

Worship
Renaissance Module

LEADER'S GUIDE



UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST
ASSOCIATION

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Worship Renaissance Module

Introduction

Worship is the central activity of congregational life. Through worship we gather together to respond not only to the needs of the individual but also to the community. It is a sacred time and when done well sends us forth to be and act on our best selves.

Worship opportunities abound: adult worship, religious education classes, children's chapel, youth circles, rites of passage, and multigenerational services, to name a few. Religious educators, then, have both a place and a stake in the worship life of a congregation. In many congregations, religious educators are the staff members who carry the biggest responsibility for the introduction and maintenance of the worship life of children and youth. Their talents may be called on for leading rites of passage and "solo" worship services. As more congregations seek to be multigenerational communities, they seek their religious educators' input, knowledge, and skills to offer worship for all ages.

A foundation in worship is essential for a religious educator. Understanding worship, its place in congregational life, and its craft and presentation is critical to the religious educator's work. The acquisition of skills, resources, knowledge, and practice can feed enthusiasm and confidence to plan and present worship well.

Goals and Learning Objectives

The overall goals of this module are:

- To explore worship formation
- To appreciate the range of worship experiences
- To gain resources and skills for the craft of worship
- To understand and practice the power of stories in worship
- To evaluate the aspects and impact of a worship service

The module explores these areas:

- Purpose of worship
- Significance of personal and congregational narratives about worship
- Fluency with the language of worship
- Key distinctions and similarities of a range of worship opportunities
- Structure of successful orders of service
- Healthy and effective teamwork among those who plan/present worship
- Power and use of stories in worship
- Sensitivity to cultural appropriation in choosing readings, songs, and stories for worship
- Appreciation for the purpose and construction of a sermon/homily
- Specific and meaningful evaluation of worship services

Leader Preparation

Be thoroughly familiar with the content and process of this Leader's Guide, including the Leader Resources. Review the Reader (participants are expected to read the entire book), the Handouts, and the PowerPoint slides. [Links to all components](#) of this Renaissance Module can be found on the UUA website.

Email a welcome letter to participants.

- Use Leader Resource 1, Sample Welcome Letter to Participants, as a guide.
- Tell participants they are responsible to print their own copies of the handouts for this module. Include the link to the handouts: https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/renmod_worship_ho.pdf
- Tell participants they are responsible to obtain a copy of the Reader, *Worship That Works: Theory and Practice for Unitarian Universalists, 2nd edition* (Skinner House, 2017). It is available from the [UUA Bookstore](#).

Make the preparations you need so that you will feel comfortable in your role as a leader, committed to delivering an intensive program, in a limited time, with attention to relationship and creativity among all participants.

This module is divided into five three-hour segments for a total of 15 hours of workshop time. You will need to adjust times for breaks and to include a brief opening each time your group comes back together after a significant break (such as a meal or overnight). Ahead of time, invite volunteers to prepare to lead these openings, which should be limited to a reading, a hymn, or a worship element of similar length.

Although not required, a computer, projector, and Internet access are strongly recommended. A [PowerPoint presentation](#) accompanies this module; the slides provide song lyrics, discussion questions, key points, and the guidelines for participant projects. If you will not project the slides during the sessions, you will need pre-session time on-site to prepare and post sheets of newsprint with the information the slides provide. You may also save the PowerPoint presentation as a PDF file. Email participants the PDF file to print, if they wish, to have handy for written reflections during the module and reports afterward.

During the module, encourage working groups to document their work electronically rather than on newsprint, if possible. This will help you distribute working groups' projects to the large group after the module.

An optional, but helpful, resource is the CD, *Wake, Now, My Senses* (Musicopia, 2007), featuring the musicians of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland (CA). It is available for download from <https://store.cdbaby.com/cd/chancelchoir2>

The Reader for this module is [Worship That Works: Theory and Practice for Unitarian Universalists, 2nd edition](#) (Skinner House, 2017) by Wayne Arnason and Kathleen Rolenz; It is available from the [UUA Bookstore](#).

Make sure participants receive a link to the handouts in plenty of time. In the welcome letter, instruct participants to download and print (or save) the handouts to bring to the first session.

Select an active, meaningful way to conclude the module and wish participants well. One suggestion is to use a “metaphor box”—any box of small items which can be used as personal metaphors, such as the following: mirror, clothespin, shell, penny, rubber ball, small nest, mini-size item from craft stores, marble, key. Bring a box and metaphoric box items to the module. Spread the items on a worship table so all can see. Provide more items than participants so choices are not limited. Offer a question such as, “How have you grown as a religious educator who creates and presents worship?” or “What important idea about worship will you take home?” Participants choose an item to be a metaphor for their answer. Then each person, including leaders, one at a time, offers a one-sentence answer to the question and places their item in the box.

Supplies and Resource Materials

- Handouts https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/renmod_worship_ho.pdf
- PowerPoint slides https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/renmod_worship_1.pptx
- Leader Resources 1, 2, 3, and 4 (provided below)
- Computer (preferably with Internet access), projector, and screen
- Optional: Music [download](#), *Wake Now My Senses*, Chancel Choir, First Unitarian Church of Oakland (Musicopia, 2007) and speakers
- Worship resources (invite module organizers and participants to bring)
- Chalice and LED battery-operated candle
- Centering table and cloth
- Optional: Basket for readings
- Bell or chime for indicating time periods

- List of participants' names and addresses
- Copies of the Unitarian Universalist hymnbooks, *Singing the Living Tradition*, *Singing the Journey*, and Spanish version *Las Voces del Camino*
- Large newsprint pad(s), self-sticking if possible
- Sticky notes, 3x3-inch or larger
- Colored index cards, 3x5-inch
- Lined and unlined 8.5x11-inch paper
- Pens or pencils
- Color markers and/or color pencils, enough for each participant to use a few at a time

List of Handouts

Session 1

Handout 1, A Covenant for the Module

Handout 2, Schedule of Sessions and Topics

Handout 3, Intro to Renaissance and RE Credentialing Programs

Handout 4, Preparing for the Module Evaluation (use again in Session 5)

Handout 5, Reflection Questions (use again in Session 5)

Session 2

Handout 6, Worship Quotes and Definitions

Handout 7, Worship Leaders Give a Voice to Multigenerational Worship

Handout 8, Why Do We Have Intergenerational Services?

Handout 9, Skit – Worshipping Together

Handout 10, Worshipping Together Pamphlet

Handout 11, Wonder Box: Time for All Ages

Handout 12, Ten Good Ideas for Multigenerational Worship

Handout 13, The Functions, Purpose, and Meaning of Rituals

Handout 14, The Lion and the Mouse

Handout 15, Typical Elements of Circle/Youth Worship

Handout 16, Guidelines for Worship Module Project

Session 3

Handout 17, Components of Worship

Handout 18, Child-Friendly Hymns

Handout 19, Checklist for Planning Worship

Handout 20, That Which Holds All

Handout 21, The Best Worship Space Possible

Handout 22, Honoring and Respecting Our World's Cultures

Handout 23, Anger – A Buddhist Story

Handout 24, The Promise and The Practice

Session 4

Handout 25, Selected Resources: Worship Module

Handout 26, The Difference Between Heaven and Hell

Handout 27, Homily Writing Tips

Handout 28, Two Monks

Session 5

Handout 4, Preparing for the Module Evaluation

Handout 5, Reflection Questions

List of PowerPoint Slides

Session 1

1. Module Welcome Slide
2. Spirit of Life
3. Introductions
4. Renaissance Program
5. Worship Quotes/Definitions
6. Quote from *Worship that Works: Theory and Practice for Unitarian Universalists*
7. Quote, cont'd
8. Session 1 Reflection Questions

Session 2

9. Session 2
10. Enter, Rejoice, and Come In
11. Rites of Passage
12. Rites of passage, cont'd
13. Elementary-Age Children
14. Guidelines for Worship Module Project
15. Session 2 Reflection Questions

Session 3

16. Session 3
17. Whoever You Are
18. Come, Come, Whoever You Are
19. What Does the Minister Bring?
20. What Does the Music Director Bring?
21. Key Components of Worship
22. We Worship Thee, God
23. The Best Worship Space Possible
24. Honoring and Respecting Our World's Cultures
25. Guidelines for Worship Module Project

26. Session 3 Reflection Questions

Session 4

27. Session 4

28. Blue Boat Home (1)

29. Blue Boat Home (2)

30. Blue Boat Home (3)

31. Personal Story

32. Congregation's Story

33. Elements: A Good Story...

34. Six Techniques of Storytelling

35. Homily Writing

36. Guidelines for Worship Module Project

37. Session 4 Reflection Questions

Session 5

38. Session 5

39. Wake, Now, My Senses (1)

40. Wake, Now, My Senses (2)

41. Wake, Now, My Senses (3)

42. Session 5 Reflection Questions

Leader Resource 1, Sample Welcome Letter to Participants

Dear Colleagues,

We are excited at the prospect of leading together and sharing the revised Worship Renaissance module, [date], at [location].

Worship is the central activity of congregational life. Through worship we gather together to respond not only to the needs of the individual but also to the community. It is a sacred time and when done well sends us forth to be and act on our best selves. Worship opportunities abound—adult worship, religious education classes, children’s chapel, youth circles, rites of passage, and multigenerational services, to name a few. Religious educators have both a place and a stake in the worship life of a congregation. A foundation in worship is essential for a religious educator and the acquisition of skills, resources, knowledge and practice can provide the confidence and enthusiasm to plan and present worship well.

Criteria for receiving credit for the module:

- Attend all sessions for the full fifteen hours.
- Complete an online Evaluation Form within one week of the conclusion of the module.

Reader and Handouts

Please borrow or buy a copy of *Worship That Works: Theory and Practice for Unitarian Universalists, 2nd edition* (Skinner House, 2017) by Wayne Arnason and Kathleen Rolenz, available from the [UUA Bookstore](#), and read it prior to the module. Also, please download, save, and, if you wish, print (or save) a PDF file of the handouts for this module, found on the [Renaissance module resources page](#); it’s helpful to preview these prior to the start of the module.

We also ask that, before the module, you watch both one-hour recordings from webinars held in June and September, 2017 [Decentering Whiteness in Worship webinars](#).

Materials to gather and bring with you

- Worship resources
 - A copy of the Unitarian Universalist hymnbooks, *Singing the Living Tradition*, *Singing the Journey*, and Spanish version *Las Voces del Camino*
 - Materials to share which may include orders of service, rites of passage, ceremonies, worship service scripts, resources for stories, or materials related to planning and presenting worship. If possible, bring copies to share.
 - Display items. If you bring books or special worship tools, mark them with your name so they can be easily returned.
- Paper and pens
- Folder or binder for handouts and paper
- Your own power cord, if you are bringing a laptop or tablet

We look forward to our time with you,
[Leader names and contact information]

Leader Resource 2, Energizers

JUMPING JACKS	THE HOKEY POKEY	THE WAVE
TOE TOUCHES	DEEP BREATHING	TELL A JOKE
ARM CIRCLES	CREATIVE HANDSHAKING	LEAD A SONG
THE ITSY BITSY SPIDER	STRETCHING	CHORUS LINE
SHOULDER RUBS	LEAD A DANCE	HI, MY NAME IS JOE

Leader Resource 3, Identifiers

six-year-old boy

DRE

new widow/widower

Hispanic male, age 30

visitor

music director

"unchurched" person

14-year-old female

new parent

veteran Sunday School teacher

college student

newly retired

fifth generation UU

Iraq War veteran

African American female, age 40

biker

newly diagnosed cancer patient

empty nester

60-year-old gay man

"sandwich" generation

ministerial intern

minister

SESSION 1:

The Meaning of Worship and Why It Matters

Session-at-a-Glance

Welcome and Covenant	20 minutes
Orientation	30 minutes
Worship: What We Know	30 minutes
Worship: Stretching the Definition	60 minutes
Worship: Why It Matters	15 minutes
Closing	25 minutes

Total Time: 3 hours

Goals

This session will:

- Orient the group to the module and share a covenant
- Use personal narrative to start defining “worship”
- Foster a wider and deeper understanding of worship
- Promote worship competency for religious educators

Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- Feel prepared to engage fully in the module
- Know what content to expect in the module
- Establish a group covenant

- Reflect on their current understanding of “worship”
- Discover ways to deepen and widen their definition of worship
- Understand the religious educator’s role in communal/public worship
- Experience story-based worship

Handouts

Handout 1, A Covenant for the Module

Handout 2, Schedule of Sessions and Topics

Handout 3, Introduction to Renaissance and RE Credentialing Programs

Handout 4, Preparing for the Module Evaluation

Handout 5, Reflection Questions

Handout 6, Worship Quotes and Definitions

Slides

1. Module Welcome Slide
2. Spirit of Life
3. Introductions
4. Renaissance Program
5. Worship Quotes/Definitions
6. Quote from *Worship That Works*
7. Quote, cont’d
8. Session 1 Reflection Questions

Session 1:

The Meaning of Worship and Why It Matters

Welcome and Covenant (20 minutes)

Materials

- Name tags, pens, markers
- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Chalice, candle and matches or LED-battery operated candle
- Centering table with cloth
- Basket of readings
- Computer (preferably with Internet access), projector, and large monitor or screen
- Handout 1, Covenant
- Slides 1-3: Welcome, Spirit of Life, and Introductions
- Hymnbooks, *Singing the Living Tradition* and *Singing the Journey*, enough for participants to share, and other worship resources

Preparation

- Arrange chairs, chalice, and worship resources.
- Set up computer equipment and check that slides display properly.
- Optional: Arrange for musical accompaniment via recordings or a participant to lead the singing.

