

Unity Church of Sarasota, Inc.

Bylaws

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SARASOTA, INC.**

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**BYLAWS FOR
UNITY CHURCH OF SARASOTA, INC.**

ARTICLE I - Identification

Section 1.01 Statement of Purpose.

The purpose of UNITY CHURCH OF SARASOTA, INC., a Florida nonprofit corporation, is to teach the universal principles of Truth, as taught and demonstrated by Jesus Christ and interpreted by Unity and the 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 the Unity Worldwide Ministries. In the accomplishment of this purpose, UNITY CHURCH OF SARASOTA, INC. (hereinafter also referred to as the Ministry 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 Senior Minister (herein referred to as "the Minister") will further the principles of practical Christianity among people everywhere.

Section 1.02 Unity Worldwide Ministries Membership and Responsibilities.

UNITY CHURCH OF SARASOTA, INC. is a member of the Unity Worldwide Ministries. The operation and conduct of this ministry will comply with the regulations and policies of the Unity Worldwide Ministries as outlined in the Unity Worldwide Ministries Bylaws, insofar as they do not conflict with the laws of the State of Florida.

- (a) **Leadership.** This ministry will have as its leader an ordained or licensed Unity minister(s) approved for ministry employment or a person serving under special dispensation approved by the Unity Worldwide Ministries. For the purpose of these Bylaws, the term "minister" will include a person serving under special dispensation of the Unity Worldwide Ministries under which this Ministry exists and operates. Unity Worldwide Ministries bylaws are found in the online edition of the Unity Worldwide Ministries Yearbook.
- (b) **Teaching.** The principles of practical Christianity will be taught through this ministry using methods, textbooks, literature, and other materials approved by the minister(s).
- (c) **Reports.** The minister designated Administrative Director will make annual reports to the Unity Worldwide Ministries on forms supplied by the Unity Worldwide Ministries.

ARTICLE II — Office and Official Records

Section 2.01 Principal Office.

The principal executive office of the corporation will be fixed by the Board of Trustees. Said office shall be in the County of Sarasota, State of Florida, or at such other place within the State of Florida 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, etc. will be maintained at the principal office of the corporation. Official church documents are to be available to Trustees and members at all times.

Section 2.03 Observance of Statutory Requirements.

The Church office shall at all times observe State and Federal requirements governing the confidentiality of any materials deemed to fall under these requirements.

Section 2.04 Membership and Contribution Lists.

These records shall remain within the Church office at all times and may only be consulted by the Minister, members of Board of Trustees and such paid staff as are designated to keep such records.

ARTICLE III — Membership

Section 3.01 Qualifications.

A member of UNITY CHURCH OF SARASOTA, INC. will endeavor to live in accord with the Jesus Christ principles of love and truth as taught by Unity. He/she will further the work of this ministry through his/her active interest, love, and financial support. Prospective members shall attend be asked to attend one or more orientation sessions, where they shall be conversant with the Unity movement, the history of this Ministry and the bylaws. All prospective active members must be at least eighteen (18) years of age at the time of application.

Section 3.02 Election of Members.

Anyone desiring membership in UNITY CHURCH OF SARASOTA, INC. will file an application for membership with the ministry office. The application will be presented to the Board of Trustees at its next regular meeting and be included in the board minutes. Upon acceptance by the trustees present, the applicant will become an active member and will be notified accordingly by the Board Secretary. All staff ministers and licensed Unity teachers are considered members of this ministry.

Section 3.03 Terms of Membership.

(a) Active Member.

An active member is one who, during the preceding twenty four (24) months, responds to at least one biannual membership query distributed through a designated membership mailing and /or emailing. Email responses are sufficient. A member who has not met these requirements becomes inactive and cannot serve on the Board of Trustees or vote at any membership meeting. A roster of active and inactive members shall be kept in the Church office and be available for inspection during normal Ministry operating hours. All active members will have the same powers and responsibilities. Privacy of information will be maintained.

(b) Inactive Member

An inactive member is one who has not met requirements of section (a). An inactive member cannot serve on the Board of Trustees or vote at any membership meeting.

(c) Reinstatement of Inactive Membership. After becoming inactive:

After 2 years of inactivity, a person may be removed from membership. Reinstatement may be completed by completing a membership card applying for membership in accordance with Section 3.02 (Election of Members). Attendance at a new member orientation is optional.

(d) Removal of Membership.

(1) For Inactive Members. After two (2) years of inactivity, a person may be removed from membership upon approval of the Board.

(2) For cause. Removal from membership of a person whose qualifications are in question requires at least a two-third (2/3) affirmative vote of the Board of Trustees. Prior to action concerning removal, the member must be notified by certified mail and be given an opportunity for a hearing before the Board.

Section 3.04 Powers of Active Members.

