

BYLAWS FOR UNITY CHURCH OF BLUE WATER

ARTICLE I

Identification

Section 1.01 Statement of Purpose. The purpose of Unity Church of Blue Water, a Michigan corporation, is to teach the universal principals of Truth, as taught and demonstrated by Jesus Christ and interpreted by Unity School of Christianity and the Association of Unity Churches, a nonprofit corporation organized and existing under the laws of the state of Georgia with headquarters at Lee’s Summit, Missouri, hereinafter referred to as “the Association.”

In the accomplishment of this purpose, Unity Church of Blue Water shall endeavor to conduct services of worship and classes of instruction and to demonstrate principles of Truth by using them in the operation of the ministry and to adopt other means that in the judgment of the minister shall further the principles of practical Christianity among people everywhere.

Section 1.02 Association Membership and Responsibilities. Unity Church of Blue Water is a member of the Association of Unity Churches. The operation and conduct of this ministry shall comply with regulations and policies of the Association as outlined in the Association Bylaws, insofar as they do not conflict with the laws of the State of Michigan.

A. Leadership. This ministry shall have as its leader an ordained or licensed Unity minister(s), approved for ministry employment, or a person serving under special dispensation approved by the Association. For the purpose of these Bylaws, the term “minister” shall include a person serving under special dispensation of the Association.

B. Teaching. The principles of practical Christianity shall be taught through this ministry using methods, textbooks, literature, and other materials provided by the Association.

C. Mailings. Copies of all printed matter mailed by this ministry to its membership shall be sent to the office of the President of the Association.

D. Reports. The Minister designated Administrative Director shall make annual reports to the Association on forms supplied by the Association.

ARTICLE II

Office and Official Records

Section 2.01 Principal Office. The principal executive office of the corporation shall be fixed by the Board of Trustees. Said office shall be in the County of St. Clair, State of Michigan or at such other place within the State of Michigan as the Board of Trustees hereafter shall designate. The Corporation may also have offices at such other place or places, as the Board of Trustees may from time to time designate.

Section 2.02 Official Records. Records of membership, finances, donations, corporate minutes, etc. shall be maintained at the principal office of the corporation. Official church documents are to be available to church officers and the senior minister and/or co-minister(s) at all times.

ARTICLE III

Membership

Section 3.01 Qualifications. A member of Unity Church of Blue Water shall endeavor to live in accord with Jesus Christ principles of love and truth as taught by Unity. He/she shall further the work of this ministry through his/her active interest, love, and support.

Section 3.02 Elections of Members. Anyone desiring membership in Unity Church of Blue Water shall file an application for membership card with the ministry office. The application shall be presented to the Board of Trustees at its next regular meeting. Upon a majority affirmative vote of the Trustees present and voting, the applicant shall become an active member and shall be notified accordingly by the Board Secretary. All staff ministers and licensed Unity teachers are considered members of this ministry.

Section 3.03 Terms of Membership.

A. Active Members.

1. **New Members.** After acceptance as a new member, as outlined in Section 3.02, each member having attained the age of eighteen (18) shall have voting rights at all membership meetings, up through and including the next regularly scheduled annual membership meeting after joining the church.
2. **Existing Members.** To retain active membership rights, each member must indicate his/her desire to remain a member by completing and returning to the church, either in person or by mail, a yearly membership renewal card or such other document as approved by the Board of Trustees. If no current membership renewal card or approved document is on file prior to the annual membership meeting, that person becomes inactive and cannot serve on the Board of Trustees or vote at any membership meeting.

B. Reinstatement of Inactive Membership. After becoming inactive:

1. Within the first two years, one may regain membership if he/she has accrued, prior to six (6) weeks before a membership meeting, the attending of four (4) Sunday services. He/she must then fill out a yearly membership renewal card or document approved by the Board of Trustees.
2. After two years, one must reapply for active membership in accordance with Section 3.02 [Election of Members].

