Thriving in Unity 2.0

“When we are clear, focused, and united, our impact is immense.”

Association of Unity Churches International
www.unity.org
Thriving in Unity 2.0

www.unity.org/thrive
# Table of Contents

**Welcome to Thriving in Unity 2.0** ........................................................................................................ 4
  Going Integral ......................................................................................................................................... 7

**Raising Consciousness** .................................................................................................................... 19
  Benchmark 1: Register Ministry Leadership for 2010 Convention .................................................. 21
  Benchmark 2: Offer Leadership Development Options ...................................................................... 25
  Benchmark 3: Implement the Practice of Thriving Prosperity Program ........................................... 39

**Shifting Culture** .............................................................................................................................. 43
  Benchmark 4: Connect to the World of Unity on the Web ............................................................ 45
  Benchmark 5: Develop Ministry Core Values .................................................................................... 48

**Building Community** .................................................................................................................... 53
  Benchmark 6: Assess Your Youth and Family Program .................................................................. 55
  Benchmark 7: Increase Your Small Group Activity ....................................................................... 69
  Benchmark 8: Expand Your Spiritual Social Action Activities ...................................................... 89
  Benchmark 9: Deepen Your Practice of Living and Being Peace ................................................... 95

**Developing the Organization** ......................................................................................................... 103
  Benchmark 10: Connect Your Congregants to Convention & Regional Meetings ...................... 105
  Benchmark 11: Assess Basic Finance and Accounting Practices .................................................. 109
  Benchmark 12: Enhance Your Sunday Services ............................................................................. 114
Welcome to Thriving in Unity 2.0!
A program of our
Association of Unity Churches International

For those of you who completed the Thriving in Unity 1.0 (TiU 1.0), congratulations. If you haven’t, you may still find some value in working with that program concurrently or at a later time. The powerful work our ministries did with 1.0 has created a palpable energy flowing across our movement. Thriving in Unity 2.0 (TiU 2.0) promises to continue building on this energy, creating synergy within our movement, and bringing us ever closer to realizing our vision: Centered in God, we co-create a world that works for all.

Global and economic challenges are providing fertile ground for the seeds of true transformation to take root and grow. Unity ministries are uniquely positioned to nurture these seeds within our congregations and our communities. Thriving in Unity 2.0 will continue supporting your ministry as it expands in its capacity to share the Unity message so needed in these challenging times.

Your work at the local level is bringing into reality our Association’s three powerful intentions:

**Intention 1: We are the fastest-growing transformational spiritual movement in the world.**

**Intention 2: To bring forth “a new heaven and a new earth,” we work closely with leaders around the world in co-creating a world that works for all.**

**Intention 3: We are a catalyst for unifying New Thought.**

We believe that when we support our ministries in becoming thriving spiritual communities filled with thriving congregants, these intentions will become reality. Those who graduated from Thriving in Unity 1.0 know the power of focused efforts toward thriving ministry principles. By choosing to participate in the Thriving in Unity 2.0 program, you grow in these ways:

- Deepening your connection to the activity happening in the movement as a whole
- Building on the energy and enthusiasm sparked by TiU 1.0 within your congregation
- Enhancing the commitment within your ministry’s leadership
- Expanding your ministry’s capacity to transform lives
Just what is a thriving ministry?
Imagine a Unity ministry or center where there is more than enough—more than enough energy, creativity, enthusiasm, expertise, volunteerism, money—an abundance of inspired, committed Unity students of all ages and backgrounds who come together to worship, minister, support, serve, and make a difference in the world.

Next, imagine an amazing partnership between credentialed and other leaders modeling self-responsibility, personal integrity, commitment to spiritual practice and prayer, and non-violent communication in such a way that others are inspired to take up meaningful roles in the life of the church—leaders cultivating and mentoring other leaders.

Consider what it would be like to participate in a center or church that is so clear about who and what it has come here to be—that the majority of the community is in active roles of bringing forth the shared vision of their future together. Not only are people involved, but they are learning, growing, and transforming. And because of this, there is a welcoming spirit that goes beyond attraction—one that brings first-timers face to face with the mirror of their own divinity.

This is a glimpse into what we call the Thriving Ministry Model™—the foundation for Unity becoming the fastest growing transformational spiritual movement in the world.

Our Association home office has developed three programs to serve as a pathway to help all our ministries move toward this model:
- The Practice of Thriving prosperity program
- Thriving in Unity ministry development program
- The Transformation Experience whole ministry transformation

Thriving in Unity 2.0: the next step
Just like TiU 1.0, TiU 2.0 has 12 benchmarks taken from the key areas of the Transformation Experience. These benchmarks will build on the work you have done and move your ministry toward the Thriving Ministry Model™ described above. This kit explains all you need to do to complete this program and be recognized at the next Unity People’s convention following your completion of all benchmarks.

Also in keeping with TiU 1.0, please note that the programs contained in this series of benchmarks were selected as first steps. They don’t cover every aspect of ministry. When we focus on a specific set of goals, we know the effect is most powerful. There is always more to be done, and we will develop further programs that assist Unity ministries in accordance with our strategic plan.
Monthly resource:
Each month the Communication Department will email you updates and tips on how to accomplish these benchmarks, as well as any new developments in the program.

Are You Ready to Transform?
This kit has the potential to provide a transformative experience for your ministry. You can do these benchmarks lightly or you can dive in deeply. It’s up to you. As with most things, the more energy and commitment you put into carrying out the program’s 12 benchmarks, the more profoundly you will experience their impact.

An Integral Approach to Thriving in Unity
“All is connected ... no one thing can change by itself.”
— Paul Hawken

In this program, the benchmarks for Thriving in Unity fall across the four quadrants (or developmental areas) found in Ken Wilber’s Integral Model, which has been adapted for use in ministry development. This model is well suited to Unity as it seeks to respond to life from a unified or integrated perspective, much the same way we approach spirituality.

Leading edge research shows that when individuals and organizations are consciously developing across all four of these quadrants, they are better able to be aligned with and serve from their highest and best purpose in the world. In addition, they can do so more efficiently and more effectively. Below is a very brief introduction to the Integral Movement excerpted from the article included in this book, entitled, Going Integral: A New Model of Ministry for the New Thought Movement, by Rima Bonario. The article provides a good summary of the Integral framework.

If you wish to explore further we suggest you consider these books:
• The Integral Vision, by Ken Wilber
• A Theory of Everything, by Ken Wilber
• Integral Consciousness and the Future of Evolution, by Steve McIntosh
Going Integral:
A New Model of Ministry for the New Thought Movement

By Rima Bonario

Have you noticed that most every system on planet earth seems to be experiencing severe breakdown? From our ecosystems to our financial systems, from our education systems to our religious systems, what was once working, now seems to be out of balance and broken. Though many approaches have been tried to bring these systems back into balance, none have had much long-lasting success. Most often cracks in our systems are treated with “band-aid” solutions. Perhaps now is the time to look at a fundamental shift in our approach to life. The Integral Movement may be one of the most promising new approaches on the horizon, and its application to how we approach ministry is worth exploring.

The Integral Movement (sometimes referred to as the integral approach, integral philosophy, the integral paradigm, or the integral worldview) weaves together scientific and spiritual insights, as well as other disciplines to provide a comprehensive understanding of humans and the universe (Kosmos). Integral thought provides “a new understanding of how evolution affects the development of consciousness and culture.” (Steve McIntosh, Integral Consciousness and the Future of Evolution, Paragon House, St Paul Minnesota, 2007, page 2). When used to refer to this movement, the word integral means whole, complete and holistic. Or in other words, it is a body-mind-spirit view that includes both Eastern and Western philosophies.

A Post-modern Synthesis

The Integral Model is a comprehensive look at human endeavors that synthesizes the arenas of science, spirituality, psychology, business, education, medicine and more. But this alone is not enough to offer a fully integral viewpoint. The model also includes how humans (both individually and collectively) evolve over time. It tracks the evolution of consciousness as evidenced by how humans develop as individuals (body, mind, heart, and soul) and as cultures (institutions, collective knowledge, societies, and collective beliefs).

Integral thought is often called “post-rational” or “post-modern” because it reaches past the thought models of rationalism and materialism, which can ignore or deny the existence of the mystical and the spiritual. Integral thought provides a more universal and holistic view or approach, which incorporates other points of view into a larger synthesis. This parallels the spirituality of New Thought, which sees the beauty in, and honors, all spiritual paths to God.

The Association of Unity Churches International is now pioneering the application of the Integral Model to ministry development. This new application of the integral model is called the Thriving Ministry Model™. It is based on the doctoral research of Rev. Dr. Gary Simmons,
Vice President of Integral Operations for the Association. An article highlighting this work has been published in the Summer issue of the *Journal of Integral Theory and Practice*. The Thriving Ministry Model™ is now being combined with best practices from a wide range of experts, and with wisdom mined from fieldwork into a three-year transformative journey called The Transformation Experience.

**Overview of the Four Quadrants found in the Integral Model**

One key aspect of an Integral approach is to understand both the internal and external aspects of life as well as the individual and collective aspects of life. Wilber uses a square with four quadrants to illustrate this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Upper-Left (UL) Quadrant</th>
<th>Upper-Right (UR) Quadrant</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I”</td>
<td>“It”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This quadrant focuses on the</td>
<td>This quadrant focuses on the</td>
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<tr>
<td>interior quality of the</td>
<td>exterior quality of the</td>
</tr>
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<td>individual.</td>
<td>individual.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The key word here is</td>
<td>The key word here is</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Intentional</em>.</td>
<td><em>Behavioral</em>.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lower-Left (LL) Quadrant</th>
<th>Lower-Right (LR) Quadrant</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“We”</td>
<td>“Its”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This quadrant focuses on the</td>
<td>This quadrant focuses on the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interior quality of the</td>
<td>exterior quality of the</td>
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<tr>
<td>collective.</td>
<td>collective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The key word here is</td>
<td>The key word here is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Cultural</em>.</td>
<td><em>Social</em>.</td>
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In the past, our ideas about the human experience often focused on only one of these boxes (quadrants) at a time, or on the left versus the right side, or the upper versus the lower quadrants. This does not allow the whole picture to be seen. We think we can make progress by working on just part of the whole, but because the quadrants are interrelated, our efforts do not create lasting change.
For example, we may observe disagreements where one person holds the view that people must take personal responsibility for their life circumstances and “make it” on their own (the upper quadrants), while the other person points to societal barriers keeping even the most responsible and motivated person from having a fair chance to achieve their dreams (the lower quadrants). In Wilber’s model, both these perspectives hold truth. We might also observe disagreements where one person holds that prayer/meditation and a deep internal practice are keys to a successful life (the left hand quadrants), where another might say that it’s time to “get off the cushion” and actually produce practical results in the “real” world (the right hand quadrants). Again in Wilber’s model, both views are needed and valued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interior (subjective)</th>
<th>Exterior (objective)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I (consciousness)</td>
<td>It (body)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We (culture)</td>
<td>Its (relationships, social systems)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notice how the right quadrants depict what is observable or measurable—behaviors, practices and structures of the individual or organization, while the left quadrants relate to the subjective interpretation of experience or the “inner” world, asking the questions, “What does it mean? How and what do I/we feel and think about it?” Wilber believes that in our modern world we have become so over-focused on right quadrants, the external, that many people suffer deeply from a loss of meaning. In New Thought, we do an excellent job of helping people return to the inner world, seeking first the Source of their being. But we must be careful not to make the same mistake of becoming so over focused on the left quadrants, or the internal, that we leave the “outer world” to those who are disconnected from the deeper sense of meaning in life.

**Applying the Integral framework to Ministry**

If we understand that every ministry is a living system possessing four domains of development, we can begin to appreciate the evolutionary paths within our spiritual communities. Taking a journey through the quadrants from a ministry perspective will bring this into focus.

Let’s start with the upper right: the organization. This encompasses not only the physical home (or body) of the ministry, but also all the organizational practices and functions that can be observed—such as bylaws, employee policies and procedures, accounting practices, etc. All of these help to create a sense of order and stability for the ministry. We can see how
important it is to have a healthy body for ourselves. This is true for our ministries as well. The items in this quadrant are the “hands and feet” of our ministry that allow us to successfully carry out our work.

Next is the relational quadrant (lower right). Ministry is more than just arriving at church on Sunday. It is about relationships and being with others who share our values and principles. The relationships we have with others add depth to our experience. So for ministry, this quadrant focuses on the quality of the relationships that exists within the ministry. This dimension of ministry is about intimacy, being cared for and caring for others. We can observe our relationships in action. We can even measure certain kinds of interactions that occur. We can get a sense for how healthy or dysfunctional our relationships are.

Remember that both the upper right and lower right represent the exterior elements of the organization. They can be observed directly as well as measured. Next we move to the interior quadrants on the left hand side. These are Culture or congregational identity (lower left) and Consciousness or leadership intentionality (upper left).

While it may be difficult for those of us immersed in our congregational culture to see it clearly, new ministers have an easy time recognizing the culture when they step into a new church. They enter into a cultural field already in existence and as the new minister, they must respond to this culture successfully. Ministers that can attune to this culture find they are accepted, and they, too, become accepting of the culture. Those that don’t blend into the culture usually move on or are asked to leave. Changing a culture is a delicate process and is best done from the inside out by leaders within the ministry modeling the desired changes.

And this leads us to the final quadrant: the consciousness quadrant (upper left) where leadership intentionality is the force at work in ministry. This quadrant includes the field of consciousness set by the leadership or core group at the heart of the ministry. This group is often made up of the minister and board of trustees, but can also be a group of founders, key volunteer leaders, or anyone who has an impact on decision-making and is seen as being a leader within the congregation. What is important for ministries to observe is that this group is a “resonant core” that sets a tone or vibration with its consciousness.

Research shows that the group consciousness almost never rises above that of the leadership (as a collective), so when we look to make changes within the ministry, it must first be held in consciousness and demonstrated by the leadership level. Once demonstrated it has the potential to manifest on the congregational level.
Putting it all together

The key to remember is that these quadrants are completely interrelated. Think of a place where you may have worked or a fictional setting where the attitude or consciousness of the boss/executives sets a negative and cynical tone for the entire department (upper left). Imagine a new employee arrives full of enthusiasm. After some time, that person is finally worn down and also becomes cynical, or eventually quits and moves on, unable to adapt to the cynicism and stress that pervades the culture of the office (lower left). This cultural environment creates a lack of trust within the staff. Now imagine what the relationships might be like in that office (lower right). How well can team members work together if they lack trust? This lack of trust will no doubt affect employee performance, productivity and quality of work (upper right).

The same is true in ministry. You cannot be in relationship without the culture of the church affecting that relationship, without the organization of the church affecting the culture and the social system, or without the consciousness affecting those quadrants as well. For ministries to develop and thrive authentically and sustainably we have to be addressing all four of these quadrants within our ministry. The first step is to become aware of these quadrants and begin noticing how each impacts the other. The next time you have concerns arise in your ministry, consider how they are related to the consciousness, culture, relationships, and the structure of the organization. You will gain new insights on how to proceed when you see the work to do in each quadrant on any given issue.

As New Thought becomes more skilled at taking a whole systems approach to ministry development, we can look forward to having a wealth of thriving ministries within our movement. Perhaps now more than ever the world is hungry for the message of New Thought. The global challenges facing us today provide an unprecedented opportunity to offer our message of peace and love, of personal power and responsibility, of healing and hope to the world. The time has come for us to step forward in a bigger and bolder way. The world is ready. Are we?

For more information on this model, please visit www.unity.org/success. Dr. Gary Simmons offers a weekend workshop for ministry leaders that delves deeply into the integral framework for ministry and offers clear insight into how to shift to a whole-systems approach to ministry development.
Thriving in Unity 2.0 Benchmarks

In Thriving in Unity 2.0, the 12 benchmarks are divided into the four quadrants as applied to ministry development: Raising Consciousness, Shifting Culture, Building Community, and Developing the Organization.

Raising Consciousness:
The quadrant that is devoted to raising consciousness is the upper right. It contains all activities devoted to developing the inner self through spiritual insights. For organizations, this area represents the consciousness of the leadership team of that organization, both as individuals and as a group.

Benchmark 1: Minister and at least two lay leaders register for the next Unity People's Convention
Attend our Association’s annual gathering where ministry leaders and congregants have the opportunity to gather with and learn from other leaders in the field, as well as offer their own wisdom in conversations with others.

Benchmark 2: Offer leadership development options
Increase participation in your ministry and in Unity by offering potential leaders in your ministry various options to enhance their leadership potential.

Benchmark 3: Implement the Practice of Thriving Program
Your congregation will be wowed by the newest Practice of Thriving prosperity education program based on the powerful book *Spiritual Economics*, by Eric Butterworth.

Shifting Culture:
The quadrant devoted to shifting culture is the lower left. This quadrant focuses on the inner experience we have as a group, or our culture. It is how we define ourselves as a group (our attitudes and beliefs). Each ministry has its own unique culture, as does our Association made up of all the ministries.

Benchmark 4: Connect to the World of Unity on the Web
Ministries and their congregants are offered opportunities to literally get linked in to the entire Unity movement by connecting to the new Unity website. Enjoy a website “scavenger hunt” and become an expert at navigating and interacting with the site. You’ll find resources you never knew were available.
Benchmark 5: Develop ministry core values
Develop a deeper experience of community by clearly stating your ministry’s core values. The program will offer a workable process for discovering and articulating your spiritual community’s unique values to use as guiding principles in all you do.

Building Community:
The quadrant devoted to building community is the lower right. Here is where we find all efforts that enhance our relationships through the programs and organizational structures we create. Conversely, the health of our programs and organizations is deeply impacted by the attitudes and beliefs of the culture quadrant. Intentionally developing these programs and structures improves the overall health of your community, adding a deeper spiritual dimension to your ministry.

Benchmark 6: Assess your youth and family program
Thriving ministries understand the need to have congregants of all ages engaged and active in their community. This benchmark will help you assess your youth and family program and discover your areas of excellence and your opportunities for growth.

Benchmark 7 Increase small group activities
Research shows that small group activities create opportunities for transformation. This benchmark offers your ministry several choices to strengthen your small group ministries. Activities include:

- Ordering and implementing suggestions from our Association’s Small Group Ministry Guide (required)
- Offering small group study using our Association’s small group ministries booklets
- Offering a book study with this year’s book choices: The Third Jesus by Deepak Chopra or Spiritual Liberation by Michael Beckwith (study guides provided).

