

# **Administration as Leadership**

## **Renaissance Module**

### **LEADER'S GUIDE**

By Pat Ellenwood



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## About the Author

Pat Ellenwood, in addition to her role for 30 years as a Director of Religious Education, was involved in the development of The New DRE Workshop by the Mass Bay Religious Education Team and has expanded subsequent versions of this workshop. She developed a guide for congregations The Search for Religious Education Leadership: Best Practices for Unitarian Universalist Congregations currently under revision, contributed the essay “Changing Lenses” to The Essex Conversations and served on the Curriculum Visioning Team for Tapestry of Faith. She was on the LREDA Board from 1997 – 2002, serving as President from 1999-2002. While on the Board, she served on The Professional Standards Task Force and Religious Education Futures Task Force. Trained in Renaissance Module leadership, Pat has led modules across the continent. In 2002, she received the Angus MacLean Award for Excellence in Religious Education Leadership. Most recently she has created a workshop called The Puzzle of Leadership available in a variety of formats.

## **Introduction**

Because there are so many facets to the overall responsibility of a religious educator, it is imperative to keep in mind the big picture of the role. It is easy to get bogged down in a maze of administrative details or to see this as the limit of what the religious educator is capable of offering to the congregation. Learning effective management and organizational strategies will help the religious educator gain the perspective needed to achieve a healthy balance among all the elements of religious education leadership. Capitalizing on one's energy for the work and acquiring a solid foundation in the management skills that are needed will free up the time needed to strengthen other aspects of religious education leadership.

## **Goals and Learning Objectives**

The overall goals of this module are:

- To set the administrative duties in the context of the larger portfolio of religious education leadership
- To appreciate the importance of strong organizational and management skills in administration
- To survey effective means for educating, engaging and appreciating those who share in faith development
- To explore strategies for healthy communication, decision making and delegation.

Effective management and organizational skills are critical to the administrative role. Over the course of the module the following areas will be explored:

- Being a professional consistent with official employment documents and the guidelines of LREDA (Liberal Religious Educators Association)
- A collegial and collaborative staff dedicated to right relations
- The art and science of orienting, recruiting and appreciating volunteers
- Policies and procedures to ensure a congregation that is safe for all.
- Healthy and effective means of communication
- Normalization of conflict and guidelines for resolution
- Delegation that helps to manage the time of the religious educator and volunteers

- Learning about a range of decision making strategies and when to use each appropriately.
- Using technology more effectively to store and easily access relevant data

## **Leader Preparation**

This guide is divided into 5 segments, each 3 hours in length, for a total of 15 hours of workshop time. You will need to adjust times to accommodate breaks, as well as a brief opening for each time your group comes back together after a significant length of time (such as a meal or overnight). Invite volunteers to lead those openings, which should be limited to a reading, a hymn, or something of similar length. Slides for Renaissance module session breaks are available on the UUA website. If you wish, [download this optional PowerPoint](#) to incorporate one or more break slides into your module PowerPoint.

Although not required, a computer, projector, and internet access are strongly recommended. Power Point slides are included to eliminate much of the preparation of newsprint. Not only does this save preparation time for the leaders during the module, it also allows leaders to email the presentation to participants so that they can use it to help prepare written reflections or reports after the module. Encourage working groups to prepare reports electronically rather than on paper, and to distribute their work to the large group at the end of the module.

If you are not using the slides, be ready to write some slides' contents on newsprint to post; review all the slides before the module to choose material to share.

The Leader Resources can be found in the Leaders' Guide at the end of each session; a packet of all handouts is available on the [Module Resources page](#). The Reader for this module is the collection of handouts, which participants will receive before the module from either the Module Coordinator or in the welcome letter sent by the leaders (this should be clarified as early as possible to allow participants maximum time to read all handouts). Participants can print their own copies or save them on a laptop.

## List of Handouts

### Session 1

- 1 Covenant
- 2 Schedule, Goals, and Objectives
- 3 Introduction to Renaissance and RE Credentialing
- 4 Preparation for Module Evaluation
- 5 Reflection Questions
- 6 Creating and Sharing Our Stories
- 7 The Professional, Politics and Power
- 8 Template for Memorandum of Agreement
- 9 Template for Half-Time Job Description
- 10 Guidelines for Evaluation

### Session 2

- 11 Gaining Perspective
- 12 Creating Covenants
- 13 Healthy Communication
- 14 Avoiding Negative Triangulation
- 15 Faith Development Portfolio
- 16 Tasks in Areas of Responsibility

### Session 3

- 17 Responsibilities of the RE Committee Checklist
- 18 Developing Policies and Procedures
- 19 Process for Collegial Consultants

### Session 4

- 20 Strategies for Recruitment
- 21 Orientation and Support
- 22 Recognition and Appreciation
- 23 Risk Management
- 24 Cash Register Story Questions
- 25 Guidelines for Right Relations
- 26 Conflict Continuum

- 27 How Decisions Are Made/Who Decides?
- 28 Cost Benefit Analysis
- 29 Control/Impact Analysis
- 30 S.W.O.T. Analysis

### **Session 5**

- 31 Organizational Strategies
- 32 LREDA Code of Professional Practices
- 33 About Delegation
- 34 Delegation Role Plays
- 35 Planning for Action

Appendix: Online Resources

### **List of PowerPoint Slides**

#### **Session 1**

- 1 Welcome
- 2 Session 1: Welcome and Covenant
- 3 Renaissance Program
- 4 Orientation
- 5 Sharing Our Stories – Appreciative Inquiry
- 6 Sharing Our Stories – Mentors
- 7 Sharing Our Stories – Path to Leadership
- 8 The Professional, Politics and Power
- 9 Handout 7... *If You Are the DRE*
- 10 Official Documents
- 11 Performance Evaluations
- 12 Session 1 Reflection Questions

#### **Session 2**

- 13 Session 2: The Religious Educator in the Congregation
- 14 The Congregational Dance cont'd
- 15 Covenants
- 16 Healthy Communication

- 17 Triangulation
- 18 Faith Development Portfolio
- 19 Session 2 Reflection Questions

### **Session 3**

- 20 Session 3: Partners in Faith Development
- 21 Session 3 Reflection Questions

### **Session 4**

- 22 Session 4: Management Skills
- 23 Conflict Management
- 24 Conflict Continuum
- 25 Session 4 Reflection Questions

### **Session 5**

- 26 Session 5: Integration and Application
- 27 Using Technology More Effectively
- 28 Delegation
- 29 Delegation cont'd
- 30 Delegation cont'd
- 31 Session 5 Reflection Questions
- 32 Closing Worship

Note: If you decide to insert optional "[break slides](#)" into your PowerPoint," the number sequence of your Renaissance module slides will shift.

### **List of Leader Resources**

- 1 Sample Letter to Participants
- 2 Energizers
- 3 Pie Chart Graphic
- 4 Triage Cards
- 5 Cash Register Story Answers
- 6 Game Cards
- 7 Song Sheet and Readings
- 8 Sample Closing Worship

# Leader Resource 1: Sample Letter to Participants

Dear Colleagues,

We are excited at the prospect of leading together and sharing the Renaissance Administration Module (add dates and location or name of event.)

No matter how part-time the job or how small the program, a coordinated, well managed and smoothly running program stems from competent administration. The amount of time religious educators have for the other responsibilities in their portfolio depends largely on how well they understand the procedures that are fundamental to administration. Whether you are brand-new or an experienced leader, we hope to guide you toward greater proficiency in this important aspect of our ministry.

## Expectations

Although other areas of religious education leadership are mentioned, only those topics listed below will be covered during the 15 hours of the module.

## Criteria for receiving credit for the module:

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

## Handouts and Reader

Please download and print the file Handouts for Administration Module found on the Module Resources page at <http://www.uua.org/careers/re/renaissance/56010.shtml> (or the PDF file you received from the leaders). **The handouts are also the reader for this module**, so please read through them thoroughly before the module and jot down notes and questions.

## Materials to gather print and bring with you:

- Personal electronic device (such as laptop or tablet); the site coordinator should provide information on availability of internet connection. It's helpful if you bring a power cord as well.

- One copy of a **diagram or description of the governance for your congregation**. If you are new to your position or do not know the structure that is in place, please check with the Board chair for this information.
- **Letter of Agreement/Contract**. If you do not have a copy in your files, please request one from the chair of the Personnel committee or the Chair of the Board.
- **Job Description** for your current position,
- **Congregational budget** showing line items for the operating budget for RE Committee
- Information about the **database** used in your congregation.
- Materials to share with others which may include documents, forms or anything related to administration such as policy statements or manuals, materials related to management of finances, data, volunteers, conflict or risk.

We are looking forward to our time with you,

Names and email addresses of co-leaders

## Leader Resource 2: Energizers

<b>JUMPING JACKS</b>	<b>THE HOKEY POKEY</b>	<b>THE WAVE</b>
<b>TOE TOUCHES</b>	<b>DEEP BREATHING</b>	<b>TELL A JOKE</b>
<b>ARM CIRCLES</b>	<b>CREATIVE HANDSHAKING</b>	<b>LEAD A SONG</b>
<b>THE ITSY BITSY SPIDER</b>	<b>STRETCHING</b>	<b>CHORUS LINE</b>
<b>SHOULDER RUBS</b>	<b>LEAD A DANCE</b>	<b>YMCA IN BODY LANGUAGE</b>

## Leader Resource 3: Pie Chart Graphic

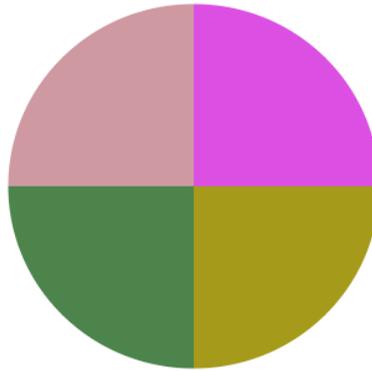
25 % ■  
Philosophical

25 % ■  
Educational

25 % ■  
Administrative

25 % ■  
Theological

Faith Development Portfolio



**How big is each piece of your faith development pie?**

## Leader Resource 4: Triage Cards

Parish Minister	Religious Educator	Administrator	Music Director
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Parish Minister	Religious Educator	Administrator	Music Director
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Parish Minister	Religious Educator	Administrator	Music Director
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Parish Minister	Religious Educator	Administrator	Music Director
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Parish Minister	Religious Educator	Administrator	Music Director
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Parish Minister	Religious Educator	Administrator	Music Director
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Parish	Religious		Music
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Minister	Educator	Administrator	Director
----------	----------	---------------	----------

Parish Minister	Religious Educator	Administrator	Music Director
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Parish Minister	Religious Educator	Administrator	Music Director
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Parish Minister	Religious Educator	Administrator	Music Director
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Handled  
unilaterally by  
individual staff.

Consult with staff  
team. Handled by  
individual.

Consult with staff  
team. Decide on  
best response.

Handled  
unilaterally by  
individual staff.

Consult with staff  
team. Handled by  
individual.

Consult with staff  
team. Decide on  
best response.

Handled unilaterally by individual staff.

Consult with staff team. Handled by individual.

Consult with staff team. Decide on best response.

Handled unilaterally by individual staff.

Consult with staff team. Handled by individual.

Consult with staff team. Decide on best response.

Handled unilaterally by individual staff.

Consult with staff team. Handled by individual.

Consult with staff team. Decide on best response.

Handled unilaterally by individual staff.

Consult with staff team. Handled by individual.

Consult with staff team. Decide on best response.

Handled  
unilaterally by  
individual staff.

Consult with staff  
team. Handled by  
individual.

Consult with staff  
team. Decide on  
best response.