Active members of UNITY CHURCH OF SARASOTA, INC. shall have the power to do the following:

- a. Vote at any membership meeting, at which the member is present, called in accordance with Section 3.05 [Meetings and Quorum]. Refer to Section 3.05 (f) [Voting] for absentee ballot requirements.
- b. Elect members to the Board of Trustees as specified in Section 4.04 [Board of Trustees Election].
- c. Ratify the bylaws of this ministry or any amendments thereto as specified in Section 9.01 [Bylaws Amendments - Procedures].
- d. Vote on any unbudgeted expenditure that exceeds twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) in value. A two thirds majority (2/3) affirmative vote of those present and voting is required for approval. Refer to Section 4.03 (c) (7) [Board of Trustees - Duties].
- e. Elect two members and an alternate to serve on the Nominating Team as-specified in Section 6.01 (a) Nominating Team.
- f. Call a special membership meeting when the affairs of this ministry warrant such action. Refer to Section 3.05 (b) [Special Membership Meeting].
- g. Vote to override any action of the Board of Trustees. This vote must be taken at a duly constituted membership meeting. [See 3.05 (a) and (b).] Notice of the issue to be voted on must be submitted to the membership in writing fifteen (15) calendar days prior to the meeting. Two thirds (2/3) vote of those present have the authority for determination.

- h. Vote for the removal of any or all trustee(s) from the Board of Trustees in accordance with Section 4.05(a) [Vacancy]. A two thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of those present and voting is required.
- i. Vote for the removal of any or all congregational representative(s) of the Endowment Ministry Team. A majority affirmative vote of those present and voting is required.
- j. Vote for the removal of any or all congregational representative(s) of the Nominating Team. A majority affirmative vote of those present and voting is required.
- k. Vote for the removal of the Minister in accordance with Section 4.03 (e).
- l. Ratify and confirm the Board of Trustees' selection of the Minister in accordance with Section 4.03 (d).
- m. Vote on any motion to purchase to or sell any real property owned by the Church,. Two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of those present and voting is required for approval as specified 1in Article IV, section 4.03 (Cc) (7)
- n. . (wait for Susie to combine 0 and q)
- o.
- p. Any twenty-five (25) active members may request Peacemaking assistance by notifying the President of the Unity Worldwide Ministries in writing with copies to the Board of Trustees and minister. Upon receipt of a request for assistance from twenty-five (25) or more active members to the President or designee of Unity Worldwide Ministries, the representative will confer with the Minister and or regional representative to evaluate whether further action is required.

Section 3.05 Meetings and Quorum.

- (a) **Annual Membership Meeting.** The annual membership meeting of UNITY CHURCH OF SARASOTA, INC. shall be held at its official headquarters during the month of February upon such day and at such time as may be designated by the Board of Trustees. The agenda shall include a report to the membership on activities of the ministry and the election of Board of Trustee members to fill expiring terms as defined in Article IV, Section 4.03.
- (b) **Special Membership Meetings.** Any time the affairs of this ministry warrant a special meeting the meeting may be called by:
 - (1) The Minister.
 - (2) A majority of the Trustees of the Board.
 - (3) Submitting a petition having been signed by at least 15% of the Active Members; a written request must be submitted to the Board who will within thirty (30) days call the meeting on behalf of the requesting party.

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

- (c) **Written Notice.** Written notice stating the date, time, and place of the meeting will be mailed by US Postal service and /or email to all active members as of the date of the mailing at least fifteen (15) calendar days before any membership meeting.
- (d) **Quorum.** Those active members present and voting at a membership meeting called pursuant to the notice provisions of Section 3.05 (c) [Written Notice] will constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any membership meeting.
- (e) **Participation.** Participation in the business affairs of any membership meeting will 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. Unity Worldwide Ministries representatives have a right to participate in discussion when they have been invited by the minister(s), the Board, or the membership.
- (f) **Voting.** Unless otherwise provided herein, the vote of a majority of the eligible Active Members present and voting or by absentee ballot will be necessary for approval or disapproval of the action being voted upon. Refer to Section 3.04 (d) and (i) [Powers of Active Members] and Section 8.01 [Procedure]. 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 to the Board Secretary or designated officials collecting the ballots one (1) day prior to the meeting. Voting by proxy is not allowed.
- g. **Prayer.** In any membership meeting, the Board President, minister(s), Unity Worldwide Ministries Peacemaking 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 will provide a period of prayer and silence.
- (h) **Town Hall Meeting.** A congregational "Town Hall" meeting shall be convened midway between the annual membership meeting each six (6) months on a Sunday selected by the Minister or the Board. The purpose of the meeting shall be to allow attendees to voice their interest in affairs of the Church. There shall be no predetermined agenda, or voting on any matters or binding resolutions. The Minister, members of the Board, active members and any other interested parties may attend. No special mailing is required. This meeting shall not exceed seventy-five (75) minutes in length.

ARTICLE IV — Government

Section 4.01 Administration.

The government of UNITY CHURCH OF SARASOTA, INC. 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) will be responsible for the scheduling, conduct, and content of services, classes, and all other activities that further the purpose of this ministry as specified in Section 1.01 [Statement of Purpose]. As Administrative Director(s), the minister(s) will be:

- a. Responsible for the complete functioning of this ministry, except those duties explicitly given to the Board of Trustees under Section 4.03 (c). Specific duties include:
 1. Hiring and termination of all employees to be ratified by the Board of Trustees
 - 2.
 3. Setting salaries of employees within approved budget to be ratified by the Board of Trustees
 4. Implementation of budgeted items
- b. Entitled to a single vote each as a voting member of the Board of Trustees on all matters except own employment, or that of successor(s).
- c. An ex-officio member of all ministry teams.
- d. Responsible for seeking Unity Worldwide Ministries' assistance in the event of a dispute adversely affecting the ministry.
- e. Allowed Required to hire a professional Parliamentarian to be present at all membership meetings and Board of Trustee meetings, as needed.

