

Unity Expansion Ministry Bylaws Template
Specifically for Community-based & Service-based Ministries
_____(Ministry name)
Bylaws (Approval Date)

ARTICLE I – Name

The name of this local ministry shall be (name of ministry).

ARTICLE II – Purpose

Section 1. Statement of Purpose.

The purpose of _____ (Ministry name), a _____
(state where incorporated) corporation, is to teach universal principles of Truth, as taught and demonstrated by Jesus the Christ, and other spiritual masters and interpreted by Unity 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.

Section 2. Accomplishment of Purpose.

In the accomplishment of this purpose, _____ (Ministry name), a
community-based or service-based (pick one) ministry shall
_____. (Describe what the ministry will be doing specifically, ex.
educating, leading prayer, spiritual focused retreats) based on the teachings of Unity.
_____ (Ministry name) will demonstrate the principles of Truth by using
them in the operation of the ministry. If the ministry is temporarily without a spiritual leader, the Board of Trustees (Board), will notify the UWM Member Support Team within five to seven (5-7) days and will carry out this and all other functions until a new minister is selected.

Section 3. Unity Worldwide Ministries.

_____ (Ministry name) shall be a vital part of the worldwide Unity movement and a member of Unity Worldwide Ministries. Any person connected to this ministry may call upon the resources and support of UWM through its ministry leader/co-leaders, Board of Trustees, staff, or through direct communication with UWM.

In the spirit of cooperation, the operation and conduct of this ministry shall comply with the regulations and policies of UWM as outlined in UWM Bylaws, insofar as they do not conflict with the laws of the State of New Mexico.

A. UWM Membership. This ministry will comply with the Member Ministry requirements and expectations as outlined in the UWM Membership Model Policy.

B. Participation. This ministry may have its voice heard and its wishes expressed in the membership meetings of UWM, and its members (or Board members) may participate in workshops, seminars, and classes designed to encourage and foster their spiritual development and that of this ministry.

C. Resources. This ministry can benefit from its membership in UWM and its corresponding region through direct support, materials and coaching regarding

ministry functions.

D. Leadership. This ministry shall have as its ministry leader(s)/coleader(s), credentialed individuals eligible for employment by Unity Worldwide Ministries and willing to serve the ministry.

This would include the following:

- Ordained Unity Minister
- Licensed Unity Minister
- Licensed Unity Teacher

E. Teaching. The principles of practical Christianity shall be taught through this ministry using methods, textbooks, literature, and other materials consistent with the guidelines of UWM.

F. Comply with Requests. The ministry shall comply promptly with all requests from UWM for identifying ministry information including, but not limited to the following:

- Articles of Incorporation.
- Bylaws whenever updated.
- Deeds to properties owned by the ministry.
- Form SS-4, Application for Employer Identification Number, once it has been returned by the IRS to the ministry.
- 8822-B, Change of Address or Responsible Party.

G. Reports.

- The ministry shall make annual reports to UWM as required, using the emailed link provided.
- The ministry shall inform UWM whenever a change is made in the ministry's phone number, address, or email.
- The ministry shall inform the UWM Member Support Team within five to seven (5-7) days whenever a change is made in leadership.

ARTICLE III – Board of Trustees

Section 1. Membership Composition.

The Board of Trustees shall be composed of the ministry leader/co-leaders and no fewer than two (2) _____ and not more than six (6) _____. The minister(s)/ministry spiritual leader(s) may serve as any officer/officers of the Board. Two or more offices may be held by the same individual.

Section 2. Eligibility and Terms of Office.

- A. **Qualifications.** Initially the board of trustees will be selected by the pioneer(s), ministry leader/co-leaders, of the ministry. After the first year, to be eligible to be elected to the board of trustees a person must be a member of (name of ministry) for at least one (1) year. In addition, candidates for election shall endeavor to live in accord with the Jesus Christ principles of love and truth as taught by Unity Worldwide Ministries (UWM), uphold the Code of Ethics,

Sexual Conduct Policy, Social Media Policy, Mutual Accountability Agreements/Covenant, and other ministry policies, and, have the time, skills, and disposition to serve on the board of trustees.

