

Adult Faith Formation

Renaissance Module Handbook



Session One Handouts

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Handout 1.1a: Online Etiquette and Features for Adult Faith Formation Ministry

In order to have successful and accessible online offerings, there are several things that each of us can do to create an accessible and successful experience for everyone.

Accessibility

- If you have accessibility needs, share them with the facilitator well before the first session so that they can be worked out.
- Accessibility might mean a technical issue concerning technology, or it might be an abilities issue, such as the need for regular breaks, less video screen time, a hearing or visual concern.

Zoom

- We will be using the Zoom platform. Please download the free software before the meeting. Follow the prompts. Using a device with a larger screen makes a notable difference in the Zoom experience.
- If you are new to Zoom, please find a more experienced user or ask the facilitator to meet with you online prior to the first session so that we can practice making it a good experience for you.
- There are many Zoom tutorials that you can review. For very new users you might want to start with the Quick Start Guide For New Users. Another option is to ask a more experienced user to walk you through the process.
- Even if you have used Zoom before, you might learn some new settings or options from the many Zoom tutorials that will provide a better experience for you and the group. Some of the Zoom features we will be using, and you may need/wish to turn on in your settings are:
 - Auto-save the Chat.
 - Annotate the Shared Screen items.
 - Turn your Whiteboard on in case you wish to use it in your presentation.
 - Nonverbal feedback and/or meeting reactions.
 - Use up to 49 zoom windows showing on your main screen (depends on your CPU).

- When you are setting up your Zoom Account, [go to your profile](#) and add your full name. Some also add their pronouns.
- If you are using someone else's Zoom Account, you will need to change your name at the beginning of each session. To do this, once you are in the session, hover over the three blue dots in the upper right corner of your Zoom picture (once you are in the meeting) and use the pull-down screen to "Rename" yourself. Voila! A pop-up box will appear, and you can type in your full name and pronouns.

We are gathering for this module on the "meeting" Zoom software. You do not need a professional account to attend a Zoom meeting, but you do need one to conduct any online learning/meetings that last over 40 mins.

Headsets and Microphones

- Headsets will help you hear better and you can adjust the decibel level to suit your needs. You can use the type that came with a handheld device if it also has a microphone.
- If you are using the microphone embedded in your computer or device, note that it will pick up more background noise than a microphone closer to your mouth. This may become an accessibility concern for others, even if you do not notice it yourself.
- You may enter our small group sessions with your microphone on if you are early. We open up the Zoom meeting to chat ten minutes before the start. However, at the start time, we will ask everyone to mute. Note that you can create settings that allow you to press your spacebar on your computer to unmute while you are speaking briefly and let go when you are finished. Additionally, we will be covering more liberal use of nonverbal feedback that Zoom built in. It can create a more "give & take" communication feel.
- When the host hears background noise or requests that all mute and you forget, the host will mute you. Please see this as support for the group so that everyone can hear the speaker.
- Everyone experiences technical issues at some time. If possible, use the chat to let the facilitators or the group know that you can't hear, or turn on your video, or have some other issue.

Speaking

- Successful online sessions will depend on everyone taking turns speaking. When multiple people try to speak at once, no one is heard (similar to in-person meetings, but even more important online to avoid participation fatigue).
- Discuss how each person will be recognized when you write your covenant. You might choose from:
 - physically raising your hand and the facilitator calls on you

- unmuting and waiting until no one else is speaking before you speak
- using the Zoom “reaction” feature to note your interest in speaking.
- Those nonverbal feedback icons are available in the participant window if you wish to review them ahead of our review.

Video

- Although it is tempting to turn off your video when you don’t feel that you look our best we invite you to be a visibly present participant as much as possible during our sessions.
- You can improve your video by having proper lighting.
- Note that if you choose to use a virtual background, when you move there can be shadows that are very distracting to some. If you have a green screen behind you and a strong internet connection this feature works better.
- If you are having internet connection issues, try turning your video off. Sometimes this helps, especially as a temporary measure.

