

# Bylaws of the Heartland Community of Mindful Living

## Article One - Sangha

1. The name of this Sangha shall be the Heartland Community of Mindful Living, referred to as “the Sangha” herein, and abbreviated as “HCML.”
2. The Sangha may change its name at its pleasure by consensus of the Caretaking Council (see article five.)

## Article Two—Purposes

1. The objective of the Sangha is to support the practice of the art of mindful living as taught in the Plum Village tradition of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh.
2. In pursuit of the above objective the Sangha may raise funds whether by way of fundraising activities, donations, or grants and manage assets for the promotion of the objectives of the Sangha.

## Article Three - Non Profit Clause

1. The income and the property of the Sangha shall be applied solely toward the promotion of the objectives of the Sangha and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly to the members of the Sangha.
2. This shall not prevent the payment in good faith of remuneration to any member of the Sangha in return for reasonable and proper expenses for services rendered to the Sangha as approved by the Caretaking Council.

## Article Four - Membership

1. The Sangha welcomes all those interested in the art of mindful living for membership. Membership will not be restricted based upon race, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, physical or mental disability.
2. Participation in any Sangha event is open to members and non-members alike unless an event is specified for members only.
3. Membership is not transferable.
4. Anyone participating in the practice of the art of mindful living and related activities with the Sangha may become an **Affiliate Member** by requesting in writing that their name be added to the Sangha membership roll.
5. **Full Membership** requires the following:
  - 5.1. The member has attended the Sangha’s weekly gatherings at least four times per quarter for the last year.

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- 5.2. The member has received transmission of the Five Mindfulness Trainings and may have received transmission of the Fourteen Mindfulness Training.
  - 5.3. The member has recited the Five Mindfulness Trainings at least once every quarter with the Sangha and is making an effort to study, practice and observe them.
  - 5.4. If the member has received transmission of the Fourteen Mindfulness Trainings, the member has recited them at least once every quarter with the Sangha and is making an effort to study, practice and observe them.
6. Termination
- 6.1. Any member may withdraw by giving written notice of resignation to the Caretaking Council, which shall be effective immediately.
  - 6.2. Membership may be terminated by consensus of the Caretaking Council in consultation with the Elder (see article nine.)
  - 6.3. When membership terminates, the former members right's and duties as a member are suspended and the former member shall release the Sangha and continuing members from any claim of the property or assets of the Sangha.

### Article Five - Caretaking Council

1. Eligibility for membership in the **Caretaking Council** requires the following:
  - 1.1. Order of Interbeing ordination
  - 1.2. Practice in accordance with the requirements for Full Membership for a minimum of the two previous years.
  - 1.3. Exceptions to these criteria may be granted by consensus of the Caretaking Council.
2. Members shall be appointed by consensus of the Caretaking Council.
3. The Elder shall always be a member of the Caretaking Council.
4. Caretaking Council decisions will be made by a consensus approach. The consensus of the Full Membership may be sought for decisions of importance.
5. Regular meetings of the Caretaking Council shall be held three (3) times a year and additionally as needed.
6. The presence of not less than two-thirds of the Caretaking Council membership shall constitute a quorum and shall be necessary to conduct the business of this Sangha; but a lesser number may adjourn the meeting for a period of not more than two weeks from the date scheduled by these bylaws and the Secretary shall cause a notice of this scheduled meeting to be e-mailed to all Caretaking Council members.

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7. A Caretaking Council member may be removed when sufficient cause exists for such removal. The Caretaking Council may entertain charges against any of its members. The Caretaking Council shall adopt such rules as it may in its discretion consider necessary for the best interests of the Sangha for this hearing, in consultation with the Elder and Dharma Teachers.

### Article Six - Caretaking Council Officers

1. The Caretaking Council officers shall be as follows:
  - 1.1. President
  - 1.2. Treasurer
  - 1.3. Secretary
2. The President shall:
  - 2.1. Preside at all membership meetings.
  - 2.2. By virtue of the office be chairperson of the Caretaking Council,
  - 2.3. Present at each annual meeting of the Sangha an annual report of the work of the Sangha,
  - 2.4. Appoint all committees, temporary or permanent
  - 2.5. And have such powers as may be reasonably construed as belonging to the President of any Sangha.
3. The Secretary shall:
  - 3.1. Keep the minutes and records of the Sangha in appropriate books,
  - 3.2. Give and serve all notices to members of the Sangha.
  - 3.3. Submit to the Caretaking Council any communications which shall be addressed to the Secretary of the Sangha.
  - 3.4. Attend to all correspondence of the Sangha and exercise all duties incident to the office of Secretary.
4. The Treasurer shall
  - 4.1. Have the care and custody of all monies belonging to the Sangha,
  - 4.2. Be solely responsible for such monies or securities of the Sangha.
  - 4.3. Be one of the officers who shall sign checks or drafts of the Sangha.
  - 4.4. Render at stated periods as the Caretaking Council shall determine a written account of the finances of the Sangha. Such report shall be physically affixed to the minutes of the Caretaking Council meeting,
  - 4.5. Exercise all duties incident to the office of Treasurer.
5. No special fund may be set aside that shall make it unnecessary for the Treasurer to sign the checks issued upon it.
6. Officers shall be appointed by consensus by the Caretaking Council before the Annual Meeting.

