

## **GA 2010 Workshop**

**Rev. Kevin Tarsa, Minister of Music and Karen McCarthy, DRE**  
**Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Grand Traverse**  
**Traverse City, MI**

Thursday 10:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

### **#2026 Engaging Music: Heart, Mind, Voice & Hand**

Vibrant communal experience depends on active participation. Music, movement, and silence offer powerful opportunities for all to participate. Focusing on ‘take-home’ learning, we’ll celebrate a short worship service, then explore together the how-to’s and the conceptual grounding of what we’ve experienced.

## **Outline**

- 1. Worship Service**
- 2. Workshop Part I – Your Observations about the Worship Service**
- 3. Workshop Part II – Our Words**
  - a. Rev. Kevin Tarsa – Participation**
    - i. Notice, Feel, Pay Attention**
    - ii. Start Where People Are**
    - iii. Move from the Personal to the Communal**
    - iv. Encourage Participation**
    - v. Five Tools for Musical Participation**
      - 1. Tempo (speed)**
      - 2. Pitch (key, high or low)**
      - 3. Dynamics (loud or soft)**
      - 4. Duration (do it long enough)**
      - 5. Uniqueness (make the experience unrepeatabl)**
  - b. Karen McCarthy, DRE – Multigenerational Participation**
    - i. Child-Friendly Songs**
    - ii. Responsive Readings**
    - iii. Movement**
    - iv. Participatory Storytelling**
- 4. Workshop Part III – Your Ideas**
- 5. Workshop Part IV – Closing**

## Opening Worship Service

### Gathered Here #389 in *Singing the Living Tradition*

- *piano begins*
- *Offer non-verbal invitation to tap heartbeat rhythm with hand on heart*
- *Hum – 2x*
- *Sing – several times*
- *Add movements, simply modelling them without instruction*
  - *1<sup>st</sup> phrase = one arm is held out to side, then drawn to center of body*
  - *2<sup>nd</sup> phrase = other arm is held out to side, then drawn to center of body*
  - *3<sup>rd</sup> phrase = both arms rise in front of body, make fists at top*
  - *4<sup>th</sup> phrase = hands lower, and cross over chest*

### Opening Words – Karen

We are called, by Philip Porter's song, to gather here in mystery, struggle, power, and spirit. We gather in to this sacred time together, coming from our disparate lives and our far-flung homes, carrying with us our personal stories and our emotional beings. Whoever you are, whatever you believe, however you feel, whatever you seek ... we welcome you into this morning's part of the journey. Together, we are on a continuing quest for love, hope, peace, joy ... we know there is more somewhere, and like the African-American hymn proclaims, we're gonna keep on till we find it.

### There is More Love Somewhere #95 in *Singing the Living Tradition*

*Piano begins, singing simply starts...*

*Posters of each primary word are held up for the corresponding verse*

*Key of each verse rises in half-steps*

- Love (2x)
- Hope
- Peace
- Joy
- Love

### Chalice Lighting

- *in silence – hold unlit chalice up and slowly present it to the room*
- *light it or turn it on and slowly present the lit chalice.*

**Poem:** "Water" by Philip Larkin

[www.poetryconnection.net/poets/Philip\\_Larkin/4825](http://www.poetryconnection.net/poets/Philip_Larkin/4825)

### Musical Response – Rev. Kevin

- *pentatonic improvisation on the piano (meant to evoke sense of water)*
- *Use any and only black keys on the piano (try it!)*
- *(Kevin kept this intentionally simple, to demonstrate that YOU can do this.)*

## Short Sermon – Karen

We are gathered in the Land of 10,000 Lakes, with the Mississippi River meandering along ... Water is all around us ... and within us. Every living thing on the interconnected web needs water, and so water connects us to every being that lives and every being that has ever lived.

A scientist once told me that all water on earth is connected to all other water on earth, and that since its beginning, this planet has contained a finite quantity of water. Water is continually moving and transforming – evaporating, condensing, and precipitating, over and over again. Water is immortal ... essential ... sacred.