C. Removal of Membership.

1. **For Inactive Members.** After two years of inactivity, a person is removed from membership upon approval of the Board.
2. **For cause.** Removal from membership of a person whose qualifications are in question requires at least a two-third (2/3) affirmative vote of the Board of Trustees, including agreement by the minister(s). Prior to action concerning removal, the person must be notified by certified mail and be given an opportunity for hearing before the Board.

Section 3.04 Powers of Active Members. Active members of Unity Church of Blue Water having attained the age of eighteen (18) shall have the power to do the following:

- A. Vote at any membership meeting, at which the member is present, called in accordance with Section 3.05 [Meetings and Quorum].
- B. Elect members to the Board of Trustees as specified in Section 4.04 [Board of Trustees Election].
- C. Ratify the Bylaws of this ministry or any amendments thereto, as specified in Section 8.01 [Bylaws Amendments – Procedures].
- D. Vote on any expenditure on the sale, pledge, or proposed financing of real property belonging to this ministry that exceeds twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000), excluding salaries, or 25% of the previous year's income, whichever is greater. A two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of those present and voting is required for approval. Refer to section 4.03 (c) (7) [Board of Trustees – Duties].
- E. Elect a member and an alternate to serve on the Nominating Ministry Team as specified in Section 4.04 (b) [Nominating Ministry Team].
- F. Call a special membership meeting when the affairs of the ministry warrant such action. Refer to Section 3.05 (b) [Special Membership Meeting].
- G. Vote to override any action of the Board of Trustees. This vote must be taken at a duly constituted membership meeting. [See 3.05 (a) and (b).] Notice of the issue to be voted on must be submitted to the membership in writing ten (10) days prior to the meeting. Seventy-five percent (75%) of those present and voting have the authority for determination.
- H. Vote for the removal of any or all Trustee(s) from the Board of Trustees in accordance with Section 4.05 (a) [Vacancy]. A seventy-five percent (75%) affirmative vote of those present and voting is required.
- I. Vote on any matters officially brought to the attention of the membership.
- J. Offer suggestions to the minister(s) or Board of Trustees as may seem advisable for the good of this ministry.
- K. Any ten (10) active members may request peacemaking assistance by notifying the President of the Association in writing with copies to the Board of Trustees and Minister(s). Upon receipt of this request for assistance from ten or more active members to the President or designee of the Association, said person shall confer with the minister(s) and/or regional representative to evaluate whether further action is required.

Section 3.05 Meetings and Quorum.

- A. Annual Membership Meeting.** The annual membership meeting of Unity Church of Blue Water shall be held at its official headquarters on the second Sunday in February, at the time of day designated by the minister(s) and Board of Trustees.
- B. Special Membership Meetings.** Any time the affairs of this ministry warrant a special meeting it may be called by:

1. The senior minister or co-ministers.
2. A majority of the Trustees of the Board.
3. Submitting a petition having been signed by twenty percent (20%) of the active membership; a written request must be submitted to the Board who shall, within a reasonable length of time, call the meeting on behalf of the requesting party.

The purpose(s) for the special meeting shall be stated both in the written request and the written notice to the membership. In case of a Special Membership Meeting called by written petition, the written notice of the meeting to the membership shall faithfully reflect (restate, reproduce) the purpose(s) for the special meeting stated in the petition. Business conducted at the special meeting shall be limited to the pre-stated purpose(s).

