

Worship Services at HUU: Template

This template reflects updates as of October, 2017. For more resources and ideas for readings for chalice lighting, etc. see this website: uua.org/worship

Your task as facilitator is to create and hold sacred space for the presenter. You are supporting her/him while welcoming guests and inviting the participation of all in the service.

Be aware that the entire order of service is informed by Unitarian Universalist principles. The following is meant as a sample. Be creative and use your own words and ideas.

I. Gathering and Welcoming the People

RINGING THE BELL

Prior to the service, the RE coordinator will ask a child and adult helper to ring the bell. The door will be held slightly ajar so that the bell can be heard inside the building.

SETTING A TONE (optional)

An invocation or contemplative reading at this point may help quiet and calm the room. This is a new concept that some facilitators are trying out. Consider reading one of these (yourself, not responsively):

- # 435 (“We come together this morning ...” or
- #443 (“We arrive out of many singular rooms ...”) or
- #444 (“This house is for the ingathering of nature and human nature ...”) or
- #418 (Come into the circle of love and justice. . .)

WORDS OF WELCOME

Welcome to the Harrisonburg Unitarian Universalists. My name is _____ , describe yourself further if you wish; you may also introduce the theme of the day and the speaker and mention special events of the morning if you wish. If you don’t introduce the speaker here, then be sure to do it just prior to his/her talk.

Announcements

Insert church-related announcements . . . either from e-news or announcements you have been given in writing (brief). If you are making announcements from e-news, make sure they are directly related to church activities and not community activities.

Summer Child Care (June, July, and August)

Just before Sunday service, Rachel Baczynski, summer child care coordinator, will check in with the facilitator to let you know if there is a volunteer to work with her or if an announcement

needs to be made to solicit a volunteer.

As we meet each Sunday, we remind ourselves that three key tasks of this religious community are:

Choose a version of our key tasks that resonates with you, or write your own. It will be more meaningful to you and to others when you create your own definitions.

- sense-making, helping each other to find the truths in our lives and in the world;
- care-giving, helping each other through the hard times and celebrating the good times
- justice-seeking, trying to leave this community and the world a better place for our having been here.

Another version

- sense-making, searching for meanings that help us lead lives of integrity and purpose in a challenging world;
- care-giving, helping each other in difficulty and celebrating the joys of life together;
- justice-seeking, each acting to leave the world a better place for our presence.

Another ...

- sense-making, the effort to find and name the truths that we discover;
- care-giving, helping each other at difficult times in life's journey and celebrating together as well;
- and justice-seeking, trying to make our world a better place for us having been here.

A well-received recent alternative formulation

In the words of James Vila Blake (#473 in hymnal),

Love is the spirit of this church and service is its law.

This is our great covenant:

To dwell together in peace,

To seek the truth in love,

And to help one another.

GREETING VISITORS

Are there any visitors with us for the first or second time today. We'd like to get to know you. . . would you be willing to stand and introduce yourselves?

(Allow time here for visitors to introduce themselves)

We welcome you and invite you and all gathered to stay after the service for coffee (*or if it is a first Sunday for a potluck meal.*) One of our Visitor Hosts will be available to answer any questions you may have about us. *Ask the day's visitor host to identify him or herself if you wish.*

You'll find great variety in our Sunday services and we invite you to come and explore with us.

We are a diverse community and out of that diversity we share in the leadership of the congregation. It is here that we seek to respect our differences and to go beyond our diversities to experience our Oneness, knowing that we are all part of the interdependent web of all existence.

From September through March (may vary): In addition to the service at 10:30, we offer Adult Education at 9 am on the second and third Sundays of the month; there is more information in your bulletin and on our Web site.

PRELUDE

Give the pianist a cue when the announcements are over (preferable just with eye contact and a nod) and sit down. Stand up again when the prelude is over.

II. Worship Opening

CALL TO WORSHIP

Sung with the congregation seated. . . unless it's an energetic song that needs congregation to stand. When you set up your Order of Service, you will have chosen the call to worship you will use. Feel free to use one of the following or choose another.

Join with me now to sing together our call to worship. The words are printed in your order of service.

May we have eyes that delight in beauty,
The majesty of Nature, the wonder of a smile.
Let us glory in being together.

OR

When this is sung, the pianist plays it through once, then we join in. Sing it once or twice – tell people which.

(Hymn # 361)

Enter, rejoice and come in. Enter, rejoice and come in!
Today will be a joyful day – enter, rejoice and come in!

OR

(Hymn # 360) Here we have gathered, gathered side by side.

Circle of kinship, come and step inside.
 May all who seek here find a kindly word.
 May all who speak here feel they have been heard.
 Sing now together, this, our heart's own song.

OR

one of your choosing

LIGHTING THE CHALICE

Read your chalice lighting text, and light the chalice. Or light first and read second: it is fine either way.

This is also a good place to involve others. You may want to ask another person, child or adult, to light the chalice while you read. Or you may wish to ask 2 others to participate, one to read the text and one to light the candle.

OPENING HYMN:

I invite you now to stand, in body or in spirit, and join in singing our opening Hymn number and title.

Other ways to introduce the hymn: "let's raise our voices now" or "Join me now in singing"

If the hymn is an unfamiliar one, ask the pianist to play it through for us first.

"STORY FOR ALL AGES"

Invite the children to come forward.

From September through May, someone from the Children's Religious Exploration staff or their Committee will have prepared this. If the speaker for whom you are facilitating wishes to prepare a story instead, you should let the DCRE, (dcre@huuweb.org) know just as soon as you are aware of this. It can be tricky finding stories appropriate to the service themes and they try to plan as far ahead as possible. The DCRE is always happy to work with the speaker on this. Be sure to coordinate with DCRE on this so there will be explicit connection between story and the day's topic.