*Gutta cavat lapidem*, goes the Latin proverb: “Drops hollow rock.” When two molecules of hydrogen and one molecule of oxygen congregate and move together, the result can be astonishing and powerful. The Colorado River carved the Grand Canyon simply by rolling along to the Pacific Ocean. Water can wear down boulders and crack mountains. Hurricanes and floods can devastate a landscape and all who live in it.

And a misty rain can refresh a parched landscape, and a cool glassful can slake a thirst. Water greens our plants and works with sun and air to provide nourishment for life.

Being near moving water can be calming ... comforting ... uplifting. The scientific explanation for this is something complex and beautiful about negative ions, which is beyond my understanding. But I know that my spirit is soothed by the babble of a brook.

Bhuddist monk, teacher, and author Thich Nhat Hanh writes poetically about water in *Present Moment, Wonderful Moment*, reminding us that life-sustaining water comes to us miraculously, and that compassion can fall like rain, turning deserts into oceans.

These images of water – everlasting, potent, holy – can call us to our best selves. We can be the rain of compassion, refreshing a parched heart and slaking the thirst of loneliness. That furious devout drench can be the outpouring of our work for truth and justice. Our music-making can soothe a troubled spirit like a brook. Our persistent droplets of love can hollow rock, fracture obstacles, and generate transformations.

We are called to be like water. Kendra Ford put it beautifully ...

**Reading:** “Be Like Water” by Kendra Ford  
(from *How We Are Called* – Skinner House Books)

- *piano music played gently under the reading*

**Song:** “Be Like Water” by Kevin Tarsa (composed specially for this workshop)

- *Piano begins, sing and offer non-verbal invitation to sing*
- *Alternate singing with spoken phrases from the poem*

## **Rainstorm**

- *Rub hands – offer non-verbal invitation to participate*
- *Tap one finger on other hand's palm, gradually stronger*
- *Slap legs*
- *Stomp feet*
- *(Then reverse, back to rubbing hands, smaller and smaller, ending in silence)*

## **Closing – Kevin**

- *Hold up chalice*

You can be like water – fluid, filling the space of the important moment to its own dimensions.

You can bend light – not always make the light, but bend the light that is around you toward wholeness and love.

You can eat boulders, quietly – grain by tiny grain, and you can be the rain of compassion, refreshing a parched heart.

You can be a universal solvent, constructing a religion where any-angled light can congregate endlessly.

You can be what love asks of you.

Knowing there is more love somewhere, you can be like water. Yes ... you.

Gathered here, gathered anywhere, WE can be like water. Yes ... We!

- *Extinguish chalice – slowly, in silence*

So may we be.

- *After worship, hold the silence for a bit ...*

## Workshop

### Part I – Opening – Karen

We are gathered this morning in power and Spirit to explore the nature of participation ... how is our sense of connection with each other, and our experience of worship, affected by conscious, active participation?

Kevin and I believe that active participation is essential and vital to a vibrant emotional and spiritual worship experience, to our emotional connectedness (which provides the unity in our diversity), and to our building of strong religious communities.

We'll delve into more detail about all that shortly, as well as our sources and choices for the worship service we just experienced, and we'll properly introduce ourselves in a moment, but first, we would like ... your participation! We'd like to hear what you have to say. What did you observe about the participatory nature of the service we just shared?

We invite you, as you are comfortable, to turn to a person or two near you, introduce yourself, and describe your experience of participating in our worship service. We'll take just three minutes to do this, and we'll let you know when there's one minute left.

- *Ring a chime and announce "1 more minute"*
- *Play piano briefly at end of 3 min to call group back together*
- *Ask for a scribe and give them pen and paper*

We'd like to hear out loud as many of your observations as we can gather in the next 3 minutes. If you're near the audience mic, go ahead and go to it; otherwise get our attention and we'll come to you. Tell us briefly what you noticed, and our scribe will write down your observations, and we'll add them to the Website later.