- C. Written Notice.** Written notice stating the date, time, and place shall be mailed to all active members at least ten days before any membership meeting.
- D. Quorum.** Those active members present and voting at a membership meeting, called pursuant to the notice provisions of Section 3.05 (c) [Written Notice], shall constitute quorum for the transaction of business at any membership meeting.
- E. Participation.** Participation in the business affairs of the membership meeting shall be restricted to active members in attendance. Association representatives have a right to participate in discussion when they have been invited by the minister(s), the Board, or the membership.
- F. Voting.** Unless otherwise provided herein, the vote of the majority of the active members present and voting or by absentee ballot shall be necessary for approval or disapproval of the action being voted upon. Refer to section 3.05 (d) and (g) and Section 8.01 [Procedure]. Active members unable to be present at an annual membership meeting may vote by absentee ballot upon application to the ministry office in advance of the meeting date. Absentee ballots must be returned prior to the meeting. Absentee ballots shall not be accepted at special membership meetings. Proxy votes are not allowed.
- G. Prayer.** In any membership meeting, the Board President, the Minister(s), an Association Peacemaking Representative, or any member may request that action of an item of business be suspended while the membership enters into a time of prayer on the issue. Upon such request the President shall provide a period of prayer and silence.

ARTICLE IV

Government

Section 4.01 Administration. The government of Unity Church of Blue Water shall be vested in the Minister(s), as the Administrative Director(s), and the Board of Trustees elected from the membership.

Section 4.02 Minister(s).

A. Senior Minister(s) or Co-minister(s).

1. **Duties.** As the spiritual leader(s), the Minister(s) shall be responsible for the scheduling, conduct, and content of services, classes and all other activities that further the purpose of this

ministry as specified in Section 1.01 [Statement of Purpose]. As the Administrative Director(s), the Minister(s) shall be:

- a. Responsible for the complete functioning of the ministry, including the hiring and termination of all employees. Refer to Section 4.03 (c) (8).
 - b. Voting member(s) of the Board of Trustees on all matters except his/her own employment, or that of successor(s).
 - c. Responsible for appointing ministry teams in accordance with Section 5.01 [Ministry Teams Formation].
 - d. A member of all ministry teams. Refer to Section 5.01 [Ministry Teams Formation].
 - e. Responsible for seeking Association's assistance in the event of a dispute adversely affecting the ministry.
2. **Vacancy.** The position of Minister may be vacated by either of the following actions:
- a. Resignation
 - b. After complying with Section 4.03(e) [Termination of Employment of the Minister(s)], failure to fulfill the duties of the position as specified in Section 4.02(a).
3. **Compensation.** The compensation of the Minister(s) shall be fixed by agreement between the Minister(s) and the Board of Trustees.

B. Associate and/or Assistant Ministers. An Associate and/or Assistant Minister shall be duly licensed or ordained by Unity minister(s), who functions with less responsibility than the Senior or Co-minister(s).

1. **Duties.** The Associate and/or Assistant Minister(s) shall perform the duties and fulfill the responsibilities assigned them by the Senior or Co-minister(s).
2. **Compensation.** The compensation of the Associate and/or Assistant Minister(s) shall be fixed by agreement of this/these Minister(s) and the Senior or Co-Minister(s), as ratified by the Board of Trustees.

Section 4.03 Board of Trustees.

A. Structure. The Board of Trustees shall consist of the Minister(s) and no fewer than six (6) Trustees elected from the active membership of Unity Church of Blue Water. Each elected Trustee shall hold office for three years or until a successor is duly elected. The terms of two elected Trustees shall expire annually and their positions shall be filled at the annual membership meeting in accordance with Section 4.04 [Board of Trustees – Election]. No elected Trustee shall serve more than two consecutive terms of three years each without an interval of one year between terms.

The following are prohibited from serving on the Board of Trustees:

1. Any active Licensed Unity Teacher.

2. Relatives, significant others, or household members of any Board member or Licensed Unity Teacher.
3. Individuals receiving compensation from the ministry [with the exception of the minister].
4. Relatives, significant others, or household members of an individual receiving in excess of \$5,000 annual compensation from the ministry.
5. Individuals who have not been an active member for more than one (1) year.
6. Individuals chairing a New Minister Search Team

The Board may elect to appoint up to two members to serve as alternate members on the Board of Trustees. The appointment shall expire on the day of the next annual meeting. A person appointed in this manner is not considered to have served a complete term.