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## Article Seven—Meetings

1. Annual Meeting:
  - 1.1. The Annual Meeting of this Sangha shall be held on the first occurring fifth Monday evening of the year each and every year except if such day be a legal holiday. In that event, the Caretaking Council shall fix the day but it shall not be more than two weeks from the date fixed by these bylaws.
  - 1.2. The Secretary shall post a notice on the Sangha website telling the time and place of such annual meeting and announce the meeting at weekly Sangha practice gatherings.
2. Special meetings of this Sangha may be called by the President when (s)he deems it for the best interest of the Sangha. Notices of such meeting shall be e-mailed to all Full Members and announced at the weekly Sangha practice gatherings. Such notice shall state the reasons that such meeting has been called, the business to be transacted at such meeting and by whom called. No other business but that specified in the notice may be transacted at such special meeting without the consensus of all present at such meeting.
3. At the request of any members of the Caretaking Council or three (3) Full Members, the President shall cause a special meeting to be called but such request must be made in writing at least fourteen (14) days before the requested scheduled date. No other business but that specified in the notice may be transacted at such special meeting without the consensus of all present at such meeting.

## Article Eight—Order of Business

1. Sitting and Walking Meditation
2. Reading of the minutes of the preceding meeting/attendance
3. President's Report
4. Elder's Report
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Committee Reports/Steward Reports
7. Old Business
8. New Business
9. Bowing to the Three Jewels
10. Adjournment

## Article Nine—Role of the Elder

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1. The Elder shall provide guidance in all aspects of the art of mindful living within the Sangha in consultation with the Sangha's Dharma Teacher(s).
2. In addition, the Elder will also influence and offer guidance on the business aspects which affect the harmonious existence of the community and which allow her (him) to provide the aforementioned guidance. As such, The Elder may block decisions of the Caretaking Council that are not in accord with the teachings.
3. The Elder shall see that all books, reports and certificates as required by law are properly kept or filed, be the official custodian of the records and seal of the Sangha, and be one of the two individuals who may sign the checks or drafts of the Sangha, the second being the Treasurer.
4. (S)he shall in the event of the absence or inability of the President to exercise his or her office become acting President of the Sangha with all the rights, privileges and powers as if (s)he had been the duly elected President.
5. The Elder must meet all of the requirements for membership in the Caretaking Council.
6. Upon the death, resignation or removal of the Elder, the Care Taking Council may initiate a search and selection process.
7. The Caretaking Council shall be responsible for appointing the Elder, and bringing the appointment to the Full Membership for ratification.
8. The Elder may be removed by consensus of the Full Membership at special meeting called for that purpose (see article seven). The Caretaking Council and the Sangha's Dharma Teacher shall adopt such rules as it may in its discretion consider necessary for the best interests of the Sangha.

### Article Ten—Sangha Dharma Teacher

1. The Caretaking Council shall be responsible for appointing the Sangha Dharma Teacher, and bringing the appointment to the Full Membership for ratification.
2. The Sangha Dharma Teacher shall have received the Lamp Transmission in the Plum Village tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh.
3. Upon the death, resignation or removal of the Dharma Teacher, the Care Taking Council may initiate a search and selection process.

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4. The Sangha Dharma Teacher may be removed by consensus of the Full Membership at special meeting called for that purpose (see article seven) The Caretaking Council and the Elder shall adopt such rules as it may in its discretion consider necessary for the best interests of the Sangha.

### Article Eleven—Compensation

1. No officer or director shall for reason of the office be entitled to receive any salary or compensation, but nothing herein shall be construed to prevent an officer or director from receiving any compensation from the Sangha for duties other than as a director or officer.
2. In addition, the Caretaking Council shall hire and fix the compensation of any and all employees which they in their discretion may determine to be necessary in the conduct of the business of the Sangha.

### Article Twelve—Committees and Stewards

1. All committees and stewards of this Sangha shall be constituted by the Elder, President, or Caretaking Council, and serve at their pleasure.
2. Any member may serve on a committee or as a steward.

### Article Thirteen—Dues

There are no dues for membership in this Sangha which relies solely on voluntary donations.

### Article Fourteen - Dissolution

1. If the Caretaking Council decides at any time that on the ground of expense or otherwise it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Sangha, it shall call a Special Meeting of the Full Membership.
2. No more than 21 days notice shall be given of a meeting of dissolution being called. The notice shall state the terms of the dissolution resolution to be proposed.
3. The Sangha shall not be dissolved, except with the consensus of the Full Membership at a Special Meeting convened for the purpose.
4. In the event of the Sangha being dissolved as provided above, all debts and liabilities legally incurred on behalf of the Sangha shall be fully discharged.

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5. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of proper debts and liabilities shall not be paid or distributed among the members of the Sangha, but shall be given or transferred to other charitable organizations with special consideration of those in the Plum Village tradition of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh.

## Article Fifteen—Amendments

These bylaws may be altered, amended, repealed, or added to by consensus of the Caretaking Council.

These bylaws are adopted this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_ in the year \_\_\_\_\_ by the Caretaking Council.

Maud Croibier-Muscat, Joyful Peace of the Source, President:

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David Klug, True Wonderful Lamp, Secretary/Treasurer:

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Bethany Klug, The Practice of True Emptiness, Elder:

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