

# Unity Church on the Lakeshore

41 Washington  
Douglas, MI 49406  
269-857-8226

## BYLAWS

### ARTICLE 1 Identification

**Section 1.01** **Statement of Purpose.**

The purpose of Unity Church on the Lakeshore, a Michigan nonprofit corporation, is to teach the universal principles 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 on the lakeshore shall endeavor to conduct services of worship and classes of instruction and to demonstrate the principles of Truth by using them in the operation 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.

**Section 1.02** **Association of Unity Churches Membership and Responsibilities**

Unity Church on the Lakeshore is affiliated with the Association of Unity Churches. The operation and conduct of this ministry shall comply with the 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.

1 **Leadership.** This ministry shall have as its leader an ordained or licensed Unity minister(s) or a licensed Unity teacher approved by the Association. Refer to Section 4.01 (c) Association of Unity Churches Bylaws.

1 **Teaching.** The Principles of practical Christianity shall be taught through this ministry using methods, textbooks, literature, and other materials approved by the Association.

1 **Mailings.** Copies of all printed matter mailed by this ministry to its membership shall be sent to the office of the Executive Director of the Association of Unity Churches.

1 **Reports.** The minister designated Administrative Director will make annual reports to the Association on forms supplied by the Association.

### ARTICLE 2

**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 Allegan, 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, donation, corporate minutes, and personnel records shall be maintained at the principal office of the corporation. Personnel records and documents regarding contributions, tithes,

and/or donations are available only to active church officers and senior minister and/or co-minister(s) at all times. Financial information is available upon request to all members.

### ARTICLE 3

#### Membership

**Section 3.01** **Qualifications.** A member of Unity Church on the Lakeshore 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 support.

**Section 3.02** **Election of Members.** Anyone desiring membership in Unity Church on the Lakeshore shall file an application for membership form 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**

1. **New Members.** After acceptance as a new member, each member shall have voting rights at all membership meetings up through and including the next regularly scheduled annual membership meeting after joining the church.
1. **Existing Members.** To retain active membership rights, each member must indicate a desire to remain a member by completing and returning to the church 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.
1. **Reinstatement of Inactive Membership.**
  1. **Reinstatement with two years.** If a member who has become inactive wishes to return to active status within the first two years after becoming an inactive member, such a member who meets membership qualifications and fills out a yearly membership renewal card or document approved by the Board of Trustees shall be reinstated as an active member. In order to vote at a membership meeting such members must fulfill these requirements at least six (6) weeks before a membership meeting.
  2. **Reinstatement after two years.** If a member has been inactive for two years or more and desires to become an active member again, such a member shall file an application for membership form 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.
  3. **Removal of Membership for Cause.** A member may be removed for cause by the Board of Trustees. Prior to any vote concerning removal, the member in question must be notified by certified mail at least ten (10) days prior to the Board of Trustees meeting of the changes that may lead to removal of membership and thereafter be given an opportunity for a hearing before the board. A 2/3rds vote shall be required for removal of membership provided that the senior minister or co-ministers are in agreement with this action

**Section 3.04** **Powers of Active Members.** Active members of Unity Church on the Lakeshore shall have the power to do the following:

1. Vote at any membership meeting, at which the member is present, called in accordance with section 3.05.
2. Elect members to the Board of Trustees as specified in Section 4.04.

3. Ratify the bylaws of this ministry or any amendments thereto as specified in Section 8.01.
4. Vote on any expenditure which exceeds twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) in value. A seventy-five percent (75%) affirmative vote of those present and voting is required for approval. Refer to Section 4.03 (c) (7).
5. Elect a member, and an alternate, to serve on the Nominating Committee as specified in Section 4.04 (b).
6. Call a special membership meeting when the affairs of this ministry warrant such action. Refer to Section 3.05 (b).
7. Vote to override any action of the Board of Trustees. This vote must be taken at a duly constituted membership meeting. [See 3.5 (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.
8. Vote for the removal of any trustee from an office in accordance with Section 4.05 (a).
9. Vote on any matters officially brought to the attention of the membership.
10. Offer suggestions to the minister(s) or Board of Trustees as may seem advisable for the good of this ministry.
11. Any ten (10) active members may request conflict management assistance by notifying the Executive Director of the Association of Unity Churches in writing with copies to the Board of Trustees and Minister(s). Upon receipt of a request for assistance from ten or more active members to the Executive Director or designee of the Association of Unity Churches, said person will confer with the minister(s) and/or regional representative to evaluate whether further action is required.
12. Absentee ballots will be mailed to active members upon request

**Section 3.05 Meetings and Quorum**

1. **Annual Membership Meeting.** The annual membership meeting of Unity Church on the Lakeshore shall be held at its official headquarters on a variable date in August or September on the date and time of day designated by the minister(s) and Board of Trustees.
2. **Special Membership Meetings.** Any time the affairs of this ministry warrant, a special meeting 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 10% 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. Business conducted at the special meeting shall be limited to the pre-stated purpose(s).