- *Take a few observations*
- *Capture and name a few underlying themes or principles*

If you have an additional observation that no one has voiced yet, we'd still love to hear it! There are some index cards around the room – we invite you to write down your observation and we'll collect it later!

## Part II – Our Words

### “Participation” by Kevin Tarsa

My look at participation comes through the lens of music, informed by my Catholic experiences earlier in life and my UU experiences as an adult over the past 22 years.

If we are about community, then I believe that our life together – our worship services, our meetings, our time together, are about participation. Yes, together receiving someone else’s words or music has an element of subtle communal participation, but the stronger experience of connection to one another and thus of community comes with explicit active engagement of the members of the community. For me, participation embodies the spirit of our religious ideals and our religious heritage, and points us toward responding to the needs and the call of the immediate moment.

You don’t have to take my word for it.

I begin with an invitation:

#### #1 Notice, Feel, Pay Attention

I invite you to pay attention to your own feelings and awareness throughout this morning, throughout General Assembly, and beyond. I invite you to notice changes in how you feel internally, and how you feel within and about the group of people you are with. Notice the feeling of the group as a whole, so you are constantly deepening your own awareness and building your own experiential database of tools and ideas regarding what influences a gathered community and how.

Let’s practice; let’s pay attention.

Let’s take several breaths together ...

- *Take several breaths*

Let’s take several more breaths together, this time adding the movement of some part of our bodies. If you are able, I invite you to raise your arms as we breathe in – or it could be your toes, or your eyelids, or the focus of your gaze – raising some part of your body as we breathe in together, and then let it lower, letting gravity bring the movement down, as we breathe out.

- *Take several breaths*
- *Notice any change in how you feel, or how the group feels, after breathing together in this way.*

## #2 Start Where People Are

It is important to start where people are, if you want them to participate.

Breathing together accomplishes several goals:

- Gives us info about where we are, as individuals and as a group
- Invites us to start influencing each other
- Gets us connected and synchronized

## #3 Move from the personal to the communal.

Starting where people are, I find it helpful to begin with participation that feels more personal, safe, and internal, and then to invite people gradually outward toward more and more communal participation.

This morning we began with piano and the heartbeat on the drum – outward sounds that met our internal pulse – becoming, with our tapping, both inward and outward.

- *Tap heartbeat*

... connecting, synchronizing ...

We moved then to humming, the first use of our personal voices, resonant inside our heads. You can remain inward and relatively anonymous when you are humming. Looking from the outside, no one needs to know that you are participating.

- *Hum first phrase of Gathered Here*

We moved then to singing, an effort that requires more courage, and that is immediately more communal.

- *Gathered here in one strong body*

We added movement, [*do movement*] bringing the inward more visibly outward.

- *Gathered here in the struggle and the power*

We sang in a round – same song, starting at different times, creating a visceral experience of diversity in harmony...

- *Spirit draw, spirit draw, spirit draw near*

And we ended by singing together again...one strong body.

We were gradually building the level of participation to more expansively, lovingly, meaningfully, and joyfully include others. Ideally, it's worth taking plenty of time for this to develop.

#### **#4 Encourage Participation – both following and influencing what you find.**

Heartbeat Rhythm ...

- *Invite each person to discern own heartbeat*
- *Tap, or somehow keep time with, the rhythm/pace of own heartbeat*
- *Make that movement increasingly larger*
- *Make movement that makes some sound*
- *If possible, move to clap – stronger and stronger*
- *Invite everyone to find group heartbeat together*

My goal (typically) is to move toward a stronger and stronger feeling of cohesion, connectedness, and community ... stronger and stronger energy ... energy that the members of the group generate. Not creating the light, but bending it a little and reflecting it back for the sake of the group. I see myself as a catalyst: I support and encourage and invite ...

I try to sense the feel, the mood, the spirit of a group, and then look for ways to help the group realize the full potential of the movement that it has created together. As we become more and more viscerally connected to one another, our energy keeps both deepening and strengthening.

