

# **USCL BYLAWS**

**Approved MARCH, 2023**

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## **ARTICLE I – Name**

The name of this local ministry is Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing (USCL).

## **ARTICLE II – Purpose**

**Section 1. Statement of Purpose.** The purpose of Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing, a Michigan ecclesiastical nonprofit corporation, (hereinafter referred to as “ministry”) is (i) to teach the universal principles of Truth, as taught and demonstrated by Jesus Christ and interpreted by the Association of Unity Churches, Inc., d/b/a Unity Worldwide Ministries, a Georgia nonprofit corporation with headquarters at Unity Village, Missouri, hereinafter referred to as Unity Worldwide Ministries [UWM], and (ii) to live its mission and core values as adopted by the members of UWM from time to time.

**Section 2. Accomplishment of Purpose.** In the accomplishment of this purpose, Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing will endeavor to conduct services of worship and classes of instruction and to demonstrate the principles of Truth by using them in the operations of the ministry and to adopt other means that in the judgment of the minister will further the principles of practical Christianity among people everywhere. If the ministry is temporarily without a minister, the Board of Trustees (Board), collaborating with the Leadership Council, will carry out this and all other functions until a new minister is selected.

**Section 3. Unity Worldwide Ministries.** Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing will be a vital part of the worldwide Unity movement and a member of UWM. Any member of this ministry may call upon the resources and support of UWM through its senior minister or co-ministers, Board of Trustees, staff, or through direct communication with UWM.

In the spirit of cooperation, the operation and conduct of this ministry will comply with the Bylaws, policies, and regulations of UWM, insofar as they do not conflict with the laws of the State of Michigan.

- A. Participation. This ministry may have its voice heard and wishes expressed in the membership meetings of UWM, and its members may participate in workshops, seminars, and classes designed to encourage and foster their spiritual development and that of the ministry.
- B. Resources. This ministry can benefit from its membership in UWM and the Great Lakes Region of Unity Churches (GLRUC) through direct support, materials, and coaching regarding organization, finances, music, adult and youth education, church growth programs, ethics compliance, and other topics related to church function.
- C. Leadership. This ministry will have as its leader an ordained or licensed Unity minister(s) approved for ministry employment by UWM or a person serving under special dispensation approved by UWM. For the purpose of these Bylaws, the term “minister” will include a person serving under special dispensation of UWM.

- D. Teaching. The principles of practical Christianity will be taught through this ministry using methods, textbooks, literature, and other materials approved by UWM.
- E. Comply with Requests. The ministry will comply with all requests for identifying information from UWM, including, but not limited to authentic copies of the ministry's:
  - 1. Articles of Incorporation;
  - 2. Bylaws whenever updated;
  - 3. Deeds to properties owned by the ministry;
  - 4. Form SS-4, Application for Employer Identification Number, once it has been returned by the IRS to the ministry;
  - 5. Form 8822-B, Change of Address or Responsible Party.
- F. Reports. The ministry will make annual reports to UWM as required.

### **ARTICLE III – Office and Official Records**

**Section 1. Principal Office.** The principal executive office of the ministry will be fixed by the Board of Trustees. Said office will be in the County of Ingham, State of Michigan, or at such other place within the State of Michigan, as the Board of Trustees hereafter designate. The ministry may also have offices at such other place or places, as the Board may from time to time designate.

**Section 2. Official Records.** Records of membership, finances, donation, corporate minutes, and other records required by law or as designated by the Board of Trustees will be maintained at the principal office of the ministry. Confidential documents are available only for use by the minister(s), board members, or designated professional staff and advisors. Non-confidential documents are available to members for review at the principal office of the ministry upon request.

### **ARTICLE IV – Members**

**Section 1. Qualifications.** A member of Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing will endeavor to live by:

- A. The principles of love and truth as taught by Jesus Christ and Unity to further the work of this ministry through active interest, participation, love and support {Appendix A};
- B. Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing's Inclusion/Diversity Statement {Appendix B};
- C. Healthy and Safe Community Interactions Agreement {Appendix C}.

**Section 2. Election of Members.** Anyone who has reached the age of thirteen (13) desiring membership in Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing will file with the ministry office an application for membership document as approved by the Board of Trustees. In addition, prospective members may need to meet additional requirements according to current ministry policy. The application will be presented to the Board of Trustees at its next regular meeting. A majority vote of the trustees present and voting will be required for the applicant to become a member. The Board Secretary will notify the applicant of the Board's action.

All staff ministers and licensed Unity teachers are considered members of this ministry. Members must be eighteen (18) years of age to vote at a membership meeting provided the thirty (30) day wait period has also occurred.

