

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF KENT**

**228 GOUGLER AVE KENT OH 44240**

**330-673-4247**

**[www.kentuu.org](http://www.kentuu.org)**

**Information for Visiting or Lay Worship Leaders**

Thank you for offering to lead a Sunday worship service. The following information will be helpful to you in your planning. Out of respect to the congregation and the religious educators, please do your best to limit the entire service to 60 minutes. So that you may have time for your own preparation and for consultation with the Worship Associate, Director of Religious Education, Music Director and any others involved in the service, please plan to arrive no later than 30 minutes before the service is scheduled to begin.

In addition to receiving these instructions, you will be contacted by your Worship Associate several weeks before your service. That person will review the deadlines you need to meet; put you in touch with musicians, DRE, etc. as necessary; and answer any questions you may have.

As the service officiant, you are expected to provide the sermon or other centerpiece of the service. Our worship typically includes a sermon or homily, which is preceded by one or two readings. The reading consists of a passage from sacred text, spiritual writing, secular poem/essay, or original piece that introduces the sermon topic. Authorship should be cited on the Order of Service. The sermon and readings should not exceed a combined total of 25 minutes. Alternatives and/or additions to the sermon or homily, such as skits, first-person readings, musical storytelling, and rituals are welcome. The church has a projector that can be used for visual media and a CD player connected to the sound system for audio offerings. Please notify your WORSHIP ASSOCIATE several days in advance if you wish to incorporate use of visual media. In addition to the sermon, you may take responsibility for any other elements of the service that you would like to handle. Your WORSHIP ASSOCIATE can assist you in preparing the elements of the service if you like, including: the announcements, chalice lighting, call to worship, silence and embracing meditation, prayer, the readings, offertory, closing words and benediction. We prefer that the Worship Associate be involved in speaking, as we believe that it is important to have multiple voices included in the service. In addition, the Worship Associate will prepare the chancel for the service (light the candles and get water for the officiant). Your service coordinator will put you in contact with your Worship Associate. Please let your Worship Associate know the ways in which you would like for them to work with you on your service at least one week in advance.

Please be aware that the children in Kindergarten through the 5th grade are in the sanctuary for the first 15 minutes of the service. Unless she is away for a Sunday, the Director of Religious Education, Colleen Thoele, us, will lead the TIME FOR ALL AGES. Colleen would like to speak with you about your topic and receive any ideas you may have for the Time for All Ages at least two weeks in advance of the service. Earlier communication is always preferred. You

may reach Colleen at [colleen@kentuu.org](mailto:colleen@kentuu.org).

We typically sing three HYMNS from our hymnals, but you may opt to sing fewer if you prefer. Our congregation owns and is familiar with music in both Singing the Living Tradition and Singing the Journey. In considering the selection of hymns, we suggest that the opening and closing hymns be songs that are familiar to the congregation or fairly simple to sing. More challenging hymns can go in the middle of the service. We also recommend that the last hymn be upbeat in either tempo or lyrics to end the service on a positive note. In addition to the hymns, we typically have three pieces of PERFORMED MUSIC in each service. You may offer suggestions for any special music you'd like to have included. Please contact our Music Director, Hal Walker, with your thoughts about hymns at least one week prior to the service. If you have suggestions for the performed music, please contact Hal with your idea at least three weeks prior to the service. If Hal will be away for your Sunday, you will be put in contact with the guest musicians for that day. You may reach Hal at [halwalker@mac.com](mailto:halwalker@mac.com). In the event that Hal cannot be reached, the Music Committee chair will be the backup point of contact.

The TITLE of your service should be a minimum number of words [3-6 words], so it will fit on the sign in front of the church. It should give an indication of the topic and generate interest. The title, along with a SERVICE DESCRIPTION consisting of a few sentences, need to be submitted ASAP to our Congregational Administrator, MaryBeth Hannan, at [churchoffice@kentuu.org](mailto:churchoffice@kentuu.org), and your Service Coordinator. This information will be used to advertise your service and assist in designing the cover art for the Order of Service.

MaryBeth will need a completed copy of your ORDER OF SERVICE sent to her by noon on the Wednesday prior to your service. This will enable her to prepare a draft for your review before she prints on Thursday. You may submit the information in a Word document, and MaryBeth will format it appropriately for the final Order of Service. Please be aware that it is a member of the congregation who has a volunteer ministry of preparing original cover art for each order of service. If you would like to request a particular image for the cover, please communicate that to the office at least one month before your service as the member who creates the art often works several weeks ahead.

We currently ask for the offering after the sermon, in order to use this as a time to reflect on the sermon. This order is reflected in the example but is not mandatory. If the following format is used, we suggest that closing words follow the sermon and include a unison or responsive reading involving the congregation in order to provide a verbal break in the music between the offering and the closing hymn. The closing words are usually related to the theme. They can be a reading from the back of the hymnal or something else. If a unison or responsive reading is used that is not from the hymnal, the words can be included in the Order of Service.