Screen Sharing

- Sharing something from your computer with the group is possible using the screen share feature but it’s best to have that item already open on your device prior to sharing. Notifying the group that you would like to share the screen is helpful.
- If you are not able to use this feature, ask the host of the meeting to turn on screen share privileges. We have turned ours on already for this module.
- Use this [Zoom tutorial](#) or these steps:
 - First, make sure your item is open on your screen.
 - Click on “share screen.” (Rectangular icon is in green, usually at the bottom of your Zoom screen, but always in the same area as the mute button.)
 - If you are sharing audio as well as a visual, choose the “share computer sound” at the bottom left of the share screen pop up. Then click on the graphic that shows what you want to share (a green border will appear on your item) and then choose “share screen” in the bottom right.
 - When you are finished sharing, choose the red “close screen” button near the top of your screen.
- Note that when someone is sharing a screen, you can click on the line between the screen share and the participants and move it to either see more participants or more of the screen share.

Disruptions

- If there is a sound disruption in your space, please mute your microphone.
- If there is a visual disruption in your space, please turn off your video. If you can’t come back for a while, you might put a note in the chat box.

- If you need to step away from the computer, leave a “BRB” (Be Right Back) or similar brief note in the chat. You can also use the “coffee cup” or “clock” icon in the participant screen.

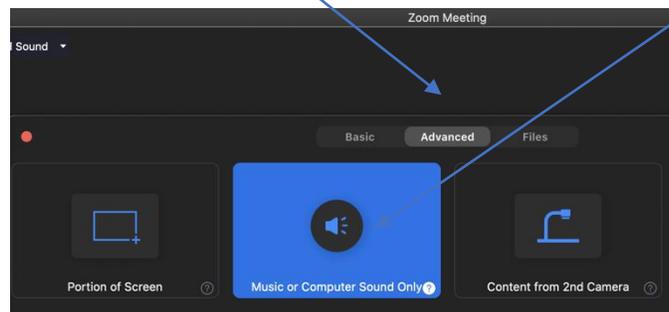
Handout 1.1b: Commonly Used Online Tools for Adult Faith Formation Facilitators

Handouts

- Create handouts that do not need to be printed. You can provide handouts in both a PDF and Word format so that people can download and type directly onto the editable format.
- If your screen is too small to allow you to see both the Zoom screen and your handouts, you might use your phone or another handheld device for the handouts, reserving the larger screen for Zoom. Encourage participants to do the same. If needed, they can print out the few pages that they want to write on, versus type into.

Audio Only Share

- If you want to share audio only from your computer to allow participants to listen but still be able to see more people, you can use the share screen feature.
- If you want participants to also be able to share their screen, you will need to give them access. This is set up in your settings, or you can do it in the meeting quickly by clicking on the carat next to the Share Screen icon.
- Use this Zoom tutorial or these steps:
 - Open Shared Screen
 - Choose the Advanced Icon and choose “Music or Computer Sound Only.”



- Choose “Share Screen” at the bottom right of this pop-up screen.

Options for Brainstorming in Sessions

- Ask everyone to type their answers into chat. This is easy and quick but only provides a linear response. People can respond but their responses are not always next to the comment, making it challenging to dialogue.
- Create a Google Doc (document, sheet, Jam Board or slide) and share the editable link with everyone. Note that everyone will need the link and will need to type on

their own opened copy. You can paste the link in the chat box so everyone in the room has it. See the **Slides** guide in the next section for detailed directions on using this tool.

- Open a Zoom Whiteboard. Use this [Zoom Tutorial](#) for guidance.

Slides

- If you want participants to brainstorm or work on common documents, you might choose Google Slides.
- Always make a copy of collaborative slides and provide an editable link. This allows participants to write or copy onto slides simultaneously, add slides, and make edits. You can add slides by going to the insert menu and choosing “add slides.”
- One set of shared slides can be used throughout the module.
- Note that as the facilitator, you will need to make a copy of the shared document to keep as the template before their edits are added. Another option is to delete all of their additions/edits before you lead the offering again.
- Note that if participants simply keep the slides as a shared document, they will lose the information once you clear or delete the slides.

Handout 1.1c: Introduction to Renaissance and RE Credentialing Programs

The Renaissance Program is a major component of the [Unitarian Universalist \(UUA\) Credentialing Program](#). Each module provides standardized basic training in a specific area useful to religious educators. The following modules may be used in any order:

- Administration as Leadership
- Adult Faith Formation (online only)
- Curriculum Planning
- Leading Cultural Change (in development)
- Ministry with Youth
- Multicultural Religious Education (currently unavailable)
- Philosophy of Religious Education
- Teacher Development
- Unitarian Universalist History (online only)
- Unitarian Universalist Identity
- Unitarian Universalist Theology (online only)
- Worship

Other UUA Training

- Family Ministry
- Pastoral Care

Explore the components of each Renaissance module on the Renaissance module resources page. Some modules are available in online or hybrid formats. Regardless of format, Renaissance modules are organized and scheduled by a sponsoring group; view the calendar [here](#).

