



ASSOCIATION SUNDAY 2011

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE IN MINISTRIES

~ ORGANIZING AND WORSHIP RESOURCES ~

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Association Sunday

Checklist for Organizing Your Service

Before the Service:

- Consider doing a pulpit exchange with neighboring congregations.
- Collaborate with religious professionals and lay leaders in your congregation to plan your service.
- Contact members of the congregation about making lead gifts, and consider making a lead gift yourself.
- Put up Association Sunday Posters in your congregation.
- Publicize the service and special collection in your newsletter (see sample Association Sunday Announcement for Congregational Newsletters), on your website, and in your Order of Service (see sample Order of Service Insert). Be sure to provide the http://uua.kintera.org/assoc_sunday2011 link in your electronic newsletter, and ask those who will be unable to attend to mail their contributions.
- As we trust people will be inspired by it, schedule the offering for after the sermon.

At the Service:

- Announce your gift, and ask that each member consider a gift of \$20 or more. Remind them that this Sunday's collection is a special opportunity to connect and combine our resources for the future of our faith.
- Indicate that all checks should be made out to the UUA.

After the Service:

- Send your congregation's donation to the UUA (see How to Return Gifts form). Have a check made out for all cash collected and return it to the UUA with the Gift Information Form.
- Send sermons, pictures and other materials you used for sharing with others to Lindsey Reed at 25 Beacon Street, Boston MA 20108 or AssociationSunday@uua.org.

**For further information email us at AssociationSunday@uua.org,
or call Lindsey Reed at (617) 948-4661.**

Association Sunday 2011: Frequently Asked Questions

Why do we need Association Sundays?

Unitarian Universalist congregations are self-governing entities whose connections to one another sometimes seem tenuous. We need Association Sundays to strengthen the bonds of common purpose among congregations. Even more importantly, we need to combine our resources in order to make Unitarian Universalism a stronger voice of liberal religious values in the world.

We need to bring our congregations together to pursue our mission of affirming the "inherent worth and dignity of every person". These Association Sundays will strengthen our connection, and combine our resources, enabling us to have more of an influence on our country. Now is the time for our congregations to grow stronger and more effective because our religious values are needed to help heal the wounded world.

What are Association Sundays?

Since 2007, the UUA has asked congregations to participate in annual Association Sundays to recognize and support, both spiritually and materially, the national work of the Association. We envision a day – an “Association Sunday” - during which thousands of UUs across the nation are simultaneously celebrating our shared commitment to Unitarian Universalism.

Like *Ministry Sunday* in 1995, (which was a request to support the financial needs of ministers and seminary students) and *Mind the Gap Sunday* in 2002 (which was focused on supporting Youth and Young Adult Ministries), each Association Sunday will include a worship service based on a particular theme and congregations will be asked to host a special collection to support the Association of Congregations. This year’s theme is *Celebrating Excellence in Ministries*.

How is Association Sunday different from other UUA fundraising efforts?

Association Sunday is different from The Annual Program Fund (APF) and Friends of the UUA; those programs help to pay for the operating budget of the UUA. Special projects require additional funding and that’s the purpose of Association Sunday.

[Read more](#) about the differences between Association Sunday and the Annual Program Fund.

When is Association Sunday, and what will its funds support?

The theme of Association Sunday 2011, scheduled for October 2, 2011, is *Celebrating Excellence in Ministries*. The UUA will partner with the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (UUMA), the Unitarian Universalist Musicians Network (UUMN), the Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA), and other professional organizations to celebrate Association Sunday this year. Funds raised will be distributed as grants to these professional organizations to support a range of projects, including scholarships, continuing education, an

assessment of our ministries, and other projects that help religious professionals get the ongoing training they need to support thriving congregations.

Some of the proposed projects that may receive Association Sunday 2011 funding include:

- Small group training, support, and coaching for ministers to work together on building ministerial skills.
- Scholarships for religious professionals to attend the bi-annual Institute for Excellence in Ministry, the 2012 UUMN Conference, LREDA Fall Conferences, and other meaningful professional education events.
- A multicultural competency assessment, multicultural training for religious professionals and lay people, and a comprehensive assessment and evaluation of skills necessary for professional ministries in the next generation.
- Collaborative partner learning programs between UU professional organizations.
- A Shared Ministry Workshop Series focused on collaborative planning and implementation of multi-generational worship services for religious educators, musicians, and ministers.
- Additional support for the UU Children's Choir, music professional credentialing, and the composition of new UU music.
- New approaches for connecting with religious professionals in isolated areas through webinars and other communications.

