

# Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Manhattan Convener Packet

*Revised Sept. 2009*

We are asking you, as convener, to work with speaker(s) to put together the order of service, to find a children's story and/or someone to read a children's story of their choice, and similarly with possible readings, then to choose the music or contact the music chairperson to select music for you, and, on the day of the service, to do our "regular" morning things, set the tone for the service, coordinate the readings, etc., and introduce the speaker(s).

Information for convening, with additional things to note in preparation and for the day of, is below. Let us highlight a few things.

- Please get the order of service (elements, titles, etc.) for the Sunday Bulletin to Sue Turner (office@uufm.net) by Thursday morning before the service (see below).
- If yours is the second Sunday of the month, coordinate helping hands with Yvonne Lacy (yvcq67lacy@sbcglobal.net). You will be introducing the speaker representing the helping hands beneficiary. Please be sure to indicate that any donations NOT marked to go to the fellowship will be given to the helping hands beneficiary.

About elements in the order of service:

- *Announcements.* We are no longer inviting people up to give announcements. Please draw attention to what's written in the order of service, and read other announcements people have handed you (max 3 short sentences) that didn't make it into the order.
- *Welcome and visitors:* We try to say something to make visitors feel welcome and to invite them to stick around for coffee. Remember that for some of them a UU service might seem pretty foreign, so it can be helpful to provide a little background. Give them the opportunity to get to know us later by making them feel welcome now. You may ask them to introduce themselves if you want.
- *Joys & concerns:* Please try to introduce the sharing of joys and concerns in a tone that gently suggests that it's meant for significant items of some personal nature, not forgotten announcements or little quibbles, or political concerns.
- Try to keep the things before the children leave fairly brief, so that they can get to their classes. Long readings before then are especially not recommended.
- Feel free to vary aspects of the elements or the order of service as seems required. E.g., children's moment can come after the offertory if there's not a lot going on—some parents like their children to have the chance to participate in that.
- The example wordings in the attached document are meant to give you an idea of how each service element can work. Do not take either the list of elements or the possible wordings as requirements, but please do think about what role they are meant to play before you alter the structure or choose substantially different wordings.

In general, it's helpful to have something written down to say, so that you can look to it if you forget what's next. This is especially helpful for helping visitors feel welcome and setting an appropriate tone for sharing joys & concerns, meditative moments, and so on. When I have not taken the time to make notes to myself of what I'd like to say, I've found it's too easy to say things that sound odd. Look to the convener's instructions for some examples, and if you would like other suggestions, ask.

Thank you again for convening! We know it takes work to get it together, and we appreciate the effort you will put in to it. Varied member participation in the services is part of what makes the fellowship thrive.

-The program committee

# 1. Convener Responsibilities

## 1.1. Responsibilities Prior to Sunday

- **Contact the speaker** to discuss the program and general order of service. The speaker may select his or her own readings and hymns, or ask you to make selections. Visiting ministers often have almost an entire order of service already established. If the speaker makes selections, ask for titles and authors for the Sunday Bulletin.
- **Provide info about timing:** Visiting speakers who will be providing only the main “sermon” or talk may need help deciding on timing, expectations about the audience, etc. The “main event” can be anywhere between 20 to 40 minutes, depending on how many additional things are going on. 30 minutes of speaking plus about 10 minutes of discussion is fairly typical. If you plan a longer talk, keep other elements to a minimum.
- **Provide info about audience:** you may inform/remind the speaker as needed that we welcome viewpoints that challenge us, that we are interested in both intellectual and emotional/“spiritual” stimulation, and that we welcome political issue advocacy, but not partisan politics.
- *Ask the speaker for permission to audio-tape the service and post it online.*
- **Please also give the speaker directions** to the fellowship, if needed, and ideally a phone number at which you can be reached, and check to see if home hospitality is needed for an overnight stay, if he/she is traveling any distance. Contact the programming chair for information, if needed.
- **Choose music and/or contact the music committee chairperson** 2-3 weeks in advance to be sure all music is covered and that titles will be sent in for the Sunday Bulletin. Music may be selected by the speaker or convener, or the music committee chair can do this. Music selections typically needed are pre-service opening music (about 10 minutes), 1 or 2 hymns, and offertory music (live music or CD of 3 minutes or less). Post-service music (another CD selection for 10 or more minutes) is also an option. In addition, you may incorporate special musical events. The Choir sings once a month (usually the third Sunday) and may be scheduled for your Sunday, and the Music Chairperson might suggest other possibilities.
- **If yours is the second Sunday of the month**, discuss with the social action Helping Hands representative what the **Helping Hands** beneficiary is and what you should say to introduce them or their representative speaker. Occasionally the Social Action Committee has a suggestion or recommendation for other program material (poem, reading or music) a propos of the beneficiary. Program planners and conveners are ultimately responsible for the choice.
- **Choose additional readings**, words for introducing service elements, etc. as needed. Our hymnal has many good readings in the back, and you may also want to search <http://www.uua.org/spirituallife/worshipweb/index.php> or other websites, or just find your own sources of poetry and literature.
- **Plan your mix of readers.** Typically you will be responsible for presenting the parts of the service through the offertory, although (as mentioned above) visiting ministers may be interested in doing some of that. You may also want to ask others to read (brief!) pieces for the chalice lighting or other readings.
  - Choose and arrange for someone else to light the **chalice**, if you would like. A child can be an especially nice choice.
  - Contact the Religious Education Chairperson if you need help finding a **children’s story** or activity.
- **Contact the audio-visual equipment** person with any other special needs regarding audio/visual or other presentation needs, and coordinate any special seating arrangement with