The Rev. Dr. Thandeka would call this rise in energy an uplifting change of heart.

... Notice how you feel ...

## 5 Tools for Participation

Here are a five practical tools I've found helpful for supporting an uplifting change of heart – for increasing the amount and quality of participation, and thus the energy and sense of community in a group: I am going to apply these tools to music in my examples, but they will apply to other aspects of congregational life, other efforts on our parts.

### 1. Find the tempos – the speeds – that elicit the most energy.

As is true for most everything about this process, this is like focusing a camera lens. Keep looking for the tempos where the energy becomes more focused, more concentrated.

A little far this way, a little slow...oh, it's losing energy.

A little far this way, a little fast...oh, it's losing energy.

- *Sing first half of "Come and Go With Me" (#1018 in "Singing The Journey) at different, increasing speeds*

Please keep in mind, that the nearest focused energy may be behind you.

- *Sing song at a slower tempo*

So ... Going faster doesn't necessarily increase the energy of music. It might. And it may be slowing down that will increase the energy.

**There is no perfect tempo for a given song. There are only tempos that maximize the energy in a given moment, in a given space, with a given group of people.**

When you feel the energy in the community increasing, steer toward that, keep focusing there.

### 2. Find the keys – the pitches – the highness or lowness that elicit the most energy.

Sometimes a song feels clearly too high, or too low, to a given group at a given moment in a given space. You can feel this, hear this, and see it on the faces of those who are singing. Sometimes it is obvious. And sometimes, a small change can make all the difference. This too is like focusing a camera lens to find the most focused energy for the group as a whole. Each key feels a little different.

- *Sing the first phrase of "There is More Love Somewhere" in several keys*

Rising in key over the course of singing a song often lifts the energy. This is physiological response. We did this with "There Is More Love Somewhere" this morning. You can experiment to find the keys that feel best, that have the most energy in your setting, in your moment, with the people present.

### **3. Find the dynamic level - the volume – the loudness – that elicits the most energy.**

There is no perfect dynamic level for a given song. There are only dynamic levels that work in the moment and context.

- *Sing “Comfort Me” (#1002 in Singing the Journey) – beginning loudly*
- *Start again at medium volume, and again softly*

Singing more loudly doesn’t necessarily increase the energy, though it may. Simply varying the volume in either direction can increase the energy. Experiment, then draw on your experience to discern the strongest energy in your setting.

### **4. Sing a song, or engage in an activity, long enough to deepen and raise energy.**

This is a several-part process: 1) singing the song enough times to become familiar with it, 2) singing the song enough more times to become comfortable with it, 3) singing the song enough more times to go somewhere with it – to a rise in energy, an elevated feeling.

The steps of this process happen in that order: brand new, familiar, comfortable, Oooh! Sometimes, before getting to “Oooh!” you have to press through a boredom phase [*sigh*] to get to the reward on the other side.

Feel the rise and fall of energy in the group – experiment with pressing through the boredom phase, learn to sense in your own way whether there is an “ooh” waiting on the other side. Learn to read the signs in your group – feel for crest of the wave of energy in the group, when the energy is just peaking.

When you reach that crest, you can stop there when the energy is at its zenith – as we did with our body percussion this morning. Or you might ride over the crest of the wave, and just as the energy starts to relax, let it settle gently back down– as we did with “Gathered Here.”

The questions here are: “Where does the group go naturally in the moment?” and “What will best prepare the group for what’s coming next?” There is often room to shape what happens, but it’s also important to work with the movement of the moment ... taking the time you need to get where you need to go.

**5. Make (or allow) an aspect of the experience to be immediate, unique ... unrepeatable.**

Facilitate an experience that will never happen quite the same way again, and that brings our attention and awareness to the here and now, the immediate moment. For instance, tapping our heartbeats this morning was not composed or rehearsed.