1. **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. [Note: "Mailed" because the notice needs a postmark for legality.]
2. **Quorum.** Those active members present and voting at a membership meeting called pursuant to the notice provisions of Section 3.05 (c) shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any membership meeting.
3. **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. Association representatives have a right to participate in discussion when they have been invited by the minister(s),

the board, or the membership.

4. **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. Refer to Section 3.04 (d) and (g), and Section 8.01. Active members unable to be present in 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 will not be accepted at special membership meetings. Proxy votes are not allowed.
5. **Prayer.** In any membership meeting, the chair, the minister(s), an Association of Unity Churches conflict management 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 4**

##### **Government**

**Section 4.01 Administration.** The government of Unity Church on the Lakeshore shall be vested in the minister(s), as the Administrative Director(s) and the Board of Trustees elected from membership.

**Section 4.02 Minister(s).** (a) **Senior Minister(s) or Co-ministers**

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. As administrative director(s), the minister(s) shall be:
  - (a) Responsible for the complete functioning of this ministry.
  - (b) Voting member(s) of the Board of Trustees on all matters except own employment, or that of successor(s).
  - (c) A member of all committees. Refer to Section 5.01.
  - (d) Responsible for seeking Association of Unity Churches assistance in the event of a dispute adversely affecting the ministry.
1. **Vacancy.** The position of a minister may be vacated by any of the following actions:
  - (a) Resignation, or
  - (b) After complying with Section 4.03 (e), the minister's removal because of failure to fulfill the duties of the position as specified in Section 4.02 (a).
1. **Compensation.** The compensation of the minister(s) shall be fixed by agreement between the minister(s) and the Board of Trustees.
1. **Associate and/or Assistant Ministers.** Associate and/or Assistant Minister(s) shall be duly licensed or ordained Unity minister(s) who function(s) with less responsibility than the Senior Minister(s) or Co-ministers.
  1. **Duties.** The Associate and/or Assist Minister(s) shall perform the duties and fulfill the responsibilities assigned them by the Senior or Co-minister(s).
  1. **Compensation.** The compensation of the Associate and /or Assistant Minister(s) shall be fixed by agreement of these minister(s) and the Senior or Co-minister(s), as ratified by the Board of Trustees.

**Section 4.03 Board of Trustees (Members).**

**4.03**

- (a) **Structure.** The Board of Trustees shall consist of the minister(s) and no more than six and no fewer than four trustees elected from the membership of Unity Church on the Lakeshore. Each elected trustee shall hold office for three years (omit "or until a successor is duly elected"). Expiring terms may be filled at the annual membership meeting in accordance with Section 4.04. No elected trustee shall serve more than two consecutive terms of three years each without an

interval of one year between terms. No active licensed Unity teacher, individual receiving compensation from the ministry (with the exception of the minister(s)) or the spouse, parent, child, or significant other of an individual receiving compensation from the ministry may serve on the Board of Trustees. Further, no board member shall be the spouse, parent, child, or significant other of another board member.

1. **Prayer.** It is important that in addition to adhering to the normal procedures for legal function 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.
2. **Duties.** As representatives of the membership, the Board of Trustees shall:
  1. Uphold the spiritual purpose of this ministry as stated in Section 1.01
  2. Uphold the highest interest of the membership in conducting the business of this ministry.
  3. Be conversant with these bylaws.
  4. Be faithful in attendance at services, board and membership meetings of this ministry.
  5. Make determination of the business needs of this ministry and authorize payment of monies 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. All decisions in favor of the sale, pledge, or proposed financing of real property exceeding twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) in value shall be presented to the membership at a properly constituted membership meeting to be voted on in accordance with Section 3.04 (a).
  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).
  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. When deemed advisable, secure a fidelity bond for the treasurer, the amount to be set by the board.
  12. Approve applicants for membership in accordance with Section 3.02.
  13. Act to fill the unexpired term of any trustee in accordance with Section 4.05 (b).
  14. Elect officers of the board, and their successors to fill any unexpired term when necessary. See Section 4.07.
  15. Ratify committees and their chairpersons as appointed by the Board President. See Section 5.01.
  16. Communicate with the Association for aid in resolution of all conflicts between the Board of Trustees and the minister(s) concerning the minister's services.
  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. To keep or cause to be kept an accurate record of membership.
  20. To keep or cause to be kept accurate records of gifts to the ministry in compliance with Internal Revenue Service regulations and acknowledge in writing contributions in compliance with Internal Revenue Service regulations.
3. **Employment of Minister(s).** It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to

employ a licensed or ordained minister(s), well versed in Unity principles, for the church through cooperation with the placement management procedures of the Association of Unity Churches.

