

STANDARD SERVICE LEADING TEMPLATE FOR THE FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF HAMILTON (Effective December, 2011)

This document contains a standard service leader script. What you say from the pulpit sets the tone for the spiritual atmosphere everyone is about to be immersed in. As Service Leader, your role is to create and maintain a sense of worship, transcendence, and peace throughout the service. Therefore, being practiced and prepared are an important aspect of this role.

Please make sure you read and update this script thoroughly before you Service Lead so everything is seamless and natural for both you and the audience in the Sanctuary. If you would like to modify this script by putting things into your own words so they sound more comfortable and natural to you, please do so. Although please note that if you wish to make significant changes to the Service Leader Script and Order of Service, please check with the Minister and/or the Worship Committee ahead of time.

DO'S AND DONT'S IN LEADING WORSHIP FROM THE UUA:

- Don't feel it's necessary to reinvent the wheel. Originality in worship is no special virtue. Familiar language, like an old shoe, soothes and reassures.
- Don't put anybody down, including yourself. Do take care of your congregation. They are really yours; they have placed themselves in your care for an hour. Some are hurting. Some are angry. Some need sympathy, others to be challenged, others just to laugh or cry. Try to make worship a safe place for them all.
- Do over-rehearse. Don't try to wing it until you've been doing this every week for, say, ten years. Maybe not even then.
- Don't draw attention to yourself. The message counts, not the messenger. Do, however, share something of yourself in worship. If you can, try to say something that costs you something to say.
- Be warm and welcoming AND concise and brief. Each time you open your mouth to speak, two hundred others must keep theirs shut. Leave them asking for more, not wishing for less.

From: <http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/leaderslibrary/interconnections/44006.shtml>

Pre-Service Checklist:

1. Remember to send a copy of your entire script to your Speaker and/or Minister at least 24 hours before your service.
2. Make sure you have the contact info (home phone, cell phone, e-mail) for your Speaker and Storyteller on your person in case anyone is late and you need to contact them.
3. Make sure you have your entire script with you and any props you may be using during your service.
4. If you need your glasses or contacts make sure you have them with you.
5. Arrive at the church at least 30 minutes if not more before the start of the service.
6. Practice lighting and extinguishing all chalices and candles. Practice playing the singing bowl.
7. Do a sound check with assistance from your Sound Tech from both your podium mike and the cordless mike if you are also the storyteller for your service. If you aren't the storyteller make sure the storyteller does a sound check.
8. Do a little practice run of the transition between you and the storyteller when it comes to the end of the Story For All Ages and decide who will lead which pieces of this transition.
9. Make sure both you and the speaker have hymnals and Orders of Service by your seats on the chancel. (The Worship Assistant usually takes care of this, but double check to make sure.)

10. Make sure there is a glass of water for both you and the speaker by the podium. (The Worship Assistant usually takes care of this, but double check to make sure.)
11. Have cough candies or lozenges with you just in case, too. A box of tissues wouldn't hurt either.
12. If you plan on changing the position of the podium, story chair, chalice, etc. for your service make sure you talk to the Ushers, Worship Assistants, and Musicians at least a day in advance so they are prepared and know what to expect.
13. Go to the washroom before you ring the bell.

#	Item	Words to be spoken	Notes
1	Overture	<i>(This music will start to play at 10:15am, unless musicians are still rehearsing. The Sanctuary doors should also open at this time.)</i>	This music will be chosen by the Music Committee. It will NOT be live, but on CD. This music will *NOT* be cited in the OOS
2	Bell	<p><i>(Ring the bell in the foyer.)</i></p> <p><i>(Say this while in the foyer):</i> Our Gathering Music begins in two minutes, please take your seats in the Sanctuary.</p> <p><i>(Indicate to the Sound Tech that the service will begin and that you will need your podium mike turned on so everyone can hear you introduce the Gathering Music.)</i></p> <p><i>(OPTIONAL: Say this from the pulpit.):</i> Please quietly take your seats as we enjoy our Gathering Music. We ask that you turn off any cell phones, pagers, blackberrys, or other electronic devices as they interfere with our sound system and your listening enjoyment during the service.</p>	The Bell will be rung by the Worship Assistant or the Service Leader at 10:25am.
3	Gathering Music	This is an OPTIONAL portion of the service. If there is a speaker or the choir is performing, this may be a part of the service.	<p>This music should start 2 mins after the Bell in the foyer is rung at 10:25am.</p> <p>Sometimes this music will just be an extension of the music on CD. Sometimes it will be live. Either way the next piece "Singing Together" must start at 10:30am SHARP.</p>
4	Singing Together	<p><i>(To be said by the Minister or Music Director. Service Leader will say these words only if the Minister or Music Director are both absent.):</i></p> <p>Good Morning! Please rise as you're able and let's join our voices together in song. This morning we'll sing [title of song].</p>	<p>Minister or Music Director will select this song.</p> <p>Please make sure that the congregation is directed to the hymnals, has a copy of the lyrics in their OOS, or lyrics are projected.</p>