Any improvisation can make the experience unique and unrepeatable:

- call out special words to be used in a song – choose words that match your moment
- invite the group to call out words, and incorporate them into the song
- name people or groups present, and invite them to sing to each other
- pass out bar chimes or other pretuned instruments or percussion instruments to be played improvisationally
- have someone improvise on piano (even a non-pianist can play a pentatonic improvisation using only the black keys)

You may have seen the PBS special on “Music and the Brain.” In it, a researcher spoke of a *frisson* – that sudden strong feeling of excitement or thrill that grabs us, bumps our heart rate up a notch, and opens our sense of hope and possibility.

A frisson, the researcher explained, requires encountering something unexpected. We can plan to do things that people will not expect, and thus facilitate the chance for that sudden strong feeling of excitement in them. A chord ending, for example, can create that feeling, or a change in tempo, key, or loudness.

But there is a larger “unexpected” that grabs even those of us who have planned an experience – an unexpected that exceeds our immediate beliefs, and concepts, and ideas. It is something that we feel, sometimes as tangible to some as a presence or spirit in the room. This experience is described and understood in many different ways, but it is always wonderful!

Prepare for the unexpected.

## **“Multigenerational Participation” by Karen McCarthy**

I’m Karen McCarthy, Director of Religious Education for Children and Youth at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Grand Traverse in Traverse City, MI – the same congregation as Rev. Kevin Tarsa.

We’ve found that another benefit of engaging in this participatory approach is that it really helps foster multigenerational worship experiences.

In our congregation, we hold full multi-gens several times a year, and almost all the other Sundays, our young people begin the morning in the sanctuary with the whole group, and then, after a Story for All Ages, go off to Religious Education. Many Unitarian Universalist congregations structure their worship services this way. So, really, those services are *multigenerational* for the first 15 or 20 minutes.

Therefore, our goal is to provide worship experiences that are both accessible and meaningful (and sometimes even transcendent or challenging) for people of *all* ages.

Active participation can help meet the broad spectrum of needs, styles, and abilities that are present in multigenerational worship. Here are four of Karen’s favorite ways to use this “engaging” approach:

- Child-Friendly Songs
- Responsive Readings
- Movement
- Participatory Storytelling.

I’m going to run through some examples in super-high speed, even though that artificial structure is not the ideal way to do these in real life.

## 1. Child-friendly Songs

During multigenerational worship services – and the early, multigen portion of most services – I’ve found it’s very helpful to choose songs that are child-friendly. What kinds of songs are child-friendly?

- **Echo songs**, in which a leader sings a line and the group sings it back (#1010 in *Singing the Journey*: “O, we give thanks ... *O, we give thanks* ... For this precious day ... *For this precious day*”)
- **Call-and-response songs**, in which a leader sings a line, and the group sings back a different, repeated line (Traditional African-American spiritual: “I looked over Jordan, and what did I see? ... *comin’ for to carry me home* ... A band of angels comin’ after me ... *comin’ for to carry me home*”)
- **Chants**, or songs that are short and rhythmic and sung many, many times, like #1003 in *StJ* (“Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?”)
- **Zipper songs**, which are also sung multiple times. Each time you sing it, you change one word or phrase, and then sing it with slightly different meanings. A little while ago, we sang “There Is More Love Somewhere” as a zipper song. If you have time, you can take suggestions from the group that you’re singing with, and zip them into the song on the spot.
- Songs are child-friendly if they are easy to catch on to and sing along with after a few repetitions, and without needing to look at words.
- Or they may have a recurring chorus sung by the group, and a soloist or group sings the verses.
- For people who *used* to be children, a child-friendly song may feel more appropriate and meaningful when it’s sung with this kind of active participation, as well as with elements that make the experience unrepeatable.

See our resource page for information on finding child-friendly songs.

## 2. Responsive Readings

Readings can also be participatory. One way to achieve the communal feeling of reading together, when all the generations are gathered, is to choose a piece with a short phrase that is repeated by the whole congregation, interspersed with lines read by a presenter.