4. **Termination of Employment of Minister(s).** After a ministry and its senior minister or co-ministers have cooperated with the conflict management procedures of the Association of Unity Churches, a 2/3 majority vote of the Board of Trustees is required to terminate the employment of a senior minister or co-ministers.

#### **Section Board of Trustees – Election**

##### **4.04**

1. **Qualifications.** Any person elected to the Board of Trustees must be an active member of Unity Church on the Lakeshore. 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.
2. **Nominating Committee.** A Nominating Committee shall be formed at least three months prior to the annual membership meeting, and shall initiate a search for qualified candidates for the Board of Trustees. The Committee shall recommend as many candidates as necessary to fulfill the requirements of Section 4.03. The Committee shall make a recommendation to the Board and the membership regarding how many Trustees should be elected in any given year and shall inform the Board of Trustees of the names and qualifications of the Members being recommended. The Committee shall consist of the senior minister or co-ministers 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 Committee 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 a current board member.
  2. The board shall elect one of its trustee.
  3. Together with the minister(s), the above two committee members shall select a third committee member from the active membership who shall become chairperson of the Nominating Committee.
3. **Nominating Procedure.** As the presiding officer of the annual membership meeting, the President shall:
  1. Read Section 4.04 just prior to the call for nominations.
  2. Call upon the chairperson of the Nominating Committee to present the committee'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 (a) of this Section.
4. **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 Board of Trustees – Vacancy and Replacement.**

##### **4.05**

1. **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 as specified in Section 4.03 (c).
  4. 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 (c). See Section 3.04 (h).
1. **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, if the vacancy results in fewer than four remaining board members. If the vacancy does not result in fewer than four Board members, the board may proceed to fill the vacancy by ballot at its next regular meeting, or the board may choose to leave the position open until the next annual meeting of the membership. In case of emergency, a special meeting may be called. Only persons meeting the qualifications specified in section 4.04 (a) may 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 appointment shall expire on the day of the next annual meeting. A person appointed in this manner is not considered having served a complete term.

**Section 4.06 Board of Trustees – Meetings and Quorum.**

1. **Regular Board Meetings.** The regular business meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be held monthly at the headquarters of this ministry, unless otherwise specified by the board.
2. **Special Board Meetings.** Special meetings of the board shall be called by the president under any of the following conditions:
  1. By request of the senior minister or co-ministers.
  2. By request of two or more trustees.
  3. As the president deems it 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.** If the Board consists of six members, four trustees shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business,. If the Board consists of fewer than six members, three trustees shall constitute a quorum.

(d) **Minister(s) Attendance.** The minister(s) has/have the right to attend all board meetings. Each minister must be notified 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 one year or until their successors are duly elected or qualified.

1. **President.** The President shall:
  1. Preside at all Board of Trustees meetings.
  2. Preside at all membership meetings.
  3. Appoint committees in accordance with Section 5.01.
  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.
1. **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.
  - (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, minute books, and the corporate seal, 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.
  - (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
    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 this ministry in the bank or other depository approved by the board.

## **ARTICLE 5**

### **Committees**

**Section Formation** Committees for any specific purpose, with the exception of the Nominating  
**5.01** Committee, shall be appointed by the board president. Approval by the senior minister or co-ministers plus ratification by the board is required.

## **ARTICLE 6**

### **Seal**

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

**Section Dissolution.** Should this corporation dissolve:  
**6.02**

- (a) all property and funds remaining after the payment of the debts of the corporation shall be delivered to the Association of Unity Churches, a nonprofit corporation organized under the laws of the state of Georgia, for religious and educational purposes.
- (b) such funds or 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 Saugatuck.
- (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 purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for the purposes set out in Section 5.01(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

## **ARTICLE 7**

### **Meeting Procedures**

**Section Rules of Order.** The latest edition of ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER shall be the authority

**7.01** of this ministry on parliamentary law and its usage, unless otherwise provided by these bylaws.

**ARTICLE 8**

**Bylaws Amendments**

**Section Procedure.** Amendments to these bylaws must be made by voting members of this 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 to these bylaws. These bylaws fully supersede all previous by laws adopted by Unity Church on the Lakeshore. To take effect, any amendment(s) to or general revision of these bylaws must also be ratified by a 2/3rds vote of the members of the Board of Trustees present and voting at the first meeting of the board following the adoption of such amendment(s) or general revision.

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Attest-Secretary Jerry Graham

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Date of Adoption or Revision