



Ministry Vacancy Information Packet

Unity Church of The Hills
Austin, TX

September 2024

About the Ministry

OVERVIEW

Unity Church of the Hills (UCOH) is a spirit-led community of love and acceptance that is located in the vibrant capital city of Austin, TX. Throughout our 29-year history, UCOH has been dedicated to the transformation of individual lives through spiritual education and amid a supportive community that prays and plays together. Our new Senior Minister must embody these same values. The right and perfect candidate will be a dynamic, motivational speaker and inspirational teacher with demonstrable spiritual maturity, emotional intelligence, and grounded leadership skills.

Locality

Our church is in the Texas Hill Country with a beautiful 14.6-acre campus, covered with live oak trees. There are two main buildings: (1) the main building with the sanctuary, chapel, offices, bookstore, Fellowship Hall and kitchen, plus classrooms (2) Unity Oaks with educational classrooms and a pavilion. We are also unique because of our incredible volunteers and staff, who have managed to provide wonderful events, activities, classes, groups and services during this transitional period. We are a wonderful, welcoming community.

Austin is located on the eastern edge of the Texas Hill Country, and within easy driving distance of San Antonio, Houston and Dallas-Fort Worth. It is one of the fastest growing destination cities in America. As the capital of Texas, Austin enjoys a thriving and diverse high tech, service-oriented economy, with excellent hospitals and medical care facilities, world class universities and colleges, a vibrant music and arts community, and a wide range of available sports and leisure activities year-round.

Lake Travis, Lake Austin and Lady Bird Lake (all three parts of the Colorado River) flow through the city, offering year-round water activities and stunning vistas. While there is a thriving downtown and residential area, Austin is surrounded by some of the most beautiful and desired suburban communities found anywhere in America.

Physical Description

We are a “green” city, committed to public spaces and sustainable building practices, and also the home to Formula-1 Racing events, South by Southwest, Austin City Limits and other international events. In the “Live Music Capital of the World” there is something for everyone.

Proximity to Other Unity Ministries or New Thought Centers

Unity Spiritual Center Pflugerville: 13 miles - Pflugerville

Unity in the Heart of Austin: 17 miles - Central Austin

Unity Church of Austin: 20 miles - Southwest Austin

Proximity to Other Unity Ministries or New Thought Centers (Continued)

Unity Spiritual Center of Georgetown: 30 miles - Georgetown

Unity of Wimberley: 50 miles - Wimberley

Austin Center for Spiritual Living: Virtual only

Church of Conscious Harmony: 17 miles - Southwest Austin

First Church of Christ, Scientist: 15 miles - Downtown Austin`

Live Oak Unitarian Universalist Church: 3 miles - Cedar Park

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin: 12 miles - Central Austin

Wildflower Church (Unitarian Universalist): 19 miles - South Austin

UCOH Classes, Groups, and Activities

- Active Youth of Unity group
- Wholehearted Women's Group
- Men's Fellowship Network
- Sunday school classes for teens and younger
- Spirit Circles - Small groups
- Wednesday Evening Meditation Service
- Congregational Choir (Inspiration)
- Path to Discovery Class - New member class that occurs 2x per year

On-going Classes

- A Course in Miracles
- UCOH Prayer Circle (Zoom) with minister
- Adulting Classes once a month (variety of subjects and presenters)
- Weekly meditation group
- Dr. Joe Dispenza's meditation group

Recurring workshops/events/classes

- Light Touch Healing (once a month)
- Holographic Sound Healing
- Fall & Spring Equinox Gatherings
- Cacao Circle | Weaving Spirit into community
- Summer & Winter Solstice Gatherings
- I Am the Word – Paul Selig Book Study
- Learn to Meditate
- QiGong for Bone Health

One-time Events

- Snatam Kaur Heartflow Tour – a concert
- Reforming Relationships Webinar
- An Evening of Dance with Jack & Mary Ellen Frick
- Become Wild, Willing, and Wise with HeatherAsh Amara
- Armand & Angelina with Dr. Will Tuttle concert 'piano passion'
- Austin Civic Wind Ensemble July 4th celebration
- Dr. Vikas Kashalkar, Hindustani Vocalist
- Affirmative Prayer Series

