

## **Bylaws of The Religious Education Association, Inc.**

Adopted May 22, 1975; Revised 1979, 1985, 1988, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1997, 2004, 2008, 2010, 2017, 2019, 2022, 2023, 2024

### **ARTICLE I. NAME, PURPOSE, PLACE**

- Section 1. The Name of the corporation shall be "The Religious Education Association, Inc." It shall be designated as "An Association of Professors, Practitioners, and Researchers in Religious Education" in written materials, as deemed relevant.
- Section 2. The purpose of this Association shall be to create opportunities for exploring and advancing religious education through the interconnected practices of scholarship, research, teaching, and leadership in faith communities, academic institutions, and the wider world community.
- Section 3. The business of the corporation shall be conducted from such place or places as its directors shall from time to time decide. The corporation shall be registered as a corporation not for pecuniary profit in the state in which the registered agent resides.

### **ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP**

- Section 1. The membership of the Association shall consist of all persons who have paid the annual dues.
- Section 2. Membership in the association shall be composed of teachers, professors, and researchers in religious education; practitioners giving religious education leadership in local faith communities or central offices or agencies of denominational/religious bodies; administrators in religiously affiliated schools, colleges, universities, and seminaries; graduate students and others preparing for and engaged in research, teaching, administration, or other kinds of leadership in religious education.
- Section 3. An application for membership shall constitute an agreement to continue such membership and to pay annual dues unless written notice is given by the member to discontinue membership or the dues become four months overdue. Membership may be resumed on payment of annual dues.
- Section 4. Annual dues shall be payable to the Association in the care of the Executive Secretary. The Board of Directors shall set the membership year and annual dues based on income.
- Section 5. In elections, and when an official vote of the Association membership is otherwise required, the voting shall not be done by proxy.
- Section 6. Each individual member shall be entitled to receive one subscription to the Journal of the Association. Subscriptions to the Journal will also be available to persons and organizations who are not members.

### **ARTICLE III. MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL**

- Section 1. The members of the Association shall meet annually at the call of the Board of Directors and shall have authority to amend the Bylaws, elect Board members, and to transact such business as may properly come before them. The annual meeting shall be held at such times and at such places as the Board may decide. Written notice stating the place, day, and hour of the meeting and, in the case of a special meeting, the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is called, shall be delivered not less than 5 nor more than 60 days before the date of the meeting, or in the case of a removal of one or more directors, a merger, consolidation, dissolution or sale, lease or exchange of assets not

less than 20 nor more than 60 days before the date of the meeting, by or at the direction of the president, or the secretary, or the officer or persons calling the meeting, to each member of record entitled to vote at such meeting.

- Section 2. Special meetings may be called by the President/Chair, or in absentia by the President elect/ Program Chair, or by a majority of the Board of Directors, or upon written request of 75 members of the Association. Business transacted at all special meetings shall be confined to the object stated in the call.
- Section 3. Twenty-five members present in person shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any regular or special meeting of the Association.
- Section 4. Officers and Board members shall be nominated in advance by the Nominations Committee, shall be elected at an annual meeting of the Association, and shall hold that position until their successors are elected. Additional nominations may, however, be made from the floor of an annual meeting or by electronic notice.
- Section 5. An Advisory Council may be appointed by the Board of Directors for the purpose of advising the Association regarding fund-raising, financial management, and other matters. The President may call meeting(s) of the Council, as appropriate.

