

UNITY OF SPRINGFIELD BYLAWS

OCTOBER, 2016 APPROVED VERSION

ARTICLE I

Name and Purpose

- Section 1. **Name.** The name of this non-profit organization shall be Christ Church Unity DBA Unity of Springfield.
- Section 2. **Statement of Purpose.** The purpose of Unity of Springfield, a Missouri corporation, is to teach the Universal Principles of Truth, as taught and demonstrated by Jesus Christ and interpreted by Unity Institute and Unity Worldwide Ministries, 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 UWM. Our mission is to encourage and inspire spiritual and personal growth by empowering each other to be authentically all that we came here to be.
- Section 3. **Unity Worldwide Ministries Membership and Responsibilities.** Unity of Springfield is a member of UWM. The operation and conduct of this ministry shall comply with the regulations and policies of UWM as outlined in the Bylaws of the UWM, insofar as they do not conflict with the laws of the State of Missouri or impinge upon the internal affairs or autonomy of Unity of Springfield.

ARTICLE II

Office and Official Records

- Section 1. **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 Greene, State of Missouri, or at such other place within the State of Missouri, 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. **Official Records.** Records of membership, finances, donation, corporate minutes, and other records required by law or as designated by the Board of Trustees shall be maintained at the principal office of the corporation. Confidential documents are available only for use by the minister(s), board members, or designated professional staff. Other documents are available to active members upon request. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: personal and personnel records, spiritual counseling information, pending litigation, and contribution records.

ARTICLE III

Membership

- Section 1. **Qualifications.** A member of Unity of Springfield shall endeavor to live in accord with the 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 financial support.
- Section 2. **Election of Members.** Anyone desiring membership in Unity of Springfield shall file an application for membership with the ministry office after six (6) months of attendance, and complete a series of classes. The application may be subject to approval by the Board of Trustees.
- Section 3. **Terms of Membership.**
- A. Active member.** A member shall retain status as an active member through his/her involvement and participation through prayer, service, classes, and financial support during the preceding fiscal year.
- B. Inactive member.**
1. An active member shall become inactive:
 - a. Upon absence from the congregation for one (1) year, per Section 3.A.
 - b. Those individuals have joined another religious organization for their primary source of inspiration.
 2. Removal from the membership role of any member whose qualifications are in question requires at least a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Board of Trustees. Prior to action concerning removal, the member shall be given an opportunity to respond to the Board.
 3. Reinstatement of Inactive Members shall occur upon approval of the Board of Trustees. After six (6) months of active involvement as per Article III, Section 3.A. written request of activation must be submitted to the Board six (6) weeks prior to any membership meeting.
- Section 4. **Powers of Active Members.** Active members of Unity of Springfield shall have the power to do the following:
- A. Vote at any membership meeting at which the member is present.
 - B. Elect members to the Board of Trustees.
 - C. Ratify the bylaws or any amendments thereto.
 - D. Vote on any expenditure, which exceeds fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) in value. A seventy-five percent (75%) affirmative vote of those present and voting is required for approval.

- E. Call a special membership meeting when the affairs of this ministry warrant such action.
- F. Vote to override any action of the Board of Trustees, which shall be initiated by a petition and signed by twenty percent (20%) of current membership. This petition shall be submitted to the Board thirty (30) days prior to the date of the requirement of a membership vote. Upon receipt of the proper notification, said action will be considered “on hold” until the membership has voted. At the membership meeting, approval of the action shall be found by a fifty percent (50%) plus one (1) vote, or extraordinary majority.
- G. Vote for the removal of any trustee from office.
- H. Vote on any matters officially brought to the attention of the membership.
- I. Offer suggestions to the Spiritual Leader(s) or Board of Trustees as may seem advisable for the good of the ministry.
- J. Request mediation assistance. This shall be a written petition signed by the number of members equal to or greater than ten percent (10%) of the previous year’s average attendance. This petition, with copies to the Board of Trustees and Spiritual Leader(s), shall notify the President of the UWM that a mediator is requested; or, upon mutual agreement with the Spiritual Leader, Board of Trustees, and those members requesting mediation, a local or other selected mediator may be used.
- K. May address the Board during membership comment time, which occurs during any regular Board Meeting.
- L. Participate in all activities and programs of the ministry.