The Religious Education Credentialing Program is a three-level program for religious education professionals intended to nurture the call to religious education as a profession, to provide a comprehensive path for professional development, and to articulate and uphold professional standards and guidelines in religious education leadership. For more information, visit the [RE Credentialing page](#) of the UUA website.

Handout 1.1d: Preparation for Module Evaluation

Visit the [Renaissance Program participant Online Evaluation Form](#) to review the questions to enable you to think about your responses throughout the program.

Please complete and submit it within one week of completion of this Module. The official Renaissance Certificate will be sent to you within ten days of receipt of evaluation. All feedback is confidential and is seen only by Renaissance staff; feedback to leaders is shared only in the aggregate. Your candid comments are very helpful in developing strong leaders and a strong Renaissance program.

There are three areas on which you will be asked to provide feedback:

I. Module Leadership – consider each leader separately

- Group Facilitation Skills
- Knowledge of Content Area
- Sensitivity to Different Learning Styles
- Teamwork with another Leader
- Organization/Communication
- Other Comments or Suggestions for Leaders

II. The Learning Experience

- What was most valuable for you?
- Please share at least three significant learnings from the module:
- What expectations did you bring to the module? Did the module meet your expectations? Please explain.
- In what ways will you use the learnings from this module?
- How will you share your learnings in the congregation or with peers?
- Other comments or suggestions about the learning experience?

III. Preparation Materials

- I read: all/most/some/none of the pre-session readings and videos.
- I found the pre-session assignments: very useful/somewhat useful/not useful
- Other comments on the materials used in the program.

Handout 1.1e: Chocolate Quiz

This is a multiple-choice synchronous assessment that we will use during the Adult Faith Formation Session One. The answers to the quiz can be found on the first four handouts: 1.1a through 1.1d. The winner receives fair trade chocolate, which the facilitators will gratefully consume for you!



Zoom sends out frequent updates. Did you update it for today's session?

- No but will update it before I sign off.
- Yes
- No

In your Zoom account, how will you signal when you would like to say something? (Choose all that might work.)

- Just start talking.
- Physically raise your hand on screen if everyone is on screen at once and can be seen, especially during screen sharing.
- Use the “raise hand” feature if you have one.
- All of the above

How do you plan to handle the Handouts in this online learning module?

- Print them out.
- Download them into word or PDF (then convert to a text program that allows you to type your answers in and save)
- Use two screens if you have one, one for Handouts and the other for Zoom.

What two (out of 12) Renaissance Modules might be good companions for Adult Faith Formation?

- 1.
- 2.

Share how you plan to prepare for Module Evaluation?

Handout 1.2: Learning Management Systems

Online learning requires a system to provide the course materials.

- An in-person learning management system often looked like
 - A syllabus or collection of session agendas
 - A listing of any required readings or materials you may need
 - Any supporting material you need
 - Handouts received in the session
 - Emails home
 - An evaluation

The Adult Faith Formation Learning Management System includes:

- The UUA Module AFF pages which is an online organized place for:
 - Session Agendas
 - A place that holds all the handouts
 - Session-by-session prework directions
 - Supporting videos or readings
 - Evaluations
 - Discussion Forum, which contains some preparatory and reflection questions to deepen the learning.
- Prework/Participant Guide emails home each week (mimics the material found on the UUA LMS just organized by session)
- **AFF Module Slides** which house our individual and collaborative work
- Sample Action Plans Google Slides
- Shared Google Folder holding the Session recording
- Resources post-end of class including Facilitator Resources

Prework

Consider what your facilitators will need in your online adult faith formation offerings, and how to go about addressing it.

Handout 1.3: Creating Covenant

The 8 Guidelines for Equity and Inclusion—Visions, Inc.1.

