

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION RESOURCE GUIDE FOR MINISTERIAL INTERNS

The readings, experiences, and training opportunities described below are ideas and suggestions for developing your learning/serving agreement with your intern site. After determining your growth needs in religious education and setting realistic goals for what you can accomplish during your internship, select learning opportunities from each of the categories below that will enable you to achieve those goals. Draw also from the educational resources of your intern setting, community, and UUA district staff and programs.

Human Development and Faith Development

Publications

- *Creative Leadership Series: Building an Effective Youth Ministry*, Glenn E. Ludwig.
- *The Critical Years: Young Adults and the Search for Meaning, Faith and Commitment*, Sharon Parks. Valuable insights based on the human- and faith-development theories of Fowler, Gilligan, and Kegan.
- *The Evolving Self: Problem and Process in Human Development*, Robert Kegan. Lifespan development theory—readable, informative, and thought-provoking.
- *Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle*, Kenneth Stokes, Ed.
- *Junior High Ministry*, Wayne Rice.
- *Mapping the Moral Domain: A Contribution of Women's Thinking to Psychological Theory and Education*, Carol Gilligan.
- *Meeting at the Crossroads: Women's Psychology and Girls' Development*, Lyn M. Brown and Carol Gilligan.
- *No Ladder to the Sky: Education and Morality*, Gabriel Moran. Disturbed by hierarchical framing of morality, Moran proposes an education process that leads to moral integrity that is bodily and communal.
- *Portrait of Youth Ministry*, Maria Harris. Harris explores issues confronting adolescents in U.S. culture and suggests ways the whole church can engage in ministry “for and with and by young people.”
- *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*, James Fowler.

Experiences

- Young Children (3 to 5 years). Observe one child for at least one full session, from entering to leaving the building. Record observations. Reflect on and draw inferences about the nature of the child's experiences of the church that day. Will s/he look forward to next Sunday? Why?
- Elementary (6 to 11 years). Interview one lower and one upper elementary teacher about how the religious education programs they are using relate to the children's developmental characteristics.
- Junior High/Senior High (12 to 18 years). Interview a female and a male of the same age, selecting questions from James Fowler's “Faith Development Interview Guide” in his *Stages of Faith* (p 310).

Philosophy of Religious Education

Publications

- *Christian Religious Education: Sharing Our Story and Vision*, Thomas H. Groome. Groome, a Catholic educator, provides a rich resource of theory and praxis, easily translatable to the Unitarian Universalist principles and lifespan religious education.
- *Educating in Faith: Maps and Visions*, Mary C. Boys. Offers overview of religious education development in North America. Includes summaries of major theories as well as new directions for religious education.
- *Liberal Religious Education*, journal of the Liberal Religious Educator's Association, explores the theory and practice of religious education.
- *Philosophy-Making for Unitarian Universalist Religious Growth and Learning*, Elizabeth Anastos and David Marshak (UUA).
- *Religious Education*, the journal of the Religious Education Association and the Association of Professors and Researchers in Religious Education, H.A. Alexander, Ed. Excellent articles on current trends in religious education.
- *Religious Education and Our Ultimate Commitment: An Application of Henry Nelson Wieman's Philosophy of Creative Interchange*, Harold Rosen (UUA). A statement of philosophy with suggested goals and content for children and youth.
- *Religious Education as a Second Language*, Gabriel Moran. Moran uses four words to describe religious education—international, interreligious, intergenerational and interinstitutional—challenging us to develop ministries that transcend parochial boundaries.
- *Sharing Faith: A Comprehensive Approach to Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry*, Thomas H. Groome. Groome gives us further examples of integrating theory with praxis in religious development.
- *Teaching From the Heart: Theology and Educational Method*, Mary Elizabeth Moore.

Renaissance Program

The UUA's Renaissance Program, a leadership development program for lay leaders in religious education, is also appropriate for ministerial candidates. It's eight 15-hour workshops are entitled Training Teachers, Curriculum Planning, Administration of R.E. Programs, Philosophy of Religious Education, Ministry With Youth, Worship for All Ages, Unitarian Universalist History, and Unitarian Universalist Identity. Participation in Renaissance workshops gives ministerial candidates experiences in religious education praxis and access to current theories in the field, but is not a substitute for graduate level courses. The learning will serve you well if you are asked to initiate or give direction to educational programs in a congregation or a community agency. See the *UU WORLD* or the REACH Packet for workshop locations and dates, or contact your local religious educator, district office, or the UUA Religious Education Department's Renaissance Office.

Experience

- Co-lead a study-discussion group for three to six sessions with *Philosophy-Making for Unitarian Universalist Religious Growth and Learning*. Guide participants through a developing process to define their religious philosophy, formulate goals, and implement a plan for lifespan religious education.

Training Opportunities

- Take the UUA Renaissance workshop, “Developing A Philosophy of Religious Education”.
- Attend cluster, district and continental workshops and conferences.