How will the money be raised?

We ask that each member and minister contribute individually as part of a special collection during services on Association Sunday. We suggest a recommended donation of \$20 per member. Some may even wish to inspire generosity in their congregation by making a large lead or matching gift and announcing it prior to their service.

If you or a member of your congregation wishes to make a leadership contribution, matching gift, stock gift or bequest to benefit Association Sundays, please contact us.

How can my congregation register for Association Sunday?

Each congregation has a different way of managing special services and collections, so it is important that you check with your minister and board before taking any steps to register. Once you have followed the guidelines set out by your congregation, please:

1. Have your minister or board president register with the Stewardship and Development Office by emailing AssociationSunday@uua.org or online at www.uua.org/associationsunday;
2. Schedule Sunday, October 2, 2011 or another date for your "Association Sunday" service;
3. Spread the word about Association Sunday among members of your congregation.

Newsletter articles, pulpit announcements, and emails are all good ways to share your enthusiasm for this project. After your service, please share your stories and photos with us at associationsunday@uua.org. More information and resources can be found online at www.uua.org/associationsunday.

Association Sunday 2011: Sample Language for Congregational Newsletters

We're Celebrating the Fifth Annual Association Sunday!

Since 2007, the UUA has asked congregations to participate in annual Association Sundays to recognize and support, both spiritually and materially, the national work of the Association. Association Sunday is a special opportunity for thousands of UUs across the nation to simultaneously celebrate our shared commitment to Unitarian Universalism.

Our congregation will celebrate Association Sunday 2011 on October 2 (or alternative date). As part of our service, we will take a special collection to affirm our common bonds and purposes as Unitarian Universalists.

The theme of this year's Association Sunday is *Celebrating Excellence in Ministries*, and funds raised from special collections at participating congregations will support the UUA, Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (UUMA), Unitarian Universalist Musicians Network (UUMN), Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA), and other professional organizations. Grants to these organizations will support a range of projects, including scholarships, continuing education, an assessment of our ministries, and other projects that help religious professionals get the ongoing training they need to support thriving congregations.

We ask that each member and minister contribute individually as part of a special collection during services on Association Sunday. We suggest a recommended donation of \$20 per member. Some may even wish to inspire generosity in their congregation by making a large lead or matching gift and announcing it prior to their service.

If you wish to make a leadership contribution, matching gift, stock gift, or bequest to benefit Association Sunday, please contact the UUA at 1-888-792-5885 or visit http://uua.kintera.org/assoc_sunday2011.

Welcome to Association Sunday 2011!

As part of the service today affirming our common bonds and purposes as Unitarian Universalists, we are taking a special collection.

We ask you to make a tax deductible gift of \$20 or more.

What will be funded?

The theme of the fifth annual Association Sunday is *Celebrating Excellence in Ministries!*

This year, the UUA is partnering with the UU Ministers Association, the UU Musicians Network, the Liberal Religious Educators Association, and other professional organizations to make this the largest celebration yet!

Proceeds from this service will be distributed as grants to support scholarships, continuing education, an assessment of our ministries and other projects that help religious professionals get the ongoing training they need to support thriving congregations.

Thank you for growing our faith in one another and our way in religion. We are better together!

“We can be the religion for our time. We can only do this together...as an Association.” – Rev. Peter Morales, President of the UUA

Checks should be made out to the UUA with Association Sunday 2011 and your congregation’s name on the memo line; they may be put in the offering today or mailed to the Unitarian Universalist Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108; donations may also be made online at http://uua.kintera.org/assoc_sunday2011.

OPENING WORDS / CALLS TO WORSHIP

Call to Worship

Rev. Kathleen McTigue

We come together this morning as a tapestry of faith,
woven of threads unique and nuanced.

We are not all of one mind when we bring forth our visions for the future.
We do not all speak the same language to name what is holy.
Different teachers and words of scripture speak our hearts' truth.

We do not utter the same prayers,
nor do we use the same word, if any word at all,
to speak the name of God.