Description

(5 minutes) Display the welcome slide. Greet and welcome participants. Invite all to make and wear name tags. Gather the group and announce that the group will sing Hymn 123, *Spirit of Life*, a song by Carolyn McDade. Share that several of McDade's songs are in our hymnbook and its supplement, but that she herself does not identify as a UU. She stated:

...when someone asks where am I being spiritually formed and where am I participating in spiritual formation with others, it's not ever been connected with churches. My community is a loose community of women. I call myself a woman of faith seeking with others to touch what matters.

Many UUs know and love “Spirit of Life” and, as a result, some have attempted to add verses to McDade’s original song. She strongly resisted. She stated:

My feeling was, you need to find your own melody. Don't lose what you want to sing but find a way to make it yours.

Advance to the slide with lyrics and welcome participants to join in singing “Spirit of Life.” Say that the song’s creator encourages us to find our own path for worship and to touch what matters. After the song, light the chalice. Invite participants to look around and take in one another’s faces, noting that while some are friends or acquaintances, others are brand new to us. Say:

This group will become a learning community while we are together and will get to know one another very well. We will share wisdom and reflections with one another and together enhance the knowledge and skill we each have to create and present worship in our congregations. And we will begin at the very beginning, with who we are.

(10 minutes) Display the Introductions slide. Invite each person to share their name, the name and location of their congregation or UU community, the size of the congregation or community, including the number of children and youth they serve, their role, and their length of time in that role. Make a note of participants’ congregation size to help determine project groups at the end of Session 2.

(5 minutes) Once introductions are done, ask participants to look at Handout 1, Covenant. The practice of establishing a covenant is essential for groups that come together for a limited time. Ask participants to review the covenant to see if there is anything they would add; if so, record on newsprint. End by reading the covenant together, including any additions on the newsprint. Ask individuals to read parts of the covenant aloud and direct everyone to read the response.

Orientation (30 minutes)

Materials

- Handout 2, Schedule of Sessions and Topics
- Handout 3, Introduction to Renaissance and Credentialing Programs
- Handout 4, Preparing for Module Evaluation
- Handout 5, Reflection Questions
- Slide 4, Renaissance Program
- Sticky notes for Parking Lot
- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Optional: Leader Resource 2, Energizers, and a basket

Preparation

- Arrange for someone familiar with the site to explain logistical details.
- Although participants should have procured for themselves the reader and handouts prior to the module, have a few extra copies available.
- Prepare a sheet of newsprint for Parking Lot contributions.
- Prepare another sheet for volunteer sign-up for session openings/closings.
Optional: Collect opening and closing readings the volunteers may wish to use, and place in a basket.
- Decide when breaks should be added to the schedule and post.
- If using energizers, cut apart Leader Resource 2 as indicated and place the slips in a basket. Watch this [YouTube video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SdaA1PFyuR8) to see how to play “Hi, My Name Is Joe.”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SdaA1PFyuR8>
- Display resource materials, including any participants have brought.

Description

(5 minutes) Invite the designated person to review site logistics such as policies about the meeting room (moving furniture, use of tape, etc.), location of bathrooms, meal and snack times, and information about wireless Internet if applicable.

(5 minutes) Review the module schedule on Handout 2, adding times for breaks as needed.

(10 minutes) Ask participants about their Renaissance Module experience. Is this module their first? Fifth? Tenth? Refer to Handout 3 and show the Renaissance program slide (Slide 4) and briefly describe the Renaissance program and the credentialing process. Then, referring to Handout 4, explain that Renaissance module evaluations by participants as well as leaders are to be completed online. In order to receive credit for the module, participants as well as leaders are responsible to submit the evaluation within one week after the module concludes. Optional: If you have Internet access, show the web page with the participant evaluation:

<http://www.uua.org/careers/re/renaissance/277437.shtml>

Invite participants to use Handout 4 to take notes as the module progresses. Ask them to give any feedback about the site, lodging, or food arrangements directly to the module coordinator or on-site contact. Encourage participants to speak directly to one of the leaders as soon as possible about any problem they perceive with facilitation or group dynamics, so that the situation can be remedied.

(10 minutes) Introduce Handout 5, Reflection Questions, saying something like:

Whether or not you are enrolled in the RE Credentialing Program, it is a good practice to write a brief reflection shortly after attending any learning experience. Time is allotted at the end each session for you to get started on the reflections questions and to address other issues or questions that come up for you during the session.

Encourage participants to use their reflections in:

- a newsletter article (to tell their congregation about their professional development),
- a report to the board (to ensure their congregation's leadership knows that they are putting their professional expense line to good use), and/or

- their credentialing portfolio (to keep a record of this module and provide a short reflection to show how the module influenced their work).

Identify other resources for this module including:

- “Parking Lot” (sometimes referred to as the “Bike Rack”). Indicate the blank, posted newsprint or other location where you wish to document comments as they arise. Explain that this is where questions or issues not directly related to the session topic can be posted; at the end of each session, the leaders will check the Parking Lot and decide whether, how, and when to address the items.
- Resource tables. Invite people to peruse in their free time and to add any sample brochures, programs, and materials they have brought to share.
- Newsprint for volunteers to sign up to light or extinguish the chalice, offer chalice lighting words, or lead songs at the beginning or end of each session
- (Optional) Basket with energizers, from Leader Resource 4. Invite participants to offer “energy breaks” as needed, such as leading a song, movement, or game.

Worship: What We Know (30 minutes)

Materials

- Handout 6, Worship Quotes/Definitions
- Sheets of unlined paper, and markers or other drawing materials
- Index cards, multiple colors
- Tape

Preparation

- Identify spaces for breakout groups to meet.

Description

(10 minutes) Invite the participants to listen to the following guided recollection.

Announce that three minutes of silence for reflection will follow. Read the passage slowly and gently, giving time for punctuation pauses/stops.

I invite you now to make yourself comfortable. . . and to think back upon your own life and recall moments that you would identify as worshipful or spiritual experiences. I will guide your remembering for a minute or so and then give you three minutes of silence so that you can move at your own pace and let your memories come into focus. Right now, the words worship and spiritual mean what you feel they mean. We honor your definition.

Now, let images of those memories play in your mind's eye as if they were scenes in a movie. Begin with your earliest memories. Don't struggle to remember, simply let significant images come to mind, focusing especially on times that you would now describe as worship experiences. Call to mind a significant experience from early childhood, from later childhood, from adolescence, or from your adult years. Allow various images to surface. Choose one to focus on. Where are you? Remember the time of day, the sound and smell of the place. Who else is present, what is happening? Think about yourself there—your age, what you wore, how you felt, whether you told anyone about the experience.

Allow three minutes of silence. Distribute paper and markers/drawing materials. Say something like:

I invite you to take five minutes to express your experience either by drawing a picture, symbol or an abstract representation or meaningful listing of words that represents what experience you recalled. This exercise will allow you to express and share your memory, so that you are not restricted to just talking about them. These will be shared with the group.

(20 minutes) After participants have had five minutes to put their experience on paper, say something like:

Please gather into groups of three or four people near you and each take two minutes to share your drawings/writings and reflections with each other.

If you have designated breakout spaces, tell the group where they are. As groups share, give a five minute and one-minute warning. When sharing has been completed, say something like:

Please return to the whole group. Each of you will now take one minute to choose one word that conveys the quality or feeling of your chosen worship experience and write that word on your paper.

After participants have chosen and written their word, ask participants to sign and post their papers on a section of wall. Encourage them to take three minutes to move around the room to view one another's drawings, symbols, and other representations.

Invite participants to return to their seats. Distribute index cards. Ask each participant to complete the phrase, "To me, worship is..." After about a minute, collect, shuffle them and redistribute the cards. Ask each person to read aloud the card they are now holding. Add these cards to the wall display.

Worship: Stretching the Definition (60 minutes)

Materials

- Handout 6, Worship Quotes and Definitions
- Slide 5, Worship Quotes/Definitions
- Newsprint, markers, and tape

Preparation

- Label four sheets of newsprint, each with a worship age group (children, youth, adult, multigenerational) and the three worship questions (why, how, and what challenges).

Description, PART 1

(30 minutes) Say something like:

In planning for worship in our congregations, it's important to know the answers to three questions: "Why do you worship?" "How do you worship?" "What are the challenges of creating meaningful worship?" And the answers to those questions might change when we consider the audience. Children? Youth? Multi-generational? Adults?

You will now do a moving brainstorm to answer those questions for each of the four different "audiences." Each of these is listed on newsprint at a table [or on the wall] with markers nearby].

Please form new groups of three or four and travel, as a group. For 20 minutes, brainstorm your answers to each question for each of the four "audiences." Each group should spend no more than five minutes at each "audience" sheet. I will signal every five minutes so you will know when to move.

Re-gather the entire group. Take ten minutes to review the four brainstormed lists, noting similarities and differences among the answers for different age groups. Ask a volunteer to type up or take a picture of the lists and send to participants.

Description, PART 2

(20 minutes) Say something like:

So far you have been invited to recollect feelings of worship, out of your own experience and within your own definitions. You have been part of the congregation in a worship service. And you have thought about what we are trying to accomplish when we worship. No one has yet defined worship for you. But, obviously, we do need a shared understanding of what we are talking about. It is time now for us to consider some definitions. Please look at Handout 6, Worship Quotes and Definitions and take five minutes to read these quotes.

Then display the Worship Quotes/Definitions slide with the following questions and facilitate a 10- to 12-minute discussion:

- Was there a significant discrepancy between any of these and the definition you used for the memory exercise?

- What do you like best in these definitions?
- Do they, all together, seem to present diverse, similar, or complementary views?
- Have any helped you understand the feelings you had in the memory exercise?

Then say something like:

This is the time to point out the distinction between personal and communal worship. The definition we would use for the individual's "peak experiences" can be very different from the definition of the planned, intentional process taking place in a congregation. Which definitions seem to apply to which occasions? This module is primarily concerned with communal worship.

Description, PART 3

(10 minutes) Say something like:

The phrase, "mind, body, and spirit," arises again and again in discussions about what makes good worship in any faith tradition and Unitarian Universalism is no exception. Rev. Kenneth Patton's responsive reading "Let Us Worship" (Reading 437 in Singing the Living Tradition) begins, "Let us love the world through heart, mind and body." The Tapestry of Faith adult curriculum Spirit in Practice includes a workshop entitled Eight Spheres of Spiritual Growth, and of course, mind, body, and soul are three of the eight spheres. The sphere of the mind is intellect, held in high regard by many in our movement since its beginning; the sphere of the body refers to the physical, to movement. The third sphere, spirit or soul, refers to our intangible essence and includes emotions, creative impulses, and feelings of connectedness. These three are certainly interconnected and definitely overlap. Effective worship engages the whole person: mind, body, and spirit. Those who plan effective worship intentionally keep these three in mind when creating meaningful experiences for those who have gathered together for worship. Just as we are most comfortable with one particular learning style, such as visual, auditory, or kinesthetic, we are likely most drawn to one of the three components. By a show of hands, how many of you are more drawn to experiencing or creating worship that engages the mind? The body? The spirit?

Because we want to make meaningful worship that engages the whole person, it makes sense to use that “triple lens” when we create, offer and evaluate worship.

Explain that the participants will reflect on their own memorable worship experiences that appealed to mind, body, or spirit and share their answers with the whole group. Ask them to divide a piece of paper into three columns and label the columns: “mind,” “body,” and “spirit.” Explain that they will have about five minutes to consider some of the successful worship they’ve created or experienced and to articulate the specific way or activity in which it engaged their mind, body, or spirit. As time allows, invite individuals to share examples.

Worship: Sharing the Definition (15 minutes)

Materials

- Slide 6, Quote from “Quote from *Worship that Works*” and Quote, cont’d
- Leader Resource 3, Identifiers
- Newsprint, markers, and tape

Preparation

- Be familiar with the module reader, *Worship that Works; Theory and Practice for Unitarian Universalists, 2nd Edition* by Wayne Arnason & Kathleen Rolenz.
- Cue the slide.
- Print Leader Resource 3 on card stock and cut apart.
- Have one co-leader monitor the experience levels indicated by the raising (or not) of hands; this may provide some insight when forming the worship groups.
- Post blank newsprint.