#### ARTICLE IV. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Section 1. The management of all affairs, property, and business of the Association shall be vested in a Board of Directors who shall consist of the elected officers and Board members.
  - a. The Board shall oversee the policies of the Association.
  - b. In addition to the power and authorities conferred expressly upon it by these Bylaws, the Board of Directors may exercise all such powers of the Association and do all such lawful acts and things as are not by statute or by the Articles of Incorporation or by these Bylaws directed or required to be exercised or done by the members.
  - c. The Board shall consist of a maximum of 21 members, to include the elected officers of the Association—the President/Chair, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer—Program Chair, Program-chair elect, standing committee chairs, one doctoral student representative and designated ex officio, non-voting members. These ex officio members are the Editor of the journal, *Religious Education*, the Executive Secretary of the Association, the Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer, and the Networking Coordinator. All persons elected or appointed by the Board must be members of the Association.
- Section 2. Board members will be actively involved in various REA responsibilities and activities.
- Section 3. The term of office of all Board members shall be two years with the exception of the chair of the Harper/Wornom committee which shall be one year. All Board members shall have the possibility of reelection to one successive term. A person is not eligible to be reelected for at least one year after serving a maximum term.
  - a. A person elected to an office of the Board begins a new term as stipulated for that office by the by-laws
  - b. Vacancies among the officers or the Board members may be filled by the Board of Directors for any part of the term where such memberships on the Board may be vacant. A person elected to fill a vacancy may, at the conclusion of that term, be elected in his/her own right as stipulated for that office or Board position by the by-laws

- Section 4. No dividend shall be paid and no part of the income of the Association shall be distributed to its members, directors or officers; provided, however, that the Association may pay compensation in a reasonable amount to members, officers or directors for authorized services rendered and for authorized expenses incurred on behalf of the Association.
- Section 5. Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be called by the President/Chair of the Board, or at the written request of seven members of the Board, annually, by electronic notice to each director, at least three weeks prior to the date of such meeting.
- Section 6. A quorum shall consist of at least three officers plus five additional voting Board members. On matters that require decisions between Board meetings, a vote of the Board may be taken by electronic means. In this case, a vote of a majority of the voting members of the Board shall be necessary to constitute action of the Board.
- Section 7. The Steering Committee of the Board of Directors shall exercise such powers and duties as are conferred upon it by the Board.
- a. The Steering Committee shall be composed of the officers of the Association— President/Board Chair, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer—plus the Program Chair. The Executive Secretary and the Networking Coordinator shall serve as ex officio members. The total voting membership shall be five. A quorum shall consist of three of the voting membership.
  - b. The Steering Committee shall coordinate the work of the Board and its Committees, and it shall act and speak on behalf of the Board on matters that require decision in the interim between Board meetings.

#### ARTICLE V. TERMS OF OFFICERS

- Section 1. The President/Chair of the Board serves for two years and can be reelected for one additional term. The President shall preside at the annual and special meetings of the Association. In case of the absence of the President, the Vice-President will preside. The President also shall preside at Board meetings and Steering Committee meetings. In his/her absence, the same replacement procedure shall be followed. The President shall be an ex officio member of all committees of the Board. The President is the Association's public representative.
- Section 2. The Program Chair serves for one year, and is responsible for the current year's programming. The Program Chair-elect serves for one year, and shall be responsible for the next year's programming. After one year, the Program Chair-elect shall become the Program Chair.
- Section 3. The Vice-President serves for two years, and is responsible for convening meetings of the Advisory Council, should there be one, and other meetings in the absence of the President.
- Section 4. The Recording Secretary serves for two years and shall keep a full and accurate report of the proceedings of the meetings of the Association and of all the meetings of the Board of Directors and Steering Committee. In the absence of the Recording Secretary, the presiding officer shall appoint a pro-tempore secretary. The Recording Secretary may be reelected for one additional term.
- Section 5. The Treasurer serves for two years and shall oversee, under the direction of the Board of Directors and of the Steering Committee, all money paid to the Association; shall oversee budget, audits, taxes and endowment; and shall render the accounts for the fiscal year to the Board of Directors. The Treasurer will work closely with the Executive Secretary and chair the Finance Committee. The Treasurer shall give such a bond for the faithful

discharge of those duties as may be required by the Board of Directors. The Treasurer may be reelected for one additional term.

#### ARTICLE VI. SALARIED STAFF

Section 1. An Executive Secretary is appointed by the Board of Directors for such time and at such salary as the Board may decide. The Executive Secretary is responsible for administering the affairs of the Association under the guidance of the Board. He/She shall have direct charge of the Association's office and shall perform all duties incident to that function, including daily operations, policy implementation, membership, finances, and support of programming. The Executive Secretary shall give such bond for the faithful discharge of those financial duties as may be required by the Board of Directors, including regular reporting of all financial transactions to the Treasurer.