Benchmark 8: Implement spiritual social action activities
The fifth of Unity’s basic principles reminds us that it is not enough to know spiritual principles, we must live them. Ministries will not only choose from several spiritual social action events to implement, including 11 Days of Global Unity, but also draft and adopt a commitment statement for ongoing, ministry-wide spiritual social action.

Benchmark 9: Deepen your practice of living and being peace
Ministries are invited to interact more deeply with the powerful and transformative practices of HeartMath, Be Peace, Non-Violent Communication and the I of the Storm material.
Developing the Organization:
The quadrant that is devoted to developing the organization is the upper right. It contains all activities that develop the outer expression of the consciousness found in the first quadrant. It is measureable and tangible. For ministries, this area represents the operational aspects of a ministry’s work.

**Benchmark 10: Share information from Convention & regional meetings with congregants**
Plan an event or service that builds enthusiasm and excitement as you share with your congregation all the amazing things unfolding in our movement.

**Benchmark 11: Assess basic accounting practices**
Assess the professionalism and stability of your financial and accounting practices.

**Benchmark 12: Enhance your Sunday services**
Your ministry can choose from several creative ideas that are designed to enhance Sunday Services. Many options are available, so you can select the one that best suits your needs and has the greatest impact.

How to Complete the Program Benchmarks
If you are already doing some of the ideas presented in these benchmarks, that’s great! We suggest you read over the material for each benchmark for possible ways to improve or streamline your work. If you are tackling many of the suggested activities for the first time, you may find it takes more than 10 months to complete them all. If you are not finished with all 12 benchmarks by the April deadline for recognition at the next People’s Convention, please keep going. You can continue to implement the benchmarks in the program and be honored at the following Convention.

At the end of each benchmark you will find the required action steps as well as a Benchmark Tracking Sheet. In order to receive credit for the benchmark, these sheets must be completed and submitted to the Communications Department at our Association home office. Please submit the sheets as soon as possible after you complete a benchmark while the experience is still fresh in your mind. You will find tracking sheets in this book, as well as on the web as a fill-in form (www.unity.org/thrive).

Use the Thriving in Unity Program Tracking Form to keep track of which forms you have submitted and which you have still to complete. Once you have completed the last benchmark, send that tracking sheet along with a copy of the Program Tracking Form. All forms are
available online for you to complete electronically if you prefer. Once completed you can either email the form or print and mail it. Please send your tracking sheets to the home office as soon as you finish each benchmark (Attn: Communications).

Please identify a Thriving in Unity 2.0 champion or captain. This person may be the minister, a staff member, board member, licensed teacher, or a key volunteer. Duties might include:

- Looking at the church calendar to determine when each benchmark will be scheduled to avoid conflict with items already on the calendar (a sample calendar is included on the next pages)
- Noting where additional materials may be needed and making arrangements to secure those materials
- Planning events/activities for the benchmarks or identifying another person who is well suited to carry out the benchmark
- Completing and submitting the tracking sheet for each benchmark as they are achieved (find tracking sheets with benchmarks)
- Filling in the Program Tracking Form throughout the program and submitting it once complete to arrive no later than April 30 for recognition at June Convention (find Program Tracking Form after calendars)

Congratulations on choosing to join in Thriving in Unity 2.0. We look forward to receiving your tracking sheets and cheering you on as you complete the program.

Sincerely,
Your Home Office Staff
Sample Timeline #1 for Implementing the Thriving in Unity 2.0 Program (all benchmarks)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>July</th>
<th>August</th>
<th>September</th>
<th>October</th>
<th>November</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benchmark 1: Register leadership for next year’s convention (can complete in June)</td>
<td>Benchmark 12: Enhance Sunday services (this may take several months to complete—can debut at holiday services!)</td>
<td>Benchmark 7: Launch Fall Faith or small group book study</td>
<td>Benchmark 4—Website Scavenger Hunt</td>
<td>Benchmark 3: Practice of Thriving prosperity education (continue into Dec.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benchmark 10: Share this year’s convention info with congregation</td>
<td>Benchmark 6: Conduct Youth &amp; Family (YFM) assessment</td>
<td>Benchmark 8 (1 of 3): Spiritual social action Event #1 World Day of Prayer—11 Days of Global Unity</td>
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Please complete and submit all tracking sheets as you finish each benchmark.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>December</th>
<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benchmark 3: Practice of Thriving prosperity program (continued from Nov.)</td>
<td>Benchmark 5: Launch Core Values Initiative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Benchmark 8 (3 of 3): Spiritual social action Event #3—Earth Day event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benchmark 8 (2 of 3): Spiritual social action Event #2—Heifer Project alternative gifting</td>
<td>Benchmark 11: Conduct finance and accounting assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete and submit Program Tracking Form to Association home office (attention Communications Dept.).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Create your own Timeline for Implementing the Thriving in Unity 2.0 Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>July</th>
<th>August</th>
<th>September</th>
<th>October</th>
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Please complete and submit all tracking forms as you finish each benchmark.

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<tr>
<th>December</th>
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<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
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</table>

Complete and submit Program Tracking Form to Association home office (attention Communications).
Thriving in Unity 2.0 Program Tracking Form

Fill in this form as you complete each benchmark to track your progress. Once you have completed all benchmarks make a copy of this form and return it to our Association home office (Attn Communications) no later than April 30 to be recognized at the next Unity People’s Convention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Form Sent</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - Connect Deeply within Unity: Register for the 2010 Unity People’s Convention</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 - Build Unity leadership</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - Recession-proof prosperity education</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 - Connect to the world of Unity on the web</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 - Develop ministry core values</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 - Conduct an assessment of your Youth and Family Program</td>
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<td>7 - Increase small group activity</td>
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<td>8 - Expand your spiritual social action activities</td>
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<td>9 - Deepen your practice of living and being peace</td>
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<td>10 - Connect congregation to convention and regional meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 - Assess basic accounting practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 - Enhance Sunday services</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Benchmarks 1, 2 & 3: Raising Consciousness
Raising Consciousness

“When you are inspired by some great purpose, some extraordinary project, all your thoughts break their bonds: Your mind transcends limitations, your consciousness expands in every direction, and you find yourself in a new, great, and wonderful world. Dormant forces, faculties and talents become alive, and you discover yourself to be a greater person by far than you ever dreamed yourself to be.” —Patanjali

Remember that the quadrant devoted to raising consciousness is the upper left. It contains all activities that develop the inner self through spiritual insights. For organizations, this area represents the consciousness of the leadership team of that organization, both as individuals and as a group.

Having a clear vision and enlightened leadership practices is a major component of a thriving ministry. For Unity to thrive as a movement there must be coherence within our ministries and our organizations and congruence between them. Our Association is making great gains in its efforts to align more clearly with Unity School. This section has benchmarks geared toward helping us align more clearly as an Association while increasing our own consciousness and awareness of our roles as leaders within the movement and in our own spiritual communities.

The benchmarks for this section are:

1. Your ministry leadership team (minister(s) and at least two board members) register and attend the next Unity People’s Convention
2. The ministry offers leadership development options to increase the conscious development of leaders within ministries and for the movement as a whole
3. Deepen leadership and congregational prosperity consciousness by implementing the Practice of Thriving prosperity program

By committing to attend Unity’s annual convention, intentionally developing leaders, and continuing to deepen prosperity consciousness, you will set the stage for a shift in consciousness that will ripple out from your ministry into the lives of your congregants and into the movement as a whole.

The energy and excitement we can generate together far exceeds what we can accomplish alone, as magnificent as our individual efforts might be.
Benchmark 1: Register Ministry Leadership for Next Annual Convention

The Art and Spirit of Connecting in Leadership

Being open to life-long learning is a key tenet of Unity teachings. Charles Filmore flatly refused to assign immortality to his own thinking or writing, declaring, “I reserve the right to change my mind.” He and Myrtle understood the importance of continuing the quest to find new and better ways to apply the sacred truths they uncovered. Universal law is itself unchanging, but how we apply it should evolve over time as our practical experiences yield new understanding.

Humans (as with the whole of life) are dynamic in nature, designed to grow and evolve. The speed of this evolution has been accelerating at an ever increasing pace. The level of growth in human consciousness that once took millennia has been happening over centuries. Now, this pace is compressing into the space of decades, and some would even say years. As world events and global consciousness shift and change, our application of principle must evolve or risk becoming quaint at best and obsolete and irrelevant at worst.

The annual Unity People’s Convention brings leaders and congregants from ministries around the world together to explore what it means to be in ministry in the 21st century.

It is essential that our application of principle evolve to keep pace with the evolving of human consciousness. Like Charles and Myrtle before us, we must become models and examples of the power of right mind-action coupled with an understanding of our innate wholeness—personal wholeness and the wholeness of life.

Getting Started:

This benchmark may seem to be a simple task, but we understand the commitment of time and resources it takes for you to complete it. The purpose of this benchmark is to:

- Offer member ministries access to leading edge information and inspiration to continue making a difference in our world (from within the field and other respected leaders).
- Engage in conversations about who and what we have come to be in the world and how our ministries, individually and collectively, can serve and support the emerging consciousness of oneness.
- Deepen the connection your ministry and board members have with the movement as a whole. When people feel part of a larger movement, they are more deeply connected to their local church as well.
- Allow our Association leaders to learn from you how you see your role in all that is unfolding.
• Allow others the privilege of getting to interact with your leadership team and to learn from your unique wisdom.
• Increase the effectiveness of Association-wide communications (flowing both into our home office and coming out from our home office).
• And finally, to continue to help our Association create more unity in Unity as we focus our united energy on key projects that have serious impact.

**Action Steps**

1. Identify one or more board members, non-ministerial staff or lay leaders who can commit to attend the next Unity People’s Convention.

2. Review the registration materials for the convention (www.unity.org/convention). Promotional video or handouts may be available to support your sharing the importance of Convention with others in your ministry.

3. Register the minister(s) and at least one additional representative from #1 for Convention. Complete the registration form and return it to the home office according to its instructions.

4. Complete the Benchmark Tracking Sheet and submit it to the Association home office (Attn: Communications) as soon as you have completed the benchmark. You will find tracking sheets in this book, as well as on the web as a fill-in form (www.unity.org/thrive).
TiU 2.0 Benchmark 1 Tracking Sheet

Ministry Name:  ________________________________________________________________

Address:  _____________________________________________________________________

City:  ___________________________________________ State: _______  Zip: _________

Thriving in Unity Champion:  ___________________________________________________

Phone:  ___________________________  Email:  ________________________________

Please complete the following information to meet benchmark 1: Register Ministry Leadership (minister(s) and at least one additional representative) for next year’s Unity People’s Convention.

**General Information**

- Leadership team registered for convention (use additional paper if needed):
  - Name:  ________________________________________________________________
  - Name:  ________________________________________________________________
  - Name:  ________________________________________________________________
  - Name:  ________________________________________________________________
  - Name:  ________________________________________________________________

**Results**

How has registering for convention affected your team?

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________
Feedback
Please use the space provided to record your feedback on the following questions (use additional paper if needed):

What are you most looking forward to at convention?

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

What hesitancies, if any, does your team have about attending convention?

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________
Benchmark 2: Offer Leadership Development Options

The Art & Spirit of Developing Leaders
One powerful leader can certainly be successful, but an empowered spiritual community overflowing with enlightened leaders working together can eclipse what any one can do alone. Intentional leadership development is becoming an increasing focus for organizations as we see that greater community involvement leads to greater community ownership.

How can we consciously develop leaders within our spiritual communities and our movement? This benchmark offers a variety of options to support your spiritual community’s efforts to expand and enhance expressions of leadership.

Getting Started:
The first step in meeting this benchmark is to read the wealth of resources we have provided for you in this section. Become familiar with all the options Unity offers for leadership development.

Next, take some time to brainstorm current and potential leaders in your spiritual community. Chart the possible places for congregants to take on roles of increasing leadership. If you have an individual who coordinates those in sacred service, he/she could facilitate this step.

In addition to involvement in sacred service, the in-depth study of Unity principles is essential for the development of Unity leaders. This benchmark gives you ways to introduce the formal spiritual leadership development opportunities that exist within our movement, particularly the Spiritual Enrichment & Education (SEE) courses. Unity is blessed to have a rich tradition of spiritual education and the SEE curriculum is a source of spiritual nourishment where congregants can delve deeply into the spiritual principles at the heart of our movement.

Finally, we invite all leaders in the spiritual community to notice those around them who demonstrate qualities and attributes that are well-suited for leadership and to encourage these talents and spiritual gifts. Individuals currently serving in roles of leadership within the congregation are in the best position to identify and encourage those with the potential to serve as a Unity minister. There is no doubt that a word of encouragement from a minister or other spiritual leader can be a powerful affirmation for those who have, or even have not yet, begun to recognize within themselves an awakening spiritual leader.

Action Steps:
1. Read over the resources provided in this section (Finding our Future article, Visionary Statement for Enlightened Leaders, SEE brochure, online courses flier).
2. The minister(s) and other leaders in the spiritual community reads the Finding Our Future article and Visionary Statement for Enlightened Leaders.

3. Brainstorm current and potential leaders and how they might step into sacred service leadership roles. Consciously connect with them and open opportunities to make a deeper commitment and then call them forth to participate.

4. Choose and implement 3 of the options listed in this section which will introduce and/or offer SEE classes to the congregation.

5. Complete the Benchmark Tracking Sheet and submit it to the Association home office (Attn: Communications) as soon as you have completed the benchmark. You will find tracking sheets in this book, as well as on the web as a fill-in form (www.unity.org/thrive).
Unleash the Power of New Leadership in Your Ministry

Who do you know that is ready to take that next step on their spiritual journey and unleash the Spirit within through service? Conscious connecting with congregants as a means of movement toward leadership opportunities is an exceptional way to equip them for further growth and service. As ministers and leaders in the spiritual community, you have the perfect viewpoint to call forth the leadership gifts of others. A word of encouragement from a minister or other leader in the spiritual community can make all the difference as congregants contemplate what next step will support their personal spiritual evolution.

In addition to supporting congregants on their spiritual journey, ministries will benefit from increased attention and intention on expanding leadership. Thriving ministries are aware of the ongoing need to open opportunities for individuals to step into leadership within their spiritual community and consciously act to encourage leadership growth in congregants. The spiritual community will be deeply enhanced by ensuring a wealth of enthusiastic and capable leaders, whether in sacred service as team leaders, small group facilitators, or board members, or other areas within their individual gifts and interests.

What makes a good leader in Unity?

- Knowledge and active demonstration of Unity principles and spiritual teachings
- Sincere desire to continue personal spiritual development
- Good communication skills, willing and able to speak truth compassionately
- Willingness to develop and demonstrate leadership skills
- Heart of sacred service
- Coming from a place of being first then doing

People who take classes and provide sacred service within the spiritual community are already primed to step into increasing leadership. We also encourage you to create the intention of identifying and working with some “fresh faces” by inviting them to participate in new ways.
There is no single path for leadership development in Unity. Opportunities to develop leaders within your spiritual community include:

- inspiring and encouraging youth leadership,
- offering and encouraging participation in Spiritual Education and Enrichment (SEE) classes,
- participating as a ministry leadership group in the Association’s Transformation Experience Enlightened Leadership Development program.

**Inspiring & Encouraging Youth Leadership**

When we think of leaders we often think of adults, yet our youth have so much to offer. Working with the YOU sponsors to discern ways that the youth can provide sacred service is important. Even more essential for their development and the continued growth of the spiritual community, is to provide our youth with support, encouragement, and authentic opportunities to serve in meaningful roles.

There are a number of ways that our YOUers can begin to attain SEE credits. The yearly International YOU event, Peace Ambassador Training, is part of a leadership development program, leading our youth to international service eligibility, and may be taken for credit. If a youth attends a class being taught by a licensed Unity teacher or minister, they may be able to take it for credit if the class has been approved. Simply work with Unity’s Dean of Spiritual Education and Enrichment, Paul Hasselbeck, to establish credit for your program.

**Becoming a Licensed Unity Teacher**

Unity licensed teachers (LTs) can contribute to the spiritual community in many meaningful ways. LTs support and expand ministry programs by teaching SEE classes for credit at their local church (which in turn develops other leaders), and by assisting with youth ministry, pastoral care and prayer chaplaincy programs, or administrative duties.

Becoming a licensed teacher requires a sponsoring minister. The role of the sponsoring minister is to be a mentor for the licensed teacher candidate as well as an evaluator of the candidate’s teaching skills, interaction with the congregation, and readiness for a leadership position in a
Unity church. The sponsoring minister continues in this role even after the candidate is licensed. The licensed teacher serves the Unity spiritual community in accordance with the mission and vision of the Unity spiritual community and at the direction of the minister. The sponsoring minister must be an ordained or licensed Unity minister.

The focus areas available for LT study are:
- Administration
- Adult Education
- Pastoral Care
- Youth and Family Ministry

Additional information is available on www.unity.org under the Ministries and Leaders tab or by contacting Shirley Kennedy, Licensed Teacher Coordinator, ltc@unity.org, or by phone at 816.524-7414.

**Developing as an Enlightened Leader**
If your spiritual community’s leadership team is ready to exponentially increase your capacity to develop leaders within the congregation, consider enrolling in the Transformation Experience’s Enlightened Leaders Program, starting fall 2009. For more information, see www.thetransformationexperience.org, then contact Shannah McAleer at leadership@unity.org or by phone at 816.524.7414.

**The Future of Unity: It’s in Your Hands!**
“The single biggest way to impact an organization is to focus on leadership development. There is almost no limit to the potential of an organization that recruits good people, raises them up as leaders and continually develops them.”
— John C Maxwell
*The 17 Irrefutable Laws of Teamwork* (2001, p.185)

No matter how you choose to step into leadership development, know that you are making a critical contribution not only to the lives of those you inspire, and to the spiritual community in which you serve, but also to the future of the Unity movement as a whole. This in turn serves our world.
Visionary Statement for Enlightened Leaders

“There is great need of leadership under Christ whose banner is love.” —Charles Fillmore

Imagine thriving ministries in which all the leaders truly act from a place of enlightened consciousness. They embody and model spiritual principles and core values. They take the time to center in God with a daily spiritual practice that results in a confidence and calmness that permeates everything they do. They live, work, and breathe in the moment. Being an enlightened leader is just that—being. It is not only what these leaders do and how they do it, but the inner source from which they operate. Their leadership comes from within.