Description

(15 minutes) Explain that you will read statements about possible roles related to worship in congregations. Instruct participants to raise their hand or otherwise indicate when a statement is true for them:

- Worship leadership is a stated part of my job description.
- I plan and lead/co-lead worship for children.
- I plan and lead/co-lead worship for youth.
- I plan and lead/co-lead worship for young adults.
- I plan and lead/co-lead worship for adults.
- I plan and lead/co-lead multigenerational worship.
- I plan and lead/co-lead a “Time for All Ages.”
- I participate in rites of passage, such as child dedication, Coming of Age, Bridging, elder recognition.
- I plan and present worship for religious education volunteers.
- I plan and lead/co-lead alternative forms of worship.
- I guide/support youth-led worship.
- I support/direct a children’s choir that sings in a worship service.
- I train children/youth to have roles in a worship service.
- I write about worship in the congregation’s newsletter, website, blog, etc.
- I plan and lead/co-lead worship that includes multicultural/multi-faith traditions.

Ask if participants can add other statements to the list of ways they might have a role in worship. Write contributions on newsprint. Suggest they take note of any listed items they might want to explore in the congregations they serve. Point out that this exercise suggests a wide range of worship responsibilities and opportunities for religious educators—clear proof of an expectation that worship should matter to religious educators, as well as other religious professionals. Referring to Slides 6 and 7, read the quote from *Worship that Works* aloud:

Unitarians and Universalists and Unitarian Universalists have worshipped together by our covenants on this continent for more than two centuries. We have a common denominator of understanding that worship is done in community. Increasingly we understand that while individuals may have private spiritual devotional practices, and individuals and groups may have mystical experiences of awe, wonder, and beauty, these are not worship. Worship is a

communal and intentional event, constructed from the building blocks of the liturgical arts and intended to be practiced over time.

Say something like:

We come to worship seeking wholeness and connection. As Arnason and Rolenz state, worship happens only in community. This applies to all humans, whether we are children, youth, or adults. As a religious leader, you are one of the most likely people in your congregation to know that children, just like adults, know loneliness, fear, joy, confusion, the gamut of human emotions and the attendant needs for wholeness and connection. What do people seek in your congregation's worship life?

I will distribute a card to each of you, a card with an "identifier" on it, such as "six-year-old boy" or "new widower." Please take one minute to think of what that person might be seeking. Your answer, stated in a word or a sentence, can be based on an actual person or one you imagine. For example, a "six-year-old boy" might seek comfort for the loss of a family dog or reassurance for an upcoming surgery.

Distribute the cards. After a minute, invite participants to share, unprompted and in random order ("popcorn style"), what the person seeks. Ask participants to draw some conclusions from the responses. Were there common themes among the "identifiers"? How might these responses influence the kind of worship experiences we offer? What was not expressed that you might have expected to hear? If a participant suggests that the exercise liberates rather than restricts how we approach worship planning and presenting, as it's clear that the human experiences of sadness, joy, regret, need for ritual, and desire for transformation are known/experienced by all ages, great... But, if not, make that point.

To conclude, restate the key reasons why worship matters particularly to religious educators: It is an important piece of the job they've been hired to do. It is a way religious educators can and do respond to spiritual needs of children, youth, families,

and the congregation as a whole. It is a way for the religious educator to practice their own faith.

Closing (25 minutes)

Materials

- Cloth, chalice, candle/lighter/LED battery powered flame
- Handout 4, Preparation for the Module Evaluation and Handout 5, Reflection Questions
- Slide 8, Session 1 Reflection Questions

Preparation

- Identify a volunteer to offer the closing words.
- Practice telling the story.

Description

(10 minutes) Review any questions that have been posted in the Parking Lot and respond as appropriate. Ask if there are any closing thoughts about this session.

Display Slide 8. Allow participants at least five minutes to reflect on the session using these questions:

- How does my personal “story” regarding worship influence and inform my ability to plan and offer worship experiences for others?
- How has my understanding of the term “worship” been affirmed, challenged, widened, deepened?

Suggest that participants make notes about the session (Handout 4) to prepare for the online evaluation. Remind them of the start time of the next session and suggest that they preview Handouts 7-16, which will be used in Session 2.

(15 minutes) Say something like:

I invite you to join in our closing circle, around our flaming chalice, symbol of our faith, a faith that seeks to know and celebrate what is true and of value.

Being in a faith community that affirms positive values can be a way to affirm life. Worship is a place where we grapple together and learn to work through the temptation to feed what fosters harm and hurt for ourselves and our world. Let us sit for a moment and consider what we hope for during our time together at this module. When you're ready, and if you'd like, please share your hope.

Conclude with a short reading or benediction connected to worship, worth, and our first Principle, such as:

We are never complete. We are never finished. We are always yet to be. May we always allow others to be and help and enable each other to grow toward all that we are capable of becoming. Amen.

—Anonymous

SESSION 2:

Worship Opportunities – Multigenerational, Rites of Passage, Children’s Worship

Session-at-a-Glance

Opening	5 minutes
Multigenerational Worship: What It Is	25 minutes
Multigenerational Worship: Why It’s Important	20 minutes
Multigenerational Worship: Introducing the Congregation	20 minutes
Multigenerational Worship: Tips for Success	30 minutes
Rites of Passage	30 minutes
Children’s Worship	30 minutes
Worship: Empowering Youth	10 minutes
Worship Assignments	10 minutes

Total Time: 3 hours

Goals

This session will:

- Present a strong rationale for offering multigenerational worship
- Examine the unique traits of multigenerational worship and promote it as a viable form of worship to be evaluated by standards of worship excellence
- Engage participants in both selecting and creating liturgy for a multigenerational worship service
- Share the range of opportunities for religious educators to lead worship
- Present ways to empower youth to lead worship

Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- Understand the reasons for encouraging multigenerational worship
- Recognize the ways multigenerational worship is both like and unlike other kinds of worship
- Have opportunities to evaluate songs for multigenerational worship
- Create and share a responsive reading for multigenerational worship
- Learn traditional UU rites of passage and consider new ones
- Add children's worship to their repertoire and refine their understanding of it
- Learn the unique style of youth worship and ways to empower youth to create and lead worship

Handouts

Handout 6, Worship Quotes and Definitions

Handout 7, Worship Leaders Give a Voice for Multigenerational Worship

Handout 8, Why Do We Have Intergenerational Services?

Handout 9, Skit – Worshipping Together

Handout 10, “Worshipping Together” Pamphlet

Handout 11, Wonder Box

Handout 12, Ten Good Ideas for Multigenerational Worship

Handout 13, The Functions, Purpose, and Meaning of Rituals

Handout 14, The Lion and the Mouse

Handout 15, Typical Elements of Circle/Youth Worship

Handout 16, Guidelines for Worship Module Project

Slides

9. Session 2

10. Enter, Rejoice, and Come In

11. Rites of Passage

12. Rites of Passage, cont'd
13. Elementary-Age Children
14. Guidelines for the Worship Module Project
15. Session 2 Reflection Questions

Session 2:

Worship Opportunities – Multigenerational, Rites of Passage, Children’s Worship

Opening (5 minutes)

Materials

- Chalice, candle and matches or LED-battery operated candle
- Centering table with cloth
- Handout 6, Worship Quotes and Definitions
- Slide 9, Session 2
- Computer (preferably with Internet access), projector, and large monitor or screen

Preparation

- Identify two volunteers to read chalice lighting words aloud and to light the chalice. You might suggest they choose a quotation from Handout 6.
- Arrange a circle of chairs.
- Cue Slide 9.

Description

Display the slide and invite the participants into the circle. Ask the volunteers to offer the chalice lighting words and to light the chalice. Remind the participants that “worship” means to consider what you hold of highest value or worth. Ask each to share aloud (“popcorn style”) what they find in their work as religious educators or other religious leaders that is holy work, work of the highest value.

Multigenerational Worship: What It Is (25 minutes)

Materials

- Copies of *Singing the Living Tradition* for all participants
- Slide 10, Enter, Rejoice, and Come In

Preparation

- Cue the slide.

Description

(5 minutes) Say something like:

*Welcome to the second session of the Worship Renaissance Module. In this session we'll be exploring four kinds of worship—multigenerational worship, rites of passage, children's worship, and youth worship. We're going to open our session with a favorite song in many congregations, "Enter, Rejoice, and Come In." Louise Ruspini's opening stanza is based on Psalm 100, verse 4: "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him and bless his name." The song's verses invite us to be open to the Spirit in worship. It gained wide popularity in Christian churches, especially Catholic ones, in the 1960s when they were beginning to use the vernacular in worship. The UUA included the song in *Singing the Living Tradition* in 1993, and it remains a beloved gathering song for worship. Let's rise in body or spirit and sing all the verses together, with gusto!*

Display the slide and sing the song.

(20 minutes) Then say something like:

The song we just sang invites all who arrive at the worship space entrance to enter, rejoice, and come in. It also says, "Don't be afraid of some change." The song itself is an easy one to sing, with a simple melody, a strong rhythm, and

simple words—easy enough for a child to join in. It's a good place to begin our discussion about multigenerational worship.

First, you may have heard the terms “intergenerational” and “multigenerational” used interchangeably, and we should clarify this. A decade or two ago, “intergenerational” was the usual term. But the prefix “inter” means “between”; the prefix “multi” means “many.” If the congregation provided a worship service to help children and their parents share an experience together, that would be an intergenerational worship service. Most of our congregations, however, span of at least three and possibly four generations, so the term “multigenerational” seems more appropriate to use for worship we create and present for all ages. Also, the term “multigenerational” invites us to recognize the developmental stages and needs of each of those generations in the worship service—very young child, middle-schooler, high school youth, young adult, middle-aged adult, and elder.

Take 15 minutes to facilitate responses to and discussion of the following questions about the congregations the participants serve:

- How many of you serve congregations or UU communities that sometimes offer a full multigenerational worship service (i.e., not just a Time for All Ages within a worship service)?
- How often are such services held: Every month? Every season? On holidays or special occasions? What purposes do they serve?
- How are multigenerational worship services perceived by the adults, youth, children, ministers and worship leaders, and you?

Note responses that were common among the participants as well as those responses that were not. Emphasize that worship, like other areas of congregational life, has leaders, traditions, budgets, and congregational expectations that influence how it is planned and presented.

Ask participants to suggest ways in which multigenerational worship is similar to other kinds of worship. Offer these points, if they do not come up:

- It is similar in that good multigenerational worship is simply good worship.
- It engages the participants, it moves them, it invites them into a community that will honor and hold them.
- It engages the mind, body, and soul.
- It takes the worshippers on a journey from which they emerge changed and renewed.
- It embraces the range of human emotions, with their attendant expressions—joy and suffering, love, loneliness, loss, awe, confusion, delight.
- It offers us a chance to experience transcendence, even the divine.
- A worshipper may have a private experience during worship, but worship is by and large created for, and presented to, a community.

Say something like:

Though ambitious, this list of traits of good worship can serve as a touchstone for any service that gathers us to consider and praise what is most worthy or of highest value, no matter if the worshipper is five or 105.

Multigenerational Worship: Why It's Important (20 minutes)

Materials

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Handout 7, Worship Leaders Give a Voice to Multigenerational Worship
- Handout 8, Why Do We Have Intergenerational Service?

Preparation

- Review the activity's description and handouts.

Description

(10 minutes) Say something like:

Research on current practices of both UU and non-UU houses of worship in the United States confirms there is a growing tendency to recognize, create, and present multigenerational worship. The worship leaders and text I am quoting are on Handout 7. Unitarian Universalist Rev. Greg Ward states, “One of the most important aspects church shoppers are looking for is vital, creative, responsible, and caring approaches to including children in the life of the church and helping to teach values and important lessons in memorable ways.” Think about reasons you can offer for promoting this kind of worship experience in a congregation. It may help to consider philosophical as well as practical and concrete reasons. What might the congregation gain by offering multigenerational worship? Please break into trios (preferably including someone you haven’t met or talked with yet), discuss this question, and have a volunteer list the reasons you come up with on newsprint. You will have five minutes for this activity and then we will share and post these ideas for the whole group.

After five minutes, invite trios to return to the whole group and have each trio offer their reasons. Ask for a volunteer to compile the lists of reasons or take photos of them and email them to the group.

(10 minutes) Say something like:

Rev. Greg Ward is a pioneer of all-ages worship in UU congregations. In 2001 he compiled a list of reasons why we need it. Please take out Handout 8, Why Do We Have Intergenerational Services?

Remind participants that “intergenerational” was the word used then for what we now call “multigenerational.” Ask for volunteers to read each point on the handout aloud.