- B. **Term of Office.** Elected trustees shall hold office for three (3) years, or until their successors have been elected and assume office. Trustees elected at any annual membership Board of Trustees meeting shall take office at the conclusion of the annual membership meeting at which they were elected. No elected trustee shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms without an interval of one (1) year between terms. Any person who serves on the board more than half of a term shall be credited with having served a full term.
- C. **Alternate or Advisory Board Members.** The board of trustees may appoint or remove up to two Alternate or Advisory board members. Alternate or Advisory board members must be a member of (name of ministry) and shall meet the same requirements as candidates during regular elections. A standardized application and vetting process shall be used consistently for all potential candidates including a background check, and letters of reference.

Alternate or Advisory board members shall have no voting power at board meetings. Alternate or Advisory board members may participate in board discussions and may receive and review information regarding the business of the board. The term of the Alternate or Advisory board members shall be one year, with a limit of two years of service. No elected trustee shall serve more than two (2) consecutive years without an interval of one (1) year between terms.

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

- Relatives, significant others, or household members of any trustee board member, licensed Unity teacher, or licensed/ordained Unity minister of the ministry.
- Individuals receiving compensation from the ministry with the exception of the ministry leader/co-leaders.
- Relatives, significant others, or household members of any individual receiving compensation of any kind or amount from the ministry. may serve on the board but may not vote on any matter of compensation as it relates to such individual or a business entity owned by such individual.
- No board member shall follow an immediate family member or significant other without a one (1) year interval between terms of service to the board.

Section 4. Regular Board Meetings.

Regular meetings of the Board of Trustees will be held at least once a month _____ (there is a minimum of quarterly required) as determined by the Board. Board meetings may be held by electronic means if the Board so agrees.

NOTE: UWM encourages the ministry to create a publicized procedure where an active voting member can speak at a board meeting for a limited timeframe regarding a topic of their choice. The board of trustees will devise a follow-up plan to respond in a timely manner. Confidential matters such as minister employment, evaluations, and legal matters or pending litigation are to be held in an executive session. Only executive session motions passed should be recorded in the minutes.

For additional information or to schedule a board training by a UWM Certified Ministry Consultant, please email membersupport@unity.org.

Section 5. Special Board Meetings.

Special meetings of the Board may be called by any member of the Board notifying the others of such a need. The President of the Board will set a date and time for such a meeting and notify the other Board members. Special Board meetings will be held within 30 days of such a request. All current Board members, including the ministry leader/co-leaders, shall be given notice of any special Board meeting at least forty-eight (48) seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the meeting. The attendance of any member of the Board at the meeting shall serve as a waiver of this notice requirement. Special Board meetings may be held by electronic means if the Board so agrees.

Section 6. Action without a Meeting.

The board may take an action without a meeting if consent in writing, setting forth the action so taken, is signed, or electronically communicated to and acknowledged by all of the trustees as a complete group and is thereafter ratified at a regular board meeting or special board meeting. Individual communications to board members regarding action without a meeting is prohibited. For board transparency, full group communication is strongly encouraged.

Section 7. Quorum.

A majority of the total number of trustees including the spiritual leader(s) constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Unless otherwise provided herein, the vote of a majority of the trustees present and voting shall be necessary for approval of the action being voted upon. Should the total number of trustees, including the spiritual leader (s), fall below a quorum, the remaining trustees shall refer to and implement Section 13 concerning vacancies. Telephonic or electronic attendance is permitted and is not considered an absence.

Section 8. Board Authority.

Except as provided in these bylaws, all authority is vested in the board of trustees (including the minister/spiritual leader as an active voting member) only when it meets in session after notice to all trustees and the spiritual leader (or co-leaders), and a quorum is present.

Section 9. Prayer.

It is important that in addition to adhering to the normal procedures for legal functioning set forth in these bylaws, 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 such request, the president/chair shall provide a period of prayer and silence.