(2) **Vacancy.** The position of a minister may be vacated by any of the following actions:

- (a) Resignation, or
- (b) After complying with the terms of the minister's contract and Section 4.03 (e) [Termination of Employment of Minister(s)], the minister's removal because of failure to fulfill the duties of the position as specified in Section 4.02 (a) (1).

(3) **Compensation.** The compensation of the minister(s) shall be fixed by agreement between the minister(s) and the Board of Trustees.

(b) Associate and/or Assistant Ministers.

Associate and/or Assistant Minister(s) will be duly licensed or ordained Unity minister(s) who function(s) with less responsibility than the Senior minister Refer to Addendum 1 [Definitions of Terms].

(1) **Duties.** The Associate and/or Assistant Minister(s) will perform the duties and fulfill the responsibilities assigned them by the Senior or Co-Minister(s).

(2) **Compensation.** The compensation of the Associate and/or Assistant Minister(s) shall be fixed by agreement of these minister(s) and the Senior 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 Senior Minister(s) representing one vote each and six (6) to nine (9) trustees and no fewer than one (1) and no more than three (3) alternate trustees elected from the membership of UNITY CHURCH OF SARASOTA, INC. Each elected trustee will hold office for three years, or until a successor is duly elected. Each elected trustee will be placed in one of three classes based on the year of election, providing for a staggered three year rotation of trustees. The terms of no less than two and no more than three elected trustees will expire annually, and their offices will be filled at the annual membership meeting in accordance with Section 4.04 [Board of Trustees-Election]. No elected trustee will serve more than two consecutive terms of three years each without an interval of one year between terms.

The qualifications for an alternate trustee are the same as those for a regular trustee as set forth in Section 4.04(a), infra. An alternate trustee shall not be someone who has served as a trustee in the preceding twelve months. The alternate trustee(s) shall hold office for one year. The alternate trustees will be ranked as Alternate Trustee 1, Alternate Trustee 2, and Alternate Trustee 3, if applicable, based on the number of votes received when elected by the members at the annual membership.

Alternate Trustee 1 will be the individual receiving the highest number of votes, followed by Alternate Trustee 2, and then Alternate Trustee 3, if applicable. In the event of a tie in voting, the ranking of the alternate trustees will be decided by vote of the Nominating Team.

No individual receiving compensation from the ministry (with the exception of the minister(s)) may serve on the Board of Trustees. No individual who is the relative, spouse, or significant other of an employee of the church may serve on the Board of Trustees [with the exception of the ministers(s)]. Further no Board member shall be a relative or significant other 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 or attending member may request time for prayer about the issue. Upon request the chair shall provide a period of prayer and silence.

4.03(c) **Duties.** As representatives of the membership, the Board of Trustees will:

(1) Uphold the spiritual purpose of this ministry as stated in Section 1.01 [Statement of Purpose] and carry out the directives of the Church Membership, assist and advise the Minister(s) in administering the affairs of the Church, and be responsible for the legal and financial matters of the Church.

(2) Uphold the highest interest of the membership in conducting the business of this ministry. Be a sincere and continuing student of Unity, conversant in its teachings, who makes every reasonable effort to support Unity classes, and other educational opportunities offered in the church.

(3) Be conversant with and abide by these bylaws and the policy manual of this church.

(4) Be faithful in attendance at Sunday services, Board and membership meetings of this ministry. Members are required to be physically present at board meetings. Three consecutive absences from regular board meetings shall evolve [sic] loss of position of the member concerned. The board may take affirmative action to reverse this automatic action.

(5) Make recommendations on the business needs of this ministry to the administrator and authorize payment of necessary monies over and above budgeted items for those purposes, within the limits of Section 4.03(c)(7).

(6) Administer the legal and financial aspects of the property of this ministry, both real and personal, in accordance with the limitations in Section 4.02(a)(1)(a) and Section 4.03(c)(5).

(7) Make determinations on the sale, pledge, purchase or proposed financing of real or personal property belonging to this ministry. All decisions in favor of the sale, pledge, purchase or proposed financing of real or personal 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(d)[Powers of Active Members]. A two thirds affirmative vote is required for approval.

(8) As recommended by the Senior Minister(s), authorize the position and salary of all staff personal of this ministry. See Section 4.02 [Minister's Duties].

(9) Set dates for the fiscal year.

(10) Each year cause to be prepared a complete financial statement with disclosures that will set forth the fiscal conditions and operations of the ministry.

(11) Cause to occur an independent financial review every three years.

(12) Will secure a fidelity bond for persons with check signing authority.

(13) Accept applicants for membership in accordance with Section 3.02 [Election of Members] and send or cause to be sent bi-annual membership renewal cards to all Active and Inactive Members in accordance with Section 3.03(a), (b) Members.