Section 5. **Meetings and Quorum.**

- A. **Annual Membership Meeting.** There shall be one (1) annual membership meeting of Unity of Springfield each year. This meeting shall be held at its official headquarters on the third Sunday in January, or an alternate Sunday in January, as specified by the Minister(s) and Board of Trustees, at the time of day designated by the Minister(s) and Board of Trustees. Election of Board Members shall be held at this meeting.
- B. **Special Membership Meetings.** The purpose(s) for the special meeting shall be stated in both the written request and the written notice to the membership. Business conducted at the special meeting shall be limited to the pre-stated purpose(s). Anytime the affairs of this ministry warrant, a special meeting may be called by:
 - 1. The Senior Spiritual Leader or Co-Spiritual Leader(s).

2. A majority of the Trustees of the Board.
 3. A petition having been signed by a number of members equal to ten percent (10%) of the previous calendar year's average attendance. This written request must be submitted to the Board, which shall, within thirty (30) days, call the meeting on behalf of the requesting party. The location, quorum notice, presiding officer, participation, voting, and prayer provisions for special membership meetings shall be the same as those for the annual meeting.
- C. **Notice.** Written notice stating the date, time, and place shall be postmarked or electronically transmitted to all active members at least ten (10) days before any membership meeting.
- D. **Quorum.** Excluding the voting requirement for special meetings, those active members present and voting at a regular membership meeting shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting.
- E. **Participation.** Participation in the business affairs of any membership meeting shall be restricted to active members in attendance. Participation of other persons in discussion of business must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the active members in attendance. The UWM Liaison Representatives or other selected mediators have a right to participate in discussion when the Spiritual Leader(s), the Board, or the membership has invited them.
- F. **Voting.** Unless otherwise provided herein, the vote of a 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. Active members unable to be present in a membership meeting may vote by absentee ballot upon application to the ministry office in advance of the meeting date. Absentee ballots must be returned three (3) days prior to the meeting. Official votes will be tallied only for members present and absentee ballots. Proxy voting will not be accepted.
- G. **Prayer.** In any membership meeting, the Chair, the Minister(s), UWM Liaison Representative, or any member may request that action on an item of business be suspended while the membership enters into a time of prayer on the issue. Upon such request, the Chair shall provide a period of prayer and silence.

ARTICLE IV

Government, Spiritual Leadership, and Administration

- Section 1. **Government.** The Government of Unity of Springfield shall be vested in the Board of Trustees elected from membership.
- Section 2. **Board of Trustees (Members).**

- A. **Structure.** The Board of Trustees shall consist of nine (9) Trustees elected from the membership of Unity of Springfield. Each elected Trustee shall hold office for three years. No elected Trustee shall serve more than two consecutive terms of three years each without an interval of one year between terms. The terms of three elected Trustees shall expire annually and their offices shall be filled at the annual membership meeting. No Licensed Unity Teacher, individual receiving compensation from the ministry or the spouse, parent, or child of an individual receiving compensation from the ministry shall serve on the Board of Trustees. Further, no Board Member shall be the spouse, parent, or child of another Board Member.
- 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 the issue. Upon request, the Chair shall provide a period of prayer and silence.
- C. **Duties and Powers.** As representative of the membership, the Board of Trustees shall:
1. Uphold the spiritual purpose of this ministry.
 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 this ministry.
 4. Be faithful in attendance at services, board, and membership meetings of this ministry.
 5. Determine the business needs of this ministry, develop and approve an annual budget, and authorize payment of funds for those purposes.
 6. Administer the property of this ministry, both real and personal.
 7. Make determinations on the sale, pledge, or proposed financing of real or personal property belonging to this ministry except for decisions in favor of the sale, pledge, or proposed financing of real property exceeding fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) in value.
 8. As recommended by the Administrator, authorize the employment of all staff and personnel of this ministry and set and approve their salaries.
 9. Set dates for the fiscal year.
 10. Each year cause to be prepared a complete financial statement with disclosures, which will set forth the fiscal conditions and operations of the ministry.
 11. May approve applicants for membership.
 12. Act to fill the unexpired term of any Trustee.
 13. Elect officers of the Board, and their successors to fill any unexpired term when necessary.
 14. Ratify committees and their Chairpersons as appointed by the Board President.
 15. Communicate with the UWM Liaison Coordinator, or other selected mediator, for aid in resolution of all disputes between the Board of Trustees and the Spiritual Leader(s) concerning the Spiritual Leader's services.