Enlightened leaders demonstrate self-awareness. They listen, observe and process their own behavior and assumptions, and take responsibility for how their presence and involvement make a difference. As enlightened leaders, they build trust through their integrity and authenticity. While looking to what is possible, they move from a point of purpose rather than a point of view.

Enlightened leaders draw forth the shared vision and mission from the collective community, then inspire and generate highly energized sustained action to achieve them. As leaders they know that they do not need to have all the answers; rather they know to ask powerful questions and create an environment that allows the divine answers to emerge from within others. It is in the voice of the many or in the voice of just one that wisdom may be revealed. They listen carefully while remembering to give credit where credit is due.

Enlightened leaders foster transformation. They ignite the fire of Spirit and creative flow within people, maximizing their capacity to grow and thrive. They act as the catalyst to help others remember who they already are. It is a gift to seek and find the treasures within people; indeed it is a sacred privilege. Enlightened leaders mine the treasures within others and create environments in which others can shine and put their gifts and passion to good use. They serve as coaches and mentors as they inspire, guide and support people to find and respond to their inner call to serve and take action. They empower effective teams.

Enlightened leaders seek out and embrace change and shift and welcome the opportunities it brings. As leaders, they help others cope, engage, and flourish as they grow through transitions. They identify tensions and incongruities and guide their resolution. They facilitate shifts in consciousness and perspective which liberate people to try new things and together shape a world that works for all.

Enlightened leaders serve in all sizes and types of ministries and are not limited to a certain age or status. They are youth, prayer chaplains, ministry team leaders, board members, licensed Unity teachers, ordained ministers, and everyone else who, through loving and abundant service, create the thriving ministry all enjoy.

Enlightened leadership—simply a dream? Now is the time to create this vision and help turn the dream into a reality. It takes all of us to do so. Together we behold the dream. We hold the sacred vision!
Leadership Initiatives:
choose at least three options to complete this benchmark.

Option 1: Sunday lesson on the subject of spiritual leadership.

Possible topics to include are:

- Spiritual leadership can happen anytime, anywhere. You do not need to be in a formal position of leadership. It happens every time you respond to a situation from your inner Christ presence, every time you demonstrate Unity principles in action, every time someone becomes inspired by your example to be more true to their essential self.

- Spiritual leadership happens when we get ourselves out of the way and allow Spirit to work through us; when we stop insisting and controlling and begin allowing; and when we consciously stop to go within for guidance before acting.

- Spiritual leadership happens in families. How we model for our children our decision-making, our response to life circumstance, our expression of love and respect is a critical aspect of being a spiritual leader.

- Spiritual leadership can be seen in how our sacred service blesses others out of gratitude for all we have been given, how we give back of our time, our talent, our treasure. Spiritual leaders are open to the flow of abundance and are therefore generous with their love, with their time, and with their material good.

- Spiritual leaders embody spiritual principles such as trust, self-reflection, seeking inner guidance, serving, etc. SEE classes are an excellent way to study principles and learn to live them in our everyday lives.

There are many ways to present a lesson on spiritual leadership. Resources you might wish to consult include:

- *Jesus Christ Heals*—Charles Fillmore
- *The Twelve Powers of Man*—Charles Fillmore
- *Discover the Power Within You*—Eric Butterworth
- *What Are You?*—Imelda Shanklin
- *Jesus CEO*—Laura Beth Jones
- *Enlightened Leadership*—Ed Oakley & Doug Krug

“Leadership is not so much about technique and methods as it is about opening the heart. Leadership is about inspiration—of oneself and of others. Great leadership is about human experiences, not processes. Leadership is not a formula or a program, it is a human activity that comes from the heart and considers the hearts of others. It is an attitude, not a routine.”

—Lance Secretan, in *Industry Week Magazine*
Spiritual leadership is not about doing but about being—living an authentic life and modeling spiritual principles. Enlightened leaders practice their own spiritual development and ignite the fire of leadership in others. They have self-awareness, they listen, they build trust, and they live in integrity. Enlightened leaders foster transformation—in their own lives, in the spiritual community, and in the world. Enlightened leaders embrace and seek shift. They hold the sacred vision.

**Option 2: Minister or licensed teacher (LT) offers an SEE course for credit**

Providing information to congregants may assist in developing new and enhancing existing spiritual leadership skills by offering courses for credit in your spiritual community. (You can offer Practice of Thriving for SEE elective credit in Benchmark 3 to get credit for this option.)

**Option 3: Publicize and promote available SEE courses**

Use the bulletin, newsletter, website, and announcements to share with the congregation information on SEE courses offered within the spiritual community in which you serve, at Unity centers near yours, at your region, at Unity Village, and online. Use the flyers provided or get updated info at www.unity.org.

**Option 4: Offer SEE credit courses through Youth of Unity (YOU) programs**

Assist the youth within your spiritual community in developing themselves through the ongoing study of Unity principles in the SEE program. Have YOU sponsors introduce the SEE program to the YOU and share about the opportunity to earn a Personal Development Certificate. Provide encouragement and opportunities for the YOU to reach out to other youth in their spiritual community and the greater community at large. Recognize those who commit to continuing their spiritual development and enroll in classes as role models for the congregation.

**Option 5: Organize a group trip to Unity Village to participate in a SEE learning session**

Spiritual leaders and members of the spiritual community can make the journey together to Unity Village for a time of bonding and spiritual enrichment. During the week-long session the group can enroll in 1 to 4 SEE courses, stroll through the beautiful and inspiring grounds, visit the Unity Village library filled with spiritual wisdom, and enjoy the relaxing and inviting rooms at the hotel at Unity Village (one of the first LEED certified hotels in the nation).

**Option 6: Set up a scholarship fund for SEE classes**

Assist congregants with SEE class expenses by offering scholarships to those who would most benefit from financial assistance.
There are two tracks in the curriculum: the Spiritual Development Program and the Leadership Development Program. In order to enter the Leadership Development Program, the student must have completed the Spiritual Development Program. The credits required for either program must be earned within a ten-year period.

### SEE Schedule for 2009

- **Spring SEE Session A**: March 15–21
- **Spring SEE Session B**: March 22–28
- **Spring SEE Session C**: March 29–April 4
- **Summer Session A**: July 19–25
- **Summer Session B**: July 26–August 1
- **Spanish SEE Session**: July 26–August 1
- **Summer Session C**: August 2–8
- **Fall Session A**: October 18–24
- **Fall Session B**: October 25–31
- **Spanish SEE Session**: October 25–31
- **Fall Session C**: November 1–7

For more information on our programs at Unity Village, contact:

Spiritual Education and Enrichment
1901 NW Blue Parkway
Unity Village, MO 64065-0001
816-251-3535

www.unityeducation.org or SEE@unityonline.org

### SEE Distance Learning

Unity offers some SEE courses online and will introduce them through our Web site as they become available. Please visit www.unityeducation.org. At this time, we offer The Creative Process in the Bible (English and Spanish), Discover the Power Within You (English and Spanish), Metaphysics I–Part 1, Metaphysics I–Part 2, Metaphysics II–Part 1, Metaphysics II–Part 2, I Believe!, Prosperity, Life of Prayer, Background of New Thought, The Christ in the Bible, Lessons in Truth, Bible Overview, Hebrew Scriptures, and Unity for Today. For additional information, please e-mail SEE@unityonline.org.

### Class Scheduling and Resident Study

Classes at Unity Village are one-week sessions. Each class is ten hours/ten credits (two hours a day for five days). Some courses may be audited.

On Thursday nights there will be a banquet and recognition ceremony. All required classes and activities end Friday at 5:30 p.m.

### Fees

Fees are to be paid at the Reservations office. Once a class has commenced, no refunds will be given. MasterCard, Discover, American Express, and Visa are accepted for purchases at the bookstore and for SEE love offerings. Unity Inn and the Reservations office accept all major credit cards.

Note: A $25 graduation fee is assessed for graduates of the Spiritual Development and Leadership Development Programs. This fee includes the cost of one graduation photo and a graduation certificate and will be collected by the SEE registrar during registration for the last session.

### Love Offering

Unity has operated on a love-offering plan since its inception by the Fillmores. Your generous love offering helps keep our sessions at a reasonable cost. This provides each student with the opportunity to select the form and amount of his or her gift and especially bless it to continue God’s work. A love offering will be received at the Thursday banquet.

### Clothing

Casual clothes and comfortable walking shoes will meet your needs during most activities. There is a candlelight dinner at each SEE session, so you may want to pack something special for this occasion. We recommend a sweater and a raincoat for spring and summer activities and a warmer coat for the fall.

### Computers

Computers/printers and Internet access are available in the Unity Library. Wireless access is available for those staying in our accommodations.

Spiritual Education and Enrichment (SEE) provides educational opportunities for people who are seeking practical principles in order to live more joyously and successfully.

SEE is devoted to helping all people bring a consciousness of the activity of God into every life situation. All activities of the Unity movement are united in one primary spiritual purpose—learning and expressing what it means to live a God-centered life. SEE classes seek to provide the atmosphere, information, and inspiration necessary to help individuals fully express their God-given potentials.

You may participate in classes through the one-week resident study program (offered three times a year), SEE online courses, and through extension study courses available in the Unity center in your area. For additional information, please e-mail SEE@unityonline.org.

To get the most out of your time during SEE sessions, the faculty asks that you come prepared for class by reading as many of the required books as possible prior to your arrival.
Spiritual Development Program

This program is designed for personal growth and development. The following courses are available in this suggested format:

**Session A**
- **Recommended First Session**
  - BI820 Bible Overview: Hebrew Scriptures or Elective
  - MS804 Discover the Power Within You
  - BI821 Bible Overview: Christian Scriptures
  - MS820 Metaphysics I–Part 1

- **Recommended Second Session**
  - MS815 Myrtle and Charles on Healing and Wholeness—Part 1
  - MS822 Metaphysics II–Part I
  - PR800 Life of Prayer
  - BI605 Bible Interpretation: Hebrew Scriptures

- **Recommended Third Session**
  - BI804 The Creative Process in the Bible
  - MS816 Myrtle and Charles on Healing and Wholeness—Part 2 or Elective
  - BI604 Bible Interpretation: Acts–Revelation

**Session B**
- **Recommended First Session**
  - MS821 Metaphysics I–Part 2
  - HI604 Background of New Thought
  - BI802 Jesus’ Teachings in the Bible or Elective

- **Recommended Second Session**
  - IS800 Development of the Unity Movement
  - MS802 Lessons in Truth
  - MS823 Metaphysics II–Part 2
  - PR801 Meditation Practices

- **Recommended Third Session**
  - MS800 Prosperity
  - MS801 The Twelve Powers or Elective
  - BI803 The Christ in the Bible

**Total:** 220 credits

Note: An additional ten credits are earned by self-study of The Quest, Unity for Today (online), or The Simple Truth.

Please contact the SEE registrar for details of how to earn credits for The Quest, Unity for Today and The Simple Truth.

(Continued on back panel)

Leadership Development Program

The following courses are available in this suggested format:

**Recommended First Session**
- CM900 Communication Theory
- BI900 Advanced Bible Study
- CM903 Art of Teaching—Part 1
- AD900 Management Skills

**Recommended Second Session**
- MS900 Advanced Metaphysics
- CM901 Communication Skills I
- IS901 Peacemaking Skills
- CM907 Art of Teaching—Part 2

**Recommended Third Session**
- PR903 Spiritual Prayer Treatment
- PR900 Prayer for Unity Leaders
- AD901 Interpersonal Studies
- CM902 Communication Skills 2

For Specialty Courses and Practicum, contact the Association of Unity Churches International’s Education Department at 816-524-7414.

**Total:** 250 credits

Miscellaneous Information

**For Those Not Driving**
- If you are not driving, ask your travel agent for air, rail, or bus schedules to Kansas City, Missouri. Amtrak has limited east-west service to Lee’s Summit. Check with your travel agent for the current schedule.
- For Shuttle information, contact Reservations at 1-866-34-UNITY or reservations@unityonline.org.
- SEE office at 816-251-3535 or SEE@unityonline.org.

**Food**
- All meals (including vegetarian selections) will be provided at Unity Inn. We are willing to customize a menu to meet special dietary requirements.

**Children**
- Since all programs are planned for adults (16 years and older), no facilities are provided for the care of children under the age of 16.

**Rooms**
- Each room is for double occupancy. Unity Reservations will attempt to honor all special requests. Check-in begins at 1 p.m. on Sunday and checkout is 11 a.m. on the following Saturday. Classes end at 5:30 p.m. on Friday. Please plan your return transportation accordingly.

**Smoke-Free Policy**
- All areas inside Unity Village buildings and in Unity vehicles have been designated as smoke-free areas.

**Special Needs**
- At this time, we can accommodate guests who use wheelchairs or walkers only if they are accompanied by a responsible companion. If you have a special physical requirement, please contact our Reservations office by letter or by telephone at 1-866-34-UNITY (1-866-348-6489).

**Class Tuition**
- Class rates: 1 class, $160; 2 classes, $260; 3 classes, $336; 4 classes, $400.
- All rates/fees/prices are subject to change at any time. Rates/fees/prices in effect at the time of registration will be honored.

**Pets**
- Please do not bring pets to Unity Village. We have no facilities for their care. Guide dogs accompanying our visually-impaired friends are always welcome.
“Distance learning makes it so easy for me to fulfill the class requirements without the expense or time of travel ... It is such a great way for me to study from home and still be challenged to open my mind to the wide, wide world of Unity teachings.”

—MR, Newbury Park, CA

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<tr>
<th>Registration Deadline</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>End Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>July 28, 2008</td>
<td>August 18</td>
<td>October 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 22, 2008</td>
<td>January 5</td>
<td>March 1</td>
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<td>March 30, 2009</td>
<td>April 13</td>
<td>June 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 10, 2009</td>
<td>August 24</td>
<td>October 18</td>
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Each class (10 credits)—excluding Unity for Today—is $170. Required textbooks are additional.

SEE classes are also offered at our beautiful Unity Village campus, as well as at Unity centers throughout the United States. For more information and updates on new classes, visit us online at www.unityeducation.org or e-mail us at see@unityonline.org.

The classroom comes to you ... with distance learning from Spiritual Education and Enrichment.
Reach your spiritual and personal growth goals from the comfort and convenience of your home. With SEE distance-learning courses, you can:

- Find spiritual solutions for everyday living.
- Increase your knowledge of spirituality and the Bible.
- Discover the Unity philosophy of life.

Our online programs include self-study courses and interactive courses facilitated by instructors. Or, if you enjoy LIVE interaction with an instructor and other students, you can join a live Webcam class. The choice is yours!

Online Self-Study

Once you purchase online access, you're in charge! Set your own pace and study when and where you want. Available classes:

- Unity for Today

Online Interactive

Consisting of ten lessons spread over eight weeks, these courses feature online discussion and private journaling. You get to set your own pace for each week's lesson and activities, and participating in online discussions is easy. Available classes:

- The Creative Process in the Bible (English and Spanish)
- Discover the Power Within You (English and Spanish)
- I Believe
- Prosperity
- Life of Prayer
- The Christ in the Bible
- Background of New Thought (New!)
- Metaphysics I—Part 1
- Metaphysics I—Part 2
- Metaphysics II—Part 1
- Metaphysics II—Part 2
- Lessons in Truth
- Bible Overview I: Hebrew Scriptures
- Jesus' Teachings in the Bible (Coming in 2009)
- Bible Overview II: Christian Scriptures (Coming in 2009)

Live Webcam Classes

Would you like to experience a live classroom atmosphere from the comfort of your own home? Now you can, with our new live Webcam classes running with on-campus classes!

Classes are now in a testing phase and can be taken as an Audit/Spiritual Explorer for $75. For an additional $25 registration fee, the class can be taken for credit ($100 total*).

* Once the Webcast testing phase is complete, the price will increase to $170.00 a class.

For more information updates on new classes, visit us online at www.unityeducation.org or e-mail us at esee@unityonline.org.
TiU 2.0 Benchmark 2 Tracking Sheet

Ministry Name: ________________________________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________________

City: __________________________________________ State: _______ Zip: _________

Thriving in Unity Champion: __________________________________________________

Phone: __________________________ Email: _____________________________________

Please complete the following information to meet Benchmark 2: Offer leadership
development options.

General Information

☐ All ministers at our ministry have read Finding Our Future: Developing Spiritual
Leadership in Unity, and looked over the SEE course materials

Choose at least two leadership initiatives for your ministry to implement:

Choice 1: ___________________________ Date Complete: _________________

Choice 2: ___________________________ Date Complete: _________________

Choice 3: ___________________________ Date Complete: _________________

Results

Please use the lines below to record your impressions of how this benchmark has impacted
congregants in your ministry, you as minister, and the ministry overall (use additional paper if
needed):

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
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www.unity.org/thrive

Raising Consciousness— 37
Feedback
Please use the space provided to record your feedback on the following questions (use additional paper if needed):

What were your greatest success and greatest challenge in implementing this benchmark?
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
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In addition to the options listed for this benchmark, what ways can you see expanding your leadership development efforts in the future?
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What additional materials if any would have been helpful in completing this benchmark?
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Benchmark 3: Implement the Practice of Thriving 2.0

Prosperity Program

The Art & Spirit of Thriving

Once again we have provided a complete prosperity program for your ministry entitled, *The Practice of Thriving*. When your words and actions are aligned with spiritual law, abundance is sure to follow. This year’s program features the book *Spiritual Economics* by Unity minister Eric Butterworth. Below is an excerpt from the book’s introduction:

This is a book about true prosperity. The concepts it articulates are applicable to governments and to people. You have been drawn to this book by divine appointment, so it just could be that *Spiritual Economics* is an idea whose time has come in your life.

This great idea whose time has come is that there is no such thing as a purely financial problem. It is time to become aware of our false attitudes and emotions which caused it or a healthy attitude or emotion which can cure it.

It has been commonly assumed that in times of economic reverses, we are all victims of a strange malaise about which there is little that can be done other than to wait and see. However, the study of the laws of spiritual economics reveals that there is much we can do, personally for ourselves, and in concert for our country and our world.