(14) Act to fill the unexpired term of any trustee in accordance with Section 4.05(b) [Replacement].

(15) Elect officers of the Board, and their successors to fill any unexpired term when necessary. See Section 4.07 [Board of Trustees Officers].

(16) Ratify Board appointed ministry teams. Serve as Liaison to one or more teams. Submit monthly team reports at each monthly board meeting as needed. See Section 6.02 [Other Ministry Teams].

(17) Annually elect 2 Trustees to represent the Board on the Nominating Team. Refer to Section 6.01(a)(1) [Nominating Team].

(18) Seek Unity Worldwide Ministries assistance in the event of a dispute adversely affecting the ministry.

(19) Attend and actively participate in ongoing Board education programs.

(20) Keep or cause to be kept an accurate record of membership.

(21) 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.

(22) Secure liability insurance for all Board of Trustee members and ministers.

(23) Consult and listen to the membership on a regular basis in order to solicit feedback and maintain open communication. Suggested methods include but are not limited to monthly congregational reporting with opportunity for feedback, email feedback techniques, a form similar to prayer requests, a suggestion box and regular meetings with open topic format.

(24) Refrain from participating in the discussion of, or voting on, any matter from which s/he shall benefits, financially or materially, and disclose such interests to the board.

(25) Maintain complete confidentiality concerning any matters raised and discussed in "closed session" Board meetings.

(26) **Duties and Responsibilities of Alternate Trustee.** The Alternate Trustee(s) will make every effort to attend all Board meeting so that s/he will be knowledgeable in the affairs of the ministry. The Alternate Trustee(s) will serve as active board member(s) and have voting privileges and responsibilities whenever one or more regular trustees is absent. The opportunity to serve in the absence of a regular trustee will be determined by the alternate trustee's ranking. At all times, the alternate trustee(s) must be fully aware of the duties of a trustee as enumerated in 4.03(c)(1-25), supra, and be prepared to conduct themselves in accordance therewith.

(d) **Employment of Minister(s).** It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to seek and recommend to the membership licensed or ordained Unity minister(s) for the church through cooperation with the employment management procedures of the Unity Worldwide Ministries of Unity Churches.

(e) **Termination of Employment of Minister(s).** Per the terms of the contract and after a ministry and its Minister have cooperated with the Peacemaking procedures of the Unity Worldwide Ministries a two thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting, and those voting by absentee ballot, of the eligible active church membership is required to terminate the employment of a Senior Minister at a membership meeting. Such action can be recommended to the membership by a two thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Trustees.

Section 4.04 Board of Trustees -- Election.

(a) **Qualifications.** Any person elected to the Board of Trustees must be an Active Member of UNITY CHURCH OF SARASOTA, INC. He/she will be a person who:

1. Desires to serve on the Board and must be a committed Active Member of the Church for at least twelve (12) consecutive calendar months prior to his/her election as a trustee.
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.
6. Has read and is willing to sign the "Code of Ethics and Commitment Agreement".

(b) **Nominating Procedure.** The Chair of the annual membership meeting will:

- (1) Read Section 4.04 (a) [Board of Trustees--Elections].
- (2) Call upon the Chairperson of the Nominating Team to present the team's nominations.
- (3) Call for additional nominations from the floor. All nominees, no matter how nominated, must qualify in accordance with paragraph 4.04 (a) [Qualifications].

(c) **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 will be elected to full three (3) year terms. The candidate receiving the next highest number of votes will be elected to the longest un-expired term, etc. All persons elected in such a manner will be considered to be fulfilling a term of office.

Section 4.05 Board of Trustees — Vacancy and Replacement.

(a) **Vacancy.** The office of a trustee may be vacated by any of the following means:

1. The resignation of the trustee.
2. Three consecutive nonexcused absences from regular board meetings shall involve loss of position for the Board Member concerned. The Board may take affirmative action to reverse the automatic action.
3. The Board may recommend to the membership the removal of a trustee because of a failure to fulfill the duties of the office as specified in Section 4.03 (c) [Duties].
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) [Duties]. Refer to Section 3.04 (j) [Powers of Active Members].
5. If fifty-percent (50%) or more of the members of the Board of Trustees, excluding the minister(s), are to be recalled, the entire Board of Trustees must be recalled. Refer to Section 3.04 (h) [Powers of Active Members].
6. If the entire Board of Trustees is recalled by the membership, then the membership may nonetheless re-elect individual recalled trustees, however, not more than fifty-percent (50%) of the individual recalled trustees may be so re-elected.

4.05(b) **Replacement.** Should a vacancy or vacancies occur on the Board of Trustees other than by recall, the vacancy(s) will be filled by the alternate trustee(s) in the order of their ranking.

An alternate trustee(s) called to replace an elected trustee due to vacancy(s) will continue to serve for the duration of the elected member's term(s). Filling a vacancy for more than one half of a full three year term shall be considered service for a full three year term for the purposes of 4.03(a), supra.

