in a manner and place designated or otherwise approved by the Board. Such records shall be made available for examination on request by any director, officer, Trustee, or member of the temple.
- Section 3. He or she shall maintain the official register of the members of the temple.

## **ARTICLE IX: TREASURER**

- Section 1. The treasurer shall have custody of the funds and securities of the temple and shall keep full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements in books belonging to the temple and shall deposit all moneys and other valuable effects in the name and to the credit of the temple in such depositories as may be designated or otherwise authorized by the Board of Directors.
- Section 2. He or she shall disburse the funds of the temple as may be ordered or approved by the Board or Trustees, taking proper vouchers for such disbursements, and shall render to the president, Directors, and Trustees, whenever they require it, an account of all his transactions as treasurer and the financial condition of the temple, and at the regular annual meetings of the Sangha a like report.
- Section 3. He or she shall keep an account of all properties real, personal or mixed, owned, held, purchased, sold, conveyed, leased, mortgaged, developed, pledged and exchanged by the temple.

Section 4. He or she shall be bonded.

#### **ARTICLE X: TRUSTEES**

Section 1. There shall be no less than two Trustees of the temple elected by the members in accordance with Article XI. Additional Trustees may be elected from time to time, initially when the number of registered members of the temple exceeds 100, and thereafter whenever there is an additional increase of no less than 100 registered members; providing that the total number of Trustees shall not exceed seven.

Where a Trustee is unable or fails to fulfill his duties, the Board of Directors with concurrence of other Trustee(s) shall appoint an Acting Trustee who shall serve until he/she is able to resume his/her duties or until the next annual meeting of the Sangha, whichever comes first, whereupon the Sangha shall elect a Trustee to complete the term of the replace Trustee.

Section 2. The Trustees shall have the power to receive, own, and hold, on behalf of the temple, the investments and property, real or personal or mixed of the temple.

Section 3. The Trustees shall execute all contracts, agreements, deeds, mortgages and other obligations and instruments relating to the receipt, ownership, transfer, exchange, disposition, or other change of ownership status of the investments and property of the temple.

#### **ARTICLE XI: ELECTION OF DIRECTORS AND TRUSTEES**

Section 1. Directors and Trustees of the temple shall be elected from among the Ekoji Members of the Sangha.

Section 2. The Directors and Trustees of the temple shall be elected to serve a term of two years by affirmative vote of a majority of the members present and voting at the annual meeting of the Sangha.

Section 3. The Directors and Trustees shall assume the duties of the position to which elected when they accept the oath of office at the first service of the sangha held between 30 and 60 days after the general meeting at which they were elected.

Section 4. If a position of director or Trustee becomes vacant for any reason such that the total number of Directors or Trustees falls below the minimum numbers prescribed under Articles IV or X hereof, a special election shall be held within 30 days of the vacancy to fill the vacant position for the remainder of the term of the vacating incumbent; otherwise, any such vacancy shall be filled for the full term by election at the next annual meeting of the Sangha.

Section 5. Nothing contained in these by-laws shall be construed to limit the eligibility of any Member to be elected and to serve as a Director, Trustee, or both.

Section 6. Elections of the Directors shall be staggered, so that no more than 4 5 new directors shall be elected at the annual meeting each year.

## **ARTICLE XII: MEETINGS OF THE SANGHA**

Section 1. There shall be an annual meeting of the Sangha during the month of November at a time and place set by the Board of Directors and announced at least 30 days prior to the date of the meeting. Such meeting shall be for the purpose of receiving the annual reports of the Board of Directors, officers, Trustees and committees, electing Directors and Trustees, approving recommendations of the Board of Directors and committees, approving the budget and financial plans for the next fiscal year, approving the receipt, acquisition, transfer or other disposition or action on temple property, and conducting other business of the temple.

Section 2. Special meetings of the Sangha may be called at any time by the Board of Directors or the Trustees, providing no less than 20 days notice is sent of the time, place, and purpose of the meeting to all members.

Section 3. Quorum. For all meetings (annual meeting and special meetings) of the Sangha, a quorum is those members who attend the meeting.

