

Code of Ethics for Ministers/Spiritual Leaders of our Association of Unity Churches International

I. Dedication to Truth Principles

- A.** As a Unity Minister/Spiritual Leader [Minister/Spiritual Leader here and throughout the document refers to those individuals who are credentialed and/or recognized as Unity leaders by the AUCI.] I dedicate myself to the principles of Truth as taught and exemplified by Jesus Christ and interpreted by Unity and the Association of Unity Churches International. I will adhere to the five basic ideas:
- God is Absolute good, everywhere present.
 - Every human being is an expression of the Divine; the Christ spirit, by whatever name, indwells all people. Their very essence is of God, and therefore they are also inherently good.
 - Human beings create their experience by the activity of their thinking. Everything in the manifest realm has its beginning in thought.
 - Prayer is creative thinking that heightens the connection with God-Mind and therefore brings forth wisdom, healing, prosperity, and everything good.
 - Knowing and understanding the laws of life, also called Truth, are not enough. A person must also live the truth that he/she knows.
- B.** I look to the indwelling Christ for inspiration, to guide, govern, and prosper me.
- C.** I will, to the best of my understanding and ability, bring the freeing truth to humankind. This I will do in a spiritually dignified way, being guided by divine wisdom and good judgement.
- D.** I believe in the power of prayer and I am convinced that, as Jesus said, “All things are possible to him who believes.”
- E.** In consecration to God and the work of ministry, I offer myself as a channel for God’s will to be made manifest that I may honor and glorify God.
- F.** I believe that the true Minister/Spiritual Leader of the Gospel is one who has been called to this work by the spirit of Truth within. I desire only to express this Truth, and to teach others to live it.

II. The Ministerial Relationship to Self – Self Care

Recognizing that wholeness is expressed on all levels of my being I will honor myself in spirit, mind and body.

- A.** Following the example of Jesus I will take time away from the crowds for conscious contact with God, and will maintain a spiritual practice of prayer and meditation.
- B.** I will respect the need to develop and broaden my intellectual and spiritual capacities through personal reading, and professional continuing education programs that are vital and relevant to my growth.
- C.** I will endeavor to maintain a program of emotional and physical fitness that includes vacation time, and time off each week for rest and relaxation.
- D.** Knowing that ministry makes great demands upon the Minister's/Spiritual Leaders time, I will endeavor to maintain a proper balance between the life of the church and the rights and privileges of my family relationship.

III. The Ministerial Relationship with Others

The ministerial relationship pre-supposes certain role expectations; the Minister/Spiritual Leader is expected to make available certain resources, talents, knowledge, and expertise which will serve the best interests of the congregant, client, employee, student, staff member, etc.

- A.** The role of Minister/Spiritual Leader carries with it authority and power. I will fulfill my responsibility and use this power to benefit the people who call upon me for service.
- B.** I will conduct my work, private and public, after the standards and in accord with the teachings and ideals of Unity, Unity Village, Missouri, and the Association of Unity Churches International without competition and contention, realizing that the more truly I practice the principles of this Association and Unity, the greater will be the good to each and all immediately concerned, and to the community at large.
- C.** I will maintain the boundaries of the ministerial relationship, realizing that crossing boundaries is a betrayal of trust. I will not misuse the trust placed in me by the unique power inherent in my function by exploiting in any way those seeking my help and care. I will guard against violating the emotional, spiritual, and physical well-being of people who come to me for help or over whom I have any kind of authority. I will not use my authority to defame, or manipulate either an individual or a congregational decision or to create or cultivate dependencies. I will avoid situations and relationships which could impair my professional judgement, compromise the integrity of my ministry, and/or use the situation or relationship for my own gain.
- D.** The ministry of healing or counseling is held to be sacred and, therefore, is to be conducted with reverence and with the strictest regard for the sensibilities and individual rights of students and counselees who in good faith and confidence have committed themselves to the consideration and guidance of the Minister/Spiritual Leader.

E. As a Minister/Spiritual Leader and church professional, I shall work within my professional qualifications and limitations. People with needs beyond my expertise shall be referred to a qualified professional.

F. Confidentiality:

- I am honor bound to hold sacred all confidences reposed in me, except that I may choose to comply with local laws if a confidence reveals that the person confiding can pose a threat to self or others.
- I will never mention, without permission, either privately or publicly, the name, residence, or locality of any person under treatment in the past or present in illustration or verification of Truth principles.
- I will not use privileged information for personal gain.

G. I will refrain from sexual contact and/or sexualized behavior with a congregant, client, or employee with whom I have a professional and/or pastoral relationship, realizing it is unethical and is deemed clergy misconduct. (Clergy misconduct involving sexual abuse and/or sexualizing a professional relationship is defined as sexual activity or contact, not limited to sexual intercourse.)