#	Item	Words to be spoken	Notes
5	Welcome and Singing Bowl	<p>Good Morning! Welcome to the First Unitarian Church of Hamilton.</p> <p>Whoever you are, whomever you love, wherever you are on your journey of faith or search for meaning, today you are one of us, and you are welcome in this house of worship.</p> <p>My name is [name of service leader] and I'm your service leader this morning.</p> <p>I invite you all to be comfortable, close your eyes if you wish, and listen to the sound of our singing bowl until it disappears. <i>(play the singing bowl . . . and fade)</i></p>	<p>Make sure you know how to properly use the singing bowl. Please rehearse before the service so you can practice how to strike it and make it hum.</p> <p>You can also assign the task of playing the singing bowl to another congregant.</p>
6	Call To Worship	<i>(Read your Call to Worship Words.)</i>	These words should connect us with our Unitarian Universalist faith and set the worshipful tone that is to be imbued throughout the rest of the service.
7	Lighting of the Chalice	<p>We light our chalices to mark our entry into sacred space.</p> <p>I invite [name(s) of chalice lighters] to come forward to light our Sanctuary and Children's Chalices.</p> <p><i>(Chalice Lighters lights chalices and stay at Chalices until all the Unison Chalice Lighting Words have been read.)</i></p> <p>[OPTIONAL: This portion will only come in to play on an ad hoc basis as determined by the Worship Committee. There might be special words or a special display to denote this event, date, or occasion as well.</p> <p>Please reflect on [this important faith date and/or secular event (Ex: Yom Kippur or Remembrance Day)] as we light our chalice this morning.</p> <p><u>or</u></p> <p><i>(If some significant event in the "real world" needs to be acknowledged, this would be the place to honour it in a worshipful way. The Worship Committee may give you words from the CUC or UUA to share with the congregation for this portion of the service.)</i></p>	<p>The Service Leader selects the Chalice Lighters for the service. The Chalice Lighters will light both Chalices. The lighters can be an individual, a couple, a family, a committee . . . etc. The choice will be at the discretion of the Service Leader.</p> <p>Important dates and events will be provided to the service leader by the Worship Committee as needed. This will only come into play on occasions when the service, which is scheduled, does not specifically address a significant event or faith date.</p>

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8	Unison Chalice Lighting Words	<p>Please join in reading our Unison Chalice Lighting Words, found in your Order of Service.</p> <p><i>May this flame be our light of friendship and love.</i></p> <p>Thank you chalice lighter(s).</p>	
9	Hymn	<p>Please stand as you are able and join together in singing hymn number [number] from your [grey/aqua] hymnal entitled [name of hymn].</p>	<p>Our Music Director selects all hymns.</p>
10	Story for All Ages	<p><i>(We ask the Storyteller to position the storytelling chair in a location where both the adults and the children can see and hear them. There is also a storytelling carpet that can be placed on the floor for the children to sit on. Please make arrangements with the Sound techs to get a hand held mike or body mike for the Storyteller for this part of the service. Make sure you do a sound check with your body mike prior to the service.)</i></p> <p>Children and youth come and sit on the carpet here [state location] to share in our Story for All Ages [story must be brief, optimally no longer than 5 minutes].</p> <p>Today's story is . . .</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Called [title] by [author] b) One that I remember from my childhood and my parents shared with me. Once upon a time . . . [etc.] c) About [name of real life person] a [short description of person]. Once upon a time . . . [etc.] d) A real story from my own life. Once upon a time . . . [etc.] 	<p>This section can be done by the Service Leader, Speaker, or an assigned Storyteller.</p> <p>Find a story that can entertain and engage our younger members while also giving our older members some food for thought.</p> <p>If you would like assistance in choosing a story please contact CYRE.</p>
11	Children's Recessional Hymn	<p><i>(To be said by the Storyteller from the location where they just finished sharing their story.):</i></p> <p>Children and youth please line up behind [Name of Co-Chair of CYRE or CYRE Coordinator], who will take the Children's Chalice as you leave for class.</p> <p>Adults on this aisle (point to aisle on the right) may form an arch, if you please. Everyone join us in singing our Children's Recessional Hymn, found in your order of service.</p> <p><i>As you go may joy surround you, as you go, go in peace. Know our love is with you always, as you go, as you go.</i></p>	<p>The Storyteller, if possible, should give these instructions.</p> <p>These instructions must be done efficiently and with precision or this transition will get very muddy and the children may leave the Sanctuary before the recessional hymn even ends.</p> <p>Service Leader is to lead congregation in singing this hymn.</p>