- a. The Executive Secretary shall serve as ex officio member of the Board of Directors, Steering Committee, and all Board committees.
- b. The search for an Executive Secretary shall be conducted by a committee appointed by the Steering Committee of the Board. The search committee shall report its recommendation to the Board of Directors who will appoint the Executive Secretary.
- c. In the event of an unforeseen vacancy in the position of Executive Secretary, the Steering Committee may appoint an Interim Executive Secretary until the full search process can be conducted.

Section 2. The Editor of *Religious Education*, the journal of the Association, shall be appointed by the Board of Directors.

- a. The Editor shall serve as an ex officio member of the Board of Directors, and as a voting member of the Publications Committee of the Board.
- b. The search for Editor shall be conducted by a committee appointed by the Steering Committee in consultation with the Chair of the Publications Committee of the Board. The search committee shall report its recommendation to the Board of Directors who will appoint the Editor.
- c. In the event of an unforeseen vacancy in the position of Editor, the Steering Committee, in consultation with the Publications Committee, may appoint an Interim Editor until the full search process can be conducted.

Section 3. The Networking Coordinator shall be appointed by the Board of Directors. The Networking Coordinator is responsible for structures, particularly electronic, that network members together. The website content and design and the content of the newsletter are central responsibilities.

- a. The Networking Coordinator shall serve as an ex officio member of the Board of Directors.
- b. The search for Networking Coordinator shall be conducted by a committee appointed by the Steering Committee. The search committee shall report its recommendation to the Board of Directors who will appoint the Networking Coordinator.
- c. In the event of an unforeseen vacancy in the position of Networking Coordinator, the Steering Committee may appoint an Interim Networking Coordinator until the full search process can be conducted.

Section 4. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Officer shall be appointed by the Board of Directors. The DEI Officer is responsible for considering REA's interest, commitments and expertise in creating diverse, inclusive, and equitable spaces and events. The DEI Officer will collaborate with the REA leadership to assess the need for, and recommend and/or lead training initiatives on racial justice, cultural diversity, gender differences,

disability, sexual harassment, and other topics designed to increase awareness and support of equity and inclusion values.

- d. The DEI Officer shall serve as an ex officio member of the Board of Directors.
- e. The search for DEI Officer shall be conducted by a committee appointed by the Steering Committee. The search committee shall report its recommendation to the Board of Directors who will appoint the DEI Officer
- f. In the event of an unforeseen vacancy in the position of DEI Officer, the Steering Committee may appoint an Interim DEI Officer until the full search process can be conducted.

## ARTICLE VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1. For the maintenance and continuity of the work of the Association and to cultivate attentiveness to religious education in a variety of contexts, the Association will have standing committees.

- a. The activities of each committee shall be coordinated by a chairperson who is a voting member of the Board and elected by the Association's membership. The task of the chairperson will be to promote the effective functioning of the committee through its input in Association matters. The committees will be composed of a minimum of two additional members elected by the Association's membership to serve a two-year term. Additional others may be invited by the chairperson to serve during that chairperson's term such that the work of the committee can be accomplished thoroughly and efficiently.
- b. The selection process should assure representation that is diverse and reflective of the broad Association constituency.
- c. Committee activities may be funded through the annual budget at the discretion of the Board, or other sources.

Section 2. Individual committees shall have designated areas of responsibility.

- a. Religious Education in Faith Communities. The Religious Education in Faith Communities Committee will focus on religious education in local faith communities, and within and by denominational/religious bodies, on regional, national, and international levels.
- b. Religious Education in Public Life and the Global Community. The Religious Education in Public Life and the Global Community Committee will focus on the role of religious education beyond religious and academic contexts in the interest of the common good as well as on inter-religious education and conversation.
- c. Religious Education in Academic Disciplines and Institutions. The Religious Education in Academic Disciplines and Institutions Committee will focus on the engagement in and advancement of religious education in academic disciplines and in schools, colleges, universities, and graduate schools of religion and theology.
- d. Proposal Selection. The Proposal Selection Committee shall be responsible for reviewing and accepting proposals for Research Interest Groups, Colloquia, or other formats to be presented at the annual conference. The Selection Committee shall occasionally review the criteria and process for selection of proposals and make recommendations to the Board for needed revisions.
- e. Harper/Wornom. The Harper/Wornom Committee will seek to promote the values of inter-faith and ecumenical collegiality and religious education in the public arena through the Harper Award and the Wornom Innovation Grant.
  1. The Harper/Wornom Committee will be composed of four members from among the Association's membership, appointed to four staggered or overlapping classes by the Board, based on nominations from the Nominations Committee, pending ratification by the Membership. The

Committee Chair shall be the Committee member serving his/her fourth and final year and will serve a 1-year term as a voting member of the Board.