Groups for the community (Reaching beyond the Arch)

- Power for Parkinson's exercise Groups
- Boy Scouts of America
- Interfaith Action of Central Texas (iACT)
- Power for Parkinson's support Groups (one is for caregivers, one for those with Parkinson's)
- Toastmasters
- Training X tator
- Stress Recovery International

OUR CONGREGATION

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Mailing List | 3000 | Newsletter on Thursdays Service Reminder on Saturdays |
| Average Sunday Attendance | | |
| 8:30 am Contemplative Service | 9 attendees on average | Online attendance average 20 live views on Facebook |
| 11:00 am Main Service | 124 attendees on average | Online attendance average 20 live views on Facebook and YouTube |
| Classes and Workshops | 388 per week on average | |
| Formal Membership | 1,300 | |

SACRED SERVICE TEAMS

UCOH has many teams which are comprised of wonderful volunteers.

Prayer Chaplain Team

This ministry is dedicated to prayer and spiritual support for individuals of our community. The chaplains pray with our Sunday service teams, hold sacred space during the Sunday service, are available after Sunday service for individual prayer, and conduct monthly prayer calls with members.

Greeter & Welcome Team

Greeters are often the first contact visitors have with UCOH. The team members meet and greet everyone arriving at Church on Sunday before service and wish them well as they leave. This team also identifies Newcomers to provide them with the UCOH welcome packet.

Usher Team

Ushers greet guests as they enter the Sanctuary. The Ushers play an important role, during services and events, by ensuring that things run smoothly by assisting with seating, answering questions, recording attendance, and collecting the Love Offering.

Hospitality Team

This team sets up seating, makes coffee, and prepares snacks before Sunday Service and scheduled events. The team keeps the refreshments replenished during Friendship Hour, and cleans up afterwards.

Counting Team

This team counts, verifies, and records the cash, coin, and checks placed in the offering baskets during services and events. The contribution report is completed and signed by the team members present during the count.

Bookstore Team

This team rings up sales on Sunday mornings, accepts payments, and answers guest questions. *The UCOH bookstore is perhaps the only New Thought bookstore in the Austin area.*

Youth and Family Ministry Team

This team guides children and teens on their individual journeys of spiritual self-discovery each Sunday during the 11:00 am service.

Office Volunteer Team

This team assists the Church staff during the week by answering phones and completing various office tasks. They also assist with Church projects.

Hands on Unity Team

This team completes specific upkeep and maintenance of our beautiful UCOH grounds which includes indoor and outdoor projects.

Lending Library Team

This team keeps our lending library welcoming and orderly so that our community members may browse and borrow any materials available to them.

Special Events Team

This team helps out and supports any special events hosted by UCOH.

InReach Pastoral Care Team

This team provides support for the UCOH family during times of special needs. This includes sending cards, in person visits, light errands, meals, and transportation to appointments.

Endowment Fund Management Board

This team manages the Endowment Fund including the development of approaches to planned giving and communication to the congregation about the health of the fund.

Community Outreach

- **January – March: Blanket Drive for Willy's Angels** - Collect gently used blankets, new socks or gently used socks for individuals who are housed in nursing or long-term care facilities.
- **July – September Back to school support-** provide school supplies and other needed items for groups like Foster Care Village
- **October – December Giving Tree-** collection of gift cards and monetary donations given to support groups in the community including Community First Village, Foster Village, RRISD, Eldercare, and Unity Benevolence Fund.
- **Ramadan Iftar Dinner** – provided by our Turkish Muslim neighbors

CHURCH STAFF

- **Dez King**, Managing Director
- **Jennifer Chavez**, Communications Manager
- **Anaiya**, Events Manager and Sacred Service Manager (coordination of volunteers)
- **Melissa Larson**, Bookstore Manager, Office Support
- **Susan Waid**, Accounting Manager

Pastoral team

- **Rev. Cynthia Vermillion-Foster**, Transitional Minister, May 1, 2023, to present
- 4 Licensed Unity Teachers
- 3 additional supporting ministers
- Spiritual Director

Music team

- Director of Music
- Co Director of Music
- Band
- Inspiration choir

Technical Team (contracted)

- Team Lead
- The Sound Team, The Projection Team and The Video Production Team

MINISTRY SUPPORT SERVICES

Our board, staff, search team, and congregation have been working with **Rev. Cynthia Vermillion-Foster**, transitional minister, who specializes in supporting congregations during times of transition. She has over 15 years of experience in this role and has been essential to our congregation.