16. Consider other duties brought to their attention by the Spiritual Leader and/or other Trustees.
17. Attend and actively participate in ongoing educational programs.
18. Consider other issues brought to their attention by the Spiritual Leader or members of the board.
19. Select an independent auditor every five (5) years, or as needed, commencing in 2014.
20. Be responsible for the hiring and the termination of a Spiritual Leader. Such procedures shall follow a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote.
21. Be responsible for the hiring and the termination of an Administrator. Such procedures shall follow a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote.

Section 3. **Board of Trustees - Election.**

A. **Qualifications.** Any person elected to the Board of Trustees must be an active member of Unity of Springfield for a minimum of one year. He/she shall be a person who:

1. Desires to serve on the Board.
2. Endeavors to live in accord with the principles of Truth as taught by Unity.
3. Furthers the work of this ministry through his/her regular attendance, love, and financial support.
4. Is a sincere and continuing student of Unity, conversant with its teachings.
5. Has demonstrated leadership capabilities.
6. Must be 25 years of age or older.
7. Must have completed an application and had an orientation meeting with the Nominating Committee prior to the annual membership meeting.

B. **Nominating Committee.** (Election to Board of Trustees) The terms of three members that expire annually shall be filled at the annual membership meeting by formal balloting. The Nominating Committee for new Board of Trustees shall consist of the Spiritual Leader(s) and four other members selected in the following manner: The Board shall elect two members of the Nominating Committee from its own membership, and one from the church membership, these four shall elect the fifth member from the church membership. The Nominating Committee shall elect the Committee Chair.

C. **Nominating Procedure.** As the presiding Officer of the annual membership meeting, the President shall:

1. Read qualifications of Board members just prior to the call for nominations as per Article IV, Section 3.A.
2. Call upon the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee to present the Committee's nominations.

- D. **Election Procedure.** Votes shall be cast by ballot by the membership only if more than three nominations have been made. The three nominees receiving the largest number of votes shall be elected to the Board of Trustees.

Section 4. **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. 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.
 3. The Board voting for the removal of a Trustee because of a failure to fulfill the duties of the office.
 4. The active membership voting for removal of a Trustee because of failure to fulfill the duties of the office.
- 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 shall be considered as replacements. No replacement shall have served as a Trustee during the year prior to their election. A majority vote of those present and voting shall be necessary to elect. The term of the newly elected Trustee shall expire on the same date as the term of the Trustee succeeded.

Section 5. **Board of Trustees - Meetings and Quorum.**

- A. **Regular Board Meetings.** The regular business meeting of the Board of Trustees shall be held monthly at the headquarters of this ministry, unless otherwise specified by the Board.
- B. **Special Board Meetings.** The request shall be filed in writing with the Board Secretary. Reasonable effort must be made to notify all Trustees of any special meeting. All special meetings that consist of a quorum shall be recorded and the minutes submitted for approval by the Board. Special meetings of the Board shall be called by the President under any of the following conditions:
1. By request of the Spiritual Leader or Co-Spiritual Leader(s).
 2. By request of four or more Trustees.
 3. As the President deems it necessary.
- C. **Special Executive Meetings.** Special meetings of the Executive Officers of the Board may be called by a majority of board members to discuss only personnel and/or membership matters. These meetings shall be considered to be closed meetings.

- D. **Quorum.** Five Trustees shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. All votes shall be made in person.
- E. **Spiritual Leader(s) Attendance.** The Spiritual Leader(s) has/have the right to attend all Board meetings except those pertaining to the conduct or employment of the Spiritual Leader(s), but is not considered to be a voting member of the Board. The Spiritual Leader(s) must be notified of all special meetings.

Section 6.

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 electing officers. Officers shall hold their respective offices for one year 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. Appoint committees.
4. Be a member of all committees by virtue of the office, except the Nominating Committee.
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 in partnership with the Spiritual Leader and the Administrator.

B. **Vice-President.** The Vice-President shall:

1. Perform all the duties of the President in the absence of the President.
2. Become President in case the office of the Presidency 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.
3. Perform the duties of Parliamentarian.