## Leader Resource 5: Cash Register Story Answers

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. A man appeared after the owner had turned off his store lights.  
Answer: ? (The story says a “businessman”)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The robber was a man.  
Answer: ? (We don’t know if there was a robber)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The man did not demand money.  
Answer: F
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The man who opened the cash register was the owner.  
Answer: ? (We don’t know if it was a man)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The storeowner scooped up the contents of the cash register and ran away.  
Answer: ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Someone opened a cash register.  
Answer: T
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. After the man who demanded the money scooped up the contents of the cash register, he ran away.  
Answer: ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. While the cash register contained money, the story does not state how much.  
Answer: ? (The story doesn’t say it contained cash)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. The robber demanded money of the owner.  
Answer: ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. The story contains a series of events in which only three persons are referred to: the owner of the store, a man who demanded money, and a member of the police force.  
Answer: ? (There could be 5 people – the businessman, the man who appeared, the owner, the police, and the man who sped away)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. The following events in the story are true: someone demanded money, a cash register opened, its contents were scooped up, and a man dashed out of the store.  
Answer: ?

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## Leader Resource 6: Game Cards

The Congregational  
Dance

Looking at the  
congregation from the  
balcony

Get off the dance floor

The root of  
“administration” is the  
same as ministry.

Covenant of Right  
Relations

What we have here is a  
failure to communicate

Assume best  
possible motives.

Listen first then speak.

Start as you mean to  
continue.

Avoid negative  
triangulation.

Balance all areas of  
responsibility.

Have empathy for staff  
colleagues

The Cambridge Platform

Covenants: Rooted in  
the Past; Promises for  
the Future

Faith Development is a  
life-long process

Create a priority driven  
Budget.

Who opened the cash  
register?

## Leader Resource 7: Song Sheet and Readings

Hymn #389            Gathered Here

Gathered here I the mystery of the hour.  
Gathered here in one strong body  
Gathered here in the struggle and the power  
Spirit, draw near.

Hymn #413    Go Now in Peace

Go now in peace, go now in peace  
May the spirit of love surround you  
Everywhere, everywhere, you may go.

### **Hymn 396    I Know This Rose Will Open**

I know this rose will open  
I know my fear will burn away.  
I know my soul will unfurl its wings  
I know this rose will open

### **Hymn # 123 Spirit of Life**

Spirit of life, come unto me.  
Move in my heart all the stirrings of compassion.  
Blow in the wind, rise in the sea;  
Move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.  
Roots hold me close; wings set me free;  
Spirit of life, come to me, come to me.

Hymn #402            From You I Receive

From you I receive, to you I give,  
Together we share, and from this we live.

### **Song: Listen, Listen, Listen**

Listen, listen, listen, to my heart song (Repeat)

I will never forget you; I will never forsake you (Repeat)

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Listen, listen, listen, to my heart song (Repeat twice and fade on third)

Song: I Am Committed to You

I am committed to you, for you are committed

To all I believe in. I honor the truth in you,

While I search within for the truth in me,

In you, in me, in you....(fade on this line)

**Hymn # 1011      Return Again**

Return again. Return again.

Return to the home of your soul.      (Repeat 2 lines)

Return to who you are,

Return to what you are,

Return to where you are born and reborn again      (Repeat 3 lines)

**Hymn #1053      How Could Anyone Ever Tell You**

How could anyone ever tell you

You are anything less than beautiful

How could anyone ever tell you, you are less than whole

How could anyone fail to notice

That your loving is a miracle

How deeply you're connected to my soul.

**Hymn #1018      Come and Go With Me**

Come and go with me to that land

Come and go with me to that land

Come and go with me to that land

Where I'm bound (Where I'm bound)      Repeat.

There'll be freedom in that land

There'll be freedom in that land

There'll be freedom in that land

Where I'm bound (Where I'm bound)      Repeat

There'll be justice...

There'll be singin'...

## **WORDS FOR INGATHERING AND CHALICELIGHTING**

Come in, come in,

Come in to this sacred place,

a place made sacred by our gathering in it.

Have compassion for everyone you meet even if they don't want it

What seems conceit, bad manners, or cynicism

is always a sign of things no ears have heard, no eyes have seen.

You do not know what wars are going on down there where the spirit meets the bone

by William Miller, from *The Ways We Touch*

May the chalice we light

Inspire us to use our powers

To heal and not to harm,

To help, not hinder,

To bless, not curse.

We light this chalice to rekindle our Flame of Truth.

We light this chalice to replenish our Spirit of Love.

We light this chalice to rededicate our Energy of Action.

May the light which is before us nurture and sustain the light which is within us.

For every time we make a mistake and decide to start again,

We light this chalice.

For every time we are lonely and let someone be our friend,

We light this chalice.

For every time we are disappointed and we choose to hope,

We light our chalice.

In the flame from this chalice

we find the light of faith, the glow of hope, and the warmth of service.

May we ever grow in faith, hope and service as we kindle our own lights from its spark.

May this flame be to us a symbol of the torch that is passed from hand to hand, and life to life –  
Of caring and concern and the passion for involvement  
which have marked the women and men of our liberal faith  
for many generations.

From separate lives, from different paths, we have come.  
From separate joys and sorrows we have come.  
We have come to make a common life.  
And so it is that we expand our joys  
and share the burdens of our sorrows.  
We have come to watch the ripples of our lives intersect.  
And when the ripples stop and peace and stillness have come  
We see reflected our community.

What we share this day is sacred.  
All gatherings when people meet and touch, celebrate life.  
The laughter we share this day is sacred.  
Joy and sorrow that rise from love and are shared are sacred.  
The stillness we share this day is sacred.

We come to find meaning in our time together.  
To grow together in wisdom and love.  
Our lives are made up of small moments:  
Our gathering here is just such a small moment.  
May we affirm and celebrate the moments that we share.

It is a blessing to be.  
It is a blessing to be here.  
It is a blessing to be here now.  
It is a blessing to be here now, together.

To this place we come to share...to learn...to speak...to listen,  
And to grow together in the spirit of peace and harmony and love.

May the peace of flowing water be with us; may the beauty of starry skies be with us; may the warmth of companionship be with us; and may the miracle of this world in its fullness bless us this day and each day of our lives.

Welcome to this time of seeking and finding, for it is in our coming together here that we celebrate who we are and who we yet shall be.

### **CLOSING READINGS/MEDITATIONS**

May we find within ourselves the courage to be who we are.

May we know when it is time to listen and when it is time to speak.

May we trust ourselves to be the ones

To find the words that need to be said or to do what needs to be done.

May we trust one another and know there are many ways to go through life.

May we know that though we cannot change some of what life gives to us, we can choose how we deal with what we are given.

*Barbara Hamilton Holway*

People say, "What is the sense of our small efforts?"

They cannot see that we must lay one brick at a time, take one step at a time.

A pebble cast into a pond causes ripples that spread in all directions.

Each one of our thoughts, words and deeds is like that.

No one has a right to sit down and feel hopeless.

There's too much work to do.

*Dorothy Day, adapted*

In the end it won't matter how much we have, but how generously we have given.

It won't matter much how much we know, but rather how well we live.

And it won't matter how much we believe, but how deeply we love. *John C. Morgan*

The wonder everyone sees in everyone else they see, and the wonders that fill each minute of time forever; It is for you whoever you are—it is no farther from you than your hearing and sight are from you.

*Walt*

*Whitman*

Let us be still an instant and remember the thoughts we have shared this morning. As we extinguish this flame, let us remember our ties to each other and look forward to being together again.

May our hearts and minds be opened to the power and the insight that weave together the threads of our experience and help us remember the Wholeness of which we are a part.

We come together seeking a reality beyond ourselves that binds us in compassion, love, and understanding to other human beings, and to the interdependent web of all living things.

For a few moments, let us seek quiet - not the quiet that is the absence of noise, For there is always noise. Rather let us look for stillness as of a friend listening. Let us pause for a few moments to listen for the stillness that rests beneath the confusion and complexities of our lives.

Remember to respond with silence now and then.

Say nothing. Listen.

Wait for something to come out

For which only silence can make room.

Let us breathe out our hopes for the world of the future.

Let us breathe in the gifts that they brought to us.

Let us breathe out the gifts we have to give to this world.

It must be borne in mind that the tragedy of life doesn't lie in not reaching your goal. The tragedy lies in having no goal to reach. It isn't a calamity to die with dreams unfulfilled. It is a calamity not to dream. It is not a disaster not to be able to capture your ideal. It is a disaster

to have no ideal to capture. It is not a disgrace not to reach the stars. It is a disgrace to have no stars to reach for.

Not failure but low aim is sin.

*Dr. Benjamin Mays*

We must love them both; those whose opinions we share and those whose opinions we reject. For both have labored in the search for truth and both have helped us in the finding of it.

*Thomas Aquinas*

## **WORDS FOR EXTINGUISHING THE CHALICE**

We extinguish this flame,  
But not the light of truth,  
The warmth of community,  
Or the fire of commitment.  
These we carry in our hearts  
Until we are together again.

## Leader Resource 8: Sample Closing Worship

### Closing the Admin Module

#### Closing Reading

*From the Holy Quiet of This Hour* by Rev. Richard Gilbert Minister Emeritus, Rochester, NY

#### Reader 1

As we prepare to end our time together, let us pause in the blessed silence of this moment to catch our collective breath. There are times when we seem overwhelmed with what we have to do and the limited time to do it. We know full well all the burdens which are ours to bear; they press relentlessly down upon us. The journey may seem arduous; we wonder if we are capable of making it. The paths we have to follow disappear into the woods. At such a time we reach down into the depths of us into a region we sometimes do not remember lives within. And when we do we are reminded simply – to take the next step.

#### Check Out

Invite those who wish to share a sentence that crystallizes their experience of the module and the group.

#### Reader 2

We are not bound to do everything now; we must not complete the journey by sunset; we are not required to be all things to all people; to us does not fall the administration of the universe. We are simply invited to take the next step. Perhaps it will be small and uncertain; perhaps we take it hesitantly, not knowing if we dare; perhaps we take it boldly in hopes the next steps will be easier. However we move into the radical uncertainty of what lies before us, let us remember – all we must do – is take the next step, and it will be enough. **Pause...let us now join in singing**

#### Song

Listen, listen, listen to my heart song

Listen, listen, listen to my heart song.

I will never forget you, I will never forsake you

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I will never forget you, I will never forsake you  
Listen, listen, listen to my heart song.

### **Responsive Reading**

**The Way is long**

**All Let us go together.**

**The Way is difficult**

**All Let us help each other.**

**The way is joyful**

**All Let us share it.**

**The way is ours alone**

**All Let us go in love.**

**The way grows before us**

**All Let us begin.**

**Invite the group to take hands and say together...**

I put my hand in your hand so we may do together that which we cannot do alone.

### **Extinguishing the Chalice**

We extinguish this flame, but not the light of truth,  
The warmth of community, or the fire of commitment.  
These we carry in our hearts until we are together again.

### **Closing Song**

Go now in peace, go now in peace.  
May the spirit of God (love) surround you  
Everywhere, everywhere you may go

# SESSION 1: Welcome and Covenant

## Session-at-a-Glance

<b>Welcome and Covenant</b>	20 minutes
<b>Orientation</b>	20 minutes
<b>Sharing Our Stories</b>	45 minutes
<b>The Professional, Politics and Power</b>	30 minutes
<b>Official Documents</b>	30 minutes
<b>Evaluations</b>	15 minutes
<b>Closing</b>	20 minutes

**Total Time: 3 hours**

## Goals

This session will:

- Orient the group to the module and share a covenant
- Use personal narratives to get acquainted
- Reframe the role that power and politics plays in the work of religious educators
- Emphasize the importance of clarity in official documents
- Identify criteria for effective supervision and evaluation.