Dates: May 1, 2023, to present

Topics Covered: Full Ministry Assessment, Board Development, Staff Development and Reorganization, Heritage & Healing Workshop (HOPCOF), New Board Member Orientation, Development of Clear Spiritual Identity through Vision/Mission/Core Values Process, Search Team Training and Strategic Planning with Board & Staff

Workshops:

- The Architecture of Selfhood
- Dance of Triangles
- Accountability: The Intersection of Truth & Love
- Dynamics of Polarization
- Possibility Creation
- Reforming Relationships (outside facilitator: Marg Van Herk-Paradis)

MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES (Adopted by the UCOH congregation on July 7, 2024)

UCOH Mission:

We put God first, celebrate Life, live Unity Principles and empower each other to transform our lives.

UCOH Vision:

Centered in Divine Love and Oneness, we transform ourselves, our community and our world.

UCOH Core Values

We are **Spirit-Centered**: being led by Source from which everything begins and returns

- We honor the many names for God, the many paths to God, the many ways of experiencing God.
- We embrace all experiences as opportunities for transformation.
- We listen for the voice of God guiding us on how to serve one another and the world.
- We connect with and express the **Divine** in our thoughts, words, and deeds.

We are a **Loving Community**: practicing a positive regard for God, self and one another.

- We choose to see Christ in all beings.
- We serve one another and the world through compassionate action.
- We mindfully balance our needs with the needs of others.
- We accept ourselves and others through the practice of forgiveness.

We are **Inclusive**: creating a safe place that honors the diversity and uniqueness of every person.

- We value the inherent worth and dignity of all beings as expressions of God.
- We foster an environment that respects and welcomes everyone.
- We seek to understand and appreciate the lived experiences of others.
- We are deeply enriched as we consciously question our assumptions.

Our Shared Agreements:

- We honor the importance of prayer and use it in our work together.
- We listen deeply, with curiosity and compassion, making room for even the softest voice to be heard.
- We are willing to assume noble intentions.
- We embrace a constant willingness to learn about and from our reactions.
- We commit to being grounded in our Unity Principles.
- We are willing to own our projections.
- We seek the value of each other's beliefs and experiences.
- We share freely and hold all confidences sacred.
- We regularly give and receive improvement-oriented feedback.

IMPORTANT EVENTS IN UCOH HISTORY

- A group desired a Unity Church in NW Austin and worked to establish Unity Church of the Hills in 1995. Rev's. Ron and Lenore Scott were hired as Co-Ministers and led our first service in November of that year.
- Purchase of the land and construction of our church home was completed in October of 2001
- Completion of Unity Oaks expansion building, which houses several classrooms and has a pavilion area for large dinners and events. Occupied 2011.
- A beautiful Labyrinth was added to our grounds in 2015.

Recent special events in the ministry that were well attended include:

- The Big Love Tour, an Evening with Lee Harris
- Piano Passion Concert with Dr. Will Tuttle
- Austin Concert Winds Fourth of July Celebration
- Evening with Paul Selig
- Armand and Angelina

GOALS: In the next 3 years, we hope to accomplish:

- **Spiritual Growth:** to increase and continue offering classes, workshops, and spirit groups that support UCOH Vision, Mission and Core Values
- **Community Building based on our Core Values:** to express UCOH Core Values in all communications; to increase opportunities for UCOH members to engage and connect with one another
- **Leadership:** to align UCOH Identity with search for a new minister; further develop our lay leadership
- **Abundance and Sustainability:** to apply Unity Principles and prosperity consciousness to our decision-making regarding the operation and success of UCOH.

INCORPORATION AND BYLAWS

Articles of Incorporation – Date: August 15, 1995

Bylaws – Date Adopted/Revised: September, 30 2021

Our bylaws are structured in accordance with the Unity Worldwide Ministries bylaw template:

<https://www.unityworldwideministries.org/recommended-bylaws-unity-ministry>

About the Position

Salary: \$60K-\$80K

Moving Expenses: Negotiable.