### **Section 3. Membership.**

- A. New Members.** Thirty (30) days after acceptance, a new member who has reached the age of eighteen (18) will have voting rights at all membership meetings up through the day prior to the next regularly scheduled annual membership meeting. To continue membership and voting rights, a new member is required to complete a renewal document prior to the start of the member's first annual meeting.
- B. Existing Members.** To retain membership rights, each member must indicate a desire to remain a member by completing and returning to the church a yearly membership renewal document as approved and distributed by the Board of Trustees. If no current membership renewal document is on file prior to the start of the Annual Membership Meeting, that person becomes a former member and cannot serve on the Board of Trustees or vote at any membership meeting.
- C. Youth Members.** Youth membership may be established under the following provisions:
  - 1.** Youth membership is open to those who are thirteen (13) years of age and no more than seventeen (17) years of age.
  - 2.** A Youth member will have the right to speak at all meetings which members have the right to speak. Youth members will be ineligible to vote at the annual and special business meetings. Upon obtaining the age of eighteen (18) a Youth member becomes a voting member.
  - 3.** Youth members are not eligible to serve as voting members of the Board of Trustees, but may serve in an honorary capacity as a Youth Advisory Board member.
  - 4.** Any additional qualifications for Youth membership and Youth Advisory Board membership will be at the discretion of the local ministry.
- D. Reinstatement of Inactive Membership.**
  - 1.** Reinstatement within one year. A former member who wishes to return to membership within the first year after losing membership, who meets membership qualifications, and who completes a yearly membership renewal document approved by the Board of Trustees, will be reinstated as members. In order to vote at a membership meeting, reinstating members must fulfill these requirements at least thirty (30) days before a membership meeting.
  - 2.** Reinstatement after one year. Persons who have not been members for one or more years and desire to return to membership may apply in the same manner required of new members.
- E. Removal of Membership for Cause.** If a member has not comported with the qualifications of membership, and/or was found to undertake illegal or inappropriate activities as measured with documented evidence or testimony, the member may be removed for cause by the Board of Trustees after consultation with the senior minister or co-ministers. Prior to any vote concerning removal, the member in question must be notified of the charges that may lead to removal of membership by postal or electronic mail at least thirty (30) days prior to the Board of Trustees meeting and thereafter be given an opportunity for a hearing before the Board. The member will have the right to be present at the hearing by the Board of Trustees and may bring a person to counsel

them who must be a member of the local ministry. A two-thirds (2/3rds) vote of the Board will be required for removal of membership.

**Section 4. Powers of Members.** Each member of Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing will have the following powers to:

- A. Vote at any membership meeting at which the member is present, unless otherwise directed in these Bylaws;
- B. Serve as ministry team leader;
- C. Offer suggestions to the minister(s) or Board of Trustees as may seem advisable for the good of the ministry;
- D. Contact the UWM regional representative or UWM directly for guidance, support, or information on available resources;
- E. Participate in all activities and programs of the ministry;
- F. Be eligible to serve on the Board of Trustees having been a member for six (6) months;
- G. Speak in debate at any membership meeting according to the rules provided for debate.
- H. To attend Board of Trustee meetings should a member request.

## **ARTICLE V – Meetings**

**Section 1. Annual Meeting.** There will be one annual membership meeting each year.

- A. Date and Location of Annual Meeting. The annual membership meeting will be held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of March. The senior minister or co-ministers in agreement with the Board of Trustees will establish the time, place, and manner of attendance and voting (what constitutes being “present” to vote) for this meeting. If external circumstances prevent the Annual meeting from occurring on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in March, the meeting will be rescheduled prior to the end of the first quarter.
- B. Notice. Written notice stating the date, time, place, manner of attendance and voting, of the annual meeting will be sent by postal or electronic mail to all members at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting.
- C. Quorum. Ten percent (10%) of the members must be present in order to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any annual membership meeting.
- D. Presiding Officer. The President of the Board of Trustees will serve as the presiding officer of the annual membership meeting unless the President relinquishes the chair to another board member, to a representative of UWM, or to a professional registered parliamentarian.
- E. Participation. The right to speak in debate, to make motions, and to vote during annual meetings is restricted to those members who are present and were admitted to membership at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of the annual meeting. The right of other persons to speak during membership meetings may be extended by the presiding officer or by a two-thirds (2/3rds) vote. UWM’s representatives have a right to speak when they are at the meeting.
- F. Voting. Unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws (see decisions concerning real property, designated special funds, or overriding BOT actions, below), a majority of the members present (quorum), qualified to vote and voting, will be necessary for approval or disapproval of the action being voted upon.