#	Item	Words to be spoken	Notes
12	News of Our Community	<p>News of our community is a part of our life as a church family. Please make a point of reading all the announcements in your order of service following worship. We have this announcement/these announcements to share, which are not in your Order of Service this morning. <i>(Read announcements.)</i></p> <p><i>(The next intro is only to be used on days our Minister, Rev. Victoria Ingram, is not giving the sermon. Move this introduction to the Welcome if the Speaker is also the Storyteller.)</i> Our speaker today is [name of speaker]. [Speaker] is [brief introductory bio – try to keep it to no more than 50 words].</p> <p><i>(The next intro is only to be used on days our Music Director, Rachel Derry, is not providing hymn accompaniment.)</i> Today's Music Ministry is provided by [name musicians]; with hymn accompaniment provided by [name accompanist].</p> <p>If you have a personal Joy or Sorrow you would like shared with the congregation today, paper and pens are available at the table to my right [indicate with hand gesture]. Please write yours before the Worship in Music ends.</p> <p>This service is also piped into the lobby if you need to step out of the sanctuary.</p> <p>If you would like a tax receipt for your offering OR you would like your donation credited toward your financial commitment of record, please write your name and address on the brown envelope given out by the ushers before the service. Envelopes can also be found on top of the hymnal bookshelf.</p> <p>After our worship please join our Fellowship in the lobby. If you are a newcomer please visit our newcomers table so you may know us better and take a green mug for your beverage so we may know you better.</p>	<p>Announcements should only be made by the Service Leader from the podium. Guest announcements will only be made with the prior approval of the Worship Committee. All announcements should be provided to you in writing at least 20 minutes before the service.</p> <p>Keep announcements as brief as possible, like headlines. No more than 50 words or 30 seconds in length. A maximum of 3 announcements would be preferable. NEVER read announcements word for word from the order of service.</p> <p>At times members of the Board, Canvass, or The Festival Committee may need to use this time to give direct messages to the congregation.</p>
13	Reading	<p>Today's reading comes from . . .</p> <p>a) SOLO: <i>(Name the author, title of book or article)</i></p> <p>b) UNISON: <i>(Name the author)</i>. You can find it in your <i>(grey hymnal. It is number [number]/ order of service)</i>.</p> <p>c) RESPONSIVE: <i>(Name the author)</i>. You can find it in your <i>(grey hymnal. It is number [number]/ order of service)</i>. I will read the text in regular font and you will respond with the text in italics.</p>	<p>This reading should help establish the overall theme of the service and should connect with the message of the sermon. It can be responsive, unison or solo.</p>

#	Item	Words to be spoken	Notes
14	Worship in Music	<p>Our Music Ministers will now share with us our Worship in Music.</p> <p><i>(If necessary, cue the musicians to play the Worship In Music.)</i></p>	<p>Music will be chosen by the Musicians assigned to the service.</p> <p>The Worship Assistant should give you Joys and Sorrows by the time this music ends.</p>
15	Meditation: Joys and Sorrows	<p>This is our time as a church community to come together to celebrate and grieve with our fellow congregants, supporting each other through both our struggles and our victories.</p> <p>Following our meditation words, we join in a time of silence for reflection or prayer. During our musical meditation, you are invited to come forward, and light a candle.</p> <p>These are the Joys and Sorrows we share today. <i>(Read written joys and sorrows.)</i></p> <p>SEPARATE THE JOYS FROM THE SORROWS. <i>Your Worship Committee would suggest that you read the joys first and the sorrows last so it brings the congregation deeper into meditation and lets everyone get their giggles, laughter, and clapping out of the way at the beginning.</i></p> <p>DO NOT READ ANNOUNCEMENTS AT THIS TIME! <i>If someone accidentally forgot to submit an important oral announcement wait until the end of the service after the sermon and before the benediction to read it. This time in the service is very intimate and personal. Announcements break the mood and tone of this part of the service.)</i></p>	<p>Make sure the worship assistant has brought any written joys and sorrows to you during the Worship in Music. Only read the ones that are clearly marked “read aloud”.</p> <p>If you feel a joy or sorrow is inappropriate (ex: It’s an announcement or it’s hurtful.) please use your good discretion and decline to read it. The person who wrote it may ask why you didn’t read it. By all means defend your decision and/or ask a member of Worship Committee to intervene if the need arises.</p>
15b	Meditation: In Words	<p>Our Meditative Reading comes from [name of author and/or book/article/piece].</p> <p><i>(Read Meditative Reading)</i></p>	<p>This reading should be akin to a prayer and take the congregation into a deep inward journey.</p>
15c	Meditation: In Silence	<p><i>(You may ring the bell to start and/or end the period of silence. Allow at least one minute for the meditation in silence; two, if possible.)</i></p>	<p>Be aware that periods of silence that are too short or too long can upset the flow of the service.</p>