B. Prayer. It is important that in addition to adhering to the normal procedures for legal functioning set forth in these bylaws, that the spiritual principles taught by Unity be utilized in the handling of decisions before the Board of Trustees. During the discussion of an item of business, any Trustee may request time for prayer about an issue. Upon request, the President shall provide a period of prayer and silence.

C. Duties. As representatives of the membership, the Board of Trustees shall:

1. Uphold the spiritual purpose of the ministry as stated in Section 1.01 [Statement of Purpose].
2. Uphold the highest interest of the membership in conducting the business of this ministry.
3. Be conversant with these Bylaws and establish policy for the operation of the church.
4. Be faithful in attendance at services and Board and membership meetings of this ministry.
5. Make determination of the business needs of this ministry and authorize payment of monies for these purposes.
6. Administer the property of this ministry, both real and personal.
7. Make determinations on the sale, pledge, or proposed financing of real property belonging to this ministry. All decisions in favor of the sale, pledge, or proposed financing of real property exceeding twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) or 25% of the previous year's income, whichever is greater, shall be presented to the membership at a properly constituted membership meeting to be voted on in accordance with Section 3.04 (d) [Powers of Active Members].
8. As recommended by the Minister(s), authorize the employment of all staff personnel of this ministry and set and approve their salaries. See Section 4.02 (a) [Senior Minister or Co-minister(s) Duties].
9. Set dates for the fiscal year.

10. Each year cause to be prepared a complete financial statement with disclosures, which shall set forth the fiscal conditions and operations of the ministry.
11. Secure a fidelity bond for persons handling church monies.
12. Approve applicants for membership in accordance with Section 3.02 [Election of Members] and send or cause to be sent yearly membership renewal cards to all active and inactive members in accordance with Section 3.03 (a) [Members].
13. Act to fill the unexpired term of any Trustee in accordance with Section 4.05 (b) [Replacement].
14. Elect officers of the Board and their successors to fill any unexpired term when necessary. See Section 4.07 [Board of Trustees Officers].
15. Ratify ministry teams and their chairpersons as appointed by the President of the Board. See Section 5.01 [Formation].
16. Seek Association assistance in the event of a dispute adversely affecting the ministry.
17. Attend and actively participate in ongoing Board education programs.
18. Consider other duties brought to their attention by the minister and other Trustees.
19. Keep or cause to be kept an accurate record of membership.
20. Keep or cause to be kept accurate records of gifts to the ministry, in compliance with the Internal Revenue Service regulations, and acknowledge in writing contributions, in compliance with Internal Revenue Service regulations.
21. Secure liability insurance for all Board of Trustee members and Minister(s).

D. Employment of Minister(s). It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to employ a licensed or ordained Unity minister(s) for the church in accordance with the placement management procedures of the Association.

E. Termination of Employment of Minister(s). After a ministry and its Senior Minister or Co-ministers have cooperated with the Peacekeeping Procedures of the Association, a 2/3 majority vote of the Board of Trustees is required to terminate the employment of a Senior Minister or Co-ministers.

Section 4.04 Board of Trustees—Elections.

A. Qualifications. Any person elected to the Board of Trustees must be an active member of Unity Church of Blue Water. He/she shall be a person who:

1. Desires to serve on the Board.
2. Endeavors to live in accord with the Jesus Christ principles of love and truth as taught by Unity.
3. Furthers the work of this ministry through his/her active interest, love, and support.

4. Is a sincere and continuing student of Unity, conversant with its teachings.
5. Has demonstrated leadership capabilities.

B. Nominating Ministry Team. A Nominating Ministry Team shall be formed at least three months prior to the Annual Membership meeting, and shall initiate a search for at least two qualified candidates for the Board of Trustees. The Ministry Team shall consist of the Senior Minister or Co-minister(s) and three active members selected in the following manner:

1. At the annual membership meeting, the membership shall elect one of its active members, and an alternate, to serve on the Nominating Ministry Team for the next year's election. In the event of unavailability to serve of the persons so elected, the Board shall select a person from the active membership to fill the vacancy, other than current Board member.
2. The Board shall elect one of its Trustees.
3. Together with the minister(s), the above committee members shall select a third Ministry Team member from the active membership who shall become chairperson of the Nominating Ministry Team.

