

Job Descriptions of the Board of Trustees

from *Building With Boards: The Foundation for Creating Spiritual Leaders*, Second Edition
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Senior Minister

Reports to: Board of Trustees and congregational members

A. General Description of Position

The senior minister empowers and enables Truth seekers to become Truth finders. He/she creates an atmosphere in which people can come to know and express their Christ nature. This position is responsible for overall administration of operations and day-to-day fiscal management of the ministry. He/she delegates programs and activities to staff personnel to fulfill, but retains responsibility for the sound financial and program management of the ministry.

B. Duties and Responsibilities: *Spiritual Leadership:*

1. Provides a sound prayer consciousness on which is based all activities of the church.
2. Sets the order of service, leads and coordinates the Sunday morning service(s), which include(s) the minister's lesson, music, and meditation. Guides the spiritual direction of the ministry in keeping with the teachings of Jesus Christ as interpreted by Unity School of Christianity and the Association of Unity Churches.
3. Schedules, plans and conducts various classes and other activities for spiritual enrichment.
4. Provides effective spiritual counseling and prayer to those who seek it.
5. Conducts weddings, funerals, memorials, christenings and special spiritual services.
6. Performs or coordinates pastoral duties such as hospital visitation and personal contact with those in need.
7. Empowers and supports the spiritual development of youth.
8. Commits to continued personal spiritual growth and enfoldment.

Personnel Administration:

1. Recruits, screens, hires, dismisses and supervises staff.
2. Provides clear direction and guidance to staff in performing their duties.

3. Provides feedback to staff in the form of annual formal evaluations and day-to-day supervision including motivation and correction, when needed.
4. Communicates with the board about personnel issues, problems, evaluations, and recommendations.
5. Assists the board in developing and revising job descriptions and personnel policies.
6. Promotes volunteer involvement by delegating, supervising and supporting volunteer efforts or overseeing the endeavor.

Fiscal Management:

1. Oversees day-to-day financial activities and transactions.
2. Assists the board in developing and revising annual budgets.
3. Approves and directs purchases and expenditures within the limits of the board-approved budget.
4. Oversees the handling of any church monies.
5. Ensures compliance with IRS regulations.

Relationship with Board:

1. Regularly attends all board meetings and serves as liaison to board teams/ committees.
2. Provides the board with adequate information to help it reach sound decisions and policies.
3. Prepares or oversees (with the board chair) the preparation of the agenda for board meetings.
4. Communicates with the board on progress, activities and direction of the church.
5. Supervises the implementation of all policies and procedures as set by the board.
6. Assists the board in developing sound short-term and long-range plans.
7. Reports regularly to the board about progress toward organizational mission, vision, and goals.

Community Outreach and Public Relations:

1. Serves as spokesperson of the Unity Church in all dealings with the public, media and other organizations.
2. Promotes effective public relations.
3. Keeps the membership informed of activities, opportunities and direction of the ministry (i.e., through newsletters, bulletins, personal contact, web page).

Unity Movement Participation:

1. Regularly attends the annual conference for the Association of Unity Churches and the annual regional conference.
2. Supports the Association and region through service (officer, ministry team membership, other activity or participation).
3. Regularly informs the board and membership of the policies, directions, activities and services provided by the Association, the region, and Unity Institute, Unity Village.

C. Employment Standards

The senior minister will be an approved minister or licensed teacher, and in good standing with the Association of Unity Churches. This position requires an individual who can adapt to various situations, is growth-oriented and is able to empower and encourage others.

From *Policy Manual for a Unity Ministry* (pages 85-86), The Association of Unity Churches.

Board Trustees: Roles and Responsibilities

Board members are models for spiritual growth.

Key Responsibilities

The board is legally and ethically responsible for the organization's standards of conduct. Board responsibilities include duty of care, duty of loyalty and duty of service. Over my years of working with boards, I have found that the following eight areas make up the key responsibilities.