We are indebted to Patricia Bass for her assistance with the workbooks included in this benchmark.

Getting Started

This benchmark offers a powerful way to build on prosperity consciousness. With both a board component and a congregational component, your ministry will gain support in following Eric Butterworth’s powerful suggestions for manifesting prosperity in all forms:

- Take responsibility for your own thoughts, thus taking charge of your own life.
- Declare your personal independence from the belief that your personal welfare is completely tied to the economic fluctuations of the world “out there.”
- Establish yourself in the unassailable conviction that the free flow of substance can only be dammed up from within.
- Know that no one can keep your good from you but you.
- Refuse to indulge in casual conversation about the bad economy or other conditions.
Action Steps

1. Every ministry received a copy of the Practice of Thriving 2.0 in the mail. Locate it or print and review the course materials based on the book *Spiritual Economics* located at www.unity.org/thrive.

2. *Spiritual Economics* is available in the shop at www.unity.org.

3. Determine dates for your board’s participation in the program. You may also wish to offer it to your staff as well. Staff participation is optional, board participation is not.

4. Determine when you will offer the four-week course to your congregation. You may also wish to do a Sunday series on the book. The Sunday series is optional, the course is not.

5. Complete the Benchmark Tracking Sheet and submit it to the Association home office (Attn: Communications) as soon as you have completed the benchmark. You will find tracking sheets in this book, as well as on the web as a fill-in form (www.unity.org/thrive).

6. Go to www.unity.org/enews and sign up for the e-newsletter, Power of Prosperity X 12. This program is intended to be shared with the congregation through emails from the minister, church newsletters or Sunday bulletins. It directly supports *Spiritual Economics.*
TiU 2.0 Benchmark 3 Tracking Sheet

Ministry Name: ________________________________________________________________

Address: _______________________________________________________________________

City: ___________________________________________ State: _______ Zip: _________

Thriving in Unity Champion: ___________________________________________________

Phone: ___________________________ Email: _____________________________________

Please complete the following information to meet Benchmark 3: Implement the Practice of Thriving Program.

General Information

☐ Board course/retreat
  Date completed: ________________________________

☐ Congregation course held:
  Date completed: ________________________________

☐ Number of participants:
  Board: _______________Congregation: ____________

☐ Sunday Series (optional)
  Date completed: ________________________________

Results

Please use the lines below to record your impressions of how this benchmark has impacted your ministry:

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

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________________________________________________________________________________
Feedback
Please use the space provided to record your feedback on the following questions (use additional paper if needed):

What were your greatest success and greatest challenge in implementing this benchmark?
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

How do you feel this benchmark spiritually stretched your leadership team and congregants?
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________________________________________________________________________________
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What other materials would have been helpful for you to have in meeting this benchmark?
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Benchmarks 4 & 5: Shifting Culture
Shifting Culture

“Culture does not change because we desire to change it. Culture changes when the organization is transformed; the culture reflects the realities of people working together every day.” — Frances Hesselbein

Remember that the quadrant devoted to culture focuses on the inner experience we have as a group, or our culture. It is how we define ourselves as a group (our attitudes, values, and beliefs). Each ministry has its own unique culture, as does our Association as a whole, and even Unity as a movement.

A cultural shift cannot be forced. It must happen naturally, organically. As the people and the organization itself change, the culture naturally will reflect that change. Therefore the goal in this section is simply to become more aware of our culture.

In this section you will undertake two activities that will assist you in becoming aware of and engaging with the culture of your ministry and of our movement. Shifting our culture into higher expression may be as simple as becoming more aware of it, or discovering greater appreciation for it. Major cultural shifts take time and can only be undertaken successfully when we see clearly where we are in our current cultural setting.

The benchmarks for this section are:

4. Connect to the world of Unity on the web
5. Develop ministry core values
Benchmark 4: Connect to the World of Unity on the Web

The Art and Spirit of Connection:
In today’s climate of fast-paced communications and increasing need for information, an effective and engaging presence on the internet is essential. The Unity movement now has a single website for both our Association and for Unity School. It offers those who are wondering about Unity a clear way to connect with our teachings and engage in the process of discovery. It also offers churches a full library of resources as well as a fantastic way to share who they are with the world.

We have created a fun and exciting way for your ministry and your congregants to interact with the amazing experience available on the Unity website. By taking the time to connect deeply, not only will your ministry benefit from becoming a featured ministry with a full ministry profile, but your ministry leaders and congregants will better understand how to access a wealth of Unity wisdom and also contribute to the face of Unity online.

Getting Started
This benchmark will take you on an enjoyable website “scavenger hunt” to become an expert at navigating and interacting with the site. We have prepared two lists of items to “hunt” for. One is for the ministry and is to be completed by a representative of the ministry (minister, board member, staff member). The second is for congregants. Both hunts will reveal hidden gems, delightful surprises, and opportunities to offer feedback, comments, and personal insights.

Action Steps
1. Log on to www.unity.org/thrive and locate the scavenger hunt lists (this is your first item to find!).
2. Print and review the two lists of items.
3. Select the person(s) responsible for completing the hunt as described on each list.
4. Follow the directions and complete both hunts.
5. Complete the Benchmark Tracking Sheet and submit it to the Association home office (Attn Communications) as soon as you have completed the benchmark. You will find tracking sheets in this book, as well as on the web as a fill-in form (www.unity.org/thrive).
TiU 2.0 Benchmark 4 Tracking Sheet

Ministry Name: ________________________________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________________

City: ___________________________ State: _______ Zip: __________

Thriving in Unity Champion: __________________________________________________

Phone: _________________________ Email: _____________________________________

Please complete the following information to meet Benchmark 4: Connect to the world of Unity on the web.

**General Information**

- We downloaded and completed the scavenger hunt for ministries
  - Date accomplished: _____________________

- The congregational scavenger hunt was downloaded and offered to congregants
  - Date accomplished: _____________________
  - Number of completed scavenger hunts by congregants? ______________

**Results**

Please use the lines below to record your impressions of how achieving this benchmark has impacted your ministry:

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
Feedback
Please use the space provided to record your feedback on the following questions (use additional paper if needed):

What were your greatest success and your greatest challenge in implementing this benchmark?

________________________________________________________________________________

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How do you feel this benchmark supported your ministry and congregants in better understanding the resources available on unity.org?

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What other materials would have been helpful for you to have in meeting this benchmark?

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Benchmark 5: Develop Ministry Core Values

The Art and Spirit of Clarity

Values exist in every organization. Your ministry’s culture is partially the outward demonstration of the values currently existing within it. The question to ask is whether your existing values (conscious or unconscious) are creating the relationships, workplace and organization you desire. In many cases, those values we think we hold may be at odds with the values our behaviors actually demonstrate. By intentionally articulating your ministry’s unique core values, taking the time to clarify them by defining them, and understanding the rationale for them, you can pave the way to demonstrating these core values in your community. Once this is done, a future initiative would involve deciding exactly how the ministry as an organization will demonstrate the core values and naming the behaviors individuals will demonstrate in order to develop a deeper experience of spiritual community.

Getting Started

This benchmark offers your ministry a clear and workable way to engage your entire spiritual community in identifying and adopting ministry-wide core values. In addition, you will be given precise steps for taking the ideas that emerge from your spiritual community and, through the work of a team of ministry leaders and congregants, craft a powerful set of community core values.

As a further option, directions will also be available through the Association’s website (www.unity.org/thrive) to assist you in translating these values into organizational actions and individual behaviors, should you choose to take this work all the way. This is the greatest benefit of having core values: having a way for everyone to consciously live the values of the ministry, including the ministry itself. Conscious intent focused in this way is a powerful expression of Unity’s spiritual principle, the law of mind-action.

The materials presented here were developed by Susan Beck, Chief Operating Officer of our Association of Unity Churches International. They are based on the work of internationally acclaimed values expert, Richard Barrett and have been successfully field tested in numerous ministries.

Action Steps

1. Review the material on the following page and download information from www.unity.org/thrive on how to develop core values.
2. Identify a person(s) responsible for organizing each step of the process.
3. Follow the directions as presented.
4. Complete the Benchmark 5 tracking sheet and return it to the Association home office (Attn: Communications) as soon as it is completed. You will find tracking sheets in this book, as well as on the web as a fill-in form (www.unity.org/thrive).

Developing & Adopting Core Values for Your Ministry

In his book, *Building a Values Driven Organization—A Whole-System Approach* (italics added below to highlight key concepts), Richard Barrett says:

The purpose of establishing a set of values is to create a *code of behavior that builds a cohesive culture* and supports the [ministry’s] mission. The values provide a framework within which every member of the organization can operate with responsible freedom. When individuals fully embrace the organization’s values, everyone becomes mutually accountable. Values that are shared *build trust and create community*. They also create *cohesion and unity*.

Values are “rules” for living and decision making. They are deeply-held beliefs that a certain way of being or a certain outcome is preferable to another. Values are externally demonstrated through behaviors. The phrase “walking the talk” means that there is no discrepancy between an individual’s values and behaviors. Values “talk” while behaviors “walk.” An organization’s values make an open declaration about how it expects everyone in the organization to behave.

Strong communities are characterized by sincere friendliness and the ability to pursue shared objectives quickly and efficiently. The strength of a community depends on the commitment of its individual members to live by the shared values. To create a strong [organizational] culture, the values must be lived by everyone, most importantly by those in leadership positions. A strong core culture can be created only when there is alignment between values and behaviors [throughout] the organization.

You can see from this quote why core values are important and what benefits are gained in a spiritual community from explicitly stating core values and living and working with these core values in consciousness.
Steps to Complete the Community’s Core Values

1. Hold a congregation-wide discovery meeting (instructions in material for download).
2. Capture meeting results.
3. Identify a Core Values Team to work with the results from the discovery meeting.
4. Share the draft of new core values with your congregation for feedback.
5. Incorporate feedback.
6. Share completed values with congregation.
7. Optional: Create organizational action statements and individual behaviors for each core value that will support the ministry and congregants in “walking the talk.”
Tiu 2.0 Benchmark 5 Tracking Sheet

Ministry Name: ________________________________________________________________

Address: _______________________________________________________________________

City: ______________________________________________ State: _______ Zip: _________

Thriving in Unity Champion: ___________________________________________________

Phone: ___________________________ Email: _______________________________________

Please complete the following information to meet Benchmark 5: Develop core values

General Information
- Held ministry-wide values workshop Date: ___________ Participants ______
- Identified Core Values Team Date: _______________________
- Draft presented to congregation for feedback Date: _______________________
- Final Values Statement presented Date: _______________________
- Behaviors identification underway

Results
Please use the lines below to record your impressions of how achieving this benchmark has impacted your ministry and congregation:

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
Feedback
Please use the space provided to record your feedback on the following questions (use additional paper if needed):

What were your greatest success and your greatest challenge in implementing this benchmark?
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________

How did this benchmark affect the energy and culture of your ministry? How do you see the values statement will support your congregation in the future? What about the behavior statements?
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
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__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________

What other materials would have been helpful for you to have in meeting this benchmark?
__________________________________________
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Benchmarks 6–9: Building Community
Building Community

“To build community, we seek conversations where people show up by invitation rather than mandate, and experience an intimate and authentic relatedness.”
—Peter Block

The quadrant devoted to building community is the lower right. Here you will find efforts that enhance your congregants’ relationships with each other through the program and organizational structures you create (think small group and large group interactions). Intentionally developing your small group and ministry-wide programs and structures improves the overall health of your spiritual community, adding a deeper spiritual dimension.

No matter how gifted and loving a minister is, a thriving congregation must have more than one person who feels responsible for the well-being of the spiritual community. It is simply impossible for a minister to meet every congregant’s needs for engagement and support by him/herself. In addition, the congregation misses out on a significant opportunity for personal transformation by not taking ownership in their spiritual community. Is there room to expand your programs and opportunities for people to develop meaningful relationships within your spiritual community?

By enhancing and strengthening your congregation’s sense of community, more congregants will become empowered to care for and reach out to one another. It is through these connections that congregants find the loving support to continue their transformational journey, to cope with life’s chaotic moments, to serve and support others, and to demonstrate faith in action. Encourage and support these connections and provide outlets for your groups to have meaningful expressions in your ministry and in the larger community through spiritual social action.

The benchmarks for this section are:

7. Assess your youth and family program: discover your areas of excellence and your opportunities for growth.

8. Increase small group activities: choose from book studies, Fall Faith programs, and other small group options.

9. Implement spiritual social action activities: interact with your community in powerful and meaningful ways.

10. Deepen your practice of living and being peace.
Benchmark 6: Assess Your Youth and Family Ministry Program

The Art & Spirit of Youth & Family
Serving families is not only part of our reason for being in spiritual community, it is also essential to our long-term success in creating a world that works for all. If our congregations begin aging without new faces joining in, we may eventually experience a decline in future growth potential. Thriving ministries offer congregants a strong Youth & Family Ministry (YFM) program to support parents in the important task of teaching and modeling spiritual principles to our youth. We have a message that changes lives at any age!

Getting Started:
This benchmark provides you a comprehensive assessment tool to discover the areas of excellence in your youth and family programming as well as the opportunities for growth. Youth and family ministry in Unity encompasses young people from infants to 18 years of age and the people around them that create their families. The goal is to provide a safe and nurturing environment that promotes spiritual growth, physical and emotional health, and positive self-esteem. This assessment tool will help you to celebrate your successes and find new ways to enhance your programming by giving you a snap shot of your current program’s expression.

Terms to keep in mind while reviewing the assessment:
• Uniteens: ministry for middle school youth (11 to 13 years)
• YFM: Youth and Family Ministry
• YOU: Youth of Unity, a ministry for high school youth (14 to 18 years)

Action Steps
1. Look over the entire assessment tool on the following pages.
2. Create a team to oversee the assessment process. The team should include staff, parents, YFM volunteers, a board representative, and a YOUer.
3. Complete an honest and in depth assessment of where your program stands.
4. The team reports its findings to the ministry leadership.
5. Implement the guest evaluation following this section for first-timers with families. (Optional)
6. Take the required action steps and identify additional steps for future action in your youth and family ministry.
7. Complete the Benchmark Tracking Sheet and submit it to the Association home office (Attn: Communications) as soon as you have completed the benchmark. You will find tracking sheets in this book, as well as on the web as a fill-in form (www.unity.org/thrive).
Thriving in Unity 2.0
Benchmark 6: Youth and Family Ministry (YFM) Program Assessment

This assessment is divided into several sections. To complete this benchmark, have your assessment team answer the following questions, take the required action steps (if any), and present the outcome of the assessment to the board of trustees. If you do not have a YFM, please share your thoughts about beginning a program on a separate sheet and send it in with the benchmark tracking sheet.

Glossary of terms used in this assessment:
Uniteens: ministry for middle school-age youth, usually 11 – 13 yrs of age.
YFM: youth and family ministry
YOU: Youth of Unity a ministry for high school ages, usually 14 - 18.

Planning and Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Required Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a copy of the Youth and Family Ministry Guide?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Order for your ministry #BA6010 ($36.95 wholesale price for churches)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Available at unity.org—click shop, click on ministry supplies, then ministry, and then manuals)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are you signed up to receive the online quarterly publication, Education Links? <a href="http://www.unity.org/el">www.unity.org/el</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sign up for this free resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you signed up to receive the online bi-monthly update, E-Links?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sign up for this free resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.unity.org/enews">www.unity.org/enews</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you know the names and contact information for your Regional Education Consultants and your International Youth Coordinators?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Get information and connect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you visited the Youth and Family web pages on the joint Unity website?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Review website offerings</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Programming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Priority of Goal</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is there a clear vision statement for the YFM that is shared by the church leadership?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the mission and purpose statement of the YFM clearly articulated?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the YFM program funded appropriately for the organization’s mission?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the YFM have a budget?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the budget reviewed by the board of trustees and minister?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are the YFM activities scheduled on the church calendar?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do the YFM coordinator and minister meet regularly?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the YFM coordinator communicate to parents and the congregation?</td>
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</table>
**Curriculum**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Priority of Goal</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the Living Curriculum philosophy being used? (See unity.org for a description of the Living Curriculum philosophy.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you chosen a curriculum, or curricula, that reflect your church’s mission and vision?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does each curriculum utilize multiple intelligences?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is each curriculum used age-appropriate?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does it engage both boys and girls?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does it demonstrate Unity principles?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does it honor family diversity?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the curriculum teacher-friendly?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does it utilize supplies that are easily acquired and within the budget?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have special holiday lessons and activities?</td>
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</table>

**Environment for welcoming families**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Priority of Goal</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the YFM easy to find on the church’s website?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are there easy-to-read signs clearly marking the church entrance and children’s ministry areas?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the YFM ministry area easy to find in the church?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are greeters informed and helpful in directing families to the YFM area?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are printed materials containing information about YFM ministry easily accessible?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are the classrooms labeled?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are classrooms in reasonably close proximity to each other?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are classrooms in reasonably close proximity to the sanctuary?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are visitors able to identify the YFM ministry director, youth minister, or other designated staff members?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are visiting children welcomed and identified as visitors in each classroom?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the sign-in area prepared (materials available for each event)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is parent contact information on file?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is snack information clearly posted?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Thriving in Unity 2.0
### Benchmark 6: Youth and Family Ministry (YFM) Program Assessment

### Sunday morning classrooms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Priority of Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are the classrooms ready 15 minutes before service time?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a pre-session activity?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are the teachers ready to receive students 15 minutes before service time?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have they prepared a lesson ahead of time?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a prayer time for teachers and volunteers before each church service?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a child’s prayer request form?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is a prayer chaplain available?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a time of prayer/meditation in each class?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a class routine that helps give structure to the hour?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there consistent program implementation?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a planned opening for each session?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is music incorporated?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does it include time for the youth to connect?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are heart agreements used?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the heart agreements current?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the youth help create them?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Have the youth and teachers signed the heart agreements?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do the teachers have the lesson supplies they need?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are the supplies organized and easy to find?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are old supplies recycled or discarded?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are the children and teens actively engaged in their classes?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do teachers check to determine if the youth understand the lesson and its practical life application?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Thriving in Unity 2.0
### Benchmark 6: Youth and Family Ministry (YFM) Program Assessment