## Learning Objectives

Participants will:

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

## Welcoming and Covenant (20 minutes)

### Materials

- Chalice, candle and matches or LED-battery operated candle
- Centering table with cloth
- Hymnbooks, *Singing the Living Tradition* and *Singing the Journey*, enough for participants to share and other worship resources
- Handout 1, Covenant
- Slides 1-2
- Newsprint and markers

### Preparation

- Arrange chairs chalice, and worship resources.
- Optional: Arrange for musical accompaniment or a participant to lead the singing.

### Description

Show the first slide and welcome participants. Invite them to sing Hymn 361, “Enter, Rejoice and Come In.” Light the chalice and 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 for the next (two days, week, etc.) 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 lead and administer religious education programs in our congregations. And we will begin at the very beginning, with who we are.*

Advance to slide 2 and invite each person to share their name, congregation and where it is located, their role, the size of the congregation and the number of children and youth they serve.

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, asking individuals to read the various parts of the covenant (go round the circle or use popcorn style) with everyone reading the response.

## **Orientation (20 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 2, Schedule, Goals, and Objectives, Handout 3, Preparation for Module Evaluation, Handout 4, Introduction to Renaissance and RE Credentialing and Handout 5, Reflection Questions
- Slides 3-4
- Supply of sticky notes for Parking Lot
- Easel, newsprint and markers
- Optional: Leader Resource 2, Energizers and basket to put them in
- Optional: Laptop and projector

### **Preparation**

- Arrange for someone on-site to be available to provide logistical details.
- Participants should have received handouts prior to the module; have a few extra copies available in case someone has forgotten theirs (or provide the link for participants to save a copy of their own).
- Prepare newsprint:
  - Parking Lot
  - Volunteer sign up for session openings/closings
- If using Energizers, cut apart and place in basket.

### **Description**

Invite the designated person on site to review 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.

Review the schedule of the module (Handout 2), adding times for breaks as needed. Point out the Collegial Consultation activity in Session 3 and ask participants to prepare for this ahead of time by identifying an issue or situation they are facing for which advice and counsel from colleagues would be helpful.

Referring to Handout 3 and slide 3, give a brief overview of the Renaissance program and RE Credentialing. Moving to Handout 4 and slide 4, explain that Renaissance module evaluations, for participants as well as leaders, are online. In order to receive credit for the module, it is the responsibility of the participant to submit the evaluation within one week after the module concludes. Optional: If you have a laptop and projector, show the [webpage with the online evaluation](#). The handout is provided for participants to take notes as the module progresses. Feedback about the site, lodging or food arrangements should be communicated to the module coordinator or on-site contact. If participants perceive a problem with facilitation or group dynamics, encourage them to speak directly to one of the leaders as soon as possible so that the situation can be remedied.

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 of each session for you to get started on the reflection questions and to address other issues or questions that come up for you during the session.*

Encourage participants to use their reflections for:

- a newsletter article (to keep their congregation informed 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 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”). Explain that this is where questions or issues not directly related to the session topic should be posted. At the end of each session, the leaders will check the parking lot and decide whether, how and when to address the questions
- 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 do readings, light the chalice, offer chalice lighting words or lead songs at the beginning or end of each session
- (optional) basket with energizers. Invite participants to offer “energy breaks” as needed, such as leading a song, some movement or stretching, etc.

## Sharing Our Stories (45 minutes)

### Materials

- Handout 6, Creating and Sharing Our Stories
- Slides 5-7

### Preparation

- Read through passages and select one.

### Description

Introduce this section by reading, or having a volunteer read, one of these brief passages:

From *Ceremony* by Leslie Marmon Silko.

“I will tell you something about stories, [he said], they aren’t just entertainment.

Don’t be fooled. They are all we have, you see...

You don’t have anything if you don’t have stories.”

or

Wherever a story comes from, whether it is a familiar myth or a private memory, the retelling exemplifies the making of a connection from one pattern to another: a potential translation in which narrative becomes parable and the once upon a time comes to

stand for some nascent truth. This approach applies to all the incidents of everyday life: the phrase in the newspaper, the endearing or infuriating game of a toddler, the misunderstanding at the office. Our species thinks in metaphors and learns through stories. —Mary Catherine Bateson

or

Their story, yours and mine -- it's what we all carry with us on this trip we take, and we owe it to each other to respect our stories and learn from them. —William Carlos Williams

or

We are lonesome animals. We spend all of our life trying to be less lonesome. One of our ancient methods is to tell a story begging the listener to say-and to feel- 'Yes, that is the way it is, or at least that is the way I feel it.' You're not as alone as you thought. — John Steinbeck

Say something like:

*We begin our session with stories because deciding what to share may lead to unexpected insights about who we are as religious educators. When we hear the stories of others, we may gain greater appreciation, a wider perspective, and a broader context in which to recognize how we are connected to those with whom we share this work.*

Explain that participants will create their story using a three part process, starting with an appreciative inquiry exercise, followed by time to reflect on the role mentors play in their story, and ending with a brief summary of how they came to the specific role they have now. Allow five minutes for each part of this process. Participants will weave together these three elements into a story that they are willing to share with others in five uninterrupted minutes.

### **1. Appreciative Inquiry (5 minutes)**

With slide 5, introduce the first element, appreciative inquiry. Appreciative inquiry is essentially the art and practice of asking questions...powerful questions. Self-assessment through these questions is an important part of growing professionally. Say something like:

*The traditional approach to assessment is to look at what is wrong or broken or weak. When we look for problems we find them and emphasize them and amplify them. In effect we get the answers to the questions we ask, “What’s wrong with me?”*

Appreciative Inquiry comes from a very different perspective – the perspective of strength and capacity. Ask participants to take the next few moments and reflect on the following questions and jot down the words and phrases that come to mind:

- What makes you effective in carrying out administrative responsibilities?
- What specific personal qualities have contributed to your success in administering a faith development program?

## **2. Mentors (5 minutes)**

Advance to slide 6 and invite one of the participants to read the following from Handout 1-5:

*Albert Schweitzer wrote in Memories of Childhood, “I do not believe that we can put into anyone ideas which are not in him already. As a rule there are in everyone all sorts of good ideas, ready like tinder. But much of this tinder catches fire, or catches it successfully, only when it meets some flame or spark from outside, from some other person. ...Thus we have each of us cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flames within us. If we had before us those who have thus been a blessing to us and could tell them how it came about, they would be amazed to learn what passed over from their life into ours.”*

Say something like:

*You are in a position of leadership and each of us has come to that role with a range of experience, different gifts, strengths and challenges. Nearly everyone who arrives at this place has in her or his narrative a story about a mentor or someone who has had an enormous influence on their development.*

Ask participants to take a few moments and think about those individuals who have been mentors, asking themselves:

- What was it that “passed over” from them into your life and has remained with you?
- What impact did that gift have on you professionally?

### **3. Path to Leadership (5 minutes)**

Advance to slide 7 and ask participants to think about and jot down the sequence of events that resulted in their present position.

Ask participants to take about five minutes to create a story by weaving together the responses from the previous three exercises. The story is one that they are willing and able to share in a small group in five uninterrupted minutes. When everyone has created their story, organize the participants in groups of three, making sure that individuals from the same congregation are in different groups. If one of the groups is larger, adjust the time to ensure that each person has five uninterrupted minutes to share their story.

Re-gather in the large group and invite responses to the following questions:

- Were there any surprises or unexpected insights from hearing another person's story?
- What general observations would you make about this process?

## **The Professional, Politics and Power (35 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 7, The Professional, Politics and Power
- Slide 8

### **Description**

Show slide 8 and ask participants to look at Handout 7, explaining that this section is intended to provide a new perspective on the use of these fundamentally important words: professional, administration, politics, and power. Say something like:

*People in religious education often think of themselves as being outside the realms of "politics" and "power." Accepting that being a DRE is a leadership role in a congregation is vitally important and enables you to best serve the congregation as a whole.*

*Accepting the power of this position and learning to work politically need not imply either strident aggressiveness or underhanded manipulation. Looking at these words from a slightly different perspective enables you to feel more comfortable and therefore more effective in your role.*

Begin a discussion of the words professional, administration, politics and power. Ask participants to share any thoughts or comments they had when reading the handout before the module. Referring to Handout 7, begin by asking how many participants are members of the Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA). Cover these points if they do not come up during the discussion.

**Professional:** What is the value of belonging to a professional organization? Point out the link to the Professional Guidelines and encourage participants to explore this further on their own.

**Administration:** The word *administration* comes from the same root word as *minister*, to serve. One out of many of the responsibilities of a religious education professional is administration. An administrator is one who plans, organizes, and manages the activities of an organization to accomplish its goals over the long run. Knowing the roots and definitions of these words can help us to understand this important role as an important element of this vital ministry.

**Politics:** The original definition of politics centers on public discourse and deliberation to achieve commonly agreed on goals by those with similar as well as diverse points of view. At its core, the word politics is neutral.

**Power:** There is a quiet power that comes from being comfortable in one's role as well as from holding the position. Acknowledging this power and learning to use it wisely is part of becoming an effective religious educator.

Ask the group:

- What impact might these new perspectives have on them in their work?

Next, ask participants to form groups of three with individuals from similar sized congregations or programs. Referring to slide 9 and the section on Handout 7... *If You Are the DRE*, ask the group to discuss the list and reflect on these questions:

- why might these items be included in this list related to “Professionals, Politics, and Power”?
- how are these items relevant to your particular situation?
- how might acting on these have the potential to lead to increased professionalism?
- are there other items you would add to the list?

## Official Documents (30 minutes)

### Materials

- Handout 8, Template for Memorandum of Agreement and Handout 9, Template for Half-Time Job Description
- Slide 10
- Optional: Laptop and projector

### Preparation

- Set up laptop and projector if using.

### Description

Lay leaders may make decisions about and create official documents based on their own personal experience in the corporate world, non-profits or other settings. They may be unaware of the importance of creating official documents for staff other than ordained ministers and may be unfamiliar with the resources from the UUA that illustrate or suggest best practices such as [\*The Search for Religious Education Leadership: Best Practices for UU Congregations\*](#) found on the UUA website (if you have a laptop and projector, navigate to the site).

Ask participants to take out the documents they brought with them (job description, contract or memorandum of agreement) as well as Handouts 8 and 9.

Allow a few minutes for participants to compare their contract or memorandum of agreement to the template. Say something like:

*A contract is a legally binding document. Both the congregation, represented by the Board, and the religious educator are ethically bound to abide by the conditions of this agreement. If the congregation is one in which the minister hires and fires, other criteria*

*may apply. A memorandum of agreement may or may not be legally binding; check the status in your state.*

Next, ask participants to compare their job description with the template on Handout 9. Say something like:

*While the job description is not a legally binding document, it is important that religious educators have such a document attached to the memorandum of agreement or contract.*

Ask participants to reflect for a few minutes and note for themselves possible changes that would strengthen their current documents.

## **Performance Evaluations (20 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 10, Guidelines for Evaluation
- Slide 11
- Newsprint and markers
- Optional: Laptop and projector

### **Preparation**

- Set up laptop and projector if using.

### **Description**

Referring to Handout 10, explain that an appropriate evaluation process is a forward-looking, positive effort to examine the planning and work of a congregation with the aim of identifying and praising areas of strength and developing strategies for improvement. Ideally, lay people and the professional staff collaborate in performing the work of the congregation. In an effort to deepen the mutuality of relationships and strengthen collaborative efforts, it is wise to examine the process and the partners including professional staff, congregational lay leaders, and the congregation's membership. [Assessing Our Leadership](#) is a valuable online tool for congregational assessment. If using a laptop and projector, navigate to the site. Suggest that

participants review it and share it with staff colleagues and appropriate lay leaders (such as the Board, a Personnel Committee, or a Committee on Ministry).

In most instances, the governance structure determines the reporting structure which in turn, impacts the evaluation process. Show slide 11 and ask participants to share the following information and record responses on newsprint:

- To whom does the DRE report in your congregation?