And yet we gather ourselves to worship,
and in our gathering we name and honor our differences,
by which we are made rich and complex and lovely.

We gather ourselves through a binding weave of choice and intent;
we are made strong by time and attention, respect and compassion.
We have made ourselves into one cloth,
textured and vibrant because we are not alike.

We are woven together.
We are bound to one another.
We belong with each other.

Let us worship together.

Excerpt from *The Scottish Himalayan Expedition (1951)*

W. H. Murray

“Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation), there is one elementary truth the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then providence moves too. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents, meetings and material assistance, which no man could have dreamt would have come his way. I learned a deep respect for one of Goethe's couplets:

Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it.
Boldness has genius, power and magic in it!”

Chalice Lighting (or Opening Words) for Association Sunday 2011

Stephan Papa

As we come together to light this chalice, let us bring what is best within us to our common purpose of creating a more caring community and world.

As we light this chalice, let us bring our gifts, our personal strengths and weaknesses, to our shared ministry, to blend them for greater effectiveness.

After lighting this chalice, let us listen and learn from one another, and in the process illuminate the way forward.

As we come together, let us celebrate the breadth of our connection and the depth of our intention to minister to a wounded world.

Let our ministry together serve one another and something more.

After kindling this chalice, let us feel the power of our faith in the goodness of life and the efficacy of love, and let us live our faith as co-ministers serving a calling of a sacred nature on this Association Sunday and every day of the year.

Words for Association Sunday 2011 and the Jewish High Holy Days

Stephan Papa

We are called to repentance by our own conscience, our communities, and creation. These holy days are a time to reassess how we have acted on our connections, our associations with others. Have we made them stronger or more tenuous? Have we been a blessing as we have been blessed? We have received life and love and in return we are asked every year to begin again to repair the web which connects us all in one creation. So may we be free and faithful to the call. Amen.

Sabbath Poems 1993:I (*No, no there is no going back*)

Wendell Berry from *The Sabbath Poems*

A Gift

Denise Levertov from *Sands of the Well*

PRAYERS & MEDITATIONS

Holding It All

Rev. Barbara Pescan

I smile when I say it
Thou meaning all that is
inside me and outside me
sometimes a tree
sometimes mountains
or the running oe
or the leaping heart
of a finch held between my palms
or a child's hand, no bigger than a tulip flower,
with no space in it yet for fear
resting in my own

Thou
that listens
to our tentative and doubting dreams
Thou
hear us into certain song
how we are touched
by the lives of our neighbors and kin
by their sorrows, healing, and hopes

In a silence we carry with us
all day long we whisper the names
of our people broken and healing,
with us and separated,
struggling and reborn

May we all be held by someone,
by something

Something like
hands
enfolding the pulse and flutter of a bird
Gently. Carefully. And slowly opening....

READINGS

Excerpt from the UUA *Strategic Plan for Professional Ministries 2011*

Strategic Review of Professional Ministries Task Force

How do we take the best from our past and at the same time live with radical creativity in the multicultural reality of the present day? Unitarian Universalism lifts up a powerful theological message, poured through the vessel of covenant: you are at once precious and distinct, and at the same time intrinsically a part of the oneness of all being. This message provides us with a quandary and a call. The quandary is this: we must live out our faith as individual members and congregations while holding in tension the needs of the whole. And the call is this: we are to walk together in the ways of love, inviting all who would join us in our big tent of faith.

Our UUA President, the Rev. Peter Morales, was elected in 2009 on a platform of change. He believes most urgently that Unitarian Universalism can and should be the religion for our time. If we are to live up to this challenge, we must equip our religious professionals to become deeply grounded in theology, cross-culturally competent, strategic about the use of technology, entrepreneurial as leaders, and resilient in the face of new challenges.

Reading for Association Sunday 2011

Stephan Papa

What is excellence in ministry? Does it mean our clergy have excellent taste or a good sense of humor? Does it mean our religious professionals serve our congregations or lead them? Does excellence in ministry mean they have been well trained in the ways of the past and carry forward traditions, or that they are visionaries prepared for a future, which we see uncertainly?