When a membership vote is required during a national, state, or local emergency situation, membership votes may be made by confidential mail. (Adopted August 2020, effective March 1, 2020.)

- G. Power and Authority.** At an annual membership meeting, the voting members will have the power and authority to do all of the following:
1. Elect members to the Board of Trustees;
  2. Approve proposed amendments to these Bylaws;
  3. Approve by a two-thirds (2/3rds) vote of **all members** any of the following with regard to real property:
    - a. Sale or purchase,
    - b. Pledge (mortgage),
    - c. Proposed financing, or
    - d. Expenditure with regard to any of the above; (see Art VI, Section 9, G.)
  4. Elect a member and an alternate, to serve on the Nominating Ministry Team;
  5. Override any action of the Board of Trustees provided that a notice of the action to be voted upon is sent by postal or electronic mail to all members in writing thirty (30) days prior to the meeting and is approved by a two-thirds (2/3rds) vote;
  6. Remove by a majority vote any or all trustee(s) from the Board of Trustees;
  7. Vote on any matters officially brought to the attention of the membership; and
  8. Approve annual budget, and vote on any matters officially brought to the attention of the membership.
- H. Prayer.** In any annual membership meeting, the Board President, minister(s), UWM representative, or any member may request that action on an item of business be suspended while the membership enters into a time of prayer concerning the item of business. Upon such request the presiding officer will provide a period of prayer and silence.

## **Section 2. Special Membership Meeting.**

Requesting Special Meetings. Any time the affairs of this ministry warrant, a special membership meeting may be requested by the senior minister or co-ministers; by a majority vote of the entire number of trustees currently serving on the Board of Trustees; or by a petition signed by ten percent (10%) of the membership and submitted to the Board of Trustees.

- A. Calling Special Meetings.** Upon receiving a proper request for a special membership meeting, the President of the Board of Trustees will call the meeting on behalf of the requesting party(s) within forty-five (45) days of the receipt of the request.
- B. The Notice of a Special Meeting** will state the date, time, place, manner of attendance and voting, and will be sent by postal or electronic mail to all members at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting.

**Special Meeting Business.** Business conducted at a special meeting will be stated in the Notice and the meeting will be limited to the pre-stated purpose(s) given in the meeting notice.

**C. - H.**

Quorum, Presiding Officer, Participation, Voting, Power and Authority of Members, and Prayer provisions for special membership meetings are the same as those for Annual Meetings.



### **Section 3. Town Hall Meetings.**

Town Hall Meetings rise from a need for information sharing, discussion, and updates. An Event form is requested from the USCL office and completed. A request can be made by a team, individual, or the minister.

- A. Date and Location. As requested and available.
- B. Notice. Mail, email, and Facebook blast.
- C. Quorum. Informal, none.
- D. Presiding Officer. Informal, none.
- E. Participation. Anyone.
- F. Voting. None, unless a straw poll.
- G. Power and Authority of Members. None.
- H. Prayer. On request.

## **ARTICLE VI – Board of Trustees**

**Section 1. Membership.** The Board of Trustees will be composed of the senior minister and five (5) to seven (7) other trustees. The trustees will be elected from among the membership of Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing at the Annual Membership Meeting. Churches with fifty (50) members or less may choose to have a Board of Trustees composed of the senior minister and at least three (3) other trustees.

### **Section 2. Eligibility and Term of Office.**

- A. Qualifications. To be eligible to be elected to the Board of Trustees a person must be a member of Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing for a minimum of six (6) months. In addition, candidates for election will endeavor to live in accord with the Jesus Christ principles of love and truth as taught by Unity Worldwide Ministries, work to further the purposes of this ministry through active interest, participation, love and support, be a sincere and continuing student of Unity always remaining conversant with its teachings and have leadership capabilities.
- B. Term of Office. Elected trustees will hold office for three (3) years, or until their successors have been elected and assume office. Trustees elected at any annual membership meeting will take office at the conclusion of the annual membership meeting at which they were elected. No elected trustee will serve more than two consecutive terms without an interval of one (1) year between terms. Any person who serves on the Board more than half of a term will be credited with having served a full term.

**Section 3. Prohibition of Board Service.** The following persons are prohibited from serving on the Board of Trustees:

- A. Any active licensed Unity teacher from your ministry;
- B. Relatives, significant others, or household members of any trustee of the ministry;
- C. Individuals receiving compensation from the ministry may serve on the board, but may not vote on any matter of compensation as it relates to such individual or business entity owned by such individual.