Say something like:

*There are several successful models for reporting and supervision in our congregations. If the parish minister is chief of staff or team leader, the congregation should expect that the staff will develop collegial and collaborative relationships as well clear guidelines about the parameters of the reporting relationship. The language in the contract or memorandum of agreement must reflect the kind of model the congregation wishes to promote. Because of the complexity of the relationship, it is **not** in the best interests of the religious educator to be supervised or unilaterally evaluated by the Religious Education Committee.*

Next, ask participants to think about the evaluation process in their congregation and raise their hands in response to these questions:

- Does your congregation have a clear process in place?
- Is the process actually followed?
- How many have had an individual evaluation (versus a program evaluation)?
- How many are reviewed annually? Semi-annually? Never?
- Was your most recent evaluation helpful in furthering your professional development?

Ask those who raised their hand for the last question to briefly share their experience.

Conclude the discussion by saying something like:

*There are many governance structures in our Association which determine reporting, accountability and evaluation. But no matter what the explicit structure is, it is ultimately best practice to make sure that authority and accountability are clear and well documented — in personnel policy manuals, in employment contracts, in job descriptions, in letters of agreement, and in some cases, in a congregation's by-laws.*

*These explicit, written agreements regarding authority and accountability in a congregation then become the basis for evaluation and assessing the ministries of the congregation. The more inclusive the process is, the more likely it is to get a holistic view of the accomplishments and the areas that may need improvement.*

## **Closing (20 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 4, Preparation for Module Evaluation and Handout 5, Reflection Questions
- Slide 12
- Hymnbooks, *Singing the Living Tradition* and *Singing the Journey*, enough for participants to share and other worship resources

### **Preparation**

- Identify a volunteer to lead a closing activity.

### **Description**

Review any questions that have been posted in the Parking Lot/Bike Rack and respond as appropriate. Ask if there are any closing thoughts about this session.

Show slide 12 and allow participants at least five minutes to reflect on the session using these questions found on Handout 5:

- Do the official documents and the evaluative process in place for me reflect best practices?
- What avenues are open to address the need for change in the process and the document?
- What do I understand about how my degree of professionalism is informed by my new understanding of politics and power?

Suggest that participants make notes about the session to prepare for the online evaluation. Remind them of the start time of the next session and suggest that they review Handouts 11-16 used in Session 2. Ask the designated individual/s to lead the closing song or activity.

# SESSION 2: The Religious Educator in the Congregation

## Session-at-a-Glance

Opening	5 minutes
The Congregational Dance	25 minutes
Covenants	30 minutes
Healthy Communication	25 minutes
Triangulation	20 minutes
Faith Development Portfolio	45 minutes
Closing	20 minutes

**Total Time: 3 hours**

## Goals

This session will:

- Introduce the metaphor of “the balcony view” to gain a perspective on the informal and formal structures in congregations
- Review congregational governance and polity
- Explore how a covenant works to clarify the role of the religious educator
- Explore guidelines for healthy communication and effective responses to triangulation
- Set administrative responsibilities in the context of the larger portfolio of the religious educator and provide tools to be a more effective administrator.

## Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- Create a visual representation of their congregational “dance floor”

- Share experiences related to governance and polity with colleagues from congregations of similar size
- Examine the possible effects of creating a covenant between the religious educator and the congregation
- Role play healthy communication and effective responses to negative triangulation
- Gain an understanding of the tasks required and how they spend their time.

## Opening (5 minutes)

### Materials

- Chalice, candle and matches or LED-battery operated candle
- Centering table with cloth
- Hymnbooks, *Singing the Living Tradition* and *Singing the Journey*, enough for participants to share and other worship resources

### Preparation

- Arrange worship table and distribute worship materials as needed.
- Review timing for the opening with the designated volunteer.

### Description

Welcome participants to Session 2 and invite the designated volunteer to lead a short opening. Briefly review the schedule for this session and make any needed announcements.

## The Congregational Dance (35 minutes)

### Materials

- Handout 11, Gaining Perspective
- Slides 13-14
- Diagrams or descriptions of governance brought by participants
- Drawing paper, markers, regular and colored pencils
- Newsprint

## Description

Explain that organizational leadership experts Heifetz and Linsky have used the metaphor of a dance to gain a better perspective on organizations. There is the view from the dance floor itself, as well as the view “from the balcony” where it’s possible to gain a different perspective on the complex relationships which are not always obvious from the middle of the dance floor. The purpose of the next exercise is to help participants get a clearer understanding of the formal and informal structures in the congregation and who their partners are in this “dance.”

Ask participants to sit comfortably, take a deep breath and close their eyes for a brief guided meditation, saying something like:

*Imagine that you are on a balcony overlooking your congregational “dance floor”. As you scan the dance, look for paid staff, members of committees, lay leaders, children, youth and adults...those with formal leadership roles, informal leaders, those with informal and formal power... notice how they are in relation and communicating...or not. Who is dancing every dance? Who are the wall flowers? Whose dance cards are full? Who is sitting out most of the dances? Who may not be dancing but is enjoying the music?*

Point out the drawing paper, markers and pencils, and invite participants to take about ten minutes to create a representation of what they saw on the congregational dance floor from their perspective from the balcony.

Re-gather in the large group and have participants put aside their drawings for a few minutes. Show slide 13 and ask participants to refer to Handout 11 and any notes they may have taken before the module. Introduce the notion that governance is the system by which a congregation exercises its authority. A congregation may use any system to govern itself; it may change systems frequently or entirely ignore the systems it claims as its own, but it will continue to exercise authority. Ask participants:

*What is the purpose of establishing a governance structure in a congregation?*

Record responses on newsprint and bring up these points if they are not mentioned:

- Provides a framework that insures all members are represented

- Allows for transfer of leadership with continuity
- Clarifies and justifies authority to take action
- Makes lines of authority clear and accessible to individuals inside and outside the congregation
- Adds transparency to decision making
- Protects leaders by establishing a basis for insuring their actions
- Enables the congregation to form a legal entity and apply for not-for-profit religious status (tax deductibility of pledges and other assets)
- Allows congregation to find insurance and establish financial accounts and credit.

Ask participants to identify the model of governance in place in their congregations as well as the size of the congregation. Record these on newsprint.

Share the information that in recent years, many congregations have adopted or more frequently adapted the Carver model of Policy Governance®, also used by the UUA Board of Trustees and district or regional boards. Governance is not one size fits all. Simply selecting elements identified with Policy Governance® without doing the necessary work of creating trust and understanding among the members of the congregation may result in a lack of clarity about supervision and reporting and perhaps a breakdown in the system built on an insufficiently strong and appropriate foundation. A “best practice” is for the Board to involve the congregation in the discernment and development process of any form of governance. For more information, suggest participants listen to the [“Drive time Essay” on governance](#).

Ask participants to describe their understanding of congregational polity, referring to Handout 11. What are the four key principles of congregational polity?

Finish the discussion of governance and polity by having participants form groups of three based on congregation size. Show slide 14 and invite them to share their representation of their “balcony view” and their governance model, answering the following questions:

- What are the similarities and differences between what you saw from the balcony such as the informal lines of communication, and the more formal structures that are in place in your congregation?

- How does your congregation regard the role of the UUA staff and the UUA Board as it relates to congregational polity?
- What impact does their stance have on you as a staff person?

## **Covenants (30 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 12, Creating Covenants
- Slide 15
- Newsprint and markers

### **Description**

Introduce the topic of covenants by saying something like:

*Governance is the framework or structure in which we do the work of being in religious community. The Cambridge Platform which provided for independence and defined polity also affirmed the importance of congregations coming together. We are all familiar with our Principles, the preface to which states, “We covenant to affirm and promote...” So it is too, that within the governance structure of our congregation we seek covenantal relationships. Engaging in the process of covenanting is useful in answering several important questions about the relationship of the religious educator, the congregation, the minister, and the Religious Education Committee. This may be a simple process of putting into words what everyone already agrees to, or it may illuminate difficult issues that need a structured process of resolution.*

The focus for this discussion is on covenants between the religious educator and the congregation and the congregational covenants of right relations; staff covenants will be covered in the next session.

Show slide 15 and ask participants:

*How many of you have a religious education covenant with your congregation?  
Is there anyone here who benefitted from the LREDA Grant program?*

Explain that a religious education covenant was one of the requirements of the LREDA Grant Program back in the late 1990's; congregations who engaged in that process reported an increased appreciation and understanding of the importance of religious education and the religious educators who were guiding their faith development programs. Invite several volunteers to share their experience with the covenanting process.

Then ask how many have a congregational covenant of right relationships? Ask a few volunteers to share their experience as you review Handout 12.

## **Healthy Communication (20 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 13, Healthy Communication
- Slide 16
- Newsprint and markers

### **Description**

Introduce this section with the quote from, saying something like:

*Do you remember the famous line from the Paul Newman classic, Cool Hand Luke - "What we got here is a failure to communicate"? Let's hope we never have to say or hear that infamous line!*

Modeling healthy communication is critical to being successful in our role as religious educators. Ask participants to review the guidelines for healthy communication on Handout 13 and any notes they took before the module. Advance to slide 16 and ask if there are other practices they would add to this list. Review both pages of this handout and record any additions on newsprint. As time allows, have participants share some examples of how they modeled healthy communication in their congregation.

## **Triangulation (20 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 14, Avoiding Negative Triangulation
- Administration as Leadership Module – Leader's Guide

- Slide 17
- Newsprint and markers

## **Description**

Ask participants to define the word “triangulation.” According to the dictionary, it’s most commonly used to express a situation in which one person will not communicate directly with another person, but will communicate with a third person, which can lead to the third person becoming part of the triangle. The concept originated in the study of dysfunctional family systems, but can describe behaviors in other systems as well, including work.

Point out that as with other words, triangulation is a neutral term; there can be situations that are definitely triangulation which have a positive purpose and often a positive outcome. Ask for examples of positive triangulation in a congregational or other setting.

More frequently however, triangulation in congregational setting is a negative experience. Advance to slide 17 and ask participants to pair up and share an experience they have had or know about that they would describe as negative or toxic triangulation. After both have shared, ask them to take five minutes each to role-play the situation; the guidelines on the handout may be useful in responding to triangulation:

1. Have you talked directly about this with the person?
2. If the answer is no, encourage the person to do that.
3. I feel uncomfortable talking about this with you but it seems important to you so I’d be happy to have the staff person in question get in touch with you.
4. If the person indicates a reluctance to speak directly to the person, encourage them to speak to someone from the Committee on Ministry
5. If the person is reluctant to do either of these things say something like: I can’t be helpful in solving the problem because our staff covenant prevents me from continuing the conversation. If you can find a way for you to convey your message so that the person in question can respond, it’s more likely that you can find a solution to the problem or address your concern.

# Faith Development Portfolio (45 minutes)

## Materials

- Handout 15, Faith Development Portfolio and Handout 16, Tasks for Areas of Responsibility
- Slide 18
- Leader Resource 3, Pie Chart Graphic (on newsprint if not using slides)
- Newsprint and markers
- Optional: Laptop and projector

## Preparation

- If you are using the laptop and projector, test the equipment.

## Description

Administering a program is one of the areas of responsibility of a religious educator within the larger Faith Development portfolio. No matter how part-time the job or how small the program, the congregation expects that things will be coordinated, organized and run smoothly. The amount of time DREs have for the other roles in their portfolio depends largely upon how well they understand administration and the management procedures that are a fundamental part of that role.

There is some risk in creating a hierarchy for the portfolios as each one is equally important to the congregation; this module focuses on providing tools to be a more effective administrator of the program. Recognize that there is an organizational component or administrative function connected with all the ministries within the congregation.

Review Handout 15 and the four major areas of responsibility (philosophical, educational, administrative, and theological) to make sure there is clarity on the distinctions between and among them. Ask participants what they would add to each category and record on newsprint.