Even if the author didn’t write it quite that way, we can choose a line from the reading to repeat. We did that with the Kendra Ford poem, “Be like water,” only we sang the response. We could also do that as a reading: “Respond to the moon, to gravity / *Be like water* / change colors with the light / *Be like water*.”

This is most effective when the reading is long enough to allow the participants to really relax into the experience, and really hear and feel the words.

A responsive reading like this can be a great opportunity to invite the group to suggest more lines to be said between the responses.

### 3. Movement

The simplest way to get our bodies engaged in our worship services is to add some gestures to our singing. I've found that some people are more open and willing to participate in hand motions if we explain a bit about the purpose for the movement. There's lots of information out there to help explain details like how crossing the center line of the body helps the two hemispheres of the brain to work in synchronicity, and how our kinesthetic sense is closely connected to our feelings.

When introducing hand motions, I try to remember to issue the invitation as just that, and to invite the group to let me be their mirror. (#402 in *Singing the Living Tradition*: "From You I Receive" with motions). We didn't offer that advice when we led the hand motions this morning in "Gathered Here" ... perhaps you noticed that your participation may have been a little confused?

If you want to make things extra exciting, you can try a sit-down square dance. Invite people to take hands in their seats, and dance – in body or spirit – just by swaying. "Everybody circle to the left! And back to the right! Now do-si-do! Now do-si-do back! Now go in to the center! And back!" You can do this to a lively tune, or gently and slowly to a song like the Alleluia Chaconne (# 386 in *StLT*).

### 4. Participatory Stories

Storytelling is an ancient, primal way to transmit information, history, culture, values, emotions, and more. Many of you will already be well aware of some of the suggestions I'm about to make, and I'm always looking for more ideas along these lines!

I've had fun telling stories with the children and the congregation participating with puppets, props, or pictures on sticks – I invite a few kids to operate the visuals or hold up a cloth for a stage.

(Once upon a time, when earth was new, there lived a Man [*hold up a Ken doll*] and a Woman [*hold up a Barbie doll*] They met and fell in love [*make dolls kiss*]. Then one day the man went out hunting [*make the Ken doll walk away*] ... )

... or we'll incorporate sounds, actions, or gestures – invite a few kids, and all those in the congregation, to help act out the story (villagers planting corn, and wind blowing)

(Lee, Kim, and Sandy, you act out the villagers with this side of the congregation. Terry, Jordan, and Chris, you act out the wind with this side of the congregation. Once upon a time, in a tiny village by the sea, all the villagers decided to plant corn. So they put on their gardening hats [*pause to pantomime putting on hats*] and picked up their buckets of corn seed [*pause for pantomime*] ...etc.)

If you tell the story with very obvious cues, you won't need any advance rehearsal.

Again, to help the story be both accessible and meaningful to people of ALL AGES, I've found it effective to use rather simple vocabulary, and then also maintain a tone of voice and melodic inflection that I would use with adults.

Also, I've found it to be most effective for everyone when the parts that the children perform truly enhance and further the story, even though they may also be cute.

### Part III – Your Ideas

Kevin:

So, these are some of our thoughts and ideas from our experience, part of our list of 101 Ways to Encourage Active Participation. And we are in a room full of people who also have thoughts and ideas. What are some of the ways you have found to successfully engage people's active participation? We invite you to come to the audience mic (or to get our attention and we'll come to you with a wireless mic), speak very briefly, and let's collect as many new ideas as we can in the next 3 minutes. There are also piles of index cards on which you can write more ideas and suggestions, and we'll include them in our post on the website.

Karen:

You may be thinking to yourself, "well, this is all fine, but in my congregation at home, we could never do this because ..." or ... "this would never work for us because of our people or our expertise or our resources or our traditions or ... or ... or ..."

We invite you to imagine ONE manageable step to begin an element of active participation in your congregation ...

- maybe begin a committee meeting with a song or chant or responsive reading ...
- add participation to the telling of a story for all ages ...
- encourage your musicians to do a hymn just a few more times, or sing one verse in a different way...