How do we develop the excellence of our ministries? Shall we tweak our system, our ministers, or our congregations? Do we send our religious professionals for transformative multicultural experiences or back to the books? Do we push them to be preachers or prophets, social activists or pastoral care providers, educators for all ages or bossy business managers, entrepreneurs or sensitive small group facilitators with social skills, personal spiritual counselors or charismatic leaders of public worship? Do we want a minister who can collaborate or one who can cast a vision? Can anyone do it all—excellently?

The ministry has changed; it is no longer an individual endeavor but a shared opportunity to worship and work together to create a more caring community and world. The ministry has changed and so must we if we are to be of service.

Whatever excellence in ministry means we will best develop it by talking to one another, by sharing our dreams for Unitarian Universalism, and our fears, by standing by this faith together. As it has blessed us, so we will be a blessing to the future.

Excerpt from *Why I am A Unitarian Universalist*

Jack Mendelsohn

Who is a Unitarian Universalist minister? He is a man [or a woman], never completely satisfied or satisfiable, never completely adjusted or adjustable, who walks in two world's—one of things

as they are, the other of things as they ought to be—and loves them both. [S]he is a [wo]man with a pincushion soul and an elastic heart, who sits with the happy and the sad in a chaotic pattern of laugh, cry, laugh, cry. And [s]he knows deep down that the first time [her] laughter is false, or his tears make-believe, [her] days as a real minister are over.

He is a man with dreams he can never wholly share, partly because he has some doubts about them himself and partly because he is unable adequately to explain, describe, or define what it is he thinks he sees and understands.

A Unitarian Universalist minister is a [wo]man who continually runs out of time, out of wisdom, out of ability, out of courage and out of money. [S]He is hurtable. [Her} tasks involve great responsibility and little power. He must learn to accept people where they are and go on from there. He must never try to exercise influence he does not possess. If [s]he is worth [her] salt, [s]he knows all this, and is still thankful every day of [her] life for the privilege of being what [s]he is.

The future of the liberal church is almost totally dependent on these two factors: great congregations (whether large or small), and skilled, effective, dedicated ministers. The strangest feature of their relationship is that they create one another.

Reading

Gordon B McKeeman

Ministry is a quality of relationship between and among human beings that beckons forth hidden possibilities. It is inviting people into deeper, more constant, more reverent relationship with the world and with one another. Ministry is carrying forward a long heritage of hope and liberation that has dignified and informed the human venture over many centuries. It is being present with others in their terrors and torments, in their grief and pain, knowing that those feelings are our feelings too. Ministry is celebrating the triumphs of the human spirit, the miracles of birth and life, the wonders of devotion and sacrifice. It is witnessing to life enhancing values, speaking truth to power, standing for human dignity and equity; for compassion and for aspiration. Ministry is believing in life in the presence of death, struggling for human responsibility against principalities and powers in institutions and structures that ignore humaneness and become instruments of death. It is all these and much, much more than all of them, present in the wordless, the unspoken, the ineffable. It is speaking and living the highest we know, and living with the knowledge that it is never as deep, as wide, or as high as we wish. Wherever there is a meeting that summons us to our better selves, wherever our lostness is found, our fragments are reunited, our wounds begin healing, our spines straighten, and our muscles grow strong for the talk, there is ministry.

Reading

Robert W. Karnan

What makes my experience in the ministry so hopeful for me is that I am not alone in this careful hearing of both pain and excitement. This is not something reserved for only one ordained and robed. It is something we all do for and with one another.

Ours is a shared ministry, a giving and receiving. We tell one another our stories, our myths, our innermost thoughts—and we seek to listen (if we can) with sensitivity and purpose and love.

We live lives. We do not live creeds or theologies or even values. We are engaged with real events and people, and we are related, torn, and isolated together. We are at odds and we are sometimes very close.

The spiritual center of our lives is not to be found in a faith, no matter how cherished or revered. It comes, rather, out of the openness and honest engagement, the courage and pain, and the love we experience with one another. Sometimes that openness is searching and doubting, confused or serene, ambivalent or empowered. But it is an openness nonetheless.

And out of it comes a vision of a world made new by the reality of our lives, lived in the service of love and justice, of gentle goodness and forgiveness.

A minister seeks to live in the struggle of each and every one of us as we seek to come to an understanding of who we are, where we are, how we are. A minister seeks to help us raise up the vision of where we must go as a people, and invites us if we need the invitation to join hands and hearts with one another to get there.