Say something like:

*We often hear that religious educators wished there was more time for the creative parts of the job. Creativity takes many forms and the administrative ministry of religious education carries with it many opportunities for innovation. An effective administrator works with others to create structures or systems which work effectively.*

Invite participants to spend around five minutes to create a list of everything they do in a typical week – a full seven days. While there are times of the year that are more labor intensive than others, particularly around start up, holidays, special events or end of the year, for this exercise they should choose a more typical week.

After five minutes, ask participants to locate Handout 16 and have them place the items on their list in the appropriate area of responsibility.

Display slide 18. Remind participants that the blocks on the handout do not represent equal periods of time spent. There may be many more tasks listed in one of the areas of responsibility than another but that does not necessarily mean that the tasks take more time. Encourage participants to take this into consideration when making the proportional pie charts.

Ask participants to take a blank piece of paper and draw a circle on one side. Using their designation of areas of responsibility on Handout 16, have them create a pie chart that represents how much of their time is spent on each area in your portfolio. Label each one either P, E, A, or T for the headings of the columns on the handout. When they are finished, repeat the same exercise but this time allocate the time as the minister, RE Committee or congregation **assumes** they spend their time.

When they are done, lead a discussion about the exercise, asking:

- Were there any surprises for you in this activity?
- Are there any discrepancies among the areas?
- How would you like to change the way the pie is divided?
- What would it take to balance it?

Suggest that when they get back home, a good minister/RE Committee and DRE discussion might start with the pie chart exercise:

- How does the RE Committee spend its time?
- How could it spend it more creatively?

This is also useful for a youth group to get clarity on how they are balancing the different elements of youth programming.

Conclude this by saying something like:

*This exercise was included to raise your awareness about something that may be otherwise ignored - the possible difference between our perception of our roles and the way others may see them. It can also inspire motivation for appropriate changes in how you spend your time and in how you might educate others to see the reality of your responsibilities. Acknowledge the percentage of time spent on administration and understand that it is only one part of your entire portfolio.*

## **Closing (20 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 4, Preparation for Module Evaluation and Handout 5, Reflection Questions
- Slide 19
- Hymnbooks, *Singing the Living Tradition* and *Singing the Journey*, enough for participants to share

### **Preparation**

- Identify a volunteer to lead a closing activity.

### **Description**

Review any questions that have been posted in the Parking Lot/Bike Rack and respond as appropriate. Ask if there are any closing thoughts about this session.

Allow participants at least five minutes to reflect on the session using these questions on slide 19:

- What are the implications of where I am in the congregational dance from the vantage point of the balcony?
- What are the implications of the governance model and congregational polity on me as the religious education professional?
- As a result of this session, what new understanding do I have about my administrative role in the larger portfolio I hold and my place in the congregational dance?

Suggest that participants make notes about the session to prepare for the online evaluation. Remind them of the start time of the next session and suggest that they review Handouts 17-19 used in Session 3. Remind participants to prepare for the Collegial Consultation by identifying an issue or situation they are facing for which advice and counsel from colleagues would be helpful.

Ask the designated individual/s to lead the closing song or activity.

# SESSION 3: Partners in Faith Development

## Session-at-a-Glance

Opening	5 minutes
The Staff Team	35 minutes
Role of Committees on Ministry	10 minutes
The Religious Education Committee	50 minutes
Collegial Consultation	60 minutes
Closing	20 minutes

**Total Time: 3 hours**

## Goals

This session will:

- Highlight the importance of working collaboratively and being an empathic member of the staff team
- Discuss the importance of a Committee on Ministry and its role in the congregation
- Explore the responsibilities of the RE Committee
- Review a process for developing policies and procedures
- Introduce the “Collegial Consultation” process.

## Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- Engage in a staff team “triage” exercise
- Learn how to strengthen the role of and empower the members of the religious education committee
- Practice developing a policy or procedure
- Experience a problem solving strategy specific to the individual participant in the area of administration or management.

## Opening (5 minutes)

### Materials

- Chalice, candle and matches or LED-battery operated candle
- Centering table with cloth
- Hymnbooks, *Singing the Living Tradition* and *Singing the Journey*, enough for participants to share and other worship resources

### Preparation

- Arrange worship table and distribute worship materials as needed.
- Review timing for the opening with the designated volunteer.

### Description

Welcome participants to Session 3 and invite the designated volunteer to lead a short opening. Briefly review the schedule for this session and make any needed announcements.

## The Staff Team (35 minutes)

### Materials

- Leader Resource 4, Triage Cards
- Sticky notes
- Newsprint for each group
- Slide 20
- Handout 12, Creating Covenants from Session 2

### Preparation

- Cut apart the identity and response cards (create extras as needed for larger groups).  
Packets should contain 4 identity cards and 3 response cards for each group of 4.

### Description

In theory, the mission for staff teams is to promote Unitarian Universalism and nurture the next generation of Unitarian Universalists. Because of the variation in the ways congregations

govern themselves, there is no fixed idea of who comprises the leadership team of any particular congregation. Commonly it includes the parish minister, religious educator, administrator and depending on the circumstances, the music director. Regardless of the structure, it is to the advantage of each congregation to capitalize on the gifts of each member of the team. One of the important factors in developing a sense that “we’re in this together” is being empathic to the other members of the team.

#### **A. TRIAGE ACTIVITY (15 minutes)**

Introduce the next activity by asking participants to define triage. As needed, explain that triage is the task of Emergency Room staff team assessing patients who arrive in the emergency room to determine who should be seen by a staff person and in what order. Congregational staff teams may indeed have emergencies that have to be dealt with, and there is also triage needed to figure out how to respond to the questions, concerns or issues that come to one or another of the staff team. This activity will give participants the opportunity to practice “triage” as part of a staff team:

1. Divide into groups of four and hand out identity cards to each person: Parish Minister, Religious Educator, Administrator, and Music Director (assign duplicate identity cards for groups with more than four participants); direct participants **not** to reveal their identity to the others in the group.
2. Handout sticky notes to each group and ask participants to write five questions or concerns that are likely to come to the staff member whose identity they have been given; allow about three minutes for this.
3. Allow about one minute for participants to arrange their sticky notes randomly on a piece of newsprint or on a table.
4. When all the sticky notes have been arranged, direct participants to sort them into the four identity groups without talking. The group can continue to rearrange the notes until silent consensus has been reached; allow about three minutes.
5. Ask the participants to place their personal identity label at the top of the group of sticky notes most likely to come to them.

6. Give each group a set of response cards and ask participants to decide where each of the questions, issues or concerns should be placed; allow about five minutes.

Show slide 20 and lead a discussion with the larger group asking:

*What insights, if any, did you have into how the dynamics of a staff team might be changed or improved if there were opportunities to share around these kinds of issues?*

### **B. COVENANTS (10 minutes)**

While the governance model in a congregation may include a supervisory and/or reporting structure, the model does not preclude mutual accountability. Establishing a covenant among the members of the staff team is one way to define accountability within the staff team. It is important for a staff group to engage in a process that results in a document that states what the staff group will affirm and promote. Engaging in the process will increase the odds that the document will be successful in guiding the actions of all members. It is useful in answering several important questions about the relationship of the religious educator, the congregation, the minister, and the Religious Education Committee. This may be a simple process of putting into words what everyone already agrees to, or it may illuminate difficult issues that need a structured process of resolution.

Ask participants how many have a staff covenant. Invite a few volunteers to share their experience. Point out that the handout on creating covenants from the last session lists the elements of a strong covenant and guidelines for when and how to revisit the covenant. This same process can be used when a staff group is creating a covenant.

Examples of staff covenants can be found in the Reach list archives; search for “staff covenants”. Stress that while it may be interesting to see covenants created by others, *it is critical that those who are covenanting engage in the process together.*

### **C. REPORTING AND SUPERVISION (10 minutes)**

There are many practices around reporting and supervision that are employed by congregations. While there is no one “right” way, having the DRE report to the RE Committee should be avoided. The relationship between the religious educator and the RE Committee is at its best a collaborative one in which the roles are clearly defined, regularly reviewed, and Administration as Leadership Module – Leader’s Guide

modified as necessary, it is usually not in the best interests of the congregation to have the RE Committee supervise or unilaterally evaluate the religious educator. If the model of governance is one in which the parish minister is chief of staff or team leader, it is important to work at developing a relationship among the staff that is collegial so the language in the official documents should reflect the kind of working model the congregation wishes to promote. Ask participants to describe the reporting structure in their congregation and record on newsprint. If some of the following are not represented in the responses of the participants, suggest them as possibilities:

- Subcommittee of the Board
- Small group drawn from the Board, Personnel Committee and Religious Education committee
- Small group from the congregation appointed by the Board with nominees suggested by the religious educator and the Board
- Small group consisting of the parish minister, the chair of the religious education committee and a member of the Committee on Ministry

Whatever the explicit structure, authority and accountability must be clear and well documented — in personnel policy manuals, in employment contracts, in job descriptions, in letters of agreement, and in some cases, in congregational by-laws. These explicit, written agreements regarding authority and accountability in a congregation then become the basis for evaluation and assessing the ministries of the congregation.

## **Role of Committee on Ministry (10 minutes)**

### **Description**

Many congregations have an established practice of forming Committees on Ministerial Relations or DRE Relations. While both of these were designed with the best of intentions to act as sounding boards or advocates for professional staff, a more current practice is to establish a Committee on Ministry designed to keep in mind the mission of the entire congregation. Those who are appointed or elected to this important committee are expected to keep the “big picture” in mind and not advocate for a specific program or staff person. More

information can be found in the document [Assessing Our Leadership](#) or in [The Congregational Handbook](#), both available on the UUA website.

Ask participants what group or groups fulfill this function in their congregation and allow a few minutes for discussion.

## **The Religious Education Committee (60 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 17, Responsibilities of the RE Committee Checklist, and Handout 18, Developing Policies and Procedures

### **Description**

There are different ways to structure the volunteer groups that are responsible for faith development. Whatever the structure in the congregation, there are core responsibilities that lead to effective programming for children, youth, and adults, and in making the best use of space, resources, and personnel.

The Committee should be composed of at least three members in the smallest fellowship; as the program grows, the Committee should be larger. At some point, usually in mid to large congregations, it becomes more effective to operate as a council of sub-groups, each charged with a portion of the total task. It is wise to have rotating three-year terms to provide continuity for the program and to avoid the necessity of rebuilding the Committee each year. The size of the Religious Education Committee is determined not only by the number of people necessary to carry out the various tasks, but also by the richness of human resources necessary to build a strong program for all. Ideally, the Committee will represent the diversity of the total fellowship/congregation.

### **A. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMITTEE (25 minutes)**

Invite the participants to locate Handout 17 and any notes they may have taken before the module. In order to keep this section moving along, you may wish to alternate going over each of the sections, or ask volunteers to help out. The purpose is not to share individual answers to the questions but rather to make sure that the participants have an opportunity to ask clarifying questions.

questions. In particular, point out those areas that may require having policies and procedures in place.

Say something like:

*Depending on the size of your existing committee, their current responsibilities, and the bylaws which govern the congregation, you may find that there are many more areas of responsibility on this handout than could possibly be covered by your REC. However, doing this review and sharing it provides the opportunity for the committee to give some consideration to these questions as part of a visioning process or as part of an annual review. You may be serving a congregation that is involved in transition and it may be trying to go along with an outmoded organizational pattern that could be improved if it stepped back and looked at these questions.*

After reviewing the last area, Nurture of the Committee, share this reading:

*Committees are groups, not individuals, and our faith is that interpersonal exchange and shared responsibility not only generates better decisions for our group and lightens the load, but is also more rewarding personally as members spark each other with commitment and enthusiasm. It means the committee must meet regularly for this to happen at least once monthly. Regular meetings are essential to plan, perform, and evaluate, yes; but more than that, the meetings provide the opportunity for the “profound” aspect to emerge.*

*When people work together regularly in a fellowship setting that encourages them not only to get the job done but also to care about each other, then the religious--rather than simply the housekeeping--dimensions become manifest. And when the committees take on personal as well as business concerns, and engage in priority setting, then the religious process of identifying what is worthy--what we as people need from our congregation or fellowship--humanizes a task-oriented committee into a group religious adventure. It is then that we transform the committees from mere engines of duties into a profoundly human dance.*

From *The Profound Committee* by Vern Barnet

## **B. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (20 minutes)**

Invite the group to brainstorm a list of areas around which the RE Committee should develop policies and record on newsprint. Then select one of the areas for which a policy is needed and quickly go through the process on Handout 18 to clarify how the work can be distributed and completed.