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

Section 4.06 Board of Trustees — Meetings and Quorum.

a. **Regular Board Meetings.** The regular monthly business meetings of the Board of Trustees will be held at the headquarters of this ministry or at such other places as the Board may designate on a regularly scheduled day specified by the Board. Meetings must be announced at the Sunday service(s) prior to the Board meeting and be included in the Church calendar.

- b. **Special Board Meetings.** Special meetings of the Board will be called by the President of the Board under any of the following conditions:

1. By request of the Senior Minister(s).
2. By request of two (2) or more trustees.
3. As the President of the Board deems it necessary.

A request will be filed in writing with the Board Secretary. Trustees must be notified of any special meeting. Every effort should be given to provide 7 days notice of special meetings and notice should be announced at the Sunday service(s) prior to the Special meeting.

- c. **Emergency Board Meetings.** Emergency Board Meetings may be called as "Special" Board meetings (Section 4.06 (b)) to address issues of past or future threat to real or personal property without the 7 day notification requirement. Only these matters may be addressed at an emergency meeting.

d. **Quorum.** Fifty-one (51%) of trustees will constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

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

f. **Open Meetings.** All Board meetings are open to active membership.

g.

h. **Closed Meeting/Session.**

(1) A Board motion must be passed by majority vote before the Board may enter closed session, either as an addendum to a regular Board meeting, or announced as a separate closed meeting.

(2) A closed session shall be limited to matters that are highly sensitive, including, but not limited to, personnel issues.

Section 4.07 Board of Trustees--Officers.

Officers of the Board of Trustees will consist of a President, Vice-president, Secretary and Treasurer.

The Board will select the officers 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 will hold their respective offices for one year or until their successors are duly elected or qualified.

a. **President.** The President will:

1. Preside at all Board of Trustees meetings.
2. Preside at all membership meetings.
3. Be an ex-officio member of all ministry teams by virtue of the office, except the Membership Ministry Teams (refer to Section 6.01) [Membership Ministry Teams].
4. Sign such papers and documents, upon proper authorization, as may be necessary.

(b) **Vice-President.** The Vice-President will:

- (1) Perform all the duties of the President of the Board in the absence of the President of the Board.
- (2) Become President of the Board in case the office of the President becomes vacant. In such a case, a new Vice-President of the Board will be elected from among the remaining trustees to fill the remainder of the term.
- (3) Be responsible for the planning of board orientation, retreats, and workshops in cooperation with the Nominating Team.

(c) **Secretary.** The Secretary will:

1. Keep, or cause to be kept, an accurate record of the minutes of all Board and membership meetings. Archived copies of all approved minutes must be kept in the Church office and be available to all members.
2. Hold in custody and be responsible for all reports, contracts, other legal papers, and the minute books, copies of which items will be kept in the ministry office at all times, and the originals of said documents shall be kept in such other secure, fireproof, waterproof depository as prescribed by the Board.
3. Attend to all official business required by the Board.
4. Keep or cause to be kept accurate active and inactive membership lists.
5. Send or cause to be sent biannual membership query (refer to Section 3.03 (a)) to all Active or Inactive Members.

(d) **Treasurer.** The Treasurer will:

- (1) Be custodian of the funds of this ministry. He/she will pay out or cause to be paid out, funds authorized by the Board or expended in accordance with approved budget. Refer to Section 4.03 (c) (5) [Duties] and Section 4.02 (a) (1) (1) [Duties].
- (2) Keep, or cause to be kept, a record of all financial transactions, and submit a monthly financial report at each regular board meeting.
- (3) Submit a financial report, covering the last complete fiscal period, at the annual membership meeting.
- (4) Count, or cause to be counted by the appointment of qualified persons, all funds received, . 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. Refer to ARTICLE V Section 5.02 [Depository(ies) and Signing Authority].

ARTICLE V — Financial Controls

Section 5.01 Designated Purpose(s):

All monies designated for a specific purpose in or out of Budget must be expended for that purpose.. (refer to Policy and Procedures Manual: Section 17 Financial Policies and Procedures must be used to ensure the proper flow of financial matters).

Section 5.02 Depository(ies) and Signing Authority.

All operating funds of Unity Church of Sarasota, Inc. shall be deposited by or caused to be deposited by the Treasurer in such depository or depositories as the Board of Trustees may designate and shall be withdrawn only by check signed by the Treasurer and President, or by any two officers or persons designated by the Board. Designated depository(ies) must be federally insured and funds protected and kept within federally--insured guidelines/limitations.

ARTICLE VI — Ministry Teams

Section 6.01 Membership Ministry Teams.

a. **Nominating Team..** The ministry team will consist of the Senior Minister and four active members selected in the following manner:

1. **Membership:**

- a. At the annual membership meeting on odd years, the membership shall elect two of its active members, and one alternate, to serve on the Nominating Team for the next two years. In the event of unavailability to serve of the persons so elected, the Board will select a person from the active membership to fill the vacancy, other than a current Board member.
- b. The Board will elect one of its trustees annually.
- c. Together with the Senior Minister, the above three ministry team members will select a fourth ministry team member from the active membership who will become Chairperson of the Nominating Team for a two year term.
- d. The Senior Minister is a voting member of the Nominating Team.
- e. In the event of an interim Board the Nominating Team shall complete its selection process within thirty (30) days from the establishment of the interim Board.