- **“Try on”** is an invitation to be open-minded to others’ ideas, feelings, world views and ways of doing things so that greater exploration and understanding are possible. The invitation also includes feeling free to take those things that “fit” and to leave or file away those things that don’t fit.
- **“It's OK to disagree”** assumes that disagreement is not only inevitable but can help individuals and groups produce better outcomes. By acknowledging what we have in common and by recognizing, understanding, and appreciating what is different between us, individuals and groups can shift the pressure to “be”, “think”, or “act” the same into permission to generate all possible ideas and strategies. This guideline assumes we can disagree and still stay connected and do great work.
- **“It's not OK to blame, shame or attack ourselves or others”** assumes that most of us have learned well how to show our disagreement by making the other person wrong. This happens in direct, indirect, verbal and non-verbal ways. When we attack, shame, or blame ourselves and others, we are less likely to take in what others are sharing and less likely to problem-solve across our differences.
- **“Practice self-focus”** assumes that our learning about differences can be accelerated and maximized when we listen to our internal thoughts, feelings and reactions. When we find ourselves getting irritated with someone about cultural differences, we can blame or shame them or ourselves, or we can figure out internally what is causing our irritation. An effective tool for practicing self-focus is using “I”, rather than “we”, “you”, or “one” statements. When we intend to refer to others, be specific about who those others are --by name or group. In addition, when speaking about our own experience or opinion, use "I have found..." or, " I think, I feel, I believe..." and include feeling words, e.g. mad, sad, scared, happy, relieved, etc.
- **“Notice both the process and content”** means notice both, “what we say”, “how “and “why” we say or do something and how the members of the group react. For example, notice who's active and who's not, who's comfortable and who's not, who's interested and who's not, including ourselves. Ask about both the process and content and share our own thoughts and feelings too.
- **“Practice “both/and” thinking”** invites us to see that more than one reality or perspective can be true at the same time (diunital thinking) rather than seeing reality as strictly either/or, right or wrong, good or bad, this or that (dichotomous thinking).Using “both/and thinking” can be very helpful in reconciling differences and conflicts that do

not present easy solutions.

- **“Be aware of both the intent and impact of your actions”** invites us to consider that in cross cultural interactions, our intent might not match our impact. When we have a negative impact on others across culture, ensuring a successful outcome requires changing that negative impact. This guideline requires a willingness to take risks and to exchange and receive honest feedback about the impact of our words and actions on others. It is possible to be well-intentioned AND still say and do hurtful things. To be successful across differences, we must be willing to shift our behaviors and actions such that people who are different from us feel fully valued and included.
- **“Confidentiality”** invites us to honor personal sharing and to not repeat personal details outside of the group. Confidentiality assumes that feeling free to share in one setting, does not translate into comfort in other settings. So, if we want to bring up information related to a person’s sharing in other settings, we need to privately ask the person if it is acceptable to do so. Confidentiality also assumes that we will not use something someone has shared to hurt them, get them, or punish them later. This is especially important for work groups or teams involving multiple staff or organizational levels. Participants are encouraged to freely share their learnings about theory, practice and themselves in any setting of their choice.

VISIONS Study Guide for COIC. <https://www.edomi.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/8-Guidelines-for-Equity-and-Inclusion.pdf>

Once we have affirmed the covenant, we will copy it into the AFF Module Slides.

Handout 1.4: Transformative Learning Reflection

Prework

As you watch the [Transformative Learning video](#) at home, use these questions to help you form a reflection which you will share in a breakout group in the session. It is also a question on the module's Discussion Forum. It is not necessary to complete both; one will suffice as prework, the UUA's Discussion Forum is preferred.

1. Describe a time when you experienced the discomfort or dissonance that resulted when new information did not fit your existing story/idea/knowledge/experience.
2. What did you do?
3. What did you learn?
4. Did your story change?
5. How might you make having transformative learning experiences possible for learners in your congregation? What do you have to do?

Handout 1.5: Key Learnings from the Module Readers

Pework Reading

[“Process, Not Program: Adult Faith Formation for Vital Congregations,”](#) by Diana Butler Bass

Welcome Conflict Even if you make only one or two of the changes that transform your congregation's culture of adult formation, you can expect to find yourself embroiled in conflict. There is nothing more typical than a congregation that hires a new adult formation director asking that person to help it grow and then resists—at every turn—attempts to make it happen.

Expect conflict.

Expect resistance. Know that when it happens, things are changing. Whatever you do, do not fall into the trap of making everybody happy with adult education. A "happy" congregation is not a spiritually growing one.