Curriculum

Publications

- *Curriculum Mapping*, Elizabeth Anastos, Ed. A comprehensive, descriptive guide to Unitarian Universalist curricular programs for children, youth and adults.
- *Fashion Me a People: Curriculum in the Church*, Maria Harris. For Harris, curriculum is more than instructional resources; it is the entire course of a congregation’s life, the creative and educational powers used to “fashion a people.”
- *The REACH (Religious Education Action Clearing House) Packet*. Contains program aids, curriculum supplements, worship resources, and reviews of new materials. Published three times a year and sent to all Unitarian Universalist congregations, addressed to the R.E. Coordinator.
- *Teaching and the Religious Imagination: The Theology of Teaching*, Maria Harris. A work about education, but also of incarnational and creational theology. Harris argues for the oppressed, forgotten people who are empowered when curriculum is changed to include them.
- *UUA Audio-Visual Loan Library Catalog*. A free annotated listing of audio-visual resources for education, worship, and community outreach available to congregations for an annual fee.
- *UUA Bookstore Catalog*. A free, annual, annotated listing of educational programs, books, pamphlets, and other church resources sold through the UUA Bookstore.

Curriculum Programs

Select one of the following program guides from each age level. Then refer to the experiences on p. ___ for suggestions of ways to engage directly with the program’s content and process.

- **Preschool (3 to 5 years)**
Growing Times, Corelyn F. Senn (UUA). A three-year curriculum. Read the Introduction and three session plans from each section: “Windows,” “Rainbows,” and “Bridges.”
- **Elementary (6 to 11 years)**
In Our Hands: Peace and Social Justice (UUA). Grades 1-3 by S. Goldenberg, E. Hunting and M. Thomson. Grades 4-6 by B. Andrews and P. Hoertdoerfer. Read the Introduction and four session plans in each program.

Timeless Themes: Stories from the Hebrew and Christian Bibles, grades 3-4 by N. Gowdy, M.A. Moore, and M. Skwire (UUA). Read the Introduction and six session plans.

God Images, grades 5-6 by Mary Ann Moore (Self published). Read the Introduction and six session plans.

Travel in Time: Unitarian Universalism for Grades 5 and 6, Lois Ecklund (UUA). Read the Introduction and six session plans.

- Junior and Senior High (12 to 18 years)

In Our Hands: Peace and Social Justice (UUA). Jr. high by B. Andrews, R. Branch, V. Lane, and H. Rosen; Sr. high by E. Hunting, V. Lane, and H. Rosen. Read the Introduction and three session plans in each program.

Messages in Music: Unitarian Universalism for Junior High, Elizabeth Strong (UUA). Read the Introduction and six session plans—three from the first half, three from the second half of the program.

Stereotypes, Sexuality and Gender, Jr. high, Tracey Robinson-Harris and Ritch Savin-Williams (UUA). Read the Introduction and six session plans.

About Sexual Abuse: A Program for Teens and Young Adults, Fred and Betty Ward (UUA). Read the program guide.

Life Issues for Teenagers (L.I.F.T.). Sr. high Wayne Arnason, Cheryl Powers (UUA). Read the Introduction and four session plans.

On the Path: Spirituality for Youth and Adults, by W. Arnason et al. (UUA). Read the Introduction and three units.

- Adults

Adult religious education programs aim to meet developing needs of persons as they enter, explore and become committed to Unitarian Universalism over several years. Select three programs to study from among those listed below or in the UUA Bookstore Catalog.

The New U. J. Highsmith, M.N. McLaughlin, J. Schmidt (UUA).

Being a UU Parent. Makaanah Morriss, David MacPherson (UUA).

Parents as Resident Theologians. (UUA) and *Parents as Social Justice Educators*. Roberta and Christopher Nelson (UUA).

Our Chosen Faith. F. Forrester Church and John A. Buehrens and *Our Chosen Faith: A Study Guide*. Joan Goodwin (UUA). Read the book and the study guide.

How Open the Door? Afro-Americans' Experience in Unitarian Universalism. Mark Morrison-Reed (UUA). A startling glimpse into our history.

Building Your Own Theology III, Richard S. Gilbert. (UUA). Presents case studies to explore ethical decision-making in its many dimensions.

Experiences

- Review the universal life questions listed by goal and subject in Rosen's *Religious Education and Our Ultimate Commitment*, pp. 132-149, noting those of the age group you have chosen to observe. Discuss with group leaders or the religious educator the overall program goals and goals of sessions you will observe. During observation, analyze the degree of congruence between goals implemented in the sessions and Rosen's list for that age level.

- In consultation with the religious educator and course leaders, choose two programs between preschool to senior-high age levels to first observe and then participate as leader or co-leader for two or more sessions each. Before visiting or assisting in a program, study its philosophy, goals, age-level characteristics, and the session plans in which you are participating. Discuss the goals, process, and method with program's leaders, and clarify your responsibilities. Ask the leaders to meet with you after each session to give you feedback on your participation.
- Participate as a member of an adult program offered in your congregation. Discuss the program's goals and process with the religious education coordinator, analyzing together how well goals were met, the effectiveness of the process and the leadership style.
- Lead or co-lead one of the adult programs listed here or in the UUA Bookstore Catalog. In choosing a program, analyze the needs of your anticipated group. Upon completion, involve participants in evaluating the program's effectiveness in meeting its stated goals and the meaning it had for them.
- In a community based setting, take advantage of opportunities to design and lead group meetings and educational sessions with children, youth, and adults. Ask your supervisor, intern committee, and/or other appropriate persons to evaluate the sessions for content and process, and your leadership.