After all points have been read, say something like:

On your handout, circle the three points that speak most strongly to you about the value of all-ages worship. Now place a star next to the one that would be your primary talking point in a discussion about offering multigenerational

worship. Join two people sitting near you and take five minutes, total, for the three of you to share your answers.

After five minutes, say something like:

Please return to Handout 7. In her book, Come into the Circle, UU religious educator Michelle Richards affirms the need for our children to worship with their peers in their own way and on their own terms. She says, “When worship services are designed to meet their needs, children can experience ritual, expand their faith development, connect with their peers, and understand the intimacy necessary to learn spiritual techniques.”

So there is an important reason to offer children worship designed specifically for them. But she then stresses the additional importance of children having the opportunity to worship with the entire faith community. She continues, “Welcoming children into the primary worship service invites children into the heart of a congregation.” And in that heart, according to Christian author Catherine Stonehouse in Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey: Nurturing a Life of Faith, “deep bonds often form between adults and children who experience worship together... When young and old in the community of faith...journey together in the commitment to one another...[a] beautiful, enriching spiritual formation occurs for all. When children are included as respected, active participants in the community of faith, they draw us back into the story of our faith and help us reactivate our imaginations to experience the story anew.”

Unitarian Universalist Reverends Wayne Arnason and Kathleen Rolenz documented their 2005-2006 sabbatical experiences of worship in and outside of UU faith communities in their book, Worship That Works. Inviting and Including All Generations, beginning on p. 72, chronicles the strides their congregation made during and after that sabbatical time in offering monthly multigenerational worship. In their words, “The foundational idea that changed our approach to multigenerational worship services was this: Everything that makes your worship

service more accessible and inviting to children makes the service more accessible and inviting to adults as well. Despite the stereotype that our congregations are filled with sophisticated people with affection for the rational and the intellectual, there is still something of the childhood learner within each of us that makes us appreciate a well-paced service that tells a story clearly, briefly, and vividly.”

Multigenerational Worship: Introducing the Congregation (20 minutes)

Materials

- Handout 9, Skit – Worshipping Together
- Handout 10, “Worshipping Together” Pamphlet
- Handout 11, Wonder Box

Preparation

- Identify two volunteers to present the scripted skit in Handout 9, Skit – Worshipping Together.

Description

Say something like:

All the reasons we’ve discussed can go a long way in helping us promote, and understand the usefulness of, multigenerational worship. It is certainly more likely to be offered if the religious educator is considered a member of the worship team, along with the minister, the music director, and any lay worship leaders, and this aspect of teamwork will be addressed in Session 3 of this module. The religious educator can also promote multigenerational worship by working with the Religious Education Committee and communicating through the congregation’s newsletter, website, Facebook, blogs, etc. But what about the concerns of actual members? A more creative approach may be needed. One UU congregation accomplished this by offering the congregation skits that named

and responded to members' concerns in a non-threatening way, well in advance of introducing monthly multigenerational worship.

Ask the designated volunteers to present the skit in Handout 9, Skit – Worshipping Together, which depicts the religious educator and an elder who is concerned about multigenerational worship. Then say something like:

In the skit, the elder's concerns are named and heard. Accurate information, reasons for the change, and possible benefits of it are given. Stress about change has (hopefully) been reduced. Can you think of another individual or group who might have concerns about this change in worship—such as parents? What would be their concerns? How might the religious educator address them? What is gained by conversation, via skits, newsletters, personal conversations, and open discussion, when a congregation attempts to change its notion of worship?

If time allows, have participants discuss these questions. If time is short, suggest that they think about them privately and perhaps write about them in the reflection time at the end of this session.

Then say something like:

To further educate the congregation and enhance the actual multigenerational service time, consider creating a set of suggestions or tips for a pew card or an insert in the order of service, such as the sample in Handout 10, Worshipping Together Pamphlet.

Lastly, full multigenerational worship, even if it's only offered a couple times a year, can seem too big, too challenging, just too different. Consider taking small steps. Make the most of the Time for All Ages, making sure that it is truly for all who attend. Rev. Christina Leone starts her congregation's Time for All Ages with the "Wonder Box." Do you know this method or use it? Her steps are described in Handout 11, Wonder Box, and this module's resource page contains a link to her workshop and her presentation "The Fairest and the Fork," which uses this

method. She invites a volunteer, of any age, to come forward, open the box, and share its contents with the congregation. Then she asks wondering questions, similar to the format of UU Spirit Play, a curriculum whose structure is based on the Montessori method and whose content is story-based. In a Spirit Play class, a series of open-ended questions follow the story. Leone's wondering questions prepare the worshippers, young and old, for a story that is to follow, one chosen for its universal appeal and its connection to the service's liturgy and to the sermon offered to adults after the children and youth leave for their own morning's activities.

Multigenerational Worship: Tips for Success (30 minutes)

Materials

- Copies of *Singing the Living Tradition* for all participants
- Handout 12, Ten Good Ideas for Multigenerational Worship
- Optional: CD, *Wake, Now, My Senses*, Chancel Choir, First Unitarian Church of Oakland (Musicopia, 2007), and a CD player

Preparation

- Review the activity's description and handout.

Description

(15 minutes) Say something like:

Multigenerational worship is, without question, some of the toughest, most challenging, and most exciting worship you will ever create. Please take out Handout 12, Ten Good Ideas for Multigenerational Worship, which is largely based on the work of the MidAmerica Region, including the Central Midwest, Heartland, and Prairie Star districts. You'll notice the first point is "Keep it simple." Let's give this a try. Suppose the congregation's theme this month is the second of the UUA's six Sources, "Words and deeds of prophetic women and men." The religious educator, the minister, and the music director have chosen two songs

for the service. The first is “I Wish I Knew How,” Hymn 151, by Billy Taylor and Dick Dallas; Taylor is a jazz pianist and founder of Jazzmobile, an outreach program offering free musical performances across the country. The second is “Circle ’Round for Freedom,” Hymn 155, a chant written by songwriter and cantor Linda Hirschhorn that has been sung at countless public demonstrations. [If you are playing the CD: Both songs are recorded on Wake, Now, My Senses, a CD by the Chancel Choir of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland.] Please take a hymnbook and form small groups of three or four. [If you are playing the CD: I will play each song in turn.] Please list examples of the song’s simplicity of words and music. You may notice other qualities the song has that would appeal to multigenerational audiences as well.

Call for responses from the groups. It is not necessary to write down the responses, but the discussion will be interesting. Guide participants to see the songs not only as examples of keeping things simple, but also potentially appealing to different age groups.

Then refer participants to Handout 12, Ten Good Ideas for Multigenerational Worship. Ask participants to scan the ideas listed in it, and if there is time, ask them for brief examples that illustrate some of the ideas.

(15 minutes) Then say something like:

The flaming chalice is the symbol of our faith. Lighting the chalice and saying special words are the standard beginning to worship in many Unitarian Universalist congregations, and this ritual can especially resonate in our multigenerational faith communities. The phrases that accompany the lighting of the chalice—their wording, structure, and layers of meaning—can be a perfect place to be mindful of a multigenerational audience. Please sort yourselves into groups of four, according to your birthday months. [Help with the sorting. Some months may need to be combined or divided so there are four participants per group.] Please create a chalice lighting in the form of a responsive reading. The repeated words spoken by all will be “We light this chalice,” and these words will

be offered three times. Your team's assignment is to complete this sentence three times. The possibilities are rich—one of the Principles, the worship theme, a word that will be important to the particular service, the time of year, etc. You will have ten minutes to create the chalice lighting reading.

Ask each group to read the responsive reading they created and to share it with everyone later via email.

Rites of Passage (30 minutes)

Materials

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Handout 13, The Functions, Purpose, and Meaning of Rituals
- Slides 11 and 12, Rites of Passage and Rites of Passage, cont'd

Preparation

- Cue the slides.

Description

Say something like:

For the next 30 minutes, we will explore rites of passage. A rite of passage is a ritual or ceremony marking a person's transition from one situation or stage of life to another.

Ask participants to take a minute to consider this very broad and open definition and to jot down notes on rites of passage they have personally experienced. These rites may be spiritual or secular, major or minor; participants may have been at the center of a rite, or a witness to it. Remind them to include not only the larger, more common rites, such as child-welcoming ceremonies, marriage and commitment ceremonies, and funeral and memorial services, but also less common ones, marking such events as moves, retirement, getting a driver's license, and gender transitioning. Then ask for responses, popcorn-style. Ask a volunteer to write them down and email the list to the

group. Next, to affirm the value of ritual in general and to prepare participants to think more deeply about specific rites of passage they will explore, refer them to Handout 13, The Functions, Purpose, and Meaning of Rituals, which was created by Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed for a cluster presentation. If time permits, have participants read the list, silently or aloud, and place a check by any items that particularly broadened or deepened their sense of the importance of ritual. Then display Slides 11 and 12. Share the slides' content aloud:

Rites of Passage...

Honor the journey of human life

Promote human growth

Contribute to personal identity

Emphasize the challenge and value of transition

Offer the opportunity for reflection

Perpetuate the values and identity of a community

Recognize the reciprocal ties between individual and community

Say something like:

In our movement, the religious educator can have a role in all rites of passages celebrated in the congregation. The three that most commonly include religious educators as leaders or co-leaders of worship are child dedications, Coming of Age ceremonies, and Bridging ceremonies.

New families in our congregations may need help understanding the UU perspective on the purpose of child dedications. They may have come from a tradition that promotes baptism as the “antidote” for original sin, or they may be unchurched and curious about UU rites of passage. We can explain that Unitarian Universalists reject the notion of original sin and embrace new life as an original blessing. A child dedication acknowledges the joy of new life and the responsibility of the whole congregation, as well as of parents and others who are close to the child, to love and support it. Our child dedications offer what

Carolyn McDade names “roots and wings” in “Spirit of Life,” the song that we sang together to open Session 1. Judith Frediani, a former Director of Lifespan Faith Development for the UUA, explains in an essay entitled “Making Sure There’s a There There,” “The roots refer to the religious community which binds us gently together, companions and comforts us in our life journeys, and assures us that we are not alone. Wings represent the free intellectual inquiry of liberal religion, the freedom to discover and be who we truly are, and the liberation of the human spirit.” Our child dedications often use water and a rose as symbols. The rose may be in bud, and the water may come from a special source, such as the congregation’s own water communion ceremony.

Invite participants to add any child dedication traditions in the congregations they serve and ask a volunteer to write them down and email them to the group. Are gifts given? Is special music played? Do siblings have a special role? Offer the UUA’s Worship Web as a good source for child dedication readings, as well as the pamphlet “We Dedicate This Child,” by Linda Olson Peebles, which is available from the UUA Bookstore.

Explain that rites of passage are common in cultures and religions around the world.

Share this definition from the UUA’s *Coming of Age Handbook for Congregations*:

Coming-of-age rites with long-standing traditions, such as bar and bat mitzvah, quinceañera, vision quest, and eunoto [in Maasai culture], recognize the passage of young people into greater maturity, responsibility, and spiritual commitment. In offering Coming of Age, our congregations seek to honor this passage as well. However, the definition of what youth are passing into is different in our congregations than it was when ancient rites originated. At the end of the program, our youth are not yet adults and are not passing into the rights and responsibilities of adulthood. Rather, when the program is offered in eighth or ninth grade, youth are transitioning from what psychologists call early adolescence to middle adolescence. They are leaving childhood and becoming youth.

Explain that Coming of Age ceremonies vary among UU congregations. Such a ceremony may be all or a part of a Sunday morning worship service or be a stand-alone afternoon or evening service. It may honor one youth or a group. A Coming of Age ceremony is a great opportunity for youth-led worship. The highlight of many Coming of Age worship services is the youth's presentation of credos, individual statements of their beliefs.

Ask participants what their congregations include in such a worship service. Write these on newsprint and ask a volunteer to type them or take a picture of the newsprint and email the list to the group. Include these points if they do not come up in the discussion:

- An order of service that includes rituals, credos, and readings particularly appropriate to the occasion as well as elements that are typically in an order of service, such as a welcome, opening words, chalice lighting words, offertory, etc.
- Presentation of gifts to the youth, such as a chalice necklace, book, chalice, or t-shirt
- Presentation of flowers to the youth's parents or mentors
- A ritual that physically moves the youth from one side of the room to another, e.g., from their parents to their mentors, and then on to join members of the high school youth group
- A symbol of childhood at an altar on one side of the worship space and a symbol of the youth's future at an altar on the other side of the space, selected by the youth
- A homily by the minister, religious educator, or mentor, perhaps with input from the youth
- Responsive readings, either created by the youth or found in a resource such as the UUA's *Coming of Age Handbook for Congregations*
- Vocal or instrumental music presented by the youth
- Seek/share ideas via the REACH email list.