2. **Responsibilities:** The Nominating Team responsibilities and guidelines are in the Policy Manual.

b. **Endowment Ministry Team.** The fund shall be called “The Donald L. and Dorothy Ann Jackson Endowment Fund.”

1. **Membership:**

Members selected for the Endowment Ministry Team must have professional investment and/or financial experience. (See Endowment Fund document.)

(2) **Responsibilities:**

set the goals and objectives of the Endowment Fund.

- (b) To select through the use of appropriate criteria, a trust investment management company to invest the portfolio of the Endowment Fund.
- (c) To monitor and review the investment performance of the trustee in accordance with Investment Policy.
- (d) Under necessary circumstances, to recommend the dismissal and replacement of the trustee.
- (e) To devise and implement strategies to grow the Endowment Fund, including the establishment of a Planned Giving Program

(c) Other Ministry Teams.

Formation. The Leader(s) of Ministry teams, with the exception of the Nominating Team listed in Section 6.01 (a), will be appointed by the Board of Trustees. The team Leader will present, or cause to be presented, a list of recommended team members to the Board for ratification. Ratification by a majority vote of the Board is required.

Section 6.02 Removal of Ministry Team Members

The team Leader of a ministry team under Sec. 6.01 may recommend to the Board of Trustees the removal of any non-performing member of the team.

ARTICLE VII — Seal

Section 7.01 Description.

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

Section 7.02 Dissolution.

Should this corporation dissolve:

- (a) All property and funds remaining after the payment of the debts of the corporation will be delivered to the Unity Worldwide Ministries, a nonprofit corporation organized under the laws of the State of Georgia, for religious and educational purposes.
- (b) Such funds or property will be for the use and benefit of the Unity Worldwide Ministries as may be determined by the Board of Trustees of the Unity Worldwide Ministries, in alignment with current policies and procedures.
- (c) The Unity Worldwide Ministries will make available according to its current policies and procedures, funds for the re-establishment of a Unity ministry in Sarasota..
- (d) Should the Unity Worldwide Ministries no longer exist, any assets remaining of this corporation after dissolution will 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 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

ARTICLE VIII — Meeting Procedures

Section 8.01 Rules of Order.

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

ARTICLE IX — Bylaws Amendments

Section 9.01 Procedure.

Amendments to these bylaws must be made by eligible voting members of this corporation at a legally constituted membership meeting. Written notice setting forth the proposed amendments must be mailed and/or emailed to all active members at least fifteen days prior to the required membership meeting. An affirmative vote of twothirds (2/3) of all active eligible members present and voting, and votes by absentee ballot, will be necessary to pass any amendment to these bylaws. These bylaws fully supersede all previous bylaws adopted by UNITY CHURCH OF SARASOTA, INC..

Attest-Secretary

Date of adoption or revision

ADDENDUM: 1 — Definition of Terms

A Unity Ministry

A member ministry in the Unity Worldwide Ministries recognized by the Unity Worldwide Ministries will have a duly ordained or licensed Unity minister, or a person serving under special dispensation as its Spiritual Leader. (For additional criteria, contact the Unity Worldwide Ministries office.)

Senior Minister

A Unity minister duly ordained, licensed [or serving under special dispensation] by the Unity Worldwide Ministries (or unity® prior to July 1, 1966), who assumes the spiritual and administrative leadership role in a member ministry. This leader works in conjunction with the Board of Trustees of the member ministry, and is to oversee the teaching, preaching (lesson), worship services, healing, counseling, prayer, administrative, and fellowship activities of the ministry.

Associate Minister

In ministries with more than one minister, a Unity minister duly ordained or licensed by the Unity Worldwide Ministries (or unity® prior to July 1, 1966), serving in a member ministry. The Associate Minister may be equal in ability, but functions with less responsibility than the Senior Minister. The Associate Minister reports to the Senior Minister, who determines the scope of the associate's responsibilities.

Assistant Minister

In ministries with more than one minister, a Unity minister duly ordained or licensed by the Unity Worldwide Ministries (or unity® prior to July 1, 1966), serving in a member ministry. The skills and/or experience of the Assistant Minister may be less than those of the Senior Minister. The assistant may be placed in a specialized service area of the ministry, i.e., pastoral visitation, or administrative support. The skills of the assistant are, therefore, allowed to develop, for a more comprehensive range of ministry service of the assistant, and the ministry.

**ADDENDUM: 2 — Board Of Trustees — Code of Ethics & Commitment Agreement Board Of Trustees
Code of Ethics & Commitment Agreement**

On Following Page

Unity Church of Sarasota, Inc.
Board of Trustee Member
Code of Ethics & Commitment Agreement

I, _____, recognizing the important responsibility I am undertaking in serving as a member of the Board of Trustees of Unity Church of Sarasota, Inc, hereby pledge to carry out in a trustworthy and diligent manner the duties and obligations of my role as a board member.

My commitment:

I will exercise the duties and responsibilities of this office with prayer, integrity, collegiality and care, always working to learn to do my job better. I will hold sacred my own prayer life, my spiritual life and spiritual growth so I can set an example for others. I will be respectful of my relationship with the minister(s).