Building Chairperson. The fellowship has an LCD projector for powerpoint, etc. presentations.

- **Submit order of service** for the Sunday Bulletin to Sue by noon on Thursday. You need only give the list of service elements you are using and information for each part (e.g., title/author or song title/artist), and a brief line or two about the speaker(s) and convener and Sue will format them, add announcements, etc.
- **Prepare** your convening introductions, etc.
- Contact the Program Committee Chairperson if you need help.

## **1.2. Responsibilities on Sunday Morning**

- Be there on time.
- Check in with the audio equipment person to talk about timing of transitions and other service elements, so that they may be better prepared with cued music, microphones, etc. Especially if the offertory music lasts more than 3 minutes, discuss with the sound people whether you want it to be played in its entirety. It is nice to arrive early enough to have music playing before the service.
- Check that the chalice is ready and matches or a lighter is available (see next section).
- Check that the heating or air conditioning and lights are set at comfortable levels.
- Introduce yourself to the speaker and provide assistance, as needed, e.g. water on the podium.
- Ring the bell or chimes a little before 10:45 to give people a chance to settle down. Try to start on time even if there are stragglers.
- Conduct order of service.
- Introduce the speaker.
- Facilitate discussion, if any.
- End the service at 12:00 promptly
- Extinguish the chalice.
- Help ensure that the speaker has a chance to get some refreshments afterwards.

## **1.3. Care and Feeding of the Chalice**

- Use only smokeless, odorless liquid paraffin oil. This is kept in the lower cabinet to the right of the refrigerator in the kitchen.
- Use funnel to fill small squeeze bottles and use those to fill the chalice.
- Keep level between 1/2 to 3/4 level in the reservoir.
- Keep wick fibers no higher than level with top of dip tube. This gives a flame of about 1 inch, which is enough. Any higher and it smokes. There is already evidence of smoke on the walls! This will require an expensive paint job sooner than necessary.
- The preferred way to light the wick is with a long, wooden match. These are kept in a small drawer to the left of the long pencil drawer in the large RE room.
- A candle may be useful as a way to get the match lit, but don't use it to light the chalice as that drips paraffin on the glass.
- Contact Tom Manney for more information.

## 2. Contact Information

Program Committee Chair	Alley Stoughton, 341-3041, stough@k-state.edu
Sunday Bulletin	Sue Turner, 537-2349, office@uufm.net.
Music Chair	Michael Oldfather , 537-3738, mou812@ksu.edu.
Religious Education Co-Chairs	Sandy Nelson, 341-0135, sandalounelson@yahoo.com Kathleen Tanona, 537-6208, sktanona@sbcglobal.net
Social Action Helping Hands Coordinator	Yvonne Lacy, 539-4404, yvcq67lacy@sbcglobal.net .
Sound System	Mark Moser, 537-5028, mark@grapeviner.com
Building Chair	Tom Manney, 537-0624, tmanney@ksu.edu

### **3. Typical Order of Service Elements**

Opening music

Welcome

- A. Welcoming words
- B. Greet those seated nearby
- C. Introduction of visitors and guests

Announcements: convener reads last-minute announcements

Call to Worship

Lighting of Chalice/words for lighting chalice

Hymn

Joys and Concerns

Story for all ages (sometimes after offertory)

Story/activity

Sing children to their activities

Offertory

Helping hands speaker, if applicable

Offertory words

Offertory music/offertory

Reading 1

Time for silent reflection

Reading 2

Sermon/Main Speaker(s)

Discussion

Hymn

Closing words

Extinguishing of Chalice

Closing Music