

**UU Church in Reston**

*Worship and Music Workshop*  
**May 17, 2015, 9:00 am – noon, Sanctuary**

*Rev. Dr. Barbara Coeyman*

**9:00 – 9:30: Worship ‘theory’**

**(15) CONVERSATION**

Why do humans worship? Why does worship matter? How is worship transformative?

What role do the different elements --- that is, spoken word, music, other arts, silence, and more --- play in worship? ... in worship’s capacity to be transformative?

What are some qualities of successful worship? In particular, how does a smooth-flowing service enhance transformation in worship?

Why do you (personally) worship?

(15) **TURNING TO MORE PRACTICAL CONVERSATION**

Some definitions:

Religion

Spirituality

Worship

Liturgy

Ritual

Faith

Is UU worship different from worship in 'mainstream' or 'orthodox' approaches to religion?  
How, why?

Consider the idea of 'Focus and Function' (applicable to both service and sermon)

- Focus: what is the theme, thesis, etc. of the service, the sermon?---Explain in 1 sentence
- Function: What outcome or transformation are you encouraging?---Explain in 1 sentence

What other question about worship do you have?

## **9:30 – 11:00: SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR WORSHIP PLANNING**

### BASIC OPERATING PRINCIPLES

- Worship is the central event of any religious community that includes worship (Vogt: “The Primacy of Worship”).
- Worship planning and presenting is intentional. Group planning is best: anyone participating in the service should be part of the planning (i.e. the service should not be the first time presenters come together). Currently we do this Sunday morning. Ideally, we would be able to do this further in advance, perhaps through monthly worship planning meetings.
- Worship occurs in sacred time and sacred space. Accommodate space and time accordingly. Establish a culture to cultivate the sacred, a culture that is understood by all (for ex: no talking out at will)
- Worship is a transformative experience, for participants, for presenters, perhaps in different ways. Ask how any given element in a service supports the shape and transformative potential.
- The events in worship should be carefully timed out. There should be a good balance of spoken word, music, and silence. Best not to schedule two musical segments back-to-back.
- Also, the various events should each relate to and also reinforce the theme of the service.
- Worship comprises many different elements, activities, and approaches: there is no absolute right or wrong, but ask how your service responds to the needs of the community being served.
- Any worship event can be enhanced or altered: made better, made different. It’s often the small details of worship that make or break it (for ex: light the chalice in advance)
- Be intentional about the shape of the service
- On your draft of OOS, underline music and other artistic items; to have a visual guide to how you are balancing spoken item and musical (or other artistic) items (SEE copy)
- Do an estimate of the length of time of each element (SEE copy) and ask how each element of the service satisfies the shape you decided on
- Ask how every spoken element also supports the theme (focus and function) of the service
- For you who are reading from prepared text, work out a method of formatting your text that works best for you. For instance, I print my sermons at 14-point font, double spaced. Depending on the pulpit, sometimes I print on top half of pages only. Some ministers have their own particular methods of indentations, etc.

- For speaking, a general rule of thumb: 100 words = 1 minute of speaking;
- For hymn accompanying, practice through all verses of the hymn, singing (to yourself?) all verses of the text so that you are aware of oddities of syllable arrangement, punctuation, etc.
- For performers of POP (prelude, offertory, postlude), ask how your selections can support the theme of the service (integral worship)
- For speakers and musicians, practice your parts before the service. For speaker, you may develop your own method of underline text for meaning, drawing messages and reminders to yourself on the page, etc.
- For all, think through the logistics of presentation: that is, where do you stand, sit, etc; when do you move; etc.

## AUDIENCE

- Consider the ‘audience’ in worship planning.
- Make intentional decisions about presence of children in a service. Intergenerational worship should be intentionally so; CUUC can benefit from discerning the role of children in services.
- Remember to speak to all in any given audience: old-timers as well as newcomers, etc.
- Avoid ‘insider’ language, known by only some, such as nicknames, abbreviations, etc.

## INFLUENCE OF THE ARTS

- Worship is performative, but it is not a performance. Speakers can learn from musicians. Practice, practice, practice before the service is important for all presenters in the service.
- Any and all congregations can have choirs. Try an ‘Ad Hoc’ choir, or a ‘Spontaneous Choir.’
- Any congregation can sing. Including hymns from our hymnal is essential to good worship. Try a hymn-of-the-month to learn new hymns.
- Instrumentalists in a congregation can also be organized to perform for worship.
- A good pianist may matter more than having a minister, RE director, or other professional staff, at least for the outcome of worship.

- Consider carefully how members of the congregation are involved in music-making for worship.
- Train lay leaders to know what questions to ask of musicians in worship planning.
- Train musicians to know what questions to ask of lay leaders and ministers in worship planning.
- Preparing and presenting the sermon, or other main presentation of the service, requires intentional skills and methodology (see separate sheet for Sermon Ideas)

#### VISITING PREACHERS

- For visiting ministers and other speakers, offer clear information about worship planning, especially how hymns are chosen.