## **C. FINANCIALS (15 minutes)**

Ask participants to take out the financial documents they brought with them. Say something like this:

*There is an important principle around finances. Our congregations and its ministries are better served if a budget is driven by priorities rather than waiting to see what comes in during the annual canvass and then distributing it.*

Break into small groups based on size of congregation. Ask participants to review the questions in the “Financials” section of Handout 17 and share their experiences with each other.

Re-gather in the larger group and invite questions or comments that came up in the small groups. Offer these key points in closing:

- the operating budget for the faith development program, approved by the Board and voted on by the congregation, should provide sufficient funds to run the program
- the RE Committee should not be responsible for raising funds to cover operating expenses. Fundraising may be appropriately undertaken for special projects, social justice, outreach or service trips by the youth group and members of the congregation, but the faith development program should be fully funded by the congregation
- the compensation for the religious education staff should not be part of the RE program budget.

## **Collegial Consultation (60 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 19, Process for Collegial Consultation.

## **Description**

Introduce the consultation activity by saying something like:

*It is a rare religious professional who does not experience a difficult situation or thorny problem for which the advice and counsel of a colleague is useful. In the first session, we invited you to be thinking of situation facing you that might benefit from the insights, advice and counsel of others to help you gain a better or different perspective to find a solution. Before we engage in this consultation, please take a few moments to write a succinct description that you can read to the others in your small group so that your consultants understand what it is you need in order to come to a workable solution or approach to the problem or issue.*

Remind the participants that this is not to be an opportunity to whine or gripe but a chance to come up with creative solutions or strategies. After everyone has finished writing their issue, review the process using Handout 19.

Form groups of three and make sure that each group has a watch or other device to time each section and to take breaks as appropriate during the exercise. Be sure representatives from the same congregation are in different groups; if appropriate, consider size of congregation when forming groups.

Ask for any questions before consultations begin; remind groups that the total time for the consultation is 45 minutes.

When the consultations are complete, re-gather the larger group and spend about ten minutes discussing the exercise. Invite comments about the value of the process and/or how this process could be used in their own congregation.

## **Closing (20 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 4, Preparation for Module Evaluation and Handout 5, Reflection Questions
- Slide 21

- Hymnbooks, *Singing the Living Tradition* and *Singing the Journey*, enough for participants to share

## **Preparation**

- Identify a volunteer to lead a closing activity.

## **Description**

Review any questions that have been posted in the Parking Lot/Bike Rack and respond as appropriate. Ask if there are any closing thoughts about this session.

Allow participants at least five minutes to reflect on the session using these questions on slide 21:

- What gifts do I bring that contribute to the effective collaboration of the staff group? If there are impediments to creating a collegial environment, what steps seem reasonable in addressing this issue?
- To what extent is the Religious Education Committee responsible for the program? How does their level of ownership affect my work? What strategies do I want to employ to increase their level of ownership if that is needed?
- How useful was the problem solving strategy and are there ways it can be used with groups and committees in my congregation?

Suggest that participants make notes about the session to prepare for the online evaluation. Remind them of the start time of the next session and suggest that they review Handouts 20-30 used in Session 4.

Ask the designated individual/s to lead the closing song or activity.

# SESSION 4: Management Skills

## Session-at-a-Glance

Opening	5 minutes
Volunteer Management	50 minutes
Risk Management	20 minutes
Conflict Management	45 minutes
Decision Making	40 minutes
Closing	20 minutes

**Total Time: 3 hours**

## Goals

This session will:

- Appreciate the role of good management skills in the area of administration
- Explore ways to approach the orientation, support, recruitment and recognition of volunteers
- Survey the steps needed to manage risk in the faith development program
- Understand the importance of normalizing conflict and using conflict management techniques
- Learn about various approaches to decision making and their relative effectiveness.

## Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- Appreciate the role of good management skills in the area of administration
- Explore ways to approach the orientation, support, recruitment and recognition of volunteers
- Practice developing policies around conflict management and complete a self-assessment

- Engage in an approach to decision making and teach others the approach.

## **Opening (5 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Chalice, candle and matches or LED-battery operated candle
- Centering table with cloth
- Hymnbooks, *Singing the Living Tradition* and *Singing the Journey*, enough for participants to share and other worship resources

### **Preparation**

- Arrange worship table and distribute worship materials as needed.
- Review timing for the opening with the designated volunteer.

### **Description**

Welcome participants to Session 4 and invite the designated volunteer to lead a short opening. Briefly review the schedule for this session and make any needed announcements.

## **Volunteer Management (50 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 20, Strategies for Recruitment, Handout 21, Orientation and Support, and Handout, 22 Recognition and Appreciation
- Slide 22
- Rope (75 ft) and eye coverings

### **Preparation**

- Locate an appropriate space for the Polygon activity (preferably outdoors).

## Description

### A. POLYGON ACTIVITY

Lead the group in the Polygon activity which should be limited to 20 minutes including getting to and from the site you choose if you are able to go outdoors:

Divide participants into two groups; the first group (group A) will do the activity while the second group (group B) observes. Ask group A to form a circle and close their eyes; offer eye coverings for those who prefer. Give them a rope approximately 75 feet long with both ends tied together and direct group A to form a perfect square, triangle, rectangle (whichever you choose). They must keep their eyes closed at all times, keep at least one hand on the rope, and will have five minutes to complete the task. When they believe the task is accomplished or when time is called, they are to stand in position and open their eyes. Ask the groups to change places, and allow group B a few minutes to discuss strategy before they try the activity to see if they do any better.

Re-gather in the large group and ask participants:

- What do you think was the purpose of this activity?
- What advantage did the second group have?
- What are the implications of this exercise for your staff situation?

Introduce the topic of management by saying something like:

*Management is a function that must be exercised in any organization; leadership is the relationship that can energize a relationship. Religious education professionals are responsible for both functions but it is foolhardy to believe that you can accomplish them on your own. Approaching the management of volunteers, risk and conflict as a team effort not only safeguards the boundaries of the religious educator but also enriches the religious and spiritual development of our children and youth by the range of skills, aptitudes and qualities found when two or more are working together toward the same goals.*

A large part of managing a religious education program is spent on basic tasks related to the management of volunteers. There is no one best way to recruit, orient, support and recognize

volunteers. It is a good idea to consider whether the process in place in the congregation is a coherent one that has the potential to create a culture of active participation by a wide range of adults as well as youth in the congregation. Remind participants that there is another Renaissance module called Teacher Development that goes into this topic in greater detail.

## **B. RECRUITMENT (10 minutes)**

Read (or ask a volunteer to read) “A Treatise on Higher Education” which was found in one of the NYC daily papers, written in response to an announcement about the course of study in one of the colleges of the University of Chicago:

*One time the animals had a school. The curriculum consisted of running, climbing, flying, and swimming, and all of the animals had to take all of the subjects. The duck was good in swimming; better, in fact, than his instructor, and he made passing grades in flying, but he was practically hopeless in running. Because he was so low in this subject he was made to stay after school and drop his swimming class in order to practice running. He kept this up until he was only average in swimming, but average was passing, so nobody worried about that but the duck. The eagle, considered a problem pupil, was disciplined severely. He beat all the others to the top of the tree in climbing class, but he always used his own method of getting there. The Rabbit started at the top of his class in running, but he had a nervous breakdown and had to drop out of school on account of so much make-up work in swimming. The Squirrel led the climbing class, but his teacher made him start his flying from the ground up instead of from the top down and he developed charley horses from over exertion on the take-off and began getting C's in climbing and D's in running. The practical Prairie dogs apprenticed their offspring to the badgers when the school authorities refused to add digging to the curriculum. At the end of the year, an abnormal eel that could swim well, and run, climb, and fly a little was made valedictorian.*

Discuss in the larger group what relevance this story might have for managing the recruitment of volunteers. Is there relevance for other areas?

An important point to communicate to the congregation is that volunteering is the responsibility of the whole congregation, not just parents and guardians of children and youth. Since there is no one best practice for recruiting, ask participants to share a recruiting technique that has been particularly successful for them. Ask for a volunteer to take notes and email to all participants.

After sharing some successful techniques, ask the participants whether there are any common elements in those that have been mentioned. Have participants take out Handout 19 and any notes they might have taken before the module. What else would they add to this list?

### **C. ORIENTATION AND SUPPORT (10 minutes)**

Many adults who come to our congregations have not been part of a faith community since they were children; they have had limited experience with what it means to be an adult in a congregation. Acknowledging this, it is helpful to provide an opportunity to clarify their religious and spiritual views and understand the responsibilities of being a member of a religious community before they volunteer. While there can be enormous reward in teaching, volunteers need to be nourished and fed first before they engage with children and youth. This requires the collaboration of many entities within the congregation with the active involvement of the DRE or faith development director.

Have participants form small groups based on size of congregation and invite them to discuss the questions on Handout 21. These may help each participant determine whether it is possible to create an orientation process for newcomers that will provide a foundation for volunteering or whether this should be a collaborative effort among the parish minister, the religious educator and the group responsible for welcoming newcomers.

Each congregation has a different support system in place and yet it is likely that there will be some elements in common at the core. In the larger group, ask participants:

*What are some of the critical elements of a support system for those who volunteer in the faith development program?*

As time allows, ask the small groups to share some of the support strategies that have effective for them.

## **D. RECOGNITION AND APPRECIATION (10 minutes)**

Recognizing and appreciating the faith development volunteers may be something that the congregation expects to happen each year in some public way. It may be that because there are volunteers serving in other program and service areas, the expectation is that it be a more private event. The issue of recognition and appreciation must be viewed in the context of congregational culture. Display slide 22 and ask participants to take out Handout 22 and any notes they may have taken before the module and ask the group:

- What are the ways that your congregations publicly recognize the faith development volunteers?
- What are the more private ways to recognize and appreciate faith development volunteers?

If possible, have a volunteer take notes and email a list of the ideas shared to all participants.

Remind participants that the Teacher Development Renaissance module goes into greater depth about volunteers.

## **Risk Management (20 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 23, Risk Management

### **Description**

Introduce the topic of risk management saying something like:

*Dealing with the most vulnerable of our populations (children who are not verbal) and with groups of children and youth can place us in risky situations. While risk management is the responsibility of the entire congregation, we must do what we can within the parameters of our responsibility to be proactive in creating policies rather than waiting to react to a crisis.*

There are a number of resources that are available to help congregations create policies to protect children, youth and adults. [Balancing Acts](#) is a manual written by Rev. Deborah Haffner available on the UUA website. The [Safe Congregation Handbook](#) is also available online or can be purchased from the UUA bookstore. More resources are available on the UUA website

at [www.uua.org/safe](http://www.uua.org/safe), and [free safety resources are available from Church Mutual Insurance Company](#).

Ask participants to look at Handout 23 and any notes that may have taken before the module. Explain that the purpose in reviewing the handout together is not to answer all the questions but to make them aware of the areas of concern that have been identified. The goal is to raise awareness and go back to the congregation and share these questions. Invite individuals to briefly share their own experiences.