During the months of June, July, and August, there is no RE staff, so the facilitator will need to insure that there is a "story for all ages" prepared. The story may be chosen by the facilitator, speaker, or other identified person. The facilitator needs to work with the speaker to coordinate this.

At the end of the story, say something like "you may return to your seats" to the children.

OFFERING & OFFERTORY RESPONSE

Introduce the offering in any way that is comfortable to you. # 672-676 in the hymnal offer possibilities for introducing the offering. The language below is just one suggestion.

On the 3rd Sunday of each month our offering is designated for a local social agency. Look in the bulletin to see who you should mention. If the information is not in the bulletin, check the list on the bulletin board above the administrator's desk in the office.

Just prior to introducing the offering, invite the 2 children who have been designated to come forward. Let them stand while you introduce the offering. Then hand them the baskets to distribute to a person in the front row of each section. RE Director will be available to coach the children. If there are no children, the facilitator will need to distribute the baskets after introducing the offering.

As a religious community we encourage each other to grow more generous in spirit and in action. Those gathered here support this self-supporting church and its ministries. Now we invite your offering, freely given and gratefully received.

The offering will be brought back to you by a member of the Finance Committee as the collection response is sung (to keep under the podium until the end of the service, when it will be picked up by the treasurer or other designated person.) Stand and hold it until the offertory response is complete.

[Collection and response] *Our regular accompanist will cue the response herself.*

From you I receive,
To you I give.
Together we share.
And from this we live.

SINGING OUT THE CHILDREN

It's time for the children to leave us for

In the summer: for supervised play in a UU spirit.

We do not offer Religious Exploration during the months of June, July, and August. We do, as much as possible, offer child care.

If for some reason, Rachel is absent and there are not 2 volunteers, facilitator will need to announce, "There will be no childcare offered for today's service. If you wish to go with your children to the Shared Ministry room, you are welcome to do so."

When Religious Exploration is in session: their program of religious exploration and nursery care.

Please follow the staff through the doors in the front of the room. Parents, you are welcome to go with your children if you like and to return to the service when you and they are comfortable.

Let's stand and sing them on their way.

Sing Out the Children Hymn #301 Verse 2 sung twice

Touch the earth, reach the sky!
Children ask the reasons why.
In our lives the answers show,
and by our love they learn and grow.

*Place a **Reading or Responsive Reading** here if you wish. It can be a way to remind people what Joys and Concerns is for.*

SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS

You are welcome to introduce Joys and Concerns in your own way. A suggestion:

At this point each week, we invite each other to speak of the joys and concerns of the week past. This is not a time for announcements that include times and dates but rather a sharing of the music in our hearts. You are welcome to come forward to share your personal celebration, concern, or sorrow with us.

Please introduce yourself and speak clearly – We ask that you use the microphone in order to include those who are hard of hearing or seated in the far corners of the room.

[Community sharing of joys & concerns]

Please add a pebble for unspoken joys and concerns on people's minds Phrase this in your own words before continuing.

There are several ways to conclude joys and concerns. Choose one, or write your own.

Alternative 1

Let us hold in our hearts the joys and sorrows of those who spoke today and of the whole company of humanity. Let us strive to grow in compassion and to extend ourselves to a widening definition of community. *Conclude with So may it be or amen or both as is your preference.*

Alternative 2

Let us hold in our hearts all the joys and sorrows given voice this morning. As members of one human family, let us grieve or rejoice with our friends who have spoken.

Let us remember those who are not here, whose claim on our compassion and concern is as real, and whose joys and sorrows are as great. Let us pledge ourselves to grow in compassion, to help each other as we are able, and to embrace this world.

Alternative 3 May we take a moment to silently contemplate, meditate, or give a prayer for the joys and concerns among all gathered, both spoken and unspoken. [*Pause.*] May we find peace, wisdom, joy, and compassion along the way in our journeys. So may it be.

Possibly include some moments of silence here

III. The Morning Message (and Our Response)

(optional): **READING BY FACILITATOR or RESPONSIVE READING**

(optional): **HYMN**: Join me now in singing Hymn # *number, title*.

Usually, the speaker begins about 11am. If the speaker is starting later than 11:05, insert a comment here that the service will run a few minutes late this morning. . . this is to help people relax and listen rather than check watches and look at the clock at exactly 11:30.

THE DAY'S SPEAKER and HIS OR HER MESSAGE

If the speaker was not introduced earlier in the service, do introduce the speaker now in a comfortable and inviting way.

TRANSITION FROM TALK TO DIALOGUE

(optional): A moment of music or meditation before we begin the period of commentary gives the speaker a moment to relax and/or collect his or her wits and gives us a chance to think about what was said. Silent reflection works well here.

COMMUNITY DIALOG

Either ask the members to come up to the lectern and use the microphone or attempt to repeat the question yourself so all can hear and participate. As facilitator, scan the congregation to

insure that questions and comments are received from both sides of the congregation. (Speakers sometimes have a tendency to focus on one side of the room.)

IV. Sending Forth

COMMUNITY SENDING FORTH

Now is the time for our community sending forth. We do not just leave this place. We are sent forth with the spirit of community within us to share with the world. Please stand and join in singing our Community Sending Forth. The words are posted over the doorways in front of you. *(Hymn #414)*

As we leave this friendly place,
Love gives light to every face;
May the kindness which we learn.
Light our hearts till we return.

Determine in advance whether you or the speaker will offer a spoken benediction and let the community know to remain standing for this. If there is no benediction after the Community Sending Forth, omit it in the order of service (printed bulletin.)

(optional): **BENEDICTION or CLOSING WORDS**