Section 10. Roles, Duties, and Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees shall:

- A. Uphold the spiritual purpose of this ministry as stated in Article I of these bylaws;
- B. Uphold the best interests, policies and vision, mission, values, and or purpose statements of the ministry membership in conducting the business of this ministry. Speak with “one voice” as a board of trustees honoring the authority held only as a group and not as individual trustees.
- C. Be conversant with bylaws, articles of incorporation, and establish policy for the operation of the ministry, and function in alignment with these documents/policies.
- D. Be faithful in attendance of board meetings, board retreats, and board trainings.
- E. Determine the business needs of this ministry. Plan, prioritize, and authorize payment of funds for those purposes in alignment with the ministry’s annual budget.
- F. Provide for the administration, care, and upkeep of the real and personal property of this ministry.
- 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 real property exceeding _____ dollars. (UWM recommends the ministry select between twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) to fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) or thirty-five percent (35%) of the previous year’s income, whichever is less, shall be presented to the membership at a properly constituted membership meeting for final approval).
- H. When conflict arises between the individual board members or between the board and the ministry leader/co-leaders, such ministry shall seek to reconcile differences and immediately notify the UWM Member Support Team for help with procedures and to provide guidance and consultation.
- I. As recommended by the ministry leader/co-leaders, the Board of Trustees determine staff positions and authorize funds for their financial support;
- J. Establish the dates for the beginning and end of the calendar fiscal year;
- K. In regard to finances:
 - Adopt an annual income and expense budget. Function within the parameters of the approved budget.
 - Authorize periodic annual reviews or periodic audits of the finances of the ministry which may be conducted by an outside auditor or from a skilled committee of members elected by the board.
 - Ensure accounting records are current and properly entered and maintained for all aspects of the ministry. When deemed appropriate by the board, a qualified bookkeeper or accountant may be employed for this purpose.

- Cause to be prepared each year a complete financial statement with disclosures that will set forth the financial conditions and operations of the ministry;
- L. Appoint new trustees to the Board as needed.
- M. Fill the unexpired term of any trustee promptly.
- N. Elect officers of the board and their successors to fill any unexpired term when necessary.
- O. Create board committees as needed related to board functions, tasks, projects, based on the roles and responsibilities of the board. (Temporary committees such as the Bylaw Committee, HVAC Replacement Committee, etc.) Board Committees report to the board to provide clarity and information in support of the board functions, while Ministry Teams report to the minister for the smooth functioning of the ministry.
- P. Advise the President of the Board on appointments to such board committees who have the time, skills, and disposition to serve on such board committees.
- Q. Promptly seek UWM Member Support assistance in the event of a dispute affecting the ministry.
- R. Attend and actively participate in annual and ongoing board education programs and training.
- S. Consider issues brought to their attention by the minister(s) or members of the board, having said issues acknowledged by the minister(s) or board of trustees.
- T. Keep or cause to be kept accurate records of financial and tangible gifts to the ministry in compliance with Internal Revenue Service regulations; acknowledge in writing contributions in compliance with Internal Revenue Service regulations.
- U. Issue or cause to be issued necessary 1099 and W-2 forms in compliance with Internal Revenue Service regulations.
- V. Secure insurance covering the building, grounds, and other properties, also Worker's 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.
- W. Take such other actions as may be deemed necessary for the best interests of this ministry.
- X. Send or cause to be sent the Annual Ministry Report (AMR) to UWM.
- Y. Ensure all staff ministry leaders/coleaders send or cause to be sent their annual Credentialed Leader Report (CLR) to UWM.

Z. Ensure all staff ministry leaders/coleaders cause their fellow staff ministers and licensed Unity teachers from this ministry to send or cause to be sent their annual Credentialed Leader Report (CLR) to UWM.

Section 11. Nomination and Election.