H. I believe that more is taught by what a Minister/Spiritual Leader is than what s/he says. Therefore, I will seek to keep my morals above reproach. I will exercise good judgment in regard to my social conduct. My relationships will be such as to command only the highest respect. I am conscious of the fact that to be pure in heart is to be pure in conduct also.

I. I will endeavor to be Christ-like in my personal attitudes and conduct towards all people regardless of race, class, creed, nationality, gender or sexual orientation.

IV. Relating to Colleagues

A. I recognize that it is incumbent upon me to hold all Minister/Spiritual Leaders in esteem and respectful regard, and to use all rightful means to protect the personal and professional honor of all other Minister/Spiritual Leaders.

B. I will respect the work, both public and private, of our Minister/Spiritual Leaders, and shall uphold them in their endeavor to carry on the practices and duties of the Unity ministry. I shall render at any and all times such cooperative assistance as may be solicited and mutually agreed upon, no Minister/Spiritual Leader interfering with the work or practice of another.

C. When assuming the leadership of an established church or center, I will avoid criticism of the former Minister/Spiritual Leader or her/his work.

- D.** I will not infringe upon or interfere in the work of another Minister/Spiritual Leader.
- If I am asked by a member of a Unity church or center in which I am not serving to conduct a special service of any kind, I will consult the Minister/Spiritual Leader of that church or center before accepting.
 - I will modify my relations with members of a congregation which I have previously served in the light of that which is in the highest interest of their current Unity Minister/Spiritual Leader and ministry.
 - After relinquishing my work to another Minister/Spiritual Leader, I will give as much assistance as possible to my successor without interfering in any way.
 - In any center or group in which I have been a student or assistant, I will fully cooperate with and obtain the approval of the leader of the group or center as well as cooperate with the President and CEO of the Association of Unity Churches International before I perform in any way, directly or indirectly, any form of ministry or group teaching, personal or public.
 - I will not accept overtures from a ministry whose Minister/Spiritual Leader has not yet resigned.
- E.** When I am disturbed by the activities of another colleague or center, I will:
- Communicate directly to the colleague or center.
 - If necessary, I will consult with other Association representatives which could include any of the following: my Regional Representative, and Association staff members.
 - I will hold the situation in prayer.
- F.** An Assistant [or Associate] Minister will give the Senior Minister/Spiritual Leader full support and cooperation, and will not criticize the Minister/ Spiritual Leader in any way, or discuss the Minister/Spiritual Leader in a negative way with any church or center member, board member, or outsider.
- If a problem arises, assistant/associate will discuss it directly with the Senior Minister/Spiritual Leader.
 - In cases of violations of the Code of Ethics, I will seek other Association representatives, which could include my Regional Representative, or a representative from my Association staff.
- G.** I will be ethical in my conduct and attitude toward churches or other denominations, and toward other organizations and metaphysical groups. I will not criticize their teaching, but will extend such cooperative assistance as may be solicited and mutually agreed upon, while at the same time being careful not to identify the name of Unity with any questionable teachings.
- H.** In all my relations with member Minister/Spiritual Leaders I will be mindful that “love is the fulfilling of the law.”
- I.** I will always and in every way within my ability assist in the advancement of the influence and power of any center in which I visit or speak.

V. Relating to Ministries

- A.** If any member requests a transfer of membership from the local Unity center to an outside organization or another Unity center in the area or at a distance, I will grant this request with my love and blessings, and without hesitation. I will not hold onto the member, or place the member in an embarrassing position of having to explain.
- B.** I will keep in mind that the welfare of the congregation is paramount. Should I experience any personal crisis, the consequences of which could affect the ministry, I will confer with my Board of Trustees and a representative of the Association of Unity Churches International. I may also choose to seek counseling or confer with colleagues.
- C.** I will not seek in any way, directly or indirectly, to draw to me correspondents or personal students from any other established Unity center, church, or group.
- D.** I will not use my ministry for my own personal gain. Any funds or assets that have been raised in the name of Unity will be registered in the name of Unity and not in the name of an individual. I will take care not to mishandle or appear to mishandle funds.

VI. Relating to Our International Association of Unity Churches

- A.** I will not attempt to carry on Unity work in any city without first obtaining the full approval of the local Association of Unity Leaders for such work and without seeking the cooperation of already active and recognized Unity leaders in that vicinity.
- B.** I will work in perfect harmony and accord with the Association of Unity Churches International in my speaking and teaching programs.
- C.** I will, to the best of my ability, communicate the Association's values, mission, vision, and goals in service to my ministry.

VII. My Pledge

I sincerely devote myself to living in accord with this Code in letter and in spirit. I recognize our Association of Unity Churches International and this Code of Ethics as a framework in which I individually agree to function. I recognize that such an agreement augments our mutual and individual effectiveness. If I find myself contemplating or actually functioning outside of this framework, I agree to seek the kind of help described in Section V. (B). Failure to seek such help will mean that, by my own choice, I am functioning outside of the framework of this Code and consequently placing myself outside of the Association of Unity Churches International.

Signature

Date