- D. Relatives, significant others, or household members of any individual consistently receiving more than \$100.00 per month compensation from the ministry may serve on the board, but may not vote on any matter of compensation as it relates to such individual or business entity owned by such individual.

**Section 4. Regular Board Meetings.** Regular meetings of the Board of Trustees will be held at least once a month, unless otherwise determined by the Board. The BOT will determine the manner of attendance and voting. There must be a minimum of one meeting per quarter. Only members of the Board of Trustees may vote at a regular board meeting. Non-board members can request to be added to the agenda no later than one week in advance of scheduled meeting. The non-board member can speak for 5 minutes. The Board will follow-up in two weeks.

**Section 5. Special Board Meetings.** Special meetings of the Board will be called by the President of the Board if requested by the senior minister, by three (3) or more trustees; or if, by a written petition of ten percent (10%) of the ministry's voting members, or by the President if the President deems it necessary. Any request for a special board meeting will be made in writing to the Board Secretary. The BOT will determine the manner of attendance and voting. All current board members, including the senior minister will be sent notice by postal or electronic mail of any special board meeting at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the meeting. The attendance of any member of the board at the meeting will serve as a waiver of this notice requirement. Only members of the Board of Trustees may vote at a Special Board Meeting.

**Section 6. Quorum.** More than half of the total number of trustees constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Unless otherwise provided, the vote of more than half of the trustees present and voting is necessary for approval of the action being voted upon. Should the total number of trustees fall below a quorum, (not including the non-voting minister) the remaining trustees will refer to and implement Section 12 concerning vacancies.

**Section 7. Board Authority.**

- A. Except as provided in these bylaws, all authority is vested in the Board of Trustees only when it meets in session after notice to all trustees and the senior minister, and a quorum is present.
- B. When discussing the minister's compensation, working conditions or review of minister's work record, the board (including the Minister) may decide to exclude the minister from that portion of the discussion.

**Section 8. Prayer.** In addition to adhering to the normal procedures for legal functioning set forth in these Bylaws, the spiritual principles taught by Unity Worldwide Ministries should be followed in the handling of decisions before the Board of Trustees. During the discussion of any item of business a trustee may request time for prayer concerning a topic. Upon such request, the President will provide a period of prayer and silence.

**Section 9. Duties and Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees.** As representatives of the membership, the Board of Trustees will:

- A.** Uphold the spiritual purpose of this ministry as stated in Article II, Section 2 of these Bylaws;
- B.** Uphold the best interests of the membership in conducting the business of this ministry;
- C.** Be conversant with these Bylaws and establish policy for the operation of this ministry;
- D.** Be faithful in attendance at weekly service as well as Board, membership, and special team meetings of this ministry;
- E.** Determine the business needs of this ministry and authorize payment of funds for those purposes.
- F.** Provide for the administration of the real and personal property of this ministry with the following provisions; any unbudgeted emergency expenditure from the general fund that would exceed 10% of the previous year's gross income will be presented to the membership for final approval;
- G.** Make decisions regarding the sale, pledge, or proposed financing of real property belonging to this ministry provided that all decisions concerning the sale, pledge, or proposed financing of the real property be presented to the membership at a properly constituted membership meeting for Membership's final approval. (See Article V, Sec. 1, G. 3. Meetings, Member Powers).
- H.** Employ an ordained or licensed Unity minister(s) through collaboration with the employment management procedures of the Unity Worldwide Ministries (UWM);
- I.** When conflict arises between the board and/or the senior minister, such ministry will seek to reconcile differences and immediately notify UWM for help with procedures and to provide guidance and consultation. After a ministry, and its senior minister have sought to reconcile differences and cooperated with the procedures and guidance of UWM, the Board of Trustees may terminate the employment of a senior minister by a two-thirds (2/3rds) vote of all Board members;
- J.** As recommended by the senior minister, determine staff positions, including associate and assistant ministers, and authorize funds for their financial support through the annual budget process;
- K.** Establish the fiscal year as the calendar year, unless the board finds a compelling reason to adopt a non-fiscal calendar year;
- L.** Cause to be prepared and posted monthly a statement of income and expense and a balance sheet setting forth the financial conditions and operations of the ministry;
- M.** Secure theft and dishonesty insurance for persons handling church funds;
- N.** Approve new applicants for membership and remove former members from the membership rolls;
- O.** Provide an annual membership renewal process for all members and keep an accurate record of members and former members;
- P.** Fill the unexpired term of any trustee;
- Q.** Elect officers of the Board and their successors to fill any unexpired term when necessary;
- R.** Create such ministry teams as needed to support the functions and responsibilities of the board;
- S.** Advise the President of the Board on appointments to ministry teams;
- T.** Seek UWM assistance in the event of a dispute affecting the ministry;