Then say something like:

Bridging is a fairly new Unitarian Universalist tradition that recognizes the transition from high school to what comes next—college, a job, military or volunteer service, travel, or something else. The Bridging service, created and offered by high school youth moving into young adulthood, is one of the highlights of worship at General Assembly each year. This module’s resource page includes links to two Bridging services held at the UUA General Assembly. Many UUA districts and individual congregations also offer such worship services. The service is often an acknowledgement of the youth’s connection to their faith community, which may have helped to nurture them since childhood. It is a time for expressing gratitude for what has been and for welcoming the youth into a different relationship with the adults in the congregation. Words like “transition,” “growth,” “leaving,” “hopes,” and “future” will likely appear in the music, readings, prayers, and homily of this kind of worship service. A common feature is to have the bridging youth actually move from one part of the worship space to the other, in a symbolic representation of this life change. Sometimes young adults are there, waiting to greet and welcome the bridging youth into a new age group within the church. Bridging: A Handbook for Congregations, on this module’s resource page, is a comprehensive resource that offers help with designing and presenting a Bridging ceremony in a congregation, including several sample scripts for the ceremony. It also offers the vision of a year-long program that invites young people, families, and the congregation to prepare for Bridging, seeing it not only as a ceremony, but as a religious rite of passage.

Ask participants to share with the group any ways their congregations celebrate bridging. Write answers on newsprint and ask a volunteer to type them or take a picture of the newsprint and email the list to the group. If time allows, ask participants to share other rites of passages celebrated in their congregation. End this section by saying something like:

Child dedications, Coming of Age, Bridging, and other rites of passage all have an important place in the worship life of the congregation. These are times of celebrations and often include gifts, small tokens of affection and appreciation.

These are times when our UU Principles and traditions can be most vivid and alive.

Children's Worship (30 minutes)

Materials

- Handout 14, The Lion and the Mouse
- Slide 13, Elementary-Age Children

Preparation

- [Watch the video](#) presentation by Dr. Ann Garrido, "Preaching with Children" (listed on Handout 25, Selected Resources).
- Cue the slide.

Description

(5 minutes) Acknowledge to participants that though the lion's share of this session has been devoted to multigenerational worship, much of the information in it can be applied to children's worship, which usually involves a range of ages. Early in this session, though, we also stated that children need to worship together, building community with their peers and learning about their faith in a way that is specific and responsive to their needs alone.

Say something like:

Children's worship can be some of the most natural, fun, and satisfying worship we can create and present. A group of elementary-age children are an easier and often more forgiving audience than we're liable to find in other age groups in our congregations. But just who are they? Ann Garrido, a Roman Catholic and a contributor to The Church of the 21st Century Center, offers the following descriptions that may affect the way we create worship for children.

Display the slide.

Children...

- ...are not blank slates
- ...are drawn to what is most essential: a single word
- ...are interested in what is real
- ...are filled with wonder and awe
- ...possess absorbent minds
- ...are small in a big world
- ...respond well to both verbal and non-verbal stimuli

(20 minutes) Have participants form groups of four, joining people they don't know or don't know well. Ask each group to choose a volunteer to take discussion notes and another to present to the larger group. Each small group will have a minute to present.

Say something like:

Imagine that you will present a children's worship this month and have invited your colleagues to make suggestions. Assume that you have an ideal worship space, including child-size chairs. The story you've chosen to tell is "The Lion and the Mouse," which is in Handout 14. Review the story and consider how these traits of children might be utilized in crafting and presenting a service that includes story, song, a chalice lighting, and prayer or meditation.

With five minutes left for this activity, ask the groups to rejoin the larger group and report their ideas. End the activity by recommending Michelle Richards's *Come into the Circle*, a good source for chalice lightings, prayers and meditations, short sermons, and theme-based stories to be used in children's worship. She also includes suggestions for family worship at home. Richards' book is listed on this module's resource page.

Worship: Empowering Youth (10 minutes)

Materials

- Handout 15, Typical Elements of Circle/Youth Worship

Preparation

- Become familiar with the *Coming of Age Handbook for Congregations*, which is available from the UUA bookstore and listed on this module's resource page.

Description

(2 minutes) Remind participants that while this activity will take only ten minutes, there is a full 15-hour Renaissance Module devoted to ministry with youth. This module only offers general insights into youth worship and provides some basic resources.

(8 minutes) Say something like:

The goals of worship for children, youth, and adults are nearly identical—build community, develop religious identity, and minister to the spiritual needs of the worshipper. Youth worship, though, has its own style. Youth worship is typically “circle worship.” Handout 15, Typical Elements of Circle/Youth Worship, describes how youth are gathered into a circle, usually from outside the room, to create sacred space. Youth worship often uses contemporary songs and readings, the work of musicians and writers known to the youth in their everyday lives. Ritual is rich and often tactile—passing the chalice, dipping fingers in water, clasping hands. Sermons presented by a worship leader to a large group are not a part of youth worship; rather, the acme or centerpiece of youth worship is communal, something everyone can experience. It might be a substantial check-in, a dance, a time to write.

Handout 15, Typical Elements of Circle/Youth Worship, is from the UUA's most recent and most comprehensive manual for those who work with UU youth. The Coming of Age Handbook for Congregations, by the UU minister Sarah Gibb Millspough, is a treasure trove of activities for teens and their advisors who share their journey and promote their empowerment. Unit 4, Spirituality, offers more avenues to youth faith development than you would ever have time to try. Prayer beads, journals, altars, silent meditation, movement-based meditation, and

experiences with the natural world are examples of the wide variety of ways to awaken and deepen youth's spirituality and its expressions in worship.

The handbook offers insights into the value of youth worship. For example, it says that youth worship "ministers to [a youth's] spiritual needs...develops skills and confidence in planning and leading worship...and grow[s] their capacity to take on responsibilities in a group."

Close the activity by asking participants to consider and respond, popcorn-style, to the question "To what degree and in what ways do the youth of your congregation plan and create worship?" Encourage participants to talk with each other over meals and by phone and email to learn more about opportunities for youth worship in their different congregations.

Worship Assignments (10 minutes)

Materials

- Notebook paper and pens
- Handout 5, Reflection Questions
- Handout 16, Guidelines for Worship Module Project
- Slide 14, Guidelines for Worship Module Project
- Slide 15, Session 2 Reflection Questions

Preparation

- Determine the theme. Form four worship teams, each ideally including four participants from similar-sized congregations or RE programs. Assign each team a specific age group audience: children, youth, adults, multigenerational.
- Cue the slides.

Description

Display Slide 14, Guidelines for Worship Module Project, and distribute Handout 16, Guidelines for Worship Module Project. Say something like:

One of the strongest learning experiences in a Renaissance Module is when we use some of our time in a hands-on lab, where we can create and actually practice the skills we came for and that we want to take home to our congregations. You will be divided into teams and asked to produce a 20-minute worship service for a specific audience, and you will present that service during our last session. The theme for your service is [the theme you chose]. Teams will have two hours, one hour each in Sessions 3 and 4, to plan the worship service, and you'll present them in Session 5. Each presentation should include a complete order of service, but you can present part or all of the service itself. Note that after each team presents in Session 5, we'll share feedback on both the process and the service.

Announce each team's members the age group audience for their worship.

Display Slide 15, Session 2 Reflection Questions, and refer participants to Handout 5, Reflection Questions. Distribute notebook paper and pens, and allow participants at least five minutes to reflect on or write about the session using these questions:

- How has my understanding of the viability of multigenerational worship increased or changed?
- How has my competency as a leader or co-leader of multigenerational worship increased or deepened?
- How has my understanding of rites of passage increased or changed? Is there a ceremony or celebration I would like my congregation to add?
- How has my knowledge of worship opportunities increased or been refined?

As time allows, address any questions about this assignment and any Parking Lot questions. Leaders may wish to add a closing if this session is the last of the day.

SESSION 3:

The Craft of Worship

Session-at-a-Glance

Opening	5 minutes
Worship Leaders	15 minutes
Worship Service Plan	20 minutes
A Word about Words	20 minutes
Practical Considerations	15 minutes
Borrowing from Other Cultures	20 minutes
De-Centering Whiteness in Worship	15 minutes
Project: Team Planning	60 minutes
Closing	10 minutes

Total Time: 3 hours

Goals

This session will:

- Promote the power of teamwork in creating worship
- Present the liturgical parts as well as the arc of the worship service
- Address fluency in religious language in worship
- Foster an awareness of the importance of the worship space
- Introduce a resource about copyrights
- Convey the importance of understanding and being sensitive to cultural appropriation of music, objects, and stories used in worship

- Stress the importance of evaluating worship

Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- Discern the individual strengths worship leaders bring to the craft of worship
- Understand the pattern and arc of a liturgy or order of service and consider alternatives
- Gain a better understanding of and comfort with the use of religious language in worship
- Learn the opportunities and limitations of their congregation's worship space and gain an understanding of accessibility concerns
- Become aware of the importance of copyright law regarding using another's music, video, art, or literature in worship services
- Learn the benefits and challenges of borrowing from other cultures when planning and presenting worship
- Understand the importance of evaluating worship

Handouts

Handout 16, Guidelines for Worship Module Project

Handout 17, Components of Worship

Handout 18, Child-Friendly Hymns

Handout 19, Checklist for Planning Worship

Handout 20, That Which Holds All

Handout 21, The Best Worship Space Possible

Handout 22, Honoring and Respecting Our World's Cultures

Handout 23, Anger: A Buddhist Story

Handout 24, The Promise and the Practice

Slides

16. Session 3
17. Whoever You Are
18. Come, Come, Whoever You Are
19. What Does the Minister Bring?
20. What Does the Music Director Bring?
21. Key Components of Worship
22. We Worship Thee, God
23. The Best Worship Space Possible
24. Honoring and Respecting Our World's Cultures
25. Guidelines for the Worship Module Project
26. Session 3 Reflection Questions

Session 3:

The Craft of Worship

Opening (5 minutes)

Materials

- Chalice, candle and matches or LED-battery operated candle
- Centering table with cloth
- Slide 16, Session 3
- Slide 17, Whoever You Are, OR Slide 18, Come, Come, Whoever You Are
- Computer (preferably with Internet access), projector, and large monitor or screen

Preparation

- Decide which song to use in the opening, either “Whoever You Are” or “Come, Come, Whoever You Are,” Hymn 188 in *Singing the Living Tradition*.
- If you chose “Whoever You Are,” review Slide 17 and the song, which you can hear performed by Hal Walker [at this link](#).
- Cue Slide 16.

Description

Welcome the participants by displaying Slide 16, Session 3. Invite a volunteer to light the chalice and another volunteer to read chalice lighting words. Then, display Slide 17 or Slide 18 and lead the song you have chosen. If you chose “Whoever You Are” and you have Internet access, you can share, and sing along to, [this video from the UU Church of Kent OH](#), which uses the song as its soundtrack.

Worship Leaders (15 minutes)

Materials

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Slide 19 What Does the Minister Bring? and Slide 20, What Does the Music Director Bring?

Preparation

- Cue the slides.

Description

Ask participants who creates and presents worship in their congregation. If the creators and presenters constitute a team, who are its members? Explain that this activity draws out the value of having a worship team. Ask participants what they think the values and benefits of having a worship team are. Add the following reasons, if participants did not mention them:

- A worship team brings together the talents, interests, and skills of individuals with specific knowledge and experience with aspects of worship as well as knowledge of certain aspects of the congregation.
- A worship team exemplifies a spirit of community and support among worship leaders (ministers, staff, lay leaders) that can be reflected and promoted among the congregation as well. It is a sign of a healthy congregation.

Acknowledge that those who create and present worship vary among congregations. For purposes of discussion, this activity explores the roles of minister, music director, and religious educator. Display Slides 19 and then, Slide 20, sharing what the minister and music director each bring to the table.

What Does the Minister Bring?

- Experience with creating/presenting worship
- Vision and responsibility for congregation and its worship life
- Specific preaching skills
- Seminary learning that informs worship content, style, standards

- Knowledge/relationships with non-staff worship leaders
- Personal strengths: music, speaking, writing, technology, dance, drama

What Does the Music Director Bring?

- Professional training
- Awareness of music's ability to create and sustain a tone/mood
- Knowledge of a variety of vocal and instrumental music
- Choir
- Ability to lead singing
- Personal strengths: voice, specific instruments, plus any of the strengths listed for religious educator and minister

Then ask the participants to say what they think the religious educator brings to the creation and planning of worship. Have a leader write their responses on newsprint. Be sure the list includes the following:

- Experience with children's and youth worship
- Understanding of the developmental stages, including faith development, of children and youth
- Knowledge of and relationships with families in the congregation
- A repertoire of stories and access to story resources
- Personal strengths in areas such as music, speaking, writing, technology, dance, or drama
- Specific training in worship

Then ask about and affirm the personal strengths of participants, strengths that can be used in creating and presenting worship, by posing the following questions:

- Are you a singer or musician?
- Do you have writing skills that can transform a written story to a dramatic piece?
- Are you creative and capable with technology?
- Are you a kinesthetic learner who can enrich the worship experience by expanding it to include more than just visual presentations?