One manageable step can start to introduce your congregation to the emotional uplift, sense of connectedness, vibrant worship, and strengthened community that can result from engaging hearts, minds, voices, and hands.

We invite you to think for a moment, then, as you are comfortable, to turn to a person or two near you and share your ideas for one manageable step. We'll take just three minutes to do this, and we'll let you know when there's one minute left.

- *Ring a chime and announce "1 more minute"*
- *Play piano briefly at end of 3 min to call group back together*
- *Ask for a scribe and give them pen and paper*

We'd like to hear out loud as many of your ideas as we can gather in the next 3 minutes. If you're near the audience mic, go ahead and go to it; otherwise get our attention and we'll come to you. Tell us briefly what you noticed, and our scribe will write down your observations, and we'll add them to the Website later.

- *Take a few observations*

If you have an additional idea that no one has voiced yet, we'd still love to hear it! We invite you to write down your idea on one of our index cards.

## Part IV – Closing

Kevin:

SO much of religion has to do with balancing and connecting our personal well-being to that of the communities in which we live our lives. Active participation increases the connective tissue – it strengthens the emotional bonds that allow a group of independent-minded people to hold together – allowing us to love alike, if not always to think alike.

Thank you for sharing your morning with us, for participating in all the ways that you have. We hope that this time together offers you some instigation to seek ever-fuller participation in your home communities.

We close with a song written by members of the Fourth Presbyterian Church of Boston. They have a tradition of writing songs together to sing, and the pastor, Rev. Burns Stanfield, taught this song to Keith Arnold, who taught it at a Liberal Religious Educators conference, where Karen learned it and taught it to me. If you don't yet know it, we pass it on to you.

The original song began with the word “walking”, but we will sing “singing”

**Singing With You Is My Prayer** – Sing 2x, invite group to sing along

Breathing ...

Being ...

Invite folks to call out other suggestions ... sing 2 suggestions, then list more

Invite folks to sing to each other:

- one side of the room to the other side
- this age to that age;
- extroverts to introverts;
- everyone sing to our conference planners
- everyone sing to everyone

Hum a couple of times

Kevin:

Living this journey WITH you is our prayer.

Thank you so much.

*Thank you, remind about ideas on index cards, we'll post our notes, full acknowledgements of our source materials, and more lists of ideas on the uua.org website.*

## Resources:

### Songs and Singing:

- *Singing the Journey: A Supplement to "Singing the Living Tradition,"* Unitarian Universalist Association
- *Singing the Living Tradition,* UUA
- *Rise Up Singing,* conceived, developed, and edited by Peter Blood and Annie Patterson
- *Come Sing a Song With Me,* Melodie Feather, Editor, Unitarian Universalist Musicians Network
- *May This Light Shine: A Songbook for Children and Youth,* UUMN
- Nick Page has a wonderful entry called "Making Music Live" in the Tapestry of Faith section of the UUA website:  
<http://www.uua.org/religiouseducation/curricula/tapestryfaith/makingmusic/index.shtml>
- <http://www.lifelongmusicmaking.org/singingchallenge.html>

### Stories:

- your local library children's department!
- the REACH list serve (<http://lists.uua.org/> - click on **Reach-I**)
- the LREDA list serve (<http://lists.uua.org/> - click on **LREDA-I**)
- *UU & Me Collected Stories,* Betsy Hill Williams, Editor, Skinner House
- *Stirring the Nation's Heart: 18 Stories of Prophetic Unitarians and Universalists of the Nineteenth Century* by Polly Peterson (for middle school and older)
- *Stories in Faith: Exploring Our UU Principles and Sources Through Wisdom Tales* by Gail Forsyth-Vail
- Jack Kornfield has several wonderful collections of stories:  
<http://jackkornfield.org/books.php>

### Movement and brain activity information:

- Brain Gym: <http://www.braingym.org/>
- Moving and Learning: <http://www.movingandlearning.com/>

### Worship:

- *Come Into The Circle: Worshiping with Children,* by Michelle Richards, Skinner House, UUA, is a comprehensive guide to creating meaningful religious experiences for children, including lists of child-friendly songs, responsive readings, and lots of ideas
- *Story, Song and Spirit: Fun and Creative Worship Services for All Ages,* Erika Hewitt, Skinner House
- *Worship That Works,* Wayne Arneson and Kathleen Rolenz, Skinner House

## **Observations and Ideas from our Workshop**

### **Observations on the Worship Service:**

Really enjoyed experience. Participate from heart. Strong presence from leaders.