C. Nominating Procedure. As the presiding officer of the annual membership meeting, the President of the Board shall:

1. Read Section 4.04 [Board of Trustees–Election] just prior to call for nominations.
2. Call upon the chairperson of the Nominating Ministry Team to present the Ministry Team's nominations.
3. Call for additional nominations from the floor. Nominees should never be chosen on the basis of a person's business success or financial resources alone. All nominees, no matter how nominated, must qualify in accordance with paragraph 4.04 (a) [Qualifications] of this section.

D. Election. Written ballots are required if there are any partial terms to be filled or there are more than two nominees. The two nominees receiving the largest number of votes shall be elected to full three (3) year terms. The candidate receiving the next highest number of votes shall be elected to the longest unexpired term, etc. All persons elected in such a manner shall be considered to be fulfilling a term of office.

Section 4.05. Board of Trustees—Vacancy and Replacement.

A. Vacancy. The office of a Trustee may be vacated by any of the following means:

1. The resignation of the Trustee.
2. If resignations on the Board have brought the number of Trustees to less than a quorum, a Nominating Ministry Team shall submit a slate of qualified nominees to the membership to fill the vacancies.
3. The Board voting for the removal of a Trustee due to absences from three successive regular Board meetings. Absences may be excused by the Board upon written request.

4. The Board voting for the removal of a Trustee because of a failure to fulfill the duties of the office as specified in Section 4.03 (c) [Duties].
5. The active membership voting for removal of a Trustee because of failure to fulfill the duties of the office as specified in Section 4.03 [Duties]. Refer to Section 3.04 (h) [Powers of Active Members].
6. If more than fifty percent (50%) of the Board of Trustees is to be recalled, the entire Board of Trustees must be recalled. Refer to Section 3.04 (h) [Powers of Active Members].
7. If the entire Board of Trustees is recalled by the membership, then the membership may re-elect recalled Trustees. The number re-elected must be less than fifty percent (50%) of the recalled Trustees.

B. Replacement. Should a vacancy occur on the Board of Trustees, the Board shall proceed to fill the vacancy by ballot at its next regular meeting. In case of emergency, a special meeting may be called. Only persons meeting the qualifications specified in Section 4.04 (a) [Qualifications] may be considered as replacements. No replacement shall have served as a Trustee during the year prior to his/her election. A majority vote of those present and voting shall be necessary to elect. The term shall expire on the day of the next annual meeting. A person elected in this manner is not considered to have served a complete term.

C. Interim Board. If the entire Board of Trustees has been recalled or a quorum does not exist, the active church membership may choose to elect an Interim Board whose term of office shall not exceed sixty (60) days. By the end of sixty (60) days a permanent Board must be elected.

Section 4.06 Board of Trustees—Meetings and Quorum.

A. Regular Board Meetings. The regular business meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be held at the headquarters of this ministry on the third Thursday of each month, unless otherwise specified by the Board.

B. Special Board Meetings. Special meetings of the Board shall be called by the President of the Board under any of the following conditions:

1. By request of the Senior Minister or Co-minister(s).
2. By request of two or more Trustees.
3. As the President of the Board deems necessary.

The request shall be filed in writing with the Board Secretary. Reasonable effort must be made to notify all Trustees of any special meeting.

C. Quorum. Fifty-one percent (51%) of Trustees shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

D. Minister(s) Attendance. The Minister(s) has the right to attend all Board meetings with the exception of those meetings or portions thereof that pertain to determinations of the minister's salary and/or review of the minister's work record. Each Minister must be notified in writing of all special meetings.