C. **Secretary.** The Secretary shall:

1. Cause to be kept, an accurate record of the minutes of all board membership meetings in a timely manner.
2. Cause to be kept, all reports, contracts, other legal papers, minute books, and the corporate seal, which items shall be kept in the ministry office.
3. Attend to all official business required by the Board.
4. Cause to be kept, accurate active and inactive membership lists.

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.
2. 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. Cause to be counted by the appointment of qualified persons, all funds received, and be responsible for their deposit.
5. Cause to be placed, the funds of this ministry in the bank of other depository approved by the Board.
6. Cause to be maintained, all records of accounts and transactions.

Section 7. **Spiritual Leadership and Administration**

A. **Spiritual Leader(s).** This ministry, following UWM guidelines, shall have as its Spiritual Leader(s) an ordained or licensed Unity Minister(s) in good standing, Licensed Unity Teacher (LUT), or a person serving under special dispensation approved by the UWM.

1. **Duties.** As the Spiritual Leader(s), he/she shall be responsible for the scheduling, conduct, and content of services, classes, and all other activities that further the purpose of this ministry. The Spiritual Leader(s) shall also be:
 - a. Responsible for the spiritual direction of this ministry.
 - b. Advise the Board of Trustees on all matters except own employment, or that of successor(s).
 - c. An ex-officio member of all committees.
 - d. Responsible for seeking UWM or other mediation assistance in the event of a dispute adversely affecting the ministry.
2. **Vacancy.** The position of a Spiritual Leader may be vacated by any of the following actions:
 - a. Resignation, or
 - b. Any reason if approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Trustees.
3. **Compensation.** Compensation for the Spiritual Leader(s) shall be determined by agreement made between the Spiritual Leader(s) and the Board of Trustees.
4. **Sabbatical.** The Spiritual Leader shall be allowed and encouraged to take a sabbatical every five (5) years, which length of time spent shall be a minimum of six (6) weeks or longer as determined upon agreement with the Spiritual Leader and the Board.

B. **Associate and/or Assistant Spiritual Leader(s).** Associate and/or Assistant Spiritual Leader(s) shall be duly ordained Unity minister(s) or LUT(s) who function(s) with less responsibility than the Spiritual Leader(s) or Co-Spiritual Leader(s) who also determines

the scope of their responsibilities, or a person serving under special dispensation approved by the UWM.

1. **Duties.** The associate and/or assistant Spiritual Leader(s) shall perform the duties and fulfill the responsibilities assigned to them by the Spiritual Leader(s) or Co-Spiritual Leader(s).
 2. **Compensation.** To the extent funded by the board, the compensation of the associate and/or assistant minister(s) shall be determined by the Spiritual Leader(s) or Co-Spiritual Leader(s) and approved by the Board.
- C. **Administrator.** It is preferred, but not essential, that the Administrator be a LUT. The Administrator shall be under the direction and supervision of the Board of Directors.
1. **Duties.** The Administrator shall be responsible for day-to-day operations of the ministry including, but not limited to the following:
 - a. Manages all staff members.
 - b. Gives to the Board a communications and Administrator's report.
 2. **Vacancy.** The position of Administrator may be vacated by any of the following actions:
 - a. Resignation, or
 - b. Any reason if approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Trustees.
 3. **Compensation.** Compensation for the Administrator shall be determined by agreement between the Administrator and the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE V

Committees

- Section 1. **Formation.** Committees for any specific purpose, with the exception of the Nominating Committee, shall be appointed by the Board President, with ratification by the Board.

ARTICLE VI

Seal

- Section 1. **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 2. **Dissolution.** Should this Corporation dissolve:
- A. All property and funds remaining after the payment of the debts of the Corporation shall be held in Trust by UWM, a nonprofit Corporation organized under the laws of the State of Georgia, for religious and educational purposes; funds are to be used for the

establishment of a new organization to replace the previous ministry of Unity of Springfield in Springfield, Missouri.

- B. Should UWM 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 purposes 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 (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

ARTICLE VII

Meeting Procedures

- Section 1. **Rules of Order.** 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 1. **Procedure.** Amendments to these Bylaws must be made by voting members of this Corporation at a legally constituted membership meeting. A notice setting forth the proposed amendments must be communicated to all active members at least ten (10) 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 to these Bylaws. These Bylaws fully supersede all previous Bylaws adopted by Unity of Springfield. Review of these Bylaws shall occur once every three years.

Attest-Secretary

Date of Adoption or Revision