Questions for Reflection

1. Reflect on how you handle conflict and criticism. Do you have skills to deal with church conflict?
2. How does your theological vision and spiritual commitment (and that of the clergy staff) resonate—or differ—with that of the congregation?
3. Part of your job is to “set the table” for adult [faith] formation. As the minister/preacher/musician/storytellers set the table for worship and ritual, how can you set the table in online faith formation?

(Questions continued on next page.)

Lifelong Faith website by John Roberto

[Intergenerational Faith Formation: Practices and Approaches](#) In this particular section the authors write “There are many forces in our society and within our congregations that make the (re)establishment of intergenerational faith formation countercultural” later conveying best practices.

https://www.lifelongfaith.com/uploads/5/1/6/4/5164069/intergenerational_faith_formation_-_lifelong_faith_journal.pdf, p.6

4. What is offered here that might be dissonant learning?

5. What is offered here that helps you make a case for re-conceiving multigenerational leaning in your congregation?

Reframing Hope: Vital Ministry in a New Generation by Carol Howard Merritt

“Power Is Being Transferred to the Edges We often fail to appreciate our own histories and the streams of thought that have formed us, and we are not always able to recognize the liberating progressions within our tradition. Right now there is a movement of Christians who hope to “begin at the beginning” and to create a Christianity that makes sense in a new generation. They long to set aside the church as it has been and look forward to forming a new church for them. Particularly in some emerging church movements, we hear calls either to get back to the practices of the apostles and the first-century church, or to create the church anew, inventing it for the first time. [Neither] is possible.”

6. Where do you see this happening in Unitarian Universalism? In your own congregation?

Handout 1.6a: Congregational Rubric Directions

Using the Rubric

- Make a copy of the [Congregational Rubric](#) so that you can customize it for your own congregation. You can print it out and work on it by hand, but it will be much easier to edit online.
- Open the rubric on another device or in another window. This allows you to review your website for offerings in the recent past and/or to look at the list of curriculum possibilities on the [Congregational Rubric](#). We will likely use the Rubric in each session, and you will use it to build your final project.
- Imagine your rubric as a picture of your congregation's Adult Faith Formation offerings down the first column. Offerings should be included whether they are considered part of the formal Adult Faith Formation ministry. Indeed, discounting their presence in congregational life can lead to competition for space and time. This rubric, and later your plan, is not limited to what you are responsible for, but inclusive of all the ways that congregants can access intentional meaning-making opportunities. Your plan serves the congregation and is not an organizational chart.
- The top horizontal row notes characteristics of specific offerings. These are characteristics that you will be learning about in this module. And as is always the case, trying to balance these characteristics across opportunities is the ideal.
- Complete the vertical list of offerings in your congregation by editing your copy of the [Congregational Rubric](#). For those whose congregational offerings may be limited, complete the column with any offerings you "hope" to add or those that staff or volunteers are planning on offering. The intention is to give you practice in making visible what was not quite as noticeable before and to provide data for your Final Project, which you can read about on **Handout 3.5a Final Project**. We are not going to discuss that here. This is part of your prework for the next session.

Handout 1.6b: Congregational Rubric Resources

Before the first session.

Go to the blank Congregational Rubric (following the sample rubric) and complete the listing of adult faith formation offered in your congregation. Include skills-based learning or other learning available offered outside of the adult learning program.

Note that each characteristic in the top row relates to a philosophical element of Unitarian Universalist Adult Faith Formation that we will discuss in this module. As we discuss each characteristic in a session, you can complete more of the rubric

Here are links to Unitarian Universalist adult faith formation offerings:

- [Roots and Wings](#), a collaborative group of adult offerings that offer online adult faith formation; and
- [BluuBox](#)
- [Small Group Ministries Network](#), another small group collaborative
- [Adult](#) Tapestry of Faith offerings, and
- [Multigenerational](#) Tapestry of Faith offerings.
- [Fahs Collaborative](#)
- [Transforming Hearts Collective](#)
- [Touchstones Project](#)
- Unitarian Universalist Congregations doing online Adult Faith Formation
- Regional and UUA Webinars ([Calendar](#))
- [UUA's LeaderLab](#)

Links to other curated offerings, many of which would not have been available in our local communities:

- [Pendle Hill](#)
- [Smithsonian](#)
- [Parent Education Programs](#) (PEP)
- [Life Long Faith](#) (primarily Christian)
- [Center for Courage and Renewal](#) (Parker Palmer)
- [EmbraceRace](#)
- [Insight Meditation Center of Washington](#)
- [Raising Race Conscious Children](#)