Additional arrangements, benefits, insurance, etc.: Negotiable.

ABOUT AUSTIN

1. Education

Austin and its surrounding areas' school systems are through the **Independent School District (ISD)**. The quality of education in Austin is as important as the growth of each and every individual. ISDs are supported by non-profit organizations and communities when it comes to different resources, especially technology.

Highly acclaimed schools in the area are **Eanes Independent School District**, **Round Rock Independent School District**, and the **Lake Travis Independent School District**. Charter, trade, and private schools are also available in the area.

[Austin School Districts Texas Education Association Rating and Rankings:](#)

| rank | district | academic performance score | students | grade levels | academic performance index | TEA accountability rating | STAAR scaled score | AP / IB | SAT | ACT |
|------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|----------|--------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|---------|-------|-------|
| 1 | Eanes | 10 | 8,100 | EE - 12 | 96.3 | A | 94 | 66.8% | 75.4% | 59.9% |
| 2 | Lake Travis | 10 | 10,700 | EE - 12 | 84.7 | A | 92 | 47.7% | 64.1% | 48.1% |
| 3 | Round Rock | 10 | 50,200 | EE - 12 | 79.4 | B | 91 | 43.2% | 68.8% | 25.5% |
| 4 | Leander | 10 | 39,900 | EE - 12 | 78.0 | B | 91 | 42.6% | 52.5% | 33.7% |
| 5+ | Austin | 10 | 84,564 | EE-12 | 63.6 | B | 88 | 35% | 45.6% | 18.6% |

There are many private and charter schools available nearby. Colleges and universities have a massive contribution when it comes to improving the quality of life for their students. One of the largest schools in the nation, the University of Texas – Austin, is popular for its engineering, social sciences, business, marketing, and management programs. They also offer 170 fields of study for undergraduates. Other well-known universities in Austin are St. Edward's University and Southwestern University.

Austin Community College is one of the top community colleges in the nation, providing over 13 locations throughout the greater Austin area. Tuition is relatively low and any student who graduates from high school is now entitled to 5 years of FREE tuition at Austin Community College. Also, dual credit is offered for FREE to qualified high school students to earn high school and college credit simultaneously for the same class at locations within the high schools or college campuses.

2. Neighborhoods

Each Austin neighborhood has its own charm and unique characteristics that completely differentiate it from the other. **Barton Hills** and **Zilker** are two neighborhoods in **South Austin** that are popular when it comes to families. West Lake Hills is another neighborhood that is sought out by families due to the great outdoor amenities and highly acclaimed schools in the area. **Lakeway**, **Allandale**, and **Brushy Creek** are also on our list of places that are great for families!

Master-planned communities in Austin are also one of the options to choose from due to the amenities and sense of belonging in the community. Easton Park, Goodnight Ranch, **Mueller**, and **Avery Ranch** are some of the notable master-planned communities great for families in Austin. If you plan to relocate to the area with your family, remember that a local, **Austin moving company** will help relieve the stress and hassle of moving.

3. Career Opportunities

You might have heard that Austin has earned the nickname of “Silicon Hills” due to the different tech companies that are starting their business, relocating, or building their campuses in Austin. The tech industry is expected to grow by 15% in the next 5 years. Austin offers plenty of opportunities in every industry that even starting your very own business can be a great option.

4. Activities and Entertainment for Kids

There are plenty of places where you can **take your kids** to have fun, enjoy, and learn new things! Children will love learning and having fun at the same time within these fantastic places around Austin. Thinkery helps kids be familiar with science, technology, engineering, and mathematics while Science Mill in Johnson City is a great family destination that offers interactive learning through exhibits and games.

The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center has display gardens of native plants that can be found in the Central Texas Hill Country which encourages children to protect the environment too! This is one of the reasons why Austin, TX is great for families!

5. Outdoor Attractions

Family days and weekend getaways are best spent at the popular attractions in Austin that will surely be enjoyed by family! Visit the **Barton Creek Greenbelt** where you can bike, swim, or walk down the trail then grab some delicious lunch at the food trucks outside the Greenbelt. Picnic or fly a kite at Zilker Park. Enjoy the waterscapes at Lake Travis, Lady Bird Lake, and Lake Austin. Swim or dive in the cool water of Barton Springs Pool. There are so many things to do in Austin, TX for families that you'll definitely enjoy!