Excerpt from *The Minister*

Edward Frost

If ministry had to be done alone, with only bystanders, helpless or simply idle, it could not be done at all. But ministry is carried out in community. That basic Protestant principle of the “priesthood of all believers,” the principle that we all minister to each other, is essential to us as a congregation and it is essential to me and to my colleagues.

As minister, I can say, ‘Look here! Look there!’ But my faith alone will not move mountains. Only your faith, united with mine, joined in one great faith, can move just little hills a little out of the shadows into the light.

I can say how, by my lights, things ought to be; but only together can we make it so.

And only you can transform yourselves from being part of an audience watching a preacher perform to becoming a congregation, a community of faith, holding each other, nurturing each other, inspiring each other, empowering each other, enjoying the wonder of it all—together.

Reading

O. Eugene Pickett, UUA President 1979-1985

The longer I am a part of this movement, the more convinced I become that the values and ideals of liberal religion can be effective only if they have a solid institutional base, and that means strong congregations and a strong Association. I know that we as a religious movement have traditionally been suspicious of a strong Association. We have been fearful that strength would mean power, rigidity, and control. But I am convinced that our Association can be both strong and flexible, an institution of which we can be critical while still being committed to it.

We tend to be a contentious group of people. We are often harder on ourselves than on our fundamentalist critics. It is so easy to be cynical and mistrustful. But the UUA is what binds us together. It is a vehicle of our hope.

Those years as president made me deeply aware of how much we need one another. It is only as we recognize our mutuality, honor our diversity, and reconcile our differences with respectful honesty that we can build a strong and vital religious community. Being part of and nurturing such a religious community is what ministry is to me....

"It's the Minister: The Mystery and Magic of the Role"

Ken Sawyer, First Parish in Wayland, MA

Berry Street Essay, 2007

I want to talk about the mysterious, almost magical power of the minister's role. Of course the role can be constricting, painful, potentially duplicitous, dangerous, and sometimes hard to come by, and for some more than others, sad to say. But I want to acknowledge and hold up and celebrate the chance that the role allows us – if we are given it and we take it and it pretty much fits and we use it well – to accomplish more than any of us mere mortals might imagine possible, enabling us to counsel, console, educate, conduct special services, lead other worship, preach sermons, offer opinions, stir people to action, and help tend the institutional needs of religious organizations with an authority we both earn and are given as a trust, as a gift....

They did not ordain or call or employ us to be ourselves but to be the ministers we are capable of being, all of us in our own ways. And to listen with our whole hearts.

Because then we can and do become, at least every now and then, mediators of mercy, agents of love, instruments of redemption, revealers of grace, proponents of peace, instigators of justice, and midwives of communities and relationships of affection and faith.

"Imagineering Soul"

Christine Robinson, First Unitarian Church of Albuquerque

Berry Street Essay, 2008

Why do people come to church? It is not to learn. People don't even go to museums to learn. It's not to be entertained. People don't even go to Disneyland just to be entertained. They come to church...especially they come to church to quench a thirst, find meaningfulness, to have an authentic experience, or in a more traditional religious language, to connect with mystery, to see themselves, *subspecie eternitatis*, to deepen their souls. We ministers then would be the *Imagineers* of "Soul", Sorcerer's Apprentices in the art of quenching thirst, filling voids, opening the doors of meaning....

Ministry is one long, joyful, painful sacrifice of love. You enter it because you discover that a worship service feeds your spirit, that community is a vital part of your life and, perhaps, because you have a certain way with words. And then you get into ministry and what do you discover? You discover that the leader of worship must sacrifice their own experience in worship, that the minister in a community doesn't really exactly belong to the community any

more, and that all your facility with words doesn't help much when you get to the things that can not be named....

There are some real and dangerous shoals in the seas of spirituality, and swimming in the current is just plain hard work. To follow this calling of *imagineering* soul, we have to know the waters and we have to have more support than we currently have....

If I'm going to do this sorcerer's apprentice thing well, consistently, and joyfully, I need three things. I need to tend my own spiritual life, I need my denomination to edge this quest for spiritualities authentic to our tradition more into the mainstream, and most of all, I need my colleagues....

BENEDICTIONS

Blessing of Gratitude

Kathleen McTigue

We give thanks for the guidance of those who came before us.
We give thanks for the faith of those who walk beside us.
We give thanks for the hope in those who follow behind us.
We give thanks for the love that sustains us each day.

May we find within ourselves a deep well of gratitude.
May we find within our gratitude our own most profound generosity,
and may we bring it forth.
Go in peace, believe in peace, create peace. Amen.

Benediction

Susan Manker-Seale

Much of ministry
 is a benediction
A speaking well of
 each other and the world
A speaking well of what we value:
 honesty
 love
 forgiveness
 trust
A speaking well of our efforts
A speaking well of our dreams
This is how we celebrate life
Through speaking well of it
Living the benediction
 and becoming as a word
 well spoken.

Benediction

Bodhisattva vows based on those of the sixth century sage Shantideva:

May we be guides for those on the path
A boat, a raft, a bridge for those who wish to cross the flood;

May we be lamps for those in need of light,
resting places for those who are weary,
A vase of plenty, a tree of miracles.

May we bring sustenance and kindness
until all beings are freed from sorrow
and all are awakened.

Excerpt from Create Dangerously: A Lecture by Albert Camus

December 14, 1957 at the University of Uppsala in Sweden

“If we listen attentively we shall hear amidst the uproar of empires and nations the quiet fluttering of wings, the gentle stirring of life and hope. . . . I believe that it is awakened, revived, nourished by millions of solitary individuals whose deeds and words every day negate frontiers and the crudest implications of history. Each and every person, on the foundations of his or her own sufferings and joys, builds for all.”

Benediction

Adapted from Sarah Barber-Braun

I do not pray for your safety,
for often safety is the way of no risk and no growth,
the way of slow stagnation.
I pray you rather courage
that is poise before all realities.
I pray you humor born of humility,
and the grace to be honest with your own foibles.
I pray you confidence in your own worth,
a worthiness not betrayed by failings or by success.
I pray you gratitude for life's great blessing.
And most of all I pray you a passionate yearning:
 for justice
 for love
 for joy.

Benediction

Adapted from Keri Hulme, *The Bone People*

We were nothing more than people by ourselves.
Even paired, any pairing, we would have been nothing more than people
by ourselves.
But all together we have become the heart and muscle and mind
of something perilous and new,
something [marvelous] and growing and great.
Together, all together, we are the instruments of change.

I Will Sing a New Song

From *Meditations of the Heart* by Howard Thurman

Closing Words for Association Sunday 2011

Stephan Papa

The ministry is a blessing; it reminds us how fortunate we are in our own lives and in our communities of faith; it reminds us the many challenges people face and that we can help them; it reminds us of the gifts of love and spirit we have received and of how good we can be together. Amen.

Suggestions for Multigenerational Worship

Association Sunday is an opportunity for congregations to celebrate and acknowledge that, together, we are stronger than any one community is alone. The same is true within congregations: when the entire congregation gets together, great things can happen. Consider making Association Sunday a truly multigenerational effort. Here are a few suggestions:

All ages love stories. Craft the entire worship service around a narrative. Include music, movement, humor, and opportunities for interaction. Here are two examples:

- Reverend Greg Ward's website "[Creating Effective Intergenerational Worship Services \(Without Going Insane\)](#)" has tips and several complete worship services. "Old Turtle" [insert new link to adapted story coming from Jessica] is one that exemplifies the themes of helping each other find our prophetic voice.
- Reverend Erika Hewitt's new book, [Story, Song and Spirit: Fun and Creative Worship Services for All Ages](#) (Skinner House, 2010) includes complete worship services for holidays and any day.

There are many other ways to make your worship service more welcoming for all ages.

- Invite youth, children, and families to take part in planning the service. Not only will this increase the chances that they will participate and attend, it builds leadership skills in younger UUs. Who knows – you might just help a young person find their "prophetic voice!"
- Include all ages as presenters. Invite the youth group to tell the Story for All Ages. Ask a family to light the chalice together. An elder, young adult and child can lead a round together. Feature a selection by your children's choir or a musical interlude by a young person. All ages can pass the offertory baskets or the Order of Service.
- Notice the pace of the worship service. Alternate periods of quiet reflection with music or activities that invite movement or congregational interaction. Consider replacing a sermon with a shorter homily. Use hymns that are well known by all, easy to learn, or conductible with call and response. See the Association Sunday resources for a list. [Insert link to Sarah Dan's list here.] Keep the need to read to a minimum or eliminate entirely. Use readings from authors familiar to children and youth – a reading that is funny can also be meaningful.
- Young people are not the only ones who enjoy an occasional non-traditional worship service. If you are itching to try something new, perhaps Association Sunday is a good time. Worshipping in the round? Worshipping outdoors? Using video or PowerPoint? Flex your creative muscles!
- Tie the worship service in with other activities within the congregation. If your theme is life-long learning, ask children and youth to hold a children's book drive for a local school. Collect the books and bless them during the service. Putting our faith in action is worthy of celebration.
- Include stories. Storytelling is a great educational tool. Drama adds movement to the worship service. Choose stories that have multiple layers that appeal to both young and old. See Association Sunday resources for suggested stories. [Insert link.]

Suggested Resources for Stories of All Ages

Story for All Ages – Stewardship

- “[The Most Generous Gift](#)”, from Tapestry of Faith’s *Wonderful Welcome* - An adaptation of “The Widow’s Mite”
- “[The Clearwater](#)”, from Tapestry of Faith’s *Gather the Spirit* - Pete Seeger uses his prophetic voice to help save a river.

Story for All Ages – Shared Ministry/Working Together

- “[Babies in the River](#)”, from Tapestry of Faith’s *Heeding the Call: Qualities of a Justicemaker* – a whole town pitches in to fix an injustice.
- “[How Coyote Lost His Songs, Music, and Dance](#)”, from Tapestry of Faith’s *Wonderful Welcome* and Kenneth Collier’s *Our Seven Principles in Story and Verse: A Collection for Children and Adults* (Skinner House, 1997)
- *The Day-Glo Brothers* by Chris Barton (Charlesbridge Publishing, 2009) – True story of two brothers working together to make both of their dreams come true.
- *Anansi the Spider* by Gerald McDermott (Henry Holt, 1987). The six sons of this Ashanti folk hero spider work together to save their father.
- *Finding the Green Stone*, by Alice Walker (Harcourt, 1991) – In this story, all living things possess a green stone, that glows when they are good. A young boy loses his and neighbors support him as he struggles to find it.

Story for All Ages – Prophetic Voice

- “[The Clearwater](#)”, from Tapestry of Faith’s *Gather the Spirit* - Pete Seeger uses his prophetic voice to help save a river.
- “[The Cellist of Sarajevo](#)”, from Tapestry of Faith’s *Toolbox of Faith* – A cellist uses his music to inspire peace.
- “[Challenged in Belief](#)” from Tapestry of Faith’s *A Place of Wholeness* – John Murray’s faith is shaken by a young woman, full of questions.
- “[Songwriting As a Prayer](#)”, from Tapestry of Faith’s *Spirit of Life* – Carolyn McDade uses her songs – like “Spirit of Life” – to meld a love of justice with spirituality.
- *The Missing Piece Meets the Big O*, by Shel Silverstein (HarperCollins, 1981) – The Big O helps the Missing Piece realize it is already complete within itself.

Story for All Ages – Lifelong Learning

- [James Luther Adams](#), from Tapestry of Faith’s *Toolbox of Faith* – Congregational members learn from each other.
- [Judith Sargent Murray: Turn Around](#), from Tapestry of Faith’s *Love Connects Us* – Judith Sargent Murray, believing in the power of religious education, receives support from John Murray and his congregation to write a religious education program for children.

Story collections you may find useful;

- UUA [Tapestry of Faith list of Stories](#)
- Books by [Sarah Conover](#), including *Ayat Jamilah: Beautiful Signs: A Treasury of Islamic Wisdom for Children and Parents*; *Harmony: A Treasury of Chinese Wisdom for Children and Parents*; and, *Kindness: A Treasury of Buddhist Wisdom for Children and Parents*.
- *Once Upon a Time: Lessons from 99 Multicultural Folk Tales for Grades K-8*, by Elisa Davy Pearmain (Character Development Group, 2006).