Governance

- Developing a board culture that incorporates the Unity principles, spiritual practices and best practices in organizational leadership. .
- Creating an environment that encourages people to follow their passion of service to ministry.
- Meeting ethical and legal responsibilities as stated in the ministry bylaws and those recommended by the Association of Unity Churches.
- Participating in and being informed of events and activities, including designing an evaluation process for ongoing feedback and continuous improvement.
- Reading and understanding your state's laws governing non-profit organizations (501 (c) 3 tax-exempt corporations).
- Evaluating trustee effectiveness through organizational and self-assessment instruments. (See the Board of Trustees Assessment in the Appendix.)

- Recruiting new trustees through the nominating process as stated in the ministry bylaws.
- Conducting exit interviews with retiring board trustees.

The Minister and Staff

- Selecting, supporting and assessing the performance of the minister(s) by conducting periodic reviews in partnership with the minister(s). Focus on acknowledging successes while working together to develop new goals and a performance improvement plan if needed.
- Approving and funding staff positions. The staff does not answer to nor is it accountable to the Board.
- Providing an in-depth orientation program for a newly hired minister. Ensure there is an orientation program for new staff.
- Supporting the minister with fair compensation, benefit packages and ongoing educational opportunities. If boards want the services of a minister and staff, they must expect to pay fair and equitable salaries. Share the gift of abundance with those who serve the ministry.
- Developing performance review processes for staff members.
- Budgeting ongoing education and training for the minister and staff.
- Supporting the involvement of the minister, board trustees and key lay leaders in regional and international conferences sponsored by our Association.

Strategic Planning

- Exploring the various strategic planning strategies available to Unity churches. For example, Future Search, Open Space Technology, visioning exercises as well as more traditional planning strategies using focus groups and a planning team.
- Creating a historical timeline of the ministry. Understanding, owning and honoring the history and, on occasion, making an agreement NOT to repeat actions of the past that have presented challenges to the ministry (see *Understanding the Size of Your Ministry* in Part Three of this manual).
- Creating shared values, mission, vision and goals to provide a sense of direction for the ministry. What are we being called to do as a ministry?
- Empowering all stakeholders to become involved in knowing, understanding and implementing the mission, vision and goals. Empower people to follow their passions in how they would like to serve in the ministry. Focusing on vision helps avoid trustees' tendency to micro-manage the ministry.
- Planning requires a major investment of time and resources. There may be times when the board is not in a position to do planning due to more imminent challenges facing the ministry. If

so, do planning after the challenges have been resolved.

- Reviewing the strategic plan periodically and making the necessary changes and adjustments as events unfold.
- Celebrating the successes with the congregation. Congregants like knowing what the board is doing in contributing to the overall success of the ministry.

Policy

- Helping set policies for the operations of the ministry.
- Using the resources of the ministry, including the minister, staff, volunteers, key lay leaders and trustees, who may recommend policies. The Association of Unity Churches is an additional resource. Participating in policy implementation based upon the issues at hand.
- Reviewing established policies. This includes revising, deleting or updating current policies. When possible, avoid the tendency to "over-policy" the operations of the ministry in an attempt to control situations or people. It usually does not work.
- Conducting procedural audits to ensure that established policies are being implemented.

Financial Oversight

- Ensuring that the organizational resources are handled responsibly and used wisely.
- Ensuring the ministry has the resources necessary to accomplish its mission and vision. This includes practicing the principle of prosperity. Thriving churches do not have trustees with a consciousness of lack.
- Approving the ministry's budget, adjusting it as needed and monitoring it.
- Creating opportunities for lay leaders to serve on a finance and budget team. Provide guidelines for their opportunity to serve.
- Educating all trustees in understanding financial statements and how to use them as a tool for planning and accountability.
- Engaging in long-term financial planning as it relates to the ministry's strategic plan.
- Ensuring that prudent fiscal policies are in place and are practiced.
- Conducting audits of the ministry's finances.
- Providing current technologies to facilitate the operations of the ministry.

Conflict of Interest

- Developing and implementing a written conflict-of-interest policy related to ethical behavior that includes not just legal issues, but duty considerations in every aspect of ministry governance.

- Delineating how compliance will be monitored and establishing a process for resolving potential violations.
- Disclosing by board trustees and staff members of their connections with groups doing business with the ministry and providing this information annually.
- Ensuring that board members who have actual or potential conflict of interest do not participate in a discussion or vote on matters that affect transactions between the ministry and the other group or organization.
- Establishing procedures such as competitive bids that ensure the ministry is receiving fair value in the transaction.
- Asking each trustee and staff member to agree in writing to uphold the policy. Review the conflict-of-interest policy regularly.