- U. Attend and actively participate with ongoing board education programs;
- V. Consider issues brought to the board's attention by the minister or member of the Board;
- W. Keep record of background checks on all staff and volunteers directly involved with the children's programs;
- X. Keep record of children and dates of participation in children programs;
- Y. Keep or cause to be kept accurate records of gifts to the ministry in compliance with Internal Revenue Service regulations;
- Z. Issue or cause to be issued necessary 1099 and W-2 forms and other required forms in compliance with Internal Revenue Service regulations and any other state and federal laws;
- AA. Acknowledge in writing contributions in compliance with Internal Revenue Service regulations;
- BB. Secure liability insurance for all Board of Trustee members, minister(s), and others handling funds on behalf of the ministry;
- CC. Take such other actions necessary for the best interests of this ministry; and
- DD. Send or cause to be sent the Annual Ministry Report to UWM.
- EE. Secure insurance covering building, grounds, and other properties, also Workers' Compensation insurance and liability insurance for all Board of Trustee members, minister(s), and either a fidelity bond or theft and dishonesty insurance for all persons who handle money.

## **Section 10. Nomination and Election.**

### **A. Nominating Ministry Team.**

1. Selection. A Nominating Ministry Team will be formed at least six (6) months prior to the annual membership meeting. The ministry team will consist of one (1) current board member, the minister, and two members of the ministry selected in the following manner:
  - a. At the annual membership meeting, the membership will select two (2) members, one of them as the designated alternate, from among the membership of the ministry to serve on the Nominating Ministry Team for the following year's election.  
In the event the person elected to serve becomes unavailable, the alternate will serve. If the alternate also becomes unavailable to serve, the Board will elect a person from among the members who is not a current member of the Board to fill the vacancy;
  - b. The Board will elect one of its trustees to serve on the Nominating Ministry Team;
  - c. Together with the senior minister, the above three nominating ministry team members will select a fourth person from among the members to serve on the Nominating Ministry Team. The Nominating Ministry Team will select the chair from among the three (3) congregant members.
  - d. In the event of an interim Board, the Nominating Ministry Team will complete its selection process within thirty (30) days from the establishment of the interim Board.
2. Duties and Responsibilities. The Nominating Ministry Team will initiate a search for at least two qualified candidates for nomination as members of the Board of Trustees.

The report of the Nominating Ministry Team will be sent to all members thirty (30) days prior to the annual membership meeting.

3. Other Nominations. Any member wishing to be nominated will notify the church office no later than forty-five (45) days prior to the annual business meeting.
- B. Nomination Procedure.** The presiding officer of the annual membership meeting will:
1. Read Article VI, Section 10A and 10D of these Bylaws just prior to the process of nomination and election;
  2. Call upon the Chairperson of the Nominating Ministry Team to offer the ministry team's nominations; and
  3. Read the names of additional nominees that have submitted their names at least forty-five (45) days prior to the annual business meeting.
- C. Election Procedure.** The election will be by ballot if there are any partial terms to be filled or there are more than two nominees. The result of the vote will be announced to the annual meeting attendees. The two nominees receiving the highest number of votes will be elected to full three (3) year terms. The candidates receiving the next highest number of votes will be elected to the longest unexpired term.

**Section 11. Removal from Office by the Board of Trustees.** Any trustee may be removed by the Board of Trustees due to unexcused absences from three successive regular board meetings, failure to fulfill the duties of the office, failure to uphold the Code of Ethics and other ministry policies, or disruptive or unethical behavior. Removal requires a majority vote of the other Board Members.

**Section 12. Vacancies.**

- A.** Should there be a vacancy on the Board of Trustees, the Board will select a qualified replacement to fill the position. A majority vote of the Board will be necessary for election. The term of service will expire on the date of the next annual meeting.
- B.** Should the number of board members fall beneath the quorum requirement, the remaining board members will be **empowered** to call and hold the two special meetings allowed by Section 12C, and to carry on the necessary day-to-day activities of the ministry.
- C.** Should the number of board members fall beneath a quorum, two special membership meetings will be called.
  1. The first special meeting will occur within thirty (30) days, with notice of the meeting sent by postal or electronic mail to all members at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting. The purpose of this meeting will be to:
    - a. Elect interim Board members;
    - b. Constitute or reconstitute the Nominating Ministry Team (See Section 10, A., B., and C., Nominating Ministry Team);
    - c. Set the date for a second special meeting. The second Special Membership meeting will be held no later than seventy-five (75) days after the first meeting with notice sent to all members by postal or electronic mail at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting.
  2. The Nominating Ministry Team will:
    - a. Complete their search for Board nominees within thirty (30) days of the first Special Membership meeting;

