

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF KENT
228 GOUGLER AVE
KENT OH 44240
330-673-4247**

Instructions for Visiting or Lay Worship Leaders

Thank you for offering to lead a Sunday worship Service. The following information will be helpful if you are planning a typical service. Out of respect to the congregation and the religious educators, please do your best to limit the entire service to 60 minutes.

The Sunday Program Committee will assign a coordinator to work with you and if you don't already have one selected, a Worship Associate who will assist you during the service.

Roughly, the Coordinator makes sure that all arrangements for the service are made, but does not participate in the service. The Coordinator will remind you of due dates for various items described in this handout and provide you with contact information for the musician who will coordinate the music with you. The Worship Associate works with you on the content and elements of the service. This includes developing the Order of Service (sample attached), choosing appropriate readings and working with the musician to select appropriate hymns. Most Sundays, Hal Walker is our lead musician. He can be contacted through the Worship Associate. If you have your own music program and musicians for the service, this is not a problem, but we need to be aware of the arrangement.

As the service officiant, you are expected to provide the sermon or main program, which should be 20 minutes maximum. In addition, you can take responsibility for any other aspect of the service that you would like to handle. It is suggested that the Worship Associate be involved in speaking, as we believe that it is important to have multiple voices. The Worship Associate can assist you in preparing all other parts of the service, including: the announcements, silence and embracing meditation, prayer, the readings, call to worship, offertory, closing words, benediction_and provide a chalice lighter. This is worked out for each service on an individual basis. The Worship Associate prepares the chancel for the service (lights the candles and gets water for the officiant).

Please be aware that the children age 4 through the 5th grade are in the service for the first 15 minutes. The Director of Religious Education, Karen Lapidus, will lead the Time for All Ages. If you wish to make a suggestion for an intergenerational activity related to your theme, you may contact Karen at the church office to discuss your ideas.

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.

Several sentences describing the service needs to be prepared early the month preceding the service. This will be put in our Monthly Newsletter. The Worship Associate can help prepare this, and the Coordinator will work with you on the specific schedule.

Two weeks before the service, a draft Order of Service should be prepared and discussed with Hal and the Worship Associate, so it can be finalized a week before the Sunday service.

The current practice is to hold 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, it is suggested that closing words follow the sermon and include 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.

You may choose to do one, two or three hymns from the hymnal. You may also insert any “special Music” as you or Hal (or your music person) wishes. In considering the selection of hymns, it is suggested 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. It is recommended that the last hymn be upbeat in either tempo or lyrics to end the service on a positive note.

You may alter the parts of the service to meet your needs, but the starred items should be included. The order may be varied if need be to make a coherent service. The Worship Associate can assist in preparing this.

On the next page is the suggested order of service. For your benefit, specific wording for certain sections is included following the suggested format. This is intended to be helpful and is not mandatory.

SUGGESTED ORDER OF SERVICE:

*Prelude (music)

*Welcome & Announcements (See next page)

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

*Chalice lighting (Worship Associate finds volunteers in advance)

Opening music

Call to Worship: (a brief message that sets the tone for the service)

Opening Hymn

Unison Mission (Secretary will provide this in Order of Service)

Doxology

Silence (See next page)

*Embracing Meditation (See next page)

Prayer

Music

Reading(s) (can be 1 or 2)

Hymn

*Sermon or Program

*Offering (See next page)

Offertory (music)

Closing words (spoken by congregation)

Closing Hymn

Benediction (brief farewell sentiment)

Postlude (music)

*Required parts of the service

SAMPLE LANGUAGE

Welcome:

Whoever you are, where ever you have come from, whoever you love, we welcome you.

I am _____, today's worship leader. I am joined by Worship Associate _____.

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 Melissa Carville-Ziemer will be back in the pulpit _____.

If you are here for the first time, I encourage you to stop by the table outside the sanctuary doors after the service where someone from the Membership Committee can answer questions and provide you with information. You are also invited to sign up for the monthly church newsletter which will provide you with information about the life and activities of the church. I also draw your attention to the "Thread From the Web" inserted in your Order of Service, which includes information on the upcoming events of the church.

I would like to draw the attention of visitors and members alike, to the white cards in the pew holders. These cards provide an opportunity to inform us if you would like to be contacted by someone from the church. It is also an opportunity for you to share information about your talents and volunteer interests. You may place completed cards in the offering baskets.

Coffee hour and announcements:

I invite everyone to join in the coffee hour downstairs (first service) following the service where you can socialize with friends and members of the church. (Second service – in between our two services. I invite you to come a little earlier next time to join in fellowship and refreshments.) For a quieter environment and tea, you can socialize in Founders Lounge, just outside of the sanctuary. There, representatives of the Membership Committee will be available to answer questions about the church.

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 have ____ announcements this morning....

I hope you will join us for next Sunday's worship service entitled "_____. It will be led by _____. 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.
(about 2 minutes of silence)

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. (name those listed)

and now, I invite you to name the people you wish to call into this community of care, the people you wish to memorialize and the ones you want to celebrate.

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 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.