### Uniteens (11 - 13 years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Priority of Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a copy of the Uniteen Program Guide?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have the Uniteen sponsors read the guide?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do the Uniteens attend local and/or regional Uniteen retreats?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a procedure for event paper work to be completed and processed?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is participation in service projects available and encouraged?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a policy about Uniteen fundraisers?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the current fundraisers working?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do the Uniteens have the funds to do the activities they desire?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are there social events in addition to the regional retreats?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have a Rites of Passage program for graduating Uniteens?</td>
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</table>

### YOU (Youth of Unity 14 - 18 years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Priority of Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a copy of the Youth Of Unity Handbook?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have the YOU sponsors read the handbook?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do the YOUers attend regional rallies and international YOU events?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a procedure for event paper work to be completed and processed?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is participation in service projects available and encouraged?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a policy about YOU fundraisers?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the current fundraisers working?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do the YOUers have the funds to do the activities they desire?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are there social events in addition to the regional retreats?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do the youth take appropriate levels of leadership both in and out of the classroom?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a teen representative on the board?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a process for teens to ask questions and give input to the board?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a process in place for the next level of participation in the ministry for graduating YOUers?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Intergenerational Activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Priority of Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are programs in place that encourage and support interaction of congregants of all ages?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are there recurring intergenerational activities that happen with intention?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are there times for intergenerational play (i.e.: picnics, plays, family activities and outings?)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Staffing/Volunteers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Priority of Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is there a list describing all YFM volunteer ministry positions available?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the positions regularly evaluated and updated?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do volunteer descriptions include what is expected of the volunteer and how long they will serve in that position?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are people are given an accurate picture of how much time and effort it will take to fulfill the requirements of the position they are being recruited for?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do the YFM volunteers understand how their work contributes to the mission of the church?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there sufficient staff? Are all the positions filled?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are personal invitations extended to prospective YFM volunteers?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there an application process used and followed consistently?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are references checked and documented?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are background checks run on all volunteers and staff working with children and updated every 2-3 years?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there an established procedure for conducting one-on-one interview with potential volunteers?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is a volunteer orientation and training program in place?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you provide volunteers with a written handbook regarding the policies and procedures?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is sacred safety training available for YFM volunteers?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do volunteers understand how your church defines and practices confidentiality and privacy?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Staffing/Volunteers (cont.)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Priority of Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do YFM volunteers have an opportunity to “try out” a position before making a commitment to serve?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a current commitment statement for each team member on file?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a performance review process in place for volunteers?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are complaints or concerns about volunteers’ behavior handled immediately?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are there written procedures for terminating volunteers?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Training/Meetings/Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Priority of Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are meetings/trainings held on a regular basis?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are meetings organized? Engaging? Well attended?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are the teachers and minister kept up to date?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the staff trained in YFM practices?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the staff trained in Sacred Safety?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the staff trained in how to use the Bible?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the staff trained in multiple intelligences?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the staff trained in Unity teachings?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the staff trained in first aid procedures?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the training current?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a planned, intentional calendar of group recognition events and/or a system for recognizing volunteers individually in place?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do volunteers have someone available to encourage and assist them in developing and growing in their roles (a mentor)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are volunteers given an opportunity to give feedback and suggest changes that would improve the position?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are volunteers given an opportunity to change positions on a regular basis?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there an exit interview process in place?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are records kept in the YFM of the volunteer service of each member?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are regular evaluations our YFM ministry goals, objectives and action plans done?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there regular planning for YFM leaders to identify needs and establish goals?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Sacred Safety

#### Policies and Procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Priority of Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the ministry have a Sacred Safety Policies and Procedures (SSPP) manual (available on unity.org)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the above manual available to parents and YFM teachers?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you provide SSPP training for volunteers?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are the board members and other church staff trained in SSPP practices?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are the SSPP formally reviewed on a regular basis?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you diligent adhere to the SSPP practices?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are emergency numbers posted and easily accessible?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are contact numbers posted for emergency utility issues?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the SSPP manual include procedures for Evacuation?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the SSPP manual include procedures for Severe weather?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the SSPP manual include procedures for Shelter in place (missing child, suspicious person)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the SSPP manual include procedures for Medical emergency?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is an incident report process for volunteers in place?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there an adequate emergency communication system for informing parents, staff, adults service, other classes, etc?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a first aid kit(s) in the YFM area? Is it accessible? Do the kits have current and appropriate supplies?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are the fire extinguishers labeled, accessible and does the staff know how to use them?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are volunteers and staff aware of the location of utility safety mechanisms, i.e. water shut off valves, alarm systems and circuit breakers?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have room usage guidelines?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are harmful supplies stored safely? (anything that would be harmful when ingested or skin/eye contact)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Policies and Procedures (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Priority of Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are youth adequately supervised according to the time, place and activity?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have a policy of two-adults per room?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are there guidelines on who is allowed in the classrooms on Sunday and/or during the week?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are attendance records kept?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are allergies noted on records?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are old records retrievable?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a registration form completed for each youth?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is this information accessible to teachers who have a need to know?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a sign-in procedure?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is it followed, reviewed, communicated?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is it used outside Sunday classes?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a medical release completed for each youth?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is it accessible to the adults who have the need to know?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are permission slips used for attendance at events?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are pictures only taken of youth with photo releases?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Insurance/Travel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Priority of Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you have general liability coverage for the volunteer program?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Who is covered and when?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the liability coverage reviewed periodically?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you assessed our programs for, and are you within, the level of liability coverage required?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you developed a relationship with your insurance representative and know best practices?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the church have adequate insurance coverage, for youth on playground during the week?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the church have adequate insurance coverage, for everyone on grounds at anytime?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the church have adequate insurance coverage, for outside groups using or renting space?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are these groups aware of your policy and procedures for young people?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Thriving in Unity 2.0
Benchmark 6: Youth and Family Ministry (YFM) Program Assessment

### Insurance for Drivers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Priority of Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the ministry have insurance that covers volunteer drivers?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is it primary or secondary to the drivers’ insurance?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are the drivers involved informed of this information?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are all vehicle types covered, including 15-passenger vans?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you check for current driver’s licenses and keep copies of current insurance on file for volunteers driving their own vehicles?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are volunteers made aware that they may need to notify their personal auto insurance carrier of their volunteer driving activities?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you check driving records?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does each driver have all the appropriate forms for youth and adults in the vehicle?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does each car have emergency kits for weather and driving conditions?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Playground (This applies if the church has a designated outdoor play area, especially if it has play equipment.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Priority of Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has the playground been checked for cleanliness?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are there regular inspections of the area and play equipment?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the area fenced?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are there rules for use (posted, trained, and followed)?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Congregant Input

Use the form on the next page to get additional information on your YFM program from the congregant perspective.
Guest Evaluation
In assessing your youth and family ministry, you may want to have input from “fresh eyes.” Below is an evaluation form directed at those who are new to your ministry, or for whom this is their first time at the church. Ask each family to fill in and mail back in your stamped self-addressed envelope provided with the evaluation.

You may decide to add some questions particular to your ministry. Remember that the fewer questions you ask, the more likely it is that the form will be filled out and returned. This form is also posted with other materials at the website for duplication.
Guest Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>neutral</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The youth and family ministry area was inviting and welcoming</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I was greeted immediately during my visit to the youth and family ministry area</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I was informed about the:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Vision/mission of the youth and family ministry</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Morning schedule</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Sign-in and registration procedures</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Signing-out process</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Sacred Safety Procedures</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I was consulted about:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Snacks/allergies/health concerns</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Parent contact information</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I felt secure leaving my child while attending worship</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. My family would enjoy visiting this community again</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. My family was thanked for coming, and invited to return</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. My child was welcomed by the teacher and children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. My child had a good experience during their class</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. My child was concerned about something during the morning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. What was your child’s favorite part of the morning? ____________________________

12. What did you find the most helpful? _________________________________________

13. Do you have any recommendations? ___________________________________________
Ministry Name: ________________________________________________________________

Address: _______________________________________________________________________

City: ______________________________________________ State: _______  Zip: _________

Thriving in Unity Champion: ___________________________________________________

Phone: ___________________________ Email: _________________________________

Please complete the following information to meet Benchmark 6: Conduct a Youth and Family Ministry Assessment.

**General Information**

- ❑ Identified team to conduct assessment
- ❑ Assessment completed  Date: ______________________________
- ❑ Completed required action steps (see assessment)
- ❑ Report presented to board  Date: ______________________________

**Results**

Please use the lines below to record your impressions of how achieving this benchmark has impacted your ministry:

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________
Feedback
Please use the space provided to record your feedback on the following questions (use additional paper if needed):

What were your greatest success and greatest challenge in implementing this benchmark?

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

Did the assessment reveal any surprises? How do you feel the information from this assessment will impact your Youth and Family Ministry decision making in the future?

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

What other materials would have been helpful for you to have in meeting this benchmark?

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
Benchmark 7: Increase Your Small Group Activity

The Art & Spirit of Small Group Development
While Sunday lessons and Sunday services are powerful opportunities for congregants to hear transformational messages, small group activities such as classes and book studies often allow congregants to go deeper into core concepts which may challenge their current thinking. Spirituality is deeply supported by small group ministry.

Getting Started
This benchmark will introduce themes such as uncovering and living from our true divine potential, taking seriously the call to transform ourselves so that we may transform our world, and spiritual transformation that transcends specific religious teachings. We have collected a variety of resources to support you in providing exciting and transformative course work. These materials can be used for classes, fall faith programs, study groups, etc. Choose from these materials to strengthen your small group ministry experience:

• Small Group Ministry Guide (required)
• Option 1—Our Association’s small group ministries booklets (nine titles to choose from, plus two in Spanish)
• Option 2—The Third Jesus by Deepak Chopra
• Option 3—Spiritual Liberation by Michael Beckwith

Action Steps
1. Available this fall, order our Association’s Small Group Ministry Guide at www.unity.org/shop.
2. Read through the following summaries and study guides provided for the three options.
3. Determine which booklet or book will best support your ministry.
4. Schedule a time and facilitator for the class.
5. Include the following components to meet this benchmark:
   a. Facilitator offers 5-7 lessons on the book or booklet’s content.
   b. Participants receive study questions or homework of some type to encourage personal reflection on the book or booklet’s content.
   c. Participants are given an opportunity to discuss the homework and the book or booklet’s content in small groups/circles.
6. Complete the Benchmark Tracking Sheet and submit it to the Association home office (Attn Communications) as soon as you have completed the benchmark. You will find tracking sheets in this book, as well as on the web as a fill-in form (www.unity.org/thrive).
Please note that the study guides provided are for your convenience. We invite you to change or edit them as you feel led, or to prepare your own material for your course. As noted, additional materials are available on the website for download at www.unity.org/thrive.

Please choose one of the following options for your small group content.

**Option 1: Small Group Ministry Booklets**

Select one of the small group ministry booklets created by our Association of Unity Churches International.

Everything you need to create vibrant small group discussions is found in these 7-week, interactive small group ministry booklets. The booklets are designed so that only the facilitator needs one. Inexperienced facilitators will appreciate the scripted text and discussion questions. Even meditations and prayers are written out. This technique subtly trains new leaders. Sessions may include music, role-play, and art. Permission is given for handouts at the back to be copied. Booklets range in price from $5.95 to $7.95 and can be ordered on www.unity.org/shop. Following is a description of booklets available.

**Spiritual Social Action**—Look at social action from a spiritual perspective. Connect social action with Unity’s basic teachings, consider the relevance of social action in your life, learn how to become a peacemaker, and explore how connecting with other faith groups can enhance the experience of giving.

**Living an Abundant Life**—God is good and God is unlimited. So how does God show up as unlimited good in our lives? Explore Unity principles of prosperity as well as techniques for becoming more aware of God’s abundance in all areas of our lives.

**Cultivating God Mind Through Parables**—Have you wondered about the teachings of Jesus? Join others to explore deeper meanings in the parables of Jesus. Observe the influence of your mind on your experiences, and claim your inheritance of good as a child of God. Explore action steps for personal transformation and spiritual growth.

**Creative Living**—How are you expressing that innate, creative ability within your being? Discover, claim, and express your creative genius daily as you realize that God is the source of your creativity. Open to the flow of ideas through prayer and meditation, and take action toward expressing your potential and achieving your dreams.

**Creating a Life of Prayer**—Together we explore the power of affirmative prayer. Many aspects of the prayer process are experienced, including the role of believing, affirming, surrendering, receiving, and thanksgiving. *Creating a Life of Prayer* provides a strong foundation in Unity prayer principles for both beginning and continuing Unity students.
**Proving the Power of Principle** (Also available in Spanish)—Unity’s five basic principles are a roadmap to living a life grounded in an awareness of God. Together we examine each of the principles: the One Presence and One Power; the Christ Spirit within each of us; the use of denials and affirmations (law of mind action); the power of prayer; the fulfillment that comes from putting our beliefs into action. This is a great resource for a new member class.

**Knowing the Truth About Healing**—Myrtle Fillmore’s experience of healing was the inspiration for the beginning of the Unity movement. Using this guide, we explore many aspects of healing, including the relationship between the mental, spiritual, and physical realms. We look at the role that prayer, forgiveness, love, faith, and joy play in bringing us to wholeness. Jesus’ healing ministry provides the framework through which “the truth about healing” is revealed.

**Trusting the Process of Change**—None of us escapes the process of change. In fact, many of us may be going through several transitions at once. In this program, we discover how change moves us through a series of stages or passages—from endings and a period of seeming “nothingness,” called the void, to new beginnings. We explore the spiritual principles that can help us to trust the process of change in our lives.

**Meeting Myself in the Bible** (Also available in Spanish)—Use of Bible in Unity churches is commonplace, but how frequently do we actually open a Bible and explore the stories? This series explores the Bible metaphysically, and encourages us to interpret and apply the lessons in our daily lives. Stories examined include David and Goliath, a reading from the Wisdom books, a miracle, a parable, and the activity of Holy Spirit around Pentecost.

**Internet Resources**
The Association of Unity Churches International website (www.unity.org, the Ministries and Leaders tab, click the link under Small Group Ministries) also offers free information and guidance about small group ministry. Included are:
- FAQs
- Ideas on the organizational structure
- Detailed descriptions of our exploration booklets and training CD
- A lesson sample from one of our exploration booklets
Option 2: The Third Jesus: The Christ We Can’t Ignore

Deepak Chopra

Summary

In The Third Jesus, bestselling author and spiritual leader Deepak Chopra provides an answer to this question that is both a challenge to current systems of belief and a fresh perspective on what Jesus can teach us all, regardless of our religious background. There is not one Jesus, Chopra writes, but three.

First, there is the historical Jesus, the man who lived more than two thousand years ago and whose teachings are the foundation of Christian theology and thought. Next, there is Jesus the Son of God, who has come to embody an institutional religion with specific dogma, a priesthood, and devout believers. And finally, there is the third Jesus, the cosmic Christ, the spiritual guide whose teaching embraces all humanity, not just the church built in His name. He speaks to the individual who wants to find God as a personal experience, to attain what some might call grace, God-consciousness, or enlightenment. When we take Jesus literally, we face the impossible. How can we truly “love thy neighbor as thyself?” But when we see the exhortations of Jesus as invitations to join Him on a higher spiritual plane, His words suddenly make sense.

Ultimately, Chopra argues, Christianity needs to overcome its tendency to be exclusionary and refocus on being a religion of personal insight and spiritual growth. In this way, Jesus can be seen for the universal teacher He truly is—someone whose teachings of compassion, tolerance, and understanding can embrace and be embraced by all of us.

Study Guide & DVD:

Study Guide: At www.unity.org/deepak, download a 65-page, comprehensive study guide filled with detailed information and suggestions for sharing this powerful book. The study guide references a companion DVD that supports the book (see below).

DVD: Direct from the Unity.FM web series, this new DVD from Unity House gives you a front row seat to conversations between Deepak Chopra and Unity minister Wendy Craig-Purcell as they discuss how Christianity fits within a context of contemporary spiritual beliefs and practices. Filmed before live audiences at The Unity Center in San Diego, the conversations about Jesus and the Awakening to God-Consciousness are based on Chopra’s book The Third Jesus: The Christ We Cannot Ignore.
The six half-hour segments include:
   Who Is Jesus and Why Does It Matter?
   Opening to the Path
   A New Way of Being
   When the Rubber Hits the Road
   What to Expect When You’re Expecting Enlightenment
   Jesus Without Dogma

The two-DVD set also includes bonus footage of a live audience Q&A and a video brief, “What Is Unity?”

#M7700, two DVDs, $24.95, available online at www.unity.org/shop: see the left navigation area, “find products,” click on multimedia, then DVD.
**Option 3: Spiritual Liberation: Fulfilling Your Soul’s Potential**

*Michael Bernard Beckwith*

**Summary**

Michael Bernard Beckwith—the dynamic spiritual leader who touched millions of readers and viewers in *The Secret* and through the spiritual community he founded, the Agape International Spiritual Center—is now sharing his transforming central message and his powerfully accessible means for embodying that message in daily life, a process he calls “aspiring toward spiritual liberation.”

Michael Beckwith teaches that inner spiritual work, not religiosity or dogma, liberates us. He draws on a wide spectrum of ancient wisdom teachers such as Jesus the Christ and Gautama the Buddha; contemporary spiritual luminaries Thich Nhat Hanh, Sri Aurobindo, and the Dalai Lama; and Western contributors to the New Thought tradition of spirituality such as Emanuel Swedenborg, Walter Russell, and Dr. Howard Thurman to create a profound new belief synthesis.

Either read silently or aloud, *Spiritual Liberation* can be included during meditation or prayer. Each chapter includes an affirmation that distills its core concepts into a sentence or two for the reader to easily practice throughout the day. Beckwith’s personal and touching accounts guide the practitioner to integrate and activate the intrinsic gifts of divinity into everyday life. The core concepts of Beckwith’s teachings are cohesive and convincingly stated in the provocative chapters of *Spiritual Liberation*. Topics covering “Evolved People,” “Transportation to Trans-formation,” “Transcending the Tyranny of Trends,” and “Inner Ecology,” are some of his foundational teachings that bring together insights from a range of spiritual paths to form a coherent practice that is neither Eastern nor Western but truly spiritually global.