A. **Qualifications.** Initially the board of trustees will be selected by the pioneer(s), ministry leader/co-leaders, of the ministry. After the first year, to be eligible to be elected to the board of trustees a person must be a member of (name of ministry) for at least one (1) year. In addition, candidates for election shall endeavor to live in accord with the Jesus Christ principles of love and truth as taught by Unity Worldwide Ministries (UWM), uphold the Code of Ethics, Sexual Conduct Policy, Social Media Policy, Mutual Accountability Agreements/Covenant, and other ministry policies, and, have the time, skills, and disposition to serve on the board of trustees.

B. Election Procedure.

- a. When a vacancy occurs on the Board of Trustees, the remaining Trustees shall conduct a search for a new Board member who meets the qualifications and has undergone the standard application and vetting process.
- b. The Board shall select a qualified replacement to fill the position.
- c. A majority vote shall be necessary for election.
- d. Voting may be held by electronic means if the Board so agrees.

Section 12. Removal from Office by the Board of Trustees.

Any trustee may resign at any time. In addition, any trustee may be removed by majority vote of the Board of Trustees. Voting may be held by electronic means if the Board so agrees.

- A. UWM/AUCI has the authority to appoint or remove, or to control the appointment or removal of, at least one of the organization's officers or directors.
- B. Removal from Office by the Board of Trustees
 - a. Any board officer may be removed by a majority vote of the other board members.
 - b. Any trustee may be removed by the board of trustees due to unexcused absences from three (3) successive regular board meetings, failure to fulfill the duties of the office, failure to uphold the Code of Ethics, Sexual Conduct Policy, Social Media Policy, and other ministry policies, or disruptive or unethical behavior.

Section 13. Vacancies.

- A. Should there be a vacancy on the board of trustees, the board shall select a qualified replacement to fill the position utilizing the standard vetting process used by the Nominating Committee. A majority vote of the board of trustees shall be necessary for the election. The term of service shall expire on the date of the next annual membership meeting.
- B. Should the number of board members fall beneath the quorum requirement, the remaining board of trustees shall be empowered to call and hold the special meetings allowed by Section 13 C and to carry on the necessary day-to-day activities of the ministry as a temporary measure.

- C. Should the number of board members fall beneath the quorum requirement, two special membership meetings shall be called.
 - a. The first special meeting shall occur within thirty (30) days with notice of that meeting sent by postal or electronic mail to all members at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting. The purpose of this meeting shall be to elect interim board members and to set the date for a second special membership meeting.
 - b. The second special membership meeting shall 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. The purpose of this meeting will be to elect officers to fill the vacancies on the board.

Section 14. Board of Trustee Officers.

The officers of the board of trustees shall be a president, a secretary, a treasurer, and other officers as the board may decide.

- A. All officers shall 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 board meeting called for the purpose of electing officers.
- B. The term of office shall be one (1) year or until successors are elected.
- C. UWM recommends mentoring potential officers into the position by the previous officer following their one (1) year officer term.

Section 15. Duties of Officers.

- A. **President.** The president shall preside at all board of trustee meetings, preside at all membership meetings, appoint members of board committees related to board functions (except the Nominating Committee) with the advice of the board and minister (co-ministers), serve as an ex officio member of all board committees except the Nominating Committee, 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 orientations, retreats, and workshops. Mentor the incoming president into the duties and responsibilities of the office.
- B. **Secretary.** The secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, an accurate record of the minutes of all board and membership meetings, hold in custody or cause for the safe keeping of and be responsible for all reports, contracts, and other legal papers, 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
- C. **Treasurer.** The treasurer shall be the custodian of all funds belonging to this ministry, payout or cause to be paid out funds authorized by the board, see that all expenditures are evidenced by proper receipts and vouchers, keep or cause to be kept a record of all financial transactions, submit comprehensive monthly financial reports at each regular board meeting to be reviewed and understood by fellow board members, submit a financial report covering the last complete fiscal year and co-create with the minister a budget for the upcoming year to be reviewed by the membership at the annual membership meeting, and account 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 be responsible to ensure at least two (2) people are present and duplicate the counting process for accuracy. The treasurer and all counters are required to pass background checks for the faithful performance of his or her duties as the ministry policy

ARTICLE IV – Emergency Situations

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 local ministry trustees present and voting, the board of trustees is authorized to meet by electronic means and to have the full power to adjust budgets and 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. It is the responsibility of the board to continue to communicate faithfully to the membership regarding the activities of the board and ministry during the emergency.