- a) At least one member of the Harper/Wornom Committee should have a primary vocational identity in the public arena, and/or one should be from a religious tradition other than Christian.
  - b) Attention should be given to ethnic, gender, and religious diversity in constituting the Committee.
2. The William Rainey Harper Award will be given occasionally, as the Committee deems appropriate (but no more than once every three years), to outstanding leaders whose work across disciplines and fields of service has had a profound impact on religious education. The Committee shall make recommendations to the Board.
  3. The Wornom Innovation Grant will be a monetary award given annually for innovative religious education projects and initiatives that further knowledge and deepen the practice of religious education, or that expand the field of religious education to a new area that is not traditionally associated with religious education. The Committee shall oversee the selection and implementation of the grant award and make recommendations to the Board.
  4. Funding for the Harper Award and the Wornom Innovation Grant will be provided from funds accrued in an investment account.
- f. Advancement. The Advancement Committee will be responsible for development of the Association's financial resources and professional reputation, membership relations and growth, and marketing and communications programs that maximize the effectiveness and sustainability of the Association.
  - g. Publications. The Publications Committee shall serve in an advisory capacity in connection with the publications of the Association, making recommendations in matters of policy regarding these publications. The Committee shall be composed of the Chair, the Editor of *Religious Education*, and the chair of the co-editorial team for the *Horizons in Religious Education* book series, the previous Publications chair, and other members as the current chair selects. The Publications Committee Chair shall support the work of both the *Religious Education journal* and the *Horizons in Religious Education* book series. The Publications chair shall convene at least one meeting per semester of the entire committee for updates and to aid in cross pollination of ideas and concepts between the journal and the book series. All reports from the journal and the book series will go to the publications chair to assemble and submit as one document to business and board meetings. The Publications chair will serve a three-year term with the outgoing chair and the incoming chair serving together for one year (last of the outgoing chair; first of the incoming chair) to ensure the appropriate transition. The Publications outgoing chair and incoming chair will work together to review papers submitted for inclusion in the annual meeting issue of the *Religious Education Journal* and make recommendations to the journal's Editor during the year when both overlap. After that year, the new chair continues the work for two more years and in year three will do likewise with the incoming chair of the Publications Committee.
  - h. Finance. The Finance Committee will be responsible for working with the Executive Secretary and the chair of the committee, the Treasurer to monitor, review, and produce budget reports, investment reviews, and tax preparations.

#### ARTICLE VIII. OTHER ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

- Section 1. Other committees may be appointed by the Board to accomplish particular tasks necessary to the functioning of the Association. These committees may or may not include Board members. Additional committee members may be added by the chair

when necessary to complete the work of the committee. Committees will include the following:

- a. Program Planning. The Program Planning Committee shall support the Program Chair in the development of the annual conference. The Committee shall also be responsible for the initiation and development of other programs of the Association and such other matters as may properly be referred to it by the Board of Directors.
  1. The Program Planning Committee shall be constituted by the Program Chair, the Program Chair-elect, the Vice-President, the Treasurer, the Proposal Selection Committee Chair, the Networking Coordinator, and the Executive Secretary.
  2. Association members from the vicinity of the annual conference should be consulted by the committee to assist with planning.
- b. Nominations. The Nominations Committee will be constituted annually by the outgoing members of the Board and an At-Large representative. The At-Large member will be an elected position serving a two-year term with the option for reelection to a second term. This committee will be responsible for submitting a slate of nominees for ratification to the Board and to the membership at the annual business meeting.
  1. Nominations will be made for officers, other members of the Board, the Harper/Wornom Committee, and the At-Large member of the Nominations Committee.
  2. The selection process should assure representation that is diverse and reflective of the broad Association constituency.
  3. The process should ensure balance in representation so that the organization does not become the arm of any one of its constituent groups.
- d. A historian, appointed by the Board, will be responsible for overseeing the preservation of historical records of the REA and APRRE prior and subsequent to the reorganization.
  1. The historian will arrange for the lodging of archives in a university library where holdings are catalogued.
  2. Copies of the archive holdings should be provided to the recording secretary and Executive Secretary.
  3. The historian shall serve a term of four years. The option shall exist for reappointment to additional terms.
  4. The historian shall provide annual reports to the Board.