Regardless of your belief system, readers will find it impossible to finish this book without at least a few “Aha!” moments.
Spiritual Liberation Study Guide
Thriving in Unity 2.0 Benchmark 7

Spiritual Liberation by Michael Beckwith is a book packed with deep insight in every chapter and on every page. Rather than attempting to handle the entire book in seven weeks, this study guide offers an introduction to the book. We have selected seven chapters to highlight. If congregants wish to go deeper upon completion of the course you can invite them to form a Spiritual Liberation Embodiment Group to meet regularly and discuss the book and its practices in their entirety (perhaps a chapter a week for 18 weeks).

This guide breaks the material into seven sessions. Each session follows the same format for the two hour class:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opening prayer (5 minutes)</th>
<th>Offer a brief centering prayer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Check in (about 40 minutes)</td>
<td>For the first meeting the check-in should be a brief introduction of each group member. For subsequent meetings, the check-in time will be used to share how the weekly practices went. Length of check in will depend on number in the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions and dialog (about 1 hour)</td>
<td>Choose from the questions provided, or write your own. Invite dialog and discussion of one or more questions. Encourage all participants to contribute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice (about 5 minutes)</td>
<td>Share the practice (homework) for the week with the participants and answer any questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embodiment (about 10 minutes)</td>
<td>Dim the lights and put on some meditation music. Read the embodiment aloud to the class. You may wish to practice ahead of time to ensure a smooth delivery with appropriate pauses and pacing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing Affirmation</td>
<td>Each week make copies of the affirmation cards (found after the session notes). Hand out the cards and have the group say the affirmation together as a closing. Invite the participants to work with the affirmation each day of the coming week.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spiritual Liberation Study Guide
Thriving in Unity 2.0 Benchmark 7

SESSION 1: Chapter 2 - Evolved People
Summary:
Patterns of thought and action develop over the course of a lifetime. Some of these patterns support us while others undermine us. Once we become conscious of the patterns we have formed, we can revisit them and make new choices. We have been given the power to create patterns of thought and action, and we have the power to change them. It comes down to understanding that we have been given dominion over our lives. Reality has dominion over illusion. You have been created to have dominion over your illusory, impermanent thought forms. To the degree that you exercise that dominion, you will experience what Jesus the Christ meant when he encouraged us to “consider the lilies of the field...”

By cultivating these seven practices of evolved people an entirely new self will be revealed to us, a self that has been present all along.
1) Giving thanks for what most people take for granted
2) Giving without an agenda
3) Seeing who can forgive first
4) Experiencing life as a celebration rather than a problem to be solved
5) Talking to ourselves and not to the world
6) Choosing happiness over drama
7) Understanding the value of downtime

Questions:
• What does it mean to you to have dominion over your life?
• What does it mean to “give without an agenda?” Have you experienced giving without an agenda and have you received a gift that you felt was given freely with no agenda?
• Imagine how your world would change if you were always racing to see who could forgive first. What resistance do you find comes up as you contemplate this, if any?
• Authentic rest is power. What keeps you from taking necessary downtime?

Practice:
Choose one of the seven practices of evolved people to work with for the coming week. Take time each day to contemplate the practice and to creatively apply it in your life. Make notes so that you can share your results during the check in portion of the next session.

Affirmation:
I fully recognize and activate my power to set clear and potent intentions. My attention is inwardly directed, and I receive intuitive guidance in language my heart can understand and respond to. In gratitude, I surrender and trust where the Spirit is leading me in my intention to transform.
SESSION 2: Chapter 6 - Inner Ecology: Your Personal Laws of Life

Summary:
Our self-growth is fueled by the contents of our inner ecology. Everything you need to fulfill your highest purpose on the planet is already within you. As we mature around our concept of the Godhead, we take responsibility for our lives. We walk the razor’s edge between our mortality and immortality. “Don’t blow this incarnation: and “you are an eternal being.” Be at Peace with your evolving Consciousness. When your personal laws of life include walking in balance between the mortal and the immortal, you become confident, and confidence leads you to acknowledge your worthiness and to deliver your talents and gifts on the planet. That which transforms your life is what you practice. And what you practice constitutes your personal laws of life—not what you merely believe in, but what you practice.

1) Sit and meditate on a daily basis, preferably first thing in the morning
2) Consciously circulate life-energy in the world (express kindness, encouragement, compassion and sharing of your financial resources.)
3) Celebrate the flow of Goodness into your life; celebrate the good that flows into the lives of others as though it were your own.

You are predisposed to vibrant health, affluence, love, compassion, creativity, generosity, equanimity, kindness—high octane qualities that will reconfigure your life in such a way that you will have tangible evidence that you are on the planet for a purpose.

Questions:
• In what ways have you noticed you are practicing “immature” wanting versus “mature” wanting?
• Have you lived through an experience that felt like lack, while staying in the consciousness of abundance? If so, what did this experience teach you? If you were unable to hold the consciousness of abundance, what got in the way?
• Where are you with the process of making peace with the temporariness of your life while embracing the fact that you are also an eternal being?
• Do you believe that you are on the planet for a purpose? If so, have you identified that purpose and are you living “on purpose”?

Practice:
Put the 3-step process described in this chapter into practice this week and note the results.

Affirmation:
Today, as I enter my meditation practice, I am open and receptive to my inner spirit revealing to me the personal laws of life by which I live. I courageously look at myself in all honesty and with full confidence in my ability to co-create with the Spirit the life I am here to live.
Spiritual Liberation Study Guide
Thriving in Unity 2.0 Benchmark 7

SESSION 3: Chapter 8 - Creatively Maladjusted

Summary:
Living “creatively maladjusted” is beautiful because it creates space for you to be transformed by the moment-by-moment renewing of your mind, heart, and spirit. Think of personality vs. character: It’s easy to tell if you are living from character or personality: If things aren’t going your way, personality pouts while character remains unruffled and learns from the experience. When you are not in psychologically or emotionally safe territory, personality panics. Character, on the other hand, rides the vicissitudes of life with even-mindedness. Personality endeavors to extract happiness from its experiences, whereas character realizes that happiness is an inherent quality of being that infuses experiences with happiness. Challenges are your spiritual liberators. Think of thermometers vs. thermostats (one reads what’s going on, the other sets the temperature.)

Questions:
• In what ways can you see that your personality is different from your character? How has your personality been influenced by societal norms?
• Think back to a challenge in your life that was particularly difficult. Are you able to put in to use in your journey to spiritual liberation? What blind spots or personality traits can you see it revealing to you?
• Consider the metaphor of thermometer vs. thermostat. What ways can you begin shifting your perspective to show up more as a thermostat than a thermometer?
• What does your truce character yearn to express?

Practice: “What’s running me?” (page 107)
Pause throughout the week, especially when you are experiencing an challenge with someone else or with yourself (engaged in negative self-talk) and ask yourself, “What’s running me?” Notice when your old personality programs and motivations are preventing you from entering the realm of intimacy and love, excellence, and vitality character. Jot some notes in a journal throughout the week and share during check-in at the next session.

Affirmation:
Today, I confidently step out of my comfort zone. I let go of self-consciousness and egoic concerns as I express myself freely, fully. I dedicate myself to genuine self-expression and know the joy of being my true self.
SESSION 4: Chapter 9 - Architects of the Beloved Community

Summary:
As the realization that we are members of a world family finds its home in more and more hearts, people across the globe are dissolving manmade boundaries and acknowledging our interconnectedness. Love: the ultimate conqueror. We are all members of a world family. **Love is not an emotion, a romantic notion; it is a living, organically powerful energy that holds together the fabric of the created world. Love is what we are.** The world is looking for love masters.

*We are not here to “save” the world, but to serve an emerging paradigm of love, connectedness, and generosity of heart.* Ordinary people can respond in an extraordinary way. Your life is as significant as the greatest harbingers of peace. You are as cherished by the Spirit as any master or saint who ever walked the planet. When you think and act from a spiritualized consciousness, you have joined the revolution of values and serve as a beneficial presence on the planet. With awareness, free yourself from the common worldview and discover your own viewpoints independent of popular opinion. Become an emissary of love, peace, kindness and generosity.

Questions:
- What does it mean to you to be a member of a Beloved Community?
- How do you show up as loving service in YOUR life?
- What beliefs about yourself would you have to give up in order to fully believe that you are as powerful as Gandhi or Martin Luther King Jr.?
- Have you noticed moments where awakening to your inherent love-nature has been messy or uncomfortable? If so, how did you deal with it?

Practice: Architects of the Beloved Community release a vibration of love wherever they go—in line at the market, on the freeway, at the gym, in the workplace, in the presence of so-called enemies (p. 125). As you go about your week, make a conscious effort to release the vibration of love wherever you are.

Affirmation:
*I know that my true essence is love, divine love. Such a potency of love am I that, were I to realize its fullness, I would be on my knees before my own inner self. Today, I embrace all of my brothers and sisters in this love. I wrap myself and every man, woman, and child in this love. I have no enemies, imagined or real. I practice world citizenry and radiate out a blessing of love upon the planet.*
**Spiritual Liberation Study Guide**  
**Thriving in Unity 2.0 Benchmark 7**

**SESSION 5: Chapter 14 - Spiritually Liberating Livelihood**

**Summary:**
The purpose of business is threefold: the fulfillment of society’s living needs and the creation of an environment in which happiness and self-development may flourish and art and beauty are encouraged. All else is an invasion of the ego in to business endeavors. From a progressive point of view, once career success has been achieved, it’s time to support the web of life by applying the principles that helped you become personally successful to creating global success. The growing recognition of the interconnectedness of body, mind, and spirit is excellent news for our society because it acknowledges that success in any endeavor begins with an integral approach. Here are seven keys that allow each individual to experience a flourishing personal and professional life.

1) Adequate hydration  
2) Good nutrition  
3) Exercise  
4) Detoxification  
5) Benevolent universe  
6) Light (dosage of sunlight every day)  
7) Adequate Rest everyday

**Questions:**
- How important do you think it is that your work life (or vocation) and your spiritual life be integrated?
- Give an example of a work/vocation experience that honored and encouraged spiritual expression.
- How might you be able to impact your career and/or work environment through applying spiritual practices?
- What, if anything, is in the way of your commitment to more deeply practicing the seven keys?

**Practice:**
During group time, give each participant a copy of the attached circle graph. Ask each participant to chart where each of the keys lands for them (from poor to excellent). If each key is “excellent” then the “wheel” is balanced. Notice which of the keys could be improved and work with it for the coming week. Take notes of your experience to share during check-in at the next session.

**Affirmation:**
_I acknowledge my desire to realize personal and professional success. I fully express my gifts, talents, and skills. I know that through my spirit of generosity, by holding back nothing, the universe fully supports me and sources my good in like measure. I give thanks for this co-creative, reciprocal relationship and enter into it with trust, integrity, and commitment._
SESSION 6: Chapter 15 - Minding Your Spiritual Manners on Planet Earth

Your name is on the A-list for a cosmic happening: an invitation to realize total aliveness, a state of being that Matthew Fox called “radical amazement.” Of all the species on the planet, the human being alone has an inherent taste for enlightenment and the ability to realize it. It is the innate capacity to wake up that caused Buddhist to describe a human incarnation as very precious. Spirits’...joy comes from a freewill offering of our love, gratitude, and the full-out use of our gifts, talents and skills.

Explore the spiritual practices of:
- gratitude
- enthusiasm
- integrity
- respect
- generosity
- creativity

Questions:
- What does the idea of minding your spiritual manners mean to you?
- How does knowing that your energy impacts others change your ideas about what is proper etiquette?
- Which of the six practices defined in this chapter speak to you the most and why?
- What gets in your way of minding your manners?

Practice:
Choose a different practice each day in the coming week to contemplate for 5 to 10 minutes of quite time (gratitude, enthusiasm, integrity, respect, generosity, creativity). Bring the word and concept deep into your heart. Using the power of love, open your heart and surrender deeply to expressing that quality throughout your day. Call forth the power to remove any barriers, blocks, or hesitation to fully embodying the trait for the day. Take notes on your daily experiences to share during check-in at the next session.

Affirmation:

*It is easy for me to mind my spiritual manners because I know who and what I am as an emissary of the spirit on earth. I surrender to life in full awareness and gratitude for all the gifts that have been freely by Existence. So with utmost respect for my individual life and that of all beings, creatures, and nature, I simply say thank you Infinite Spirit.*
Spiritual Liberation Study Guide
Thriving in Unity 2.0 Benchmark 7

SESSION 7: Chapter 17 - Soulware for Authentic Happiness.
As human beings, we have a sense of entitlement where happiness is concerned and with good reason: happiness is our true nature. Each individual must give his or her consent to being happy. Choosing happiness as a way of life ultimately leads to the understanding that joy is our natural state of being. Genuine happiness begins when we become conscious that we are co-creators of our destiny with life’s source. Our Soulware for happiness is downloaded through meditation, affirmative prayer, spiritual study, visioning, contemplation, and sacred service.

These practices re-groove our habitual thought patterns and enable us to make wisdom-guided, happiness-producing choices.
   The 4 C’s (causes) of Happiness (p226):
   - Conversation: Vibrational heaven or hell?
   - Company: Keeping it Holy
   - Challenges: Maps to your inner growth
   - Commitment: the hallmark of freedom
And one extra -
   - Consciousness: the ability to be aware that you are aware

Questions:
- Are there times in your life when you have been into “pseudo pleasure” versus a natural state of joy? What have you learned from these experiences?
- What does it mean to you that “Happiness is a choice?”
- Have tried applying spiritual law to the desires of the “entitled ego,” and if so to what effect? Where are you with regard to your relationship between happiness and material things?
- Which of the 4 (5) C’s of Happiness touch you the deepest and why?

Practice:
Choose one of the 4 (5) C’s of Happiness to focus on for the week (or choose a different one each day). Bring the concept into your prayer/quiet time. Notice how well you do in demonstrating that concept. Notice what resistance comes up. Notice any shifts in your perception as you focus on the concept. Continue experimenting with each concept as often as you like.

Affirmation:
The cosmic laughter of Spirit bathes my soul in joy. I see with clear seeing, and all that I do is from the pure joy of being. I love life and I love living. I love being me as I am me.
Additional Material:

Chapter 18: How to Make It through the Night: A Luminous View of the Dark Night of the Soul
The material in this chapter is ideally suited for individuals experiencing deeply challenging circumstances. For those in your study group that fall into this category, you may wish to suggest that they read chapter 18 sooner rather than later. This concluding chapter will clarify how spiritually beneficial the dark night is to those who are deeply committed to their self-realization. To individual accustomed to living in conscious communion with the Ineffable, this dark night is an excruciating dry spell without a trace of divine succor. While it seems more natural than unnatural to reject the dark night experience, one does so at the expense of a profound purification in consciousness. To the Spirit, light and dark and equal; there is no separation, no difference. Expanding beyond the narrow confines of resistance to the dark night causes something within to break through the habitual mental pattern that’s holding you hostage. A shift takes place. You will see yourself anew.

Spiritual Liberation the movie:
Produced by the pioneers at Elevate Films, Spiritual Liberation is an intimate look into the life of one of the most respected evolutionary teachers of our time. As you walk with Michael Bernard Beckwith (Founder and Spiritual Director of the Agape International Spiritual Center and featured in The Secret) through an actual day in his life, you will see why his teachings have empowered thousands of spiritual seekers for more than two decades. Inspired by his book, Spiritual Liberation-Fulfilling Your Soul’s Potential, Michael shares in this film genuine solutions to the challenges of our times, while awakening us to our life’s purpose.

SPECIAL FEATURES:

- Première Performance of "You Can Dream" by APL.DE.AP of the Black Eyed Peas
- 8 Musical performances of Rickie Byars Beckwith and The Agape International Choir
- Supplemental interviews about: Love, Forgiveness, Living on Purpose and Meditation
- The Genesis of Spiritual Liberation: A talk with Michael Bernard Beckwith and Director, Mikki Wills
- The secret recipe of "The Green Shake"

Additional bonus features include interviews with USC football coach Pete Carroll, bestselling author Iyanla Vanzant, actor and filmmaker Mario Van Peebles, Mark Harris, Producer of the Oscar Winning Film, Crash, and motivational speaker Lisa Nichols.

www.unity.org/thrive
Rate the seven keys.

- Adequate Hydration
- Good Nutrition
- Exercise
- Detoxification
- Adequate Rest Everyday
- Light (dosage of sunlight every day)
- Belief in a Benevolent Universe
Example of completed graph.

- Adequate Hydration
- Good Nutrition
- Exercise
- Detoxification
- Belief in a Benevolent Universe
- Light (dosage of sunlight every day)
- Adequate Rest Everyday
- Good Nutrition
- Adequate Hydration

Legend:
- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Excellent

Building Community—www.unity.org/thrive
Example of ideal graph.
Ministry Name: ________________________________________________________________

Address: _______________________________________________________________________

City: ______________________________________________ State: _______  Zip: _________

Thriving in Unity Champion: ___________________________________________________

Phone: ___________________________ Email: ______________________________

Please complete the following information to meet Benchmark 7: Create a small group activity using one of the three options for this benchmark. Choose a small group booklet created by our Association, The Third Jesus by Deepak Chopra, or Spiritual Liberation by Michael Bernard Beckwith. You may receive credit for previous work if you completed a book study on one of the books within the 12 months.

General Information

☐ Ordered Small Group Ministry Guide (REQUIRED)

Booklet/Book selected: ____________________________________________________________

☐ Date classes held: _____________________________________________________________

☐ Number of participants: _________________________________________________________

Results

Please use the lines below to record your impressions of how achieving this benchmark has impacted your ministry:

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________________________________________________________________________________
Feedback
Please use the space provided to record your feedback on the following questions (use additional paper if needed):

What were your greatest success and your greatest challenge in implementing this benchmark?
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

How do you feel this benchmark spiritually stretched your volunteers and congregants? How did the content support your ministry’s development?
________________________________________________________________________________
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Did you use the study guides provided? Why or why not? What other materials would have been helpful for you to have in meeting this benchmark?
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Benchmark 8: Expand Your Spiritual Social Action Activities

The Art and Spirit of Spiritual Social Action (SSA)
As the 5th and final of Unity’s basic teachings tells us, it is not enough to know Unity principles, we must live them. Spiritual social action is a way for us to put our principles into practice. In addition, research shows that thriving ministries are active in making a difference in their local communities and beyond. By putting feet on our faith, we serve the world, evolve our own consciousness, and provide an example that inspires our community. What better way to attract to our congregation those who are searching for a spiritual community that makes a difference in the world?