- Are you a successful recruiter who can motivate members of the congregation to share their talents in a worship service?

If time allows, go around the circle and ask participants to share, in a word or two, one of the strengths they bring to worship planning.

Explain that a successful worship team needs to be intentionally assembled. Ask participants to name the traits of such a team and ask for a volunteer to compile the list and email it to the group. The list should, at a minimum, include the following:

- Willingness to meet and plan well in advance of the service date
- Open-mindedness
- Respect for team members' different skills, and willingness to be guided by their expertise in particular areas of congregational life
- Commitment to worship as central to the life of the congregation

To conclude, say something like:

It's true that the whole is bigger than the sum of its parts when we are looking at planning and presenting strong worship experiences. Weaving together the knowledge, talents, and experience of the minister, music director, and religious educator will result in worship that far surpasses what any one of them could accomplish alone. It's also important to recognize that you need to work with what you've got!

Share that a joint report from the UUMA, UUMN, and LREDA, the professional organizations representing UU ministers, musicians, and religious educators, focuses on shared ministry and confirms observations the participants have made about worship teams in this section. Note that the link for the Shared Ministry report is listed on this module's resource page.

Worship Service Plan (20 minutes)

Materials

- Handout 17, Components of Worship
- Handout 18, Child-Friendly Hymns
- Handout 19, Checklist for Planning Worship
- Slide 21, Key Components of Worship

Preparation

- Cue the slide.

Description

(2 minutes) Say something like:

Visitors are sometimes surprised by the order of service they receive in a Unitarian Universalist worship service. They expect a different or unusual service, yet the order of service may not look much different from what they've seen in mainstream Christian churches. Those visitors are right. The usual order of service includes hymns, rituals, a sermon or homily, the offering, and readings. The sermon is usually placed at the center and has the most time allotted to it, and the liturgy that precedes and follows the sermon supports it. The way that service elements are arranged is called the "arc" of the worship service. Though there may be some variations on the traditional worship service plan, that Protestant template remains the most common choice of those who create and plan worship in our congregations. In this activity we'll explore this structure, learn why it works well, gain insight into it, and learn about resources for developing it, including some that you will share.

(18 minutes) Explain that an order of service is a guide, a road map, a set of directions for the journey that is the service. It has a beginning, a middle, and an end, and it comprises individual steps connecting logically to one another and contributing to the whole. An order of service, like the service itself, invites us, includes us, makes us know we are in a sacred place and time, prepares us to explore an idea in several ways,

engages our mind, body, and spirit, and empowers us to depart that sacred space with renewed strength and hope.

Display Slide 21, Key Components of Worship, and instruct the participants to take out Handout 17, Components of Worship, which was created by a retired UU minister. Barbara Pescan, for a UUA Spirituality Development Conference in 2005. Show its accompanying slide, which lists the components of an order of service for a worship service. Read each one aloud and ask participants to share ways in which that part of the order of service is successfully executed in their congregation's worship services. Their comments can include adult, youth, children's, and multigenerational worship. For instance, how does their congregation do an especially good job with the invitation? The chalice lighting? The reading or story? The offering? The sermon? The music?

Ask if any participants have experience with orders of service other than the traditional model. Invite them to share.

As time allows, refer participants to two resources: Handout 18, Child-Friendly Hymns, a compilation of child-friendly hymns from both *Singing the Living Tradition* and *Singing the Journey* that work well in both multigenerational and children's and youth worship, and Handout 19, Checklist for Planning Worship, by the UU minister Jane Eller-Isaacs, a useful set of questions to ensure thoughtful worship planning.

A Word about Words (20 minutes)

Materials

- Notebook paper and pens
- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Copies of *Singing the Living Tradition* for all participants
- Handout 20, That Which Holds All
- Slide 22, We Worship Thee, God

Preparation

- Review the hymn and handout.
- Cue the slide.
- Optional: Recruit a song leader or accompanist.

Description

(5 minutes) Display the slide. Say something like:

This module has covered many aspects of the creation, planning, and presentation of worship. Clearly, worship is most often presented through language. Words often name what we most value, and that includes words we might call “religious language” or the “language of faith.” Please join me in singing the first and last verses of “We Worship Thee, God,” Hymn 285 in Singing the Living Tradition.

Sing the song. Ask:

How many of you have sung this hymn in your congregation? How do you think your congregation would react to singing this song on Sunday morning?

After responses are offered, ask what words sometimes used in worship might be considered religious language. Post a sheet of newsprint and record answers on it. (Suggestions might include such terms as “God,” “worship,” “holy,” “sacred,” “sin,” “faith,” and “salvation.”) If it hasn’t become clear from participants’ sharing, point out that some UU congregations’ worship services are rich in religious language, other congregations hear or use it only in hymns, and still other congregations do not hear or use it at all, and may even deliberately shun it.

(10 minutes) Say something like:

In her book, Fluent in Faith: A Unitarian Universalist Embrace of Religious Language, Jean Nieuwejaar [pronounced “new yahr”] makes a strong case for UUs to reclaim traditional religious language in worship, as a way to strengthen how we talk about our spiritual lives. Since language is the primary vehicle with

which we do this, avoiding religious language makes us speak in very vague terms, so that we and our faith both sound wishy-washy. Relying on more philosophical or ethical terms may be more comfortable for us, but these terms don't ring true as an affirmation of faith. And avoiding religious language in worship makes us tentative, even apologetic, which compromises our own faith. What happens when we cannot articulate our UU faith using traditional religious language outside our congregation? We lose the opportunity to help those in need who truly seek what Unitarian Universalism offers, as well as the opportunity to be understood and respected for our beliefs by those who will never enter our doors.

The most important work that UU religious educators do in that role is usually with children and youth. What do you think would be gained by giving our children a religious language to use?

Elicit responses to this question from participants. Share with them this quote from Frederick Buechner: "In some important sense the thing you are seeing or feeling doesn't even fully exist for you until you have given a word to it."

Ask participants what makes it such a challenge for Unitarian Universalists to use religious language, and why stepping up to this challenge is worth it.

(5 minutes) Then say something like:

Rev. Bill Sinkford, a recent past president of the Unitarian Universalist Association, recounts a time he was asked to provide an invocation for an interfaith group, many of whose members came from his own former Baptist tradition. He thought long and hard about how he could fashion a prayer that the group would be open to receiving. Words like "Heavenly Father" no longer rang true for him. And although he was comfortable as a UU, he had not yet found a personal practice of prayer that he thought was compatible within his new faith.

He stood before the group of ministers and found the courage to begin, saying, “Spirit of Life and Love, known by many names.” As he describes it, grace happened. His honest acknowledgment of the many ways that people speak of divinity opened the door for all to enter into the silence and wonder of prayer. He began to find the language of his Unitarian Universalist faith.

Ask the participants to choose two of the words from the list of religious language created earlier. Distribute notebook paper and pens and instruct them to take a few minutes to jot a few notes about how they might use or reframe these words. Ask for volunteers to share their reflections with the group.

Conclude by reading aloud Handout 20, *That Which Holds All*, by Rev. Nancy Shaffer, a UU minister and author of *Instructions in Joy*, a book of meditations.

Practical Considerations (15 minutes)

Materials

- Unlined paper and pencils/pens
- Handout 21, *The Best Worship Space Possible*
- Slide 23, *The Best Worship Space Possible*

Preparation

- Cue the slide.

Description

(5 minutes) Explain that this activity focuses on two practical aspects of planning and presenting worship: space and copyright. Give a sheet of paper and a writing implement to each participant. Ask them to draw the worship space of the congregation they serve, the space where everyone would gather for a worship service. They should draw the whole space, indicating the walls, windows, and doors; the seating area; the chancel or stage area; the choir loft; all furniture, such as the pulpit or lectern, the altar table, and

the piano or organ; art and other decoration; sacred objects; and any visible technological equipment or controls. Explain that the appearance and arrangement of the worship space can contribute to or detract from the experience of the sacred.

(5 minutes) Display Slide 23, The Best Worship Space Possible, and ask participants to take out Handout 21, The Best Worship Space Possible. Explain that they will evaluate their own worship space by ranking it from 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest or best, for each of the five attributes named on the slide and the handout. Then ask for volunteers to read the descriptions of each of the five attributes. After each one is read, give participants a moment to rank their congregation's space. Be sure to highlight the fifth point, about inclusive space and accessibility concerns. Refer participants to the guide, "Accessible Faith" on the [UUA's accessibility page](#).

(5 minutes) Then say something like:

Another practical consideration is copyright. Copyrights acknowledge the rights of those who create intellectual property by limiting how it may be used by someone other than the creator. It provides a way for the creator to be recognized and fairly compensated for their original work. It is not only a legal issue, but also a moral and ethical one. Worship services are full of songs, stories, poems, and now even video clips, which are usually not created by the worship leaders. Congregations do have to respect copyright, and you should understand how copyright affects how you use stories, readings, art, and music in worship.

Let's say you want to use a published story in worship next Sunday. You will acknowledge the title and author in the order of service. You also hope to produce slides from this story's illustrations to show during the story, and if you do, you'll include the illustrator's name in the order of service as well.

Copyright laws are frequently updated, and nothing in this module should be considered legal advice, but in this case, you are not violating copyright. Here's why. You are presenting the story during a worship service in your

congregation's worship space, you are acknowledging the title, author, and illustrator in writing, and neither you nor the congregation is realizing a financial profit by using the story.

Some common uses of copyrighted materials do cross the line between what is legal and what is not. You may print the words to a song in the order of service or project them onto a screen, but only if you have enough hymnbooks for everyone in the worship space. You may not do it because you are short on hymnals. That's a copyright violation. The same reasoning holds for reproducing printed music, such as for choir members. This is also a copyright violation if you are doing it because you don't have enough original copies for them all. Violation of music copyright has garnered a lot of attention in our digital age, and copyrights on music are enforced more strongly than those on most other forms of creative expression. Last, you may not use a copyrighted video, not even an excerpt of one, during a worship service without receiving permission from the copyright holder.

This and additional information on using copyrighted materials, such as advice about podcasts of worship services that your congregation may make available on its web site, can be found in a UUA online publication, "Copyright Issues Related to Worship," which is listed on Handout 25, this module's resource page.

Borrowing from Other Cultures (20 minutes)

Materials

- Handout 22, Honoring and Respecting Our World's Cultures
- Handout 23, Anger: A Buddhist Story
- Handout 24, The Promise and The Practice
- Handout 25, Selected Resources
- Slide 24, Honoring and Respecting Our World's Cultures

Preparation

- Review *Worship that Works*, pages 87-98 and 171-174.
- Cue Slide 22.

Description

(7 minutes) Say something like:

As a faith that draws from many sources, including other religions and cultures as part of our search for truth and meaning, the challenge has been doing so without misappropriating. This is especially important as we work to dismantle white supremacy culture in all aspects of our faith, including the worship service. Arnason and Rolenz encourage the responsible use of stories from other cultures as a way of affirming multicultural community. As we encourage folks to use a diversity of stories, songs and readings, there is a way to do this while assuring respect and care for their origins. Ask participants what might worry them about using stories from other cultures in worship. These concerns do not need to be written down, but should include the following:

- I will tell the story wrong.
- I will be disrespectful to that culture.
- I will offend someone.
- My motives for telling the story will be misconstrued.

Explain the term “cultural misappropriation,” which is sometimes just called “cultural appropriation.” The book, *Worship That Works*, cites a definition by Rev. Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley: “consciously or unconsciously seeking to emulate concepts, beliefs or rituals that are foreign to a particular framework, individual or collective. It is incorporating language, cultural expressions, forms, lifestyles, rituals or practices about which there is little basis for direct knowledge, experience or authenticity into one’s being. It is also the superficial appreciation of a culture without regard to its deeper meaning.”

Reinforce that not only stories but also music, worship objects, and rituals from other cultures can be misappropriated. Point out that in this module, the original context of each song has been explained. This is a good practice for stories as well. Refer participants to Handout 25, Selected Resources, for more information about the background of hymns in *Singing the Living Tradition* and *Singing the Journey*.

Say something like:

Cultural appropriation can happen, even unintentionally, when we take stories or other elements from a culture that is not our own out of context, when we dilute or ignore their culture of origin, or fail to recognize the relationship between that culture and our own, historically and now. Consider the historical relationships between whites of European origin and Native Americans, or between whites of European origin and African Americans, and it's easy to see how a worship leader whose background is white European might be reluctant to use stories from Native American and African American cultures without doing their homework and using caution and care. That said, stories from diverse cultures can teach and affirm values held in high esteem by Unitarian Universalists.