Following you will find the suggested order of service. You may alter the elements of the service to meet your needs, but the starred items should be included. The order may be varied if needed to make your service flow. Specific wording for certain elements is included following the suggested format. This is provided to be helpful and is not mandatory.

SUGGESTED ORDER OF SERVICE: \*Required parts of the service

\*Music for Gathering

\*Welcome & Announcements (see next page)

\*Chime (signals the beginning of the service – pianist handles this)

\*Chalice Lighting (Worship Associate finds volunteers in advance unless you would rather lead this)

Opening Music (one of the three performed pieces)

Call to Worship (A brief message, usually topical, that sets the tone for the service. Our Worship Associates often prepare original pieces on the topic. If you would like your Worship Associate to do so, please discuss this with them at least one week in advance of the service.)

Opening Hymn

Unison Covenant (We most often use the covenant by James Vila Blake, though on occasion others are used instead. The administrator will include the words in the Order of Service if you choose to keep this element. )

Covenant Response Hymn (#188 *Come, Come, Whoever You Are*)

\*Time for All Ages (led by the Director of Religious Education)

\*Singing the Children Out (led by the Music Director)

Wisdom Words (These words function to help the congregation transition to a time of silence and prayer. They are sometimes topical, other times foreshadowing the prayer, and are usually drawn from scripture or poetry.)

Silence (see next page)

\*Embracing Meditation (see next page)

Prayer

Musical Meditation (another of the three performed pieces)

Reading(s) (can be 1 or 2)

Hymn of Affirmation

\*Sermon

\*Offering (See next page)

Offertory (last of the performed pieces)

Closing Words (spoken by congregation in unison or responsively)

Closing Hymn

Benediction (brief sending forth sentiment or message)

Postlude (music)

**SAMPLE LANGUAGE and a few notes**

**Welcome and Announcements:** Whoever you are, where ever you have come from, whomever you love, we welcome you. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am \_\_\_\_\_. I am joined by \_\_\_\_\_, who is \_\_\_\_\_. (Here we usually name all service leaders including Worship Associate, Director of Religious Education and Music Director). I'd like to extend a special welcome to those of you who are with us for the first time today. We are always glad to have guests at our services and [1<sup>st</sup> service – hope that you will join us after the service for refreshment and conversation downstairs in our Fellowship Hall Fessenden Hall.] [2<sup>nd</sup> service – hope that if you visit us again you will consider coming a bit early as we have our social hour between our first and second services beginning at approximately 10:45 am downstairs in our social hall Fessenden Hall.]

If you find you would like more information about the life and work of this congregation, I encourage you to complete a guest card which you can find in the racks in the pews before you. You may place your completed card in the offering basket when it comes to you later in the service or hand it to a representative of our membership committee who will be happy to greet you at the visitors table, which is just around the corner outside the sanctuary doors.

If lay led: Lay-led services are a time-honored Unitarian Universalist tradition. We believe that the Sunday service is best reflected in a variety of voices and experiences. We are glad to have you with us this morning. We hope you find something in the service today that nourishes your spirit, and helps you find and keep your balance. Our Minister, Reverend Steven Protzman will be back in the pulpit ....

If led by a guest minister: The worship associate should say a few words about the guest and welcome them to our church here.

In furthering the spirit of hospitality, I remind you to turn off your cell phones and I invite you to take a moment to greet those sitting near you.

I'd like to direct your attention to the "Thread from the Web", that is the insert in your order of service. There you will find several announcements as well as a calendar of events for the week ahead in the church. (If you have particular announcements to make, do so here . . . but please limit them to those that are relevant to the whole congregation and keep them to no more than a couple of minutes.)

I hope you will join us for next Sunday's worship service entitled "\_\_\_\_\_". It will be led by \_\_\_\_\_. After today's service, \_\_\_\_\_ and I will be glad to greet you at the rear of the sanctuary. Again, I bid you welcome.

**Silence:** *I invite you now to quiet yourself and spend a few moments in silence, setting aside everyday concerns and being open to what you find here. (We usually take about 2 minutes of*

*silence which is kept by the worship leader or worship associate. When you feel the time has come to break the silence, please nod to the Music Director who will open the silence with a few measures of music. )*

***Embracing Meditation:*** Each week, when we gather for worship, we set aside time to widen the caring ministry of this congregation. We take time to memorialize those who have died, to celebrate with those who are joyous and to call into this community of care all who need our love and support. (If you have been given any names to remember specifically, please do so here.) And now, I invite you to name the people you wish to call into this community of care.

For all the names that have been spoken aloud and those we hold in the silent sanctuary of our hearts, we give grateful thanks. Please join me in the spirit of prayer.

Offering: Will the ushers please come forward. (Insert personal statement about gratitude.) If you are a guest, we invite you to take a candle from the basket as our gift to you. The offering will now be gratefully received.

A sample Order of Service is shown on the following page.

