

**Facilitating the Sunday Service
at Harrisonburg Unitarian Universalists**

Our Typical Order of Service

And How to Use It

Revised October 2011

Facilitating the Service

If you are comfortable speaking in front of a friendly, supportive and good-natured group, facilitating a Sunday service will be one of the pleasantest ways you can serve your religious community.

The script that follows is your guide to the morning. You can vary the standard language in the script so that it feels comfortable for you to say it.

Please read through your script before Sunday morning. Many facilitators edit their own script so that it contains references to exactly what they plan to do. It is always better to bring your own copy than to rely on the copy in the podium.

Whether you read the template script or write some of your own language, please think of the following:

- Speak or read slowly.
- Look up and make eye contact often; smile if that's natural for you.
- Pause between elements of the service. While you are making sure you didn't lose your place in the script, the congregation is preparing itself to move on.
- Correct any mistakes you make calmly.
- Maintain your dignity and poise; the congregation trusts you, and you can trust them.

The placement of readings and hymns is up to you; the script shows you where they are typically placed. The standard script allows for up to three readings, though we rarely have that many.

Don't vary the order of the other elements of the service without reviewing your choices with an experienced facilitator.

Timing is an art, not a science. Ending early is not a problem; people will enjoy the extra time for social interaction. If you choose to comment on the early ending/short service, describe it as an opportunity or a gift of time, not as a shortcoming or a problem.

Do try not to run late. If you see this problem emerging, do what you graciously can to shorten the service. Our RE staff and volunteers especially appreciate it.

First Steps When You Get to HUU

1. Arrive by 10 AM so that no one is worried whether you are coming.
2. Make sure that your printed Order of Service and your script match.

If you find discrepancies, be ready to explain what you are going to do to the congregation. It is all right to say something like “we will not sing the third hymn” or “I have chosen a different responsive reading from the one listed in your order of service.”

3. Turn on the sound system box.
 - The control box is just inside the kitchen on your upper right. There is a switch toward the bottom of the box.
 - Under the podium, flip the switch to "on" on the silver cylinder along the right side of the structure. Further inside the podium beside the cylinder is another device that needs to be turned on.
4. Turn on the spotlight over the podium, using the slider beneath the control box for the sound system.
5. Put water in the Joys & Concerns bowl. There is one bowl for pebbles (dry) and one bowl of water. If you cannot find the joys and concerns bowls, check the bottom of the cabinet next to the front door.
6. Find the fabric baskets for taking the collection. They should be under the podium so that you can hand them forward for the offering.
7. Put a hymnal on the podium for yourself. Mark the places for the hymns.
8. Know who the musicians are who will play during the service. It is nice to refer to them by name, though it is not required.
9. Be sure you know if there are any special plans for the children this morning.
10. Light the helper candle beside the chalice. When it's time to light the chalice, light the taper from the helper candle, and use the taper to light the chalice.

Matches are on the top shelf of the bookcase in the office. Don't leave them in the podium – children may find them there.

The small candle sometimes goes out, so be prepared to light the taper from a match if you have to. Take as much time as it takes – no need to rush this part of the service.

A Script for the WORSHIP SERVICE

RINGING THE BELL

Prior to the service, ask a child and adult helper to ring the bell. Ask someone to hold the door slightly ajar so that the bell can be heard inside the building.

GOOD MORNING! Are there any short church related announcements to be made?

Announcements from the floor

Sometimes we omit the call to worship – leader’s preference. Join with me now to sing together our call to worship. The words are printed in your order of service.

CALL To WORSHIP by Betty Wylder

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

LIGHTING THE CHALICE & CHALICE READING

WORDS OF WELCOME

Welcome to the Harrisonburg Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. My name is _____ and I am *a member of this congregation or any descriptor that suits you. Introduce the speaker and special events of the morning if you wish.*

HUU is a lay-led congregation engaged in shared ministry. In ministering to each other, we each aspire to better answer our own true calling. All who join us with open hearts and minds are welcome. *To emphasize our inclusiveness, you can add:* Our welcome extends to all without regard to religious origin, race, ability, sexual orientation, or other categories that blind people to their common humanity.

We meet each Sunday in the historic Dale Enterprise School house to remind ourselves that the three key tasks of this religious community are:

- sense-making, finding meaning in a world of change and uncertainty
- care-giving, connecting with compassion to the needs of others in good times and in bad times; and
- justice-seeking, building a better world for the whole human family

At the end of this document are other versions of our key tasks; or you can make your own paraphrase of these basic ideas.

Please introduce visitors at the end of the service unless you have a strong preference for doing it at this point. If you do it here, add So that we have a chance to get to know each other, we invite you to join us after the service for coffee and refreshments or for potluck if it is a first Sunday.

Optional: Because we are lay-led, our services reflect the diverse gifts of the congregation, our guest ministers and our friends. If you are visiting today, we hope you will return more than once so that you can experience the variety of Sunday morning experiences that take place here. *While Growing Together sessions are taking place:* In addition to the service at 10:30, we offer fellowship and discussion at 9 in our Growing Together series.

OPENING HYMN: And now please stand as you are able and join in singing our opening Hymn # _____.

*You may place a **Responsive Reading** here if you wish.*

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. Please come forward, if you are able, to share your celebration, concern, or sorrow with us.

So that this time strengthens our community, we ask you to observe a few conventions: please introduce yourself and speak clearly – please be mindful that there are children among us *or “please be mindful of your audience”* - please be brief.

[Community sharing of joys & concerns]

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.

It's time for the children to leave us for their program of religious education and nursery care.

Revise this in the summer when routines are different. Infants and Toddlers are invited to the nursery, which is through the door on your right and down the hall. Preschoolers and up will follow their teachers to the classrooms behind the church for Religious Education. If you are visiting with children, you are welcome to go with them to make them and yourself more 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.

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

OFFERING & OFFERTORY RESPONSE

As a religious community we encourage each other to grow more generous in spirit and in action. Our Sunday offering supports this self-supporting church and its many ministries. *NOTE: 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.* The gifts of the congregation will be gratefully received.

If we have special offertory music, announce or at least acknowledge it.

[Collection and response]
From you I receive,
To you I give.
Together we share.
And from this we live.

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

(optional): **HYMN:** Please stand as you are able and join in singing Hymn #
number, title.

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

SERMON/TALK

Introduce the speaker (if it is not you) in any way that is comfortable.

COMMUNITY DIALOG *Invite community dialogue in your own words. Bring it to a close so that we can greet visitors and sing the Sending Forth.*

Greeting of Visitors *if not done earlier in the service*

Before we break away for coffee and refreshments *or set up for the potluck lunch*, I'd like to ask whether there are any visitors with us for the first or second time today. Would you be willing to stand and introduce yourselves? It will help us get to know each other.

Don't rush this – sometimes people are shy but will speak if you wait.

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.

(optional) **BENEDICTION**

What are our three key tasks as a religious community?

Choose the language you like best or write your own.

- 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 us 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 version

- 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.