Section 4.07 Board of Trustees—Officers. Officers of the Board of Trustees shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. All officers shall be selected in a manner decided by the Board, at the first Board meeting after the Annual Meeting or at a special meeting called for the purpose of selecting officers. Officers shall hold their respective offices for a one-year term or until their successors are duly elected or qualified.

A. President. The President shall:

1. Preside at all Board of Trustees meetings.
2. Preside at all membership meetings.
3. Form Ministry Teams in accordance with Section 5.01 [Formation].
4. Be a member of all ministry teams by virtue of office, except the Nominating Ministry Team.
5. Sign such papers and documents, upon proper authorization, as may be necessary.
6. Be responsible for the planning of Board orientation, retreats, and workshops.

B. Vice President. The Vice President shall:

1. Perform all the duties of the President of the Board in his or her absence.
2. Become President of the Board in case the office of the President becomes vacant. In such a case, a new Vice-President shall be elected from among the remaining Trustees to fill the remainder of the term.

C. Secretary. The Secretary shall:

1. Keep, or cause to be kept, an accurate record of the minutes of all Board and membership meetings.
2. Hold in custody and be responsible for all reports, contracts, other legal papers, and minute books which items shall be kept in the ministry office at all times, or in such other depository as prescribed by the Board.
3. Attend to all official business required by the Board.
4. Keep or cause to be kept accurate active and inactive membership lists.
5. Send or cause to be sent yearly membership renewal cards to all active and inactive members.

D. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall:

1. Be custodian of the funds of this ministry. He/she shall pay out or cause to be paid out funds authorized by the Board. Refer to Section 4.03 (c) [Duties].

2. Keep, or cause to be kept, a record of all financial transactions, and submit a monthly financial report at each regular Board meeting.
3. Submit a financial report, covering the last complete fiscal period, at the annual membership meeting.
4. Count or cause to be counted, by the appointment of qualified persons, all funds received, and be responsible for their deposit. When counting ministry funds there should be at least two (2) persons present.
5. Place, or cause to be placed, the funds of the ministry in the bank or other depository approved by the Board.

ARTICLE V

Ministry Teams

Section 5.01 Formation. Ministry teams for any specific purpose, with the exception of the Nominating Ministry Team, shall be appointed by the President of the Board or the Minister. Ratification by the Board is required.

ARTICLE VI

Seal

Section 6.01 Description. The corporate seal of this ministry shall include the name of the ministry in a circle, which encloses the name of the city, state, and date of incorporation.

Section 6.02 Dissolution. Should this corporation dissolve:

- A. All property and funds remaining after the payment of the debts of the corporation shall be delivered to the Association, a nonprofit corporation organized under the laws of the State of Georgia, for religious and educational purposes.
- B. Such funds for property shall be for the use and benefit of the Association as may be determined by the Board of Trustees of the Association, in alignment with current policies and procedures.
- C. The Association shall make available, according to its current policies and procedures, funds for the re-establishment of a Unity ministry in Port Huron, Michigan.
- D. Should the Association no longer exist, any assets remaining of this corporation after dissolution shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, exclusively for such purpose or to such organization or organizations, as said court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for purposes set out in Section 5.01 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

ARTICLE VII

Meeting Procedures

Section 7.01 Rules of Order. The latest edition of *ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER* shall be the authority of this ministry on parliamentary law and its usage, unless otherwise provided by these Bylaws.

ARTICLE VIII

Bylaws Amendments

Section 8.01 Procedure. Amendments to these Bylaws must be made by voting members of the corporation at a legally constituted membership meeting. Written notice setting forth the proposed amendments must be mailed to all active members at least ten days prior to the required membership meeting. An affirmative vote of seventy-five percent (75%) of all active members present and voting shall be necessary to pass any amendment by these Bylaws. These bylaws fully supersede all previous Bylaws adopted by Unity Church of Blue Water.

_____ Attest-Secretary

Revision: February 13, 2011

Date of Adoption or Revision