Getting Started
The Golden Rule is found in some form in all faiths. The New Thought version could be phrased: “Whatever you put out into the universe returns to you, multiplied.” What we do to another we do to ourselves. World events have a role to play in our awakening, helping us to become present. Imagine if the key to awakening was rooted in acting with love and compassion in response to world events.

Whether we are responding to environmental or humanitarian concerns, we choose to step into action from the higher consciousness of love. In SSA we set up programs that invite participants to do their part, to offer what they can, and to feel part of their own transformation. This work empowers rather than invites dependency. Engaging in humanitarian compassionate service is different from the kind of charity we may have been taught. Just as we learn that tithing is different from charitable giving, true spiritual social action moves us out of the role of “benevolent giver handing down to a needy receiver,” to “two hearts sharing the same space.” This is a reciprocal action, a mutually beneficial exchange.

Knowing that the Christ Presence is within all, we do not do “charity work” for those who are “unfortunate souls.” Rather we honor each, knowing no matter how outer circumstances may look, every person has something of value to give. This benchmark will assist you and your congregation in taking part in a spiritual social action event or cause.

For those who have completed TiU 1.0, we have kept some of the same options from the spiritual social action benchmark as a way to build consistency. For TiU 2.0, we have upped the intensity by requiring three SSA options. With five choices, you can choose to continue an event you began in TiU 1.0, choose from something new, or both. Please use the Benchmark 8 Tracking Sheet to record your results.
Spiritual Social Action Activities:
The activity options will stretch you in a number of ways:

- Adopt a church-wide statement about your commitment to social action.
- Go deeper into an activity you started in Thriving in Unity 1.0 by repeating it on a higher level.
- Step into something brand new offered in TiU 2.0.

The important thing to remember is that you are building a pattern of acting. You are bringing the spiritual social action into the heart of your ministry. You are stepping into intentional action to bring about individual and collective transformation.

Action Steps

1. Review and implement the requirement to adopt a ministry-wide statement on SSA (part one).
2. Select three activities from the list of options that best suits your ministry (part two).
3. Consider how you can invite the broader community to participate in your events by promoting your event to the general public, your neighborhood, a neighboring school, or a local business. (See Benchmark 4 from TiU 1.0 for information on how to publicize your event, www.unity.org/thrive.)
4. Plan and execute the chosen activities.
5. Celebrate your successes!
6. Complete the Benchmark Tracking Sheet and submit it to the Association home office (Attn Communications) as soon as you have completed the benchmark. You will find tracking sheets in this book, as well as on the web as a fill-in form (www.unity.org/thrive).
Part One (required):
Adopt a statement about your ministry’s commitment to spiritual social action.

You may do this any way you wish to, but ideally this process will be as inclusive as possible. Below are some suggestions for how to carry this out:

- Announce that a statement is being drafted and request volunteers to become part of a team to write and present the statement.
- Deliver a Sunday lesson on SSA and end by inviting all congregants to submit their version of an SSA statement, have a team (the board or another volunteer/staff team) review the submissions and either choose one or draft one inspired by the submissions.
- Present the sample statement below and invite suggestions from the congregation or ministry leaders.

Sample statement:
Through our ongoing commitment to spiritual social action, Unity Church of Anytown contributes to creating a world that works for all by recognizing the Christ Presence in everyone and honoring the sanctity of all life on Earth.

Part Two (required):
Choose at least three options to receive credit for this benchmark.

Option 1: EarthCare Congregation Program

The EarthCare Team, a ministry team of the Association of Unity Churches International, has designed the EarthCare Congregation Program to assist congregations in integrating an earth-oriented spirituality into their ministry. How we interact with our environment speaks volumes about our commitment to doing our part in co-creating a world that works for all. There is no “they” out there who will solve the moral issues facing our world today. We are the ones we have been waiting for. “If it is to be, it’s up to me.”

The program consists of three components:
1. EarthCare Covenant
2. EarthCare Commitment Program
3. EarthCare Congregation Certification

To obtain credit for this option, please complete the Earthcare Covenant only. Congregations wishing to take this further are invited to consider components 2 and 3, but they are not required under the Thriving in Unity 2.0 program. Go to www.unity.org/thrive for information on all three components.
Option 2: Create your own “11 Days of Global Unity”

Beginning with Unity World Day of Prayer and continuing through to the UN International Day of Peace, Unity is inviting participation in events for celebrating oneness and healing our world. See Benchmark 7 of Thriving in Unity 1.0 or visit www.11daysofunity.org for more information. Hold a minimum of three activities within the 11 days to get credit for this choice.

Option 3: Offer prosperity to a family affected by AIDS

Heifer International provides livestock such as bulls for plowing fields, cows which produce milk that can be sold, and much more. Recipients also receive training that can make the difference between a farming family living in hunger and poverty, and that same family having plenty to eat and being able to help others. You and your congregation can raise funds to purchase livestock and training for impoverished African families stricken with AIDS or orphans of AIDS. The offspring of the animals are given to other families in need in the village, passing on prosperity to others. The economic impact within the community grows exponentially. Visit www.heifer.org for more information.

Option 4: Habitat for Humanity (HFHI)

Habitat for Humanity International is a nonprofit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry. HFHI seeks to eliminate poverty housing and homelessness from the world, and to make decent shelter a matter of conscience and action. Habitat invites people of all backgrounds, races, and religions to build houses together in partnership with families in need. Habitat has built more than 250,000 houses around the world, providing more than 1 million people in more than 3,000 communities with safe, decent, affordable shelter.

Habitat is not a giveaway program. For more information visit www.habitatforhumanity.org.

Option 5: Celebrate Earth Day

The 40th anniversary of Earth Day is in 2010. It also marks the beginning of the Green Generation Campaign. Under the umbrella of the Green Generation, thousands of events are currently being planned in schools, communities, villages, towns and cities around the world. Visit www.earthday.net for event planning support, religious community outreach materials, and to publicize your event with the Earth Day Network.

Because we know that every ministry’s needs are different, we are offering more options than before for spiritual social action. Stay tuned to the website for new options as they become available.
TiU 2.0 Benchmark 8 Tracking Sheet

Ministry Name: ________________________________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________________________

City: __________________________________________ State: _______ Zip: _________

Thriving in Unity Champion: ___________________________________________________

Phone: ___________________________ Email: _______________________________________

Please complete the following information to meet Benchmark 8: a) write and adopt an SSA statement for your ministry; b) Plan and hold at least three of the six Spiritual Social Action event options.

**General Information**

- Statement drafted and adopted (attach statement on separate sheet)
- Choice: __________________________ Date: __________________
- Choice: __________________________ Date: __________________
- Choice: __________________________ Date: __________________

**Results**

Please record your impressions of how achieving this benchmark has impacted your ministry:

________________________________________________________________________________

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Feedback
Please use the space provided to record your feedback on the following questions (use additional paper if needed):

What were your greatest success and your greatest challenge in implementing this benchmark?

________________________________________________________________________________
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How do you feel this benchmark spiritually stretched you, your ministry’s leadership, volunteers, and congregants? How has bringing SSA to the forefront in your ministry benefited or challenged the leadership team and congregants?

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What other materials would have been helpful for you to have in meeting this benchmark?

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Benchmark 9: Deepen Your Practice of Living and Being Peace

Choose from a variety of activities to interact more deeply with the powerful and transformative practices of BePeace (Heart Math & Non-Violent Communication) and the *I of the Storm* material.

**The Art & Spirit of Peacemaking**
We chose to keep this benchmark because of the powerful impact it can have on your ministry. As with Thriving in Unity 1.0, this benchmark will enhance your ministry’s conscious commitment to practicing peace. We must embrace new ways of relating and crafting relationships. When people and organizations begin the process of transformation, a certain level of discomfort can appear. Human nature can lead us to manage this discomfort by looking outside ourselves for the cause, rather than looking inward for what we need to shift. This can derail our change process and strain our relationships. This benchmark offers ministries two options for consciously and intentionally developing the type of viewpoint and communication skills that allow people to move through the process of transformation with a greater degree of grace and ease.

**Getting Started**
The intention is to create healthier and more resilient relationships within congregations and among congregational leaders, improving people’s capacity to manage disagreement through healthy, direct communication and to take responsibility without blame. We invite you to stretch yourself beyond what you accomplished last year. Go deeper, offer the course(s) required for volunteer leaders, open it to the public, include your YOU in the courses, etc. Please use the Benchmark 9 Tracking Sheet to record your results.

**Action Steps**
1. Review the choices on the following pages.
2. Select the option that works best for your ministry.
3. If you completed TiU 1.0, determine how you will enhance your ministry’s implementation of this benchmark.
4. Order the requisite materials and/or schedule a workshop with a trained presenter.
5. Complete the Benchmark Tracking Sheet and submit it to the Association home office (Attn Communications) as soon as you have completed the benchmark. You will find tracking sheets in this book, as well as on the web as a fill-in form (www.unity.org/thrive).
Option 1: The I of the Storm, Embracing Conflict, Creating Peace

by Dr. Gary Simmons

Even if you offered this course as part of Thirving in Unity 1.0, we encourage you to consider scheduling a time for this material to be shared with your congregation as part of your experience in Thriving in Unity 2.0.

Summary

What if everything in your life—every judgment, every failure, every obstacle, every conflict, illness, and loss was really about exposing your capacity to make the difference—grist for the millstone of your own becoming?

And, what if you really knew the difference between you and your experiences, that you are not your experiences? You have experiences, but experiences don’t have to have you. What difference would you make when your way of relating was inspired by who you are, who you have come here to be, instead of what’s happening to you?

Participants will learn how to:

• Recover from judgment and criticism.
• Dismantle the belief that someone or something is against them.
• Gain relevant skills for dealing with stressful situations.

To order the 8-week program with all teaching materials, go to www.unity.org/shop. The teacher materials include:

• Teacher’s Guide and Lesson Plans
• Day by Day Reconciliation Journal
• The Art & Practice of Living with Nothing and No One Against You
• The I of the Storm
• The I of the Storm for Teens

How will you offer this curriculum on a deeper level?

Consider these ideas:

• Making the course a requirement for all volunteer team leaders or holding a class especially for them.
• Including it as part of the required training for YFM volunteers.
• Offering it to ministry staff.
• Offering The I of the Storm for Teens on the same night as the adult class for parents and teens.
• Invite the community to participate by promoting the class outside as well as within the ministry.
Option 2: BePeace

As Mahatma Gandhi said, “Nonviolence is not a garment to be put on and off at will. Its seat is in the heart, and it must be an inseparable part of our very being.” It is a practice rooted in understanding, in living honestly, and in acting empathically with all beings. Of course this starts with the self. We must first understand and act empathically towards ourselves in order to impact the world in wonderful and compassionate ways. This means cultivating nonviolence in every action and being present to our own needs and feelings in each and every moment.

Nonviolent Communication (NVC) is a “language of life” that helps us to transform old patterns of defensiveness and aggressiveness into compassion and empathy and to improve the quality of all our relationships. Studying and practicing NVC creates a foundation for learning about ourselves and our relationships in every moment, and helps us to remain focused on what is happening right here, right now. Although it is a model for communication, NVC helps us to realize just how important connection is in our lives. In fact, having the intention to connect with ourselves and others is one of the most important goals of practicing and living NVC. We live our lives from moment to moment, yet most of the time we are on autopilot, reacting out of habit rather than out of awareness and presence of mind. By creating a space for attention and respect in every moment, NVC helps create a pathway and a practice that is accessible and approachable.

Founded by Rita Marie Johnson, BePeace, a synergistic combination of HeartMath and Nonviolent Communication, maintains a creative state of personal and interpersonal peace. When this practice is used, it increases social and emotional intelligence and resolves conflicts.

- Skill of “feeling peace” using the Institute of HeartMath’s Freeze-Framer, a scientifically-validated method of building emotional intelligence, taught through verbal instruction. This method is also taught through software, with a finger sensor for monitoring heart rhythms, which acts as a guide to aligning the activity of the brain and the heart. As a result, individuals improve emotional stability and anger management while lowering test anxiety, resulting in higher test scores.

- Skill of “speaking peace” using Nonviolent Communication, developed by Dr. Marshall Rosenberg, founder of the Center for Nonviolent Communication in 1984. This method, now taught in over 30 countries, has stood the test of time and cross-cultural effectiveness. NVC is a spiritual practice disguised as a communication technique.

Unity ministries often teach NVC as a ten hour course focusing on the objectives of giving empathy, expressing honesty in relationships and conflict resolution. These broad objectives, worthy as they are, are generally too advanced for the beginning student. The result is that participants learn a somewhat mechanical, technical process that holds promise, but leaves most unable to use NVC in a fulfilling fashion.
BePeace training is a powerful method for learning and using NVC due to its inclusion of HeartMath techniques. This transforms NVC from a technique to a spiritual practice. The practice begins with developing self-empathy, and only after this has been mastered would a person move into more advanced courses in giving others empathy, expressing honesty, and conflict resolution.

To complete this benchmark successfully, ministries can begin offering this powerful practice by choosing one or more of the following options:

**Option 1: Offer a basic, introductory NVC course. (Resources at www.cnvc.com)**
Currently, Unity Institute teaches a 10 hour course and all new Unity ministers are trained to teach this in their churches. However, the course could easily be shortened by de-emphasizing the ways NVC can be used and simply presenting the technique. Many trainers who offer a Saturday (8 hour) workshop do this shortened version in a 3 hour class offered on Friday night for beginners.

**Option 2: Offer a basic, introductory course in HeartMath.**
Present a course based on the book *HeartMath Solutions*, by Doc Childre.

**Option 3: Follow up the introductory NVC course with a course in self-empathy.**
The spiritual teaching of NVC is that our needs are our inner guidance system, alerting us to the living energy of our divinity. As we come to more deep awareness of “what is alive in us,” we shift into a spiritual awareness of source energy. Self-empathy is the path to the spirituality of NVC.

**Option 4: Set up an NVC practice group within the church.**
This gives the class participants a place to continue their learning. There is an excellent guidebook that the church can use, by Lucy Leu, *Nonviolent Communication: Companion Workbook*, Encinitas, CA: PuddleDancer Press, 2003. Using this guidebook, which accompanies Rosenberg’s book chapter by chapter, anyone with basic NVC training can facilitate a practice group. Many groups find it successful to rotate the facilitation.

**Option 5: Invite a trained BePeace facilitator to your church community.**
You can have a trained facilitator work with you to create a program that best fits your ministry. Contact Dennis Breed, Director of BePeace USA at 816.863.8499 or dennisbreed@yahoo.com.

**Option 6: Sponsor a church member in becoming a certified BePeace instructor.**
Identify a ministry champion to become a certified BePeace instructor. From time to time, this course is offered at Unity Village. Please check www.unity.org for any training dates. Or for more information on BePeace please visit www.academyforpeace.org.
How will you offer this curriculum on a deeper level?
Consider these ideas:

- Making the course a requirement for all volunteer team leaders or holding a class especially for them
- Including it as part of the required training for YFM volunteers
- Offering it to ministry staff
- Choosing a more involved option than your previous choice in TiU 1.0
- Committing to more than one option
- Including it as part of the required training for YFM volunteers
TiU 2.0 Benchmark 9 Tracking Sheet

Ministry Name: ________________________________________________________________

Address: _____________________________________________________________________

City: ___________________________________________ State: _______ Zip: _________

Thriving in Unity Champion: ___________________________________________________

Phone: ___________________________ Email: ________________________________

Please complete the following information to meet Benchmark 9: Hold peacemaking skills or non-violent communication course.

General Information
Check at least one item for full benchmark credit.

☐ We completed the 8-week *I of the Storm* Course
Dates: _______________________________ Number of participants: _________

We completed the following from BePeace (Check all that apply)

☐ NVC class dates: _______________________________ Number in class: ____________
☐ HeartMath class dates: ___________________________ Number in class: ____________
☐ Self-empathy class dates: _________________________ Number in class: ____________
☐ Set up an NVC practice group Number of participants: _________
☐ BePeace workshop dates: _________________________ Number attending: __________
☐ Sponsored member to become certified in BePeace Name: _______________________

Results
Please use the lines below to record your impressions of how achieving this benchmark has impacted your ministry:
________________________________________________________________________________
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Feedback
Please use the space provided to record your feedback on the following questions (use additional paper if needed):

What were your greatest success and greatest challenge in implementing this benchmark?
________________________________________________________________________________
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If you participated in TiU 1.0, how did you choose to up-level your implementation of this benchmark?
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What other materials would have been helpful for you to have in meeting this benchmark?
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Benchmarks 10, 11 & 12: Developing the Organization
Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world. —Harriet Tubman

The quadrant that is devoted to developing the organization is the upper right. It contains all activities concerned with the outer expression of the consciousness found in the first quadrant. It is measurable and tangible. Just like the body is the outer expression for individuals, the organization is the outer expression for ministries.

How the organization operates—its structures, its health—can be overly focused on in the business world. In ministry we can put off the often mundane organizational tasks as they may seem less important when compared to the inner work of consciousness development. But without our outward demonstrations, our “good works,” others cannot see and be impacted by our inner consciousness.

In this section we will look at some small steps your ministry can make in enhancing the conscious development of your organization. First, we will look at how your ministry and congregation can become more deeply connected to the Unity movement and all it has to offer. Second, we will focus on specific financial practices that support organizational health. And third, we will offer some ideas for enhancing the Sunday morning worship service.

The benchmarks for this section are:
11. Connect your congregants to convention and regional meetings
12. Assess basic accounting practices
13. Enhance Sunday services
Benchmark 10: Connect Your Congregants to Convention & Regional Meetings

Plan an event or service that builds enthusiasm and excitement as you share with your congregation all the amazing things unfolding in our movement.

The Art & Practice of Connecting to the Whole

When we intentionally connect our ministry and our congregants to the activities of spirit unfolding in our movement as a whole, we access a synergy and a depth of meaning that goes beyond what we can provide as an individual ministry. Every year, our Association and our regions come together to join hearts and minds and focus our attention on our movement. Perhaps you are a regular attendee of our annual Association’s Unity People’s Convention, or perhaps you have never missed your region’s gatherings. Many ministries have yet to take advantage of these wonderful times for community building and personal development. With this benchmark you have the opportunity to extend your experiences at the annual convention and at your regional meeting into your congregation.