## **ARTICLE XIII: FINANCES**

Section 1. The Board of Directors, with the unanimous approval of the Trustees, shall supervise and direct the investment of the funds of the temple on hand in excess of the budgeted needs of the temple and provide for their reinvestment and the collection of interest, dividends, or other proceeds.

Section 2. The Board of Directors may disburse funds at any time to the Society for the Advancement of Buddhist Understanding (i.e., BDK-USA) and the Buddhist Churches of America and any affiliate thereof, to carry out the purposes and obligations of the temple, providing that no funds received or acquired by the temple for a particular purpose shall be expended for any other purpose until or unless the purposes for which the funds were originally received or obtained have been met.

Section 3. No funds of the temple shall be disbursed, nor any obligation be created, in the name of the temple by any officer or director without prior approval of the Board of Directors except such funds as may be delegated to an officer by the Board of



Directors to effectuate powers conferred to an officer, director, or employee pursuant to Article V.

- Section 4. No part of the income or property of the temple shall inure to the benefit of any Trustee, director, officer, or member of the temple, or any private individual (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the temple affecting its purposes), and no Trustee, director, officer, member of the temple, or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of the temple's assets upon dissolution of the temple.
- Section 5. In the event that dissolution of the temple as an institution becomes necessary, the Trustees shall, after assuring that all liabilities of the temple have been or shall be paid, dispose of all of the assets of the temple, exclusively for the purposes of the temple first to the Society for the Advancement of Buddhist Understanding (i.e. BDK-USA), then to the Buddhist Churches of America or any affiliate thereof, or both, and finally, should any of the preceding not be possible, to such activity or organization devoted exclusively to furthering the understanding of the Buddha-Dharma.
- Section 6. The fiscal year shall begin January 1 and end December 31.
- Section 7. The financial transactions of the temple shall be audited annually by a person or persons, other than the treasurer, designated or retained by the Board of Directors and qualified to perform such audit.
- Section 8. All checks, drafts or orders for the payment of money shall be signed by the treasurer or by such officer or officers as the Board of Directors may from time to time designate. No check shall be signed in blank.

#### **ARTICLE XIV: AMENDMENT OF BY-LAWS**

- Section 1. These by-laws may be amended at any annual meeting of the Sangha or at a special meeting called for that purpose, by affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present provided notice of the proposed amendment has been mailed or delivered to all members not less than 30 days in advance of the meeting in which the proposed amendment is to be presented.
- Section 2. Amendments of the by-laws shall become effective 30 days after passage unless the resolution of amendment provides for a longer period of time.

#### **ARTICLE XV: SUSPENSION OF BY-LAWS**

- Section 1. Any provision hereof, except Article I and II, may be suspended or waived by unanimous consent of the members present at any meeting of the Sangha properly

called pursuant to Article XII, providing that such suspension or waiver is for a specific and limited purpose not constituting an amendment of the by-laws, shall not cause or result in obstructing, interfering with, or nullifying the ability of the temple or Sangha to fulfill the purposes of the temple set forth in Article II hereof and is not contrary to the Laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

#### **AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS**

[Originally adopted by unanimous consent of the members present at Rockville, Maryland, on the 26th day of April, 1981.]

[Article III amended on November 9, 1996, in Springfield, Virginia.]

[Articles I, II, III, VI, XI, XIII, XIV, XV amended by unanimous vote on June 20, 1999, in Fairfax Station, Virginia.]

[Article III amended by unanimous vote on November 16, 2003, in Fairfax Station, Virginia.]

[Article II, IV, V, X amended by majority vote on December 11, 2011, in Fairfax Station, Virginia]

[Articles III amended by unanimous vote on November 17, 2013, in Fairfax Station, Virginia]

[Articles III, XI, XII, XIV, amended by unanimous vote on November 22, 2105, in Fairfax Station, Virginia.]

#### **CERTIFICATION BY SECRETARY**

The Secretary of Ekoji Buddhist Temple certified that these by-laws have not been amended or modified since November 22, 2015.

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