

Unity Worldwide Ministries - Great Lakes Region (GLR)

Board of Trustees Candidate Questionnaire

NAME: REVEREND SANDRA HIGGINS SMITH **PHONE:** (502) 232-3319 **KENTUCKY**

Ministry:

1. In each of the following categories, what gifts will you bring to the GLR Board?

Skills:

- I was ordained through Unity Worldwide Ministries and graduated from Unity Urban Ministerial School in June 2025, after serving Unity communities for over two decades. I first joined First Unity of St. Petersburg, Florida, in 1999, where I was active in Youth Ministry. Since moving to Louisville in 2015, I have served Unity of East Louisville and Unity of Louisville in a variety of roles, including Licensed Unity Teacher, SEE instructor, prayer chaplain, workshop and retreat leader, and member of leadership, finance, and worship teams.
- I bring to the Great Lakes Region Board over 40 years of professional leadership experience as a Registered Nurse, with 25 years in management and hospital administration. Recognized nationally for excellence in nursing leadership, I have extensive skills in organizational development, process improvement, financial stewardship, and team building.
- My spiritual journey has been deeply shaped by the healing power of Unity principles. Following my own healing from cancer in 2017, I live each day with a commitment to prayer, meditation, and service. I am a Unity Minister, a Reiki Master, HeartMath facilitator, and student advisor at UUMS. Currently serving as an alternate on the GLR Board, I bring the gifts of active listening, humility, compassion, and love to my work in supporting the future of the Unity movement.
- I possess above-average computer skills, and I am proficient in Excel, PowerPoint, YouTube, Google Share, Google Docs, Zoom, and Teams. I have worked in Canva, but could use a refresher. I am comfortable with UWSI and UUMS learning platforms.

Experience

- I became a member of First Unity of St. Petersburg in 1999, where I served in the Youth Ministry and as an active member. After moving to Louisville in 2015, I deepened my spiritual path through SEE classes, became a Licensed Unity Teacher in 2021. I graduated from UUMS and was ordained in June 2025. Over the years, I have joyfully served as a prayer chaplain, usher/greeter, LUT, speaker, SEE instructor, retreat facilitator, and in leadership, worship, and finance ministries at both Unity of East Louisville and Unity of Louisville.
- Before entering ministry, I was blessed with a 43-year career in nursing, including 25 years in leadership and hospital administration. My professional journey honed my gifts in organizational leadership, financial stewardship, and process

improvement—skills I now bring into spiritual service. Guided by Unity principles, I am committed to prayer, presence, and Love as the foundation for all I do.

Time and Talent

- I am a student advisor at UUMS, a volunteer at UUMS, a guest speaker, and I lead and teach workshops, Spirit Groups, and SEE classes at Unity of Louisville and Unity of East Louisville.
- I currently serve as an alternate on the Unity Great Lakes Region Board.

Spiritual Qualities

- In 2017, cancer was erased from my breast into the nothingness from which it came. I used prayer, Unity Principles, Myrtle Fillmore's Healing Letters, and Karen Drucker's music as my inspiration, and I was healed! Now, I live every day with the intention to love and connect with others. I gain great joy from helping others by teaching classes and acting as an advisor. I have a daily prayer and meditation practice, and I serve where my heart leads me moment to moment.
2. What do you see as the most significant opportunity/challenge facing GLR at this time, and how will the gifts you bring be of value in the resolution of this issue?
 - I see the restructuring of the Unity movement as an excellent opportunity to use my vast organizational and leadership skills to support the Great Lakes Region and Unity Worldwide Ministries in any capacity in which I am needed. I have absolute faith in the Unity Principles, and I am committed to the success of the Unity movement.
 3. How would you define the roles and responsibilities of the GLR Board of Trustees?
 - The roles and responsibilities of the GLR Board of Trustees are to support ministers, LUTs, spiritual centers, YOU, and their faculty and staff will adhering to the By Laws, Policies, and the approved budget.
 4. In what other capacities have you or are you serving the Unity movement?
 - I have volunteered to assist Reverend Karen, the Registrar at Unity Urban Ministerial School, beginning September 2025.
 5. What prior board experience do you have? Please give name of institution(s), position(s) you held.
 - I attended monthly Board meetings as a ministerial intern for 6 months at Unity of East Louisville.

- I am currently an alternate on the Unity Great Lakes Region Board of Trustees.
6. List any success you have had in each of the following areas: Non-profit fundraising; financial turnarounds/organization restructuring; radical innovation.
- Through the power of Imagination, from 2005 to 2010, along with a pediatric cardiologist, who had a dream, and a pediatric Echo-sonographer, I helped to expand All Children's Hospital pediatric cardiology department into a new Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital Health System, Outpatient Care Center, and 8 Specialty Care Centers in Pinellas, Hillsborough, and Manatee counties in Florida.
 - I was responsible for the day-to-day operations of pediatric cardiology at all locations for 13 years, including human resources, materials management, and preparing and maintaining the budget (I worked closely with all departments and vendors to assure that the budget was balanced at all times- a Johns Hopkins expectation).
 - I had the honor of leading a hospital-wide initiative to obtain the national accreditation for echocardiography laboratories (ICAEL) in adult, pediatric, and fetal echocardiography (three separate accreditations for inpatient, outpatient, and 8 Outpatient Care Centers were granted in 2002, and the highest standards for care were maintained during my tenure).
 - I am grateful that I was able to obtain a grant from the Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital Foundation to provide a registered pediatric cardiac dietician to see our patients with single-ventricle hearts monthly. I realized this need based on our morbidity/mortality rate compared to national averages. I used this project as my Capstone for my BSN, and wrote a grant request that included "best practices" and assured better outcomes for these patients! The grant continues today after 15 years, and the mortality and morbidity rate for this subset of patients is one of the lowest in the nation.
 - I am a "green belt" in Lean Six Sigma and led multiple process improvement and patient satisfaction initiatives. This experience helped me to use my divine abilities of wisdom, understanding, elimination, and imagination to streamline processes, eliminate waste, reduce cost, and reduce the time spent at the hospital.
 - Early in my pediatric cardiology management career, I gained experience in creating patient education materials for pediatric cardiology. (I also arranged for the education materials translated into Spanish). I created procedural and pediatric cardiology policies in collaboration with the Chief Pediatric Cardiologist and the Chief Echo-sonographer at All Children's Hospital. I wrote job descriptions for staff members in Outpatient Cardiology positions, adhering to Johns Hopkins format and guidelines. I implemented the use of an Electronic Medical Record in Pediatric Cardiology. Assisted with the selection of Echo PACS (imaging storage and support)

and assisted with creating policies and procedures to adhere to all laws and regulations.

7. Please explain why you feel called to fulfill the position of GLR Board member at this time.
- I became an alternate on the GLR Board because I wanted to gain experience in working with a board. I have gained knowledge and insight into the GLR Board of Trustees' operations. I have also learned that each board member is committed to my success and the success of the Unity movement. I would love to support the Unity GLR as the Unity movement innovates and moves toward a new way of operating. Thank you for your consideration.
8. **Please send a short bio and electronic picture** to be used in the GLR communications.

Thank you for responding and for your interest in serving on the GLR Board.

Name Reverend Sandra Higgins Smith

Please return to Daryn L. Wells, GLR Nominating Team Chair, *via* mail or email: