

**HARVEST THE POWER:  
DEVELOPING LAY LEADERSHIP**

**A Tapestry of Faith Program for Adults**



**BY GAIL TITTLE, MATT TITTLE, AND GAIL FORSYTH-VAIL**

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<http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry>

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## PREFACE

Many Unitarian Universalists experience a deepening commitment to their faith and congregation as a call to accept a position of leadership—as a lay worship leader, a leader of children or youth or a member of a task force, committee or governing board. Harvest the Power provides leadership skill development that goes hand-in-hand with faith development. The program helps lay leaders grow in spirit as they grow as leaders.

Harvest the Power addresses the reality that today's leaders operate at a time of rapid cultural change, both in and outside our congregations. Leaders need a broad range of skills, both technical and visionary. The program's 12 workshops offer opportunities for both new and experienced leaders to enrich the skills they bring to their leadership and to experience their leadership journey as a Unitarian Universalist faith journey.

As one in the Tapestry of Faith series of curricula for adults, Harvest the Power weaves Unitarian Universalist values, Principles and Sources with four strands: spiritual development, ethical development, Unitarian Universalist identity development and faith development:

**Spiritual Development.** In *Everyday Spiritual Practice*, Scott Alexander defines spirituality as our relationship with the Spirit of Life, however we understand it. Our spirituality is our deep, reflective and expressed response to the awe, wonder, joy, pain and grief of being alive. Tapestry of Faith programs seek to form children, youth and adults who:

- Know they are lovable beings of infinite worth, imbued with powers of the soul and obligated to use their gifts, talents and potentials in the service of life
- Appreciate the value of spiritual practice as a means of deepening faith and integrating beliefs and values with everyday life.

**Ethical Development.** When we develop our ethics, we develop our moral values—our sense of what is right and wrong. We also enhance our ability to act on those values, overcoming oppressions and despair. Tapestry of Faith programs seek to form children, youth and adults who:

- Realize they are moral agents, capable of making a difference in the lives of other people, challenging structures of social and political oppression and promoting the health and well being of the planet
- Accept that they are responsible for the stewardship and creative transformation of their religious heritage and community of faith in the service of diversity, justice and compassion.

**Unitarian Universalist Identity Development.** Participation in a Unitarian Universalist congregation does not automatically create a Unitarian Universalist identity. Personal identification with Unitarian Universalism begins when

individuals start to call themselves Unitarian Universalist and truly feel a part of a Unitarian Universalist congregation or community. Identity is strengthened as individuals discover and resonate with the stories, symbols and practices of Unitarian Universalism. Tapestry of Faith programs develop children, youth and adults who:

- Affirm they are part of a Unitarian Universalist religious heritage and community of faith that has value and provides resources for living
- Recognize the need for community, affirming the importance of families, relationships and connections between and among generations
- Accept that they are responsible for the stewardship and creative transformation of their religious heritage and community of faith in the service of diversity, justice and compassion.

**Faith Development.** When we develop in faith, we develop as meaning-makers. Faith is about embracing life's possibilities, growing in our sense of being "at home in the universe." Faith is practiced in relationships with others. While faith has aspects that are internal and personal, it is best supported in a community with shared symbols, stories, traditions and values. Unitarian Universalist faith development emphasizes each person's religious journey, each person's lifelong process of bringing head, heart and hands to seeking and knowing ultimate meaning.

Each Harvest the Power workshop weaves these strands together, to help our leaders grow in their identity and faith as Unitarian Universalists as they grow in their leadership roles. May these values come to life through your facilitation of these workshops, in collaboration with those who bring their spirits, minds and hearts. May you enjoy a transformational experience of congregational leadership.

— *Gail Forsyth-Vail, Unitarian Universalist Association Adult Programs Director*

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## THE PROGRAM

*One of the greatest roles of a leader in congregational life is not "being in charge" but ensuring that everyone learns to hear and tell the stories that shape our understanding of ourselves and one another. The narratives we tell tend to become the reality we are capable of living; they determine how we understand leadership and the sorts of leaders we can imagine or allow ourselves to be. — Wayne Floyd, contemporary educator and writer*

The Harvest the Power program was created not only to strengthen the skills and the confidence of individuals who have accepted a leadership role in our congregations, but also to provide the intentional faith development of integrated leaders who model healthy personal, spiritual and leadership practices.

It is stating the obvious to say our world is in a time of great and rapid change. Social systems, including the ways we communicate, are changing rapidly. Congregational life competes with many other priorities on people's calendars. Institutions that once seemed stable are in flux. People struggle to manage the demands of family life, work life and outside interests, hobbies and volunteer work. It is truly remarkable that so many come forward and agree—some with great enthusiasm—to accept leadership positions in our congregations. What a gift they give their faith community—a gift of their time, their love and their talent. That gift deserves the best support and guidance the congregation can offer so that volunteers experience leadership as challenging, yet rewarding, and an opportunity for spiritual growth as well as skill development. This program helps congregations develop and strengthen leaders in a way that honors the gifts each brings.

Harvest the Power uses a spiral learning model. The 12 workshops are structured in three units of four workshops each. Within each unit, the workshops explore progressively deeper aspects of leadership. Workshops 1 through 4 comprise a unit on **identity**. Participants explore their own leadership and religious journeys, the meanings of power and authority, and turning points and change opportunities in their lives and congregations. Workshops 5 through 8 comprise a unit on **purpose**, or what ends we serve. This unit delves into the experience of leadership. Participants explore the choices they make and how leaders can honor their own needs along with the needs of others in the leadership group and the congregation. This unit invites careful consideration of how leaders care for their own spirits in order to keep them from being buffeted by

congregational storms. It ends with an exploration of the importance of recognizing those who are on the margins of our faith communities so that their voices will matter in the life of the congregation. The third unit focuses on **path**, inviting leaders to learn skills and ways of thinking which will enable them to lead a congregation through change processes in a healthy way. This unit introduces congregational system theory and explores ways for leaders to respond to congregational conflict and difficult behavior. It looks at the complexities of leadership in a time of change and gives leaders tools for identifying effective and ineffective leadership responses. The final workshop of this unit and of the program invites participants to consider an array of metaphors for leadership and to work with a group to create their own.

The Harvest the Power program presents a model of leadership that has more questions than answers. In many cases, the job of the leader is to ask the right question and provide a framework that allows for answers to emerge from the congregation. May these workshops provide the basis for fruitful conversations and healthy decision-making among congregational leaders.

## GOALS

This program will:

- Affirm the spiritual and emotional gifts as well as the skills that each person brings to a leadership position
- Encourage congregations and participants to view holding a leadership position as an opportunity to enrich and deepen the leader's faith
- Provide tools for leaders to work with congregations in times of change
- Lead participants to develop an understanding of the importance of personal spiritual practice and integrity to healthy leadership
- Explore reflection and deep listening as important practices of healthy leadership
- Draw distinctions between management and leadership and invite participants to be intentional in creating space for leadership questions
- Introduce system theory and provide some practice with system theory to explore congregational issues

- Invite participants to look at conflict as an indicator in the congregational system and to respond accordingly
- Provide opportunities to create narratives and metaphors that express participants' understanding of the practice of adaptive leadership
- Deepen and enrich the experience of our congregational leaders, and by extension, the ability of our congregations to live out their missions and values, both in congregational life and in the wider world.

- Commitment to Unitarian Universalist Principles and to the faith development components of this curriculum
- Respect for individuals, regardless of age, race, social class, gender identity, sexual orientation and ability, and willingness to modify the workshop plans to support the full inclusion of all participants
- Willingness to support healthy group process by reinforcing ground rules politely and confidently.

## LEADERS

A team of two or more adults who have experience as congregational leaders should facilitate the Harvest the Power workshops. Working with a partner allows workshop leaders to plan together and to share facilitation responsibilities. Be intentional about bringing different perspectives and experiences to your facilitation team. For example, consider co-facilitators of different genders and different ages. Workshop facilitators may be laypersons or religious professionals.

Facilitators with these strengths may be especially effective:

- Experience in congregational leadership as a committee chair, a member of a governing board or a leader in a young adult group or in another leadership capacity
- Time and willingness to prepare thoroughly for each workshop and to take appropriate action in the event of unexpected cancellations
- Experience in facilitating a group process
- Ability to create and nurture a supportive, respectful and safe community in the workshops and follow all congregational safe congregation guidelines and policies
- Willingness to listen deeply and to let "answers" emerge from the group process
- Integrity, and the ability to maintain strong boundaries, especially in the midst of challenging conversations
- Respect for the congregation and its mission

## PARTICIPANTS

The Harvest the Power program is designed for adult participants of all ages and stages of life, young adult through elder, who currently hold positions of congregational leadership or are considering a congregational leadership position. Possible participants include current and potential board members, committee members, task force members or small group leaders. Workshops can accommodate any number of participants, with six a suggested minimum. If you have more than 12, consider adding a third facilitator to your team.

## INTEGRATING ALL PARTICIPANTS

People of all ages have a range of abilities, disabilities and sensitivities. Be sure to ask individual participants to identify any disability or sensitivity-related accommodations they will need.

Find general guidance for accommodating disabilities and sensitivities in Workshop 1, Leader Resource 1. More guidance for including all people can be found in [Disability & Accessibility](#) resources. In addition, some workshop activities suggest specific adaptation under the heading, "Including All Participants."

Participants bring a wide range of learning styles and information processing preferences. With this in mind, the workshops offer a variety of activities. Review each workshop's Alternate Activities. Plan each workshop to best suit your group.

## PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Harvest the Power is flexible to adapt to your needs.

It presents 12 two-hour workshops in three units which focus on a leader's identity, purpose and path. Each unit includes four workshops.

Workshops can be offered in the suggested sequence as a 12-session lay leadership development program or in another combination and/or order. For example, you could offer the Identity unit (Workshops 1-4) for a group that includes some new congregational leaders. Or, offer the Purpose unit (Workshops 5-8), to help current leaders explore several aspects of the experiences, challenges and responsibilities of their role. The Path unit (Workshops 9-12) can prepare leaders to help a congregation develop new organizational, cultural and spiritual capacities to face a particular challenge.

Alternatively, design your Harvest the Power program around themes of self, community, leadership or vision. You might offer Workshops 1, 5 and 9 as a three-workshop series to help leaders explore their identity, purpose and path through the lens of personal spirituality and faith. Or, lead Workshops 2, 6 and 10 to focus on the relationships that connect a congregational community and to strengthen a leadership team's bonds. You might offer Workshops 3, 7 and 11 for a group that wants to acquire or improve congregational leadership skills and strategies. Workshops 4, 8 and 12, the vision sequence, would be appropriate for an established leadership group working on long range planning.

Most of the workshops can be divided to form two, one-hour experiences. You could include part of a workshop in a committee, task force, small group or governing board meeting. Workshops, or parts of workshops, can also be presented during day-long or weekend leadership retreats.

This grid presents the units and theme tracks of Harvest the Power's 12 workshops:

|   | Unit 1:  | Unit 2:  | Unit 3:  |
|---|--|--|--|
|   | IDENTITY<br>— Who are we?                          | PURPOSE<br>— What ends do we serve?                | PATH — In what way will we lead?                           |
| Theme 1:<br>SELF<br>Personal journey as a leader                                  | Workshop 1:<br>Leadership Journey                  | Workshop 5:<br>Fated to be Free                    | Workshop 9:<br>Facing Danger                               |
| Theme 2:<br>COMMUNITY<br>Interaction between leaders and the community they serve | Workshop 2:<br>Unitarian Universalist Journey      | Workshop 6:<br>Caring for Ourselves and Each Other | Workshop 10:<br>Understanding Systems in Your Congregation |
| Theme 3:<br>LEADERSHIP<br>Healthy leadership presence and qualities               | Workshop 3:<br>Power and Authority                 | Workshop 7:<br>Integrity                           | Workshop 11:<br>Keeping Distress Productive                |
| Theme 4:<br>VISION<br>Leading with purpose and vision                             | Workshop 4:<br>Turning Points and Moments of Grace | Workshop 8:<br>Imagination and Creativity          | Workshop 12:<br>Adaptive Leadership                        |

All Harvest the Power workshops follow the structure described below:

### Introduction

The Introduction summarizes the workshop content and offers guidance for implementing the workshop.

### Goals

The goals provide the desired outcomes of the workshop. As you plan a workshop, apply your knowledge of your group, the time and space you have available and your own strengths as co-leaders to determine the most important and achievable goals for the workshop. Choose the activities that will best serve those goals.

### Learning Objectives

The learning objectives describe specific participant outcomes that the workshop activities are designed to facilitate. They describe what participants may learn and

how they may change as a result of the experience of the workshop.

### **Workshop-at-a-Glance**

This useful table lists the core workshop activities in order and provides an estimated time for completing each activity. It also presents the workshop's Faith in Action activity and Alternate Activities.

Workshop-at-a-Glance is not a road map you must follow. Rather, use it as a menu for planning the workshop. You will decide which elements to use and how to combine them to best suit the group, the meeting space and the amount of time you have.

Keep in mind that many variables inform the actual completion time for an activity. Whole-group discussions will take longer in a large group than in a small group. Consider the time you will need to form small groups or relocate participants to another area of the meeting room.

### **Spiritual Preparation**

Under the heading Spiritual Preparation, each workshop suggests readings, reflections and/or other preparation to help facilitators grow spiritually and prepare to facilitate with confidence and depth.

Part of growing as a leader is learning to pay attention to the accessibility needs of workshop participants. Review Workshop 1, Leader Resource 1, Accessibility Guidelines for Workshop Presenters, before each workshop.

### **Workshop Plan**

The workshop plan presents every element of the workshop. The workshop elements are:

**Welcoming and Entering.** This section offers steps for welcoming participants as they arrive. It is recommended that you complete the preparations in the Welcoming and Entering section 15 minutes before a workshop's scheduled beginning.

**Opening.** Each workshop begins with a short opening ritual, including a welcome, a chalice-lighting and a reading or song. Shape the opening ritual to suit your group and the culture and practices of your congregation.

**Activities.** Several activities form the core content of each workshop. To provide a coherent learning experience, present the activities in the sequence suggested. Harvest the Power offers a variety of activities to address different learning styles. Generally, workshops balance listening with talking, and include individual, small group and whole group explorations.

A ten-minute break is built in to every workshop near the halfway point. The break usually comes after a long or challenging activity so participants can stretch before engaging with new information and activities. You may want to arrange for beverages and a snack for this time or invite and schedule participants to provide these items.

Each activity presents the materials and preparation you will need, followed by a description of the activity:

- **Materials for Activity** — List of the supplies you will need.
- **Preparation for Activity** — "To do" list that specifies all the advance work you need to do for the activity, from purchasing art supplies to writing questions on newsprint just before participants arrive. Look at the preparation tasks several weeks ahead to make sure you have ample time to obtain items and make special arrangements if needed.
- **Description of Activity** — Detailed directions for implementing the activity with your group. Read activity descriptions carefully during your planning process so you understand each activity and its purpose. Later, when you lead the group, use the description as a step-by-step, how-to manual.
- **Including All Participants** — Specific accessibility guidance provided for activities that have unusual physical circumstances or for which a reminder about inclusion may benefit leaders. Please consult Workshop 1, Leader Resource 1 for general suggestions to meet some common accessibility needs.

**Faith in Action.** These activities offer participants an opportunity to put their Unitarian Universalist faith in action and apply workshop learning in the congregation or beyond. It is hoped you will provide Faith in Action activities as part of the Harvest the Power program. You may also download the Faith in Action section and combine it with the Taking It Home section as a handout or email to participants after each workshop. (Note: You can customize Faith in Action, Taking It Home or any other component of a Tapestry of Faith program: Download it to your own computer and edit it with your own word processing program.)

**Closing.** Each workshop offers a closing ritual that signals the end of the group's time together. During the Closing, you might introduce the workshop's Taking It Home or Faith in Action ideas, invite participants to share briefly, and offer closing words. Like the Opening, the Closing grounds a shared learning experience in

ritual. Shape your closing ritual to fit the group and the culture and practices of your congregation.

**Leader Reflection and Planning.** Find time as co-facilitators to discuss these questions after each workshop to strengthen your skills and your understanding of the group.

**Alternate Activities.** Each workshop offers at least one Alternate Activity to substitute for a core activity or add to a workshop. An Alternate Activity may need more time than a parallel core activity or require access to technology. It may use a different approach to presenting core material or extend learning in a particular direction not covered by a core activity.

Review Alternate Activities along with the core activities when planning a workshop. Select the activities you feel will work best for you and the group. Keep in mind the benefits of a well paced workshop that includes different kinds of activities.

**Resources.** Harvest the Power workshops conclude with three resource sections which provide all the materials you will need to lead any activity in the workshop.

- **Stories** — Narratives from the Sources of our Unitarian Universalist tradition that illuminate and support the workshop activities.
- **Handouts** — Sheets you will need to print out and copy for participants to use in the workshop.
- **Leader Resources** — Background information and/or activity directions you will need during the workshop.

## LEADER GUIDELINES

If the participants are also a congregational leadership group, the group may want to reflect on current or past congregational challenges and issues. Be ready to ask the group explicitly whether they wish to do this. If they do, be sure, as facilitator, to maintain appropriate boundaries for yourself and the group.

Workshops should not be an occasion to criticize or undermine past or current leaders, lay or professional. You are strongly urged to add to the covenant your group creates an agreement not to criticize or undermine current or past leaders.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Every congregation has its own way of scheduling adult programming and its own culture around lay leadership training. Harvest the Power is designed for maximum flexibility. You may offer the workshops in a variety of combinations and sequences, according to the needs

and wishes of your congregation. Please see Program Structure above for details and suggestions.

## BEFORE YOU START

**Determine the calendar schedule for workshops.**

Once you have determined which workshops you will offer, choose dates and times for all the workshops. Enter the information in the congregational calendar.

**Invite participants.** In consultation with your minister and/or leadership group, decide whom you will invite to participate. Participants might include members of the governing board, small group leaders, task force members and/or committee members. Make an effort to personally invite individuals to participate. Tell them what the program offers them as individuals and as congregational leaders. If appropriate, also use flyers, announcements and other publicity channels.

**Choose a meeting space.** The workshop space should be large enough to comfortably seat all participants and should have an easel or wall space for newsprint. Some activities call for a different arrangement of furniture, breakout spaces for small groups, or tables for working with art materials.

**Arrange for childcare.** If participants need childcare in order to participate, make arrangements to offer it.

## PRINCIPLES AND SOURCES

### Unitarian Universalist Principles

There are seven Principles which Unitarian Universalist congregations affirm and promote:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

### Unitarian Universalist Sources

Unitarian Universalism draws from many sources:

- Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life
- Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love
- Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life
- Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves
- Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit
- Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

## **FACILITATOR FEEDBACK FORM**

We welcome your critique of this program, as well as your suggestions. Thank you for your feedback! Your input improves programs for all of our congregations. Please forward your feedback to:

Faith Development Office  
Ministries and Faith Development  
Unitarian Universalist Association  
24 Farnsworth Street  
Boston, MA 02210-1409  
religiouseducation@uua.org

Name of Program or Curriculum:

Congregation:

Number of Participants:

Age range:

Did you work with (a) co-facilitator(s)?

Your name:

***Overall, what was your experience with this program?***

***What specifically did you find most helpful or useful about this program?***

***In what ways could this program be changed or improved (please be specific)?***

***Did you enrich the program with any resources that you would recommend to others?***

***What impact, if any, do you think this program will have on your life going forward?***

***What impact, if any, do you think this program will have on your congregation going forward?***

## **PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FORM**

We welcome your critique of this program, as well as your suggestions. Thank you for your feedback! Your input improves programs for all of our congregations. Please forward your feedback to:

Faith Development Office  
Ministries and Faith Development  
Unitarian Universalist Association  
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Boston, MA 02210-1409  
religiouseducation@uua.org

Name of Program or Curriculum:

Congregation or group:

Your name:

***Overall, what was your experience with this program?***

***What specifically did you find most helpful or useful about this program?***

***In what ways could this program be changed or improved (please be specific)?***

***What impact, if any, do you think this program will have on your life going forward?***

***What impact, if any, do you think this program will have on your congregation going forward?***

# WORKSHOP 1: LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

## INTRODUCTION

*If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader. — John Quincy Adams, sixth President of the United States*

This workshop serves as an introduction to the Harvest the Power program, presenting key concepts and inviting participants to share their own leadership stories. The two-hour workshop includes a 10-minute break following Activity 2.

Whether or not you plan to use all eight workshops of Harvest the Power in sequence, you may wish to begin your Harvest the Power program with some activities from this workshop.

## GOALS

This workshop will:

- Facilitate introductions and build rapport among the group
- Present the purposes and key concepts of the Harvest the Power program
- Offer theological grounding for faithful leadership, based on the work of Unitarian theologian James Luther Adams
- Help participants develop their identities and skills as Unitarian Universalist lay leaders.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Begin making connections with one another
- Explore their own experiences becoming leaders and learning how to exercise leadership
- Explore connections with their own sense of the divine or ultimate
- Identify the ways their faith has grown, changed and deepened over time
- Become familiar with the work of James Luther Adams, a 20th-century Unitarian theologian.

## WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

| Activity  | Minutes |
|---|---------|
| Welcoming and Entering  |         |
| Opening   | 2       |
| Activity 1: Creating a Covenant                                   | 15      |
| Activity 2: These Are a Few of My Favorite Things                 | 15      |
| Activity 3: Sharing Our Leadership Stories                        | 35      |
| Break   | 10      |
| Activity 4: Concepts of the Divine/Ultimate                       | 20      |
| Activity 5: A Free Faith  | 15      |
| Activity 6: Introduction to Harvest the Power                     | 5       |
| Faith in Action: Sharing Leadership Stories with the Congregation |         |
| Closing   | 3       |
| Alternate Activity 1: What I Cherish                              | 15      |
| Alternate Activity 2: Notions of God                              | 20      |

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Respond to the questions in Activity 3, Sharing Our Leadership Stories. Create your own Concepts of the Divine/Ultimate drawings to help you reflect on your own identity as a leader. Share your reflections with your co-facilitator.

To strengthen your leadership skills and confidence, explore the leadership development resources recommended at the end of the workshop, including Leader Resource 1, Accessibility Guidelines for Workshop Presenters.

## WELCOMING AND ENTERING

### Materials for Activity

- Blank name tags with plastic holders, and markers
- Handout 1, [Harvest the Power Schedule](#) (included in this document)
- Table for participants to create their name tags
- Music and player

### Preparation for Activity

- Adapt Handout 1 to create a schedule of workshops for your Harvest the Power program.
- Select welcoming music to play as participants arrive. Set up music player.
- Set out workshop schedules and materials for making name tags.

### Description of Activity

As participants arrive, invite them to make name tags to use throughout the program. Let them know you will recycle the plastic holders at the end of the program. Invite each participant to take a copy of Handout 1.

### Including All Participants

If any participants are visually impaired, prepare the name tags yourself. Invite arriving participants to introduce themselves to one another and to you, and hand each their name tag.

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook
- Small worship table
- Chalice, candle and lighter or LED battery-operated candle

### Preparation for Activity

- Set the chalice on the worship table.

### Description of Activity

Gather the group in a circle. Ask a participant to light the chalice as you or another participant read the opening words.

Share "We come to this time and this place," Reading 436 in *Singing the Living Tradition*.

## ACTIVITY 1: COVENANT (15 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- For your own use, list the elements of covenant that you would like to suggest as the facilitator. You might include:
  - Start and end on time.
  - Practice respectful dialogue.
  - Honor diversity of opinion and approach.
  - If you desire confidentiality, ask for it.
  - Share the floor.
  - Be mindful of the time.
  - Learn something new.
  - Nurture your spirit.
- Post blank newsprint. Write the title, "How We Agree to Be with Each Other."

### Description of Activity

Explain to participants that behavioral covenants are a foundational aspect of liberal congregations and the practice of establishing a covenant is an essential act of leadership.

Invite participants to suggest guidelines for how they will behave with each other during the program. Write all suggestions on newsprint. When the group has no more suggestions, add any items from the list you prepared.

Ask participants if they would have concerns about or difficulty agreeing to any items listed. Discuss those items and decide as a group whether to keep or eliminate them.

On a new sheet of newsprint, rewrite the covenant title and the agreed-upon items. Read the covenant aloud and ask for verbal assent from each participant.

Save the written covenant to post during future workshops.

## ACTIVITY 2: THESE ARE A FEW OF MY FAVORITE THINGS (15 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape

## Preparation for Activity

- Label four sheets of newsprint A, B, C and D. Post one newsprint sheet on each wall or corner of the room.

## Description of Activity

In this forced choice activity, participants identify some of their own preferences and learn some preferences of others. While some participants may find the forced-choice aspect of this activity difficult, this dissonance enhances the effectiveness of the exercise and helps propel discussion.

Explain that the group will participate in a forced choice activity to learn something about themselves and each other. Point out the sheets of newsprint posted in the room. Tell participants you will call out various categories with four preference choices for each. After hearing the options, participants are to go to the appropriate location marked A, B, C or D to indicate their choice. "None" and "other" are not choices.

Call out the first category and the four choices. Once participants have moved to the different locations, ask volunteers to introduce themselves and share briefly why they made the choice they made. Provide the categories in order; they are designed to require progressively more thought. Allow about two minutes for each category, unless the conversations end sooner.

This activity works best with groups of at least eight. With fewer participants, offer only three choices in each category.

| Category                    | A                     | B              | C                      | D                 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Cuisine</b>              | sushi                 | burrito        | pasta                  | chowder           |
| <b>Music</b>                | Rock                  | Country        | Classical              | Hip Hop           |
| <b>Holiday</b>              | Fourth of July        | New Year's Day | Martin Luther King Day | Thanksgiving      |
| <b>Spiritual Leader</b>     | Buddha                | Jesus          | Gandhi                 | Mother Teresa     |
| <b>Favorite Way to Work</b> | Visioning             | Organizing     | Implementing           | Evaluating        |
| <b>Spiritual Practice</b>   | Meditation/<br>Prayer | Journaling     | Physical Activity      | Community Worship |

To guide participants' reflections, ask:

- What did you notice about the groups you were in?

- Did some groupings make you feel more connected? More isolated? Which categories were difficult to decide on?
- What surprised you?

## Including All Participants

If any participant uses a wheelchair or other mobility aid, be sure there is plenty of room to move from station to station. If any participant is unable to move easily around the room, modify this exercise by using a show of hands and open discussion.

## ACTIVITY 3: SHARING OUR LEADERSHIP STORIES (35 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Post a sheet of newsprint. Title it, "Early Leadership Experiences," and write these questions:
  - How did the experience feel at the time?
  - How did you learn and grow from the experience?
  - What were your hopes and fears in taking on that leadership role?
- Prepare another sheet of newsprint with the title "Becoming a Leader in a Congregation." Write these questions:
  - How did you first become a lay leader in a congregation?
  - What role did you have?
  - Why and how did you take on that position?
  - What were your hopes and fears in taking on that leadership role?
  - How did your personal faith and beliefs affect your decision to be a leader?
  - Before you became a lay leader, what were your perceptions of being a lay leader in your congregation?
- Prepare a third sheet of newsprint with the title, "Leadership Perceptions and Experience," and this question:

- How has your experience either changed or confirmed your perception of what it means to be a lay leader?

### **Description of Activity**

This activity invites participants to tell their own leadership journey. This activity has three parts, offering participants an opportunity to reflect in turn on their early leadership experiences, their congregational leadership experiences, and their perceptions of what it means to be a lay leader.

Some may be new lay leaders in the congregation, some may be longstanding lay leaders and some may be leaders in their professional lives. Acknowledge that everyone is in a different place on their leadership journey, yet participants in this workshop have in common that they have taken on (or are at least considering) the role of lay leader.

First, indicate the newsprint you have posted. Invite participants to recall their early experiences in leadership using the questions provided — childhood and adolescent experiences as well as adult ones. After a minute, invite participants to turn to a partner and share their experiences and responses to the questions listed on the newsprint. Tell them each partner will have three minutes to share. Remind them when it is time for the second partner to share.

Next, post the second sheet of newsprint. Invite participants to use the questions provided to recall the circumstances of their first becoming a leader in this or a previous congregation. After a minute, invite participants to share with the same partner their experiences and their responses to the questions. Tell them each partner will have five minutes to share. Remind them when it is time for the second partner to share.

Finally, post the third sheet of newsprint. Invite participants to consider their current experience and perceptions of their leadership role in the congregation. After a minute, invite participants to share with the same partner their responses to the question on the newsprint. Tell them each partner will have five minutes to share. Remind them when it is time for the second partner to share.

Re-gather the large group. How was the experience of sharing leadership stories? Were there any surprises or revelations as they told their own stories or heard the story of another?

## **ACTIVITY 4: CONCEPTS OF THE DIVINE/ULTIMATE (20 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Blank paper for all participants
- Colored markers
- Optional: Tape or sticky putty to display drawings on a wall

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Arrange work area so participants have individual space to draw as well as access to shared materials.
- Identify a table or wall space to display drawings.

### **Description of Activity**

Explain to participants that being an effective leader requires self-awareness, not just about one's skills, talents and leadership journey, but also about one's own spiritual journey. Invite them to think back to their childhood and their earliest memories of questions or thoughts about God or about that which is ultimate. If it is helpful, they might replace the word "God" by the phrase, "that which we should place our confidence or trust in."

Distribute paper and colored markers and invite participants to represent their childhood concepts of the ultimate/divine. Let them know their drawing can be either representational, such as a picture of what the divine looked like in their minds, or metaphorical, depicting the emotions that questions and thoughts about the divine or ultimate evoked, in their childhood. Allow five minutes for drawing.

Then, give each person a second sheet of paper. Invite them to take another five minutes to represent their current concept of the divine or ultimate.

When participants have completed drawing, ask them to choose a partner different from the one with whom they shared their leadership story and take five minutes each to share their drawings with that person.

Collect the drawings and display them on a table or wall, sorting childhood images and impressions from those which are current. In addition to reflecting on their own theology and changes over time, participants will be able to perceive the diversity of views within the group.

### **Including All Participants**

If any participants are unable to draw or prefer not to, invite them to verbalize their concepts or use words rather than pictures.

## ACTIVITY 5: A FREE FAITH (15 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Handout 2, [Three Tenets of a Faith for the Free](#) (included in this document)

### Preparation for Activity

- Prepare Handout 2 for all participants.

### Description of Activity

Invite participants to silently read Handout 2 and reflect on it in light of their participation in this workshop. Lead a discussion with these questions:

- Which of James Luther Adams' words and concepts resonate most deeply for you?
- What, if anything, troubles you in what he said? What challenges you?
- What do you find inspirational, meaningful, or otherwise helpful to you as a congregational leader?

## ACTIVITY 6: INTRODUCTION TO HARVEST THE POWER (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Handout 1, [Harvest the Power Schedule](#) (included in this document)
- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- If you have not already done so, adapt Handout 1 to create a schedule of the workshops in your Harvest the Power program. Make copies for all participants.
- Review the introduction to ensure you are familiar with the format, content and goals of the Harvest the Power program. Make a copy of the program goals to share with participants.

### Description of Activity

Describe the overall Harvest the Power program. Explain how you have configured the program for your congregation and why you chose the particular workshops you plan to present. You may wish to describe the curriculum's design of three, four-workshop modules with themes of identity, purpose and path.

Share the program goals with the group. Ask which goals matter especially to participants and if they have other goals to add. Record feedback on newsprint and tell participants you will use it in your planning.

## CLOSING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Copies of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook

### Description of Activity

Explain that you will close this workshop with a "gathering" song because, as a group, you have begun gathering yourselves for a leadership journey.

Sing Hymn 188, *Come, Come, Whoever You Are*, three times through. If someone in the group is skilled at leading rounds, you might sing this as a two- or four-part round, depending on the size of the group.

## FAITH IN ACTION: SHARING LEADERSHIP STORIES WITH THE CONGREGATION

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Talk with your minister, administrator and other appropriate congregational leaders to explore ways participants' leadership stories might be shared with the congregation. If possible, develop specific options, complete with dates, to suggest to the group.
- Post blank newsprint.

### Description of Activity

Engage participants in exploring ways their leadership stories might be shared in the broader congregation. For example, the group might invite committees or groups to participate in the "Sharing Leadership Journeys" activity. Or, the Harvest the Power group could create a series of newsletter articles to share some of their own leadership stories. Record ideas on newsprint.

As a plan takes shape, decide who will take charge of particular tasks and figure out the logistics for sharing leadership stories in another group or setting. Document task assignments on newsprint.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

- Looking at each activity in this workshop, what worked as well as or better than you had anticipated? What did not work as well as you anticipated?

- What issues came up for you, personally, in trying any activity yourself? What came up in the process of facilitating?
- What would you change if you were to lead this workshop again? How would you do it differently?
- What did you learn about yourself as an individual while facilitating this workshop? What did you learn about yourself as a leader?
- Looking ahead to the next workshop in this program, determine what materials you need to request or gather. What other preparations do you need to make?

## TAKING IT HOME

If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader. — John Quincy Adams, sixth President of the United States

Share with loved ones what you have discovered about your own spiritual journey and show them your "Concepts of the Divine/Ultimate" drawings. How are your concepts similar to or different from those of family members or friends?

### Find Out More

Learn more about James Luther Adams from the Unitarian Universalist Historical Society's online [Dictionary of Unitarian and Universalist Biography](#) or by reading *The Essential James Luther Adams* by George Kimmich Beach (Boston: Skinner House Books, 1998).

Explore leadership's grounding in theology by reading *A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey Toward an Undivided Life* ( San Francisco : Jossey-Bass, 2004) or *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999), both by Parker J. Palmer.

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: WHAT I CHERISH (15 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- As a facilitator, be prepared to model this activity.

- Write on newsprint, and post:
  - Your name
  - How long you have been a part of this congregation
  - A brief story about a place, person or item you cherish

### Description of Activity

This activity provides a safe space for participants to share, at whatever level they are comfortable, a bit of their identity through a story of something they cherish. You might use it before or instead of Activity 2, These Are a Few of My Favorite Things.

Indicate the newsprint. Give participants a minute to prepare to introduce themselves to the group, using the items on newsprint as a guide.

In a group larger than ten, you may wish to form smaller groups for this activity. Facilitators should go first to model the introductions.

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: NOTIONS OF GOD (20 MINUTES)

### Description of Activity

Use this non-drawing-oriented activity instead of Activity 4, Concepts of the Divine/Ultimate.

Invite participants to consider how they have formed images of God, both positive and negative, over time. Say:

Perhaps you recall teachings from childhood or chance conversations with others. Perhaps your experiences include a rejection — or an embrace — of the idea of God. Perhaps you recall spiritual and theological questions you had as a youth or a young adult. Perhaps you remember when your notion of the existence and nature of God somehow did not make sense anymore. Perhaps you have experienced moments of spiritual crisis or a crisis of meaning.

Allow several minutes for participants to reflect quietly. Then, invite participants to form groups of four and share the ways their notions of God/Divine/Ultimate have developed over time.



## HANDOUT 2: THREE TENETS OF A FAITH FOR THE FREE

From "A Faith for the Free," by James Luther Adams, reprinted by permission from *The Essential James Luther Adams*, edited and with an introduction by George Kimmich Beach (Boston: Skinner House Books, 1998).

*From the Unitarian Universalist Historical Society Dictionary of Unitarian and Universalist Biography:*

*James Luther Adams (November 12, 1901-July 26, 1994) was a Unitarian parish minister, social activist, journal editor, prolific author, and for more than 40 years a divinity school professor. A distinguished scholar, he translated and edited the works of major German theologians. Adams was the most influential theologian among 20th-century Unitarian Universalists and one of the finest 20th-century American liberal Christian theologians.*

### Three Tenets of a Faith for the Free

As creatures fated to be free, as creatures who must make responsible decisions, what may we place our confidence in? What can we have faith in? What should we serve?

*1) The first tenet of the free person's faith is that our ultimate dependence for being and freedom is upon a creative power and upon processes not of our own making. Our ultimate faith is not in ourselves. We find ourselves historical beings, beings living in nature and history, beings having freedom in nature and in history....*

Whatever the destiny of the planet or of the individual life, a sustaining meaning is discernable and commanding in the here and now...

One way of characterizing this meaning is to say that through it God is active or is fulfilling himself in nature and history. To be sure, the word *God* is so heavily laden with unacceptable connotations that it is for many people scarcely usable without confusion... Indeed, the word *God* may in the following formulations be replaced by the phrase, "that which ultimately concerns humans, or by the phrase, "that which we should place our confidence in."

God (or that in which we have faith) is that reality which works upon us and through us and in accord with which we can achieve truth, beauty, and goodness. It is that creativity which works in nature and history, under

certain conditions creating human good in human community. Where these conditions are not met, human good, as sure as the night follows day, will be frustrated or perverted.

*2) The second tenet of the free person's faith is that the commanding, sustaining, transforming reality finds its richest focus in meaningful human history, in free, cooperative efforts for the common good. In other words, this reality fulfills our life only when people stand in right relation to each other...*

A faith that is not the sister of justice is bound to bring people to grief. It thwarts creation, a divinely given possibility; it robs them of their birthright of freedom in an open universe; it robs the community of the spiritual richness latent in its members...

*3) The third tenet of the free person's faith is that the achievement of freedom in community requires the power of organization and the organization of power. The free person will be unfree, will be a victim of tyranny from within or from without, if his or her faith does not assume form, in both word and deed. The commanding, transforming power is a shaping power; it shapes one's beliefs about that reality and when it works through persons it shapes the community of love and justice.*

The free church is that community which is committed to determining what is rightly of ultimate concern to persons of free faith. It is a community of faithful and a community of sinners. When alive, it is the community in which men and women are called to seek fulfillment by the surrender of their lives to the control of the commanding, sustaining, transforming reality... It is the community in which the life-spirit of faith tries to create and mold life-giving, life-transforming beliefs, the community in which persons open themselves to God and each other and to commanding, sustaining, transforming experiences from the past, appropriating, criticizing, and transforming tradition and giving that tradition as well as newborn faith the occasion to become relevant to the needs of a time.

## LEADER RESOURCE 1: ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES FOR WORKSHOP PRESENTERS

*People with obvious and not-so-obvious disabilities need accommodation in order to participate fully. As a presenter, you may or may not be aware of a participant's need for accommodations. In addition to accommodating the accessibility needs of participants who request them, you are urged to follow these basic accessibility guidelines for every workshop activity.*

- Prepare a few large print copies of all handouts.
- Write clearly and use large letters on newsprint. Use black or brown markers for maximum visibility (red and green are difficult for some to see).
- Make a printed copy of information you plan to post on newsprint, to give to any who request it.
- Face the group when you are speaking and urge others to do the same. Be aware of facial hair or hand gestures that may prevent or interfere with lip reading.
- In a large space or with a large group of people, use a microphone for presentations and for questions and answers. If a particular activity will likely make it difficult for speakers to face those who are listening (e.g., a fishbowl, forced choice or role play activity), obtain a portable microphone to pass from speaker to speaker.
- In a brainstorm activity, repeat clearly any word or phrase generated by the group in addition to writing it on newsprint.
- During small group work, position each group far enough from other groups to keep minimize noise interference.
- Keep aisles and doorways clear at all times during a workshop so that people with mobility impairments or immediate needs may exit the room easily.
- When re-arranging furniture for small groups or other purposes, ensure clear pathways between groups.
- Enlist workshop participants in being vigilant about removing bags, books, coffee cups and other obstacles from pathways.
- Use the phrase, "Rise in body or spirit," rather than "Please stand."

- Use language that puts the person first, rather than the disability (e.g., "a person who uses a wheelchair," rather than "a wheelchair-user"; "a child with dyslexia," rather than "a dyslexic child; "people with disabilities" rather than "the disabled.")
- Do not ask individuals to read aloud. Avoid read-alouds that require everyone in the group to automatically take a turn. Request volunteers or read the material yourself.
- Ask participants in advance about any food allergies. Add to your group covenant an agreement to avoid bringing problem foods for snacks or to always offer an alternate snack food.
- Ask participants in advance about any allergies to scents or perfumes. If participants have allergies or sensitivities, invite members of the group to refrain from wearing perfumes and add this agreement to your covenant.

More guidance for including all people can be found in [Disability & Accessibility](#) resources.

# WORKSHOP 2: UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST JOURNEY

## INTRODUCTION

*I call that mind free which jealously guards its intellectual rights and powers; which does not content itself with a passive or hereditary faith; which opens itself to light whencesoever it may come; which receives new truth as an angel from heaven. — William Ellery Channing, 19th-century Unitarian preacher and writer*

This workshop deepens lay leaders' sense of identity as Unitarian Universalists by building knowledge and understanding of our Unitarian Universalist history and heritage. Each participant will share their own path to Unitarian Universalism. A light-hearted quiz game and other activities will help them gain knowledge about Unitarian Universalist history, tradition and practice.

The two-hour workshop includes a 10-minute break following Activity 3.

While it promises to be a fun activity, the UU Reverse Quiz Game (Activity 3) requires substantial preparation time. The game in Alternate Activity 1 takes less time to prepare.

## GOALS

This workshop will:

- Increase participants' knowledge of Unitarian Universalist history, tradition and current practice
- Help participants explore and articulate their own faith
- Examine lay leadership from a Unitarian Universalist perspective.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Articulate and share their journey to Unitarian Universalism
- Reflect on their journeys' similarities with and differences from those of other participants
- Learn information about Unitarian Universalism's history and heritage
- Express or articulate their own faith.

## WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

| Activity  | Minutes |
|---|---------|
| Welcoming and Entering                          |         |
| Opening   | 2       |
| Activity 1: Connections                         | 15      |
| Activity 2: How I Became Unitarian Universalist | 20      |
| Activity 3: UU Reverse Quiz Game                | 25      |
| Break   | 10      |
| Activity 4: Reflection and Meditation           | 10      |
| Activity 5: What Is My Faith?                   | 35      |
| Faith in Action: An Invitation, in Faith        |         |
| Closing   | 3       |
| Alternate Activity 1: UU Quiz Game              | 25      |
| Alternate Activity 2: Faith Statements          | 35      |

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Prepare to share your own path to Unitarian Universalism, and reflect on your own faith. What grounds and centers you, and enables you to experience "the quiet confidence and joy which enable one to feel at home in the universe?"

To strengthen your leadership skills and confidence, explore the leadership development resources recommended at the end of the workshop, as well as Workshop 1, Leader Resource 1, Accessibility Guidelines for Workshop Presenters.

## WELCOMING AND ENTERING

### Materials for Activity

- Name tags and name tag materials
- Music and player

### Preparation for Activity

- Play music to create a welcoming atmosphere.

### Description of Activity

Invite new participants to create a name tag.

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook
- Small worship table
- Chalice, candle and lighter or LED battery-operated candle

### Preparation for Activity

- Set the chalice on the worship table.

### Description of Activity

Gather the group in a circle. Ask a participant to light the chalice as you or another participant read the opening words.

Share "We come together this morning," Reading 435 in *Singing the Living Tradition*. You may wish to change the word "morning" to reflect the time of day when you are meeting.

## ACTIVITY 1: CONNECTIONS (15 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Index cards and pens or pencils
- Table for displaying completed index cards

### Preparation for Activity

- Write the following statements on newsprint, and post:
  - I felt I belonged in this congregation when...
  - I felt like a Unitarian Universalist when...

### Description of Activity

Give each participant two index cards and a pen or pencil. Invite participants to complete the two statements posted on newsprint on separate index cards.

Allow a minute or two. Then, invite volunteers in turn to share their statements. Ask the group to hold their comments or questions until everyone has spoken.

Lead the group to reflect on the similarities and differences in their experiences. What common experiences exist in this group? What experiences were unique to individuals? What is the advantage of having people with different knowledge and experiences in this group? Collect all statements and display them on a table. Encourage participants to look at them during the break.

## ACTIVITY 2: HOW I BECAME UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Optional: Poster(s), wallet cards or brochures which provide the Unitarian Universalist [Principles](#) and [Sources](#)

### Preparation for Activity

- If you do not have with a printed version of the Unitarian Universalist Principles and Sources, write them on newsprint and post.

### Description of Activity

Participants reflect on and share their experiences of becoming, or growing up, a Unitarian Universalist, and learn about the paths others have taken.

Tell the group you will conduct a brief, interactive survey. Ask:

1. When did you become a Unitarian Universalist? (Invite participants to raise their hands to respond.)
  - from birth/as a child
  - as a teen
  - as a young adult
  - after I became a parent
  - in my middle years
  - after retirement
2. What was/were the religion/religions of your family of origin? (Invite responses one at a time.)
3. Which of the six Sources of Unitarian Universalism speaks most deeply to you? (Indicate the Sources you have posted or distributed. Name each Source in turn, and ask for a show of hands in response.)

Invite participants to move into groups of three to share their stories of becoming a Unitarian Universalist, or choosing to remain a UU if they were raised UU. Tell them they will each have three minutes. Announce three-minute intervals.

When all have shared, re-gather the group and invite volunteers to offer observations or insights from their conversations. Facilitate with these questions, as appropriate and as time allows:

- What patterns do you see in one another's stories? What differences?
- What, if any, fundamental difference do you see between those raised Unitarian Universalist and those finding our faith as teens or adults?
- What difference(s) do you find between those who first became Unitarian Universalist primarily for their children and those who first became Unitarian Universalist primarily for themselves?

### **ACTIVITY 3: UU REVERSE QUIZ GAME (25 MINUTES)**

#### **Materials for Activity**

- 24x36-inch poster or foam board
- 25 pieces of self-sticking 4x6-inch notepaper
- One-minute timer
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Candies or another treat for after the game
- Leader Resource 1, [UU Reverse Quiz Game Preparation](#) (included in this document)
- Leader Resource 2, [UU Reverse Quiz Game Responses and Questions](#) (included in this document)

#### **Preparation for Activity**

- Familiarize yourself with the rules of the UU Reverse Quiz.
- Prepare the game board as instructed in Leader Resource 1.
- Optional: Copy Leader Resource 2 to give all participants after the game.

#### **Description of Activity**

Participants build rapport, confidence and Unitarian Universalist identity playing this game. A set of topics, responses and questions for the game are provided in Leader Resources 1 and 2. The responses and questions are not meant to be difficult. They are meant to inform Unitarian Universalist lay leaders and lead

them to other resources for use in their congregational work.

Invite participants to form three teams diverse in age and amount of experience as Unitarian Universalists to allow for pooling of information. If the group is larger than 12, consider playing two games simultaneously.

#### **How to Play the Game**

Invite each team to designate a captain. This person will raise a hand when the team is ready to respond.

Ask the first team to select a category and a point value for their first question. Remove the self-sticking note covering the block selected. Read the response printed there and start the one-minute timer. Invite both teams to huddle and frame a question that matches the response. For example, for the response, "Unitarian and Universalist," a question might be, "What do the two Us stand for in UUA?".

Each answer may fit with several possible questions.

Explain that when a team is ready with a response, the captain may raise a hand, and you will hear responses from teams in the order in which the captains raised their hands. A correct response earns a team the points assigned the block and the opportunity to pick the next category and value. If a team gives an incorrect response, deduct the points for that category and value from its score. Call on teams in the order in which the captains raise their hands until a team responds correctly or one minute has elapsed. If no team has answered correctly, read aloud a question that fits the response. No team receives points. The team which chose the last category and value gets another chance to choose.

After the game, you may wish to distribute copies of Leader Resource 2 so participants have the game's questions and answers for their own reference. Offer a round of applause to the team with the most points and invite all to share the treat you have brought, now or during a break.

### **ACTIVITY 4: REFLECTION AND MEDITATION (10 MINUTES)**

#### **Materials for Activity**

- Leader Resource 3, [Walking Toward Morning](#) (included in this document)

#### **Preparation for Activity**

- Familiarize yourself with the poem, "Walking Toward Morning," so you can read it smoothly to the group.

## Description of Activity

Invite participants into a time of meditation. Read aloud Victoria Safford's poem, "Walking Toward Morning" (Leader Resource 3). When you are done, ask participants to reflect silently on what they carry with them when they leave home each morning to meet the new day.

## ACTIVITY 5: WHAT IS MY FAITH? (35 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- 12x18-inch sheets of construction paper for all participants
- A variety of colored and textured papers, illustrated magazines to cut up, scissors (including left-handed scissors), glue and glue sticks, color markers and pencils

### Preparation for Activity

- Arrange work area so participants can share materials.

### Description of Activity

Share this quote from religious historian William Cantwell Smith:

Faith at its best has taken the form of a quiet confidence and joy which enable one to feel at home in the universe.

Invite participants to reflect for a moment, then put aside words and create a representation of what enables them to feel at home in the universe. Tell them they will have 15 minutes to use the art materials to create a representation of their faith. When time is up, invite participants to share their creations and their meaning with the group.

## CLOSING (3 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook

### Description of Activity

Ask each participant to share one word or phrase describing how they feel about this workshop. When all have had a chance to share, close with "For all who see God," Reading 700 in *Singing the Living Tradition*.

## FAITH IN ACTION: AN INVITATION, IN FAITH

### Description of Activity

Participants may have friends or family members they have been meaning to invite to their Unitarian Universalist congregation. Ask participants to consider extending those invitations. Ask: How can your experience creating a faith representation (Activity 5) help you start a conversation with your friend or family member and extend the invitation? Ask if the group would like an opportunity to check in at a future Harvest the Power workshop about how they have kept a commitment to invite someone to their congregation.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

- Looking at each activity in this workshop, what worked as well as or better than you had anticipated? What did not work as well as you anticipated?
- What issues came up for you, personally, in trying any activity yourself? What came up in the process of facilitating?
- What would you change if you were to lead this workshop again? How would you do it differently?
- What did you learn about yourself as an individual while facilitating this workshop? What did you learn about yourself as a leader?
- Looking ahead to the next workshop, determine what materials you need to request or gather. What other preparations do you need to make?

## TAKING IT HOME

I call that mind free which jealously guards its intellectual rights and powers; which does not content itself with a passive or hereditary faith; which opens itself to light whencesoever it may come; which receives new truth as an angel from heaven. — William Ellery Channing, 19th-century Unitarian preacher and writer

Do you have a regular spiritual practice, such as prayer, meditation, journaling, yoga, walking, singing or attending worship? Set aside time on a regular basis for your preferred spiritual practice. If you do not have such a practice, explore different ways to nurture your spirit.

Take home your faith representation. Initiate a conversation with family or friends about what helps them to feel at home in the universe. Their answers

might surprise you and make you think more deeply about your own faith.

### Find Out More

[Writing the Spiritual Journey: The Art and Practice of Spiritual Memoir](#) by Elizabeth J. Andrew (Boston: Skinner House, 2005)

[The Unitarian Universalist Pocket Guide](#), 5th edition, edited by Peter Morales (Boston: Skinner House, 2012)

[A Chosen Faith: An Introduction to Unitarian Universalism](#), revised edition, by John A. Buehrens and Forrest Church (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998)

[The Cathedral of the World: A Universalist Theology](#), by Forrest Church (Beacon Press, 2010)

[Universalists and Unitarians in America: A People's History](#), by John A. Buehrens (Skinner House, 2011)

[Being Liberal in an Illiberal Age: Why I Am a Unitarian Universalist](#), second edition, by Jack Mendelsohn (Boston: Skinner House, 2006)

*Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation* by Parker J. Palmer (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999)

[Engaging Our Theological Diversity: A Report by the Unitarian Universalist Commission on Appraisal](#) (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2005).

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: UU QUIZ GAME (25 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Handouts 1 and 2, [UU Quiz Game Questions, Side 1](#) (included in this document) and [Side 2](#) (included in this document), for all participants
- One-minute timer
- Newsprint, markers and tape or paper and pen/pencil
- Candies or another treat

### Preparation for Activity

- Familiarize yourself with rules of the game.
- Copy the handouts. For the game, half the group (one team) will use copies of Handout 1 and the others will use Handout 2. After the game, you may offer all participants the handout they have not yet seen.

### Description of Activity

Invite the group to form two teams. With more than 12 participants, consider forming four teams and running two separate games.

Give one team copies of Handout 1 and the other team copies of Handout 2. The first team will choose a question from their handout to ask the other team. Using the timer, give the second team one minute to huddle and come up with a response. If the second team responds correctly, they receive a point.

Then, the second team may pose a question from their handout to the first team. Give the first team one minute to respond. Keep score on newsprint or on a pad of paper.

After the game, give everyone a copy of the handout they have not seen. Offer a round of applause to the team with the most points and invite all to share the treat you have brought, now or during a break.

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: FAITH STATEMENTS (35 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Workshop 1, Handout 2, [Three Tenets of a Faith for the Free](#) (included in this document)
- Handout 3, [Faith Statement Worksheet](#) (included in this document)
- Leader Resource 3, [Walking Toward Morning](#) (included in this document)
- Writing journal or notebook for each participant

### Preparation for Activity

- Copy Workshop 1, Handout 1, for all participants.
- Copy this workshop's Handout 2 and Leader Resource 3 for all participants.

### Description of Activity

This activity guides participants to discern and articulate their own faith as expressions of values, blessings in life, beliefs, and reverence.

Distribute Handout 1 from Workshop 1. Invite participants to silently read (or re-read) James Luther Adams' description of a faith for the free. Allow a few moments. Then distribute Leader Resource 3, *Walking Toward Morning*. Again, invite participants to read and reflect.

Begin a discussion with the question, "What does it mean as a Unitarian Universalist to have faith?" Allow

ten minutes of conversation. Suggest this definition of faith from religious historian William Cantwell Smith:

Faith at its best has taken the form of a quiet confidence and joy which enable one to feel at home in the universe.

Now distribute Handout 3, Faith Statement Worksheet, along with journals and pens or pencils. State that understanding their own faith and being able to articulate it is an important part of their leadership in a congregational context. Invite participants to begin writing a faith statement, using the questions on the worksheet as prompts. Tell them they will have 15 minutes to work on their faith statement here and may take the journal home to continue writing if they wish.

Tell participants when ten minutes have passed. After 15 minutes, re-gather the group and invite volunteers to share any thoughts or read a short piece of what they have written.

# HANDOUT 1: UU QUIZ GAME QUESTIONS, SIDE 1

## UU POSTAGE STAMPS

- Who was Whitney Young?

Answer: Twentieth-century social worker, educator, civil rights leader and winner of the Medal of Freedom

- Who was Clara Barton?

Answer: Civil War nurse and founder of the American Red Cross

## JUUSTICE FOR ALL

- What is green sanctuary?

Answer: Program where congregations work toward environmental justice

- What are some recent UUA statements of conscience?

Answer: Threat of Global Warming, Peacemaking and Alternatives to the War on Drugs

- What is a Welcoming Congregation?

Answer: A congregation that has an intentional outreach to Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian and Transgender people and their families

## UU THEOLOGY

- What are some of the Sources of our tradition?

Answer: Wisdom from the world's religions, spiritual teachings of earth-based religions, stories of prophetic women and men, Jewish and Christian teachings, direct experience of mystery and wonder, humanist teachings

- In which traditions are the religious and historical roots of Unitarian Universalism?

Answer: Judaism and Christianity

## OUR FREE ASSOCIATION

- What is the name of the continental UU young adult organization?

Answer: C\*UUYAN (pronounced See-oo-yan) or continental UU Young Adult Network.

- In what kind of document are the seven principles contained? (hint: a \_\_\_\_\_ of right relations)

Answer: A covenant

- What do UUA districts do?

Answer: They provide geographically based resources to help local congregations.

## HERETICAL QUOTES

- Who said "We need not think alike to love alike?"

Answer: Francis David, sixteenth-century Transylvanian Unitarian preacher

- Who said "Give them not hell, but hope and courage?"

Answer: John Murray, eighteenth-century Universalist, minister of the first Universalist Church in the U.S.

- Who said, "Men their rights and nothing more. Women their rights and nothing less"?

Answer: Susan B. Anthony, nineteenth-century advocate for women's suffrage

## HANDOUT 2: UU QUIZ GAME QUESTIONS, SIDE 2

### UU POSTAGE STAMPS

- Who was John Adams?

Answer: Second president of the United States, signer of the Declaration of Independence

- Who was Louisa May Alcott?

Answer: Nineteenth-century author whose books include *Little Women*

- Who was Bela Bartok?

Answer: Twentieth-century Hungarian composer who used folk melodies in his works

### JUUSTICE FOR ALL

- What is DRUUMM? (Diverse and Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries)?

Answer: Organization of ministers and other religious professionals of color

- What is the UUSC (Unitarian Universalist Service Committee)?

Answer: An organization that advances human rights and social justice in the U.S. and around the world.

### UU THEOLOGY

- What are some of the Sources of our tradition?

Answer: Wisdom from the world's religions, spiritual teachings of earth-based religions, stories of prophetic women and men, Jewish and Christian teachings, direct experience of mystery and wonder, humanist teachings

- What is the fourth Unitarian Universalist Principle?

Answer: A free and responsible search for truth and meaning

- What are two simple statements of Universalist theology?

Answer: "God is love" and "All people are saved."

- What is a simple statement of Unitarian theology?

Answer: God is one.

### OUR FREE ASSOCIATION

- What is the name of the annual gathering of Unitarian Universalist congregational representatives?

Answer: General Assembly

- What is meant by the term "Fair Share?"

Answer: Financial support that Unitarian Universalist congregations give to the Association

### HERETICAL QUOTES

- Who said, "It is in our lives, and not our words, that our religion must be found?"

Answer: Thomas Jefferson, third president of the United States and a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

- What is the origin of the quote, "When in doubt, pray. When in prayer, doubt."?

Answer: 2007 Unitarian Universalist Association marketing campaign.

## HANDOUT 3: FAITH STATEMENT WORKSHEET

*For Alternate Activity 2, Faith Statements.*

Religious historian William Cantwell Smith wrote, "Faith at its best has taken the form of a quiet confidence and joy which enable one to feel at home in the universe."

Articulating your faith statement can help you better understand what has the utmost importance in your life and enables you to feel at home in the universe. There is no correct content or length. These suggestions may help you write your faith statement.

- List what you consider to be your blessings.

- Reflect on some difficult situations you have had to face. What enabled you to get through these situations?
- What ultimately keeps you keeping on?

We are all involved in a journey, pilgrimage and spiritual quest, all our lives. We constantly seek to know the meaning of how we are in the world, of how the world is. As religious liberals, we seek and find that meaning without the usual trappings the other more conventional religions offer. Our faith is one we must develop ourselves, for ourselves. We alone decide what it is that we can affirm.

- What can you affirm?
- What gives you the quiet confidence and joy which enable you to feel at home in the universe?

## LEADER RESOURCE 1: UU REVERSE QUIZ GAME PREPARATION

Prepare a reverse quiz game using a 24x36-inch piece of foam core or poster board held horizontally. Draw a table with five columns and six rows, making each block measure six inches horizontally and four inches vertically. Leave a three-inch margin on each side and no margin on the top or bottom. In the top block of each column, write one of these categories: UU Stamps, JUUSTice for All, Free Association, UU Theology and Heretical Quotes.

Following the diagram, transfer the text of the numbered responses (1-5 in each category) to the numbered blocks (1-5 in each column). Then, cover each response with a sheet of 4x6-inch self-sticking paper. Write the number of the block on the paper.

UU Stamps JUUSTice for All Free Association UU Theology Heretical Quotes

|    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1. | 1. | 1. | 1. | 1. |
| 2. | 2. | 2. | 2. | 2. |
| 3. | 3. | 3. | 3. | 3. |
| 4. | 4. | 4. | 4. | 4. |
| 5. | 5. | 5. | 5. | 5. |

### **UU STAMPS** (Unitarians and Universalists who have been featured on U.S. postage stamps)

1. Civil War nurse and founder of the American Red Cross
2. Second president of the United States and signer of the Declaration of Independence
3. Nineteenth-century author whose books included *Little Women*
4. Twentieth-century social worker, educator, civil rights leader and winner of the Medal of Freedom
5. Twentieth-century Hungarian composer who used folk melodies in his works

### **JUUSTICE FOR ALL** (Unitarian Universalist organizations and programs to promote peace and justice)

1. A congregation that has an intentional outreach to Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian and Transgender people
2. Organization that advances human rights and social justice in the U.S. and around the world
3. Program where congregations work toward environmental justice
4. Organization of ministers and other religious professionals of color
5. Threat of Global Warming, Peacemaking and Alternatives to the War on Drugs

### **UU THEOLOGY**

1. Wisdom from the world's religions, spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions, stories of prophetic women and men, Jewish and Christian teachings, humanist teachings, direct experience of transcending mystery and wonder
2. God is love, and all people are saved.
3. Judaism and Christianity
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning
5. God is one

### **OUR FREE ASSOCIATION** (information about our Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations)

1. General Assembly
2. They provide geographically based resources to help local congregations.
3. Financial support that Unitarian Universalist congregations give to the association.

4. C\*UUYAN (pronounced See-oo-yan) or continental UU Young Adult Network.

5. A covenant.

**HERETICAL QUOTES** (well known quotes from Unitarians, Universalists and Unitarian Universalists)

1. "When in doubt, pray. When in prayer, doubt."

2. "Men their rights and nothing more. Women their rights and nothing less."

3. "It is in our lives, and not our words, that our religion must be read."

4. "Give them not hell, but hope and courage."

5. "We need not think alike to love alike."

## LEADER RESOURCE 2: UU REVERSE QUIZ RESPONSES AND QUESTIONS

The questions here are valid responses in the UU Reverse Quiz game (Activity 3); however, keep in mind some items may have additional, valid responses.

**UU STAMPS** (Unitarians, Universalists and Unitarian Universalists who have been featured on U.S. postage stamps)

Civil War nurse and founder of the American Red Cross

- Who was Clara Barton?

Second president of the United States and signer of the Declaration of Independence

- Who was John Adams?

Nineteenth-century author whose books included *Little Women*

- Who was Louisa May Alcott?

Twentieth-century social worker, educator, civil rights leader and winner of the Medal of Freedom

- Who was Whitney Young?

Twentieth-century Hungarian composer who used folk melodies in his works

- Who was Bela Bartok?

**JUUSTICE FOR ALL** (Unitarian Universalist organizations and programs to promote peace and justice)

A congregation that has an intentional outreach to bisexual, gay, lesbian and transgender people.

- What is a Welcoming Congregation?

An organization that advances human rights and social justice in the U.S. and around the world

- What is the UUSC or Unitarian Universalist Service Committee?

Program where congregations work toward environmental justice

- What is Green Sanctuary?

Organization of religious professionals and lay people of color

- What is DRUUMM or Diverse and Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries?

Threat of Global Warming, Peacemaking and Alternatives to the War on Drugs

- What are the subjects of recent UUA statements of conscience?

### UU THEOLOGY

Wisdom from the world's religions, spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions, stories of prophetic women and men, Jewish and Christian teachings, humanist teachings, direct experience of transcending mystery and wonder

- What are the Sources of our Unitarian Universalist tradition?

God is love, and all people are saved.

- What are two simple statements of Universalist theology?

Judaism and Christianity

- In which traditions does Unitarian Universalism have its historical and religious roots?

A free and responsible search for truth and meaning

- What is the fourth Unitarian Universalist Principle?

God is one.

- What is a simple statement of Unitarian theology?

**OUR FREE ASSOCIATION** (information about our Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations)

General Assembly

- What is the name of the annual gathering of congregational representatives?

They provide geographically based resources to help local congregations.

- What are districts?

Financial support that Unitarian Universalist congregations give to the association

- What is meant by "Fair Share"?

YRUU or Young Religious Unitarian Universalists

- What is the name many congregations use for their youth program?

The seven Principles are contained in this kind of document (hint: a \_\_\_\_\_ of right relations)

- What is a covenant?

**HERETICAL QUOTES** (well known quotes from Unitarians, Universalists and Unitarian Universalists)

It said, "When in doubt, pray. When in prayer, doubt."

- What is the 2007 Unitarian Universalist marketing campaign?

She said, "Men their rights and nothing more. Women their rights and nothing less."

- Who is Susan B. Anthony?

He said, "It is in our lives, and not our words, that our religion must be read."

- Who is Thomas Jefferson?

He said, "Give them not hell, but hope and courage."

- Who is John Murray?

He said, "We need not think alike to love alike."

- Who is Francis David?

## LEADER RESOURCE 3: WALKING TOWARD MORNING

By Victoria Safford, in *Walking Toward Morning: Meditations* ( California : Dyeing Art Books, 2008).

You know, we do it every day. Every morning we go out blinking into the glare of our freedom, into the wilderness of our work and the world, making maps as we go, looking for signs that we're on the right path. And on some good days we walk right out of our oppressions, those things that press us down from the outside or (as often) from the inside; we shake off the shackles of fear, prejudice, timidity, closed-mindedness, selfishness, self righteousness, and claim our freedom outright, terrifying as it is—our freedom to be human and humane.

Every morning, every day, we leave our houses, not knowing if it will be for the last time, and we decide what we'll take with us, what we'll carry: how much integrity, how much truth-telling, how much compassion (in case somebody along the way may need some), how much arrogance, how much anger, how much humor, how much willingness to change or be changed, to grow and to be grown. How much faith and hope, how much love and gratitude—you pack these with your lunch and medications, your date book and your papers. Every day, we gather what we think we'll need, pick up what we love and all that we so far believe, put on our history, shoulder our experience and memory, take inventory of our blessings, and we start walking toward morning.

# WORKSHOP 3: POWER AND AUTHORITY

## INTRODUCTION

*A community is like a ship; everyone ought to be prepared to take the helm. — from An Enemy of the People, by Henrik Ibsen, 19th-century Norwegian playwright*

This workshop distinguishes between power and authority, and between leadership and management. The group explores the implicit and explicit expectations of a congregational leader.

Parts of this workshop invite playfulness to ease participants' anxiety about the responsibilities of leadership. Other activities offer space for deep individual and group reflection on what it means to be a leader.

## GOALS

This workshop will:

- Provide a framework for participants to examine the complex expectations of a person in a congregational leadership role
- Apply definitions of power and authority to a congregational leadership position
- Demonstrate the difference between management and leadership
- Provide opportunities for participants to apply concepts about power, authority, management and leadership to their experiences as congregational leaders.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Understand power as the ability to achieve a desired outcome
- Understand authority as power given in exchange for meeting implicit or explicit expectations
- Identify some of the many factors, internal and external, which influence or support a congregational leader
- Be introduced to Gil Rendle's distinction between management and leadership

- Reflect deeply on their own experiences of power and authority, management and leadership, as congregational leaders
- Laugh to relieve any anxiety about being a leader!

## WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

| Activity   | Minutes |
|--|---------|
| Welcoming and Entering   |         |
| Opening  | 2       |
| Activity 1: Story — King of the Birds                                  | 10      |
| Activity 2: The Ideal Congregational Leader, Parts One and Two         | 65      |
| Break  | 10      |
| Activity 3: What Leadership Is and Isn't                               | 20      |
| Activity 4: My Congregational Leadership Profile                       | 10      |
| Faith in Action: Authority in Our Congregation                         |         |
| Closing  | 3       |
| Alternate Activity 1: UU University DVD — What Leadership Is and Isn't | 40      |

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Reflect on the definitions of power and authority in Handout 1. Think of a time you have experienced power—your own, or another's—as the "ability to achieve purpose" in your congregation. How might you mobilize your own power to successfully lead this workshop? What authority, both formal and informal, are you granted by workshop participants? By the congregation? By the minister or other professional staff? What is implicitly and explicitly expected of you in exchange for the authority to lead the workshop?

## WELCOMING AND ENTERING

### Materials for Activity

- Name tags and material to make name tags
- Music and player

### Preparation for Activity

- Play music to create a welcoming atmosphere.

### Description of Activity

Invite participants to put on name tags or make one, as needed.

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook
- Small table or stand for chalice
- Chalice, candle and lighter or LED battery-operated candle

### Preparation for Activity

- Set up the chalice in the center of the circle.

### Description of Activity

Gather the group in a circle. Ask a participant to light the chalice as you or another participant read the opening words.

Share Reading 560, "People say, what is the sense of our small effort," from *Singing the Living Tradition*.

## ACTIVITY 1: STORY — KING OF THE BIRDS (10 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of the story, "[King of the Birds](#) (included in this document) "

### Preparation for Activity

- Prepare to read or tell the story.

### Description of Activity

Read or tell the story. Invite participants to respond to the exercise of power by different contestants vying to be named "king." Ask:

- In what ways is the contest in the story inherently unfair?
- Did Warbler cheat?
- What skills did each bird offer as a leader and how did each exercise power?

## ACTIVITY 2: THE IDEAL CONGREGATIONAL LEADER (65 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Colored adhesive dots
- Handout 1, [Definitions of Power and Authority](#) (included in this document)

### Preparation for Activity

- Reflect on the characteristics of an "ideal" leader in your congregational setting.
- Copy the handout for all participants.
- Post several sheets of blank newsprint.

### Description of Activity

This is a two-part activity. Part One (45 minutes) identifies the complex, varied set of skills, attributes, supports and circumstances that enable effective leadership. Part Two (20 minutes), introduces definitions of power and authority and applies them to the leadership components identified in Part One. The activity also helps participants express and relieve, through laughter, the anxiety they may feel about the responsibilities of a leadership role.

### Part One

Tell participants the group will hold an audition for the post of "Ideal Lay Congregational Leader." Participants will work in teams to imagine an ideal candidate and present that person to the group.

Ask participants to form groups of three or four. Give each group a sheet of newsprint and some markers. Invite them to draw the Ideal Lay Congregational Leader and their surroundings, support mechanisms and other essential leadership tools. Indicate that imagination and whimsy are welcome; for example, if the Ideal Lay Congregational Leader must be able to fix anything that breaks, groups may depict the leader with a hammer and nails or a needle and thread.

Give groups 15 minutes to complete the drawings. Then, invite each group to present their drawing as you list on newsprint the attributes, tools, supports and surroundings they identify. Put a check next to items that are repeated. Allow about 30 minutes for small group presentations.

### Part Two

Re-gather the large group and distribute Handout 1. Ask for volunteers to read aloud each definition. Invite comments or questions about the definitions.

Now ask the group to consider the newsprint list of attributes, tools, supports and context for the Ideal Lay Congregational Leader. Point out that while every item listed may help create an ideal leader, the items fall into different categories. Lead the group to use the definitions in Handout 1 to categorize each item as an example of power, formal authority, informal authority or skills. Assign a different color dot to each of the four categories and place the appropriate dot next to each item on your newsprint list. Where there is disagreement about category, or where an item seems to belong in more than one category, use more than one colored dot.

Lead participants to reflect on the difference between power and authority. Emphasize that power involves the ability to act and achieve a purpose, where authority is part of an exchange between or among persons or groups of persons. Invite the group to add any additional attributes, tools, supports and context they think are missing from the list.

### **ACTIVITY 3: WHAT LEADERSHIP IS AND ISN'T (20 MINUTES)**

#### **Materials for Activity**

- A copy of Leader Resource 1, [What Leadership Is and Is Not](#) (included in this document)
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- [What Leadership Is and Isn't](#) and computer with Internet access
- Copies of Handout 2, [First UU Anytown Scenario](#) (included in this document) for all participants

#### **Preparation for Activity**

- Watch [What Leadership Is and Isn't](#), a 19-minute presentation by Gil Rendle from UU University 2007. NOTE: If you have the capability and the time to show the group this online presentation, you may prefer to use Alternate Activity 1, UU University - What Leadership Is And Isn't.
- Review Leader Resource 1 for a summary of the presentation.

#### **Description of Activity**

Using Leader Resource 1 and your gleanings from the presentation, explain the difference between leadership and management.

Then, distribute Handout 2. Invite participants to turn to a partner and read the scenario. Wait for all pairs to finish. Then, say:

Given the information we have about First UU Anytown, we will create a list of questions that will guide this congregation toward ways to address its problems and move toward its goal. The questions should not seek more information to complete the scenario. Rather, let's come up with questions which ask, "Are we doing things right?" (management) and "Are we doing right things?" (leadership). For example, a management question might be, "How can we better furnish our building?" A leadership question might be, "Is our building adequate for our mission?" Let's compose some management questions and some leadership questions.

Take ten minutes to compile questions. Write each question on newsprint and lead the group to assign it a "L" or "M" for leadership or management.

### **ACTIVITY 4: MY CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP PROFILE (10 MINUTES)**

#### **Materials for Activity**

- Handout 3, [My Congregational Leadership Profile](#) (included in this document) , and pens or pencils

#### **Preparation for Activity**

- Copy Handout 3 for all participants.

#### **Description of Activity**

Distribute Handout 3. Invite participants to reflect silently on their own leadership profiles. Provide pens or pencils for participants to answer in writing. Explain that they will be asked to share only their responses to the final question. Allow at least five minutes for individual reflection before sharing. Encourage participants to continue their reflections after this workshop.

### **CLOSING (3 MINUTES)**

#### **Materials for Activity**

- A copy of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist Association hymnbook
- Copies of Taking It Home for all participants

#### **Preparation for Activity**

- Download and adapt this workshop's Taking It Home section. Print and copy for all participants, or plan to email it to participants.

## Description of Activity

Thank the group for their contributions. Distribute the Taking It Home handout or tell participants when you will email it to them. Lead the group in singing "This Little Light of Mine," Hymn 118 in *Singing the Living Tradition*.

## FAITH IN ACTION: AUTHORITY IN OUR CONGREGATION

### Description of Activity

Investigate the ways your congregation authorizes its leaders (board members, committee chairs and members, religious education teachers, youth advisors and so on). Does a formal ceremony or ritual make the congregation's expectations of leaders explicit and initiate the empowerment of leaders? Consider working with the minister and/or a small task force to create rituals to make transparent the relational nature of authority in your congregation.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

- Looking at each activity in this workshop, what worked as well as or better than you had anticipated? What did not work as well as you anticipated?
- What issues came up for you, personally, in trying any activity yourself? What came up in the process of facilitating?
- What would you change if you were to lead this workshop again? How would you do it differently?
- What did you learn about yourself as an individual while facilitating this workshop? What did you learn about yourself as a leader?
- Looking ahead to the next workshop in this program, determine what materials you need to request or gather. What other preparations do you need to make?

## TAKING IT HOME

A community is like a ship; everyone ought to be prepared to take the helm. — from *An Enemy of the People*, by Henrik Ibsen, 19th-century Norwegian playwright

Reflect with your family or friends about the definitions of power and authority. Where in your life do you have authority, either formal or informal? Where are the places you use your power to achieve a desired outcome? Where are the places you might more effectively use the power and authority you have?

## Find Out More

Resources for exploring leadership in the congregational context include the [Congregational Handbook](#) (Unitarian Universalist Association, 2005), [Leading Change](#), and these books:

- *Leadership Without Easy Answers* by Ronald A. Heifetz (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994)
- [Welcoming Resistance](#) by William Chris Hobgood (Alban Institute, 2001)
- [Holy Conversations: Strategic Planning as a Spiritual Practice for Congregations](#) by Alice Mann and Gil Rendle (Herndon, VA, Alban Institute, 2003).

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: UU UNIVERSITY DVD — WHAT LEADERSHIP IS AND ISN'T (40 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- [UU University 07: Leading Change in Your Congregation DVD](#) and player or a computer with Internet access
- Projector for computer or DVD player and screen or wall for projection
- A copy of Leader Resource 1, [What Leadership Is and Isn't](#) (included in this document)
- Copies of Handout 2, [First UU Anytown Scenario](#) (included in this document) for all participants
- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Watch [What Leadership Is and Isn't](#), a 19-minute presentation by Gil Rendle from UU University 2007.
- Review Leader Resource 1 for a summary of the presentation.
- Ready your DVD player or computer, projector and screen.

### Description of Activity

This activity guides participants to distinguish between leadership and management.

Show the "What Leadership Is" chapter of the DVD in its entirety (19 minutes). Then, distribute Handout 2. Invite

participants to turn to a partner and read the scenario. Wait for all pairs to finish. Then, say:

Given the information we have about First UU Anytown, we will create a list of questions that will guide this congregation to address its problems and move toward its goal. The questions should not seek more information to complete the scenario. Rather, let's come up with questions which ask, "Are we doing things right?" (management) and "Are we doing right things?" (leadership). For example, a management question might be, "How can we better furnish our building?" A leadership question might be, "Is our building adequate for our mission?" Let's compose some management questions and some leadership questions.

Take ten minutes to compile questions. Write each question on newsprint and lead the group to assign it a "L" or "M" for leadership or management.

## STORY: KING OF THE BIRDS

From *Stories in Faith: Exploring Our Unitarian Universalist Principles and Sources through Wisdom Tales*, by Gail Forsyth-Vail ( Boston : Unitarian Universalist Association, 2007).

*Tales like this are part of the folklore of many different cultures. There are references to its appearance in a Jewish collection from the 13th century; there are variants in Irish, Scottish, Manx, English, Dutch, Danish and Norwegian folk cultures. Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm published a version in German Household Tales in 1812. Similar stories appear in both Chippewa and Ojibway folklore in North America and in a tale from India .*

*Often, "King of the Birds" tales serve as explanations for why a particular kind of small bird darts about noisily. Each version of the tale has its own natural setting with the trees, terrain and kinds of birds drawn from the familiar surroundings of the storyteller. A surprising and wonderful version of the tale was collected and translated by Loreen McDonald, a first-grade teacher at the John Wesley School in Eshowe, Zululand, Natal, South Africa . The tale here draws from this Zulu version, which portrays the birds deciding together who will be their leader, with an unexpected result.*

Once upon a time, when the world was new, the Great Eagle called a meeting of all the birds. On a bright beautiful morning, they all assembled: the flamingo, the weaver, the steppe buzzard, the warbler, the owl, and all the other birds of the wild.

There was chirping, hooting, and all manner of singing as the assembled birds greeted one another. Eagle called for silence. When all had quieted down, he said, "We know that Lion is king of all who dwell on the land. But a land dweller like Lion should not rule the birds of the air. We must choose our own leader!" There was great cawing and chirping and chattering of agreement. When all was quiet again, Eagle spoke once more: "The King of Birds should behave like a king. I am the bird with royal bearing. I am the best choice for king!"

The birds murmured and mumbled.

Another voice spoke: "Yes, you are indeed majestic. But I think I, Owl, should be king. I have the largest eyes of any of you and can see everything that happens. I am known for my wisdom and will know best how to act when the king must choose wisely."

The birds began to chatter and argue back and forth. Should their leader have wisdom like Owl or majesty like Eagle? Or perhaps strength like that of the steppe buzzard was the most important thing. The birds had

chosen sides and were preparing to vote on who should be their king when another voice emerged from the chatter. It was the voice of the tiny warbler: "I'd like to be king. I think you should elect me!"

The assembled birds began to laugh. What a silly idea! Electing this small warbler king was unthinkable! How dare this ridiculous little bird even suggest such a thing! "Whatever makes you think we should consider choosing a bird like you for our leader? What have you got to offer? You are not the wisest, or the strongest, or the most majestic of the birds," said Eagle.

"Well," said Warbler, "I think I'm as able to be a good king as any of you others who have declared yourselves. I want the opportunity to try!"

The birds laughed. "He certainly has courage," one said.

"Let's have a contest!" declared Eagle, and every bird agreed. "We will meet right after the next full moon. We'll wait until the sun is going down, and when it touches the very top of the mountain, the contest will begin. We'll all fly as high as we can go, maybe even high enough to touch the place where the sky begins. Whoever flies highest will be our new king."

When the contest day arrived, all the birds met once more. Warbler was among the birds who gathered. He had figured out a special plan to prove that he had as much right to be king as any other bird. Just before the beginning of the contest, Warbler crept under Eagle's wing. He pushed his way so deep into Eagle's feathers that as Eagle flew upward, determined to win the contest, he did not feel Warbler buried deep in his feathers.

The birds flew higher and higher. The ones with small wings were soon out of the competition, unable to soar with the larger birds. In time, there were only three birds remaining: Eagle, Owl, and Buzzard. They were exhausted, but they pushed on, flying ever higher. When Owl could no longer continue, he dove back toward earth, resigned. Up and up, higher and higher flew Eagle and Buzzard, until at long last even Buzzard gave up, too exhausted to continue. When Eagle saw that Buzzard was not able to continue, he flew just a little higher and proudly declared himself the contest winner — and the new King of the Birds!

"Not so fast," chirped Warbler, who emerged from Eagle's feathers. "You have not won yet!" And Warbler rose above Eagle, who could not muster the strength to continue flying.

The birds did not declare Warbler their king. They were angered by his trickery and ready to pounce upon him when he came back down. Warbler was frightened by their anger and flew into a deserted snake hole, where

he hid from all the others. Owl was appointed to watch the entrance to the hole night and day, lest the little bird escape without facing the consequences of his trickery.

After a while, Owl grew tired. He decided to close one eye and watch with the other. It wasn't long after that when his second eye closed as well and Owl fell asleep. Warbler, who had been waiting for this moment, flew out of the hole and deep into the forest, where even today he flits from place to place, never staying long enough to be caught, calling "I am king! I am king!"

And to this day the birds are still undecided about who should be king.

## **HANDOUT 1: DEFINITIONS OF POWER AND AUTHORITY**

**POWER** is the ability to achieve purpose. — from a 1967 sermon by the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

**AUTHORITY** is conferred power to perform a service. This definition will be useful to the practitioner of leadership as a reminder of two facts. First, authority is given and can be taken away. Second, authority is conferred as part of an exchange. Failure to meet the terms of the exchange means losing one's authority: It can be taken back or given to another who promises to fulfill the bargain.

**AUTHORITY** can be conferred in two forms: formal and informal. With **FORMAL** authority come the various powers of the office, role or position. With **INFORMAL** authority comes the power to influence attitude and behavior beyond compliance.

**FORMAL** authority is granted because the officeholder promises to meet a set of explicit expectations (job description, legislated mandates).

**INFORMAL** authority comes from promising to meet expectations that are often left implicit (expectations of trustworthiness, ability, civility). — adapted from *Leadership Without Easy Answers* by Ronald A. Heifetz (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 57 and 101.

## **HANDOUT 2: FIRST UU ANYTOWN SCENARIO**

Membership at First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Anytown, USA has reached a plateau, even though the demographic studies of their community suggest they could be larger. The congregation has tried a variety of growth strategies over several decades, but none have resulted in significant membership growth. During the past decade, the average age of its members has increased from 47 to 60 years old. A few years ago, the congregation undertook a capital campaign and building project that caused severe conflict within the congregation. This conflict has continued with open arguments and confrontation. When district consultants were called in to conduct a congregational assessment, they found that communication practices within the congregation were unhealthy, the facility equipment and furnishings were sparse and unwelcoming to visitors and there was no apparent path to congregational membership. The congregation has an experienced minister who has been with them for five years, a part-time director of religious education, a part-time music director, a full-time administrator and a part-time facilities staff person. Their Board's expressed goal is to better serve their membership and the community.

## **HANDOUT 3: MY CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP PROFILE**

*Use these questions to reflect on your personal profile as a congregational leader. You will be invited to share responses to the final question with the group.*

If authority is power conferred in exchange for meeting certain expectations, what are you formally authorized to do? What are the expectations of a person in your leadership role? What is the source of that formal authority?

What is your informal authority, that is, what are you trusted and expected to do? What is the source of that informal authority?

What power do you bring to your leadership position?  
What ability to achieve purpose do you bring?

List a half dozen tasks or activities you have accomplished recently as a leader. Which would you categorize as management tasks? Which as leadership?

What are your burning questions about being a leader?  
What would you like to learn or understand more fully?

## LEADER RESOURCE 1: WHAT LEADERSHIP IS AND IS NOT

Review Gil Rendle's presentation on [Leading Change](#), from UU University 2007.

In his presentation, "What Leadership Is... and Isn't," Alban Institute consultant Gil Rendle describes *management* as "something that makes the organization operate smoothly." He says that management tries to answer the question, "Are we doing things right?" If this is your primary question, then what you are doing is trying to "satisfy" a congregation. Rendle notes that a completely satisfied congregation is difficult to lead because they don't want to try anything new or do anything differently.

By contrast, Rendle says *leadership* asks the question, "Are we doing right things?" Rendle explains that asking this leadership question creates a necessary unsettledness in congregations because it makes congregants look more deeply into what they are doing. Both leadership and management are necessary, but leaders need to focus on leading, and not seeking simple harmony or satisfaction.

Rendle further explains that true harmony does not mean everyone is doing the same thing, but suggests a multiplicity of ideas blending together. As in singing, "everyone singing the same note is not harmony, but monotony." He draws on the work of leadership author Ron Heifetz, who talks about the difference between "reactive" space and "balcony" space. Managers necessarily work in reactive space, but leaders must move to the balcony to see the whole picture. By moving out of reactive space into balcony space, we move away from action to learning, but we also have to be willing to move away from neatness. This is difficult because we must lead into the unknown.

# WORKSHOP 4: TURNING POINTS AND MOMENTS OF GRACE

## INTRODUCTION

*For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. — Christian scripture, 1 Corinthians 13:12*

This workshop introduces the idea of turning points, or moments of grace—times when events or circumstances lead one's life in a new direction. After identifying personal turning points, participants consider conditions that can lead a congregation to a turning point.

This is the last of four workshops in the Identity unit. It focuses on vision, or big picture thinking, offering an opportunity to experience what Ronald Heifetz calls "getting on the balcony" to look at their lives and the life of the congregation.

## GOALS

This workshop will:

- Introduce the idea of turning points, or moments of grace
- Explore ways congregations can experience turning points, or adaptive challenges
- Expand and deepen understanding of the difference between management and leadership.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Explore their own turning points and moments of grace
- Explore the difference between management and leadership
- Gain experience in identifying leadership and management issues by enacting or observing role plays
- View leadership as a response to adaptive challenges
- Name adaptive challenges and potential turning points in their own congregation.

## WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

| Activity   | Minutes |
|--|---------|
| Welcoming and Entering   |         |
| Opening  | 2       |
| Activity 1: Turning Points   | 15      |
| Activity 2: Moments of Grace                                       | 40      |
| Break  | 10      |
| Activity 3: Leadership and Management                              | 40      |
| Activity 4: Adaptive Challenges                                    | 10      |
| Faith in Action: Responding to Adaptive Challenges                 |         |
| Closing  | 3       |
| Alternate Activity 1: Leadership and Management Alternate Scenario | 35      |

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Reflect on the turning points and moments of grace in your own life, either by completing the timeline described in Activity 2 or by journaling. Share some of what you discover about yourself with your co-facilitator or with a trusted friend.

Examine each of the "player" instructions in the role play for Activity 3 (or Alternate Activity 2) and imagine yourself, in turn, as each of those people. Find in each of them the desire to do what is best for the congregation, remembering that each leader has an important contribution to make to the conversation.

To strengthen your leadership skills, explore the leadership development resources recommended at the end of the workshop, as well as Workshop 1, Leader Resource 1, Accessibility Guidelines for Workshop Presenters.

## WELCOMING AND ENTERING

### Materials for Activity

- Name tags and materials for making name tags
- Music and player

### Preparation for Activity

- Play music to create a welcoming atmosphere.

### Description of Activity

Invite any participant who did not create a name tag in an earlier workshop to create one now.

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook
- Small worship table
- Chalice, candle and lighter or LED battery-operated candle

### Preparation for Activity

- Set the chalice on the worship table.

### Description of Activity

Gather the group in a circle. Ask a participant to light the chalice as you or another participant read the opening words.

Share "The Task of the Religious Community," Reading 580 in *Singing the Living Tradition*.

## ACTIVITY 1: TURNING POINTS (15 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Story, [A Path Diverted](#) (included in this document)
- Optional: Story, [Crossing a Bridge](#) (included in this document)

### Preparation for Activity

- Read both stories and choose one for this activity. Arrange for one of the participants to read the story aloud.

### Description of Activity

Gather the group to hear a participant read the story aloud. After the reading, +invite participants to recall a time in their lives when an action, event, or chance meeting sent their lives in a new, unexpected direction. Allow a minute for silent reflection. Then invite participants to share their stories with one other person, explaining what happened and how their self-perception

changed. Each person will have about three minutes to share. Encourage participants to practice deep listening, allowing the other person to tell their story without interruption.

Signal the group when three minutes have passed. When pairs have shared, regather the group. Invite people to think of a word or phrase that captures the essence of their experience. Wait a minute for people to think of their word or phrase. Then ask each person in turn to share it with the group.

## ACTIVITY 2: MOMENTS OF GRACE (40 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint for all participants
- Markers (several for each participant)
- Leader Resource 1, [Moments of Graced Guided Meditation](#) (included in this document)

### Preparation for Activity

- Review Leader Resource 1 so you will be comfortable leading the guided meditation. You may wish to include a second reader to tell the parable within the meditation.
- Arrange your space so all participants have a comfortable seat for guided meditation, as well as enough room to work on their own piece of newsprint.

### Description of Activity

Participants build awareness and understanding of events in their lives that were turning points — moments of grace — and reflect on how their past shapes their present and their vision for the future.

Distribute newsprint and markers. Ask participants to draw a line across the length of the paper. This line represents their life. Have them mark the line evenly for every five years of their life. If it is helpful to them, they can also write the actual year at each mark.

Next, invite participants to get comfortable and prepare for a guided meditation in which they will think about some events in their lives. Read the guided meditation in Leader Resource 2.

After the meditation, invite participants to mark their timelines with "moments of grace" in their lives. They can use different colors for different types of events if they like. With each event or moment, have them think about (or write down) what change resulted. Tell them they will have 15 minutes to complete this portion of the exercise. You may want to play some music during this

period. Check in with each participant to ensure that they understand the activity.

After 15 minutes, invite participants to form groups of three to share their timelines. Ask them to describe particular events or moments and the effect each had on their lives. Allow each participant five minutes to share with their group, reminding them to switch speakers at five-minute intervals.

Then regather the whole group for discussion about the exercise. You might ask:

- What moments of grace did you identify that you hadn't considered before today?
- Did anything cause difficulty for you in this exercise?
- How can we use the idea of moments of grace to help us better understand ourselves?

To conclude, tell the group that the next activity will guide them to look at how congregations experience turning points and what that has to do with leadership.

### Including All Participants

This activity may evoke difficult memories. Be sensitive to participants' emotional states. Make it clear they may "pass" in both small and large group discussion.

## ACTIVITY 3: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT (40 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Workshop 3, Leader Resource 1, [What Leadership Is and Is Not](#) (included in this document)
- Leader Resource 2, [Accessibilities Audit Scenario](#) (included in this document)
- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Prepare Leader Resource 2 according to directions.
- Review material in Leader Resource 1 from Workshop 3.
- Arrange seating in a "fishbowl," a tight circle of six chairs (or six chairs around a small table), with seating around the outside of the circle for remaining participants.
- Write three questions on newsprint, and post:
  - When is the group asking management questions?

- When are they asking leadership questions?
- How might this scenario become a turning point or moment of grace for the congregation?

### Description of Activity

Briefly review Leader Resource 1 of Workshop 3. Make sure participants are clear about the difference between management issues, which require a technical solution, and leadership issues, which require one to see a bigger picture of what is going on in the congregation. Remind them that a management question is, "Are we doing things right?" and a leadership question is, "Are we doing right things?" Convey the idea that congregations, like individuals, are sometimes faced with the unexpected when events or issues seem to call for moving in a new direction. Often issues that face a congregation present both management and leadership challenges. When leaders have the courage to ask not only "Are we doing things right?" but also "Are we doing right things?" the results can mean a turning point or moment of grace for the congregation and its work in the world.

Tell participants they will do a fishbowl role play. Some volunteers will role play members of a congregation's governing board, faced with a significant issue. You will give each of them a slip of paper with some details they will bring to a discussion of the issue. Those not in the role play are to pay attention to the governing board's discussion: When is the group asking management questions? When are they asking leadership questions? How might this scenario become a turning point or moment of grace for the congregation?

Ask for six volunteers to be the congregation's governing board. Give them individual information as instructed in Leader Resource 2.

Introduce the scenario:

Your congregation is planning to do some major work to repair the foundation of the building and to upgrade space. You have had a successful capital campaign and have raised nearly enough money — but not quite enough. Now you have heard from local government officials that you will not be granted a building permit until you have addressed some major accessibility issues in your building.

Allow discussion for ten minutes or until it seems to reach a natural stopping point. Then, invite those on the outside of the fishbowl to respond to the questions you have posted on newsprint. Record their responses on another sheet of newsprint. After those on the outside of the fishbowl have spoken, ask the role players to reflect

on their experience. Add their observations to the newsprint list of responses.

## ACTIVITY 4: ADAPTIVE CHALLENGES (10 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Prepare newsprint by writing this definition: An "adaptive challenge" is one which requires developing the organizational, cultural, and spiritual capacity to meet problems successfully according to our values and purposes. It often requires clarification and integration of competing values.

### Description of Activity

Introduce the concept of "adaptive challenge" to the group. Post the prepared newsprint and read the definition to the group. Tell them this definition comes from the work of Ron Heifetz, director of the Leadership Education Project at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. Read the definition a second time, underlining the words "developing," "capacity," "meet problems," and "values."

Invite participants to suggest some adaptive challenges faced by our society. What are events or issues that could lead to a turning point in how we proceed as a society?

After they have considered some of society's adaptive challenges, invite them to name some of the adaptive challenges facing their congregation. What are some challenges that require our congregation to develop some new organizational, cultural or spiritual capacities? What events or issues could lead to a turning point or moment of grace in how we proceed as a congregation?

## CLOSING (3 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A penny for each participant

### Description of Activity

This activity, developed for children, works well for adults too. You might consider using this as an alternative closing to any Harvest the Power workshop. Say:

How many of you have thrown a coin into a fountain and made a wish? When we do this, we sometimes have a superstitious idea that if we keep our wish a secret, it will magically come true. When I throw coins into a fountain, I

usually don't remember what I wished for, and so I don't know if those wishes ever come true. Today, I want to give you an idea for a new way to make wishes. I'm going to give you each a penny. Hold your penny in your hand and wish something not for yourself, but for this congregation.

Now I invite each of you to give that penny to someone else.

(Pause.)

You just gave another person your hopes and dreams, and you just received someone else's hopes and dreams for the congregation. They have given you an invitation to help them with their wish, and you have invited them to help you. Pass your pennies around again.

(Pause.)

And again. And again. So many wishes and hopes and dreams passing through so many hands. May you all be ready to help each other fulfill those wishes. I hope you will tell others what your wish is so that they can help you to fulfill it.

Keep your pennies and when you look at them, think of the hopes and dreams that we all have for this congregation and help each other make wishes come true.

## FAITH IN ACTION: RESPONDING TO ADAPTIVE CHALLENGES

### Description of Activity

What are some ways in which your congregation, or you personally, are involved with efforts to help individuals and communities develop new capacities in response to adaptive challenges? Explore the website of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee for ways that organization partners with communities to develop new capacities to meet adaptive challenges.

Make a time commitment and/or a financial commitment to capacity building work, working wherever possible through congregational social justice projects.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

- Looking at each activity in this workshop, what worked as well as or better than you had anticipated? What did not work as well as you anticipated?
- What issues came up for you, personally, in trying any activity yourself? What came up in the process of facilitating?

- What would you change if you were to lead this workshop again? How would you do it differently?
- What did you learn about yourself as an individual while facilitating this workshop? What did you learn about yourself as a leader?
- Looking ahead to the next workshop in this program, determine what materials you need to request or gather. What other preparations do you need to make?

## TAKING IT HOME

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. — Christian scripture, I Corinthians 13:12

Take your timeline home to share with family members or friends. Invite others to identify their own turning points or moments of grace. Find a way to celebrate how those moments have helped make you the person you are.

Consider with others how leaders might work to ensure the congregation asks "Are we doing right things?" along with "Are we doing things right?" Entrust a volunteer or two from your group to write a newsletter piece explaining turning points and moments of grace. Create a forum for others to respond with their own turning point stories.

### Find Out More

You may wish to add resources that informed this workshop to your congregation's leadership library:

Beldon, Kenneth, editor, [\*Wrestling with Adulthood: Unitarian Universalist Men Talk About Growing Up\*](#) (Boston, Skinner House Books, 2008)

Heifetz, Ronald A., *Leadership Without Easy Answers* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994)

Hochswender, Woody, Greg Martin and Ted Morino, [\*The Buddha in Your Mirror: Practical Buddhism and the Search for Self\*](#) (Middleway Press, 2001)

Learn about the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's [partnership model](#) for social justice work.

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ALTERNATE SCENARIO (35 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Workshop 3, Leader Resource 1, [What Leadership Is and Isn't](#) (included in this document)
- Leader Resource 3, [Safe Congregation Scenario](#) (included in this document)
- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Prepare Leader Resource 3 according to directions.
- Review material in Leader Resource 1 from Workshop 3.
- Arrange seating in a "fishbowl": a tight circle of six chairs (or six chairs around a small table), with seating around the outside of the circle for remaining participants.
- Write three questions on a sheet of newsprint, and post:
  - When is the group asking management questions?
  - When are they asking leadership questions?
  - How might this scenario become a turning point or moment of grace for the congregation?

### Description of Activity

Conduct this activity exactly like Activity 3, Management and Leadership, substituting the scenario below for the one in Activity 3. Your congregation's insurance company has informed you that you will no longer be able to purchase liability coverage unless you have a policy in place that addresses prevention of sexual abuse and misconduct, including the use of criminal background checks for volunteers and staff.

## STORY: A PATH DIVERTED

Excerpted from "A Path Diverted" by Gregory S. Pelley. Originally published in *Wrestling with Adulthood: Unitarian Universalist Men Talk About Growing Up*, edited by Ken Beldon and published by Skinner House Books, 2008. Used with permission.

One morning last fall, I picked up [my daughter] Grace from preschool. She was now two and a half years old. When we arrived home, I was rushing to get into the house to do whatever it was I thought I had to get done at that moment. When I got to the back door, I turned to see her squatting on the sidewalk, blankie in one hand, poking a stick at something on the ground. Frustrated, I barked at her to get inside *now*. She stood and let the stick drop, still staring at whatever she had been prodding. I impatiently held the door and growled, "Come *on*, Grace! We *need* to get inside!" She took a half-step toward me and cocked her head to one side, her eyes never leaving that spot on the ground.

Suddenly it hit me. *This* is the clash between being an adult and being a child. At that moment, for Grace, nothing could be more important than what had caught her attention. It was time to wonder, to explore. I sighed, sad that I had given up the ability to be deeply interested in something crawling across the sidewalk on a warm afternoon. I let the door shut, walked the few steps to Grace's side, and quietly asked, "What do you see?" She picked up the stick and pointed. It took a moment for me to quiet down enough for my eyes to see.

An ant was dragging a crumb of bread that looked to be four times its size. The ant pulled and pushed and climbed on top of the crumb, then underneath it. The scene was excruciating, and fascinating. I sat down, and Grace slipped into my lap. She never said a word, keeping the stick in one hand and her blanket clutched in the other, thumb in her mouth. It took several minutes for the ant to move that crumb the last six inches to the edge of the sidewalk, before slipping down into the leaves and out of sight. Grace stood, dropped the stick, and walked up the stairs to the door. I didn't know what to do, what to say. At the top of the stairs, she turned to me and said, "Come *on*, Daddy."

## STORY: CROSSING A BRIDGE

Excerpted from "Crossing a Bridge," by the Reverend Tim Kutzmark, Unitarian Universalist Church, Reading, Massachusetts, from [Quest, a publication of the Church of the Larger Fellowship, January 2008](#). Used with permission.

The railroad bridge seemed to stretch out for a mile over the ravine. It linked the sharp rocky edge of where we stood to some far away, unknown ending. If you breathed deep you could still smell tar, steamy and sticky, that had long ago bubbled up on the bridge's beams, heated by the late summer sun. The paint had faded over the last few years, but the warning was still there: "No trespassing." We laughed, and threw rocks at the other sign, the one proclaiming: "Do not cross."

No one but us kids ever came out there during the day. At night, the teenagers would come. We would find their beer cans, cigarette butts, even, once, a pair of Fruit of the Loom underwear, waist size 28 inches. But by day, that edge of that bridge was ours. It was a great place to hide — from grown ups, and from the world that wanted us to be everything we were not. It was a great place to dream of everything we might become.

Shoes hung around our necks, with t-shirts tucked into the waist of our low slung shorts, we would walk a little way out onto that bridge, just out over the deep creek that ran below. The bigger, braver boys would walk forward along one metal rail, balancing and reveling in the heat that seared dirty toes, pain proving they were more than just boys pretending to be men. The smaller of us would cling to the sides of the bridge, holding on as we edged out over the water, cautiously reaching legs from railroad tie to railroad tie.

We always stopped a quarter of the way out. Screaming, and yelling, "Train!" we would turn and rush back to the dirt and rocks, laughing and rolling together till it was time to return to home. Home, that sometimes harder place, where dreams could drain away.

No one had yet crossed that railroad bridge, no one that we knew. None of us yet needed to know what waited at the far end. We'd heard stories. Ten years earlier the Nulandy twins got caught mid-bridge by the train. Jimmy jumped at the last minute, landing hard on the rocks. Kieran took the train full force on his back as he tried to outrun it. One bridge, two boys, two deaths. We always stopped a quarter of the way out and turned back.

But that day was different. Something had changed. That afternoon, we decided to cross over. We would claim the other side.

We walked out to where we always stopped. This time, no one yelled, "Train!" and retreated. In the shadows cast by the sun, edges were blurring and yesterday seemed done. And then, almost as one, we stepped beyond. We let go of something, something that was once strangely us, but now was no more.

We were in between. We were off balance. We were unknown to our own selves. As if on cue, the breeze picked up, whipping through the wooden beams. It tousled Terry's hair. He smiled. Another gust, cooler, caused me to stop. Christian hollered and tossed his t-shirt high above our heads, and for a moment it rode the wind out beyond the bridge. I shut my eyes, threw open my arms, wide, and let that same wind rush across my skin. Then, with eyes open, we stepped forward.

And that's how it can happen, how a day that seems so ordinary can somehow become a day of new beginning. Those moments do not come easily. We have to consciously claim them, create them. We have to dare them into being. In the end, we have to choose to cross over.

## LEADER RESOURCE 1: MOMENTS OF GRACE GUIDED MEDITATION

The Parable of the Gem in the Robe comes from the Lotus Sutra.

*Read the meditation slowly and calmly. It would be very effective to have a different voice (perhaps a co-facilitator) read the parable.*

We are going to take a journey into our pasts. Please sit in a comfortable position.

*(Pause as participants adjust their sitting position.)*

Take three slow, deep breaths, counting to four with each inhale and again with each exhale.

*(Pause to breathe deeply with the participants.)*

You may close your eyes or focus on a particular object in the room. We're going to share a parable, or teaching tale, from the Buddhist tradition.

*(Pause. Shift your voice, or change readers.)*

A poor man visited a wealthy friend and the two enjoyed conversation, food, and drink far into the evening. After the poor man fell asleep, his friend was called away. Before he left, he sewed a priceless jewel into the lining of the poor man's coat. When the poor man awoke, he knew nothing of the gem.

Years passed, difficult years for the poor man, who traveled far and wide searching for food and clothing to keep himself alive, unaware that in the lining of his robe he carried a priceless jewel. After many years, he once again met his friend, who was astonished that he still lived in poverty. The friend showed him the jewel sewn in his robe, and the poor man was filled with gratitude and with joy, knowing that he would

never go hungry again. We are like that poor man.

Think of a time that you received a gift you didn't recognize in that moment. Maybe it was the first time you learned about Unitarian Universalism... Maybe it was a piece of advice... Maybe it was meeting a new friend... Maybe it was a decision to take one path instead of another that brought you to where you are today.

*(Pause.)*

Our entire lives are filled with these inconspicuous moments of grace — times when we are presented with choices or opportunities to recognize a gift in our lives. What are the moments of grace in your life? The events that changed the course of your life? These aren't just the usual milestones in life such as leaving home, finding a partner, having children, going to school, getting a job, retiring, and so on. These are also the subtle moments that resulted in our journey being what it has been. Moments, without which our lives might have been remarkably different, for better or for worse.

*(Pause for about 30 seconds.)*

What are your moments of grace? What are the jewels in your pocket that you didn't initially know were there? What gifts have you received along the way that have brought you to this time and place in your life? Take a moment to silently think about your moments of grace.

*(Pause 60 seconds.)*

As you are ready, please bring your attention back to the room with another three slow, deep breaths, counting to four with each inhale and again with each exhale.

*(Lead the group in deep breathing.)*

## LEADER RESOURCE 2: ACCESSIBILITIES AUDIT SCENARIO

*Cut along the dotted lines to create six different "roles" for the fishbowl role play. Give each of the six volunteer players a different slip.*

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Player One: Chair of the Board. You are overwhelmed by this latest news, and very worried. There just doesn't seem to be any more money to be had from the congregation and the accessibility upgrades will be costly. You are afraid this will torpedo the whole project.

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Player Two: You are angry with local government for imposing this on the congregation and believe they have no right to do so. Your attitude is that they should support the building repairs and upgrades the congregation is undertaking, rather than undermining them.

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Player Three: You have arthritis in your hands and in your knees and sometimes find the front steps and the door handles difficult to negotiate. You are quiet about this difficulty and are not sure you are ready to share your experience with this group.

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Player Four: You believe in your heart that making the congregation more accessible to those with mobility impairments is the right thing to do, and are convinced that a way can be found to do it. You are often seen as the "impractical" one in the group.

-----  
Player Five: You wonder if there is any practical way to financially manage the accessibility upgrades. From your point of view, the upgrades you have planned will benefit many people and accessibility upgrades only a few.

-----  
Player Six: You have been the representative to the building task force and you are exhausted. You have done all that you can do to get this project ready to the point where construction and renovation can begin — and now this!! You are discouraged and feeling unappreciated.

## LEADER RESOURCE 3: SAFE CONGREGATION SCENARIO

*Cut along the dotted lines to create six different "roles" for the fishbowl role play. Give each of the six volunteer players a different slip.*

Player One: Chair of the Board. You believe that having liability coverage is crucial to the well-being of the congregation and that you have a fiduciary responsibility to see to it that there is a safe congregation policy.

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Player Two: You are concerned about finances, especially about any possible costs of criminal background checks. You are also concerned because a large donor has stated that they view background checks as an invasion of privacy.

-----

Player Three: You are concerned about the implementation of any safe congregation policy. Who will be responsible? How will they get training? Do our current staff members have enough hours to take this on?

-----

Player Four: You have been reading in the papers about child sexual abuse among volunteers and professionals who are entrusted with the well-being of children. From your point of view, a safe congregation policy cannot come soon enough.

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Player Five: You keep thinking about the first UU Principle, the inherent worth and dignity of every person. How does this Principle apply when it comes to protecting children? What about our volunteers? Do background checks violate their worth and dignity?

-----

Player Six: You have been with this congregation for a long time and you trust everyone here. Requiring background checks and other policies seems to be unnecessary. You wonder if there really is any need for liability insurance — and resent the insurance company for pushing the congregation around.

# WORKSHOP 5: FATED TO BE FREE

## INTRODUCTION

*The prophetic liberal church is the church where persons think and work together to interpret the signs of the times in the light of their faith. — James Luther Adams, 20th-century Unitarian theologian*

We are the inheritors of a free faith—a faith in which we freely choose our beliefs, our values and in whom or what we trust. We decide how we will act on our faith in our lives and work. This workshop explores a congregational leader's opportunities and responsibilities to choose, in faith, their actions and their responses to situations.

The first in Harvest the Power's second unit, Purpose, this workshop guides the congregational leader to ask, "What ends do we serve?" Activities invite participants to consider the explicit values, judgments and personal preferences that underlie even the simplest decisions. The workshop builds participants' capacity to choose well as they navigate the challenges of leadership.

To strengthen your leadership skills and confidence, explore the leadership development resources recommended at the end of the workshop, as well as Workshop 1, Leader Resource 1, Accessibility Guidelines for Workshop Presenters.

## GOALS

This workshop will:

- Highlight the Unitarian Universalist theological understanding that we each have the freedom and the responsibility to make choices about what we trust, what we believe and how we will act
- Deepen understanding of the connection between a leader's faith and the choices they make in leading a congregation
- Invite leaders to be intentional in bringing their faith to their leadership
- Provide meditative and creative time for participants to internalize and deepen their embrace of the freedom and responsibility of choosing.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Identify what they trust and believe
- Recognize how complex some choices can be
- Through an incident from the life of James Luther Adams, examine a leader's role in encouraging turning points/moments of grace in congregational life
- Identify some of the many decisions congregational leaders make
- Use poetry, myth and art to contemplate the freedom and responsibility inherent in being a human being with the power to choose.

## WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

| Activity   | Minutes |
|--|---------|
| Welcoming and Entering                                   |         |
| Opening  | 2       |
| Activity 1: Forced Choices                               | 15      |
| Activity 2: Case Study — James Luther Adams              | 35      |
| Break  | 10      |
| Activity 3: Choices Leaders Make                         | 25      |
| Activity 4: Contemplating Choice through Poetry and Myth | 30      |
| Faith in Action  |         |
| Closing  | 3       |
| Alternate Activity 1: Choices and Values                 | 20      |
| Alternate Activity 2: The Road Not Taken                 | 25      |

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

As you prepare to lead this workshop, respond to the forced choices you will offer participants in Activity 1. Which pairs present real challenges for you? When do you want to say "It depends..."? What do you learn about yourself as you respond to the pairs? What do you trust most deeply?

Take time to reflect on both the Frost poem and the Genesis myth. How does each deepen your understanding of what it means to choose faith freely? Compare and contrast your reactions to the two pieces.

To strengthen your leadership skills and confidence, explore the leadership development resources recommended at the end of the workshop, as well as Workshop 1, Leader Resource 1, Accessibility Guidelines for Workshop Presenters.

## WELCOMING AND ENTERING

### Materials for Activity

- Name tags and material to make name tags
- Music and player

### Preparation for Activity

- Play music to create a welcoming atmosphere.

### Description of Activity

Invite any participant who did not create a name tag during a previous workshop to create one now.

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Small worship table
- Chalice, candle and lighter or LED battery-operated candle

### Preparation for Activity

- Set the chalice on the worship table.

### Description of Activity

Gather the group in a circle. Ask a participant to light the chalice as you or another participant read the opening words from James Luther Adams' essay, "A Faith for the Free."

The question concerning faith is not, Shall I be a person of faith? The proper question is, rather, Which faith is mine? Or better, Which faith should be mine? For, whether a person craves prestige, wealth, security, or amusement, whether a person lives for country, for science, for God, or for plunder, that person is demonstrating a faith, a showing that she or he puts confidence in something...

The fact that every man and woman, whether they will it or not, must put trust in something, is no basis for any particular faith. Rather, the necessity as well as the fact shows only that we humans must choose. We cannot escape making a choice, nor can we escape the responsibility for the choices we make, and more than we can escape their consequences...

We cannot escape from freedom and its responsibilities. ...Freedom is our fate as well as our birthright...

## ACTIVITY 1: FORCED CHOICES (15 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 1, [Forced Choices](#) (included in this document)

### Preparation for Activity

- Print out Leader Resource 1.
- For the forced choice activity, identify two sides or areas of the room, and clear a path so all participants can move easily from one side or area to the other.

### Description of Activity

Tell participants you will ask them to choose between two items. In which of the two do they have more trust or confidence? With each pair, they may move to one designated place in the room to choose the first and to the other designated place to choose the second. Tell them that for the purposes of this activity, they must choose between the two.

Read each pair from Leader Resource 1. Give participants a chance to move to the space indicating their choice. After each choice, invite one or two people from each side to explain their choice, making sure each person who wishes has a chance to speak at least once in the course of the activity.

After participants have responded to all the forced choice questions, gather the group in a circle. Lead a conversation with these questions:

- What choices were most difficult for you to make?
- What would have made choosing easier?
- Were there times when you thought, "That depends on the context"?
- Did you become aware of anything about your own faith, such as where or in what you put your trust and confidence?

### Including All Participants

If you cannot rearrange the space to facilitate movement from one place to another and/or any participants cannot easily move from one place to another, modify the activity by asking for a show of hands for each choice.

## ACTIVITY 2: CASE STUDY — JAMES LUTHER ADAMS (35 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape
- Story, [James Luther Adams](#) (included in this document)
- Handout 1, [Questions for Reflection](#) (included in this document)

## Preparation for Activity

- Copy the story and Handout 1 for all participants.
- Optional: Prepare newsprint with the questions from Handout 1. Post as a reference for individual and small group reflection, and use to capture comments when the large group reconvenes.

## Description of Activity

This activity presents a story about theologian James Luther Adams. Participants will identify the choices leaders made in the story which moved their congregation toward embracing racial integration. The group will explore how the individuals' choices reflected their faith.

Read the story aloud.

Then, distribute the story and the handout. Invite the group to take a few moments to re-read the story and reflect on the questions on the handout. Allow three minutes for individual reflection.

Now, ask participants to work in groups of four to examine the story together, using the questions as a guide. Tell them in 15 minutes you will ask them to report back, especially on their responses to last question.

After 15 minutes, re-gather the large group and invite small groups to report.

## ACTIVITY 3: CHOICES LEADERS MAKE (25 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Review Workshop 4, Activity 4, to be comfortable with the concept of "adaptive challenge."

### Description of Activity

Engage participants in brainstorming a list of the kinds of choices that congregational leaders make. Invite them to include all kinds of choices, from practical to philosophical to spiritual. Record their ideas on newsprint.

Present this definition of "adaptive challenge":

Adaptive challenge is one which requires developing the organizational, cultural and spiritual capacity to meet problems successfully according to our values and purposes. It often

requires clarification and integration of competing values.

Comment that in the Chicago case study, leaders had to meet an adaptive challenge.

Draw the group's attention to the brainstormed list of choices and invite them to decide which constitute "adaptive challenges" for the congregation — challenges that presented choices to leaders. Acknowledge that the group may not agree on which of the choices are adaptive challenges. Mark the items which the group agrees are adaptive challenges.

Then invite participants to work in groups of four to select one adaptive challenge to consider together. Tell them:

To face an adaptive challenge, leaders have choices to make, such as "Is this the right time for the leadership and the congregation to consider this challenge?" In your groups, name some choices leaders might make and the choices the congregation might make in meeting the challenge you have selected. Consider how you as leaders would draw on your faith in leading a congregation to meet this challenge.

After ten minutes, ask the small groups to report back to the whole group. Then, invite general comment and discussion.

## ACTIVITY 4: CONTEMPLATING CHOICE THROUGH POETRY AND MYTH (30 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Handout 2, [The Road Not Taken](#) (included in this document)
- Handout 3, [Eating of the Tree of Knowledge](#) (included in this document)
- Sheets of 12x18-inch poster board for all participants
- A variety of magazines, papers and other items for a collage; glue and glue sticks; markers, colored pencils and crayons; and scissors (including left-handed scissors)

### Preparation for Activity

- Decide whether to use Handout 2 or 3 for this activity. Or decide to let participants choose between the two. Make copies of the handout(s).
- Arrange the work area so participants have space to work and access to the collage materials.

## Description of Activity

Ask for volunteer(s) to read the handout(s) aloud. If you have decided to offer a choice, ask two readers to read the two handouts.

Invite participants into a time of silent reflection focusing on the freedom and responsibility inherent in "choice." Tell them that after two minutes, they will be invited to work silently to create a collage that represents their response to the handout and to their own freedom and responsibility to make choices.

Allow participants to work for about 20 minutes in silence. Then, invite participants to form pairs to share their creations with another person.

## Including All Participants

Be sure the art materials are within the reach of all participants. If any participant has a visual or mobility impairment that precludes their participation in a collage-making activity, use Alternate Activity 2.

## CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Copies of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook

### Description of Activity

Lead the group in singing Hymn 287, "Faith of the Larger Liberty." If participants are not familiar with it, read it aloud together.

## FAITH IN ACTION: NOTICING AND CELEBRATING CHOICES

### Description of Activity

Pay attention in the coming days to all of the opportunities you have to make choices. Note how you draw on your faith as you make choices in your everyday life. Ask yourself questions such as "Why did I choose, or not choose, to donate my time or money to a particular cause or person?" and "Why did I choose, or not choose, to engage in a particular activity?" Celebrate the ways in which your Unitarian Universalist faith informs your choices!

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

- Looking at each activity in this workshop, what worked as well as or better than you anticipated? What did not work as well as you anticipated?

- What issues came up for you personally in trying an activity yourself? What came up in the process of facilitating?
- What would you change if you were to lead this workshop again? How would you do it differently?
- What did you learn about yourself as an individual while facilitating this workshop? What did you learn about yourself as a leader?
- Looking ahead to the next workshop, what materials do you need to request or gather? What other preparations do you need to make?

## TAKING IT HOME

The prophetic liberal church is the church where persons think and work together to interpret the signs of the times in the light of their faith. — James Luther Adams, 20th-century Unitarian theologian

Share your collage with your family or friends. Explain why you included the items you did. Use the Robert Frost poem or Genesis verses as a dinner time reading or chalice lighting or to spark discussion with family or friends.

### Find Out More

You may wish to add resources that informed this workshop to your congregation's leadership library:

Beach, George Kimmich, [\*The Essential James Luther Adams\*](#) (Skinner House Books, 1998)

Fewell, Danna Nolan and David M. Gunn, *Gender, Power, and Promise: The Subject of the Bible's First Story* (Nashville: Abington Press, 1993)

Walton, Christopher L., "[James Luther Adams' Examined Faith](#)," *UU World*, January/February 2005.

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: CHOICES AND VALUES (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Paper and pens/pencils for all participants

### Description of Activity

Distribute paper and pens/pencils. Invite participants to list all the choices they have made in the past few days. Ask them to include all choices from the simple ("What shirt will I wear?") to the complex ("What approach will I take with a family member whose behavior is a problem for me?"). Allow about five minutes.

Next, invite participants to cross off any choices they have made which are neutral—in other words, no

particular decision or course of action is better than another.

Now, invite participants to cross off any items remaining on the list for which the choice was primarily based on efficacy—in other words, a particular decision or course of action fulfills a practical goal or purpose better than another.

Ask participants to reflect on the items which remain, using these questions:

- Which choices are between or among values you hold?
- Do any represent a choice between the most practical or effective decision and the one that most closely represents personal values?
- Are any choices about what or whom you most trust? How so?

Invite participants to share with a partner one of the decisions on their lists, explaining the way in which values and beliefs impacted the decision. After three minutes, remind pairs to switch speakers. After six minutes, invite pairs to rejoin the large group.

Lead a discussion about the exercise. Did participants discover anything surprising in creating and exploring their lists? Did they become aware of times when values, either implied or explicit, influenced their decision making?

## **ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: THE ROAD NOT TAKEN (25 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Recording of "The Road Not Taken" from the musical piece, *Frostiana: Testament of Freedom*, by Randall Thompson; and music player
- Handout 2, [The Road Not Taken](#) (included in this document)

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Prepare to play "The Road Not Taken."
- Copy Handout 2 for all participants.

### **Description of Activity**

Invite participants to listen to the recording of "The Road Not Taken." Ask them to notice how the music works with the words of the Frost poem. Invite participants to share in pairs their reactions to the poem and the music and their reflections on how they make choices in their own lives. Then listen to the recording again.

## STORY: JAMES LUTHER ADAMS

By Jessica York.

In 1948, most congregations and houses of worship in the United States were segregated by the color of their members' skin. Some were segregated by law; others by custom. The First Unitarian Society of Chicago was one of these congregations. Although their church was located in a neighborhood with many African Americans, only whites could join, according to the written by-laws of the church, and according to custom.

The day came when many members began to believe they needed to take action against racism if they really wanted to live their values and principles. The minister, the Reverend Leslie Pennington, was ready for this day and ready to take action. So was James Luther Adams. James Luther Adams was a famous liberal theologian and social ethicist. He taught at the Meadville Lombard Theological School, right across the street from the First Unitarian Society of Chicago. And he was a member of the congregation's board of directors. Along with some others, Reverend Pennington and James Luther Adams proposed a change in the church's by-laws to desegregate the church and welcome people whatever the color of their skin. They saw this as a way to put their love into action.

When the congregation's board of directors considered the desegregation proposal, most of them supported it. However, one member of the board objected. "Your new program is making desegregation into a creed," he said. "You are asking everyone in our church to say they believe desegregating, or inviting, even recruiting people of color to attend church here is a good way to tackle racism. What if some members don't believe this?"

Desegregation was a very controversial topic. In 1948, anything about skin color and racism was controversial. Some people, even some who supported African Americans in demanding their civil liberties, believed in a separate-but-equal policy which kept people apart based on their skin color.

Respectful debate ensued at the First Unitarian Society of Chicago. Both sides felt, in their hearts, that their belief was right. Perhaps they were so busy trying to be heard they forgot to listen. And so, they kept on talking.

The debate went on in the board of directors' meeting until the early hours of the morning. Everyone was exhausted and frustrated. Finally, James Luther Adams remembered that we should be listening twice as much as talking. He asked the person who had voiced the strongest objection, "What do you say is the purpose of this church?"

Suddenly, everyone was listening. Everyone wanted to hear the answer to this crucial question. Probably, the person who objected was listening especially hard to his own heart, as well as to the words he had heard from other board members through the long discussion.

The board member who opposed opening the church to people of color finally replied. "Okay, Jim. The purpose of this church is to get hold of people like me and change them."

The First Unitarian Society of Chicago successfully desegregated.

## HANDOUT 1: QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

*Use these questions to explore the choices made by the members of the First Unitarian Society of Chicago as they considered changing their congregation's policy and practice of racial exclusion.*

What conditions made it possible for Adams and Pennington to bring forward the issue of desegregation for congregational action?

What preparatory work must have been done?

Did the group have to take on this large question *right then* or could it have been postponed? On what basis might they have decided whether to postpone or go forward?

In what did Adams and Pennington initially place their faith?

In what did the dissenting board member initially place his faith?

As the debate unfolded, who made what choices?

Where were the turning points/moments of grace for the congregation?

In what did Adams place his faith when he asked the question about the purpose of the church?

In what ways were this decision process and its result reflective of our free faith?

What leadership wisdom does this story offer? Or, what does this story offer as a model for leadership?

## HANDOUT 2: THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

By Robert Frost.

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;  
Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear,  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,  
And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I marked the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way  
I doubted if I should ever come back.  
I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I,  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

## HANDOUT 3: EATING OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE

From Hebrew scripture, Genesis 3:1-6. Commentary from Danna Nolan Fewell and David M. Gunn's book, *Gender, Power, and Promise: the Subject of the Bible's First Story* (Nashville: Abington Press, 1993), p.30.

*Read this portion of the scriptural account of Eve's choice to eat fruit of the tree of knowledge. Reflect on the passage and on the commentary from Gender, Power, and Promise.*

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'? The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate.

From *Gender, Power, and Promise*:

The woman reaches for sustenance, beauty, and wisdom. And for doing so she is blamed both within the text and by countless generations of biblical interpreters in the text's afterlife. Particularly through the influence of Augustine, she has become known as the authoress of what Christian theology has come to know as "The Fall." Human sin is laid at her door. Why? Because she reaches for sustenance, beauty, and wisdom — and disobeys the divine command to eschew the knowledge of good and evil.

Yet, like God, the woman is an explorer. She seeks the good, fruit that is good for food. She delights in beauty (God took care to create trees that were beautiful) and the fruit is a delight to the eyes. Furthermore, she seeks to learn, to discern. The commentators cry for her blind obedience, her trust. But mature trust grows out of experience. How can the woman discriminate between God's words and the serpent's words until she has the experience of failure or the discrimination she seeks? Why should she believe that one peremptory command is in her

best interest and not another? She seeks, reasonably, to be in a position to make a choice.

## LEADER RESOURCE 1: FORCED CHOICES

*Explain that you will ask participants to choose, from each of the following pairs, the one in which they have more trust, faith or confidence.*

- Internet weather forecast OR your own weather observation
- Cold medicines OR home remedies to ease cold symptoms
- Political website in line with your views OR nonpartisan news source
- Personal preparedness for emergencies OR emergency help from family and friends
- Your best judgment OR an expert's opinion
- Going with the majority opinion OR waiting until all are in agreement
- Those with financial skill OR those with artistic skill
- Risk-takers OR those who are cautious
- New ways of doing things OR what is tried and true
- Human capacity for altruism OR human capacity for greed
- Natural order of life and death OR modern medical practice that postpones death
- Love of God OR human love

# WORKSHOP 6: CARING FOR OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER

## INTRODUCTION

*Laughter and tears are both responses to frustration and exhaustion. I myself prefer to laugh, since there is less cleaning up to do afterward. — Kurt Vonnegut, 20th-century American novelist*

This workshop is the second in Harvest the Power's Purpose unit. Participants address the question, "What ends do we serve?" from their perspectives as members of both a faith community and a leadership team. The workshop helps participants consider how they care for themselves as leaders and how they encourage and model self-care for other members of the congregation.

Participants reflect on the causes of personal stress and burnout and on their own responses to stress. They name ways they can take care of their own spirits and practice asking for what they need from a leadership group to help them participate with a full heart.

Some activities may evoke emotional responses. Be sure participants understand that this workshop focuses on stress and its impact, and that they are free to "pass" or excuse themselves from an activity at any time.

## GOALS

This workshop will:

- Help participants honestly examine their own spiritual well being
- Explore the role of leaders in creating a spiritually healthy congregational culture that encourages spiritual and emotional health in volunteers
- Help participants recognize what energizes and what depletes them personally and help build their empathy for others', possibly different, experiences.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Name responsibilities and accountabilities they hold as people and as leaders
- Reflect on their sense of spiritual well being.
- Recognize differences among people regarding what energizes them and what depletes them

- Practice asking the group for specific support that will make it easier for them to stay spiritually and emotionally healthy while leading
- Consider their role in preventing their own burnout and in modeling healthy behavior for the congregation
- Learn strategies to build/maintain a congregational culture that encourages spiritual and emotional health in volunteers.

## WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

| Activity   | Minutes |
|--|---------|
| Welcoming and Entering                                   |         |
| Opening  | 2       |
| Activity 1: Heads Up!                                    | 10      |
| Activity 2: Bodies of Water Guided Meditation            | 15      |
| Activity 3: Working and Coping Styles                    | 15      |
| Activity 4: What I Need                                  | 20      |
| Break  | 10      |
| Activity 5: Confessions of a Prodigal Volunteer          | 20      |
| Activity 6: Keeping Priorities Straight in Congregations | 25      |
| Faith in Action: Keeping Priorities Straight             |         |
| Closing  | 3       |
| Alternate Activity 1: Juggling Act                       | 10      |
| Alternate Activity 2: Burnout — A Misnomer               | 20      |

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

If you have a personal spiritual practice, engage in it before facilitating this workshop. Consider your own spiritual practice, level of self-care, and potential for fatigue and burnout by answering the following questions honestly. Writing your answers will help you to refer to them after the workshop to notice differences in your feelings before and after:

- In what ways am I currently taking good care of myself?
- In what ways could I take better care of myself?
- Am I excited about leading this workshop? (If not, why?)

- Do I currently feel joy or satisfaction in my service to the congregation?
- Does my work at the congregation feel like a chore or obligation?
- What is currently causing me stress?
- What is currently giving me joy?

To strengthen your leadership skills and confidence, explore the leadership development resources recommended at the end of the workshop, as well as Workshop 1, Leader Resource 1, Accessibility Guidelines for Workshop Presenters.

## WELCOMING AND ENTERING

### Materials for Activity

- Name tags and materials to make name tags
- Music and player

### Preparation for Activity

- Play music to create a welcoming atmosphere.

### Description of Activity

Invite any participant who does not have a name tag to create one now.

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Copies of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook
- Small worship table
- Chalice, candle and lighter or LED battery-operated candle

### Preparation for Activity

- Set the chalice on the worship table.

### Description of Activity

Gather the group in a circle. Ask a participant to light the chalice as you or another participant read the opening words.

If your group likes to sing either *a capella* or with accompaniment, sing "Here We Have Gathered," Hymn 360 in *Singing the Living Tradition*.

Or, share "We Need One Another," Reading 468 in *Singing the Living Tradition*. This is a responsive reading, so you may want to divide participants into two groups, one group to read the plain text and the other group to read the italicized.

Tell participants some activities in this workshop may induce a mild level of stress. Let them know that they can always "pass" or excuse themselves if they are uncomfortable. Reassure them that the purpose of the workshop is to build participants' awareness of how they react to and reduce stress and to explore how they, as leaders, can set a congregational tone that invites others to care for themselves in body and spirit.

## ACTIVITY 1: HEADS UP! (10 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Four or five foam balls, small stuffed animals or other soft objects for throwing

### Description of Activity

Invite participants to toss a foam ball or other soft object to one another while naming tasks and people that demand their time and attention on a daily or weekly basis. Explain: The person catching the ball will name one task or person from congregational life, home life or work life to which or whom they must attend. After naming the task or person, they should then immediately toss the ball to another person, who will also name something or someone that calls on their time and attention.

Encourage participants to go as quickly as possible, but be aware that some people find it easier to think under pressure than others do. Once a rhythm is established, add a second tossed object, then a third and a fourth in turn. Adding additional tossed objects will require participants to watch in several directions for the next ball and think quickly of tasks or people to name. Continue the game for about five minutes or until everyone has had a chance to speak a number of times. Participants may feel mild stress due to the speed of the game, the number of objects and the increased difficulty of thinking of things to name. They may also respond with laughter and silliness. In any event, the point will be made that everyone carries multiple responsibilities and is required to pay attention to things coming from many different directions.

Ask participants how they felt as they played the game. Did the game feel stressful, or silly? Did they respond more to the requirements of the game itself, or more to the naming of the demands upon their time and energy?

Tell participants that, as leaders, they need to develop ways to care for themselves in both body and spirit, because (1) their well-being is essential to their continuing the work and (2) their approach to self-care sets a tone for others in the congregation. Part of self-care includes telling the truth to oneself and others about the responsibilities we hold and carry.

### Including All Participants

If any participants cannot throw an object around the room, have participants call out the name of the next person who must answer. For example, "I take care of bill paying for my parents. Bill, you're next." Encourage everyone to be random in calling on the next person, so other participants cannot anticipate their next turn.

## ACTIVITY 2: BODIES OF WATER GUIDED MEDITATION (15 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 1, [Bodies of Water Guided Meditation](#) (included in this document)

## Description of Activity

Invite participants to settle into a comfortable space for meditation. Tell them you will read a guided meditation to encourage awareness of the state of their spiritual and emotional selves, both currently and at other times in their lives. Say the goal is to help them connect more intentionally with what is life-giving and enables them to cope with myriad responsibilities and tasks.

Read aloud the guided meditation in Leader Resource 1.

After the meditation, invite participants to consider the ways in which the various bodies of water reflect their own experiences as human beings and as leaders. After about a minute, invite participants to turn to a partner and share their reflections for ten minutes. Offer these questions:

- What discoveries did you make about yourself and your own journey?
- Did you identify some circumstances which are life-giving and energizing for you? Some things that deplete you?

## ACTIVITY 3: WORKING AND COPING STYLES (15 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Paper and pens/ pencils for all participants

### Description of Activity

Distribute paper and pens/pencils. Read aloud this scenario:

You have just been asked to be part of a seven-person committee established to work on an issue of great importance to the congregation, and you have agreed to serve. The charge to the committee is unclear to you, and the Board has not chosen a leader, instead telling you to choose a chair from among the group. The night of the first meeting, all seven of you assemble in a room at the appointed time. What would you do under these circumstances?

Tell participants they have three minutes to reflect on the first two or three things they would do for this hypothetical committee meeting.

Then, invite participants to move into groups of three and share their ideas. After participants have spent ten minutes sharing in triads, invite general comments from the group about the experience. You may prompt with these questions:

- In what ways did you and your conversation partners respond similarly to this situation? Differently?

- To what do you attribute the different approaches?
- Where is self-care in this scenario? Where should or could it appear?

## ACTIVITY 4: WHAT I NEED (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Paper and pens/pencils

### Preparation for Activity

- Post blank newsprint.

### Description of Activity

Participants focus on the role of congregational leader and name the parts of that role that they find stressful, energizing or both. If they belong to a leadership group working together, this activity provides an opportunity for participants to ask for specific supports to reduce some of the stress they experience in their leadership roles.

Draw a vertical line to divide the newsprint in half. At the top of one column, write "energizes/feeds me." At the top of the other, write "stresses/depletes me." Invite each participant to name one way in which the leadership work energizes or feeds them and one way in which it stresses or depletes them. Acknowledge that since we respond differently to situations, an item might appear in one column for one person and in the other for another. After each person who wishes to has named two items, ask for any items that belong somewhere between the two. Then ask if there are important items which have not yet been mentioned. Allow eight minutes for this part of the activity

If the participants do, in fact, work together as leaders (e.g., as members of a governing board), allow time for them to consider ways to increase the "energizing/feeding" experiences and decrease the "stressing/depleting" experiences. Guide them to identify specific ways the group might accommodate individual members' stated needs. If the participants do not currently work together in a congregational setting, distribute paper and pens or pencils and invite them to write down a few things that make it more rewarding and less stressful for them to hold a leadership role. Invite participants to share their list with a partner. Suggest they practice framing their list as requests for the specific supports they need to thrive physically, emotionally and spiritually in their leadership role. Leave a few minutes for pairs or the entire group to discuss ways a leadership team might be able to meet their needs for support.

## ACTIVITY 5: CONFESSIONS OF A PRODIGAL VOLUNTEER (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Story, [Confessions of a Prodigal Volunteer](#) (included in this document)

### Preparation for Activity

- Pre-arrange with a participant to read the story. Provide a copy in advance.

### Description of Activity

Invite participants to listen to a volunteer read the story. Then, engage the group in conversation. Ask participants what aspects of the author's story resonate for them. What does the story suggest leaders can do to support a culture that reduces burnout?

## ACTIVITY 6: KEEPING PRIORITIES STRAIGHT IN CONGREGATIONS (25 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Handout 1, [Health Versus the Push to Accomplish Things](#) (included in this document)
- 9x12-inch construction paper and markers and/or color pencils for all participants
- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Prepare Handout 1 for all participants.
- Pre-arrange with a volunteer to read the handout aloud.
- Arrange the space so participants have room to draw and share materials.
- Post blank newsprint.

### Description of Activity

Introduce this activity:

As congregational leaders, we must be aware that we are role models. Our actions can add to or decrease the stress of others. How we handle situations that arise sets the tone for how others respond. It is important to realize that each individual responds to situations differently. Situations that seem overwhelming and highly stressful to one person may provide exactly the challenge another person seeks. By providing direction and a supportive atmosphere, a leader can significantly contribute to a more effective,

thoughtful and positive experience for all involved.

Distribute Handout 1. Invite a participant to read it aloud. Then invite two or three minutes of comment. Ask:

- What would the congregation need to do to keep its priorities straight?
- What would that look like in this congregation?

Invite participants to move to a space where they will be able to think and draw. Ask them to create a drawing of a congregation that has its priorities straight. The drawing can be abstract or representational, and stick figures and symbols are welcome. Make markers or color pencils and construction paper available. Allow ten minutes for drawing.

Re-gather the group and invite each person to share their drawing.

You may want to record ideas on newsprint and save it for a time when the leadership group has a retreat or a goals setting meeting.

## CLOSING (3 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook

### Description of Activity

Gather participants together and invite them to share two minutes of silence to honor the important work the group has done together. Share "Wild Geese," by Mary Oliver, Reading 490 in *Singing the Living Tradition*.

## FAITH IN ACTION: KEEPING PRIORITIES STRAIGHT

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint list from Activity 6, Keeping Priorities Straight in Congregations
- Handout 1, [Health Versus the Push to Accomplish Things](#) (included in this document)

### Preparation for Activity

- Arrange to attend a meeting of a committee or other leadership group to share the work done in this workshop.

### Description of Activity

Invite committees or other leadership groups in the congregation to read Handout 1 together and consider its implications for the work they do. Offer to attend a group meeting and share the Harvest the Power group's

list of ways to keep priorities straight. Invite them to add to it or create their own.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

- Looking at each activity in this workshop, what worked as well as or better than you had anticipated? What did not work as well as you anticipated?
- What issues came up for you personally in trying any activity yourself? What came up in the process of facilitating?
- What would you change if you were to lead this workshop again? How would you do it differently?
- What did you learn about yourself as an individual while facilitating this workshop? What did you learn about yourself as a leader?
- Looking ahead to the next workshop, what materials do you need to request or gather? What other preparations do you need to make?

## TAKING IT HOME

Laughter and tears are both responses to frustration and exhaustion. I myself prefer to laugh, since there is less cleaning up to do afterward. — Kurt Vonnegut, 20th-century American novelist

You may wish to journal about these questions:

- In what ways am I currently taking good care of myself?
- In what ways could I take better care of myself?
- Do I currently feel joy or satisfaction in my congregational work?
- Does my congregational involvement feel like a chore or obligation?
- Are there changes I need to make in my life or in the way in which I interact with the congregation?

Invite family members and friends to reflect with you on these questions.

### Find Out More

You may wish to add resources that informed this workshop to your congregation's leadership library:

Baab, Lynne M., *Beating Burnout in Congregations* (Alban Institute, 1989)

Benefiel, Margaret, *Soul at Work: Spiritual Leadership in Organizations* (New York: Seabury, 2005)

Masten, Ric, *Ric Masten Speaking* (Watsonville, California: Paper Mache Press, 1990)

Oliver, Mary, *Dreamwork* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1986)

Palmer, Parker J. *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999).

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: JUGGLING ACT (10 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Items to juggle safely

### Preparation for Activity

- Write the three questions below on newsprint, and post.

### Description of Activity

This is an activity for facilitators who are also jugglers! Alternatively, recruit a juggler to help you with this activity.

While juggling, tell participants that congregational leaders are like jugglers trying to keep all the balls in the air. Perform whatever juggling tricks you have. Embellish the analogy to congregational life as much as possible. Invite participants to assign specific task responsibilities to each item you have in the air. Have fun!

While juggling, or after you have finished, indicate the three questions on newsprint and ask:

1. When you keep all the balls in the air, how do you feel physically? Mentally?
2. When you drop important balls, how do you feel physically? Mentally?
3. Are all these balls yours to juggle or are you juggling someone else's balls?

Ask participants to keep these questions in mind as they go about their work as leaders. Ask them to share their observations the next time the group meets.

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: BURNOUT — A MISNOMER (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Handout 2, [Burnout — a Misnomer](#) (included in this document)

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Prepare a copy of Handout 2 for each participant.
- Pre-arrange with a participant to read the poem aloud.

### **Description of Activity**

Invite participants to listen to a reading of the poem in Handout 2. What images or words resonate for them? Are there times in their lives when they have felt burned out? What do they think of Masten's prescription ("find another source of power, and if the cord doesn't reach, move the set")? Does that image suggest any ways congregational leaders could support a culture that reduces burnout?

## STORY: CONFESSIONS OF A PRODIGAL VOLUNTEER

By Elizabeth Weber, in *UU World*, Fall 2007.

As is true for so many Unitarian Universalists, my first encounter with the concept of inherent worth and dignity offered an exhilarating contrast to my childhood faith, which taught me I was born unworthy of God's love. I abandoned Roman Catholicism upon leaving home for college, feeling guilty yet giddy with relief. Twenty-five years later, as I resigned my job to join my partner Ken in his retirement, I joined the UU fellowship located a magnetic half-mile from our home. Embarking on retirement and my new religion with equal parts enthusiasm and naiveté soon realized I still needed to work—to stimulate my intellect, to cultivate connections, to find purpose.

Put another way, I needed something to do.

Unitarian Universalism obligingly filled the void, and myriad volunteer opportunities soon drew this introvert from her shell. By my fifth year I'd put my whole self in, racking up a resume of leadership roles and committee posts within, then beyond, the walls of my congregation. The work was novel, varied, rewarding. It changed me in ways I liked. It offered me much more than "something to do."

Unitarian Universalism cultivated in me a more expansive view of my place in the world. It encouraged me to relinquish the illusion of safety for new ventures. I credit it with giving me the courage, last spring, to act on Ken's and my long-deferred desire to move 2,000 miles closer to his grown children and grandchildren. We had played major roles in leading our congregation through a multiyear planning process, capital campaign, and building addition. Finally, it was finished, imbuing our relocation decision with a satisfying sense of completion.

In my case, however, this milestone was muddied by a sense of depletion. Following the building project, my service to my congregation and community had grown tedious, increasingly burdensome. Instead of enlivening me, it made me cranky. Decisions I disagreed with grew harder to accept. I was doing less than I once had, but enjoying it far less than before. I'd eased up, but apparently too late.

I knew I'd erred in gravitating toward roles that, although worthwhile, didn't feed my spirit. I'd come to care too much about the work, for a mishmash of reasons—ego, certainly, and strong convictions based on a by-now prodigious institutional memory. A sense of earned power—that occupational hazard of intense volunteer commitment—also tethered me. And if I set the work

down, I feared it might lie there a good long while (horrors!) before others picked it up.

Meanwhile, believing it was my responsibility to reinvest the social capital I'd amassed as a lay leader, I recruited others relentlessly—to help with the canvass, to serve on committee x or y. Even then, I couldn't rest. For how hypocritical it would be to enlist others, only to dust off my hands and resign from the finance committee!

Where I'd once lauded UUism as the antithesis of my childhood religion, I now saw parallels in my reactions to the two. My new faith had exhorted me to do good works, as Catholicism had. But drawn into ever more volunteer roles at church and beyond, my sense of mission was subsumed by minutiae as dutiful old habits of mind held sway. I pondered budget numbers as if they were mysteries of the Rosary. Committee meetings now seemed as mandatory as Mass once had. (Afterward, I typed minutes like a dutiful penance.) I was burying my talents and expending my energy not in true ministry but in what a friend called "administrivia."

A year before we moved, my survival instinct belatedly kicked in, with mixed results. Weary and protective of my fragmented free time, I avoided the very groups and gatherings that might have nourished my spirit and balanced my involvement. Abandoning my "volunteer obligations" (although I wryly noted the paradox therein) remained unthinkable—until the stronger magnetic pull of family half a continent away served to end my self-imposed servitude.

My farewells to my fellowship were genuinely fond and sad. But when at last I took my whole self out to race the moving van cross-country, I realized I felt much as I had upon leaving Catholicism behind decades earlier. It shocked me to think I'd let my commitment to Unitarian Universalism devolve into a rerun of that old defection.

###

Once settled again, I began rebuilding my life, balancing Marge Piercy's summons to be of use with Mary Oliver's reassurance that I do not have to be good—at least not all the time.

Reflecting on my decade as a UU, I recalled that in my early days, I'd seen certain members work hard, then disappear. I hadn't understood why they left. In my newfound zeal, I had been certain I would never burn out.

After our move I saw that hubris for what it was. Declaring myself an Emily Dickinson-style Nobody, I let my unstructured days wash over me: no budgets, no meetings, no minutes to type—just hours to recharge and reflect. Slowly, from silence, clarity emerged: I was

ready to put down roots again. I listened a little longer, but I knew just where to plant them.

I was fortunate that circumstances conspired to save me from myself. Unlike many "church ladies" (or men) who unwittingly over-involve themselves, my perspective was restored by an abrupt and absolute physical relocation. It granted me the spiritual detachment I needed to recall precisely why I embraced this religion ten years ago—and to understand how I got lost along the way.

I brought some lifelong, self-abnegating behaviors to my new faith, I see now. But unlike my old faith, Unitarian Universalism never made me feel unworthy. If anything, it swamped me with a sense of my value and potential.

At my new fellowship, I began by confiding to my new minister my need to go slowly. On Sundays, I hearkened to sermons that emphasized the importance of finding one's own true calling, beyond any organization's internal needs. When asked to help with sundry small tasks, I hesitated, then said yes, and found I enjoyed renewing old proficiencies while meeting new friends. Later, when offered a larger role, I responded simply but sincerely, "Not yet." (Watching a talented, more energetic member quickly fill that spot, I felt grateful to her—and humbled by all I had learned.)

I'm savoring the sweetness of a fresh start and the prospect of growing into a spiritual community. Best of all, I've learned that while I'm not indispensable to any congregation, Unitarian Universalism will always be indispensable to me.

## **HANDOUT 1: HEALTH VERSUS THE PUSH TO ACCOMPLISH THINGS**

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We expect our congregations to be places of health and healing, an oasis in the midst of the demands and stresses of daily life. Yet some people experience great pain in their congregations, pain that robs them of the comfort their faith could give them. Burnout is one kind of pain that goes against the very promise of congregational life.

All systems that rely on the labor of individuals, if left to themselves, will encourage burnout. The workplace, nonprofit organizations, and congregations all have a tendency to push workers toward burnout. That is because these systems have goals and leaders dedicated to meet these goals. The people working within the system very easily become the means to an end, and that end is the accomplishment of goals.

In a congregation, the goals are often lofty and energizing: rich and celebratory worship services, stimulating adult education, outreach to people who are poor and in need, care and concern for children and youth. The congregation has to keep a strong focus on its goals in order for the congregation as a whole to be healthy. Meeting those goals requires labor. The congregational system needs to get people working and keep them at it.

Hard work is necessary to make the congregation a place of refuge and rest. This is a tension, an irony that always exists in congregations. The need for hard work pushes congregation members towards diligent service, and that kind of service can take away the sense of rest and refuge that people need. The congregation that has the goal of bringing life and health to its members may also push people toward burnout because workers are needed.

The congregation as a system will tend to call people into service for the sake of duty, which unfortunately moves so easily into workaholism. It takes effort on the part of leaders to keep priorities straight. Congregational leaders need to expend significant energy with deliberate intention in order to affirm the call to serve God with joy, from the heart, so that burnout will be less frequent.

## HANDOUT 2: BURNOUT — A MISNOMER

By Ric Masten (1929-2008), a Unitarian Universalist poet, folk singer and minister. In *Ric Masten Speaking* (Watsonville, CA: Paper Mache Press, 1990). Used with permission.

burnout

you've seen the results

in the shop on the shelf

row after row of grey empty faces

with nothing happening in the glassy eyes

except

a little surface reflection

burnout

you know the symptoms

a history of dependable service

then suddenly for no reason things go dark

and you're a dead piece of furniture

waiting

to be removed from the living room

burnout

the psychological repairman said

and shrugged and shook his head

having checked everything

except the cord

which of course

was disconnected

in a word "unplugged"

and to think

i nearly went to the dump myself

because someone less than a poet

trying to describe a condition

came up with a misleading term

clearly

a case of burnout demands a second opinion

and this is mine

find an outlet

and if the cord doesn't reach  
move the set

## LEADER RESOURCE 1: BODIES OF WATER GUIDED MEDITATION

*Read the meditation in a slow, calm manner, pausing between sentences for a second or two. Pause about ten seconds where longer pauses are indicated in the text.*

Please sit in a comfortable meditation position. Close your eyes if you are comfortable doing so and focus on your own breathing. Take three deep breaths, breathing in and out; in and out; in and out.

Picture in your mind your favorite body of water. It may be as large as the ocean, or as small as a brook. *(longer pause)* Notice the way in which the water moves, the way it holds its own space, the way it impacts that which surrounds it. Notice how the water feels. Is it cool? Or warm? Is it icy? Is it refreshing? Notice how it tastes. Notice the color of the water—and its smell. Be aware of what is carried by the water—small bits of plant or animal, particles of soil or sand, fish and other aquatic creatures, some too small to be seen by human eyes. *(longer pause)*

Become one with the water, carrying what it carries, taking its form. *(longer pause)* In your mind's eye, trace the water back to its source, back through the rivers and streams and lakes and waterfalls—back to its source somewhere in the mountains. Experience yourself as a stream beginning with rain and melted snow somewhere high above sea level.

As you begin your journey, you are a but a tiny stream, bubbly with new possibilities, exploring and shaping your own path through crevices in the rock or channels left by glaciers which receded long ago. Feel your energy. Feel your power and strength as you shape your own path through the mountains. Feel the changing nature of your being as you grow with spring melts, contract with summer drought, and freeze in the depths of winter. *(longer pause)* You are full of joy, enthusiasm, and the energy that can literally move mountains.

Now trace your path downstream a bit to a place where you become a fresh water lake, with water spilling in through the lake's inlet and leaving at its outlet. You are constantly renewed by a fresh supply of water, and sending your own living waters forth, carrying a rich mixture of life and life-giving soil. *(longer pause)* You feel full, but not overfull, strong and deep, full of motion, and yet somehow stable in your lake bed.

Trace your path downstream to the mighty river, broad and moving, carrying not only life, but also commerce. You are in a hurry, in constant motion, moving things relentlessly and powerfully downstream. You remain

mostly in your riverbed, but not always. Sometimes the water coming in from melted snow or heavy rains leaves you with not enough space for its volume. You spill over the banks, for blocks, or acres, or miles, covering everything in your path with water, bringing destruction and at the same time bringing soil and nutrients which will enrich the earth when the waters recede and you return to your riverbed. *(longer pause)* You feel powerful, even mighty. You are responsible for much, and receive from everywhere. And sometimes it gets to be just too much and things spill over.

Now trace your path to the small stagnant pool left behind by the receding waters. There is no inlet or outlet for this pool. You are self-contained. Your warm waters and rich broth support life well, and your ecosystem is isolated from other bodies of water. There is calm here, but there is decay and stagnation as well. *(longer pause)*

And now trace your path to the mighty ocean, constantly in motion, answering to the forces of the moon and wind, and weather, moving in warm and cold currents interconnected one with another. You are the place where life arose on earth, the cradle for billions of species. *(longer pause)* Storms rock you, but only in isolated places. You are too big, too broad, and too deep for one hurricane, one snowstorm, one tsunami to affect more than a small part of who and what you are. You are always in motion, ever restless, always changing, part of the essential nature of the earth itself. Feel your endless motion as your waves rise and fall and churn.

As you breathe reflect on the ways in which your life resembles the different bodies of water. With which images do you most closely identify?

*(Pause for about a minute.)*

When you are ready, please return slowly to your own body, to your chair, to this room. And when you have returned, open your eyes. .

# WORKSHOP 7: INTEGRITY

## INTRODUCTION

*The power inherent in a leader's presence does not reside in physical or economic strength but in the nature of his or her own being... Leaders function as the immune systems of the institutions they lead — not because they ward off enemies, but because they supply the ingredients for the system's integrity. — Edwin H. Friedman, late 20th-century rabbi, family therapist and author*

This workshop invites participants into challenging territory. Drawing on the work of Edwin H. Friedman, the activities explore a deeper understanding of the chronically anxious society that surrounds and invades our congregational life. Participants name and embrace that which sustains and grounds them and learn how this self-knowledge can help them lead from a place of creativity and imagination, rather than reactivity. The workshop offers models to help individuals and leadership teams support and reinforce the integrity of those entrusted with leadership positions in our congregations.

## GOALS

This workshop will:

- Demonstrate that a leader's personal grounding and spiritual well-being are crucial to their ability to lead
- Help participants understand their own responses to challenge, crisis and opportunity
- Drawing on the work of Edwin H. Friedman, explore how living in a chronically anxious society produces predictable, ineffective responses in those who lead our institutions and congregations
- Foster laughter, meditation, reflection and artistic expression to help participants connect more fully with their spiritual and emotional selves.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Use the story of Rosa Parks as a springboard to reflect on the supports that sustain them in moments of crisis, change, challenge and opportunity
- Reflect on the idea that who a leader is matters as much as what they do

- Explore the anxieties that permeate our society, our families and our congregations
- Become aware of leadership practices, commonly fueled by chronic anxiety, which act as barriers to creativity and imagination
- Laugh, meditate, create, share and be renewed as spiritual beings and as leaders.

## WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

| Activity  | Minutes |
|---|---------|
| Welcoming and Entering                              |         |
| Opening   | 2       |
| Activity 1: Rosa Parks' Moment                      | 15      |
| Activity 2: Navigating Moments of Crisis            | 10      |
| Activity 3: The Who of Leadership                   | 10      |
| Activity 4: What Sustains You?                      | 20      |
| Break   | 10      |
| Activity 5: Anxiety in the System                   | 10      |
| Activity 6: Data Deluge, Empathy and Other Barriers | 30      |
| Activity 7: A Time for Worship                      | 10      |
| Faith in Action: Leadership's Spiritual Dimension   |         |
| Closing   | 3       |
| Alternate Activity 1: Button Pushing                | 10      |
| Alternate Activity 2: Worship with Serenity Prayer  | 10      |

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Take time to reflect on how and where you find grounding and sustenance in times of crisis and challenge. Read Handout 1, The Who of Leadership, and journal or reflect on how you nurture your spirit.

Read Handout 2, Imagination Gridlock, and consider the ways you have become gridlocked by chronic anxiety in your family life or congregational life. Visualize yourself as a person with integrity, a well differentiated person who is able to regulate anxiety in yourself and in the congregation where you are a leader. How will you live into that vision?

To strengthen your leadership skills and confidence, explore the leadership development resources recommended at the end of the workshop, as well as Workshop 1, Leader Resource 1, Accessibility Guidelines for Workshop Presenters.

## WELCOMING AND ENTERING

### Materials for Activity

- Name tags and materials to make name tags
- Music and player

### Preparation for Activity

- Play music to create a welcoming atmosphere.
- Lay out participants' name tags and name tag-making materials.

### Description of Activity

Invite any participant who does not have a name tag to create one now.

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook
- Small worship table
- Chalice, candle and lighter or LED battery-operated candle

### Preparation for Activity

- Set the chalice on the worship table.

### Description of Activity

Gather the group in a circle. Ask a participant to light the chalice as you or another participant read the opening words: "Prophets" by Clinton Lee Scott, Reading 565 in *Singing the Living Tradition*.

Tell participants this workshop invites them to reflect on their spiritual and emotional lives and the qualities they bring to their leadership roles.

## ACTIVITY 1: ROSA PARKS' MOMENT (15 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Story, [Rosa Parks' Moment](#) (included in this document)

### Preparation for Activity

- Familiarize yourself with the story.
- Pre-arrange for a participant to read the story.

### Description of Activity

Share the introductory material for the story and invite participants to consider the ways Rosa Parks modeled leadership with integrity. Have a participant read the story aloud to the group.

Engage participants in a discussion with these questions:

- How does this story differ from the popular story about Rosa Parks? Does knowing she was prepared for this moment and this action change your perception of her as a leader?
- What skills did Rosa Parks need in order to act in this situation? What personal qualities did she have that made her action effective?
- What spiritual and emotional support might she have drawn on to withstand enormous pressure?

## ACTIVITY 2: NAVIGATING MOMENTS OF CRISIS (10 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Paper and pens/pencils for all participants
- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Assure that each participant has a comfortable space for writing.
- Prepare and post newsprint with these questions:
  - What were the circumstances?
  - What choices did you have to make?
  - What skills or information did you seek to help you?
  - What spiritual and emotional resources did you need?
  - Did you feel prepared spiritually and emotionally for the challenge?
  - How could you have been better prepared?
  - What did you learn? How did this experience change you?
  - How did/does your experience contribute to your perception of yourself as a leader?

### Description of Activity

Invite participants to recall a moment of crisis in their own lives, a moment when they had some choices to make. It might be a work, family or health crisis, or a crisis that emerged out of a commitment or goal they were pursuing. Allow a minute of silence for participants to bring a moment of crisis to mind.

Indicate the questions you have posted on newsprint. Tell participants they will have ten minutes to write or silently meditate in response to the questions and, while they will not share their reflections with one another at this time, the reflections will be helpful later in the workshop (Activity 4).

Read the questions aloud.

After ten minutes, invite participants to finish writing or reflecting and return their attention to the group. Ask for brief feedback about the experience of considering their own spiritual and emotional resources.

### **ACTIVITY 3: THE WHO OF LEADERSHIP (10 MINUTES)**

#### **Materials for Activity**

- Handout 1, [The 'What' and the 'Who' of Leadership](#) (included in this document)

#### **Preparation for Activity**

- Copy Handout 1, The Who of Leadership, for all participants.
- Pre-arrange with four participants to read the four paragraphs of the handout.

#### **Description of Activity**

Distribute Handout 1. Ask four volunteers to each read aloud a paragraph, then, invite participants to share with a partner their responses to the handout:

- Did they gain new insights?
- What in the piece rings true for them?
- What do they disagree with?
- Is understanding yourself crucial to good leadership?

Allow five minutes for paired conversation. Then engage participants in a whole-group discussion. Continue the conversation by introducing the work of Margaret Benefiel. In her book, *Soul at Work*, she defines spirituality broadly as "the human spirit, fully engaged." She goes on to state, "Spirituality includes the intellectual, emotional, and relational depth of human character, as well as the continuing capability and yearning for personal development and evolution." Ask participants if they agree that the capacity for full engagement is important, especially in a moment of crisis.

Invite participants to name some spiritual practices that can strengthen and deepen us, helping us to engage more fully in all that life offers. Affirm prayer, worship, small group ministry, meditation, service, time in the natural world, singing, journaling and other ideas.

### **ACTIVITY 4: WHAT SUSTAINS YOU? (20 MINUTES)**

#### **Materials for Activity**

- A variety of colored and fancy papers; markers and glue and/or glue sticks
- Scissors for each participant (including left-handed scissors)
- A cardboard box, large basket, or other large container and a cloth to cover it

#### **Preparation for Activity**

- Arrange for each participant to have a space for cutting, writing and making paper creations. Set out materials where all can reach them.
- In a central place, such as your chalice-lighting area, set a large box, basket or other container. Cover it with a cloth so it is visually appealing.

#### **Description of Activity**

Ask participants to consider what sustains them in times of crisis. What spiritual practices or disciplines do they find helpful? What keeps them grounded and centered when they face challenges?

Invite participants to create symbols with papers, glue and markers to represent that which sustains them and helps keep their spirits fully engaged. For example, they might create a leaf to represent walking in the woods. Suggest they create one symbol or many, and use words, pictures or abstract creations to represent that which sustains them.

After 15 minutes, re-gather participants. Invite them to name their spiritual practices as they place their creations, one person at a time, in the container.

### **ACTIVITY 5: ANXIETY IN THE SYSTEM (10 MINUTES)**

#### **Materials for Activity**

- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Optional: 30 small, wrapped candies and a basket, bowl or candy dish

#### **Preparation for Activity**

- Draw a large soup pot on a sheet of newsprint, and post.
- If you do not have a co-leader, recruit a volunteer to serve as brainstorming scribe.

## Description of Activity

In this activity, participants identify issues—internal and external to the congregation—which heighten anxiety in both members and leaders. Approach this activity playfully, encouraging light-hearted competition and laughter, to ensure it does not itself raise anxiety.

In his book, *A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix*, Edwin H. Friedman explores the phenomenon of anxiety in individuals, institutions and society. He draws on the work of Dr. Murray Bowen of Georgetown Medical School to suggest that the speed and quantity of change as well as the inability of institutions and individuals to absorb the anxiety can cause an entire society to experience a chronic anxiety. This chronic anxiety renders people unable to think creatively or move past internal barriers, which limits their ability to respond to change in a healthy way.

Tell participants that you are going to make a "soup" together that will be a metaphor for some of what we and members of our congregation experience on a day to day basis. Ask your co-facilitator or a volunteer to scribe while the group creates the "soup."

First, ask participants to name all of the changes that they and other members of the congregation have had to adjust to in the last decade; some of these may be technological, some societal, some having to do with personal life transitions. Encourage people to keep naming things, even when there is a lull. You might offer a small candy for each answer as a way of encouraging people to keep naming. Have the scribe write the items in the soup pot. It is not necessary that each word be legible from a distance. More to the point will be the sheer number of changes written in the "soup."

Continue this exercise for four minutes, encouraging general light-heartedness, but always being aware that some items may be serious. Acknowledge serious items, but do not let them overwhelm the process.

Next, invite people to name all the things they worry about or think other congregational members worry about. These may be related to home, the congregation, safety, world affairs or any other realm of life. Continue to encourage as many responses as possible, while your scribe tries to capture them all in the pot (with increasing difficulty!). Continue this exercise for four minutes. Encourage general light-heartedness. Be respectful of serious worries, but do not let them overwhelm the process.

After you have created your anxiety "soup," invite people to sit and admire the creation. Say, "This is the medium in which leaders must work. It is up to each of us to keep from being overwhelmed by that soup."

## ACTIVITY 6: DATA DELUGE, EMPATHY AND OTHER BARRIERS (30 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Handout 2, [Gridlocked Systems](#) (included in this document)
- Optional: Pens or pencils

### Preparation for Activity

- Prepare a copy of Handout 2 for each participant.

### Description of Activity

The concepts presented in this activity may be new to participants. Present the concepts, guide initial responses and encourage participants to mull these ideas over time, both in and outside the context of the workshop.

Distribute Handout 2. Invite participants to read it silently and note responses or questions in the margins as they read. Allow a few minutes. Then, tell the group they will work with the handout one section at a time. Explain that these concepts are complex and may require time to digest. Because these concepts may be counter to assumptions and practices participants have engaged in as leaders, participants may be confused, defensive, or even anxious, so it is important to assure the group that most leaders find these ideas challenging.

Read aloud the first section, listing the three barriers to leaders' imaginative thinking. Then read aloud the section, including the quote titled "Data." Invite participants to move into triads and to share responses to that section. Suggest they discuss these questions:

- Does this material ring true?
- Where in your own experiences as a leader (or as a follower) have you seen the "data" phenomenon manifested?

Allow five minutes for this discussion. Then re-gather the group for an additional three minutes of general conversation.

Next, read aloud the section, including the quote titled "Empathy." Invite participants to move into the same triads and to share responses to that section, using these questions:

- Does this material ring true?
- Where in your own experiences as leaders (or as followers) have you seen an organization organize itself around the weakest or most immature members?

Allow five minutes for this discussion, then re-gather the group for an additional three minutes of general conversation.

Read aloud the section, including the quote titled "Self." Invite participants to move into the same triads and to share responses to that section, with these questions:

- Does this material ring true?
- How do the activities you did at the beginning of today's workshop help you understand the value of a well-differentiated leader?
- How do you think you can nurture yourself to stay well-differentiated from an anxious system?

Allow five minutes for this discussion, before gathering the group for an additional three minutes of general conversation.

## **ACTIVITY 7: A TIME FOR WORSHIP (10 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Table or stand for chalice and worship materials, and a cloth to cover it
- Chalice, candle and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- Four candles or four natural objects such as pine cones, stones or shells and a container to hold them
- A bell or chime

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Prepare a visually appealing worship table. Arrange four unlit candles or display the empty container with the four natural objects arranged near it.

### **Description of Activity**

This worship time offers a model for leaders to acknowledge the anxieties and challenges in the congregation while lifting up what supports and deepens the congregation's vision and mission. It is a technique to help congregational leaders intentionally hold space for creative ideas and emerging leadership.

Say:

I invite you to enter into a time of silence, and bring into your hearts and minds all those in the congregation and in our families who are facing challenges—death of a loved one, difficulties with a child or elderly parent, physical and mental health concerns, sadness, job loss, financial difficulty.

Pause a moment. Then, ring the bell. While lighting one candle or putting one of the natural objects into the container, say:

We hold in our hearts and minds and prayers all those in the congregation who are facing difficulties. In this moment, you are invited to speak the names of those we hold in thought and prayer.

Wait an appropriate interval while people speak. Then say:

I invite you to hold in your hearts and minds all those who have offered their gifts of love and service to the congregation. Enter into silence for a time and call to mind those who bring their creativity, their dedication, their labor, their financial support and their passion to support the congregation and its mission and work in the world. Call to mind those who are newly emerging as leaders, both adults and youth, and feel your heart fill with gratitude for the gifts they bring.

After a minute, ring the bell. While lighting a second candle or putting the second of the natural objects into the container, say:

We hold in our hearts gratitude for the many ways in which people bring their gifts to serve the mission of this congregation.

Now say:

I invite you to hold in your hearts and minds the challenges faced by this congregation. Enter into silence for a time and call to mind—one at a time—all the myriad issues facing the leadership at this time. In the silence of your heart, embrace the challenges, knowing these are signs of a living institution.

After a minute, ring the bell and while lighting a third candle or putting the third of the natural objects into the container, say:

In the silence, we number our challenges with humility, rejoicing in the opportunity to take our own turn in guiding this faith community in living the values of our liberal faith.

Now say:

I invite you to embrace your role as leader, understanding that you and your spiritual well-being are crucial to the well-being of the congregation. In the silence, I invite you to honor your own spirit and your own service to your faith community.

After a minute, ring the bell. While lighting a fourth candle or putting the fourth of the natural objects into the container, say:

We honor ourselves and each other as leaders in this faith community and embrace our need to care for our own spirits that we may serve with integrity and with love. So may it be.

## CLOSING (3 MINUTES)

### Description of Activity

Gather participants. Invite the group to sit together for a brief moment of silence to honor the important work the group has done together. Read these closing words, written by Harold E. Babcock:

And now may we go forth  
in the certainty of faith, in the knowledge of love,  
and in the vision of hope.  
And in our going, may we be blessed  
with all good things on this day  
and forevermore. Amen.

## FAITH IN ACTION: LEADERSHIP'S SPIRITUAL DIMENSION

### Description of Activity

Consider ways to nurture your spiritual well-being. What practices help you feel centered and whole, even under stress? Consider blocking time in your day and in your week for that which sustains you—and encouraging others to do the same.

Add or deepen the spiritual dimension of leadership and other meetings in your congregation. Chalice lightings, readings, prayers, songs and meditations can enrich your time together and lead to leadership with creativity, imagination, clarity and integrity.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

- Looking at each activity in this workshop, what worked as well as or better than you had anticipated? What did not work as well as you anticipated?
- What issues came up for you, personally, in trying any activity yourself? What came up in the process of facilitating?
- What would you change if you were to lead this workshop again? How would you do it differently?
- What did you learn about yourself as an individual while facilitating this workshop? What did you learn about yourself as a leader?
- Looking ahead to the next workshop, determine what materials you need to request or gather. What other preparations do you need to make?

## TAKING IT HOME

The power inherent in a leader's presence does not reside in physical or economic strength but in the nature of his or her own being... Leaders function as the immune systems of the institutions they lead — not because they ward off enemies, but because they supply the ingredients for the system's integrity. — Edwin H. Friedman, late 20th-century rabbi, family therapist and author

Reread the handouts at home. Reflect on your own responses to the situations that arise in your life and in your work. When are you responding with integrity, out of a clear and healthy sense of self? When are you reactive, responding to the chronic anxiety which surrounds us? What practices will help you nurture your spiritual well-being?

### Find Out More

You may wish to add resources that informed this workshop to your congregation's leadership library:

Benefiel, Margaret, *Soul at Work: Spiritual Leadership in Organizations* (New York: Seabury Books, 2005)

Friedman, Edwin H., *A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix* (New York: Seabury Books, 2007)

Jones, Jeffrey D., [The "What" and the "Who" of Leadership](http://www.alban.org/conversation.aspx?id=6896) (at [www.alban.org/conversation.aspx?id=6896](http://www.alban.org/conversation.aspx?id=6896)) (Alban Institute, 2008).

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: BUTTON PUSHING (10 MINUTES)

### Description of Activity

The purpose of this activity is to raise participants' awareness about their own stressors and consider how they react/respond to stress.

Ask participants to think about short answers to these questions:

- As a congregational leader, what "pushes your buttons?"
- What do you do when your buttons get pushed?

Allow participants a minute or so to find their answers. Then, invite them to move around the room and to share answers with others, one person at a time.

After five minutes, or when the activity slows down, call the group back together. Ask participants if they saw

similarities or were surprised by their own or others' buttons or responses. Allow some discussion.

Now, ask them to consider what it is about themselves, not the button pushers, that makes their buttons "pushable." Invite any who wish to share their self-reflection to do so. Tell the group they may also wish to mull this question in the privacy of their own thoughts.

## **ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: WORSHIP WITH SERENITY PRAYER (10 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Table or stand for chalice and worship materials, and a cloth to cover it
- Small candles, enough for all participants, and sand-filled container or a bowl of water and small stones, enough for all participants

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Prepare an attractive worship table in the center of the circle, including a lit chalice and the sand-filled container and candles or the bowl of water and stones.
- Write the words to the Serenity Prayer on newsprint and post: "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

### **Description of Activity**

This worship time offers a model for leadership groups to acknowledge the anxieties and the challenges in the congregation while lifting up that which supports and deepens the congregation's vision and mission. It is a technique to help congregational leaders intentionally hold space for creative ideas and emerging leadership.

Say:

I invite you to enter into a time of silence, and to bring into your hearts and minds all those in the congregation and in our families who are facing challenges.

Pause for 30 seconds. Then say:

I invite you to hold in your hearts and minds all those who have offered their gifts of love and service to the congregation. Enter into silence for a time and call to mind those who are newly emerging as leaders, both adults and youth, and feel your heart fill with gratitude at the gifts they bring.

Pause for 30 seconds. Say:

I invite you to hold in your hearts and minds the challenges faced by this congregation. Enter into silence for a time and call to mind—one at a time—the myriad issues facing the leadership at this time. In the silence of your heart, embrace the challenges, knowing that these are signs of a living institution.

Pause for one minute. Then say:

I invite you to embrace your role as leader, understanding that you and your spiritual well being are crucial to the well-being of the congregation. In the silence, I invite you to honor your own spirit and your own service to your faith community. In the moments that follow, I invite each of you to light a candle in silence (or put a rock into the water), symbolizing your own spirit, fully engaged and ready to face the challenges of leadership.

After everyone has lit a candle or placed a stone, invite participants to repeat together a familiar prayer, often attributed to theologian Reinhold Niebuhr:

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

### **Including All Participants**

If you have participants whose mobility impairments make it difficult for them to move to the worship table, distribute stones before beginning worship. Then, pass the bowl so all can put their stones in the water.

## STORY: ROSA PARKS' MOMENT

Adapted from *Stories in Faith: Exploring Our Unitarian Universalist Principles through Wisdom Tales* by Gail Forsyth-Vail ( Boston : Skinner House, 2007).

*We all think we know the story of Rosa Parks. The standard script tells of a woman who became tired of discrimination and injustice and one day just refused to budge from her bus seat, an individual with courage who sparked the civil rights movement. But December 1, 1955, was not an isolated moment in the life of Rosa Parks. The complete story of how she reached that day is far more interesting than the simple version. Her life and experiences made that moment possible, but so did the passion of the many others who worked to overturn injustice and discrimination.*

*This story presents Rosa Parks as a young woman with great integrity and humility. She is willing to take her place among those working for justice, doing whatever it takes to advance the cause, including answering phones and stuffing envelopes. She takes time to learn from others who have come before, to be grounded in the history and culture of a grassroots movement. She serves as a mentor to teens, organizing youth conferences and other events. She is a collaborator, participating in trainings and strategy sessions designed to determine the most effective way to move forward. The full picture of Rosa Parks is quite different from the snapshot many hold, in which she simply refuses to move from her seat on the bus on December 1, 1955.*

*This is a story of leadership with integrity. It invites us to consider how our own presence and the way in which we embody the values and vision we hold most deeply can transform a situation. Read or tell it as though sharing a compelling story from the life of a beloved and familiar person, because that is exactly what you are doing.*

On December 1, 1955, in Montgomery, Alabama , an African American woman named Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on the bus to a white man. She was arrested on the spot and her arrest sparked the beginning of the U.S. Civil Rights Movement. That is the way many of us have heard the story. But she did not act alone. She had spent a lifetime acquiring the skills, wisdom and experience she needed at that very moment. She was one person in a grand organization of people working for equality and justice. She was the right person at the right time, but she was not alone.

The daughter of Louise, a teacher, and James, a carpenter, Rosa Parks was born in Tuskegee, Alabama , in 1913, a time when black people were subject to

discriminatory laws and unequal treatment at every turn. Her mother believed strongly that one should take advantage of every opportunity, so she enrolled Rosa in Miss White's School for Girls. There she was taught that she could do anything she wanted to do, even though that seemed impossible for an African American child in the southern United States at that time. When Miss White's School closed, Rosa was 15. She took in sewing and cleaned houses to help support her family, and tried to complete her high school education. Family illnesses made it impossible for her to finish on time, although she did earn her diploma three years later.

When Rosa was 18, she met Raymond Parks and married him a year later. He was a barber who was active in politics and in the cause of justice and equality for African American people. From him, she learned that there were people working hard to get rid of Jim Crow laws. With him, she joined and became active in the NAACP, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. She served as the volunteer secretary for the NAACP Montgomery branch, coming in after work to answer phones, address envelopes, take meeting notes, or do whatever needed doing. She met other activists who mentored her and taught her about the long, proud history of the civil rights movement. In time, she became the youth leader of the branch, working with teens and passing on her own knowledge and wisdom.

Those were extraordinary times. In 1954, the U. S. Supreme Court had declared that the laws requiring separate schools for black and white children were unjust and unconstitutional. The NAACP leadership knew that something dramatic would happen—and soon. African Americans would not wait forever for just treatment. In March of 1955, an African American teenager named Claudette Colvin, a teenager from Rose Parks' NAACP youth group, refused to give up her seat on the bus to a white man and was arrested. The NAACP leaders thought that maybe the time had come for action to force just treatment, but they knew that Claudette was only 15 years old and had been in some trouble, so they decided not to press the issue. They needed just the right person to refuse to yield her seat, a pillar of the community, one who could withstand intense pressure and not lose her cool.

In the summer of 1955, the NAACP sent Rosa Parks and others to the Highlander Folk School for a ten-day training session in nonviolent protest. There she learned of Mahatma Gandhi's commitment to and use of nonviolence in India . She learned more of the history of the Civil Rights movement. She met the movers and shakers of the movement and sang its powerful songs, including "We Shall Overcome" and "Keep Your Eyes on

the Prize." After 12 years of working hard as an NAACP volunteer and leader, she had now acquired the skills and background she would need when the moment came.

And come it did. On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks, seated in the front row of the "colored" section of a bus, refused to give up that seat when the bus became crowded and there wasn't enough room for all the white people to sit. She refused to move and she was arrested. The NAACP leadership and Rosa herself understood that the time for action had arrived. She was a pillar of the community, a person of wisdom, skill, maturity and character who could weather what lay ahead. Four days later, the Montgomery bus boycott began and the Civil Rights movement came to the attention of people across the United States .

Rosa Parks died in 2005 after a long and full life. She was a prophet in our time, one whose style was not to be an orator denouncing injustice, but rather to work quietly, mostly behind the scenes, preparing for the moment when what was required was that she hold her ground. Her style of prophethood reminds us that learning about issues, acquiring important skills, practicing collaboration and growing our own souls is vital work that allows us to take our place in the long line of people working for justice. She is a hero in the United States, remembered for her courage, dignity and determination. The memory of her life and deeds speaks to us of her wisdom, strategic skill, passion, integrity and membership in a great community of activist souls.

## HANDOUT 1: THE 'WHAT' AND THE 'WHO' OF LEADERSHIP

["The 'What' and the 'Who' of Leadership"](#) by Jeffrey D. Jones is reprinted from *Alban Weekly* (No. 231, December 29, 2008), with permission from the Alban Institute. Adapted from *Heart, Mind, and Strength: Theory and Practice for Congregational Leadership* by Jeffrey D. Jones. Copyright (C) 2008 by The Alban Institute, Inc., Herndon, VA. All rights reserved.

The "who" aspect of leadership is based on the reality that not everything a leader needs can be learned from books or reduced to a step-by-step plan that can be universally applied; rather it must come from an internal sense of the situation and what the leader brings to it.

The "who" is often revealed under pressure. Your "who" is revealed in what comes out of your mouth when you need to respond instantly, without the benefit even of personal reflection. It also becomes evident in the long haul, perhaps when there's nothing dramatic going on at all—how you handle day-to-day interactions with members of the congregation, how the way you live your life outside the congregation reflects that which you value and believe as a member of a religious community.

The "who" of leadership has many dimensions. Our spiritual lives affect both our self-understanding and our relationships. The depth and strength of our faith and the way that faith is nurtured through spiritual disciplines shapes who we are and how we relate to others in profound ways. Without that depth, our "who" is something less than it can be.

Another dimension of the "who" of leadership is our own self-knowledge. Years of therapy aren't essential, but a good understanding of what makes us tick is. What issues tend to threaten us? What strengths can we rely on, what preconceived notions can get us into trouble? How has our past experience shaped the way we relate to people? What are the needs, the hopes, and the fears that drive us? All of this (and much more) influences our ability to lead. To lead effectively we need to be aware of these personal traits and the way they shape our leading. Given sufficient time, almost all of those traits will become apparent to those we lead, so we had best be honest with ourselves right from the beginning.

## HANDOUT 2: GRIDLOCKED SYSTEMS

Adapted and summarized from Edwin H. Friedman's book, *A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix* ( New York : Seabury Books, 2007).

Friedman writes that chronic anxiety "influences our thoughts and our leaders toward safety and certainty rather than boldness and adventure." He suggests that we are "imaginatively stuck" and that leaders have developed barriers which prevent new and creative thinking. He names "imagination limiting" notions that keep today's leaders gridlocked:

- *Data*: that data are more vital to leadership than the capacity to be decisive;
- *Empathy*: that feeling for others helps them mature or become more responsible; and
- *Self*: that selfishness is a greater danger to a community than the loss of integrity that comes with having no self.

### DATA

Friedman writes of the current obsession with gathering data and with finding the right technique to move the institution forward. He speaks of a "quick fix" mind-set which focuses on problems and not strengths and demands certainty and easy answers rather than creativity and adaptation. He writes:

What I am driving at is this: As long as leaders—parents, healers, managers—base their confidence on how much data they have acquired, they are doomed to feeling inadequate, forever...

The data deluge can only be harnessed to the extent that leaders realize that not all information is worth gathering, and also to the extent that they can develop criteria for discerning what information is important to leadership...

Ultimately, the capacity of leaders to distinguish what information is important depends less on the development of new techniques for sorting data than on a leader's ability to avoid being driven by the regressive anxiety that is often the source of unregulated data proliferation to begin with.

### EMPATHY

A second imagination limiting notion is the focus on empathy rather than responsibility, and weakness rather than strength. He writes of the tendency of chronically anxious organizations to work to lessen the pain of

some needy or immature members and to organize itself around their needs, rather than nurturing the creativity of the healthier, more mature members of the organization. He writes:

On the one hand, there can be no question that the notion of feeling for others, caring for others, identifying with others, being responsive to others, and perhaps even sharing their pain exquisitely or excruciatingly is a heartfelt, humanitarian, highly spiritual, and an essential component in a leader's response repertoire. But it has rarely been my experience that being sensitive to others will enable those "others" to be more self-aware, that being more "understanding" of others causes them to mature, or that appreciating the plight of others will make them more responsible for their being, their condition, or their destiny...

Ultimately, societies, families, and organizations are able to evolve out of a state of regression not because their leaders "feel" for or "understand" their followers, but because their leaders are able, by their well-defined presence, to regulate the systemic anxiety in the relationship system they are leading and to inhibit the invasiveness of those factions which would preempt its agenda. After that, they can afford to be empathic.

### SELF

Friedman writes about the importance of the leader's capacity for self-differentiation, that is, ability to remain grounded in one's own sense of purpose and identity and to avoid being swept into the anxiety of the organization's system. He writes:

The key... is the leader's own self-differentiation, by which I mean his or her capacity to be a non-anxious presence, a challenging presence, a well-defined presence, and a paradoxical presence. Differentiation is not about being coercive, manipulative, reactive, pursuing or invasive, but being rooted in the leader's own sense of self rather than focused on that of his or her followers. It is in no way autocratic, narcissistic, or selfish, even though it may be perceived that way by those who are not taking responsibility for their own being. Self-differentiation is not "selfish." Furthermore, the power inherent in a leader's presence does not reside in physical or emotional strength, but in the nature of his or her own being, so that even when leaders are entitled to great power by dint of their office, it is ultimately the nature of their real strength. Leaders function as immune systems of the institutions they lead — not

because they ward off enemies, but because they supply the ingredients for the system's integrity.

# WORKSHOP 8: IMAGINATION AND CREATIVITY

## INTRODUCTION

*Wisdom is not a fixed quality. It circulates among us.* — Sister Souljah, contemporary hip-hop artist

This workshop, the fourth in the Purpose unit, explores reasons and ways to include many voices in the visioning work of the congregation. Participants learn how to pay attention to voices on the margins of the faith community. When the leadership intentionally invites all members to share their ideas, life experiences and wisdom, the community becomes more adept and creative in meeting challenges.

## GOALS

This workshop will:

- Introduce the concepts of mattering and marginality in a faith community or organization
- Present two stories—one historical and one contemporary—involving Unitarian and Unitarian Universalist voices "on the margins"
- Teach a process for differentiating leadership questions from management questions and skillfully framing leadership questions
- Provide an experience of listening circles, a technique for engaging many voices in leadership questions.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Understand concepts of mattering and marginality
- Explore how, in their own experience, mattering and marginality affect one's ability to offer creativity and wisdom to benefit a congregation
- Deepen their understanding of mattering and marginality through one historical and one contemporary story
- Learn to craft leadership questions
- Experience a listening circle and consider ways to use that model in the congregational setting.

## WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

| Activity               | Minutes |
|------------------------|---------|
| Welcoming and Entering |         |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Opening  | 2  |
| Activity 1: Mattering and Marginality                | 20 |
| Activity 2: Guilty of Innovation — Francis David     | 10 |
| Activity 3: Practicing Reconciliation — a Reflection | 20 |
| Break  | 10 |
| Activity 4: What Are Our Questions?                  | 25 |
| Activity 5: Listening Circle                         | 30 |
| Faith in Action: Seeking Voices from the Margins     |    |
| Closing  | 3  |
| Alternate Activity 1: News You Can UUse!             | 30 |

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Journal about your own experiences of mattering and marginality or share them with your co-facilitator. Reflect on how you were called to offer your wisdom, skills and creativity as a workshop facilitator. Was that an experience of mattering?

## WELCOMING AND ENTERING

### Materials for Activity

- Name tags and materials for making name tags
- Music and player

### Preparation for Activity

- Play music to create a welcoming atmosphere.
- Lay out participants' name tags and name tag-making materials.

### Description of Activity

Invite any participant who does not have a name tag to create one now.

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook
- Small worship table
- Chalice, candle and lighter or LED battery-operated candle

### Preparation for Activity

- Set the chalice on the worship table.

### Description of Activity

Gather the group in a circle. Ask a participant to light the chalice as you or another participant read the opening words, "Look to this Day," attributed to Kalidasa, Reading 419 in *Singing the Living Tradition*.

## ACTIVITY 1: MATTERING AND MARGINALITY (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Paper and pens/pencils
- A clock, and a bell or chime to signal time

### Preparation for Activity

- Assure that participants have appropriate surfaces for writing.

### Description of Activity

This activity is adapted from an exercise developed by Dr. L. Lee Knefelkamp, described in "Integrating Jewish Issues Into the Teaching of Psychology" by Evelyn Torton Beck, Julie L. Goldberg and L. Lee Knefelkamp, Chapter 17 in *Teaching Gender and Multicultural Awareness* edited by Phyllis Bronstein and Kathryn Quina (Washington, DC: APA Press, 2003).

Distribute paper and pens/pencils. Invite participants to journal their responses to the prompts as you read them aloud. Allow the time suggested for writing after each prompt:

- Consider a time in your life when your presence, your skills and your ideas *really mattered*. What were the circumstances? How did you know that your contributions mattered? How did you respond to the situation in that moment? How did you respond, going forward? (*Allow four minutes for journaling.*)
- Consider a time in your life when you felt marginalized, on the margins. A time when you believed your presence, your ideas, your skills and your opinions were not all that important. What were the circumstances? What gave you the impression that your contributions were not really valued? How did you respond to the situation in that moment? How did you respond, going forward? (*Allow four minutes for journaling.*)
- As you contrast the two situations, what strikes you? What was your level of engagement, energy, creativity and imagination in each case? What conclusions can you draw from the two different experiences? (*Allow three minutes for journaling.*)

Invite participants to turn to another person and to share their experiences and conclusions as much as they are comfortable. After two minutes, remind pairs to switch speakers. After four minutes, invite general comment on the last question: are there conclusions you draw from the two different experiences?

### Including All Participants

If any participants who cannot journal in response to the prompts, modify the activity by inviting people to work in pairs and verbally share their responses to each section with one another.

## ACTIVITY 2: GUILTY OF INNOVATION — FRANCIS DAVID (10 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Story, [Guilty of Innovation — Francis David](#) (included in this document)

### Preparation for Activity

- Read the story and prepare to tell it or read it aloud.

## Description of Activity

Read or tell the Francis David story. Then, lead a discussion with these questions:

- In what different ways did people exercise leadership in 16th century Transylvania? What kind of power and authority did King John Sigismund have? Giorgio Biandrata? Francis David?
- At what points was David speaking from a position of *mattering*?
- When was he *marginalized*?
- What were the primary concerns of Biandrata? David? To what end did Biandrata exercise his leadership skill? To what end did David exercise his?
- What were the outcomes—short- and long-term—when the leadership system moved from protecting voices of dissent and disagreement to marginalizing and suppressing those voices?
- Does this story from the Unitarian side of our tradition offer any insight about how leaders today deal with voices on the margins, especially when they threaten institutional stability?

## ACTIVITY 3: PRACTICING RECONCILIATION — A REFLECTION (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Story, [Practicing Reconciliation — A Reflection](#) (included in this document)
- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Recruit a volunteer to read the story aloud.
- Write the URL for the complete *UU World* article on newsprint, and post: [www.uuworld.org/life/articles/14270.shtml](http://www.uuworld.org/life/articles/14270.shtml)

### Description of Activity

This first person story by Paula Cole Jones is abridged from her article, "Reconciliation as a Spiritual Practice," in the March/April 2004 issue of *UU World*. Invite listeners to pay special attention to the author's experiences of *mattering* and of *marginality*, and to the roles formal and informal leaders played in her experiences.

Read or tell the story. When you are done, give the original title of Jones' piece and indicate the URL and

the edition of *UU World* where they can read the entire article.

Invite comments on the author's experiences of *mattering* and *marginality*. Lead the group to identify the actions of formal and informal leaders as Jones expressed her concerns about the experience of people of color in Unitarian Universalism and brought her creative ideas forward.

Ask the group to extract from this story elements of a model for engaging many voices in the process of discerning direction for a congregation. You may wish to record suggested elements on newsprint.

## ACTIVITY 4: WHAT ARE OUR QUESTIONS? (25 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Handout 1, [What Are Our Questions?](#) (included in this document)
- Workshop 3, Leader Resource 1, [What Leadership Is and Isn't](#) (included in this document)
- Pen or pencil for each participant
- A clock, and a bell or chime to signal time

### Preparation for Activity

- Copy Handout 1 and Workshop 3, Leader Resource 1 for all participants.
- Assure that each participant has a suitable space for writing.

### Description of Activity

You will guide participants to develop the kinds of questions leaders need to ask to keep their congregations healthy and moving forward.

Say:

An effective way to invite creative and innovative engagement with the challenges faced by your congregation is to ask questions, rather than seek answers. With the right questions, you can invite people into conversation about the congregation's identity, purpose and vision—an excellent way to bring voices in from the margins.

Distribute Handout 1. Tell participants they will fill it in one section at a time. Suggest they find a comfortable position for writing and take three minutes to fill in the top section, which asks, "What are the burning questions in our congregation at this moment?"

After three minutes, distribute the leader resource from Workshop 3, the summary of Gil Rendle's *UU University*

2007 presentation on leadership and management. If the group has done Workshop 3, Power and Authority, lead a brief review; if not, the handout offers enough material to support this activity. Focus the group on Rendle's definitions of "management" questions and "leadership" questions. Invite participants to look at their burning questions list and label each questions "M" for management, "L" for leadership or "ML" for combination questions. When participants are done, verbally highlight this section of the handout:

Leaders need to change from providing answers to posing worthy, significant questions the congregation needs to face. Rendle suggested that three basic questions need to be posed to our congregations:

Who are we? — a question of identity

What are we called to do? — a question of

purpose

Who are our neighbors? — a question of context, which acknowledges that the world around us is changing as much as we are

Invite participants to reframe the questions they have identified as leadership or combination questions so they ask about identity, purpose and context. Direct participants to write the reframed questions in the second section of the handout. Explain that they will leave the management questions behind in this activity. Tell them that they are practicing "getting on the balcony." Allow five minutes.

Now ask participants to turn to a partner and share what they have written. Partners should listen carefully to one another's questions and comment on the ways the other has crafted "leadership" questions. After conversation with their partner, participants may reframe or revise their leadership questions once again, in the handout's third section. Allow five minutes.

Now invite participants to work with their partner once more. Give pairs one of these two instructions, depending on the circumstances:

1. If you and your partner belong to the same congregation, work together to compose two or three questions together that blend or contain both of your lists of questions.

2. If you and your partner are not from the same congregation, take turns sharing why your questions get to the heart of the big issues facing your congregation.

Allow five minutes for this portion of the activity.

Then, invite participants to look at their questions one more time and reflect on how they, as leaders, might engage their congregation's responses to leadership questions in a positive way. Invite them to reframe their

questions or add related (or sub-) questions to elicit positive responses (naming the congregation's strengths), rather than negative responses (naming the congregation's problems). Allow five minutes.

As you conclude, allow just a few general comments and observations. Tell the group in the next activity they will try a specific technique they might use to invite voices and creative ideas from the congregation.

## ACTIVITY 5: LISTENING CIRCLE (30 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A "talking object" which can be easily passed from hand to hand, such as a stick, a shell or a rock—one for each listening circle
- Leader Resource 1, [Listening Circle Facilitator Guide](#) (included in this document)

### Preparation for Activity

- Arrange chairs in a single circle for groups of ten or fewer, or in multiple circles some distance apart for groups larger than ten.
- Recruit facilitators if needed for multiple groups. Explain the listening circle concept so volunteers are comfortable with the facilitator's role. Copy Leader Resource 1 for all facilitators.

### Description of Activity

Explain that the "listening circle" is a spiritual practice found in many different traditions. Say, in your own words:

In a listening circle, people sit facing one another, and are invited to speak, one by one, from the heart, in response to a broad question. Each speaker may share with the group their own experience, feelings and point of view in response to a question. Each person has a turn to speak when they are passed a "talking object." Listeners are invited to listen from their own hearts. They are not to interrupt, clarify, offer advice, agree, disagree or engage in cross-talk. The idea is to listen deeply without judgment, focusing on the listener's statement of their experience and not on formulating your own response. This is a different kind of group process from what many are accustomed to. It can be a way for leadership to engage many voices and perspectives as a congregation considers leadership, rather than the management, questions, such as "Who are we as a congregation?" / "What is our purpose?" / "Who is our neighbor?" / "How is this faith

community called to be in the world?" / "What is this faith community called to do in this world?"

Explain that while the concept is simple, a listening circle can be a powerful experience. Tell the group they will try a listening circle now.

Invite participants to move, with facilitators, into the listening circle space(s) you have arranged.

Have each facilitator lead a listening circle, as directed by Leader Resource 1.

After the groups have experienced the listening circle process, bring the entire group together. Invite feedback on the process itself. Ask participants what kinds of issues/questions might be appropriate for a listening circle process. Guide them to identify three important features for listening circle questions in a congregational setting:

- Leadership questions, not management questions
- Open-ended questions, with no right/wrong, either/or answers. Questions framed to elicit positive contributions (e.g., what the congregation does well, as opposed to what needs improvement).

## CLOSING (3 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Chime or bell.

### Description of Activity

Thank participants for their willingness to share from the heart in this workshop and to support one another with deep listening. Close with a minute of silence. Begin and end the minute by ringing a chime or bell. To conclude, say:

Go in peace and love, and may peace and love surround you as you go.

## FAITH IN ACTION: SEEKING VOICES FROM THE MARGINS

### Description of Activity

Ask yourself what groups, constituencies or individuals in your congregation might consider themselves to be "on the margins." Compare your reflections with those of other congregational leaders. Together, consider the voices which may be missing or muted as your congregation makes decisions about direction. What creativity and innovation might you be missing? What might be some ways to engage those who are currently on the margins to bring their gifts to the congregation?

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

- Looking at each activity in this workshop, what worked as well as or better than you had anticipated? What did not work as well as you anticipated?
- What issues came up for you, personally, in trying any activity yourself? What came up in the process of facilitating?
- What would you change if you were to lead this workshop again? How would you do it differently?
- What did you learn about yourself as an individual while facilitating this workshop? What did you learn about yourself as a leader?
- Looking ahead to the next workshop in this program, determine what materials you need to request or gather. What other preparations do you need to make?

## TAKING IT HOME

Wisdom is not a fixed quality. It circulates among us. — Sister Souljah, contemporary hip-hop artist

Practice listening deeply. Invite family members or friends to set aside time for one-to-one or group conversations where each person in turn is invited to share an experience which touched them deeply or a moment that called them to be their best selves. You might try framing a leadership question for family or a group of friends to consider together.

### Find Out More

You may wish to add resources that informed this workshop to your congregation's leadership library:

Bumbaugh, David E., [\*Unitarian and Universalism in America: A People's History\*](#) (Chicago: Meadville Lombard Theological School Press, 2000)

Jones, Paula Cole, "[Reconciliation as a spiritual discipline,](#)" *UU World*, March/April 2004

[Rendle Challenges Congregational Leaders to Think in New Ways](#) UU University, 2007.

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: NEWS YOU CAN UUSE! (30 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Card stock to fold in half to make table tents

- Several tables or rooms for small groups to spread out and collaborate
- Newsprint and markers
- Writing paper and pens/pencils

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Make up to five table tents by folding card stock. Label each with one of these headings: SPIRITUAL/ FAITH DEVELOPMENT, WORSHIP, SOCIAL JUSTICE, MUSIC and FACILITY. Or, use other headings that are more appropriate for your congregation.
- Set up several tables, each with one or two sheets of newsprint, writing paper, markers, pens/pencils and one of the tent signs. If you will use multiple rooms, keep all the table tents with you to introduce the activity.

### **Description of Activity**

Tell participants they are going to travel ten years into the future of their congregation. Show them the tent signs for various aspects of congregational life. Invite them to choose the one which most interests/suits them and form small groups according to interest. Direct the small groups to write either a congregational newsletter article or a press release for local media that announces and explains the activities of the congregation, as if today were ten years in the future. Tell small groups they have 20 minutes for this part of the activity and ask them to move with their tent sign to the tables/rooms you have prepared.

After 20 minutes, re-gather the entire group. Invite small groups to share their articles. Ask participants to consider how, as leaders, they might move the congregation toward the accomplishments they have imagined. You might suggest that by imagining the future, they have taken the first step.

## STORY: FRANCIS DAVID — GUILTY OF INNOVATION

Based on information in *Unitarian Universalism: A Narrative History* by David E. Bumbaugh (Chicago: Meadville Lombard Theological School Press, 2000).

*Note: David is pronounced, "Da-VEED."*

For a short time, religious toleration was the rule of the land in 16th-century Transylvania. When his mother died, the newly crowned King John Sigismund found himself ruling a country divided religiously among Roman Catholics, Calvinists and Lutherans. Among the king's advisors were George Biandrata, a Polish physician and skilled politician, and court preacher David Ferencz, known in the west as Francis David.

In the heady times of the 16th century, Christian doctrine was the subject of great debate. King John Sigismund, realizing there was no possibility of compromise among the various interpreters of proper doctrine, issued an edict that each person was free to support their chosen understanding of Christian doctrine. The edict allowed advisor Biandrata, and court preacher David, both members of the Reformed (Calvinist) tradition, to begin to explore questions concerning the doctrine of the Trinity and the deity of Jesus. Their exploration and unorthodox interpretations of Christian doctrine caused considerable concern among other members of the Reformed clergy.

In those days, doctrinal matters in Transylvania were fully aired by convening a formal debate. King John Sigismund scheduled such an event for March 3, 1568. He invited believers in the "Unity of God" position to debate the Trinitarians. The debate lasted ten days, beginning at 5 a.m. each day. Francis David represented the Unitarian position and relied on scripture to buttress his arguments. At the conclusion of the debate, David's arguments were seen as stronger, and many in Transylvania embraced Unitarianism. A second debate the following year led the King to declare that he himself was Unitarian and there should be religious toleration in the land. By 1571, Unitarianism was given legal recognition in what would turn out to be King John Sigismund's last public act. He died two months later as a result of an accident, and left no heir to the throne.

John Sigismund was succeeded by a Catholic named Stephen Bathori, who dismissed most of the Unitarians at court, while retaining Biandrata as one of his advisors. Stephen Bathori reaffirmed a policy of toleration for those Christian religions named in the 1571 decree, but declared that he would not allow any further religious innovation.

Unitarianism gained more converts in Transylvania during that period, despite the prohibition against doctrinal changes, and an ecclesiastical organization was developed. By 1577, restrictions were placed on Unitarians, but the organization continued to thrive. Francis David, by now the Unitarian Bishop, was still driven toward reform of doctrine rather than development of church organization. He explored questions having to do with the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, infant baptism, predestination and the worship of Jesus, questioning doctrine in all four areas. Biandrata, more concerned with the health of the church than with matters of doctrine, urged David to keep silent. But this was not Francis David's way.

Francis David began to preach his heretical ideas from the pulpit. Biandrata, concerned for the survival of the Unitarian Church, reported David's activities to the ruler. David continued to preach after the Prince ordered him to stop, and Francis David was arrested and tried for the crime of "innovation," questioning and challenging religious doctrine. The prosecutor at trial was Giorgio Biandrata, who dissembled when asked about his own earlier involvement in questioning religious doctrine. Francis David was found guilty of innovation and condemned to prison for the remainder of his life. He died in the royal dungeon in the castle at Deva on November 15, 1579. Biandrata went on to push the Unitarian church toward more conservative theological positions. By the time he died in 1588, very little remained of his former influence in the Transylvanian Unitarian movement. The Unitarian Church itself was forced into a position of doctrinal stagnation that lasted more than 200 years.

## STORY: PRACTICING RECONCILIATION — A REFLECTION

Excerpted from "[Reconciliation as a spiritual practice.](#)" by Paula Cole Jones in the March/April 2004 issue of *UU World*.

Practicing reconciliation is my personal spiritual discipline. Practicing reconciliation means I commit to being in right relationship with people in my life and, when I'm not, caring enough to face unresolved issues and improve the relationship.

I have carried reconciliation with me while working in All Souls Church in Washington, where I am a lifelong member, and increasingly, in the Unitarian Universalist Association at large. From this experience I have learned that reconciliation is a competency we can bring to four levels of conflict — in our own souls, between individuals like my sister and me, within groups like my congregation, and between groups such as people of color like me and the dominant white culture. Reconciliation helps us to get into right relationship.

I learned the importance of personal and group reconciliation at church on a sticky weekend in July 1997. Seventy members of All Souls in Washington, DC, gathered to discuss reconciliation at the church. Our racially diverse congregation was staggering after a divisive crisis that ended a ministry. The meeting began a painstaking process of rebuilding our community and deciding how to move forward.

One of the many changes that came out of the reconciliation work at church was "A Dialogue on Race and Ethnicity" (ADORE). People came together to share personal stories about how race had shaped their life experiences, and it was clear that we had tapped into something deep in the community. We kept the door open for anyone who wanted to participate: Everyone has a story about race and ethnicity. Telling the stories brought a new dimension of our lives to the church community and brought us closer together. Six years later, ADORE continues to meet and welcomes new participants.

The leaders provided a structure for this large group of people to address one of the most difficult issues in our lives; they took the conversation much deeper than I had expected. My mother and another member of our congregation attended with me, and we agreed that such a workshop would be good for our congregation. But as we learned when the workshop came to All Souls, some people found this deeper involvement a challenge. We were fortunate to have members of the church board, search committee, ADORE, and other leaders participate in the even more challenging "Jubilee

Two" workshop before the search committee reviewed applications for a new senior minister. After five years of reconciliation work, with ministerial participation and lay leadership, antiracism has been embraced widely in the congregation.

My experience at All Souls in 1997 inspired my decision to make reconciliation my spiritual practice. That experience also deepened my involvement in my church and began my growing involvement in my district and ultimately in the UUA. The more involved I got, the more challenging the work became—but the more risks I took, the more I grew. The more I listened and the more I communicated, the stronger trust became. The more humility I summoned, the more I learned.

People tend to be reluctant to go deep into matters of race because we fear discomfort, conflict, and loss, and we fear appearing uninformed and unprepared. Summoning the depth of honesty needed to confront these fears—and thus to confront racism and bring reconciliation to groups that have been divided—is a spiritual challenge. It troubles the spirit because it disrupts our sense of things being all right. But thinking things are all right when they're not makes it difficult to see why or how we need to change.

The work of building a just community means individually and collectively working to be in right relationship with people from historically marginalized groups and holding ourselves accountable for changing the things that create injustice. A discipline of reconciliation helps us as we work to undo racism and oppression by empowering us to get on the path over and over again, respecting and appreciating that we have traveled different paths and we come to this point from different experiences.

The unfinished business of race has challenged me spiritually. At the end of 2002, reflecting on a year of engagement with UUA antiracism efforts, I wrote in my journal: "I am no longer willing to have my personal energy and spirit absorbed by the 'Great Inertia' around antiracism." I considered leaving the church. I spoke with my mother about visiting other churches. She was loving and supportive—and encouraged me to not give up.

Then I left for a ten-day trip on UUA business that I figured would make my decision to stay or leave. My first meeting, in Boston, included a serendipitous encounter with a colleague on a midnight walk in the snow to the corner store; he told me about some ministers who were ready to enter the conversation about antiracism. The trip led to Chicago and back to Boston for a meeting with the leaders of the UUA's youth organization, who committed to incorporate anti-racism into their long-

range planning. My moment of decision came on the airplane to Chicago , tears welling up in my eyes as I read the Skinner House book *Soul Work*, and saw that the conversation to undo racism is authentic among ministers in the UUA. By the end of the trip, I had reconciled my own misgivings, and I had grown.

It's like what they say about marriage: We marry a fantasy and the bubble has to burst before the real relationship begins. It took forty years for my UU bubble to burst my fantasy that it was the ideal community. It

was a pretty long honeymoon. I committed to begin again.

At its high points my work with the church has given me spiritual sustenance and a loving community. It's been more than five years since I learned the valuable lesson that led to developing a practice of reconciliation. Yes, it is spiritual work, and it takes discipline. For five years this practice has enabled me to challenge and be challenged in our congregation, which is now a vibrant, rapidly growing community with a vision for racial and social justice, and it has enriched my personal life.

## HANDOUT 1: WHAT ARE OUR QUESTIONS?

What are the burning questions in our congregation at this moment?

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Reframe those questions which are leadership questions.

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After conversation with a partner, reframe your leadership questions again.

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After conversation with a partner, compose two or three questions together that blend or include questions from both of your lists. (If you and your partner are not from the same congregation, use this time to articulate for one another how your questions get at the heart of the big issues facing your particular congregation.)

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Reframe your questions or add related (or sub-) questions that elicit positive responses (e.g., naming the congregation's strengths), rather than negative responses (e.g., naming the congregation's problems).

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## **LEADER RESOURCE 1: LISTENING CIRCLE FACILITATOR GUIDE**

*What part of belonging to this faith community touches your spirit most deeply?*

Present the question for listening circle participants to address.

Explain that as the talking object is passed around the circle, participants may respond, one at a time, from their hearts, while others listen deeply.

Explain that this exercise is only a taste of the listening circle process, so you will allow each speaker two (or three) minutes. You may wish to model a two-minute response.

Repeat the question: "What part of belonging to this faith community touches your spirit most deeply?" Pass the talking object to a person sitting next to you to begin the listening circle. When the talking object returns to you, tell the group the listening circle is now done.

# WORKSHOP 9: FACING DANGER

## INTRODUCTION

*I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand as in what direction we are moving. To reach the port of heaven we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it—but we must sail, and not drift, nor lie at anchor. — Oliver Wendell Holmes, 19th-century Unitarian poet*

Participants explore and articulate some of the risks and dangers that come with leading a congregation or organization through adaptive change. Through the ancient, familiar story of Moses, participants consider the challenges leaders face and identify strengths and strategies that can help. Participants express creatively their identity as congregational leaders and share resources and understandings that help them when they face danger in a leadership role.

In Activity 3, participants paint masks. Some may work quite carefully on and take great pride in their efforts; expect this activity to take at least as long as the time allotted here (55 minutes). Arrange a place to leave masks to dry.

## GOALS

This workshop will:

- Introduce Heifetz and Linsky's work enumerating and explaining some ways a leader can be marginalized, distracted, seduced or attacked when leading an organization through adaptive change
- Present the biblical story of Moses as a case study in leadership.
- Provide creative opportunities for participants to integrate and express their understanding of themselves as leaders.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Explore Heifetz and Linsky's work on the dangers leaders face, using the biblical Moses as a case study
- Discover wisdom the Moses story can offer contemporary Unitarian Universalist lay leaders
- Use meditation, art or music and reflective conversation to explore and express a growing identity as a leader.

# WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

| Activity  | Minutes |
|---|---------|
| Welcoming and Entering                                      |         |
| Opening   | 3       |
| Activity 1: Dangers Leaders Face                            | 10      |
| Activity 2: Moses — An Ancient Leadership Story             | 40      |
| Break   | 10      |
| Activity 3: Creating a Leader's Mask                        | 55      |
| Faith in Action: Good Leaders, Good Followers               |         |
| Closing   | 2       |
| Alternate Activity 1: Favorite Hymns                        | 30      |
| Alternate Activity 2: Our Leadership Stories — Going Deeper | 25      |

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Read Handout 1. Consider your own leadership story in the light of Heifetz and Linsky's work on the dangers leaders face. Where have you faced danger? Did you anticipate danger, or did it surprise you? How did you meet it? What did you learn from the experience?

Express yourself artistically as a leader. Write a poem, create a mask, paint, sing or play favorite hymns or write in your journal. How has facilitating Harvest the Power workshops deepened your understanding of yourself as a leader? Built your leadership skills and confidence?

Reflect on your experiences as a follower. When, and under what circumstances have you followed someone else's lead? Are you more anxious as a leader or as a follower? What experiences as a follower have enriched your understanding of what it means to lead?

To strengthen your leadership skills and confidence, explore the leadership development resources recommended at the end of the workshop, as well as Workshop 1, Leader Resource 1, Accessibility Guidelines for Workshop Presenters.

## WELCOMING AND ENTERING

### Materials for Activity

- Name tags and materials for making name tags
- Music and player

### Preparation for Activity

- Play music to create a welcoming atmosphere.
- Lay out participants' name tags and name tag-making materials.

### Description of Activity

Invite any participant who needs a name tag to create one now.

## OPENING (3 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Small worship table
- Chalice, candle and lighter or LED battery-operated candle

### Preparation for Activity

- Set the chalice on the worship table.

### Description of Activity

Gather the group in a circle. Ask a participant to light the chalice as you or another participant read the [opening words](#) from the UUA's online [Worship Web](#), by the Rev. Kendyl R. Gibbons:

We are here because we are people of faith. Within each of us lives the conviction of a saving faith that could restore our broken planet and illuminate the lives of our sisters and brothers. Ancient wisdom teaches that we who would save the world must first save ourselves. We who would restore the planet must learn to restore the broken structures of the institutions closest to hand; to illuminate the lives of our companions and friends. To this end let us center ourselves, acknowledging the trouble of mind and vexation of spirit that accompany us even here. Let us open ourselves to that creative mystery which is at work in our striving, whose servants we are and seek to be.

## ACTIVITY 1: DANGERS LEADERS FACE (10 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Handout 1, [Dangers Leaders Face](#) (included in this document)
- Pens or pencils

### Preparation for Activity

- Copy Handout 1 for all participants.

### Description of Activity

Point out that Harvest the Power workshops have emphasized individual integrity, spiritual practice and understanding of faith. Invite participants to take a moment and reflect on how spiritual and emotional health can help a leader deal with challenges. Then invite volunteers to share some of their reflections with the group. If no participant expresses the idea that leaders face risks during times of change in a congregation, raise it yourself.

Distribute Handout 1 and pens/pencils. Ask participants to read the handout and mark any form of "danger" that rings true for them. Perhaps they can imagine examples of those dangers or have faced them in the course of their own leadership. Invite them to place a question mark next to any danger for which they cannot imagine an example or a scenario. Allow five minutes.

Invite participants to comment on the list and raise questions they have about it. Explain that this workshop will explore some of the ways leaders face risk and will help them identify resources, both internal and external, to help them manage their own anxiety and uncertainty in the leadership role.

## ACTIVITY 2: MOSES — AN ANCIENT LEADERSHIP STORY (40 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Story, [Moses — An Ancient Leadership Story](#) (included in this document)
- Handout 1, [Dangers Leaders Face](#) (included in this document)
- A clock

### Preparation for Activity

- Review the story. Arrange for four participants to read aloud the story's four sections. Or, plan to engage a "cast" of readers, assigning volunteers to read the entire story including the words of the storyteller, God, Moses, Pharaoh, the people and Jethro. Make enough copies of the story.
- Make sure all participants have Handout 1, distributed in the previous activity.

### Description of Activity

The Moses story is an ancient one, generally familiar to adults in our congregations. Explain that you will explore

the Moses story using a new lens. Say, in your own words:

Moses will be a case study. We will examine how Moses led through an adaptive challenge. An adaptive challenge is one that demands a community develop organizational, structural and spiritual capacities to meet a problem successfully, according to its values and purposes.

Tell them they will hear the story in four sections. After each section, they will be invited to examine how Moses is doing as a leader and what wisdom the story offers to contemporary Unitarian Universalist congregational leaders.

Invite prearranged volunteers to read aloud the first section of the story, Moses is Called to Leadership. Then, ask participants to reflect silently on these questions:

- Who first called you to leadership?
- What were the circumstances?
- Did you hesitate to accept? What were your concerns about saying "yes"?
- Did you feel compelled to say "yes" because of the person doing the asking?

After two minutes, invite participants to turn to a partner and to share as much as they are comfortable sharing about their story. Tell participants they have four minutes for the conversation. After two minutes, remind pairs to switch speakers.

Resume the reading. After the second section, Out of Egypt, lead a whole-group conversation for about five minutes, using these questions as a guide:

- What resistance did Moses face? What were the sources of the resistance?
- How did Moses show his integrity as a leader in the face of a seemingly intractable problem? How would the story have been different if he had compromised?
- What role did vision (getting on the balcony) play in Moses' actions? What role did persistence play?
- Does this story bring to mind any contemporary problems or issues facing your congregation?

Now have volunteers read aloud the third section, In the Wilderness. When they are done, invite participants to move into groups of three and take five minutes to explore this section of the story using these questions:

- How is Moses doing here as he faces a wild assortment of management challenges?
- What role is anxiety playing in this story? How is Moses trying to hold the people's anxiety or fix what is making them anxious?
- Does Moses' own anxiety come into play? If so, how?
- As a congregational leader, have you ever felt overwhelmed by management challenges? How does that affect your ability to get on the balcony and ask "Are we doing right things?" rather than "Are we doing things right?"

Re-gather the group and have volunteers read aloud the fourth section, Forming a New Society. Invite participants to reflect and comment on the way Moses leads the people through an adaptive challenge. You may wish to remind the group of the definition of an adaptive challenge by asking, "What organizational, structural and spiritual capacities did Moses' people need to develop, in order to move forward as a people?" Ask, "Why must a generation die off before the people can enter the Promised Land?"

Indicate the information found in Handout 1 and invite participants to name the dangers Moses faced. Use these questions:

- Are there occasions when he is seduced, marginalized, attacked or diverted?
- Are there occasions when he is reactive and anxious himself?

Be sure to save a few minutes for these concluding discussion questions:

- What wisdom does this tale offer contemporary congregational leaders?
- In what ways does this story help you better understand any of the dangers listed in Handout 1?

### **Including All Participants**

Ask for volunteer readers ahead of time; do not put anyone on the spot. If possible, provide the story to pre-arranged readers before the workshop.

## **ACTIVITY 3: CREATING A LEADER'S MASK (55 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Blank face masks for all participants
- Paints and decorating materials to share

- Two small paintbrushes, one narrow and one wider, for each participant
- Materials for decorating masks and appropriate craft glue(s)
- Newspaper to cover work tables; cups of water or paint thinner, as appropriate; paper towels and other clean-up materials

### Preparation for Activity

- Purchase blank masks made of cardboard, paper mache, Styrofoam or plastic at an art supply or craft store.
- Obtain paints and brushes. Use water-based paints for cardboard or paper mache masks, acrylic or enamel for Styrofoam or plastic. (Note: Plastic masks are difficult to paint on; you may wish to provide permanent markers.)
- Obtain decorative materials such as feathers, ribbon, applique and stickers, and appropriate craft glue.
- Cover work tables with newspaper. Set out a blank mask and two brushes for each participant. Set paints, water or paint thinner, paper towels and decorating materials on work tables for participants to share.
- Identify a place where participants can leave wet masks to dry after the workshop. Spread newspaper there, as well.

### Description of Activity

Tell the group they will each paint and decorate a mask to express themselves as congregational leaders, after a brief, guided meditation.

Invite participants to sit comfortably and close their eyes as they are comfortable. Read the meditation, pausing to allow reflection after each question:

We are going to envision our roles as congregational leaders through a brief guided meditation. Please sit comfortably. Either close your eyes or focus on an object in the room. Take three, slow, deep breaths, counting silently to four on each inhale and exhale. Think about your role as a leader in your congregation. What or who first recognized your potential to be a leader? When did you realize that you were a leader? Think about the leadership positions you have held, events you've planned, programs or groups you have led or times you have been part leading worship. What dangers or challenges have you faced along the way?

What is it that grounds you and helps you to maintain your own integrity in the face of dangers and challenges?

How has your becoming a leader been connected with your spiritual growth?

Bring your attention back to the room as you are ready, and finish with three more slow, deep breaths.

When everyone has returned their attention to the group, invite them to depict themselves in their role as a congregational leader by painting a face mask. Their mask can be either concrete or abstract, whichever expresses them best. Show them the materials you have assembled and invite them to begin working. Point out that some may choose to work silently and others may prefer to converse and share with others as they work.

Once all masks are complete, invite participants to share them either with the entire group or in small groups, depending on the overall group size and the time available. Ask participants to explain each element of the mask and how it represents them as a congregational leader.

### Including All Participants

If a participant expresses a lack of confidence in their artistic abilities, encourage them to use their fear or concern as part of their mask.

If any participants are unable to paint or decorate, you may choose to use Alternate Activity 1, Favorite Hymns, or Alternate Activity 2, Our Leadership Stories — Going Deeper.

## CLOSING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook

### Description of Activity

Thank participants for sharing of themselves in the workshop today. Tell them they may take their masks home (or, leave them to dry before bringing them home).

Close with "Let Religion Be to Us Life and Joy" by Vincent Silliman, Reading 466 in *Singing the Living Tradition*.

## FAITH IN ACTION: GOOD LEADERS, GOOD FOLLOWERS

### Description of Activity

Encourage participants to reflect on this question: Are there times in your life when you have been among the

people complaining, because of anxiety or uncertainty, in a congregation or organization (or even your family or workplace)? In remembering those times, consider how you might react differently if you were to encounter a similar situation today. What have you learned from your experiences as a leader about the ways people respond to change?

### Leaders Need Followers

Make a commitment to be a follower in some area of your life. You might volunteer to be part of a congregational or community project where others are in the leadership roles. You might volunteer to work with youth in a situation where they hold the leadership position. What are the qualities of a "good follower"? How does it feel to work in a situation where someone other than you determines the vision and priorities?

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

- Looking at each activity in this workshop, what worked as well as or better than you had anticipated? What did not work as well as you anticipated?
- What issues came up for you, personally, in trying any activity yourself? What came up in the process of facilitating?
- What would you change if you were to lead this workshop again? How would you do it differently?
- What did you learn about yourself as an individual while facilitating this workshop? What did you learn about yourself as a leader?
- Looking ahead to the next workshop in this program, determine what materials you need to request or gather. What other preparations do you need to make?

## TAKING IT HOME

I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand as in what direction we are moving. To reach the port of heaven we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it—but we must sail, and not drift, nor lie at anchor. — Oliver Wendell Holmes, 19th-century Unitarian poet

Explore biographies and stories of leaders you admire. How did they face danger as they led a community or organization through adaptive change? Where were they successful? When they were less successful, how do you think they could have done things differently?

## Find Out More

Read or watch the 1882 Heinrich Ibsen play, *An Enemy of the People*. You can order a DVD of a 1966, black-and-white television production of Arthur Miller's adaptation of the play. Pay attention to the kinds of danger the main character faces as he tries to warn his town about a potential environmental catastrophe.

Resources that informed this workshop may enhance your congregation's leadership library:

Benefiel, Margaret, *Soul at Work: Spiritual Leadership in Organizations*, (New York: Seabury, 2005)

[Congregational Handbook](#), Unitarian Universalist Association, 2005

Friedman, Edwin H., *A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix* (New York: Seabury Books, 2007)

Heifetz, Ronald A., *Leadership Without Easy Answers* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994)

Heifetz, Ronald A. and Marty Linsky, *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive Through the Dangers of Leading* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2002)

Wills, Gary, *Certain Trumpets: The Nature of Leadership* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995).

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: FAVORITE HYMNS (30 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Copies of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook, for all participants
- Paper and pencils/pens
- Optional: Piano

### Preparation for Activity

- If possible, arrange for a musician (either a vocalist or a pianist) with good sight reading ability to join you for this part of the workshop.

### Description of Activity

Participants share with one another hymns and readings which inspire them, comfort them, challenge them or are for some other reason personal favorites. Distribute hymnals, paper and pens/pencils. Invite participants to find their favorite hymns or readings and jot down the numbers. Tell them as they search the hymnbook for their favorites, they may discover other gems.

After about ten minutes, invite participants, one at a time, to explain why one they have chosen is a particular

favorite. Sing favorite hymns as a group, accompanied by keyboard or led by an experienced vocalist.

Note common favorites among those in the group; one may suit the closing for this workshop or an opening for a subsequent workshop.

### **Including All Participants**

A song leader or accompanist can encourage those in your group who may be reluctant to sing.

Have large print and/or braille hymnbooks available as needed by your group.

## **ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: OUR LEADERSHIP STORIES — GOING DEEPER (25 MINUTES)**

### **Description of Activity**

If the group has done Workshop 1 of Harvest the Power, participants had an opportunity to tell one another their leadership stories. Now, participants re-examine (or, consider for the first time) their own leadership journeys through the lens of "dangers leaders face."

Begin with a guided meditation, pausing to allow reflection after each question:

We are going to envision our roles as congregational leaders through a brief guided meditation. Please sit comfortably. Either close your eyes or focus on an object in the room. Take three slow, deep breaths, counting silently to four on each inhale and exhale. Think about your role as a leader in your congregation. What or who first recognized your potential to be a leader? When did you realize that you were a leader? Think about the leadership positions you have held, events you've planned, programs or groups you have led, or times you have been part leading worship. What dangers or challenges have you faced along the way? What is it that grounds you and helps you to maintain your own integrity in the face of dangers and challenges? How has being a leader helped you to grow spiritually? Bring your attention back to the room as you are ready, and finish with three more slow, deep breaths.

Invite participants to move into groups of three or four and share their leadership stories, with a focus on dangers they have faced along the way. Ask small groups, after each person has shared, to reflect together on the dangers and risks they currently face as

congregational leaders, particularly if they are leading in a time of change.

## STORY: MOSES — AN ANCIENT LEADERSHIP STORY

*This story has four sections. Stop the reading after each section to share reflection as guided in Activity 2, Description of Activity.*

### 1. Moses Is Called to Leadership

"Today," Moses thought, "I'll take the flock to the base of the Holy Mountain . I know there is some green pasture over there." As Moses walked, he daydreamed, remembering how it was that he came to be in Midian, in the land of the Kennites. He vaguely recalled his childhood in the court of Egypt, and his long-ago discovery that he was not Egyptian, but had instead been born to a Hebrew woman, one of the slaves who labored on the Pharaoh's pyramids. He remembered that awful day when he had killed an Egyptian soldier, and then had run and run and run until he came to this land. He wondered what had become of his people, still enslaved in the land of Egypt . He thought about how lucky he was to have escaped and come to Midian. He smiled as he remembered his wife and two sons, and thought about how contented he was to spend his days tending his father-in-law Jethro's flock.

Soon Moses and the flock reached the base of the mountain, where they would surely find good pasture. As Moses walked, something caught his eye and pulled him abruptly from his reverie. A single bush was on fire, an odd occurrence. As Moses approached the bush, he heard a voice calling to him, "Moses! Moses!"

"Here I am," he replied. And the voice ordered him to put off his sandals, for the place where he was standing was holy ground.

"Who are you?" asked Moses, trembling with fright.

"I am the God of your fathers, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I have heard my people call out to me as they suffer in slavery. I want you to go and tell Pharaoh to let my people go!"

"Who, me? I can't do that! Why would they believe me? Whom shall I say sent me?"

"Tell them that 'I AM' sent you! I will give you a sign. Cast your staff upon the ground." When Moses threw his staff to the ground, it began to move. It became a snake! "Take the snake by the tail," commanded the voice. When Moses grabbed the snake, it became once more his staff.

Convinced that the voice was indeed God's, a reluctant Moses pointed out that he was a poor choice to go and make demands of Pharaoh: "I have never been

eloquent," he said, "I am slow of speech and slow of tongue."

"Go and tell Pharaoh to let my people go! Your brother Aaron can serve as a mouthpiece for you if you need help."

"Will you please send someone else? There must be others who can do this."

"Go and tell Pharaoh to let my people go!"

And reluctantly Moses made preparations to leave for Egypt .

### 2. Out of Egypt

Moses was glad to meet his brother Aaron on the edge of the wilderness outside of Egypt . Aaron told him of the difficulty the Hebrew people had under the yoke of slavery. Moses told Aaron of the strange vision at the burning bush and of his understanding that he and Aaron were to go to Pharaoh and demand that he let the Hebrew people go.

A few days later, Moses and Aaron stood before Pharaoh, saying, "The God of our fathers demands that we hold a feast for him in the wilderness at a place three days' journey from here. If we do not go, then he has promised that terrible events will befall us and also the people of Egypt ."

Pharaoh mocked the request, angrily saying, "Why do you want to take your people away from their work? They must not have enough to do." And then he ordered his taskmasters to force the Hebrews to find their own straw to make bricks. The people were forced to gather stubble for straw, doubling the work expected of them.

And the foremen came to Moses and Aaron to complain: "Why did you ever go and talk to Pharaoh? You have made things worse; he has doubled our work and increased our suffering." And Moses told them of the freedom that awaited them and they kept before them the hope and the vision of the land God had promised would be theirs.

And again God said to Moses and Aaron, "Go and tell Pharaoh to let my people go." And Moses responded, "The people of Israel are not listening to me. Why would Pharaoh listen to a person like me?" But God repeated his demand.

When they went to Pharaoh, they showed him the many wonderful and terrible things that God could do. The waters of the Nile turned to blood. There was a plague of frogs in the land. Gnats invaded the land and flies swarmed throughout Egypt . And Pharaoh said, "Go and sacrifice to your God within the land of Egypt ." Moses replied, "It would not be right for us to sacrifice within the

land of Egypt . We must travel three days into the wilderness for our feast."

And God demanded again that Moses go to Pharaoh and tell him to let the people go. God threatened that a sickness would come upon the cattle and a pestilence upon the people of Egypt if Pharaoh did not let the Hebrews go. There would be thunder and lightening and hail that would ruin crops and cause famine in the land. And Pharaoh did not listen, and those plagues came to pass. When the hail came upon the land, Pharaoh said to Moses, "Go and sacrifice to your God, but take only your men. Women and children and flocks and herds you must leave behind in Egypt ." And Moses said, "We must go with our young and our old; we will go with our sons and daughters and with our flocks and herds three days' journey into the wilderness to hold a feast for our God." And Pharaoh refused, driving Moses and Aaron from his presence.

And when they went again to Pharaoh to demand that he let the people go, Moses and Aaron threatened that their God would bring a plague of locusts and a plague of darkness upon the land of Egypt . And so it was that the plague of locusts was followed by a plague of darkness. And Pharaoh called Moses in to him and said, "Go and sacrifice to your God. You may bring your men, women and children, but your herds and flocks you must leave behind." And Moses said, "We must have animals to sacrifice. Not one hoof will we leave behind!" And Pharaoh said, "NO! Get out of here! If I ever see your face again, I will have you killed!"

Moses spoke to the people of Egypt and not to Pharaoh when he told of the last plague to come: All the first-born in the land of Egypt would die if Pharaoh would not let the Hebrews go. Moses and Aaron called the people of Israel together and gave them instructions, "You shall slaughter a lamb and take some of the blood and put it on your door and your doorposts so that the plague will pass over your abode." And so it was that all the first-born of the land of Egypt died that night and the first-born of the Hebrews were spared. Pharaoh heard the great cry in all of Egypt . He summoned Moses and Aaron in the dead of night and told them, "Go! Take your men, your women, your children, your flocks and your herds. Go out of Egypt now!" And the people of Israel left so quickly that they could not allow their bread to rise; they ate unleavened bread as they journeyed.

When they reached the Red Sea, Pharaoh's army was in pursuit. As Pharaoh drew near, the people cried out to Moses, "Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us out to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us? Why didn't you leave well enough alone? In Egypt we would have lived and here we will be slaughtered." And Moses said to them, "Fear not! Stand

firm!" And he stretched out his staff over the waters of the Red Sea and a great east wind blew and the waters were divided. The people passed across the Red Sea on dry land, and when they reached the other side, they watched as the waters closed in, drowning Pharaoh's pursuing army.

There was great celebration in the land, songs and dancing and the sound of tambourines. And the freed people prepared for their journey into the wilderness toward the land that God had promised them.

### **3. In the Wilderness**

The journey through the wilderness was difficult. Moses was called on to do many things, and he sought advice from God to figure out what to do.

After three days; journey, the only water they could find was bitter and undrinkable. The people complained, demanding something to drink. Moses threw a piece of wood into the water and it became sweet. The people drank eagerly, and then continued their journey until they reached Elim, where there were 12 springs of water and 70 palm trees.

After they departed Elim, some weeks after leaving Egypt , they ran short of food. The people complained against Moses and Aaron: "If only we had died by the hand of God in the land of Egypt , when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill the whole assembly with hunger." And Moses told the people that God had promised manna would reign down from heaven in the night, and at daybreak they could gather and eat their fill. And so it was that manna, looking white like coriander seed with a taste like that of wafers and honey, was found everywhere as the sun rose. And the people ate their fill, and continued to gather and eat manna each morning through their journey.

And when they camped at Rephidim, there was again no water to drink. And the people complained, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" Moses cried out to God, "What shall I do? They are ready to stone me!" And God instructed him to take his staff, and in the presence of the elders, to strike a rock. Moses did so, and water came out of the rock so the people could drink.

The Amalekites who lived in the area did not want to share their water with this wandering people, and they attacked. Moses told his commander Joshua to choose some men to fight the Amalekites. They went out to fight, and Moses, Aaron and Hur, one of the elders, went to the top of the hill. The battle unfolded before them. Whenever Moses lifted up his hand, Israel prevailed. Whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed.

When Moses grew too weary to hold his hand up any longer, they brought a stone and put it under him so he could sit. Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side and the other on the other side so he was steady until the sun set. Thus Joshua and the Israelites defeated the Amalekites.

When they came to the land of Midian, where Moses' father-in-law, wife and children were living, Moses told Jethro of all that had befallen since he had left Midian. Jethro observed that the people came to Moses with all of their complaints and disputes, and that Moses worked to resolve every one. Moses was exhausted, and had no time for his wife or his children. Jethro said to Moses, "Why are you doing all of this? Why must you solve disputes between people from morning until evening? You need to delegate some of this work. Choose individuals who are trustworthy. Teach them to be judges and preside over the complaints and disputes of the people." Moses listened to his father-in-law and named some judges. After that, the judges brought only the hard cases to Moses; the rest they decided themselves.

#### **4. Forming a New Society**

When they reached the foot of Mount Sinai, Moses summoned the elders and told them to instruct the people to wash their clothes and prepare for God to come three days hence. "Do not allow anyone to go up the mountain or to touch it," he said.

On the third day a thick cloud covered the mountain and there was thunder and lightening and the blast of a trumpet. Moses and Aaron approached the mountain, covering their faces. The people were afraid and stood at a distance. After a time, Moses journeyed alone to the top of the mountain, where he received from God two tablets containing the words of the covenant with Israel, the Ten Commandments. On the mountaintop, Moses received many instructions for forming a new society, including prescriptions for behavior, instructions for worship and for construction of a tabernacle and for an ark to hold the tablets of the covenant. And he was gone from the people for a long time.

Meanwhile, the people at the foot of the mountain grew anxious. "Who is this Moses anyway? And why has he been gone so long? What of this God he keeps talking about and the promises of a new land?" They urged Aaron to do something to help them, to make for them a golden calf that they might worship something familiar. Aaron was worried about the people and wanted to reassure them, so he gathered all of their gold jewelry and melted it down and created for them a golden calf to worship.

As Moses came down from the mountain carrying the tablets with the covenant, he heard much singing and dancing, and he became concerned. He knew that the first thing on those tablets was, "I am the Lord your God and you shall have no other gods before me." So when Moses came upon the people worshipping the golden calf, singing and celebrating, he grew angry. He broke the tablets. He pulverized the golden calf and put the powder into water which he made the people drink. Then he called out, "Who is on the side of the Lord?" Those who came to him he instructed to take their swords and to kill all those who had worshiped the golden calf, even brothers and cousins and other family members. Three thousand people were slaughtered that day.

Moses pitched a tent apart from the people, outside the camp. There he withdrew to speak with God and to plead on behalf of the people.

After a time, God instructed Moses to once again journey up the mountain to meet God, once again to carve tablets upon which would be written the instructions for a new society. And so Moses went up the mountain for a second time and received the words of the covenant on behalf of the people of Israel. And he came down from Mount Sinai much changed. He looked and sounded calm as he gathered the people around to tell them the laws for a new society. He instructed them on the roles they were to play, the ways they were to worship, and the ways they were to behave with one another. He ordered the construction of the ark and the tabernacle according to the instructions he had received.

And so it was that the Israelites went forth, carrying the Ark of the Covenant, journeying toward the Promised Land. But God told Moses that the people were not ready for a new land. They were to wander in the wilderness for 40 years until a generation had died; the next generation of Israelites would be the one to enter the Promised Land. Moses himself went to the mountaintop and saw the Promised Land, but did not enter it. He died there, and to this day no one knows where he is buried.

## HANDOUT 1: DANGERS LEADERS FACE

The dangers of leadership take many forms. Although each organization and culture has its preferred ways to restore equilibrium when someone upsets the balance, we've noticed four basic forms, with countless ingenious variations. When exercising leadership, you risk getting marginalized, diverted, attacked, or seduced. Regardless of the form, however, the point is the same. When people resist adaptive work, their goal is to shut down those who exercise leadership in order to preserve what they have.  
— Ronald A. Heifetz and Marty Linsky

Heifetz and Linsky name some of the many ways leaders face danger when trying to ask good questions and help an organization face adaptive challenges:

1. Marginalization, which might take these forms:
    - Tokenizing a person or a small group so they embody an issue and carry it prominently within the organization, so the organization as a whole never has to address the issue
    - Longing for a beloved past leader and not allowing space for a new leader
    - Telling an individual they represent a highly valued idea, keeping that individual from being a generalist
    - Confusing the leader with the issue, so the leader takes personal responsibility for an organizational challenge.
  2. Diversion, which might take these forms:
    - Broadening the leader's agenda by promoting or giving new responsibilities to a leader
    - Overwhelming the leader's agenda with demands and programmatic details.
  3. Attack, which might take these forms:
    - Engaging in personal attacks—physical or verbal
    - Criticizing a leader's style or personality instead of their message
    - Misrepresenting a leader's position or behavior.
  4. Seduction, which might take these forms:
    - Playing on the leader's friendships and loyalties to divert the leader from a sense of purpose
- Flattering and supporting a leader with the expectation of favored status in return.

# WORKSHOP 10: UNDERSTANDING SYSTEMS IN YOUR CONGREGATION

## INTRODUCTION

*The call to acts of leadership, which can be practiced from wherever we sit, is also an invitation to reclaim the creative capacity within every human being — especially those who are willing to engage the complex, adaptive challenges of our time. — Sharon Daloz Parks, contemporary educator and author*

This workshop introduces the idea of system thinking. Participants practice identifying relational and emotional patterns within the congregation as they examine congregational challenges. Looking at their own congregation's issues from a system perspective, participants will apply system thinking to consider healthy approaches to real life challenges.

## GOALS

This workshop will:

- Introduce the concept of system thinking
- Teach participant a process for examining an organizational challenge from a system point of view
- Offer participants practical guidelines for leading with integrity and vision while remaining connected to those who have authorized them to serve as leaders.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Learn a process for unearthing the relationships and emotions in play when a congregational system faces a challenge.
- Examine their own congregation's challenges from a system perspective
- Explore ways leaders can remain emotionally and spiritually healthy in a time of strong congregational emotions, while still remaining connected to the congregation they serve.

## WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

| Activity  | Minutes |
|---|---------|
| Welcoming and Entering                                    |         |
| Opening   | 3       |
| Activity 1: Story — It's Not MY Problem!                  | 10      |
| Activity 2: Applying System Thinking                      | 45      |
| Break   | 10      |
| Activity 3: Three Guidelines for Leaders                  | 10      |
| Activity 4: Your Congregation's Systems                   | 40      |
| Faith in Action: Through a System Lens                    |         |
| Closing   | 2       |
| Alternate Activity 1: Alternate System Thinking Scenarios | 45      |
| Alternate Activity 2: On the Brink of Big Change          | 40      |

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Consider a challenge facing your congregation right now. Use the process described in Activity 2 to identify some of the emotional and relational systems at play. Talk with your parish minister about the challenge, using the content of this workshop. Ask their observations about the congregation's emotional and relational systems in regard to the challenge facing the congregation. Reflect on the minister's observations and your own as you prepare to lead this workshop.

Examine the three guidelines for leaders in Handout 1. How are you doing a good job of caring for yourself as a leader? Are you having more difficulty doing so? In meditation or prayer, express compassion and a wish for spiritual and emotional health for yourself and for all the participants in this workshop.

To strengthen your leadership skills and confidence, explore the leadership development resources recommended at the end of the workshop, as well as Workshop 1, Leader Resource 1, Accessibility Guidelines for Workshop Presenters.

## WELCOMING AND ENTERING

### Materials for Activity

- Name tags and materials for making name tags
- Music and player

### Preparation for Activity

- Play music to create a welcoming atmosphere.
- Lay out participants' name tags and name tag-making materials.

### Description of Activity

Invite any participant who needs a name tag to create one now.

## OPENING (3 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Copies of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook
- Small worship table
- Chalice, candle and lighter or LED battery-operated candle

### Preparation for Activity

- Set the chalice on the worship table.

### Description of Activity

Light the chalice and share "Out of the Stars," Reading 530 in *Singing the Living Tradition*. Read it antiphonally, with half the group reading the plain text words and the other half responding with the words in italics.

## ACTIVITY 1: IT'S NOT MY PROBLEM! (10 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Story, [A Drop of Honey](#) (included in this document)

### Preparation for Activity

- Arrange in advance for a participant to read the story aloud.

### Description of Activity

As a volunteer reads the story to the group, ask participants to consider "drops of honey" that have caused unforeseen reactions or consequences in their family, their workplace or the congregation. Allow a minute or so for reflection, but do not ask for responses. Instead, invite participants to carry their examples and stories in their minds as you move through the workshop. Say, in your own words:

This workshop explores system thinking, the idea that all parts of the congregation are connected. Leaders need to examine all changes and all presenting issues in congregational life by looking at the congregation as a system.

## ACTIVITY 2: APPLYING SYSTEM THINKING (45 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 1, [Heavenly Unitarian Universalist Congregation](#) (included in this document)
- Newsprint, markers (four different colors) and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Review Leader Resource 1. Be clear how the congregation in the scenario works as a system.
- Optional: Review Alternate Activity 1, Alternate System Thinking Scenarios, and the accompanying handout, which presents two scenarios less complex than the Heavenly Unitarian Universalist Congregation scenario, both involving stresses that come from outside, not inside, the congregation. You may wish to use the alternate activity if the group is, in fact, engaged in a challenge resembling the Heavenly Unitarian Universalist scenario or if unpacking two simple scenarios would work better for the group than exploring a single, complex one.
- Post a sheet of newsprint.
- Prepare, but do not post, a sheet of newsprint with these reflection prompts:
  - Who in the congregation is affected by the music director's retirement?
  - What emotions might come to the fore as the congregation works through this change?
  - What long-standing patterns of behavior in this congregation may have been revealed by the music director's resignation?

### Description of Activity

Share with participants the scenario in Leader Resource 1. Tell them you are going to create a drawing of "the system" at Heavenly.

Draw a stick figure of the music director in the center of the newsprint. Ask participants to name individuals or groups affected *in any way* by the music director's work. As each individual or group is named, draw or represent them on the newsprint using the same color marker you used for the music director. If they have not done so already, prompt the group to add groups or individuals in the congregation which may have little relationship with the music director, but might have feelings about her departure. Draw these in the picture as well.

Now use a second color marker to draw arrows to connect the music director to groups or individuals with a direct relationship with the director. Use a third color marker to draw wavy lines between the director and those with whom she has an indirect relationship or who might have feelings about her departure.

Invite the group to examine the drawing and consider other connections in the congregation which have nothing to do with the music director or the music program; for example, teachers might be connected directly to the religious educator. Draw in those connections with arrows or wavy lines, as appropriate, using a marker in a fourth color.

Pause for a moment and let the participants take in the drawing. Tell them you are going to add complexity by identifying the emotions involved in the relationships. Form three small groups. Assign each group to consider the emotions involved in one of the three types of relationships:

- Group 1: The straight lines in color "two," representing direct connections with the music director
- Group 2: The wavy lines in color "three," representing indirect connections with the music director
- Group 3: The straight and wavy lines in color "four," representing connections among groups or individuals in the congregation that have nothing to do with the music director.

Provide each small group with newsprint and invite them to list *all the emotions* that might be involved in each relationship in the category they are assigned. After five minutes, invite each group, one at a time, to post their lists near the diagram and share. Ask the entire group for additions to each list.

Explain that system theory tells us an organization, family or congregation desires stability or balance and will find ways to keep things stable, whether or not those ways are entirely healthy. When something upsets the balance, it is human nature to want to return to what was perceived as stable and safe. The music director's

resignation upset the congregation's balance and brought into play a variety of factors and issues which had been latent or dormant when the congregation was stable.

Post the newsprint you have prepared with reflection questions. Invite participants to move back into their small groups to reconsider the question of who in the congregation is affected by the music director's resignation and what emotions might come to the fore as the congregation works through this challenge. Invite them also to identify any long-standing patterns of behavior in this congregation that were revealed by the music director's resignation.

After 10 minutes, re-gather the large group. Invite small groups to share their responses to the reflection questions. Then ask:

- Does system thinking point us to any larger questions that Heavenly's leadership and congregation might want to address?
- What are management questions for Heavenly's board? What are the leadership questions? (Remind that management questions ask, "Are we doing things right?" and leadership questions ask, "Are we doing right things?")
- How might Heavenly restore its balance — or find a new equilibrium?

Allow 10 minutes for this conversation.

To conclude, ask: Was the music director's retirement a good thing or a bad thing for Heavenly Unitarian Universalist Congregation?

### **Including All Participants**

If any participants cannot see your drawing of Heavenly's system on newsprint, explain the drawing in detail as the large group works together to create it.

## **ACTIVITY 3: THREE GUIDELINES FOR LEADERS (10 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Handout 1, [System Thinking — Guidelines for Leaders](#) (included in this document)

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Copy Handout 1 for all participants.
- Arrange for three participants to read sections of the handout aloud.

## Description of Activity

Distribute Handout 1. Read aloud the Steinke summary statement about system thinking. Then invite three volunteers to each read one of the guidelines.

Explain that the group will next look at their actual congregational issues and challenges from a system perspective. Suggest that they keep these guidelines in mind. Invite brief comments or questions about the handout.

## ACTIVITY 4: YOUR CONGREGATION'S SYSTEMS (40 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Handout 1, [System Thinking — Guidelines for Leaders](#) (included in this document)
- Newsprint, markers (four different colors) and tape for each small group

### Preparation for Activity

- Make sure all participants have Handout 1, introduced in Activity 3.
- Prepare, but do not post, a sheet of newsprint with these questions:
  - Does system thinking point us to any larger questions that your leadership and congregation might want to address?
  - Has something unbalanced the system?
  - What are the management questions? What are the leadership questions?
  - What might be some next steps for the leadership and the congregation to take?

### Description of Activity

Have the group brainstorm challenges or issues facing their congregation(s) and select two or three to examine from a systems perspective. Invite participants to form groups of four to six to address the issue that most interests them.

Invite the groups to examine their congregational issue from a system perspective, using the process for Heavenly Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Activity 2. Tell groups they have 10 minutes to represent on newsprint everyone affected, directly or indirectly, by the issue, the relationships between the parties, and the emotions involved in those relationships.

After ten minutes, post the newsprint you have prepared with questions. Invite the groups to consider those four questions and to write their responses on newsprint. Allow 15 minutes for this part of the activity.

Now, ask groups to post their diagrams and responses and share their discoveries with the large group. Engage the large group in making plans to continue the conversations and seek ways to move forward on these issues.

## CLOSING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook

### Description of Activity

Gather participants. Invite the group to share a brief moment of silence to honor the important work they have done together. Share Reading 706 in *Singing the Living Tradition*, "May the light around us guide our footsteps."

## FAITH IN ACTION: THROUGH A SYSTEM LENS

### Description of Activity

Consider some of your congregation's social justice projects and programs using a system lens. How does your congregation engage with the community? What relationships, both within the congregation and outside it, comprise your congregation's social justice system? What healthy or unhealthy patterns appear as your congregation engages in carrying its faith into the world? Consider inviting interested congregants to examine the social justice work of the congregation to discern how to support healthy patterns and shift unhealthy ones.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

- Looking at each activity in this workshop, what worked as well as or better than you had anticipated? What did not work as well as you anticipated?
- What issues came up for you, personally, in trying any activity yourself? What came up in the process of facilitating?
- What would you change if you were to lead this workshop again? How would you do it differently?

- What did you learn about yourself as an individual while facilitating this workshop? What did you learn about yourself as a leader?
- Looking ahead to the next workshop in this program, determine what materials you need to request or gather. What other preparations do you need to make?

## TAKING IT HOME

The call to acts of leadership, which can be practiced from wherever we sit, is also an invitation to reclaim the creative capacity within every human being — especially those who are willing to engage the complex, adaptive challenges of our time. — Sharon Daloz Parks, contemporary educator and author

Make plans with other members of the congregation's leadership team to follow up on ideas that emerged from examining the congregation's challenges from a system point of view.

### Find Out More

Review the [Healthy Congregations resources](#), including links to articles, webinars, videos, and books, on the UUA Central East Region web pages.

Read [The Congregational Handbook](#), Unitarian Universalist Association, 2005

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: ALTERNATE SYSTEM THINKING SCENARIOS (45 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Handout 2, [Alternate System Thinking Scenarios](#) (included in this document)
- Newsprint, markers (four different colors) and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Copy Handout 2 for all participants.
- Read Activity 2, Applying System Thinking, to become familiar with how to diagram a congregational issue or challenge from a system perspective.
- Post a sheet of newsprint.
- Prepare, but do not post, a sheet of newsprint with these reflection prompts:

- Who in the congregation is affected by the issue?
- What emotions might come to the fore as the congregation works through this challenge?
- What long-standing patterns of behavior in this congregation might be revealed by this challenge?

### Description of Activity

The two scenarios in Handout 2 are less complex than the Heavenly Unitarian Universalist Congregation scenario presented in Activity 2, and the events which cause the system to react come from outside, not inside, the organization. Use these alternate scenarios if the group you are working with is, in fact, engaged in a challenge resembling the Heavenly Unitarian Universalist scenario or if unpacking two simpler scenarios would work better for the group than exploring the single, complex one. These scenarios will take less time to process, so you will likely have time for both of them. You might change the configuration of small groups for the second scenario.

Read the first scenario aloud to the group. On newsprint, use the process described in Activity 2 to identify and diagram those affected by a change, their relationships to one another and the emotions involved. Then, form small groups to consider the questions you have posted on newsprint. Re-gather the large group to share observations (see Activity 2). Then, if time allows, repeat the process for the second scenario.

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: ON THE BRINK OF BIG CHANGE (40 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Handout 1, [System Thinking — Guidelines for Leaders](#) (included in this document)
- Newsprint, markers (four different colors) and tape
- Paper and pens/pencils

### Preparation for Activity

- If you have not already done so, copy Handout 1 for all participants.
- Read Activity 2, Applying System Thinking, to become familiar with how to diagram a congregational issue or challenge from a system perspective.
- Post a sheet of blank newsprint.

- Prepare, but do not post, a sheet of newsprint with these questions:
  - Does system thinking point to any larger questions our leadership and congregation might want to address?
  - Has something unbalanced the system?
  - What are management questions? What might be the leadership questions?
  - What might be some next steps for the leadership and the congregation to take?

### **Description of Activity**

Use this activity to lead a system analysis of your congregation's real life, including a planned major change such as a ministerial transition, a new worship service schedule or addition or removal of program staff positions. Follow the process outlined for the Heavenly Unitarian Universalist Congregation scenario in Activity 2, except that you may want to keep the leadership together rather than forming small groups.

Tell the group they will examine their congregational challenge from a system perspective. With input from participants, diagram on newsprint all those affected, directly or indirectly, by the change. Diagram the relationships (see Activity 2). Invite the group to consider the emotions involved in the relationships. Take 20 minutes to create the diagram.

Post the questions you prepared and distribute paper and pens/pencils. Invite participants to consider the posted questions and write their responses individually on paper. Allow 15 minutes.

Now invite participants, one at a time, to share what they have written. List the responses on newsprint as they are shared to document the group's collective thinking on the congregation's current challenge. Engage the group in making plans to continue the conversation and seek ways to move forward.

## STORY: A DROP OF HONEY

Adapted from a Thai folk tale.

Once upon a time, a queen sat on her balcony eating rice cakes and honey with her chief advisor. As they ate, they gazed down at the busy street below. The queen pointed to something in the distance. As she did, a drop of honey from her rice cake landed on the balcony railing.

"My Queen, you have spilled a drop of honey," observed the advisor. "Shall I call a servant to come and clean it up?"

But the queen laughed, "A little drop of honey is not MY problem. Someone will clean it later."

They went on eating and talking as the drop of honey warmed in the sun and began to slowly drip down the side of railing until it landed in the street below with a plop!

"Your Highness," the advisor said, "that drop of honey has now fallen into the street, where it is attracting flies. Shouldn't we call a servant to come and clean it up?"

But again the queen yawned lazily and replied, "A little drop of honey and a few flies are not MY problem. Someone will deal with it later."

Soon a lizard darted out from underneath the palace wall and began to catch the flies on her tongue. Then a cat sprang from the baker's shop and began to bat the lizard back and forth like a toy. Just then a dog charged out from the butcher's shop and began to bite the cat on the neck.

"Your Highness," the advisor implored, "now the flies have attracted a lizard, which attracted a cat, which is now being attacked by a dog. Shouldn't we call someone to stop the fight?"

But the Queen only stretched, and shook her head at her advisor, "Won't you relax. A silly animal fight is not MY problem. Someone will surely see to it."

In fact the baker did see to it. She saw the dog attacking her cat and ran out with her rolling pin and began to hit the dog. And then the butcher heard his dog howling and ran out with his broom and began to hit the cat. Soon the butcher and baker were hitting each other. Then the neighboring shopkeepers began to take sides, joining in the fight. Then some soldiers came along, but some knew the butcher and some knew the baker. So the soldiers, too, took sides and the battle grew. It grew and grew until a great battle waged in the streets. People were throwing rocks through windows and tipping over the vendor carts. Someone picked up a torch from the wall and hurled it through a

window. Fire raged, and eventually it spread to the palace.

The next thing they knew, the queen and her advisor were being escorted down a ladder from the balcony into the street below because the palace itself was in flames.

Later that day when the fire had died out, the queen and her advisor surveyed the ruins of their land. Suddenly the queen stopped in the street underneath where her balcony had been. She reached down and touched something in a small puddle on the ground. "It's honey," she said, remembering. "I guess I should have cleaned up that drop of honey in the first place. Now, my whole kingdom has been lost because of it."

That was the last day the queen ever said "IT'S NOT MY PROBLEM!"

# HANDOUT 1: SYSTEM THINKING — GUIDELINES FOR LEADERS

In the book, *How Your Church Family Works: Understanding Congregations as Emotional Systems* (Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 1996), Peter Steinke gives this summary statement about system thinking:

System thinking is a way of seeing  
— the whole,  
— how the parts mutually influence one another,  
— how the circle of influence becomes patterned, and  
— how the pattern is maintained by the arrangement of the functioning parts.  
In an emotional system there is always  
— information (a reaction or a response) and  
— the struggle to be self-defined and yet in touch with others.

Here are three guidelines for congregational leaders to consider to help them remain healthy and effective in a congregational system under stress or in distress:

## Take Responsibility Only for What Belongs to You

- Pay attention to the congregation's mission.
- Ask good questions to help you discern which are leadership and which are management questions.
- Pare your list of "issues" to leadership issues and to management issues which rightfully belong to you.
- Delegate management issues that should be handled by others.

## Maintain Personal Integrity

- Stay spiritually grounded by engaging in regular spiritual practice.
- Take care of yourself in body, mind, and spirit.
- Identify and manage your own anxiety.
- Resist attempts by others to transfer their anxiety about a situation to you or their "issues" to you.

## Stay Connected to the Organization

- Communicate regularly with those who have authorized you to lead, paying attention to transparency about your leadership decisions and process.
- Find formal and informal ways to gather information from those who have authorized you to lead.

- Notice who is on the margins and invite their ideas and input.
- Practice deep listening and discerning what lies beneath the surface for individuals and the congregation.
- Regularly attend Sunday worship and other large congregational gatherings.

## HANDOUT 2: ALTERNATE SYSTEM THINKING SCENARIOS

*Note: These scenarios appeared in a different form in Workshop 4.*

### Accessibilities Audit Scenario

A congregation is planning to do some major work to repair the foundation of the building and to upgrade space. They have had a successful capital campaign and have raised nearly enough money—but not quite enough. Now they have heard from local government officials that they will not be granted a building permit until they have addressed some major accessibility issues in the building.

This project will be costly. The chair of the governing board believes there is no more money to be had from the congregation. She convenes a meeting of the governing board, which includes:

- A member who is angry with local officials for imposing this on the congregation and believes they have no right to do so. His attitude is that they should support, rather than undermine, the building repairs and upgrades the congregation is undertaking.
- A member who has arthritis in her hands and her knees and sometimes finds the front steps and the door handles difficult to negotiate. She has never told anyone about this difficulty.
- A member who believes in his heart that making the congregation more accessible to those with mobility impairments is the right thing to do, and is convinced a way can be found to do it. He is often seen as the "impractical" one in the group.
- A member who wonders if there is any practical way to financially manage the accessibility upgrades. From her point of view, the planned upgrades will benefit many people and the accessibility upgrades only a few.
- A member who has been the representative to the building task force and is exhausted. She has done all that she can do to get this project ready to the point where construction and renovation can begin, and finds this news discouraging.

### Safe Congregation Scenario

A congregation's insurance company has informed them the congregation will no longer be able to purchase liability coverage unless they have a policy in place for prevention of sexual abuse and misconduct. The

prevention policy must include the use of criminal background checks for volunteers and staff. As the governing board convenes to consider this challenge, members of the board are of several minds:

- The chair of the board believes liability coverage is crucial to the well being of the congregation and the board has a fiduciary responsibility to see to it that a safe congregation policy is adopted.
- A board member is concerned about finances, especially about the potential cost of criminal background checks. She is also concerned because a large donor has stated that they view background checks as an invasion of privacy.
- Another member is concerned about the implementation of any safe congregation policy. Who will be responsible? How will they get training? Do current staff members have enough hours to take this on?
- A member—one who has been reading in the papers about child sexual abuse among volunteers and professionals entrusted with the well being of children—believes a safe congregation policy cannot come soon enough.
- Another member keeps thinking about the first Unitarian Universalist Principle, the inherent worth and dignity of every person. How does this Principle to protecting children? What about our volunteers? Do background checks violate their worth and dignity?
- A long-time member trusts everyone in the congregation. Required background checks and other policies seem unnecessary. He wonders if liability insurance is really needed- and resents the insurance company for pushing the congregation around.

## **LEADER RESOURCE 1: HEAVENLY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION**

Heavenly Unitarian Universalist Congregation has a lovely building in a suburban community. It is a congregation well known for its music. They have a beloved music director who has been with the congregation for 20 years. She believes ethereal music is best for congregational worship and favors the harp. The Heavenly Choir loves her as a director and cannot imagine singing with anything other than harp as accompaniment. The Heavenly Music Committee meets only twice a year. Things are going so smoothly with the congregation's music program in the music director's hands there is no need for more frequent meetings. The staff members, particularly the parish minister, love working with the music director because the music is reliably excellent and the congregation seems happy with that aspect of worship. There are rumblings from the younger people in the congregation that although ethereal music is lovely, they might like to hear something more earthly now and again. Parents have commented to the religious education director that it would be wonderful to have music children can sing and enjoy from time to time. But, it is not a big issue in the congregation. All is tranquil at Heavenly Unitarian Universalist Congregation, until...

The Heavenly music director receives an offer to teach harp at a world famous conservatory and decides to accept. It means that she and her partner will be moving out of the area, so she tenders her resignation as Heavenly's music director effective at the end of the year. The Heavenly Music Committee and the Heavenly Choir make plans for a gala good-bye celebration. The Board decides to appoint a search committee for a new music director, and in the interest of being inclusive, appoints a parent, a young adult and a jazz musician to the search committee, along with a member of the choir and a member of the music committee. The appointments raise eyebrows among those in the Heavenly Choir and those on the Heavenly Music Committee, who thought they would be the ones to find a new harpist to continue their successful ethereal music program in the congregation. They begin to murmur, wondering what the Board is thinking, and feeling somewhat underappreciated.

After a grand good-bye party, the search committee meets to begin its work in earnest. They find very quickly that committee members have entirely different ideas about the person who should be their next music director. Soon they are divided into two factions, lovers of ethereal music and those desirous of something

different, with both sides planning surveys to prove the majority of the congregation is on their side. The conflict spreads to the congregation at large. People choose sides. The Board is stunned by what is happening in their once tranquil congregation, and wants to do whatever is necessary to restore harmony and balance. The minister and Board chair wisely seek help from their UUA Regional staff, who help them examine their problem by looking at Heavenly's issue from a system point of view.

# WORKSHOP 11: KEEPING DISTRESS PRODUCTIVE

## INTRODUCTION

*Solutions are achieved when "the people with the problem" go through a process together to become "the people with the solution." — Ronald A. Heifetz, contemporary author and leadership educator*

This workshop, the third in the Path unit, explores conflict and difficult behavior as signs that a congregation has a deeper issue to bring forth. Participants will learn tools to discern and address the emotions and concerns that feed a congregational conflict. They will learn strategies for responding to difficult behavior and resources for managing and transforming high level or intractable congregational conflict. With a focus on deeply understanding and faithfully addressing conflict, participants explore ways adaptive leaders can "give the work back to the people."

## GOALS

This workshop will:

- Explore tensions between our longings for individuality and for community
- Provide a new way to think about uncivil or hostile behavior when it surfaces in congregational life
- Promote effective ways to "give the work back to the people" as part of adaptive leadership.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Explore the tensions they experience between the need for individuality and the need for community
- Examine how individual/community polarities can lead to anxiety, disagreement or conflict in the congregational setting
- Learn strategies for responding to difficult behavior
- Identify effective ways to engage a wider circle of congregational stakeholders in the work of adaptive change
- Summarize and synthesize what they have learned about adaptive leadership.

## WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

| Activity   | Minutes |
|--|---------|
| Welcoming and Entering                                 |         |
| Opening  | 2       |
| Activity 1: Individual and Community Polarities        | 15      |
| Activity 2: Story — The Fowler and the Quail           | 10      |
| Activity 3: Managing Difficult Behavior                | 25      |
| Break  | 10      |
| Activity 4: Giving the Work Back                       | 35      |
| Activity 5: Adaptive Leadership                        | 20      |
| Faith in Action: Applying UU Principles to Conflicts   |         |
| Closing  | 3       |
| Alternate Activity 1: Representing Adaptive Leadership | 30      |

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Before facilitating a workshop that deals with conflict and difficult behavior, take time to reflect or journal about some of your own experiences with conflict, both in your family and in organizations. What is your usual role in conflict? What is your usual response? Is it a "fight" response, a "flight" response or maybe a "freeze" response? Is responding appropriately to conflict something that has been difficult for you? How have your responses changed over time?

## WELCOMING AND ENTERING

### Materials for Activity

- Name tags and materials to make name tags
- Music and player

### Preparation for Activity

- Play music to create a welcoming atmosphere.
- Lay out participants' name tags and name tag-making materials.

### Description of Activity

Invite any participant who needs a name tag to create one now.

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Preparation for Activity

- Set the chalice on the worship table.

### Description of Activity

Gather the group. Ask a participant to light the chalice as you or another participant read the opening words, "In the quietness of this place," Reading 498 in *Singing the Living Tradition*.

## ACTIVITY 1: INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY POLARITIES (15 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Handout 1, [The Polarities of Community](#) (included in this document)
- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Copy Handout 1 for all participants.
- Post a blank sheet of newsprint.

### Description of Activity

Invite participants to name tangible and intangible *benefits* of belonging to their congregational community. Capture responses on newsprint. Keep the brainstorm time short (about two minutes).

Now invite participants to name what they *give up* in order to be part of the community — a question that will require more thought. Record responses. Keep this brainstorming to about three minutes.

Distribute Handout 1 and invite participants to consider tensions between our needs for individuality and community. Ask for verbal assent (or nodding) if the chart names tensions they have felt as a member of a faith community.

Invite participants to discuss with a partner the question at the bottom of Handout 1. Tell them that their leadership group might consider revisiting this question as part of future work together. Allow eight minutes for pairs to share. Remind them to switch speakers after four minutes.

## ACTIVITY 2: STORY — THE FOWLER AND THE QUAIL (10 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Story, [The Fowler and the Quail](#) (included in this document)

### Preparation for Activity

- Arrange for a participant to read the story.

### Description of Activity

Invite a participant to read the story to the group. Ask for comments on the ways this ancient Buddhist tale speaks to the tension between individuals and community, and the ways this tension can lead to conflict.

## ACTIVITY 3: MANAGING DIFFICULT BEHAVIOR (25 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Handout 2, [Responses to Difficult Behavior](#) (included in this document)
- Pens/pencils

### Preparation for Activity

- Copy Handout 2 for all participants.
- Post a sheet of blank newsprint.
- Write on newsprint, but do not post:
  - What are some "hardball" ways to deal with this situation?
  - What are some "softball" ways?
  - What are some ways to begin identifying the underlying issue?

### Description of Activity

Say, in your own words:

In a complex system, such as a congregation, disagreement is inevitable as people live out the tensions between individuality and community. Healthy response to expressed disagreement is a key responsibility of leaders, especially when the expression of disagreement is awkward, uncivil or even hostile.

Invite participants to sit quietly and bring to mind an incident during their time in the congregation when disagreement made them uncomfortable. What were the circumstances? What was their role? What was the behavior exhibited? What did they do, or not do, in response? What did others who witnessed or heard about the behavior do or not do in response? Did they have thoughts after the incident about what they or someone else should have done differently? Tell participants that they will not be asked to share their thoughts with others. After a minute or two of silence, invite participants to name some of the emotions they felt as they recalled the incident. As they name feelings, write them on newsprint.

Say, in your own words:

Sometimes behavior of a congregant or group of congregants rises to a level we might define as difficult behavior. In the book, *Never Call them Jerks: Healthy Responses to Difficult Behavior*, Arthur Paul Boers defines difficult behavior as "patterned and sustained behavior that is abusive, irrational, hostile, adversarial, or distorted." It can make leaders and the community uncomfortable or emotionally and spiritually unsafe. It can hijack the congregation's and the leadership's attention. It can disrupt processes and lead to conflict or withdrawal from the congregation. It is often an indicator that something in the congregation's system needs attention. Leaders must learn to respond in ways that encourage healthy congregational functioning.

Distribute Handout 2 and invite a volunteer to read the first section on "hardball" responses and another to read the next section on "softball" responses. Invite participants to discuss their own congregation's patterns of response to difficult behavior. Does their congregation tend to use "hardball" or "softball" responses or a combination of the two? Allow ten minutes for this conversation.

Now, read aloud the section of the handout that explains a third way to respond to difficult behavior. Allow brief questions and comments.

Tell the group they will now return to their small groups and consider a "difficult behavior" scenario. Read aloud:

A congregant is of the opinion that the congregation is a hostile place for people of his theological point of view. He writes frequent letters to the governing board and regularly visits the minister to expound on why the congregation is not a welcoming place for him. He takes every occasion at congregational meetings to express his anger at the way the

congregation treats him. He often threatens to cut his pledge, but he never actually does it. Other members of the congregation have grown weary of his complaints and are avoiding him.

Post the newsprint sheet you have prepared and ask the small groups to consider the scenario in terms of the posted questions. After five minutes, re-gather and ask each small group to share their responses.

## ACTIVITY 4: GIVING THE WORK BACK (35 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Handout 3, [Giving the Work Back](#) (included in this document)

### Preparation for Activity

- Copy Handout 3 for all participants.
- Read Handout 3 and consider the ways the congregational leaders effectively "give the work back to the people" in each scenario.
- Post blank newsprint.

### Description of Activity

Explain that this activity will explore some ways to discern underlying issues that feed conflict or difficult behavior. Point out that leaders who are prepared to seek and address underlying issues can encourage healthy disagreement as a route to solving congregational problems.

Read the first set of scenarios in Handout 3. Invite observations about what the items in Set 1 have in common. Guide participants toward the idea that, in each case, the congregation (or a subset of the congregation) engaged in learning new ways to meet an adaptive challenge. Be ready to write these points on newsprint as they surface in the conversation:

- In all these scenarios, underlying conflicts and tensions can be identified and brought into the open.
- People are encouraged to listen deeply to one another and work together toward solutions.
- Rather than absorb the anxiety that change or conflict has created in the system, the leaders introduce a mechanism for the members of the congregation to explore the tensions around an issue.

Note: The language participants use to express the key concepts may be different—listen for concepts. If no

participant raises these points, raise them yourself. Allow 15 minutes for this part of the activity.

Now, read the second set of scenarios in Handout 3 aloud, one at a time. For each item, invite participants to comment on why the second scenario demonstrates a less effective model for dealing with congregational challenges. Ideally, participants will consider these items in a group of six to ten people. If the group is larger than ten, form smaller groups and ask each group to record their responses on newsprint and post for a large-group discussion.

Participants may observe (in their own words):

- In some cases, leaders set too broad an agenda.
- In some cases, leaders do not provide a safe process or provide appropriate support.
- In some cases, leaders treat the issue as a management rather than a leadership issue.
- By using a survey or vote, leaders ignore emotions about a topic and create winners and losers.
- When leaders provide information that supports an already-made decision, they sidestep others' concerns or emotions about the issue.

Allow 20 minutes for this part of the activity. Encourage participants to bring their own congregational experiences into the conversation as appropriate. If you have formed two or more groups, allow 15 minutes for small group work and five minutes for sharing insights in the large group.

Invite general comment about "giving the work back," and how congregational leaders might make this a regular practice.

## **ACTIVITY 5: ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP (20 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Sheets of poster board, one for every two or three participants
- Colored markers to share

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Arrange your space to allow groups of two or three participants to work with poster board and markers.

### **Description of Activity**

Ask: Bearing in mind all you have learned and experienced in our Harvest the Power workshops, what

are important practices for leaders facing adaptive challenges? Invite participants to move into groups of two or three and design a poster of "Best Practices for Adaptive Leadership." Invite them to leave a third of the space open at the bottom of their posters. Instruct them to express best practices in their own words. Tell participants they will have about ten minutes to work, and acknowledge that their lists may be incomplete.

Invite each pair or triad to post and present their list. If you will do Workshop 12 of Harvest the Power, save the posters for that workshop

## **CLOSING (3 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Copies of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook, or newsprint, markers and tape

### **Preparation for Activity**

- If needed, post on newsprint the words to Hymn 402 in *Singing the Living Tradition*, "From You I Receive."

### **Description of Activity**

Gather participants. Invite the group to share a brief moment of silence to honor the important work they have done together. Lead the group in singing the hymn three times.

## **FAITH IN ACTION: APPLYING UU PRINCIPLES TO CONFLICTS**

### **Description of Activity**

Look for congruence of adaptive leadership strategies with our Unitarian Universalist [Principles](#) and [Sources](#). As we plan how to manage difficult behavior or "give the work back to the people," are there questions or issues we need to address from a Unitarian Universalist point of view?

Practice viewing disagreement as an opportunity to engage in dialogue and discover more about the other person's point of view. Try using adaptive leadership strategies in your family or another organization or group to which you belong.

## **LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING**

- Looking at each activity in this workshop, what worked as well as or better than you had anticipated? What did not work as well as you anticipated?

- What issues came up for you, personally, in trying any activity yourself? What came up in the process of facilitating?
- What would you change if you were to lead this workshop again? How would you do it differently?
- What did you learn about yourself as an individual while facilitating this workshop? What did you learn about yourself as a leader?
- Looking ahead to the next workshop, determine what materials you need to request or gather. What other preparations do you need to make?

## TAKING IT HOME

Solutions are achieved when "the people with the problem" go through a process together to become "the people with the solution." — Ronald A. Heifetz, contemporary author and leadership educator

Research well known leaders to explore how they have "given the work back to the people." Watch feature films and documentaries about leaders such as Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Wangari Maathai and Harvey Milk, paying attention to the ways they involved others in finding solutions to adaptive challenges:

*Gandhi*, film directed by Richard Attenborough (Sony Pictures, 1982)

*Milk*, film directed by Gus Van Sant (Alliance Films, 2008) and [Study Guide to Milk](#) (Unitarian Universalist Association, 2009)

[Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai](#) (at [takingrootfilm.com/](http://takingrootfilm.com/)), a film by Lisa Merton and Alan Dater (Marlboro Productions, 2008).

### Find Out More

You may wish to add resources that informed this workshop to your congregation's leadership library:

Boers, Arthur Paul, [Never Call Them Jerks: Healthy Responses to Difficult Behavior](#) (Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 1999)

["Conflict is Part of Congregational Life,"](#) Unitarian Universalist Association

[Congregational Handbook](#) (Unitarian Universalist Association, 2005)

["Dealing with Disruptive Behaviors,"](#) Unitarian Universalist Association

Hobgood, William Chris, [Welcoming Resistance](#) (Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 2001).

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: REPRESENTING ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP (30 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Self-hardening clay for all participants
- Material to protect tables
- Water in containers to share

### Preparation for Activity

- Arrange space so each participant has room to work with clay.
- Cover tables to protect them. Set out containers of water to keep clay soft.

### Description of Activity

What strategies and skills does an adaptive leader use? What kind of *presence* does that person have? Distribute clay and invite participants to create a representation or symbol of what it means to exercise adaptive leadership.

Allow the group 15 minutes to work with clay. Then invite each participant to present and explain their representation.

## STORY: THE FOWLER AND THE QUAIL

*This is a Jataka Tale, one of many folk tales from India concerning previous lives of the Buddha, known as Bodhisattva. This version is adapted from a translation in [Jataka Tales](#) by H. T. Francis and E. J. Thomas (Cambridge, England: The University Press, 1916).*

Once upon a time the Bodhisattva was born a quail and lived in the forest as the leader of thousands of quail.

There was in that place a fowler who would imitate the call of the quail so as to draw many quail together. When many quail were together, the fowler would fling his net over them, gather them up and bring them to market to sell for food.

The Bodhisattva was determined to help the quail avoid this terrible fate. He called them all together to tell them his plan: "When you hear a quail's call, be alert and remember that it might well be the deceptive call of the fowler. If we keep our wits about us and work together, we can escape the fowler's net. Here's what to do: The very moment he throws his net over you, let each one put their head through an opening in the mesh and then, all together, you must flap your wings. Fly with the net until you are able to let it down on a thorn bush. After the net is caught on the thorns, all may pull their heads out and escape from underneath." All the quail understood the plan. All nodded in agreement: They would work together.

The very next day, the net was cast over a group of them, and they did as they had been instructed by the Bodhisattva. They flew the net to a thorn bush and let it down, escaping from underneath. While the fowler was still untangling his net from the thorns, evening came and he went home empty-handed.

Day after day, the quail used the same device. Day after day, the fowler was forced to untangle and repair his net. His wife grew angry because he brought home no quail to sell at market. But the fowler only said, "Wait a while. Those quail have decided to work together now, but they will not cooperate always. Pretty soon they will start bickering among themselves and I will capture the lot of them."

Not long after this, one of the quail stepped on another's head by accident as he landed on the feeding ground. "Who trod on my head?" the second quail asked angrily. "I'm sorry," said the first. And both quail began to murmur about how crowded the feeding ground had gotten lately. Pretty soon, the two began to taunt one another, and others joined in. Each claimed they had a bigger share of responsibility in lifting up the net to escape the fowler.

The Bodhisattva reminded them they faced great danger if they did not work together, but they were not much interested in what he had to say. He led those who were still willing to cooperate away from the quarrels at the feeding grounds, away from the danger of capture.

Sure enough, the fowler came back a few days later and once again collected the quail together by imitating the sound of a quail. Once again he threw his net over a whole group. One quarrelsome quail said, "I'm tired of carrying such a big share of the load. Others need to flap harder," at which point a second quail defending herself, saying, "I've lost feathers in the effort to lift this net. I work hard enough. There must be lazy ones among us." And they began to quarrel about who was stronger, who worked harder and who should be the one to say when it was time to flap their wings and lift that net off the ground.

And while they were arguing about who should do the work of lifting the net, the fowler lifted the net for them, crammed them in a heap into his basket, and took them off to market.

# HANDOUT 1: THE POLARITIES OF COMMUNITY

## The Polarities of Community

\*Maintain Self < -----> Connect to Others

\*Allow Freedom < -----> Help One Another

\*Take Risks < -----> Maintain Safety

\*Sacrifice < -----> Benefit

\*Comfort < -----> Challenge

\*Stranger < -----> Friend

## Personal Experience in a Congregation

Describe an experience you had in your congregation which helped you grow, even as you had to give something up.

## **HANDOUT 2: RESPONSES TO DIFFICULT BEHAVIOR**

### **"Hardball" Responses**

This is the "fight" mode of response to abusive, irrational, hostile, adversarial or distorted behavior. It includes blame, retribution, hostility and counterattack. The basic goal of such tactics is "to outwit, subvert, outmaneuver or silence opponents." Even if leaders succeed at accomplishing a change using hardball methods, the change tends not to last.

Note: On rare occasions, a situation requires a "hardball" response, such as asking an individual to leave. The [Conflict Management](#) section of the Unitarian Universalist Association [Congregational Handbook](#) offers information on how to institute policies and procedures for these occasions and when to seek outside help (such as UUA District staff) to manage congregational conflict.

### **"Softball" Responses**

This is the "flight" mode of response to abusive, irrational, hostile, adversarial or distorted behavior. It includes placating, appeasing, reasoning and avoiding problems. Its goal is to relieve anxiety and re-establish tranquility at any price. Such tactics inadvertently invite the person exhibiting difficult behavior to control the system and the congregation's agenda.

### **A Third Way**

Difficult behavior, however inappropriate, may be a sign of anxiety or distress in the congregational system. If leaders move to alleviate the anxiety on a short-term basis, using either hardball or softball methods, the underlying issue will likely linger in the congregational system and reappear in a different form. There is a third, and generally more effective, way to work with the anxiety that informs difficult behavior: Ask questions and listen to the responses to understand the underlying issues. The third way invites leaders and congregations to learn new ways to respond to conflicts and challenges.

## HANDOUT 3: GIVING THE WORK BACK

*Ronald Heifetz notes that an essential strategy of adaptive leadership is to "give the work back to people, but at a rate they can stand." Below are two sets of scenarios. Explore the differences between the actions described in the first set and those described in the second.*

### "Giving the Work Back" Scenarios — Set 1

- When the pledge campaign falls short of its goal, the leadership invites members of the congregation to an open conversation about how to proceed.
- A congregation hosts a number of listening circles so they can hear one another's thoughts and feelings about whether to add a second service on Sunday morning
- A long-range planning task force hosts a series of cottage meetings and workshops to gather input for a new mission/vision statement.
- A congregation's youth group is asked to consider how they might bring their Unitarian Universalist faith into the world and invited to work with advisors and other adults to refine and carry out the plans to support their goals.
- Complaints surface in a congregation that young adolescents are "not ready" for the content of the Our Whole Lives (OWL) program for seventh to ninth graders. The religious education committee invites interested members of the congregation to join them at a workshop to thoughtfully consider the place of comprehensive sexuality education in faith development for youth.

### Giving the Work Back Scenarios — Set 2

- When the pledge campaign falls short of its goal, the leadership invites members of the congregation to speak to board members and provide input on whether or not to lay off a member of the staff, and if so, which one.
- A congregation's leadership decides to conduct a survey to determine whether or not the majority of the congregation favors adding a second service on Sunday morning.
- A long-range planning task force asks people to submit their ideas for the congregation's long-range goals in writing, along with their best ideas for a congregational mission statement.

- A congregation's youth group is asked to choose a service project and figure out how to raise the money to support that project.
- Complaints surface in a congregation that young adolescents are "not ready" for the content of the Our Whole Lives (OWL) program for seventh to ninth graders. The religious education committee votes overwhelmingly to continue to support comprehensive sexuality education and plans to publicize links to the UUA's website to explain the OWL program to those who have concerns.

# WORKSHOP 12: ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP

## INTRODUCTION

*The first step toward change is to refuse to be deployed by others and to choose to deploy yourself. — Warren Bennis, contemporary organizational consultant and author*

This workshop, the fourth workshop in the Path unit, concludes the Harvest the Power program. Like Workshops 4 and 8, it focuses on how a leader can give form and voice to a guiding vision as a congregation works through adaptive challenges. Through activities, readings and conversation, participants integrate what they have learned about adaptive leadership. The workshop points participants toward further learning, reflection and action in the service of the congregation and its mission and vision.

## GOALS

This workshop will:

- Guide participants to integrate and apply what they have learned about leadership and about themselves
- Offer a variety of opportunities to reflect on the qualities of an effective leader in a time of change
- Demonstrate transparency as an essential aspect of congregational leadership
- Point toward resources for ongoing learning, reflection and action to support participants' continued growth as leaders.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Practice listening deeply to one another
- Articulate and express their understandings of the essential qualities of adaptive leadership
- Explore adaptive leadership using a variety of metaphors and perspectives
- Understand the concept and importance of transparency in congregational leadership and consider ways to promote transparency in their own leadership role and congregational setting
- Work with others to create an expression of the essence of leadership.

# WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

| Activity   | Minutes |
|--|---------|
| Welcoming and Entering                                       |         |
| Opening  | 2       |
| Activity 1: Qualities of Leadership                          | 20      |
| Activity 2: Adaptable Frogs                                  | 15      |
| Activity 3: Law of the Farm and Other Leadership Metaphors   | 20      |
| Break  | 10      |
| Activity 4: Transparency                                     | 15      |
| Activity 5: The Essence of Leadership                        | 30      |
| Faith in Action: The Journey into Leadership, and Beyond     |         |
| Closing  | 8       |
| Alternate Activity 1: Ideal Congregational Leader, Revisited | 30      |

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

This workshop should be a joy to facilitate! You will learn what new understandings participants have gained from the previous workshops and find out how they have integrated what they have learned. You will listen to them articulate how they will carry their leadership forward.

Prepare by calling to mind each participant. Appreciate the gifts each one brings to the congregation, to Unitarian Universalism and to the world.

## WELCOMING AND ENTERING

### Materials for Activity

- Name tags if needed
- Music and player

### Description of Activity

- Play music to create a welcoming atmosphere.

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Copies of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook
- Small worship table
- Chalice, candle and lighter or LED battery-operated candle

### Preparation for Activity

- Set the chalice on the worship table.

### Description of Activity

Gather the group. Ask a participant to light the chalice as you lead an antiphonal reading of "Blessed are Those," Reading 728 in *Singing the Living Tradition*. Have half the group read the plain text and the other half the words in italics.

## ACTIVITY 1: QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Paper and pens/pencils
- A clock or timepiece

### Preparation for Activity

- On newsprint, list the workshops the group has completed. Post the list.
- Post a blank sheet of newsprint.

### Description of Activity

Invite participants to consider all that has transpired over the course of the workshops. Ask, "After experiencing this program, what do you now believe are the essential qualities of leadership?" Allow a minute or two for silent reflection. Then ask participants to choose a partner with whom they have not shared in other workshops. Invite pairs to interview one another about the essential qualities of leadership. Tell pairs one participant may speak for five minutes while the other listens and records the responses on paper, asking only clarifying

questions. Watch the time and announce when it is time to switch speakers.

Bring participants back to the large group. Invite participants to share some insights from the person they interviewed. Record on newsprint the qualities people believe are essential to leadership.

## ACTIVITY 2: ADAPTABLE FROGS (15 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Story, [Fear and Loathing in the Tropics — Frogs Adapt to Survive](#) (included in this document) , or Story, [Red-Eyed Tree Frogs Adapt to Survive](#) (included in this document)

### Preparation for Activity

- Review both stories. The first is a newspaper article and the second is a shorter, expository presentation of the same material. Decide which to share with the group.
- Arrange for one or more participants to read the story aloud. If possible, provide volunteer readers with the story in advance.

### Description of Activity

Tell the group:

In this workshop we will explore metaphors for adaptive leadership. Different metaphors can each shed a different light on the art of leading a congregation in a time of change. The first story is about tree frogs!

Participants may expect they will hear the oft-repeated story about how a frog will boil to death, rather than jump out, if the temperature in a pot of water is raised slowly enough. You may wish to assure them that, as useful as that metaphor may be for management consultants, that story is simply not true (see [Frog Fable Brought to Boil](#) in the *University of Washington Conservation Magazine*). This is another kind of frog story.

Have one or more participants read "Fear and Loathing in the Tropics" or "Red-Eyed Tree Frogs Adapt to Survive" aloud. Then, invite conversation. What wisdom does the tree frog and its ability to adapt offer to congregational leaders?

## ACTIVITY 3: LAW OF THE FARM AND OTHER LEADERSHIP METAPHORS (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 1, [Metaphors for Leadership](#) (included in this document)

### Preparation for Activity

- Prepare Leader Resource 1, which offers five metaphors to cut into separate slips of paper. If you expect to form more than five small groups, make additional copies to give some metaphors to more than one group. If you have fewer than five groups, you can offer groups a choice of metaphors.

### Description of Activity

This activity helps the group create a fuller picture of what it means to be a leader by using a variety of lenses. In small groups, participants explore a metaphor for leadership in a time of change. Then the large group compiles their observations of the wisdom each metaphor offers.

Form groups of four. Give each group a slip of paper with a leadership metaphor from Leader Resource 1. Ask groups to reflect on how the metaphor captures the essence of adaptive leadership, and any ways the metaphor falls short.

Allow ten minutes. Then, invite each group to present their metaphor and their reflections on its wisdom.

## ACTIVITY 4: TRANSPARENCY (15 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Post blank newsprint.

### Description of Activity

Say:

"Transparency" is a word we hear often, usually as a demand for more clarity and accountability in the ways government officials and organizational leaders function. Transparency is an important concern for congregational leaders, as well. It means making sure you communicate to the people who authorize you to lead them. Those who authorize your leadership deserve to know the questions you are asking, the actions you are taking, and the reasons for decisions you make.

Invite participants to name some reasons clarity about the agenda and actions of leaders would be helpful in managing anxiety in the congregation's system. Ask for examples of times in their experience when more transparency and better communication would have allowed more effective leadership and a healthier congregation.

Invite participants to suggest concrete actions leaders can take to increase the transparency of leadership functions and decision-making. Write their suggestions on newsprint. For each action, ask how it can be part of a strategy to "give the work back to the people."

Suggest that participants use the list you have created to enhance a discussion about transparency during a leadership team meeting.

## ACTIVITY 5: THE ESSENCE OF LEADERSHIP (30 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Paper and pens/pencils
- Optional: Arts and crafts supplies
- Optional: Posters created in Workshop 11, Activity 5

### Preparation for Activity

- Optional: Obtain and set out a variety of arts and crafts supplies.
- Optional: Display posters created in Workshop 11.

### Description of Activity

Say, "Now that you have had a chance to explore some metaphors for leadership, you are invited to create your own." Invite participants to move into groups of three or four with different people than they worked with in the previous activity. Suggest they spend some time talking about what has touched them in the Harvest the Power workshops and any images that emerged as they encountered new concepts. Perhaps something from the leadership metaphors they have explored has resonated. Indicate participants' posters from Workshop 11, Activity 5, if you have posted them.

Allow small groups about five minutes to speak and listen to one another. Then, invite them to jointly create a metaphor for adaptive leadership. Tell them it can take any form—for example, a short skit, a free verse poem, a bumper sticker, a drawing, a cartoon or a song—any way of expressing the essence of adaptive leadership. Indicate newsprint, markers, pens/pencils and other materials you have available for them to use. Allow 15

minutes for creating their expression of the essence of leadership.

Re-gather the group. Invite each group to present their creation.

## CLOSING (8 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook

### Preparation for Activity

- Prepare to lead Hymn 402, "From You I Receive," or another simple song without using a hymnbook
- Optional: Select a benediction familiar to participants.

### Description of Activity

Gather participants in a circle. Invite them to name one way they will lead differently as a result of the Harvest the Power workshops.

When all who wish to have spoken, invite the group into a time of silence. You might say, "Let us share silence together in gratitude for all of the gifts our leaders bring to our congregations, and our congregations bring to our leaders." Conclude the time of silence by leading the group in singing Hymn 402, "From You I Receive." Or, conclude with a familiar benediction.

## FAITH IN ACTION: THE JOURNEY INTO LEADERSHIP, AND BEYOND

### Description of Activity

In his book, *On Becoming a Leader*, Warren Bennis writes, "The process of becoming a leader is much the same as the process of becoming an integrated human being." How has your leadership journey been part of your spiritual journey? What surprising and unexpected directions or vistas has it opened for you? What wisdom have you gained? How is that wisdom guiding you in your home life and your work life, as well as in your congregational life?

Think about the ways your congregation deploys the wisdom of its leaders after they have served in a particular authorized leadership capacity. Figure out a way for you to deploy yourself following your term of service in your authorized leadership capacity. Where are you longing to serve and to bring your gifts of wisdom an experience? You might consider volunteering to be a mentor to a Coming of Age youth. You might consider working on a congregational social justice project. You might offer to work with the congregation's

stewardship campaign or a long-range planning group. You might consider being an excellent "follower" for the next group of authorized congregational leaders. Begin now to think about what you will do when your term as authorized leader is over so that you can continue to carry your leadership gifts into the congregation and into the world.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

- Looking at each activity in this workshop, what worked as well as or better than you had anticipated? What did not work as well as you anticipated?
- What issues came up for you, personally, in trying any activity yourself? What came up in the process of facilitating?
- What would you change if you were to lead this workshop again? How would you do it differently?
- What did you learn about yourself as an individual while facilitating this workshop? What did you learn about yourself as a leader?
- What insights have you gained from facilitating the program that will be useful to you as a facilitator? As a congregational leader?

## TAKING IT HOME

The first step toward change is to refuse to be deployed by others and to choose to deploy yourself. — Warren Bennis, contemporary organizational consultant and author

In the closing circle for this workshop, you were asked to name one way your work as a leader will be different as a result of the Harvest the Power program. Spend some time journaling or thinking about your next step. Will you pay better attention to your spiritual self? Will you listen for the music beneath the words when you are faced with complaints? Will you undertake to learn more about system thinking? Will you browse the Leaders Library on the UUA website? Figure out your next action—and do it!

Set aside some agenda time to talk with other members of your leadership team and choose the next leadership development action for your group. Consider making it a regular practice to spend leadership meeting time paying attention to leadership issues, as well as management issues.

## Find Out More

Resources that informed this workshop may be useful for your congregation's leadership library:

Bennis, Warren, *On Becoming a Leader*, 4th edition (New York: Basic Books, March 2009)

Parks, Sharon Daloz, *Leadership Can Be Taught: A Bold Approach for a Complex World* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2005).

See the Unitarian Universalist Association's [Leadership Development](#) resources and links. Also visit the website of the [Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership](#) (at [www.greenleaf.org/](http://www.greenleaf.org/)).

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: IDEAL CONGREGATIONAL LEADER, REVISITED (30 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Description of Activity

In Workshop 3, participants imagined an Ideal Congregational Leader. As the Harvest the Power program concludes, invite participants to work in teams to imagine (or re-imagine) an Ideal Congregational Leader to present to the entire group.

Ask participants to form groups of three or four. Give each small group a

sheet of newsprint and some markers and invite them to work together to draw the Ideal Congregational Leader, including that person's surroundings, support mechanisms and other essential leadership tools. If the group did Workshop 3, remind them of the drawings they made of the Ideal Congregational Leader and invite them to re-imagine that person in the light of their work in Harvest the Power workshops.

Indicate that imagination and whimsy are welcome. For example, if the Ideal Congregational Leader must be able to fix or mend anything that breaks, depict them with a hammer and nails and/or a needle and thread. Give the groups twelve minutes to complete the drawings.

After the drawings are complete, invite each group to present their drawing, explaining each aspect of their drawing. Allow about 10 minutes for all the presentations. Then, engage the group in conversation. Ask how their current understanding of the qualities, skills and context for good leadership differs from ideas they held when the Harvest the Power program began.

## STORY: FEAR AND LOATHING IN THE TROPICS — FROGS ADAPT TO SURVIVE

By Murray Carpenter. From the *Boston Globe*, November 24, 2008. Used with permission.

GAMBOA, Panama — The eyes of a caiman, an alligator-like reptile, reflect the beam of a flashlight shining on the pond, as, nearby, a snake slips through the shore undergrowth. Large spiders patrol the margins, and predacious water bugs skim the water's surface. It's a tough place to be a frog. But it's a great place to study fear and death.

That is exactly what Boston University associate professor Karen Warkentin—standing at water's edge wearing rubber boots and a headlamp—is doing. Along the way, she and her colleagues are challenging basic biological assumptions by illuminating the many different ways frogs develop in response to their environments.

It rained buckets earlier, and red-eyed tree frogs are calling enthusiastically. These slender frogs are to the tropics what loons are to New England—photogenic emblems of the wild. They are also fruitful research subjects. Warkentin has been studying them since 1991, when she staked out a pond in Costa Rica. The pond attracted many frogs and snakes, and she noticed two things: Frog eggs were not hatching at the same age, and snakes were eating a lot of the eggs.

After hundreds of hours of observation in the field and in the lab, she found that when a snake attacks a cluster of frog eggs, the vibrations prompt the embryos to hatch early. The eggs are mature at seven or eight days, but will hatch as early as five days in response to an attack. By hatching early, the embryos trade certain death by snake for the risk of being slightly underdeveloped and more vulnerable to predators when they splash down into the pond.

When Warkentin first presented her observations, many herpetologists harrumphed. But they came around after watching her videos of the attacks.

Warkentin says her research is part of a growing body of work showing how environmental influences affect development and survival. "It's not just what genes you have, but how you use them," said Warkentin. "Genes matter, the environment matters, and what you get in the end is dependent on both of them."

Since her initial discovery, she says, "I've kind of followed where these frogs have led me." That included a fellowship with the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, where she is a research associate. She spends

at least two months a year at a Smithsonian field lab in an old school building in this Panama Canal town. Not only are there a number of well-studied frog ponds nearby, the institute excavated this pond for Warkentin four years ago, sculpted to her specs among trees at the edge of the jungle. The amphibians colonized it as soon as it held water.

Warkentin and her students have had some surprises.

Warkentin and Justin Touchon, a doctoral candidate at BU, found that tadpoles raised in tanks with fish develop clear, slender tails, while those in tanks with dragonfly larvae develop big red tails. The adaptations allow them to better escape the different predators.

"What it shows is that these animals are much more complex than we think," said Touchon.

Touchon also found that hourglass tree frogs, which usually lay eggs on leaves over water, instead laying their eggs in the water—marking the first time that a vertebrate has been known to lay eggs both on land and in the water, a sort of evolutionary bridge species.

In one experiment, Touchon moved frogs that were about to lay eggs to enclosures with water-filled kiddie pools and overhanging plants. Half the enclosures were in an open field, where eggs laid on leaves would be at risk of drying up in the hot daytime temperatures, the other half were in the shade nearby. Although neither group of frogs had ever seen their new habitat in daylight, the vast majority of each group laid their eggs in the place best suited to the daytime conditions—in the cooling water for those in the sun, on the leaves for those in the shade.

"The idea that frogs make these really smart decisions about where to lay their eggs surprises most people," said Touchon. His photo of these frogs made the cover of the *Proceedings of the National Academies of Science*, which published his paper in May.

Warkentin has found complexity at every turn. Not only can red-eyed tree frogs hatch early to escape predators, they can also complete their metamorphosis and leave ponds early to escape tadpole predators such as water bugs, or delay metamorphosis when there's an abundance of pond-side predators such as fishing spiders. Fear of predators, it turns out, strongly influences not just frog behavior but also physical development.

Warkentin is also investigating early development, growth within the egg, and how eggs hatch.

But her biggest project is nicknamed "fear and death." It occupies a large field near the experimental pond. Each of the 200 tanks that hold 100 gallons is stocked with

tadpoles. Some tanks have no predators, some have dragonfly larvae, and some have water bugs. In some tanks the predators are loose among the prey, in others they are suspended in nets where they are fed tadpoles but can't prey on the general population. The tadpoles detect the predators' presence through chemical signals.

Warkentin hopes this project will provide answers to a big question: In a frog's world, "what's the relative importance of fear and death?"

## **STORY: RED-EYED TREE FROGS ADAPT TO SURVIVE**

Adaptation, responding to ambient stress or danger, is a key survival skill for many biological species. Recent research by Boston University scientist Karen Warkentin has revealed that tree frogs, even in their embryo stage, show an adaptive response to cues about environmental conditions. Working in frog ponds in Central America's tropical rainforests, she and her colleagues are expanding our understanding of how these creatures develop in response to their environment.

Red-eyed tree frogs lay their eggs in clusters on leaves that overhang ponds. Those eggs are normally ready to hatch in about six to eight days. When the eggs hatch, the tadpoles fall into the water below. Dr. Warkentin has found that the embryos can somehow detect danger in their environment. By accelerating or delaying their hatching, embryos increase their chance of survival.

Generally, delaying hatching as long as possible will increase the chance of tree frog survival. The larger the embryo grows before hatching, the less likely the tadpole will be consumed by fish or fresh water shrimp. A few extra days of growth make the tadpoles too big for predators to easily consume. However, a delay in hatching causes the embryo to risk asphyxiation as the oxygen supply in the egg runs low. Somehow, the embryos, without any capacity for muscle movement, manage to orient themselves so their gills are positioned in the area of the egg where there is the most oxygen,

often near the surface where the egg is exposed to the air.

Sometimes, though, there is greater risk than asphyxiation in delaying the time of hatching. Many tree-frog eggs are consumed by snakes. When a snake attacks a cluster of eggs, the embryos appear to detect vibrations from the snake and begin at once to hatch early and fall into the water, taking their chances with the shrimp and other predators below. Dr. Warkentin has shown that embryos respond to approaching snake vibrations and hatch early, but seem unaffected by other kinds of vibrations, such as those from weather systems. She has intrigued the scientific world by demonstrating that three frog embryos consistently adapt their response in such a way as to maximize their chance of survival.

Red-eyed tree frogs are not the only adaptive amphibian. Boston University doctoral candidate Justin Touchon has found that hourglass tree frogs lay their eggs either in land or in the water, apparently choosing a spot for its optimal incubation conditions. Even when moved to an unfamiliar habitat, an hourglass tree frog will pay attention to the temperature, the level of moisture in the air and the presence or absence of shade before laying her eggs.

These biologists and others have found complexity at every turn in their work with tree frogs, suggesting that these biological creatures are surprisingly well equipped to deal with the adaptive challenges that face them in their quest for survival.

## LEADER RESOURCE 1: METAPHORS FOR LEADERSHIP

*Cut along the dotted lines to give each small group a metaphor to explore.*

The only thing that endures over time is the law of the farm: I must prepare the ground, put in the seed, cultivate it, weed it, water it, and then gradually nurture growth and development to full maturity.

Stephen R. Covey, contemporary author and consultant, from *Principle-Centered Leadership*.

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In regard to the practice of leadership, one of the most potent features of thinking like an artist is that the artist necessarily works in a profoundly interdependent relationship with the medium- paint, stone, clay, a musical instrument, an orchestra, a tennis court, a slalom run, or food... A potter, for example, must learn that clay has its own life, its own potential and limits, its own integrity. The potter develops a relationship with the clay, spending time with it, learning to know its properties, how it will interact with water, discovering that if you work it too hard, it will collapse, and if you work with it, it will teach you its strength, your limits, and the possibilities of co-creation.

Sharon Daloz Parks, contemporary educator and author, from *Leadership Can Be Taught*.

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If you want to build a ship, don't drum up the men to gather wood, divide the work and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea.

Antoine de Saint-Exupery, French writer (1900-1944), from "The Wisdom of the Sands."

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The servant-leader is servant first... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions... The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature.

The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit or at least not be further deprived?

Robert K. Greenleaf, twentieth-century researcher, author and educator, from "The Servant as Leader."

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Any jazz musician is good at experiencing moments of doubt and confusion- moments of, "Wait a second, this guy just threw me a phrase, and I don't know what to do with it, and I'm just going to play with it until I figure out something to do, or I'm going to let somebody else catch the ball until I come up with something." There's always these moments of doubt, action, doubt, action, what's the next action? It's part of an adventure, and what adventure doesn't have uncertainty and doubt in it? Adaptive leadership asks for that capacity to move from doubt to action and back to doubt again and again.

Ronald A. Heifetz, contemporary educator and author, interviewed by Sharon Daloz Parks.