Section 2. The Chair of all committees other than standing committees shall be appointed by the President/Board Chairperson in consultation with the Steering Committee, unless otherwise stipulated by the Bylaws.

Section 3. Chairs shall be expected to act until their successors are appointed and have assumed their duties.

#### ARTICLE IX. ANNUAL CONFERENCE MEETINGS

Section 1. Annual meetings of the Association will have both thematic and non-thematic elements. A theme selected by the Program Chair will focus the Association's attention on an issue of importance to the field and provides a common point of interaction. Non-thematic elements will provide opportunities for the pursuit of unique member interests.

- a. Plenary sessions will bring together all meeting registrants at one time to focus upon the meeting theme.
  1. Each standing committee has the option, in consultation with the program chair, of co-sponsoring a plenary event that addresses the meeting theme from the perspective of the committee's focus.
  2. Plenaries may utilize a variety of formats and methods.

- b. “Break-out” meetings that allow attention to specific topics related to the theme could include, but are not limited to these formats: Research Papers, Resourcing Workshops, Collaborative Sessions, and Poster Sessions.
- c. Proposal Selection. Proposals for Research Papers, Resourcing Workshops, Collaborative Sessions, and Posters to be presented will be selected by the Association’s Proposal Selection Committee.
- d. Working Groups will be groups who agree to stay together and to continue to work on certain issues over a period of several years.
  - 1. Conveners will be selected by each Working Group.
  - 2. Presenters will be chosen by each Working Group or by its conveners.
  - 3. New Working Groups may be initiated by request of members.
- e. Non-program Sessions can be offered by groups that may choose to organize their own sessions for specific needs before, after, or at designated times during the annual meeting.
  - 1. Examples of groups offering sessions may include, but are not limited to, groups representing or involved in a certain religious tradition or denomination, a particular school, a program or grant project, and organizations affiliated with REA.
  - 2. The inclusion of these sessions in the schedule will be negotiated with the Program Chair and the Executive Secretary, and the group’s convener will identify participants.

#### ARTICLE X. RELATED LEARNING ORGANIZATIONS

A Related Learning Organization of REA is an otherwise independent organization, with its own officers and bylaws, that enters into an affiliation with REA due to shared common interests and commitments. The RLO affiliation will provide mutual benefits, such as concurrent meetings and shared events and sessions, membership privileges, and information sharing.

Section 1. RLO status will be granted upon application by the external organization and approval by the Board for a three-year period. Affiliation will be reviewed every three years for continued status, based on criteria set forth in REA bylaws, documented by a memo of understanding.

Section 2. Combined membership in both organizations will be offered at a reduced rate from the individual rate for separate memberships. RLO members will receive reduced registration rates for the REA Annual Meeting.

#### ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENT OR ALTERATION OF BYLAWS

These Bylaws may be modified, amended, or altered by a two-thirds majority vote at any annual or special meeting of the Association, if the legal notice of such meeting in advance contains a statement of the proposed alteration, amendment, or repeal.

#### ARTICLE XII. IN EVENT OF DISSOLUTION

In the event of the dissolution of the Association, the net assets after payment of debts shall be transferred to one or more not-for-profit, tax-exempt organizations engaged in activities substantially similar to those of the dissolving corporation and located in North America.

#### ARTICLE XIII. MISCELLANEOUS

Section 1. Rules. The Board may establish rules that are consistent with these bylaws for the policies, procedures, and programs of the Association.

Section 2. Rules of Order. The rules contained in the most current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the organization may adopt.



Section 3. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the Association shall be the calendar year.