- b. The names of nominees will be mailed by postal or electronic mail to all members within forty-five (45) days.
- 3. The Board members will be elected at the second of these Special Membership meetings [See Section 10, A., B., and C., Nomination and Election Procedure]. If the regular annual meeting of this ministry should be scheduled in this time period, then board elections will be held at the regular annual meeting of this ministry.
- D. Election Procedure. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes will fill the longest unexpired term; the candidate receiving the next highest number of votes receives the next longest term. This procedure is followed until all vacancies are filled.

**Section 13. Board of Trustees Officers.** The officers of the Board of Trustees will be a president, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer. All officers will be elected by a majority of the board members present and voting at the first board meeting after the annual meeting or at a special meeting called for the purpose of selecting officers. The term of office will be one year or until successors are elected.

**Section 14. Duties of Officers.**

- A. President. The president will preside at all Board of Trustees meetings, preside at all membership meetings, serve as an ex officio member of all ministry teams except the Nominating Ministry Team, sign such papers and documents upon proper authorization as may be necessary, and be responsible for collaborating with the senior minister in the planning of board orientation, retreats, and workshops.
- B. Vice President. The vice president will assist the president in the performance of that officer's duties, perform all the duties of the president of the Board in the absence of the president, and succeed to the office of president in case the office of the president becomes vacant. In such a case, a new vice president will be elected from among the remaining trustees to fill the remainder of the unexpired term.
- C. Secretary. The secretary will keep, or cause to be kept, an accurate record of the minutes of all Board and membership meetings, hold in custody and be responsible for all reports, contracts, other legal papers, and keep the meeting minute books at the principal executive office of the ministry at all times or in such other depository as prescribed by the Board, be a signatory to any legally required documents which the state or local government determine necessary, attend to all official business as directed by the Board, keep or cause to be kept accurate membership lists, and send or cause to be sent yearly membership renewal cards to all members or former members.
- D. Treasurer. The treasurer will be custodian of all funds belonging to this ministry, pay out or cause to be paid out funds authorized by the Board, keep or cause to be kept a record of all financial transactions, submit monthly financial reports to the congregation and at each regular Board meeting, submit a financial report covering the last complete fiscal year at the annual membership meeting, and account for or cause to be accounted for by the appointment of qualified persons, all funds received being responsible to assure that all such funds are deposited in accounts authorized by the Board. When counting ministry funds there should be at least two (2) persons present. The treasurer is required to pass background checks for the faithful performance of his or her duties as the Board may require.

## **ARTICLE VII – Administration, Management, and Leadership**

### **Section 1. Definitions.**

- A.** Unity Ministry. A member ministry is a ministry recognized by UWM.
- B.** Senior Minister. A Senior minister is a Unity minister duly ordained, licensed or serving under special dispensation by UWM or Unity School of Christianity prior to July 1, 1966, who assumes the spiritual and administrative leadership role in a member ministry. This leader oversees teaching, preaching, healing, counseling, praying, and all spiritual services and fellowship activities of the ministry. The Senior Minister will also be responsible for overseeing the administration and operation of the ministry.
- C.** Co-Minister. In shared partnership ministries, a Co-minister is a Unity minister duly ordained or licensed by UWM or Unity School of Christianity prior to July 1, 1966 or serving under special dispensation, who equally assumes the leadership role with another minister in a member ministry.
- D.** Associate Minister. In ministries with more than one minister, an Associate Minister may be equal in ability, but function with less responsibility than the Senior Minister. The Associate Minister reports to the Senior Minister, who determines the scope of the associate's responsibilities.
- E.** Assistant Minister. The skills and/or experience of the Assistant Minister may be less than those of the Senior Minister. The Assistant Minister reports to the Senior Minister, who determines the scope of the assistant's responsibilities. The assistant may be placed in a specialized service area of the ministry, i.e., pastoral visitation, or administrative support.