Whether you are moving to Austin to settle with your family or eyeing a neighborhood to start a family in, Austin is one of the best places to enjoy and experience life with your loved ones.

(Copied from "movetoaustin.org")

Every variety of housing is available relatively close to Unity Church of the Hills.

6. Real Estate

As of June 2024, the Austin Board of Realtors, reported the average median sales price for homes was \$450k. Average home costs for NW Austin and Cedar Park that are locations close to Unity Church of the Hills: (Copied from Community Impact magazine Feb 2024)

| ZIP code | December 2022 | December 2023 |
|----------|---------------|---------------|
| 78641 | \$560,000 | \$516,500 |
| 78613 | \$473,500 | \$424,250 |
| 78717 | \$573,000 | \$541,000 |
| 78726 | \$861,250 | \$753,000 |
| 78729 | \$415,000 | \$443,500 |
| 78750 | \$570,000 | \$470,500 |

[Market Trend report 2024, Average Apartment Rental Cost:](#)

| Apartment Type | Square ft | Cost per month | Location |
|----------------|-----------|----------------|------------|
| Studio | 530 | \$1093 | Cedar Park |
| One Bedroom | 744 | \$1282 | Cedar Park |
| Two Bedroom | 1,101 | \$1661 | Cedar Park |
| Three Bedroom | 1,340 | \$1849 | Cedar Park |
| Studio | 465 | \$1268 | Austin |
| One Bedroom | 710 | \$1437 | Austin |
| Two Bedroom | 1056 | \$1843 | Austin |
| Three Bedroom | 1363 | \$2366 | Austin |
| Studio | 605 | \$1108 | Leander |
| One Bedroom | 747 | \$1318 | Leander |
| Two Bedroom | 1129 | \$1720 | Leander |
| Three Bedroom | 1448 | \$2235 | Leander |

MINISTERIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND EXPECTATIONS – 1 IS TOP PRIORITY, 9 IS LEAST IMPORTANT

1

Building Leaders and Teams, and Empowering Others

- Keeps mission, vision, values, and the WHY this ministry exists current
- Plans for continual training of leadership and volunteers, ministry growth, and outreach
- Implements training for boards, staff, and volunteers and fosters a team-based culture
- Plans for training and utilizing licensed Unity teachers (LUT) as an integral part of the ministry
- Planning for building financial development strategies
- Incorporates training for Youth & Family Ministry, youth, YOU, Next Generation
- Develops and leads worship experiences collaboratively with others involved

2

Focus on Prayer, Meditation, Pastoral Care, Chaplaincy

- Demonstrates prayer consciousness and facilitates prayer & meditation classes & experiences
- Compassionate and caring person, sensitive to others' needs and emotions
- Focus on the pastoral care needs of the intergenerational congregation
- Helps people develop a spiritual life and a prayer consciousness within the ministry
- Ministers to people in crisis, offer guidance in solving problems
- Makes hospital visits, visits shut-ins and nursing homes, prayer with members
- Facilitates training for chaplains and utilizes chaplains within the ministry

3

Administration

- Knowledgeable of and proficient in applying ministry bylaws, policies, and procedures
- Proficient in executing fiduciary responsibilities, developing prosperity awareness, and maintaining a balanced budget
- Follows office management best practices and use of office systems (software)
- Empowers staff and volunteers, delegates well
- Implements training for boards, staff, and volunteers and fosters a learning culture

4

Spiritual Social Activism

- Invites others to become involved and is a team player
- Models and teaches open attitudes, active listening, and tolerance with a diverse population
- Consciously educates themselves and others on the topic
- Maintains a respectful presence regarding spiritual social activism
- Act as a resource to additional community and support services

5

Outreach into the Local Community

- Demonstrates a desire to engage and support the local community members
- Compassionate and caring person, sensitive to others' needs and emotions
- Community Organizer skills to coordinate with multiple volunteers and outside organizations
- Problem solver who recognizes the third option, shows persistence, and follow through
- Negotiates and/or compromises, seeking the highest outcome for all involved
- Demonstrates appreciation for volunteers, staff, board, and congregants of all ages
- Compassionate listener and deals effectively with different points of view

6

Working with a Specific Group (Kids, teens, seniors, men, women, LGBTQ, etc.)