I pledge:

- To attend, participate in, and openly support activities of prayer and community / team building that will enhance my experience as a trustee and enrich my own spirituality.
- To establish as a high priority my attendance at all meetings of the board and the ministry teams that I serve on.
- To recognize that all authority is vested in the full board only when it meets in legal session.
- To be prepared to participate actively in board meetings and keep informed of developments relevant to issues that may come before the board.
- To support all actions taken by the board in a positive manner, even when I am in a minority position on the action.
- To respect the confidentiality of all discussions at board and committee meetings that require such (i.e.: personnel matters)..
- To make decisions in the context of the values, mission, vision and goals of the ministry.
- To interpret the needs of the congregation to the board, and interpret the actions of the board to the congregation.
- To represent the congregation and not a particular interest group or my personal position.
- To take my issues and concerns to the individuals involved and seek resolution.
- To acknowledge conflicts of interest between my personal life and my position on the board and abstain from voting when appropriate.
- To avoid interfering with the duties of the minister or undermining his or her authority with the staff.
- To ensure the ministry is well maintained, financially secure, growing and always operating in the best interests of those we serve.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Governance Leadership Ministry Team and Leadership Matrix

follows this page.

Governance Leadership Ministry Team

The "Governance Leadership Ministry Team" changes and expands the role and responsibilities of the "Nominating Committee" beyond recruiting and recommending a slate of candidates for election to the board. The governance leadership team membership is set forth in the Bylaws and performs several discrete responsibilities:

- Recruiting, welcoming and orienting new board trustees.
- Recommending the officer slate.
- Assessing the performance of the board in relation to the vision, mission and goals, as well as operations of the board.
- Ensuring that the accomplishments of the board and staff are recognized.
- Providing ongoing educational opportunities for the board.
- Monitoring board retention and addressing problems when appropriate.

The fundamental purpose of governance is to achieve the visions and mission of the ministry while demonstrating the Unity principles. Governance is a means to an end. The work of the governance leadership team is one of the most important to the future of a ministry. The team is charged with the responsibility to research, evaluate and act on behalf of the membership to find active leaders who are committed to the beliefs, values, vision and mission of the ministry and their own spiritual journey. Here is an overview of the typical responsibilities:

1. **Ministry Team Orientation** — Members meet; learn about each other's backgrounds and the gifts they bring to the governance leadership team. The team engages in an orientation process of how they will work together, reviewing the team's job description and commission.
2. **Learning About the Ministry** — The team reviews and discusses for clarity the current belief statement, core values, vision, mission and goals. The financial vision is reviewed. The team learns about the history and culture of the ministry and how it has evolved to its current state.
3. **Envisioning the Ideal Board** — The team envisions an ideal board with the diversity, gifts, talents and consciousness to lead the ministry, 3 to 10 years into the future. Using a group fantasy process, a highly imaginative story development (mind picture) by the team, is effective, as are discussion questions. An understanding of the guiding beliefs, core values, vision, mission, goals, bylaws and financials is essential at this step.
4. **Characteristics of the Ideal Board** — Once an ideal board has been visualized and agreed upon, a matrix is designed to illustrate the ministry's current and future needs (see sample in Appendix of "Building with Boards" from the Association). Team members find out which board members wish to continue and what gifts and spiritual consciousness they bring, as well as their interests in new responsibilities based upon their passion (ministry team assignments) and leadership roles (chair, vice chair, etc.). New board prospects are evaluated against the same criteria or the matrix.
5. **Characteristics of the Current Board** — Refining the matrix to reflect the response from current trustees is the next step. An analysis of the current board trustees is conducted, including in-depth discussions of their commitment and performance before they are asked about their interest in serving another term.
6. **Planning the Recruitment Process** — Recommended board prospects are considered in two categories: those who would be recommended for a board position right now and those who would be considered in the future (2-5 years) once they have had more leadership training and experience. The board prospects are included on the matrix. If some criteria remain blank, the team will take this into prayer and visualize (an) ideal person(s) who meet(s) or exceed(s) the criteria.

Successful recruitment of the board trustees includes a review of previous recruitment practices and recommendations for what could be improved. Determine who will contact the prospective trustee and where they will meet; what points to be covered; and what materials to take to the interview such as a board of trustees manual.

7. The prospective board trustee needs to know what the expectations are in terms of time, talent and tithe.

Determine the information you want to learn from a prospective board trustee. Have in-depth conversations with potential board trustees to learn about their values and vision, what they care deeply about, why and how they believe they can contribute and make a difference, and how serving on the board would contribute to the person's spiritual journey. The person is NOT being asked to commit to serving or running for the board at this time.