## **Conflict Management (45 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handouts 24, Cash Register Story Questions, Handout 25, Guidelines for Right Relations, and Handout 26, Conflict Continuum
- Slides 23-24
- Leader Resource 5, Cash Register Story Answers

### **Description**

#### **A. THE CASH REGISTER STORY (15 minutes)**

Read “The Cash Register Story” below. Be sure to explain that you will read it only once and will not answer any questions.

*A businessman had just turned off the lights in the store when a man appeared and demanded money. The owner opened a cash register. The contents of the cash register were scooped up, and the man sped away. A member of the police force was notified promptly.*

Invite participants to find Handout 24 Cash Register Story Questions and allow one minute for participants to quickly answer the questions individually. Then, form small groups of three or four and give them five minutes to come up with a team answer.

Reveal the correct answers found on Leader Resource 5. Show slide 23 and ask the group:

- What is the relevance of this story to the topic of conflict?
- What was it that seemed to cause any conflict that surfaced within your small group?

## **B. CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION (20 minutes)**

An important element in conflict resolution and normalization is complete and accurate communication; an important role for the religious professional is to create policies around communication. Ask participants to name the congregational issues around which they have already created policies or guidelines and record these on newsprint.

Say something like:

*By creating policies in advance you present the assumption that conflict is an ongoing and very normal part of congregational life. Visitors and members who are informed about these policies or guidelines will know what the expectations are in these areas. Using the Purposes and Principles to create conflict management and resolution guidelines may give you a sense of what it means to use UU values as the foundation for your work.*

Have the participants form small groups, if possible, with people they have not yet worked with. Explain that they will have approximately 15 minutes to begin the process of developing policies around conflict. Direct the groups to review Handout 25 together and check items that contain language from which you might write policies or guidelines for managing and resolving conflict. For example, using the first principle we could begin with, “Because we value the inherent worth and dignity of each person, we will...” What follows should express concrete actions that are clear, concise and unambiguous.

When the groups have finished, invite them to look at the example at the bottom of the handout where this strategy is used with children and youth. In some cases, the religious educator has initiated this process before the adults have dealt with the issue for adults.

## **C. CONFLICT CONTINUUM (5 minutes)**

Introduce the Conflict Continuum by reminding participants that as religious leaders in congregations, it is imperative that we are aware of how we each contribute to the resolution or

escalation of conflict that may arise. Ask participants take a few minutes to complete the Conflict Continuum on Handout 26.

When everyone is finished invite a few comments on the exercise and any insights they may have gained from it. Suggest that this may be a useful tool to use with the REC, the Board or other groups with which they work.

Form pairs and discuss these questions found on slide 24:

- What insights from the results of your responses on the Conflict Continuum might be of value in being more effective in conflict situations in the future?
- What value do you think there would be in sharing this exercise with other staff? With others in the congregation?

Re-gather in the larger group and say something like:

*Many times conflict may arise simply because we do not hear each other. Not just hear the words but actually listen to what the person is saying. What are some of the things we do instead of actually listening?*

Offer these if they are not mentioned by the group: interrupting, directing, bossing, threatening, moralizing, offering “shoulds,” “oughts,” or “fixes,” lecturing, judging, blaming, shaming, stereotyping, withdrawing, distracting, interrogating, humoring, diagnosing, denying...

Conclude this section on conflict management by saying something like:

*By being proactive about policies around conflict management and resolution, we will not prevent conflicts for they are inevitable; however, we can more predictably determine that conflicts are less likely to be sharply divisive if everyone is aware of the rules of engagement. Congregations become stronger and healthier to the extent that there are clear and widely publicized policies of what is expected of members and their relationships with one another and those who work on the congregation’s behalf.*

## Decision Making (40 minutes)

### Materials

- Handouts 27, How Decisions Are Made/Who Decides?, Handout 28, Cost Benefit Analysis, Handout 29, Control/Impact Analysis, and Handout 30, S.W.O.T Analysis
- Newsprint and markers

### Preparation

- If using a laptop and projector, test the equipment before the session.

### Description

Looking at Handout 27, spend about five minutes reviewing the various types of decision making participants may be faced with in their leadership role; invite responses from the participants related to the horizontal continuum of the handout. Make this point if not mentioned by participants:

- The amount of time, number of people involved, and sense of ownership among constituents all increase as one moves along the continuum toward consensus

After the review of the handout, have participants pair up and spend about five minutes reviewing the list of issues and deciding which method of decision making is most appropriate for each one. Re-gather in the larger group and ask if anyone has run into difficulty by using an inappropriate style of decision making. Invite a few participants to briefly share their experience.

Ask participants to take out Handouts 28-30 along with any notes that may have taken before the module. Break the larger group into three smaller groups and assign each group one of the approaches to decision making – cost/benefit analysis, control/impact analysis or S.W.O.T. analysis – and give each group a sheet of newsprint. Instruct the groups to spend ten minutes reviewing the appropriate handout to be sure that they understand the concept and then to use the model to analyze the designated scenario. Have the groups to designate a scribe and a reporter(s) who will explain the concept to the larger group. After ten minutes, allow each group no more than five minutes to present their scenario and analysis technique to the other

groups. After each group presents, invite participants to suggest other ways they might use this approach.

## **Closing (20 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 4, Preparation for Module Evaluation and Handout 5, Reflection Questions
- Slide 25
- Hymnbooks, *Singing the Living Tradition* and *Singing the Journey*, enough for participants to share

### **Preparation**

- Identify a volunteer to lead a closing activity.

### **Description**

Review any questions that have been posted in the Parking Lot/Bike Rack and respond as appropriate. Ask if there are any closing thoughts about this session.

Allow participants at least five minutes to reflect on the session using these questions found on slide 25:

- What insights did I gain from the results of the conflict continuum exercise?
- What changes would increase my overall effectiveness in normalizing and managing conflict?
- How can I achieve a balance between being an empowering manager and one whose volunteers see the faith development program as being so ambitious that they feel overburdened?

Suggest that participants make notes about the session to prepare for the online evaluation. Remind them of the start time of the next session and suggest that they review Handouts 31-35 used in Session 5.

Ask the designated individual/s to lead the closing song or activity.

# SESSION 5: Integration and Application

## Session-at-a-Glance

<b>Opening</b>	5 minutes
<b>Organizational Strategies</b>	45 minutes
<b>Creating Healthy Boundaries</b>	20 minutes
<b>Delegation</b>	30 minutes
<b>Planning for Action</b>	30 minutes
<b>Module Review</b>	30 minutes
<b>Closing</b>	20 minutes

**Total Time: 3 hours**

## Goals

This session will:

- Offer examples of organizational skills and uses of technology
- Consider the importance of creating healthy boundaries for religious education leaders
- Explore ways to improve and/or expand the use of technology
- Present the theory and teach the skills of delegation
- Review all elements of the module
- Provide an opportunity to integrate the elements of the module into an action plan.

## Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- Learn organizational skills and explore the use of technology
- Reflect on the importance of creating healthy boundaries
- Role play the skills of delegation
- Reinforce concepts by playing a game
- Develop a personal plan of action.

## Opening (5 minutes)

### Materials

- Chalice, candle and matches or LED-battery operated candle
- Centering table with cloth
- Hymnbooks, *Singing the Living Tradition* and *Singing the Journey*, enough for participants to share and other worship resources

### Preparation

- Arrange worship table and distribute worship materials as needed.
- Review timing for the opening with the designated volunteer.

### Description

Welcome participants to Session 5 and invite the designated volunteer to lead a short opening. Briefly review the schedule for this session and make any needed announcements.

## Organizational Strategies (45 minutes)

### Materials

- Handout 31, Organizational Strategies and Appendix: Online Resources
- Slides 26-27
- Newsprint and markers
- Optional: Mason jar, rocks, gravel, sand and pitcher of water
- Optional: Laptop with Internet access and projector

### Preparation

- If not using slides, list technology use questions on newsprint.

### Description

Ask participants to look at Handout 31 and any notes they may have taken before the module. Display slide 26 and review these points:

1. **To Do List** - A key factor in successfully administering and managing a program is the ability to set priorities, but that means knowing what it is that needs to be done. Ask participants how many have a “to-do” list? Invite those who feel they have a good system in place to share with the group. What form does their “to-do list” take? When and how do they review it? After several people have shared, make the point if it has not already come up that knowing what needs to be done is the first step in identifying priorities and managing time and resources effectively. Remind participants that groups like the RE Committee can also benefit from this practice.

2. **Establish priorities** - Review these three strategies:

**a. Eat That Frog**

Say something like:

*There’s an old saying to the effect that if you wake up in the morning and eat a live frog, you can go through the day knowing that the worst thing that can possibly happen to you that day has already passed. In other words, the day can only get better! In his book [Eat That Frog!](#), Brian Tracy suggests that you undertake the most difficult, least appealing task first thing so you know after that the worst has already happened. However, he also suggests that if you’re going to eat a frog, don’t spend too much time looking at it! That’s just a folksy way of saying don’t procrastinate by planning and strategizing about the job. Just do it! Otherwise, you are likely to talk yourself out of doing it at all and it will live to face another day.*

**b. Move Big Rocks**

Share this story with the group, or if possible, demonstrate it.

*This story has been circulating for many years about a time management expert who when speaking to a group of students used the following illustration. He pulled out a one gallon, wide mouthed Mason jar and set it on the table in front of him. Then he produced about a dozen fist sized rocks and carefully placed them, one at a time, into the jar. When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit inside, he asked if the jar was full and everyone answered "Yes." He said, "Really?" and reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel. He poured some gravel in and shook the jar so*

*that the pieces of gravel worked themselves down into the spaces between the big rocks. Then he asked the group once more if the jar was full. By this time the class was on to him. "Probably not," one of them answered. He reached under the table and brought out a bucket of sand. He started dumping the sand in the jar and it went into all of the spaces left between the rocks and the gravel. Once more he asked if the jar was full.*

*"No!" the class shouted. Then he grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour it in until the jar was filled to the brim. Then he looked at the class and asked, "What is the point of this illustration?"*

*Some offered suggestions. The truth this illustration teaches us is: If you don't put the big rocks in first, you'll never get them in at all." What are the 'big rocks' in your life? Whatever they are, remember to put these BIG ROCKS in first or you'll never get them in at all. If you sweat the little stuff (the gravel, the sand) then you'll fill your life with little things you worry about that don't really matter, and you'll never have the real quality time you need to spend on the big, important stuff (the big rocks).*

### **c. Covey Quadrants**

Steven Covey, author of the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, created a quadrant system for determining priorities. The four quadrants are: Important and Urgent, Important and Not Urgent, Not Important and Urgent, and Not Important and Not Urgent. Invite the group to offer suggestions of the kind of things that might be found in each of the quadrants.

### **3. Organizing Data**

Data takes many forms, most commonly paper, emails, and computer files; every one of these should have its place. Although we make every effort to reduce the amount of paper in our offices, it still exists. If you have a tower of paper somewhere in your office or on your desk, a simple system for handling it is like a RAFT that will help for smooth sailing to a better organized, clutter free workspace.

**R – READ it      A – ACT on it      F – FILE it away      T – TOSS it (recycle!)**

### **4. Using Technology More Effectively**

Invite the group to share the extent to which various technologies are used in their congregations and how faith development is served by that technology using the questions on slide 27 and at the bottom of Handout 31. Tell participants that the Appendix contains a collection of online resources gathered from many sources. If, during the discussion additional resources come up, record responses on newsprint and ask for a volunteer to email participants and the Renaissance Office at [renaissance@uua.org](mailto:renaissance@uua.org). If time permits and you have access to a laptop and internet, demonstrate some of the available technology. If this is not possible, share the resources with which you are familiar and ask for suggestions from the group. Remind the group that there are frequent threads and the archives from both the Reach list and the LREDA list as well as recommendations by regional and UUA staff.