- Maintains confidentiality, understanding the laws around mandated reporting
- Helps people of all ages develop a spiritual life and a prayer consciousness within the ministry
- Models and teaches open attitudes with a diverse population
- Ministers to individuals and families in crisis, offer guidance in solving problems
- Act as a resource to additional community and support services

Z

Health & Wellbeing

- Knowledgeable of and proficient in health, healing, exercise & nutrition
- Compassionate and caring person, sensitive to the mind-body connection
- Community Organizer skills to coordinate with multiple volunteers and outside organizations
- Problem solver who recognizes the third option, shows persistence, and follow through
- Negotiates and/or compromises, seeking the highest outcome for all involved
- Demonstrates appreciation for volunteers, staff, board, and congregants of all ages
- Compassionate listener and deals effectively with different points of view

8

Environmentalism

- Knowledgeable of and proficient in environmental awareness for this geographic location
- Compassionate and caring person, sensitive to the environment and connection to the planet
- Community Organizer skills to coordinate with multiple volunteers and outside organizations
- Problem solver who recognizes the third option, shows persistence, and follow through
- Negotiates and/or compromises, seeking the highest outcome for all involved
- Demonstrates appreciation for volunteers, staff, board, and congregants of all ages
- Compassionate listener and deals effectively with different points of view

9

Audio/Visual(A/V) Technology Acumen

- Adept with a variety of A/V technologies to enhance the overall worship experience
- Skilled in the use of virtual meeting applications (Zoom, WebEx, Meet, Teams, etc.)
- Demonstrated success in delivering virtual and hybrid presentations and training
- Embraces the use of social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) in support of the ministry's mission, vision, and values.

SPIRITUAL EXPERTISE AND EDUCATIONAL ACUMEN

- 1. Ministry Location:** Our ministry is primarily in person. We stream online through Facebook and YouTube for both services; there is a small online presence for these services.
- 2. Ministry Type:** Our minister will be working alongside our Board of Trustees, Staff, and volunteer leaders to foster a supportive home for our spiritual community. Together, these leaders, along with our congregants, create an extraordinary environment in which UCOH can thrive.
- 3. Age Groups:** Our current demographic is between the ages of 45-75. Prior to COVID, UCOH had a thriving youth and family ministry, comprising diverse cultures, that we are focused on revitalizing.
- 4. Interests/Area of Expertise:** We are seeking a visionary leader to inspire spiritual growth and personal transformation. We value someone who is experienced in delivering inspirational, heart-centered messages with impactful lessons, resonating with both the individual and the community. The minister demonstrates a consciousness of prayer and meditation. Working alongside our pastoral care volunteers, the minister will support our congregants during times of need. They also promote the development of spiritual education. By demonstrating strong people skills which include team-building and emotional intelligence and a sense of humor, the minister will guide UCOH in fulfilling our Core Values, Vision and Mission now and in the future.

5. Spiritual Expertise and Educational Acumen: The minister utilizes education based on Unity Foundational Teachings, The Bible, Metaphysics, and New Thought teachings.

Power of Focused Ministry

Three members of the current Board of Trustees attended the Power of Focused Ministry Workshop in May of 2024. Each member present found value in many of the ideas offered. We are aware that UWM no longer offers this workshop, however, eventual implementation of the concepts provided could be beneficial in the growth we seek to achieve.

WHO does this ministry serve?

The Congregation is made up of 68% women, 22% men. The age of congregants includes 62% 50-59 yo, 15% 40-49 yo, 3% < 40 yo, and 4% > 60 yo. The cultural diversity includes 76% white, 3% Asian or Asian American, and 3% Latino or Hispanic. Our future ministry will be based on our new Mission and Vision for UCOH.



Release of Information Authorization

I, the Board President of Unity Church of the Hills on behalf of the Board of Trustees, authorize ministerial applicants to obtain any pertinent information regarding ministry history from the permanent ministry file in Unity Worldwide Ministries' home office.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim W. Hill", is written above a horizontal line.

Board President

9-16-24

Date