Risk Management

- Evolving a mindset that recognizes that the gifts given to the ministry, the members/attendees, visitors, building, financial resources and reputation in the local community are gifts from God. Develop a plan for faithful stewardship to care for them.
- Ensuring the ministry is protected from unnecessary risk by identifying and analyzing risks, selecting the best risk-management techniques, designing a process for evaluation, developing contingency and emergency plans of operations, identifying a spokesperson who will speak for the ministry, and monitoring a risk-management program.

Communication/Marketing/Community Outreach

- Communicating the ministry's values, mission, vision, goals and accomplishments to the congregation on a regular basis.
- Developing processes for "multiple redundant communication" with the congregation and local community. The information should be communicated in several ways at least 7-12 times.
- Developing a marketing plan for the ministry by using *Growing Your Spiritual Community - Connecting Marketing and Planning* (available from the Association of Unity Churches) as well as other resources available in the community.
- Enhancing the public image of the ministry through community outreach activities and involvement.
- Communicating with our Association on an ongoing basis. The staff is there to serve and support you.

Added Value

- Supporting the minister as the spiritual leader and chief executive officer of the ministry by encouraging the development and nurture of the skills and abilities of the minister.
- Engaging in candid discussions of opportunities and challenges with the minister and other trustees. The board serves as a sounding board for the minister for ideas, questions and concerns before it is necessary to reach conclusions or make recommendations. Say what is true for you with dignity and grace.
- Encouraging innovation and incorporating new practices in all areas of the ministry. Try new approaches and alternative ways of doing things or dealing with issues. Take risks. It is OK to make mistakes. Learn from them.
- Being a role model for the staff and congregation by using the Unity principles in your board work and personal lives. The board demonstrates what it means to be an accountable spiritual organization.

Being an Accountable Organization

In today's society with technological innovations, changing demographics and often less than ethical practices in both the for-profit and the non-profit sectors, leaders in the non-profit sector are developing guidelines on what it means to be an accountable organization. Churches have the opportunity to shape their own standards. Consider these guidelines for your ministry.

- Has a responsibility to uphold and communicate the Unity principles.
- Chooses leaders who have a high spiritual consciousness.
- Fulfills its mission and purpose by doing what it says it will do.
- Shares accurate information about its governance, finances and operations.
- Is open and inclusive in its procedures, processes and programs.
- Is accountable to all those it serves and to those who give money.

Commitment

Commitment and loyalty to one's colleagues on a board take the form of some very obvious, common sense behaviors. They are worthy of repeating here. A sense of commitment and accountability to the congregation demonstrates true leadership.

Attendance

- Preparing for trustee and ministry team meetings by reading the information sent out ahead of

time.

- Being present for trustee meetings and ministry team meetings. The entire board does NOT need to attend ministry team meetings. A board trustee serves as a liaison to the team.
- Participating in classes, programs and activities of the ministry.

Teamwork

- Understanding the board is a team of leaders, not a collection of individuals. The team makes the decisions based on prayer, sound information and open, honest discussion.

Bylaws/Policies

- Reading and understanding the bylaws and policies of the ministry.

Statutory Requirements

- Maintaining complete and accurate trustee meeting minutes and financial statements.
- Verifying that state incorporation forms/fee are filed and paid. Paying withholding taxes and filing annual reports with the Association.

Ethical Standards

- Observing high ethical standards by living and demonstrating the Unity principles.

Confidentiality

- Developing a level of trust that allows the minister and board to explore all viewpoints and make the best decisions for the ministry.
- Supporting all board decisions once they are made - even if you strongly disagree with the decision. The board must speak as one voice.
- Respecting the confidentiality of discussions at trustee and ministry team meetings. When in doubt, ask if the discussion is confidential.
- Being transparent as a ministry by sharing with the congregation information that affects them. Increasingly, non-profit organizations are being held accountable by members to share information about governance issues, finances, goals and the overall well-being of the organization.