(8 minutes) Display Slide 24, Honoring and Respecting Our World's Cultures, and share these questions:

- How much do I know about the particular tradition this worship comes from? How do I respect it and not misrepresent it?
- What do I know of the history and experience of the people from whom I am borrowing?
- Does this borrowing distort, water down, or misinterpret the tradition?
- Am I changing the meaning of this worship element to suit my service? Am I changing lyrics or words to suit my theology or my congregation's theology? Why can't the experience these words or actions convey stand for itself?
- Am I overgeneralizing this culture? (Any culture can be quite diverse.)
- What is my motivation for this borrowing? What is being sought and why?

- How do the “owners” of the tradition feel about pieces of the tradition being borrowed? Do I have any personal relationship with anyone who comes from the culture from which I am borrowing?

*From Worship That Works, 2nd edition by Wayne Arnason and Kathleen Rolena/
questions adapted from the work of Jacqui James.*

Refer participants to Handout 22, Honoring and Respecting Our World’s Cultures. Say it offers good questions that can help you decide whether and how to share a story from another culture. Refer participants to Handout 23, Anger: A Buddhist Story, a tale from Love Will Guide Us, a Tapestry of Faith program for children. If there is time, ask a volunteer to read the story aloud. Have participants discuss how they would prepare both themselves and their congregations for this story, and how they would offer it in a worship service.

(5 minutes) Conclude by saying something like:

The use of cross-cultural stories, music, worship objects, and rituals in our congregations can be a worship planner’s greatest challenge. Without great care, sensitivity, and education, misunderstanding and offense can result. Grey areas abound. But cross-cultural storytelling is also an opportunity for the storyteller and the congregation to learn, grow, and practice their highest values.

De-Centering Whiteness in Worship (15 minutes)

Materials

- Handout 24, The Promise and The Practice

Preparation

- Remind participants to view the two, one-hour webinars on [Decentering Whiteness in Worship](#). Ask them to read over the materials from The Promise and The Practice (Handout 24).

Description

In this section we will discuss the idea of "decentering whiteness." In addition to learning how to appreciate other cultures without misappropriating, it is crucial to learn how the centering of "whiteness" affects worship spaces. The webinar explores how heteronormative able-ism, in addition to race, has limited our traditional worship experience. The worship materials offered in *The Promise and the Practice* are an example of centering the voices of Black Unitarian Universalists. Read this excerpt aloud:

*What's different about *The Promise and the Practice* is its intention of creating a soul-deep space of feeling and experiencing the power of this moment in our UU story. These worship materials center the voices and stories of black UUs, so your entire worship service calls upon the lived experience of black religious professional as sacred text. This service invites white UUs to bear witness to that pain as a place of connection, recognizing all that's been lost in our tradition. Because *The Promise and the Practice* is an intentional centering of black voices—and in a departure from traditional “asks”—we highly encourage white clergy, preachers, and other worship leaders to decenter their own voices and identity by not writing sermons, homilies, or other significant worship material for this Sunday.*

*To reinforce the feeling, heart-centered nature of *The Promise and The Practice* as an opportunity for atonement and re-creation—which is both complex and sacred work—these worship materials include a ritual (or, if you like, an embodied, participatory moment of healing) as a symbolic “turning” from past to future.*

Note that this excerpt is intentional in naming the importance of decentering whiteness from this Sunday service. Without this naming, it is easy for white religious professionals to center their own voices and experiences.

Next, discuss the two-part webinar on Decentering Whiteness in Worship with Rev. Erika Hewitt, Dr. Glenn Thomas Rideout and Julica Hermann DeLaFuente, reflect on the themes that came up for folks. Use the following questions with the group:

- What most surprised you that came out during the discussion?
- Have you experienced worship as having a dissonance between heart and head?
- What is something you learned that you could apply moving forward?

Project: Team Planning (60 minutes)

Materials

- Handout 16, Guidelines for Worship Module Project
- Slide 25, Guidelines for Worship Module Project

Preparation

- Decide with your co-leader on a theme for the worship service you will ask participants to develop.
- Decide whether to do a closing before or after the project planning time.
- Cue the slide.

Description

(5 minutes) Review the guidelines for the module project, a 20-minute worship service (or portion of a longer service), by displaying the slide or referring participants to the handout. Explain that the teams will have the remaining session time to begin planning and creating their worship service. Remind them that they will have another hour in Session 4 to work on it. Note that in this early stage of planning, they may feel more comfortable brainstorming ideas rather than trying to establish an actual order of service. They may hit on a particular story, reading, or song that will inform the other parts of the service. Encourage them to use resources in the meeting space, the materials linked under “Worship” on the UUA [Renaissance Modules resources page](#),

and online research. Remind them of the theme chosen for the service and suggest that teams begin by talking about their audience—its interests, needs, worldview, and stages of development (including faith development), and how it might understand and engage in that theme. Emphasize that the worship service they create should show how each team member has participated in its plan and presentation.

(55 minutes) This is work time for the participants. Be available to answer questions that arise and to clarify the assignment.

Closing (10 minutes)

Materials

- Notebook paper and pens
- Handout 5, Reflection Questions
- Slide 26, Session 3 Reflection Questions

Preparation

- Decide whether to do the closing before or after the project planning time.
- Cue the slide.

Description

Display Slide 26, Session 3 Reflection Questions, or refer participants to Handout 5, Reflection Questions. Distribute notebook paper and pens, and allow participants at least five minutes to reflect on or write about the session using the following questions:

- How does the worship team function in my setting? How might the team be strengthened?
- How might I articulate and increase the religious educator's role in the worship life of my congregation?
- How has my competency in structuring and evaluating a worship service increased and deepened?
- How has my fluency with the language of faith been challenged or confirmed?

- How has my understanding of cultural appropriation expanded?

Check for any Parking Lot questions. Ask for two volunteers, one to choose and offer a closing reading and one to extinguish the chalice.

Session 4: The Power of Stories

Session-at-a-Glance

Opening	10 minutes
Our Stories, Our Selves	25 minutes
Story Repertoire	15 minutes
Story Practice	35 minutes
Homily	25 minutes
Project: Team Planning	60 minutes
Closing	10 minutes

Total Time: 3 hours

Goals

This session will:

- Promote the appreciation of our individual and collective stories, which not only connect us in our faith community but can be a powerful tool in our worship experiences as well
- Offer resources that increase the religious educator's bank of stories
- Offer instruction and practice in presenting stories that are mindful of the age and learning styles of the audience
- Encourage participants to seek opportunities to hone their storytelling skills
- Offer instruction and practice in writing a homily
- Offer opportunities to plan worship services

Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- Understand and experience the importance of stories and storytelling as paths to self-knowledge, community building, and enhanced worship
- Increase their repertoire of stories for worship
- Learn and practice ways to present stories that are mindful of the age and learning styles of the audience
- Learn and practice the general parts of a homily
- Increase their skills in crafting a homily

Handouts

Handout 5, Reflection Questions

Handout 16, Guidelines for Worship Module Project

Handout 25, Selected Resources

Handout 26, The Difference Between Heaven and Hell

Handout 27, Homily Writing Tips

Handout 28, The Two Monks

Slides

27. Session 4

28-30. Blue Boat Home (3)

31. Personal Story

32. Congregation's Story

33. Elements: A Good Story...

34. Six Techniques of Storytelling

35. Homily Writing

36. Guidelines for Worship Module Project

37. Session 4 Reflection Questions

Session 4:

The Power of Stories

Opening (10 minutes)

Materials

- Chalice, candle and matches or LED-battery operated candle
- Centering table with cloth
- Copies of *Singing the Journey* for all participants
- Slide 27, Session 4
- Slides 28, 29, and 30, Blue Boat Home lyrics
- Computer (preferably with Internet access), projector, and large monitor or screen

Preparation

- Plan to play “Blue Boat Home” from [this YouTube video](#); test equipment.
- Cue the slides.

Description

Display Slide 27. Welcome participants as they arrive and get settled by playing “Blue Boat Home,” Hymn 1064 in *Singing the Journey*, from the Internet or a CD. Explain that the tune was written in 1844 by Rowland Prichard, who entitled it “Hyfrydol” (meaning “cheerful” in Welsh), and has been adapted by many songwriters, mostly for worship purposes. This version, with lyrics by the UU musician Peter Mayer, reflects our seventh Principle, the interdependent web of life, and has been a rallying song for many environmental groups. “Home” for Mayer is the Earth, linking science and spirit. Display the first of the three Blue Boat Home lyrics slides (Slide 28), distribute hymnbooks, and invite the participants to sing the song, watch the YouTube video, or dance to the CD. If the group wishes to dance together, perhaps in a circle, make sure

that all have a way to participate comfortably. After the song, have a volunteer light the chalice and another volunteer choose and read chalice lighting words.

Our Stories, Our Selves (25 minutes)

Materials

- Notebook paper and pens
- Slide 31, Personal Story
- Slide 32, Congregation's Story

Preparation

- Cue the slides.

Description

(10 minutes) Say something like:

Though musician Peter Mayer says that he has a “dry land heart,” he’s been “sailing all his life.” The universe is his ocean, and his companions, “all we kindred souls,” drift together, guided by stars, urged on by great winds. We are all sailors, on a journey that has a past, a present, and a future. Places, people, and events have helped to shape our journey, and these have become our personal stories. In this way, we are our stories.

Explain that in this section both our personal and our congregational stories will be explored. Both kinds of stories affect the worship we plan and present.

Ask participants to think about the people, places, and events that have been important in shaping their life and values as Unitarian Universalists. Have them take out paper and pens for a time of personal reflection. Explain that they will be considering people, places, and events in their lives that have led them to their role as religious educators. Display Slide 31, Personal Story, and give them three or four minutes to jot down one-word responses to the three questions on the slide:

- What three people have been very important in your life?

- What three places have been very important in your life?
- What three events have been very important in your life?

You may need to give them an example to get them started. Then ask them to choose one of their one-word answers (or one question, if the answers to it are connected) and write about it for five minutes. Their reflection should not only summarize the story of the person, place, or event but also explore its importance to their self- and spiritual development. Conclude the activity by asking them to write a summary statement that begins, "Because I _____ (met this person, was in this place, had this experience), I am now _____." If there is time, ask volunteers to share their statement aloud.

(15 minutes) Then say something like:

We are each an amazing compilation of people, places, and events. Knowing and reflecting on our own stories, we gain awareness of the sources of our values and their importance to us now and in the future. The same is true for the congregations we serve. The more we know about the people, places, and events of our congregation's life and history, the better we understand how to serve, including serving as a worship leader.

Share [the following joke](#), which Rev. Dan Harper posted to his blog [Yet Another Unitarian Universalist](#) on April 11, 2011:

A newcomer took a seat in one of the pews at First Unitarian. When the minister began preaching about liberal theology, the newcomer became more and more enthusiastic, and finally shouted "Amen!" when the preacher definitively proved the use of reason was essential to religion.

There was a long-time member of the church in the next pew, who leaned over and glared at the newcomer. "In this church, we do not shout 'Amen' during the sermon," hissed the long-time member.

The newcomer, looking flustered, said, “But I’ve got religion!”

“Well,” hissed the long-time member, “you did not get it here!”

Explain that the conflict between the newcomer and the long-time member arises from their different perspectives on religion and worship. Likely there’s a story behind each of their views; ask participants to think about the stories their congregation tells about themselves. Display Slide 32, Congregation’s Story, read aloud the questions, and ask participants to briefly jot down answers:

- What three people have been very important in your congregation’s life/history?
- What three places have been very important in your congregation’s life/history?
- What three events have been very important in your congregation’s life/history?

Single-word answers are fine. Tell participants they will now have seven minutes to choose one of their answers and reflect on how that person, place, or event affects the congregation’s current story, especially its understanding of, desires for, and expectations of worship. Let participants know their reflection will be shared with another participant. After seven minutes, have them form pairs; each person will have two minutes to share their reflection with their partner. If time remains, conclude by having volunteers offer a one-sentence summary of what they have learned in this exercise.

Story Repertoire (15 minutes)

Materials

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Handout 25, Selected Resources
- Slide 33, Elements: A Good Story...
- Optional: Laptop with Internet access, and a projector

Preparation

- Review this module's resource page and see if you have additional resources to include.

Description

(7 minutes) Ask participants to offer compelling reasons for using stories in worship. Include the following points made by Kristin Maier in *A Good Telling*, Chapter 1, if participants do not raise them:

- We see our own life experiences, with their highs and lows, as stories and make meaning of our own lives through the stories of others, past and present.
- Good worship touches the whole person, not just the intellect, and a story can do that.
- Good stories have layers of meaning that allow all ages to engage with them. Such an engagement is a powerful shared experience that can promote the spirit of community within a congregation.
- Stories have great adaptability in a worship service and can be used to promote its central theme, set the stage for the sermon, and link together the various liturgical parts of the service.