Training Opportunities

- Take the training programs for *Our Whole Lives*. Contact your district Religious Education Committee or district office for dates and locations.
- Explore teacher-training sessions at the church with which you are associated or a district-sponsored leadership training conference. Note the goals and leadership styles used. Are the content and process congruent with the goals? How or why? What was most and least effective in the session?
- Negotiate with appropriate persons to participate as a co-leader or part of a leadership team for a leadership training conference. Design an evaluation instrument based on your goals for the experience and ask your intern committee and other persons to be evaluators of the conference and your leadership skills.
- Take these UUA Renaissance workshops: "*Curriculum Planning for the Local Society*," which provides practical experience in planning curriculum for an institution and "*Ministry with Youth*," an orientation for working with youth.

Worship with Children and Intergenerational Groups

Publications

- *Worshipping Together With Questioning Minds*, Sophia Lyon Fahs. Out of print. Available in Theological school and church libraries.
- *Conversations with Children*, Edith F. Hunter. Initiating religious discussions with five- to eight-year olds, a valuable worship or classroom resource.
- *Conversations with a 50-Million-Year-Old Clam: A Collection of Worship Services for Children and Adults* and *Touching the Infinite: Creative Children's Worship, A Lay Leader's Manual*. Judith Fisher and Jane McKeel (UUA).
- *Seasons of Hope, Circles of Love: Eight Intergenerational Celebrations*, Judith Fisher and Jane McKeel (UUA).

Experiences

- Observe children's and/or youth worship in church, conference or camp settings. Discuss goals, format and techniques with the worship leaders.
- Design and conduct worship for children and/or youth, and obtain evaluative feedback from teachers, leaders, your supervisor and your intern committee.
- Practice speaking and storytelling skills for this form of worship.
- Work with lay and professional leaders in designing and conducting one or more intergenerational worship services.
- Work with a worship committee to plan and conduct intergenerational celebrations.
- Assist a group of youth in preparing a special service for children in the church school or other institution, or an intergenerational component for a Sunday service.
- Consider and discuss with the children's program staff and/or the religious educator the significance of ritual and tradition, as well as the power of music and song in worship with children.
- Read *Worshipping Together With Questioning Minds*. Examine Fahs' theories in light of what you believe is appropriate and initiate a discussion on worship theory and practice with persons who lead children's worship.

Training Opportunities

- Participate in skill-building workshops, such as storytelling, music and song, use of rituals and symbols.
- Take the UUA Renaissance workshop, "*Worship For All Ages*," which is a practical approach to children's and intergenerational worship leadership.

Team Development: Working with Volunteers and Staff

Publications

- *How to Mobilize Church Volunteers*, Marlene Wilson.
- *Liberating Leadership: Practical Styles in Pastoral Ministry*, Bernard Swain.
- *Let My People Go: Empowering Laity for Ministry*, Alvin Lindgren, Norman Shawchuck.
- *Theory in Practice: Increasing Professional Effectiveness*, Chris Argyris and Donald A. Schon.

Experiences

- Informed by reading or workshops in team dynamics and leadership styles, meet with the R.E. Committee regularly, analyzing the leadership style of the chair and the participation patterns of the group. How congruent with UU principles are the styles and patterns you observe? How might group participation and productivity be improved?
- Read *How to Mobilize Church Volunteers* and compare it to the practices for recruitment, training, supervision, and reward in your setting. What practices recommended by Wilson are there? What is missing? What recommendations can you give to your setting's leaders?
- Facilitate an enrichment session with committee chairs that will assist them in their work.
- Co-design, co-facilitate or work with a committee to plan a board or committee retreat.
- Attend a board or committee retreat. What are the goals and what was done to achieve them? How do you evaluate the program's design, leadership and results? What have you learned?

- Discuss with area R.E. leaders techniques of recruiting, training, supervising, and rewarding volunteers. What has been effective? Ineffective?
- Become familiar with services of the district Religious Education and Youth/Adult Committees. Participate in one or more events appropriate to your learning goals.

Training Opportunities

- Take the UUA Renaissance workshops, “*Administration of R.E. Programs,*” “*Training Teachers,*” and “*Ministry with Youth.*”
- Participate in a District Leadership School.
- Take workshops in volunteer management and team development.

.....

Roberta M. Nelson is minister of religious education at the Cedar Lane Unitarian Church in Bethesda, Maryland, a member of the UUA Panel on Theological Education, and a former member of the UUA Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

Eugene B. Navias is minister for lay leadership at the Arlington Street Church in Boston, Massachusetts and former director of the UUA Department of Religious Education and consultant in religious education.