#	Item	Words to be spoken	Notes
15d	Meditation: In Music	<i>(The Musicians will now present the Meditation in Music and congregants will light candles. Congregants then proceed to light candles. If necessary, cue the musicians to play the musical meditation.)</i>	
15e	Meditation: One Last Candle	<i>(Light the “Last Candle”)</i> We light this last candle for all those joys and sorrows which remain in our hearts until the time comes to speak them aloud. Whatever our level of sharing, may this community be a blessing and support to us all.	
15f	Meditation: Unison Words of Support	Please join me in reading our unison words of support in your order of service. SAMPLES: <i>a) We are called to be here for, and with, each other. May each of us reach out in silence, word or gesture to our fellow creatures, offering from our hearts, giving with our hands. May all be included in our circle of caring.</i> <i>b) To troubled hearts, to spirits over brimming, we offer our ministry. For stories that need to be heard, we offer the care of our attention; to the blooming of lives and to their dying, we open our hearts. This time we make sacred by a simple act we all know. We minister by listening.</i> <i>c) We gather this hour as people of faith. With joys and sorrows, gifts and needs. We look to the chalice as a beacon of hope, as we look to one another in search for truth and meaning and in celebration of the life that we share together. May all be warmed by the light of this chalice. May all be included in our circle of caring.</i> <i>d) Our path is open to all life – to the 10,000 joys and 10,000 sorrows. We find it difficult but we are not alone. And through the experience of reaching out in connectedness to others, we heal, are free to love fully, and realize a profound sense of belonging.</i>	Choose the unison words of support in advance, and make sure that they are included in your order of service submission to the office. You may use a reading from our hymnal. Readings #479-524 contain Meditations and Prayers. You can use a reading from an outside source. Be sure to keep it brief. You can create your own unique unison words of support. Be sure to keep them brief.
16	Hymn	Please stand if you are able and join together in singing hymn number [number] from your [aqua/grey] hymnal entitled [name of hymn].	
17	Sermon		We ask speakers to limit their sermon to 20 minutes.

#	Item	Words to be spoken	Notes
18	Offering	<p>Our offering is a reminder of the spirit of generosity that is at the heart of our religious community. In sharing our financial resources we ensure the continued existence of our church. Your financial contributions are appreciated and make a difference. We thank you for giving as generously as you are able.</p> <p>Please join me in reading from your [gray hymnal/order of service]. Please turn to [reading number (<i>number</i>)/your order of service.]</p> <p><i>(Give congregants a moment to find their place in the gray hymnal or order of service.)</i></p> <p><i>(Read reading along with the congregation.)</i></p> <p>We will now receive our offering while we listen to our Music Ministers.</p> <p><i>(If necessary, cue the musicians to play the offertory music. Let the ushers collect the offering while the music plays.)</i></p> <p><i>(When the offering is complete, go to the front of the chancel and receive the baskets from the ushers. Say:)</i> Your gifts in support of our ministries to one another and to the community are appreciated. Thank you.</p>	
19	Chalice Extinguished / Going Forth	<p>[Optional: (<i>Please only use in emergencies if an important oral announcement was missed at the beginning of the service.</i>) Before we conclude our worship this morning I have this announcement to share. (<i>Read announcement.</i>) Thank you.]</p> <p>READING CHOICES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>You can use a reading that fits the sermon's theme.</i> b) <i>Find resources at www.uua.org/worshipweb</i> c) <i>There are some great readings in our grey hymnal. Please refer to readings #677-#713.</i> d) <i>Unison Words: (Ex: "We extinguish this flame, while striving to carry within our minds and hearts the light of our commitment to a just society, a loving faith community and the essence of our best selves.")</i> d) <i>You can write and create your own original reading.</i> 	<p>Select someone to extinguish the chalice prior to the service.</p>
20	Postlude	Please remain seated for our postlude.	Music will be chosen by the Musicians

#	Item	Words to be spoken	Notes
		<i>(If necessary, cue the musicians to play the Postlude.)</i>	assigned to the service.
21	Fellowship Hour		Enjoy some social time in the foyer.

Post-Service Checklist:

1. Thank your service team (Speaker, Story Teller, Musicians, etc.) for their contributions to the service.
2. Return any joys and sorrows you read during the service to the table where congregants write them out. The Caring Community Committee will follow up with individual congregants with a caring card or letter at a future date.
3. Collect any paper or props you used during the service and remove them from the pulpit and take them home with you.
4. Remember to put away any hymnals you may have used.
5. If you are not going to keep your Order of Service place it in one of the blue recycle bins by the Sanctuary doors.
6. Take any water glasses back to the kitchen.
7. Return your cordless mike to the sound booth.
8. Place any garbage in a wastebasket.