8. **Discerning the Candidates** — The team reconvenes and shares their report of prospective trustees' responses. The task of the team is to discern the first, second or third choices for the ideal additions to the board. The team decides who will call the agreed-upon candidates, what they will say, where, when, checking references, gathering biographical information or resumes, etc. If some prospects decline, the team members go to the second choice without reconvening the entire team. Thank-you letters are sent to all prospective candidates.
9. **Recommending a Slate of Nominees** — Once again, the team reconvenes to share the results of their calls and makes one final check of the matrix to see if the ideal board has been recruited. It is the responsibility of the governance leadership team to propose a slate of officers to the Board. The governance leadership team has dedicated time and effort to envisioning an ideal board and done their research, interviewed and proposed the board candidates. Therefore, they are in the best position to propose a slate of officers that could successfully serve the ministry for the coming year(s).
10. **Preparing Information for the Next Governance Leadership Ministry Team** — After the annual meeting the team evaluates their success and makes recommendations for improving the process. The team organizes their documentation and evaluation to be passed on to the new chair of the governance leadership team.
11. **Board Orientation** — Letters of congratulations are sent to those elected. A board orientation session is held right after the election. The chair of the team supports the process with his or her attendance and participation in the session. The board manual is used extensively in the orientation. Pairing new trustees with a mentor trustee is also helpful. The mentor can answer questions about board procedures, background information and help the newcomer understand the unwritten rules and culture of the board.
12. **Exit Interviews** — It is important to provide an opportunity for board trustees who have served their term(s) to reach closure. The exit interview can be part of the last board meeting for the individual(s) or conducted by the governance leadership team at another time. In an exit interview, individuals are asked to share their experiences on the board, what worked, what could be improved, the impact it has had on their spiritual journey, where else they might be interested in serving, such as other ministry teams, task forces, and so on. This information can assist the board in improving their practices while encouraging former board members to stay engaged in the life of the ministry.
13. **Celebration** — Conscious celebration of the work of the team is important. The team has done substantial work affecting the future success and growth of the ministry. Taking time to share their experiences creates a deeper commitment to one another and the ministry. It can also be fun!

Leadership Matrix

In the previous section we examined the responsibilities of the governance leadership team. This section will examine in greater detail the functions and components of a matrix used in envisioning and creating the best board for the ministry.

The development of trustee leadership begins when a person decides to become involved in the ministry. Having conversations at a deep personal level with the minister and other trusted colleagues about the reasons for calling a person for service is highly recommended. Why am I called to serve? How is this service part of my spiritual growth? 'Why at this time?' What gifts do I bring? Of equal importance is an analysis of the competency and skills of the individuals and the diversity of ministry teams and board of trustees.

A matrix analysis is proposed that includes spiritual consciousness, character qualities, leadership, organizational skills and competencies for "the best board possible."

A list is presented below that can be included in a matrix. These are only suggestions. It is vitally important that the governance leadership ministry team discuss the priorities in designing a matrix that represents the values and uniqueness of their ministry.

Spiritual Consciousness, Character, Leadership, Skills/Competencies and Demographics

Spiritual consciousness, a deep understanding of the Unity principles, a passion for Unity, and a demonstrated commitment to the ministry as well as an array of qualities, skills and competencies are needed for effective boards. The values, vision, mission and strategic goals of the ministry impact the current and future make-up of the board. Trustees must demonstrate the ability to deal with complex paradoxes, ambiguity, and see the origins and depth of challenges and issues. The focus of the board is on the future and delivering high-quality results. In addition, Trustees must demonstrate living the Unity principles, their character qualities and leadership.

Sometimes organizations, including ministries, select their leaders (board presidents/chairs, vice presidents/chairs) in ways that do not serve the needs of the organization. These positions are not about "entitlement," or selecting the person(s) who give the most money or who will accept the position because no one else wants it. *The leader needs to be a person of high spiritual consciousness and integrity.*

Spiritual Consciousness and Character

- High spiritual consciousness
- Living the Unity principles
- Passion for Unity and the Unity way of life
- Trustworthy
- Honest
- Keeping commitments and is accountable
- Positive attitude
- Openness
- Compassion
- Creating value and contribution
- Balance/centeredness

Leadership Skills

- Visionary
- Communication/listening
- Knowing the history of the ministry and able to engage in in-depth analysis of needs — now and in the future
- Having a passion for the mission
- Having a personal mission statement in alignment with the ministry's mission statement
- Demonstrated leadership on ministry teams and task forces
- Complex thinking and decision-making skills
- Fulfilling commitment and accountable to self, other trustees and congregants
- Mediation/peacemaking skills
- Synthesizing disparate information
- Team player and builder
- Facilitation skills
- Entrepreneurial

Skills/Competencies

Selection of candidates based on demonstrated skills and competencies in the following areas is important while projecting future needs. Certain skills must be represented on the board such as finance, fundraising, planning, policy setting, technology, and so on. 'Without these skills the spiritual business — the ministry — is compromised in the effectiveness of its operations.

- Budget and finance
- Fundraising
- Strategic planning
- Policy setting
- Utilizing technology
- Marketing/PR
- Human resources — hiring and performance appraisals
- Evaluation/assessment
- Educational design and instruction
- Organizational development
- Governance

Demographics

In order to achieve a board that reflects the make-up of the congregation, consideration should be given to the following:

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Where the person lives
- Age range
- Marital status, children

When completed with information on current and potential board members, the matrix will reflect the ideal board as envisioned by the governance leadership ministry team. Building upon the success of the previous board, the new board will have an opportunity and responsibility to move the ministry forward in new spiritual and creative ways.

