**Unity of Buffalo Recommended Amendments to Church Bylaws**

At its June 21, 2021 meeting, the Board of Trustees voted to recommend these amendments to our Church Bylaws, to be presented at the 2021 Annual Congregational meeting.

**Recommendation #1 -**

Article III. Membership.Section 3.04 Powers of Active Members

1. To vote at any membership meeting, ~~at which the member is present, called in accordance with Section 3.05~~, either in person, by telephone, or by other electronic means simultaneously with a minimum standard being oral communication.

*Rationale: This revision allows for Zoom or electronic participation in meetings but makes sure that the member can participate fully.*

**Recommendation #2 -**

Article III. Membership.Section 3.04 Powers of Active Members

L. ~~Any ten (10) 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.~~

 *Rationale: This is no longer how Unity Worldwide Ministries is handling these situations. UWM is requesting that ministries follow the procedure as we have described in item K of this section. Item K reads as follows – Contact Unity Worldwide Ministries regional representative or the Unity Worldwide Ministries directly for guidance, support, or information on available resources.*

**Recommendation #3 –**

Article III. Membership.Section 3.05 – Meetings and Quorum

1. … (no change)
2. Written Notice. Written notice stating the date, time and place of the annual or a special membership meeting shall be ~~mailed~~ sent by postal or electronic mail to all active members at least ~~ten (10)~~ fifteen (15) days before any membership meeting. ~~(Note: “Mailed” because the notice needs a postmark for legality.)~~

*Rationale: This adds the option of electronic mail and more time for notification.*

**Recommendation #4 –**

Article III. Membership.Section 3.05 – Meetings and Quorum

1. Quorum. ~~Those active members present and voting at a membership meeting called pursuant to the notice provisions of Section 3.05-A-C shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any membership meeting~~.

A quorum of the meeting shall be at least 20 per cent of all active members, participating in-person, by phone or by electronical means.

*Rationale: This makes the requirement for a quorum more specific.*

**Recommendation #5 –**

Article III. Membership. Section 3.05 Meetings and Quorum.

F. Participation. ~~Participation in the business affairs of any membership meeting shall be restricted to active members in attendance. Unity Worldwide Ministries representatives have a right to speak when they have been invited by the senior or co-ministers, the Board of Trustees, or any member. Participation of other persons in discussion of business must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the active members in attendance.~~

The right to speak in debate, to make motions, and to vote during annual or special membership meetings shall be restricted to those active members who are present or in-person by electronic means. The right of non-members to speak during membership meetings may be extended by the presiding officer or by a one-third (1/3) vote of active members participating in the meeting. UWM’s representative(s) have a right to speak when they are at the meeting,

**Recommendation #6 –**

Article III. Membership.Section 3.05

G. Voting. Unless otherwise provided herein in these bylaws, ~~the vote of a majority of the active members present and voting shall be necessary for approval or disapproval of the action being voted upon. Refer to Sections 3.04, 3.05, 6.01 and 7.01~~ a majority of the members qualified to vote, and voting, shall be necessary for approval or disapproval of the action being voted upon.

For those participating electronically, instructions will be provided as to how to cast your vote. Absentee, text, proxy, fax or e-mail ballots are not permitted.

*Rationale: This clarifies the process without need to jump around the bylaws and refer to other sections.*

**Recommendation #7 –** (adds a new article)

Article V – 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 (2/3) 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 re-schedule 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.

*Rationale: This is being recommended by Unity Worldwide Ministries based on the experience of this past year.*

**Recommendation #8 –**

Article IV – Government. Section 4.04 – Board of Trustees – Minister – Members

D. Duties. As a representative of the Membership, the Board of Trustees and Minister as a team under their scope of responsibility and authority shall:

9. After a ministry and its senior minister or co-ministers have sought to reconcile differences and cooperated with the procedures and guidance of the Unity Worldwide Ministries, the Board of Trustees may recommend to the congregation to terminate the employment of a senior minister or co-ministers by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board;

In the event this occurs, a special membership meeting would be called in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the active membership participating in the meeting shall be required to terminate the employment of a senior minister or co-ministers.

**Recommendation #9 -**

Article IV. Government. Section 4.05 – Board of Trustees – Election

1. Qualifications

3. Furthers the work of this ministry through his or her active interest, love and support by giving of their time, talent and treasure.