## Healthy Boundaries (20 minutes)

### Materials

- Handout 32, LREDA Code of Professional Practices
- Newsprint and markers
- 1 x 18 strips of two-color paper such as [2-Color Duet paper](#) or white paper with second side shaded
- Roll of blue removable tape

### Preparation

- Cut or tear strips of tape for each participant (mobius strip activity).
- Practice the mobius strip exercise.

### Description

Read the piece *The Only True Possession* to the group:

*I walked with my friend, a Quaker, to the newsstand the other night and he bought a paper, thanking the newsman politely. The newsman didn't even acknowledge it.*

*"A sullen fellow, isn't he?" I commented.*

*"Oh, he's that way every night," shrugged my friend.*

*"Then why do you continue to be so polite to him?" I asked.*

*"Why not?" inquired my friend. "Why should I let him decide how I'm going to act?"*

*As I thought about this incident later, it occurred to me that the most important word was “act...” My friend acts toward people; most people react toward them. He has a sense of inner balance that is lacking in most of us; he knows who he is, what he stands for, how he should behave. He refuses to return incivility for incivility because he would no longer be in command of his own conduct.*

*... Nobody is unhappier than the perpetual reactor. His center of emotional gravity is not rooted within himself, where it belongs, but in the world outside him. His spiritual temperature is always being raised or lowered by the social climate around him, and he is a mere creature at the mercy of these elements. Praise gives him a feeling of euphoria, which is false. Because it confirms his own secretly shaky opinion of himself. Snubs hurt him, and the merest suspicion of unpopularity in any quarter arouses him to bitterness. A serenity of spirit cannot be achieved until we become the masters of our own actions and attitudes. To let another determine whether we shall be rude or gracious, elated or depressed is to relinquish control over our own personality, which is ultimately all we possess. The only true possession is self-possession.*

by Sidney Harris from *Pieces of Eight*

While it is not an easy task to keep the words and actions of others from determining our behavior, it is critical for those in roles of religious leadership. If we give the message that we can be so easily swayed by others, we lose credibility as models for our faith. Say:

*At Meadville Winter Institute in February of 2003, Parker Palmer shared the following insight: “Thomas Merton claimed that ‘there is in all things...a hidden wholeness.’ He said that Merton’s words can sound like wishful thinking. Afraid for our fragile inner life, we hide our true identities from each other. In the process, we become separated from our own souls; we end up living divided lives so far removed from the truth we hold within that we cannot know the integrity that comes from being fully what you are.”*

Palmer demonstrated what he called the “Quaker PowerPoint” with which he illustrated what it might be like if there were no division between the inner and outer self. It is also a useful way to think about how to create the healthy boundaries that are critical to being healthy religious

professionals. Palmer suggests that there may be as many as four phases to self- possession, integration of our inner and outer lives. Explain that to illustrate these four phases, each person needs a strip of paper and a small piece of blue tape.

Lead participants through the creation of a mobius strip with these instructions:

*Hold up the strip. Let the side facing away from you (describe the color or use shaded side) represent what you present to others. We may use among others, words like image, influence, impression to describe what we show to others. The other side of the strip (describe color or use non-shaded), the one facing you we can think of as that which represents your core - words like soul, true self, heart.*

Direct participants to hold the strip horizontal to the floor and say:

*There is no separation at all between our inner and outer life. That is why most of us love to be around infants and young children. In the presence of a new human being we are reminded of what wholeness looks like.*

Ask participants to hold the strip in front of them so it is vertical and say:

*Gradually we begin to create a barrier between our inner lives and the outer world. We form a kind of protective wall for the most fragile parts of ourselves in hopes of protecting them.*

Tell participants to a circle by taping the ends of the strip together and say:

*As we mature, we may acknowledge the lack of congruity. We feel some urgency to feel greater coherence so we create a bounded circle as a place we create to which we only welcome those with whom we feel safe and at ease. How many have you heard folks use the descriptor "like-minded" for a group or organization to which they belong? If we only feel safe among those who are just like us, it is less likely that we will truly be ourselves with those who are different. Consider the extent to which this may be true in your congregation.*

Direct participants to remove the piece of tape that creates the circle, hold the piece in front of them and give one end a half-twist and then rejoin the two ends. Say:

*When we feel more like who we really are and what we share is more congruent, we feel more comfortable with differences. This is not like Fowler's stages of faith development; rather it is a result of many factors that have little to do with age but rather more to do with being mindful of the goal to become more integrated. To illustrate this coherence, take one finger and trace what seems to be the outside surface of that strip. As your finger moves, you will find yourself on what seems to be the inside of the strip. Continue to trace what seems to be the inside surface of the strip you find yourself on what seems to be the outside of the strip.*

Allow a minute or so for reflection and then ask participants:

- *What resonance does this exercise have for you?*
- *What insights did you have as you went through the four phases?*

In addition to the personal work we do to maintain healthy boundaries, the professional organization for religious educators, LREDA (Liberal Religious Educators Association), holds all members to the high standard found in the LREDA Code of Professional Practices. Have individuals read each of the sections found in Handout 32.

## **Delegation (30 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 33, About Delegation and Handout 34, Delegation Role Play
- Slides 28-30
- Newsprint and markers
- Optional: Laptop with Internet access and projector

### **Preparation**

- If not using the slides, list the appropriate questions on newsprint.

### **Description**

Ask participants to rise in body or spirit and turn to the person on their left. (If there is an uneven number, have one of the leaders take part.) Explain that partners will engage in a brief

conversation about absolutely anything they choose. They may ask their partner questions or make statements, just like in any other conversation. However, there are two rules:

- Neither partner may utter any of these words: I, Me, My, Mine
- After one partner stops talking and it's the other person's turn to talk, you may not pause for more than three seconds.

If either partner speaks one of the banned words or pauses for more than three seconds, they should sit down. The person who "won" the challenge must then find someone else in the room that is left standing and enter into a conversation using the same rules. At the end of four minutes or so, call time and invite everyone to sit down.

Say something like:

*One of the important ways we maintain healthy boundaries is to step away from tasks that do not require the expertise or presence of a professional. Delegation involves passing responsibility for completion of work to other people. In this section, we'll examine the reasons you should delegate, how to delegate, failure to delegate and what should not be delegated.*

Show slide 28 and brainstorm in the large group on why we need to delegate; write answers on newsprint. Leaders may want to point out some of the following if not generated by the participants:

- Increases effective time management
- Taps other people's knowledge, skills, abilities, and characteristics
- Shares responsibilities
- Decreases costs
- Avoid becoming indispensable
- Help church members develop
- Reduces stress and burnout
- Increases pro-active leadership, decreases reactive responses.
- The No.1 reason that we as church staff and leaders need to delegate is that delegation helps increase the commitment to the RE program and the church. It is worth all the effort!

Say something like:

*We just created a list of the reasons why we should delegate and no one disagreed in theory. Why, then, in spite of all those advantages do you think so many religious educators are reluctant to delegate? What do you think might be some of the reasons for that?*

Invite answers from the group which may include some of the following:

- Lack of time:
- I really enjoy \_\_\_\_\_
- Fear of surrendering control
- Fear of becoming dispensable
- Volunteers are not up to the job

Ask participants to take out Handout 33 and review the “triple A” criteria for delegation, saying something like:

*When you come to grips with the fact that you actually can delegate, consider the “triple A” criteria for effective delegation – assignment, authority, accountability.*

Show slide 29 and ask participants to briefly share examples of something they successfully delegated that included the “three A’s.” Next, ask for volunteers to read each of the seven steps in effective delegation found on Handout 33.

Say something like:

*It is important to know what and how to delegate. It is also wise to consider those tasks and projects that should not be delegated.*

Advance to slide 30 and have the group brainstorm a list of what should not be delegated; have one of the leaders records the responses. Mention these if they do not come up:

- Tasks that include access to confidential information
- Managing conflict around the program

Ask participants to take out Handout 34, Delegation Role Play. Invite them to form pairs and select a scenario to role play an effective example of delegation. When all pairs are done, discuss the activity briefly in the larger group.

To close the section on delegation, read, or ask a volunteer to read, “Waitressing in the Sacred Kitchen” by Rev. Meg Barnhouse:

*I love for a waitress to call me “Hon.” It’s comforting. She doesn’t know me and I don’t know her, but we fit into well-worn, ancient categories: I am the Hungry One and she is the One Who Brings Nourishment from the Unseen Source. When I was younger, I worked as a waitress in Philadelphia and New Jersey. I learned useful things while serving food to strangers. I know how to rush around with my hands full, thinking about six things at the same time, which has stood me in good stead as the working mother of two small sons. I know that people are not at their best when they’re hungry. That knowledge helps me to understand world events. If the citizens of the world were well fed, we’d have fewer wars and less mayhem.*

*The most helpful thing I grasped while waitressing was that some tables are my responsibility and some are not. A waitress gets overwhelmed if she has too many tables and no one gets good service. In my life, I have certain things to take care of: my children, my relationships, my work, myself, and one or two causes. That’s it. Other things are not my table. I would go nuts if I tried to take care of everyone, if I tried to make everybody do the right thing. If I went through my life without ever learning to say, “Sorry, that’s not my table, Hon,” I would burn out and be no good to anybody. I need to have a surly waitress inside myself that I can call on when it seems everyone in the world is waving an empty coffee cup in my direction. My Inner Waitress looks over at them, keeping her six plates balanced and her feet moving, and says, “Sorry, Hon, not my table.”*

from *The Rock of Ages at the Taj Mahal: Unquiet Meditations*

## **Planning for Action (30 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 4, Preparation for Module Evaluation, Handout 5, Reflection Questions, and Handout 35, Planning for Action
- Slide 31

### **Description**

Review any questions that have been posted in the Parking Lot/Bike Rack and respond as appropriate.

Allow participants at least five minutes to reflect on this session using these questions on slide 31:

- If I were to delegate tasks from each of my major areas of responsibility, what might be the effect on the community and their commitment to faith development? What parts of my work do I absolutely want to keep for myself?
- What opportunities for being more creative in my administrative role are available at this time? What is needed to prepare those with whom I work for a change in this area?

Invite participants to spend a few minutes reviewing their notes and reflections from all sessions of the module, considering any adjustments or changes they would like to make as a result of what they experienced over the course of the module. Ask participants to spend about 15 minutes completing Handout 35 to develop and action plan.

## **Module Review (30 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Leader Resource 6, Game Cards
- Baskets or envelopes for cards
- Optional: Poster board or newsprint and markers

## **Preparation**

- Decide which game to play, or allow participants to choose.
- Print, cut and fold cards.

## **Description**

Tell participants that a great way to reinforce some of the important points from all sessions of the module is to play a game such as Charades or Pictionary. Review the instructions for the chosen game and randomly divide the group into two teams. Give each team a basket or envelope containing half of the game cards and allow five minutes for the team to select five cards to use. Collect the unused cards and place them back in the envelope. Flip a coin or have each team guess a number to determine who goes first. Each team gets two minutes to guess each of the cards, alternating between the teams.

After the game is over, review the overall goals of the module and offer one last opportunity for participants to ask questions.

## **Closing (25 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 4, Preparation for Module Evaluation and Handout 5, Reflection Questions
- Slide 32
- Leader Resource 7, Song Sheet and Readings and Handout 8, Sample Closing Worship
- Hymnbooks, *Singing the Living Tradition* and *Singing the Journey*, enough for participants to share

### **Preparation**

- Review Leader Resource 8 with co-leader and make changes or additions as needed. If desired, use Slide 32 for the order of service and add appropriate details.

## **Description**

Give participants about five minutes to make notes about the session and module to prepare for the online evaluation. Remind them that they have a week to complete the evaluation online and once submitted, they will receive a certificate of completion from the Renaissance Office within ten days. As needed, allow a short break to set up for the closing worship.

Lead a closing worship, making sure to affirm participants for their participation. As appropriate, include acknowledgement of those for whom this is the 5<sup>th</sup> module; you may also wish to affirm first timers as well as anyone who has completed all modules.