Add that Maier notes that most worship leaders who offer stories as part of the worship experience find the congregation to be a kind and supportive audience, mindful that the storyteller is both taking a risk and giving the congregation a gift.

Maier's points are compelling and lead us to a big question: "How do I choose the right story?"

Give the participants four or five minutes to volunteer their own standards for choosing a story for a worship service. Ask them, "What are the elements of a good story?" Take responses. Then, display Slide 33, Elements: A Good Story..., which is based on *A Good Telling*, Chapter 2, pages 25-27.

(8 minutes) Then ask participants to volunteer their own general and specific sources for stories they or others have used successfully in worship services. Ask a volunteer to write this list on newsprint and another volunteer to type it and email it to participants. The list can hold a range of contributions, from general terms, such as “myths,” to the list of stories based on the seven Principles that is found in the index of Michelle Richards’ [Come Into the Circle](#). Expect the following sources mentioned in Maier’s book to appear: picture books, folktales, myths, ancient stories, sacred writings, storytellers’ collections, one’s own stories. Be sure that the Tapestry of Faith index of stories is included. Refer participants to Handout 25, Selected Resources, for additional resources.

Story Practice (35 minutes)

Materials

- Handout 26, The Difference Between Heaven and Hell
- Slide 33, Elements: A Good Story...
- Slide 34, Six Techniques of Storytelling

Preparation

- Review Handout 26, The Difference Between Heaven and Hell
- Cue the slides.

Description

(10 minutes) Display Slide 33, Elements: A Good Story. Invite participants to read “The Difference Between Heaven and Hell.” Give participants a few minutes to read the story and evaluate why it is a story worth telling. Have volunteers share their insights with the group..

Note that all of us have probably known at least one great storyteller—a relative, a teacher, a friend, a minister, or even a professional storyteller. Ask participants to think about that storyteller and what is, or was, memorable about their technique. You may

need to provide an example from your own experience, such as “My grandma drew us into stories by creating voices for each character.” Ask for volunteers to name the techniques or qualities of that special storyteller in their lives. Do not rush this process; allow participants the opportunity to organically learn from each other’s experiences.

Once this sharing is complete, display Slide 34, Six Techniques of Storytelling. Use the slide to review the techniques and affirm participants’ contributions from the previous sharing. Refer participants to Chapter 3 of the module reader (the Maier book) for deeper explanation of the six techniques.

(25 minutes) Then say something like:

“The Difference Between Heaven and Hell” is a story we can use to practice techniques that are transferrable to any story we select to tell. We have time in this module to practice three of the techniques—tempo, the dramatic pause, and developing characters. Please find a partner, someone you haven’t had a chance to get to know yet. For the next 25 minutes, you will be practicing these storytelling techniques using your voices, listening and offering feedback. Find space where you can hear your partner and not disturb or be distracted by others.

Circulate among the pairs, offering help if needed.

Homily (25 minutes)

Materials

- Notebook paper and pens
- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Handout 27, Homily Writing Tips
- Handout 28, The Two Monks
- Slide 35, Homily Writing
- Optional: Laptop with Internet access, and a projector

Preparation

- Practice reading or telling "[The Two Monks](#)."
- Cue the slide.

Description

(10 minutes) Explain that this activity focuses on the homily, a short sermon. First, ask the participants to indicate, by a show of hands, whether they write homilies or sermons, and if they do so only once in a while or regularly. Affirm that not all congregations ask their religious educators to do this. Then state that the participants will listen to a story, brainstorm its themes, and then have individual quiet time to write a homily.

Read aloud or tell the story, "The Two Monks," a Zen Buddhist tale as retold by Jessica York. Then instruct the group to take out Handouts 26 and 27, Homily Writing Tips and The Two Monks. State that a good story has multiple themes, or ideas, that all or part of the story confirms. Ask what themes are contained in this story and have a volunteer record them on newsprint.

(15 minutes) Then display Slide 35, Homily Writing. Distribute notebook paper and pens and invite each participant to create an outline or paragraph that includes the key points of a five-minute homily based on "The Two Monks." They can assume that in a worship service the story will precede their homily. If participants finish early, their written work can be shared in small groups; it's more likely that they will have time only to complete the outline or paragraph and get a feel for a homily's structure and content. Tell participants that if they wish to learn more about writing homilies, they can find resources on Handout 27.

Project: Team Planning (60 minutes)

Materials

- Handout 16, Guidelines for Worship Module Project

- Handout 25, Selected Resources
- Slide 36, Guidelines for Worship Module Project
- Worship resources provided by the module host
- Optional: Laptop with Internet access, and a projector

Preparation

- Decide whether to do the closing before or after the project planning time.
- Cue the slide.

Description

(5 minutes) Display Slide 36, Guidelines for Worship Module Project, and refer participants to Handout 16, Guidelines for Worship Module Project. Briefly review the guidelines for the module project, a 20-minute worship service (or a 20-minute portion of a longer service). Explain that teams will have most of the remaining session time to work on their worship service, and that you will keep time and let them know when time is nearly up. Tell them that in this time they should finalize and write up (or create a slide of) the order of service; determine specific liturgy to include; finalize each team member's role in the service; and practice the service, working on their timing and confidence. Encourage them to use resources in the meeting space, the materials linked under "Worship" on the UUA [Renaissance Modules resources page](#), resources suggested on Handout 25, and online research. Continue to emphasize the importance of considering their specific audience (children, youth, multigenerational, or adult) and its human and faith development needs.

(55 minutes) This is work time for the participants; leaders should be available to answer questions that arise and to clarify the assignment.

Closing (10 minutes)

Materials

- Handout 5, Reflection Questions
- Slide 37, Session 4 Reflection Questions

Preparation

- Decide whether to do the closing before or after the project planning time.
- Cue the slide.

Description

Display Slide 37, Session 4 Reflection Questions, or refer participants to Handout 5, Reflection Questions, and allow participants at least five minutes to reflect on or write about the session using the following questions:

- How has my understanding of the value of including story in worship been challenged, increased, or deepened?
- What are my strengths as a storyteller? What are my areas to build or improve?
- How might I apply my learning about the power of stories and storytelling techniques to my work as a worship leader?
- How has the session affected my thoughts about and skills in homily writing?

Check for any Parking Lot questions. Ask for two volunteers, one to choose and offer a closing reading and one to extinguish the chalice.

Session 5:

The Presentation of Worship

Session-at-a-Glance

Opening	10 minutes
Worship Team Projects and Feedback	150 minutes
Closing	20 minutes
Total Time: 3 hours	

Goals

This session will:

- Provide opportunities to present and evaluate worship
- Support the use of storytelling as a viable part of worship liturgy for all ages
- Offer several participant-created services whose content and structure can be used or adapted by participants in their congregations

Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- Learn how to create an order of service for a specific audience based on a specific theme
- Experience co-leading a 20-minute service, or part of a longer service, that reflects understanding of key concepts and components of worship excellence
- Evaluate and learn from the worship services presented by participants
- Increase their awareness of the power of stories in worship

Handouts

Handout 4, Preparing for the Module Evaluation

Handout 5, Reflection Questions

Slides

38. Session 5

39-41. Wake, Now, My Senses (3)

42. Session 5 Reflection Questions

Session 5:

The Presentation of Worship

Opening (10 minutes)

Materials

- Chalice, candle and matches or LED-battery operated candle
- Centering table with cloth
- Copies of *Singing the Living Tradition* for all participants
- Slide 38, Session 5
- Slides 39, 40, and 41, Wake, Now, My Senses lyrics
- Optional: Music [download](#), *Wake Now My Senses*, Chancel Choir, First Unitarian Church of Oakland (Musicopia, 2007) and speakers
- Computer (preferably with Internet access), projector, and large monitor or screen

Preparation

- Cue the slides.
- Optional: Recruit a song leader.

Description

Display Slide 38, Session 5. Invite the participants to gather in a circle around the worship space. Ask for two volunteers, one to choose a chalice lighting reading and the other to light the chalice.

Display the first of the three Wake, Now, My Senses lyrics slides (Slide 39). Say something like:

The song “Wake, Now, My Senses,” Hymn 298 in Singing the Living Tradition, was written by the Unitarian Universalist minister Rev. Thomas J. S. Mikelson for

the 1981 ordination of a minister of religious education, Rev. Charity Rowley. The song names five important areas that are basic to Unitarian Universalism and often inform the themes of our worship—senses, reason, compassion, conscience, and vision. Please rise in body or spirit to join in singing this song [If you are playing the CD: ...with CD accompaniment].

Worship Team Projects and Feedback (150 minutes)

Preparation

- Obtain any books, equipment, or other supplies participants have requested for their presentations.
- Plan a time schedule which allows each team to present for 20 minutes and receive feedback for at least 15 minutes. Anticipate that teams will need perhaps five minutes to set up before beginning their presentations.

Description

(10 minutes) Say something like:

In this final session, most of our time is given to each team's presentation and feedback on it. The order of presentation will proceed from youngest to oldest audience, with the team presenting a multigenerational worship service presenting last.

Be sure that the order of the presentations is clear. Remind participants that a member of each team should email the team's project to the module leaders and all other participants. Then say something like:

As important as the presentations themselves are, the discussion immediately following each presentation, when participants and leaders will provide feedback to the presenters, is also important. Feedback time for each presentation will be 15 minutes and will consist of two types of feedback. First, the presenting team will speak about what went well and what they would do differently then other participants will describe what they liked and offer constructive feedback. Your

comments should reflect what you have learned about worship—its purpose, its types, the process of planning and presenting it, the use of stories in it, and the role of the religious educator in the worship life of a congregation. Please take five minutes to meet with your team for final preparation of your presentations.

(140 minutes) Have teams present in turn.

Notes to leaders:

- Be an enthusiastic supporter of each team's worship service. Your support will inspire participants to do the same and inspire confidence in the presenters. Respond to each presentation with applause and appreciation!
- Be mindful of time. Appoint one leader as timekeeper.
- Consider taking notes to help you remember your own thoughts about the excellence you observed in each service, as well as questions that you want to ask the individual teams and invite the whole group to consider.
- As important as your comments are, it is equally or more important that you allow the participants to do most of the evaluating of the presentations. This is a time for leaders to step back, especially in the beginning of feedback time. Your role is to clarify and to support the new insights and growth of the module's participants.

Closing (20 minutes)

Materials

- Notebook paper and pens
- Handout 4, Preparing for the Module Evaluation
- Handout 5, Reflection Questions
- Slide 42, Session 5 Reflection Questions
- Optional: Music, and music player
- Optional: A box containing many small items for a metaphor box activity, or supplies for another similar activity

Preparation

- Be familiar with Handout 4, Preparing for the Module Evaluation, which explains how to submit an evaluation to the UUA to receive confirmation of having completed this Renaissance Module, and reminds participants of the deadline for doing so.
- Make sure you know which, if any, of the participants have, with this module, have completed five modules—a Renaissance Module milestone. Plan how you will acknowledge their accomplishment.
- Cue the slide.
- Optional: Set up music player and cue music.
- Optional: A final activity is a good idea, and the exact form it takes is for the module leaders to determine. Choose an active meaningful way to conclude the module and wish the participants well. For example, fill a “metaphor box” with small items that can be used as personal metaphors, such as a mirror, clothes pin, shell, penny, rubber ball, small bird’s nest, marble, key—the possibilities are endless. Before this session, spread the items on the worship table so all can see. There should be more items than participants so choices are not limited. Offer a question such as “How have you grown as a religious educator who creates and presents worship?” or “What important idea about worship will you take home?” and then, invite participants to choose an item that is a metaphor for their answer. Invite everyone, including leaders, to show their item, share a one-sentence answer to the question, and return their item to the box. Another possibility is for participants to write a short note to themselves about what they’ve learned and would want to be reminded of six months from now. They place their notes in self-addressed envelopes and give them to the leaders, who mail them six months later.

Description

(8 minutes) Display Slide 42, Session 5 Reflection Questions; refer participants to Handout 5, Reflection Questions; and distribute notebook paper and pens. Allow

participants at least five minutes to reflect on or write about the session using the following questions:

- How have my skills improved or deepened as a result of creating, presenting and evaluating several worship services during our module?
- In what way has my knowledge of the range of possibilities to create effective worship grown or been refined?
- This module advocates for the inclusion of a religious educator in the worship life of a congregation. What is one action I will take to live/promote this strategy with my congregation, the minister, and/or others who plan worship?

If you wish, play quiet music while participants reflect and write.

(12 minutes) Welcome participants to a closing worship circle and ask for two volunteers, one to offer a closing reading and one to extinguish the chalice. The order of this closing worship should be: chalice lighting, chalice reading, shared reflection or a reflective, concluding activity (if time), and any special words of departure the leaders might like to offer. Finally, extinguish the chalice.