#### TIME FOR ALL AGES

- Choose age-appropriate material
- If reading a previously-composed story with pictures, find a way that children and all can see pictures while you read
- If not reading, but ‘telling’ a story, make it conversational. Practice in advance: timing can easily get out of hand.
- Consider the learning styles of the children included in the Story: use multiple forms of communication, especially to make the experience tangible for them

#### LAY LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES: ANY QUESTIONS, CLARIFICATION?

## **Preparing and Presenting a Sermon**

**Consider the idea of 'Focus and Function' (applicable to both service and sermon): pick a service theme for this practical application**

**- Focus: what is the theme, thesis, etc. of the service, the sermon?---Explain in 1 sentence**

**- Function: What outcome or transformation are you encouraging?---Explain in 1 sentence**

**Barbara's tips for sermon writing:**

- **Event through time**
  
- **Consider shape**
  
- **Consider grounding**
  
- **Consider outcome**
  
- **Sermon length: how to measure**
  
- **Sermon delivery**
  
- **Selecting music**

**Other**

## **WORSHIP RESOURCES AND CREATING UUCR WORSHIP LIBRARY**

**Some of the many resources available to help worship planning:** creating a worship library

Alexander, Scott. *The Relational Pulpit: Closing the Gap Between Preacher and Pew*. Boston: Skinner House, 1993.

Allen, Ronald; Barbara Shires Blaisdell; Scott Black Johnston. *Theology for Preaching: Authority, Truth, and Knowledge of God in a Postmodern Ethos*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, '97.

Grodzins, Dean. *A Language of Reverence*. Chicago: Meadville Lombard Press, 2004.

Long, Thomas G. *The Witness of Preaching*. Louisville: Westminster Press, 1989.

Malefyt, Norma deWaal; Howard Venderwell. *Designing Worship Together: Models and Strategies for Worship Planning*. Alban Institute, 2005.

Noren, Carol M. *The Woman in the Pulpit*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992.

Ray, David R. *Wonderful Worship in Smaller Churches*. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2000.

Rzepka, Jane; Ken Sawyer. *Thematic Preaching*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2001.

Schulman, Frank. *A Manual of Worship*. Boston: UUA, 2006.

Schultz, William F. *Transforming Words: Six Essays on Preaching*. Boston: Skinner House, 1996. (see especially Joan Kahn-Schneider, 'Worship')

*Singing the Living Tradition*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1993.

Skinner, Clarence R. *Worship and a Well Ordered Life*. Boston: Universalist Historical Society, 1955.

Steinke, Peter L. *Healthy Congregations: A Systems Approach*. The Alban Institute, 1996.

Tisdale, Leonora Tubbs. *Preaching as Local Theology and Folk Art*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997.

UUA website: [www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org); [www.uua.org/uumn](http://www.uua.org/uumn); [www.uua.org/programs](http://www.uua.org/programs)

UU Ministers Association: *Worship Materials Collection*, 1997.

Vogt, Von Ogden. *The Primacy of Worship*. Boston: Starr King Press, 1958.

Webber, Robert E. *Blended Worship: Achieving Substance and Relevance in Worship*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996.



11:00 – 12:00: **PRACTICUM: Speaking from the Pulpit, Sounding our Music: Feedback Form**

**Presenter:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reviewer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What was good, positive, a quality to keep in this presentation?**

**What could the speaker or performer try differently next time?**

\*\*\*\*\*

**PRACTICUM: Speaking from the Pulpit, Sounding our Music: Feedback Form**

**Presenter:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reviewer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What was good, positive, a quality to keep in this presentation?**

**What could the speaker or performer try differently next time?**

## Choosing Hymns for Effective, Integral Worship

Talk about how you choose hymns: what method?

How do you choose hymns to support integral worship?

### Discussion

- Subject matter
  
- Musical mood, style
  - Including inspirational style: esp. 'choral' style
  
- Singability
  
- Congregation familiarity
  
- Frequency of use

### Practice choosing: give a few service themes: choose 3 hymns, fit hourglass shape

- UU history
  
- Pride service
  
- forgiveness

### Different ways that hymns can be used in congregational setting

- sing outright as congregation
- have choir sing, as for offertory
- read texts
- refer to hymns in course of service

**Accompanying Hymns: for Pianists and Worship Leaders**

Performance tips for hymn accompanists

- staying slightly ahead of congregation
- don't slow down at ends of verses
- practice by singing along --- for tempo, breathing, etc
- variety in accompanying style, especially to help congregation learn melody
- accompanying some of the more complicated hymns in the teal hymnal

Tips for worship leaders advising accompanists

- tempo
- mood
- intro
- overall communication with worship leaders

Performance tips for song leaders

- personal style: inviting of singing, helping congregation believe they can sing
- use of voice: projection into mike, etc; use of hand and body gestures
- overall coordination with worship leader: be ready to lead by the time intro is played

Use of shaker-percussion and drums(?)