- Reverend Paul Beckel's [Children's Focus Bibliography](#)
- [A Lamp in Every Corner](#), by Janeen Grohsmeyer (UUA, 2004)
- [A Bucketful of Dreams](#), by Chris Buice (Skinner House, 1994)
- [Twenty Jataka Tales](#), retold by Noor Inayat Khan (Inner Traditions International, 1975)

Suggested Religious Education Material for Association Sunday

So you are holding a worship service to celebrate Association Sunday? Wonderful! What other ways will your congregation support this important work? Here is just a small sampling of materials that may be useful to you in a religious education context. Though materials were written for specific age groups, many activities are adaptable for younger or older participants and would make great multigenerational activities. Use the “Search” function to find even more on the UUA’s *Tapestry of Faith* website: www.uua.org/tapestry.

On Stewardship:

[Faith Like a River \(adult\), Workshop 11: Tranquil Streams That Meet and Merge - Consolidation, Spiritual Preparation](#)
[A Place of Wholeness \(high school youth\), Workshop 11: Speaking Faith, Faith in Action: Your Congregation Speaks Out](#)
[Wonderful Welcome \(ages K-1st grade\), Session 11: The Gift of Stewardship](#)

On Finding Our Prophetic Voice:

[Resistance and Transformation \(adult\), Workshop 2: Prophetic, Parallel and Institutional](#)
[Exploring Our Values Through Poetry \(high school\), Workshop 13: Planning a Poetry Slam](#)
[Story: The Fox and the Lion, from A Chorus of Faiths: Unitarian Universalists as Interfaith Leaders \(high school\)](#)
[Story: Augusta Jane Chapin’s Call to Ministry, from Amazing Grace: Exploring Right from Wrong \(6th grade\)](#)
[Love Connects Us \(4th-5th grades\), Session 8: The Power of Peace](#)
[Love Will Guide Us \(2nd-3rd grades\), Session 7: Give Love](#)
[A Study Guide to the film *Milk* \(adults/older youth\)](#)

On Shared Leadership:

[Faith Like a River \(adult\), Workshop 11: Tranquil Streams That Meet and Merge - Consolidation](#)
[Story: The Pride Rainbow Project, from A Place of Wholeness \(high school\)](#)
[Heeding the Call \(junior high\), Workshop 12: The Call for Responsible Leadership](#)
[Toolbox of Faith \(4th-5th grades\), Workshop 7: Democratic Process](#)

On Lifelong Learning:

[Exploring Our Values Through Poetry \(high school\), Workshop 4: Who and What Guides Us?](#)
[Story: Fah’s Religious Education Experience, from What Moves Us: Unitarian Universalist Theology \(adult\)](#)
[Wonderful Welcome \(ages K-1st grade\), Session 13: The Gift of Learning Together](#)
[Faithful Journeys \(2nd-3rd grades\), Session 6: Keep Learning](#)
[Story: Learning By Heart – Sophia Lyon Fahs, from Faithful Journeys \(2nd-3rd grades\)](#)

Association Sunday

Gift Information Form

Today's Date: _____

We held our Association Sunday service on: _____

This packet contains _____ checks for a grand total of \$_____.

Congregation Name: _____

City or town: _____

State: _____

Is this the final distribution of donations*? _____

We were unable to either hold a special service or take a special collection for Association Sunday.

If questions arise, the contact person at this congregation is:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Please enclose gifts and this cover memo in an envelope and return to:

**Attn: Gift Processing
Stewardship and Development
Unitarian Universalist Association
25 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02108**

Please renew our Association Sunday registration for future years. *(Please check this box if you prefer to be automatically listed as an Association Sunday participant in the future, without signing up each year.)*

*We will send a report on how much we received from your congregation after the first of the year.

Returning Association Sunday Donations to the UUA

After your service...

1. Collect all checks made out to the UUA.
2. Collect all loose cash donations and any checks made out to your congregation with the intent to support Association Sunday. Write a check to the UUA for that cash amount, with “Association Sunday 2011” in the memo line.
3. Collect any credit card donation forms.
4. Mail the check(s) and credit card donation forms in one envelope, along with the *Gift Information Sheet* to

**Attn: Gift Processing
Stewardship and Development
Unitarian Universalist Association
25 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02108**

If you have any questions, or any other scenarios arise which these suggestions don't address, feel free to contact us at associationsunday@uua.org or (617) 948-4661 and we'll do our best to offer an answer or solution. Our offices are open Mon –Fri 9am – 5pm (Eastern Time)