ARTICLE V – Administration, Management and Leadership

Section 1. Administration. The administration of _____ Ministry shall be vested in the ministry leader(s)/coleader(s) as the administrative director(s)/chief executive officer(s), and the Board of Trustees/Steering Committee.

Section 2. Ministry leader(s)/coleader(s).

This ministry shall have as its ministry leader(s)/coleader(s), credentialed individuals eligible for employment by Unity Worldwide Ministries and willing to serve the ministry.

This would include one of the following:

- Ordained Unity Minister
- Licensed Unity Minister
- Licensed Unity Teacher

A. Duties.

- a. As the spiritual leader(s) of this ministry, ministry leader(s)/coleader(s) will be responsible for the scheduling, conduct, and content of services, classes, and all other activities that further the purpose of this ministry.
- b. As administrative director(s), ministry leader(s)/coleader(s), shall
 - i. Be responsible for the complete functioning of this ministry, including the hiring and termination of all employees including (if applicable) associate or assistant ministers;
 - ii. Serve as voting member(s) of the Board of Trustees on all matters except their own employment, or that of their successor(s);
 - iii. Create ministry teams related to these duties;
 - iv. Appoint the members of such ministry teams;

- v. Serve as ex officio members of all ministry teams;
 - vi. Be responsible for seeking UWM's assistance in the event of a dispute adversely affecting the ministry.
- B. **Compensation.** The compensation of the ministry leader(s)/coleader(s) employed by this ministry shall be set by the Board of Trustees/Steering Committee in conjunction with the ministry leader(s)/coleader(s).
- C. **Assistant Unity Leader.** Assistant(s) Unity Leader will be a licensed or ordained Unity minister(s), or Licensed Unity Teacher(s), or other credentialed ministry leader(s) through cooperation with the employment management procedures of UWM.
 - a. The above will function with less responsibility than the senior minister or co-ministers.
 - b. Will perform the duties and fulfill the responsibilities assigned them by the senior or co-ministers.
 - c. The compensation of the assistant minister(s) shall be fixed by the ministry leader(s)/coleader(s).
- D. **Succession Plan.**

In the event that the emerging leader is not a licensed or ordained Unity minister(s), or Licensed Unity Teacher(s), the emerging leader will agree to become a credentialed Unity Leader as they step into leadership of the ministry. If the ministry is temporarily without leadership, the Board of Trustees/Steering Committee will notify UWM Member Support services within five to seven (5-7) days.

ARTICLE VI – Dissolution

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

ARTICLE VII – Parliamentary Authority

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

ARTICLE VIII – Amendment of Bylaws

Any amendment(s) to or general revision of these bylaws may be considered after review and approval of the proposed amendment or revision by UWM. After such approval, the proposed amendment or revision shall be adopted by the ministry's Board of Trustees/Steering Committee and shared at any annual or special membership meeting. An affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3rds) of the Board of Trustees/ Steering Committee present and voting shall be necessary to adopt any amendment(s) to or general revision of these bylaws.

NOTE: If the incorporating state requires the approval of the board for the adoption of amendments to the bylaws, the following provision shall be added: To take effect, any amendment(s) to or general revision of these bylaws must also be ratified by a two-thirds (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.

(UWM Recommends a bylaw review every three (3) years.)

ATTEST:

These bylaws, reviewed and approved by Unity Worldwide Ministries, and adopted by the membership at the membership meeting on (date) supersedes all previous bylaws adopted by (name of ministry).

Date of Adoption _____

Signature of Minister/Leader _____

Signature of Board President _____

Signature of Board Secretary _____