Important to have body of music we comfortably can sing. Didn't seem forced – very organized.

Non-verbal invitation to participate was welcoming. Invitation drew me in. Made me want to be involved.

Didn't have to have directions. Everyone can and will participate. Worked for introvert and extrovert.

Felt connection with others in larger group (i.e., rain shower). Felt organic and real.

Felt strong sense of community. Had fun harmonizing (Hate it when I don't know music well!)

Minute planning with such deep intention. Didn't notice transitions. Seamless.

Sometimes I'm worried I'll do it wrong, but there was a sense of “no way to do it wrong.”

Your demeanor (facial expression, etc.) gave a seriousness to the start of the service and a sense of the sacred.

Very supportive in creating safe space. I would like ideas about expanding this into a full service. Thanks! (We already do story participation.)

I came in late (during “More Love”) and was initially afraid it would be too white-bread / campfire / folky. I've been immersed in the workshops dealing with multicultural worship and wanted something deeper and more visceral. But the tying of the deep-running water with what was happening in the music drew me in. The question becomes – are there entry points in the worship for those who aren't there at the beginning ... (now that the remarks are happening I realize that I missed a great beginning!)

Inherently easily multigenerational. Thank you. 🎵 🎵

I liked making the rain and I liked singing (*from a child*)

Hydrogen is an atom not a molecule. Same with oxygen. Water is a molecule.

### **Observations about the workshop:**

Congratulations! I've been to SO many workshops and this was probably the most professional and well-prepared that I've EVER attended!! Thank you!

It was a very good, involving experience, but certain things such as repetition and misinformation (i.e., water is not a universal solvent) hurt the overall experience, since it's hard not to mentally comment.

Excellent workshop – so many ideas. What I liked as a particular plus is that this was participatory but not performance. You are both very talented individuals but you used that talent and did not showcase Kevin. Thanks.

I thought it interesting that you did not call attention to the distraction of noise outside the room – train noise, voices, or cell phones. But if you had, you might have felt permission to ignore it. What to do about distractions?

My purpose in attending GA is to connect with people beyond those in my church and I felt connected even with those I wasn't looking at.

Heartbeat thing – have most close eyes, taking cues from few around with eyes open (stopping, starting). Candle holder – nestle earth cup.

Thank you – great job on many levels! Fabulous! Wouldn't it be great to post videos of some of your congregational work for other congregations to witness? (Maybe you do!)

I was struck by how very MULTI-GENERATIONAL this whole experience was. Story suggestions would be VERY helpful, or templates of orders of service to give some models to start with.

Incredible workshop! Thanks so much!

Re: Faith Formation 2020 findings: Music must be a HUGE part of what we have to offer. Where ELSE can regular folks SING?

This was a FABULOUS workshop! I hope I have the courage to do some of this with my congregation!

Multi-generational appeal without “dumbing down” the music or words was good and important.

### **Ideas for Encouraging Participation in Your Congregation**

Important to NOT learn music and “dance” at same time. Normally the whole attention is on one or the other.

Good to not have gestures too complicated.

Important that leaders “do their homework” and be confident and smooth in presentation.

Remember that THIS group was already musically oriented, i.e., accustomed to performing e.g., gestures to round, then unison.

Participation – start small with one thing, build up to the big project.

Perform a story (needs practice).

Include youth as the voices that narrate the action of smaller kids. Youth want to be in the background and littler kids like to be front and center.

Everyone can hear the mic and voices (includes adults with hearing issues).