### **Section 2. Administration.**

- A.** Administration. The administration of Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing is vested in the senior minister or co-ministers as the administrative director(s), and the Board of Trustees elected from the membership.
- B.** Emergency Powers. In the case of a national emergency declared by the President of the United States, a State emergency declared by the governor, or a local emergency as determined by a two-thirds (2/3rds) vote of the Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing's Board of Trustees present and voting, the Board of Trustees is authorized:
  - 1.** To meet and vote by electronic means,
  - 2.** To have the full power to adjust budgets, and
  - 3.** Cancel/postpone events or reschedule them as electronic meetings.As long as the emergency lasts the Board of Trustees may take any other emergency actions deemed helpful and necessary to assure the welfare of this ministry. (Adopted August 2020, effective March 1, 2020.)
- C.** The manner of attendance and voting (what constitutes being "present" to vote) at any meeting will be agreed upon by the senior minister or co-ministers and the Board, and be designated in the required notice. A member is considered present to vote when attending any meeting as prescribed by this agreement. Voting options: in person, confidential mail, ZOOM, proxy, or other designated electronic means.
- D.** A special or restricted fund may be established by the ministry. Monies are set aside for a particular purpose as a result of designated giving. Funds are permanently restricted to that purpose and cannot be used for other expenses by USCL. All disbursements from an

established special or restricted fund must be in compliance with its purpose. If the purpose of the fund no longer exists, the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds governs the release of restricted funds or their modification. (See also special requirements for decisions related to real property as outlined in Article V, Section 1, G – 3, and Article VI, Section 9, G.).

### **Section 3. Minister(s).**

- A. Senior Minister Or Co-ministers.** The senior minister or co-ministers will be duly licensed or ordained Unity minister(s) or someone serving under special dispensation.
- 1. Qualifications.** Any senior minister will agree to abide by the UWM Code of Ethics and the Sexual Conduct Policy.
  - 2. Duties.** As the spiritual leader(s) of this ministry, the senior minister or co-ministers in collaboration with the mission teams and Board, will be responsible for the scheduling, conduct, and content of services, classes, and all other activities that further the purpose of this ministry. As administrative directors(s), the minister(s) will:
    - a.** Share with the Board the responsibility for the complete functioning of this ministry, including the hiring and termination of all employees including associate or assistant ministers;
    - b.** Serve as non-voting member(s) of the Board of Trustees on all matters except their own employment, or that of their successor(s);
    - c.** Be responsible for creating ministry teams related to these duties;
    - d.** Be and serve as ex officio members of all ministry teams;
    - e.** Be responsible for seeking UWM assistance in the event of a dispute adversely affecting the ministry that cannot be resolved by implementing:
      - i.** The Healthy and Safe Community Interactions Agreement (Appendix C);
      - ii.** The enlistment of Great Lakes Region of Unity Churches.
  - 3. Selection.** The Board of Trustees will select the senior minister or co-ministers following the employment procedures for ministerial personnel of UWM.
  - 4. Compensation.** The compensation of the senior minister or co-ministers employed by this ministry will be set by the Board of Trustees.
- B. Associate and/or Assistant Ministers.** Associate and/or assistant minister(s) are hired by the senior minister with the consent and approval of the Board of Trustees. These ministers function(s) with less responsibility than the senior minister or co-ministers.
- 1. Qualifications.** Any Associate and/or Assistant Minister will agree to abide by the UWM Code of Ethics and the Sexual Conduct Policy.
  - 2. Duties.** The Associate and/or Assistant Minister(s) will perform the duties and fulfill the responsibilities assigned them by the senior or co-ministers.
  - 3. Compensation.** To the extent funded by the Board, the compensation of the Associate and/or Assistant Minister(s) will be fixed by the Senior Minister or Co-minister(s).



## **ARTICLE VIII – Ministry Teams**

- A. With the exception of the Nominating Ministry Team, Ministry Teams may be created by the minister or co-minister(s) and the Board of Trustees. The chair or co-chairs of these teams will be appointed by the President of the Board or the Senior Minister or Co-ministers for their respective areas of responsibility, with approval of the Board of Trustees.
- B. The chair or co-chairs of the ministry teams will recruit the members of their respective teams.

## **ARTICLE IX - Dissolution**

In the event that this ministry is dissolved, after the liquidation of personal property, real estate, and all assets, property and funds remaining after the payment of the debts of the ministry will be delivered to UWM. Such funds or property will be for the use and benefit of UWM as may be determined by the Board of Trustees of UWM, in alignment with current policies and procedures. Should UWM no longer exist, any remaining assets of this ministry after dissolution will be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction of the county in which the principal executive offices of the ministry are then located and will be used exclusively for such purposes or distributed to such organization or organizations, as said court determines, which are organized and operated exclusively for purposes set out in Section 501c(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.