Getting Started

Make plans to share the insights and wisdom you gain from the Unity People’s Convention and your regional meetings with your congregation. This can happen during a Sunday service immediately following your return, as an afternoon workshop or potluck lunch following services, or even as a mid-week meeting. The idea is to make sure as many congregants as possible have a chance to increase their understanding of all that is unfolding in our movement and just how they fit into the picture. Additional resources may be available to support you in sharing with your congregation. All ministries will receive materials by mail to support sharing the convention experience, including:

- Videos entitled, “One,” and “Now is the Time” about the movement and how individuals and ministries make a difference
- Booklet showing business meeting information

Check www.unity.org/thrive for additional support for this benchmark, or see www.unity.org, Ministries and Leaders tab, where news for your ministry newsletter will be posted.

If you were unable to attend the most recent meeting, contact someone who was there for information on what was shared. Ask colleagues who attended for support, or invite a regional or Association representative to come to your ministry to present the information. You may even be able to team up with other congregations in your area to bring in this representative, thus building even more connections.
Action Steps

1. Schedule a sharing event shortly after this year’s Convention and regional meetings (see www.unity.org for dates and locations).

2. Encourage members of your congregation to attend either Convention or regionals as appropriate.

3. Plan how you will share your experiences with the congregation. If several members attend along with the minister(s), you may wish to include them in the planning and presentation to the congregation.

4. The event could be a lunch, workshop, evening meeting or a Sunday service (or two) to share the experience of both the regional meeting you attend and the annual Convention.

5. Hold the event and collect feedback from attendees.

6. Complete the Benchmark Tracking Sheet and submit it to the Association home office (Attn Communications) as soon as you have completed the benchmark. You will find tracking sheets in this book, as well as on the web as a fill-in form (www.unity.org/thrive).
TiU 2.0 Benchmark 10 Tracking Sheet

Ministry Name: ________________________________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________________________

City: ________________________________________ State: _______ Zip: _________

Thriving in Unity Champion: ___________________________________________________

Phone: ___________________________ Email: _____________________________________

Please complete the following information to meet Benchmark 10: Connect Your Congregants to Convention & Regional Meetings

**General Information**

- We planned and held an event to share information from this year’s Convention
  - Date: ________________________________ Number attending: __________

- We planned and held an event to share information from our regional meeting
  - Date: ________________________________ Number attending: __________

**Results**

Please use the lines below to record your impressions of how achieving this benchmark has impacted your ministry:

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________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
Feedback
Please use the space provided to record your feedback on the following questions (use additional paper if needed):

What were your greatest success and greatest challenge in implementing this benchmark?
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
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How do you feel this benchmark increased ministry and congregational connection to the broader Unity movement? Can you feel an energetic difference as you continue to consciously connect to the larger Unity movement?
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________________________________________________________________________________

What other materials would have been helpful for you to have in meeting this benchmark?
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Benchmark 11: Assess Basic Finance and Accounting Practices

The Art & Spirit of Stability:
Having a solid foundation upon which to build your spiritual community is a must for ministries that wish to thrive. Research shows that without exception, thriving ministries have solid financial practices. Congregants place enormous trust in us when they tithe and contribute. They expect that their church will be a good steward of their funds. Worrying about the security of those funds, not having clear procedures in place, ambiguity in the process that volunteers follow—all eat away at the energy and time available to attend to pastoral and worship needs. Perhaps you know how difficult it is to focus on serving your congregants when you have concerns about how the money is handled. Becoming conscious of best practices and putting them in place can bring a peace of mind and stability that every ministry deserves.

Getting Started:
This benchmark offers you a simple and concise way of assessing key areas of your ministry’s financial and accounting practices. It is designed to heighten awareness of those areas where you are right on track and those that require adjustments. Once the assessment is complete, you are encouraged to select key areas that need attention (if any) and set goals to make the needed changes. If you have many areas that need improvement, it may be advantageous to schedule a second review after several months to measure your progress and set new goals.

Action Steps:
1. Review the finance and accounting assessment tool on the following pages.
2. Create a team to complete an honest and in-depth assessment of where your financial practices stand. Your team may include staff, appropriate board members (treasurer, secretary, etc.), and even a congregant with finance/accounting experience.
3. After completing the assessment, take any immediate action steps needed.
4. Identify additional goals for future action to strengthen your accounting and financial polices and procedures.
5. Complete the Benchmark Tracking Sheet and submit it to the Association home office (Attn Communications) as soon as you have completed the benchmark. You will find tracking sheets in this book, as well as on the web as a fill-in form (www.unity.org/thrive).

Special thanks to Julie Armour, Sr. Minister at Mountain Light Unity for her assistance in creating this benchmark.
Answer yes or no on each item. For orange items rectify any NO answers immediately. Identify your next steps and set goals for completion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Accounting System Software:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Do you have an accounting system in operation such as PowerChurch or QuickBooks?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, which system? ___________________________________________________________</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If no, how do you keep track of your ministry’s finances?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Data Back Up:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Do you have a process/procedure in place to back up all electronic data?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Annual Internal Accounting Review:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Do you have an annual internal or external accounting review process in place? (An individual trained in accounting or bookkeeping reviews the church’s general ledger, bank reconciliations, balance sheet and profit/loss statement.)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Accounting Controls (separation of duties):</strong>&lt;br&gt;Are different people involved in the critical steps for handling ministry money (counting, entering data in computer, depositing funds, reconciling bank statement, writing checks)?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have written policies and procedures regarding checks and balances in who handles money and how it is handled?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Counting The Offering:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Are there at least 2 members counting offerings? (minister or treasurer not included)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do counters verify the inside and the outside of the envelopes?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are all checks stamped immediately?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are money counters rotated each week?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are donor-restricted funds properly identified while counting offerings?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Depositing Funds (cash receipts):</strong>&lt;br&gt;Are 2 members of the offering counting team in custody of the offering until it is deposited in the bank, placed in a night depository, or in the church’s safe?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are all funds promptly deposited? Compare offering and other receipt records with bank deposits.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are all receipts deposited intact? Receipts should not be used to pay cash expenses.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. <strong>Financial Statements:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are statements prepared on a timely basis and submitted to the organization’s board?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do they include all funds (unrestricted, temporarily and permanently restricted)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do they include a statement of financial position and statement of activity?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are account balances in the financial records reconciled?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. <strong>Archiving Meeting Minutes:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a hard copy and electronic filing system for retaining and accessing meeting minutes that have financial implications?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upon request, are members allowed access to these meeting minutes?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. <strong>Adequacy of Insurance Coverage:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a schedule of insurance coverage in force that reflects effective and expiration dates, kind and classification of coverage, maximum amounts of each coverage, premiums and terms of payment?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Workers’ Compensation insurance being carried as provided by law in most states?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are employees (and perhaps some independent contractors) covered under the Workers' Compensation policy?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. <strong>Land, Buildings, and Equipment Records:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there detailed records of land, buildings, and equipment including date acquired, description, and cost or fair market value at date of acquisition?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was a physical inventory of equipment taken at year-end?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have the property records been reconciled to the insurance coverage?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. <strong>IRS Documentation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you keep records that show donors’ gifts made to the church for the seven years required by the IRS?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are individual donor records available for all single contributions of $250 or more?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If no goods or services were provided in exchange for a gift, does the receipt include a statement to this effect? (per IRS Sec 170, 1993)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ministry Name: ________________________________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________________

City: ___________________________ State: _______  Zip: _________

Thriving in Unity Champion: ___________________________________________________

Phone: ___________________________ Email: _____________________________________

Please complete the following information to meet Benchmark 11: Conduct a finance and accounting assessment.

**General Information**

- Team identified Date: ________________________
- Assessment complete Date: ________________________
- Presented to board Date: ________________________
- Immediate actions taken Date: ________________________
- Next steps identified Date: ________________________

**Results**

Please use the lines below to record your impressions of how this benchmark has impacted congregants in your ministry, you as minister, and the ministry overall (use additional paper if needed):

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________________________
Feedback
Please use the space provided to record your feedback on the following questions (use additional paper if needed):

What were your greatest success and greatest challenge in implementing this benchmark?
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
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Were there surprises in the assessment? How has the assessment assisted your ministry in resolving any outstanding finance and accounting issues?
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
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What other materials would have been helpful for you to have in meeting this benchmark?
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Benchmark 12: Enhance Your Sunday Services

Choose from several creative ideas that are designed to enhance Sunday services.

The Art & Spirit of Worship
Having a dynamic worship service is one of the best ways to enhance your congregants’ experience on Sunday morning as well as attract new people to your ministry. Research shows that having relevant, contemporary services that reach people in the heart as well as head is the key to worship service success. If you’re still doing church the way you’ve always done church, it may be time to consider changing things up a bit.

Getting Started
This benchmark will look at several aspects of planning a dynamic worship service that can immediately create a heart connection for those in attendance. Updating and enhancing your use of music, technology, and multi-media approaches can have a dramatic impact on the worship experience. These ideas will support your lessons and reinforce your efforts to clearly illustrate Unity principles and how to apply them in everyday life.

An effective worship service does more than make us think. It needs to get into our hearts and souls. Our goal should always be to send people back into the world saying, “I laughed, I cried, it changed my life!”

The following pages offer ideas and resources for you to consider in meeting this benchmark. Choose those that will stretch you but still feel doable for your situation.

Action Steps
1. Review the materials on the following pages.
2. Required—sign up for the Sound Connections monthly newsletter.
3. Select at least three ideas from the list of options to implement.
4. Consider attending the annual Sound Connections event, or sending your music director to attend. Check www.unity.org/music for upcoming schedules. (Not required.)
5. Complete the Benchmark Tracking Sheet and submit it to the Association home office (Attn Communications) as soon as you have completed the benchmark. You will find tracking sheets in this book, as well as on the web as a fill-in form (www.unity.org/thrive).
Enhancing Sunday Services:
Several of these options are focused on music, while others focus on upgrading technology, and still others offer creative ideas for adding new elements to the worship experience.

Required: Sign Up for Sound Connections Newsletter
One of the most immediate ways to increase the energy and effectiveness of your Sunday services is through music. Our Association’s Music Ministry Team have put together a wealth of resources to assist your ministry in creating a spectacular music ministry.

Go to www.unity.org/enews and sign your ministry up if you are not currently receiving the Sound Connections monthly email newsletter. This newsletter is packed with information to support you in up-leveling your music program. Each month you will receive this resource-rich newsletter with features including:

- Suggestions for music ideally suited for holidays and other services
- Free sheet music each month
- Information on upcoming events and educational opportunities
- Information and technical support for music ministries
- Resources such as where to find special offers on equipment, music magazines, and New Thought radio stations, etc.
- A monthly music feature with creative suggestions for your music team
- Reviews of new CDs and musicians that you can invite to your ministry
- A Q&A section with questions from the field
- Employment postings for job openings (find that perfect musical talent for your ministry!)

Options: Choose three to complete this benchmark

Option 1: Purchase and use music with true New Thought/Unity lyrics

How often do you complete a Sunday lesson on a core teaching, only to have your soloist launch into a song or hymn that contradicts your lesson? Because music is so powerful and gets past our thinking mind into our emotional body, a wonderful and even moving lesson can be completely undone by the music featured in the service if it has a different message.

It can be hard to find music that aligns with Unity’s teachings since most music written for church services carries a traditional message. Fortunately, Unity has gifted musical talent and a wealth of musical resources to assist you in better aligning your ministry’s music choices.
with Unity teachings. Our Music Ministry Team has made it easy for every church in our movement to have fantastic music that also supports and aligns with Unity teachings.

Order one or more of these music books for your ministry at www.unity.org/music and get ready to feel the impact of Unity’s powerful message set to music!

**Shine On**

#BA2270

This collection contains a wide variety of upbeat congregational songs, as well as some great solo pieces with sing-along choruses. The best part is that all of these songs have lyrics and a message that supports our wonderful, inclusive theology, all without changing any words! Includes, piano/vocal score, lead sheets, lyric sheets and song clips CD.

**One Voice**

#BA2260

An awesome mix of solo, congregational, chants and choral selections from New Thought music’s best songwriters. Includes a CD of 2 minute song clips and lead sheets of most of the songs. Format is standard piano/vocal arrangements.

**Seeds of Light**

#BA2266

*Seeds of Light* is the fifth book in a series of New Thought music offerings for our music ministries from such artists/songwriters as Karen Drucker, Daniel Nahmod, David Roth, J.D. Martin, Jan Garrett, Peter Mayer, Devotion, Faith Rivera and many more. This book features music for soloists, congregational and ensemble singing, in upbeat and meditative styles. Formatted for piano/vocal, with separate lead sheets, lyric sheets and a CD of sound clips for each song.
Option 2: Get Contemporary
Shift from a piano and song leader to a band

Selecting the right songs for your services is important. However having the right instrumentation is even more important for creating an energized and more contemporary feel. This may seem like a big step, and it is, but it can be done and you will be amazed at the results!

We can learn from our friends in traditional Christian churches who learned long ago that having a powerful praise band with uplifting worship music would help to increase energy and attendance on Sunday morning. Contemporary music can reach the post WWII crowd. As Josh Hart, a Christian minister who has been through this transition, puts it:

“I grew up on the mission field and knew that to reach people, you have to eat their food, dress their dress, and play their music. I knew if I went to Africa to reach Africans I would use bongo drums, not pipe organs. Why were we using organs and choirs to reach a generation that listened to drums, guitar and synthesizer? Why did our music sound so different from the culture? I observed several fast growing churches that were employing contemporary music.”

Switching from a traditional church sound to something more contemporary can present challenges, but they are not insurmountable. Many churches will start slowly by keeping the early service on Sunday more traditional and using the band at the later service. Some elements of contemporary worship can be blended into a traditional service without too much incompatibility. Newer choruses can be blended in that give the service a fresh feel. Or you may wish to start an entirely new service first and see how it grows.

If you are contemplating this change you may find it useful to do some research on the internet. You will find a wealth of resources in the contemporary Christian movement that can be adapted and applied to New Thought ministries. One such resource is A Practical Guide to Contemporary Worship. This book can be purchased for download for only $9.95 at www.contemporaryworship.net. It covers all of the ins and outs from creating the band to scheduling practices and services, to technical needs, to common pitfalls and mistakes.
Option 3: Use a computer, projector, screen and PowerPoint for song lyrics (and more)

In order to use more contemporary music, you will need to release your attachment to your hymnals and project song lyrics on a large screen using a quality projector. Not only will this allow you to use newer music, it will dramatically shift the feel of your services. Research shows that having at least 20 minutes of uninterrupted music and prayer allows congregants to shift deeply into a heart-centered spiritual experience during services. Having a projector and screen allows you to move seamlessly from one song to another to another. Using PowerPoint, you can put the words to the songs on screen for all to read and follow along. This enables you to impart an important part of the contemporary feel into a traditional service—the flow of going from song to song without interruption. No longer will you have to stop after every song to introduce the next one, or to tell the congregation to turn to the next page in the hymnal. This breaks up the mood of your worship service and interrupts the heart-centered energy you are creating through the music.

While it can take some time to create your song library at first, once you have many of the songs you use on slides, you can just insert them into your presentation for Sunday morning. Screens can also enhance other elements of your service, such as congregational prayer or ministry announcements. You can include inspirational visuals to reach the heart.

Visit www.unity.org/thrive for samples of slide shows for Unity ministries.

Option 4: Enhance sound equipment

One of the worst problems ministries can face on Sunday morning is poor sound. Squealing microphones, feedback during prayer time, inability to hear the minister or the music, intermittent dead-time during services, all send a message to your congregation—that your church services lack intention.

If this sounds like your Sunday experience, consider creating energy and support within the congregation to invest in a high quality sound system. Set the intention of having all the resources you need to make this important shift. Removing the stress and worry of sound problems from your Sunday morning experience will free you as a minister and your congregation to sink more deeply into the experience of Spirit.

Check out the Sound Connections newsletter for great ideas on where to purchase sound equipment.
Option 5: Add multimedia experiences to your services

If you already have a projection system (or once you get yours in place) consider using the wealth of resources available on DVD to support your Sunday lessons. Whether you cue up a DVD or use something from YouTube, short snippets of film can reinforce your message and even add deep emotion or mind-stretching content. YouTube clips will require web access in your sanctuary, or you can download free or low cost software such as a Tube Catcher or YouTube Downloader to “grab” YouTube videos and save them to your computer. Once saved on your computer it can be transferred to a disc or to your sanctuary computer for use during Sunday services.

Our Unity website often features inspiring short video clips that may support your lesson. Your friends and colleagues may also be a great source for videos—now those pesky emails may prove useful!

You can also use video to help promote upcoming events and volunteer opportunities. Take video at your events and share the results with the entire congregation and celebrate your accomplishments together. Your youth may be able to assist you with the filming and uploading of videos to YouTube or saving to computer and/or DVD for playback.

If you choose this option, show video clips during at least three services to receive credit.

Note: Broadcast of video materials produced by others may require permission from the producer. You can purchase a license, the fee is based on the size of your church. For more information go to cvli.com, the Church Video License provides legal coverage for churches and ministry organizations to show home videocassettes or DVDs of motion pictures.
TiU 2.0 Benchmark 12 Tracking Sheet

Ministry Name: ________________________________________________________________
Address: _______________________________________________________________________
City: ______________________________________________ State: _______ Zip: _________
Thriving in Unity Champion: ____________________________________________________
Phone: ___________________________ Email: _________________________________

Please complete the following information to meet Benchmark 12: Enhance Sunday worship services

General Information

❑ REQUIRED: We are signed up for the Sound Connections newsletter

Mark the three options you now have in place in your ministry
❑ Option 1: Order New Thought song book(s)
❑ Option 2: Use of a band for Sunday services
❑ Option 3: Use of a computer, projector, and screen
❑ Option 4: High quality sound equipment
❑ Option 5: Use of video in at least three Sunday services

Results
Please use the lines below to record your impressions of how achieving this benchmark has impacted your ministry:
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
Feedback
Please use the space provided to record your feedback on the following questions (use additional paper if needed):

What were your greatest success and greatest challenge in implementing this benchmark?

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

How do you feel focusing on these ideas has enhanced your Sunday experience?

________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

What other materials would have been helpful for you to have in meeting this benchmark?

________________________________________________________________________________
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