## **ARTICLE X – Parliamentary Authority**

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* will govern the meetings of this ministry in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these by laws and any special rules of order the ministry may adopt.

## **ARTICLE XI - Amendment Of Bylaws**

Any member is authorized to submit proposed Bylaw amendment(s) to any Board member or Minister for consideration. Board approval is required before submission to membership for a vote.

Any amendment(s) to or general revision of these Bylaws may be considered after approval of the proposed amendment or revision by UWM. After such approval, the proposed amendment or revision will be adopted at any annual or special membership meeting provided that written notice setting forth the exact wording of such proposed amendment(s) or general revision has been sent by postal or electronic mail to all members at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which they will be considered. An affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3rds) of members present and voting will be necessary to adopt any amendment(s) to or general revision of these Bylaws.

## **APPENDIX A – The Jesus Christ Principles as the Five Unity Principles**

1. **GOD IS.** God is the source and creator of all. There is no other enduring power. God is good and present everywhere.
2. **I AM.** We are spiritual beings, created in God's image. The spirit of God lives within each person; therefore, all people are inherently good.
3. **I THINK.** We create our life experiences through our way of thinking.
4. **I PRAY.** There is power in affirmative prayer, which we believe increases our awareness of God.
5. **I ACT.** Knowledge of these spiritual principles is not enough. We must live them.

## **APPENDIX B – Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing’s Inclusion/Diversity Statement**

**Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing, its members and affiliates, welcome with love all people in every form as God’s creation. We embrace and honor the Divine within as the one common denominator that we share on our human journey.**

**We recognize the perfection represented in the mosaic of all humans by: race; culture; gender, sexual identity & orientation; body type; disability; economic status; neurodiversity; life experience; belief; ideas; and perspective.**

**We strive to expand beyond our individual unconscious biases, blinders, ignorance, and inexperience to create a space where gaps are uncovered, opportunities to be Love in action are identified, and wholeness is realized.**

**We affirm and support Unity principles and programs that are non-discriminatory and inclusive in our teachings, policies, buildings, and within our communities.**

**We champion the course of human rights and social justice for all. However varied, we are one.**

## **APPENDIX C - Healthy and Safe Community Interactions Agreement**

**In alignment with USCL's core values, the intention of this spiritual community is to foster a healthy and safe space for everyone.**

**As a member of USCL, I commit to our community agreement to treat everyone with respect.**

**I seek to be kind, self-aware, collaborative, quick to listen and slow to judge. I commit to co-create healthy and safe interactions within our community by:**

- a. Respecting that a variety of opinions and conflict is a normal part of life.**
- b. Being willing to see the need behind the conflict as opposed to becoming polarized into differences (Nonviolent communication). And,**
- c. Defaulting to prayer to open my ears, to release any need to be right, and to discover the path of peace and kindness for all concerned.**

## **APPENDIX D - Proxy Voting**

We are allowing members who are not able to attend at all OR who are attending electronically to vote by giving a member who is attending a meeting the authority to vote for the member not attending, i.e., the attending member will have the proxy of the non-attending member.

The attending member must bring with them to the membership meeting the letter authorizing the attending member to vote on behalf of the non-attending member. This means the non-attending member will have to prepare their proxy and give it to the member who plans to be present and voting prior to the membership meeting.

The written proxy from the non-attending member must contain the following:

1. Name of the non-attending member
2. Name of the attending member to whom they are giving the authority to vote on behalf of the non-attending member.
3. Email or letter must be dated prior to the date or start time of the meeting date.
4. Specific authority to vote at a specific meeting.
5. Signed by non-attending member OR if sent electronically, must show that it was sent by the email address of the non-attending member which is on record with the USCL.

Sample language: I, Bea Griffith, give USCL member Andy Griffith the power and authority to vote on my behalf for all issues raised and requiring a vote at the USCL membership meeting on March 14, 2020.

[An electronic email with the member attending electronically will suffice IF the email contains the email address on church record of the member providing the permission of the proxy.]

The attending member and non-attending member may communicate privately during the meeting via email or text, but not via phone calls as voice calls would be too disruptive to the meeting.

The non-attending member understands they must select an attending member the non-attending member trusts, as the attending member will have final authority to cast the vote as s/he sees fit. Proxy votes will be included in the final tallies of issues on which a vote is taken at the membership meeting. If there are 35 voting members present and 5 of those members have a proxy of a non-attending member, there will be a total of 40 votes to be counted on each vote taken.

No attending member may have more than one non-attending member's proxy.