

**Adult Faith Development  
and Programming  
Renaissance Module**

**LEADER'S GUIDE**

By Gail Forsyth-Vail

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## About the Author

Gail Forsyth-Vail is the Director of Adult Programs at the Unitarian Universalist Association. She is a Credentialed Religious Educator, Master Level, who served congregations for 22 years before joining the UUA staff. She is the author of *Stories in Faith: Exploring Our Unitarian Universalist Principles and Sources through Wisdom Tales* and co-author of *Harvest the Power: Developing Lay Leadership and Wisdom from the Hebrew Scriptures*, as well as editor of the UUA blog *Cooking Together: Recipes for Immigration Justice Work*. She was the 2007 recipient of the Angus MacLean Award for Excellence in Religious Education.

## Acknowledgments

We gratefully acknowledge use, with permission, of the following materials:

Mark Hicks video on transformational learning from *A People So Bold*, produced by the UUA Multicultural Ministries Staff Group

*Catalyst Special Edition: Mosaic Makers*, published by the UUA Multicultural Ministries Staff Group

“The Wisdom Tree,” by Rev. Meg Barnhouse

## Introduction

Vibrant, growing congregations acknowledge that spiritual journeys last a lifetime, and offer intentional, structured opportunities for adults of all ages and in all life stages to grow in faith. This module explores faith development and programming for adult Unitarian Universalists. Participants will have ample opportunity to engage with theoretical information, to learn and practice skills, and to explore issues, questions, and models for developing and managing programs in UU congregations and groups. There will also be a chance to consider the changing cultural context, including non-traditional delivery formats, and to learn how to best use Tapestry of Faith and other adult programs.

This module is divided into six sessions, each 2 1/2 hours in length, a total of 15 hours of workshop time. You will need to adjust times to accommodate breaks. 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.

You may wish to add a brief opening ritual each time your group comes back together after a significant length of time (such as for a meal or overnight). Invite volunteers to lead those openings. Encourage volunteers to limit these openings to a single reading, a hymn, or something of similar duration.

You will need a computer, projector, speakers, and screen to display the module slides and video clips. 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.

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.

## Goals and Learning Objectives

The overall goals of this module are:

- To model good practices in adult faith development programming
- To present information about the characteristics of adult learners
- To demonstrate how learning theory can be applied to congregational life and adult faith development programming, and to allow participants to practice doing so
- To connect adult programming and faith development to building multiracial, multicultural, multigenerational beloved congregational community
- To consider ways in which adult programming balances opportunities both for mixing with those of other perspectives and life experiences and for huddling with those who share similar perspectives and life experiences
- To consider the contemporary cultural context and its impact on programming and congregational life, and to explore strategies for responding effectively
- To provide and demonstrate practical tools for planning and supporting adult programming in Unitarian Universalist faith communities
- To present the philosophy and approach of Tapestry of Faith, provide details about adult programming, and provide an opportunity to share experiences with Tapestry of Faith
- To offer opportunities for deeper exploration of big-picture issues in adult learning and programming.

Participants will:

- Explore the characteristics of adult learners and consider how to engage these characteristics in adult programming
- Consider how story can support transformative learning to build multiracial, multicultural, multigenerational beloved community

- Consider ways in which adult programming balances opportunities both for mixing with those of other perspectives and life experiences and for huddling with those who share similar perspectives and life experiences
- Learn about a variety of models for organizing adult faith development programming in a congregation, and explore practical tools for planning and supporting adult programming
- Learn and practice facilitation skills for working with adults
- Learn about the philosophy and approach of Tapestry of Faith and explore Tapestry of Faith adult programs
- Work with others to use theory to address pressing issues regarding adult faith development programming in congregations
- Create a support network with others responsible for adult faith development programming.

## Supplies and Resource Materials

- [Handouts](#)
- [PowerPoint Slides](#)
- Leader Resources 1, 2, 3, 4 (provided below)
- Computer, projector, and screen
- Chalice
- Candle and matches, or electric candle
- Centering table and cloth
- Copies of the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook *Singing the Living Tradition*, enough for participants to share
- Two pads of newsprint, preferably self-sticking
- Masking tape, if the newsprint is not self-sticking
- About a dozen black or blue markers
- Sticky notes or index cards, at least 3x3 inches
- Pens or pencils, one for each participant
- Blank journals, one for each participant (or ask participants to bring them)
- Lined paper
- Drawing paper
- Colored markers or pencils, several for each participant

## Readers for Participants

There are two Readers for this module, both from progressive Protestant Christian writers:

*Reframing Hope: Vital Ministry in a New Generation* (Alban Institute, 2010), by Carol Howard Merritt. This book addresses the changing cultural context and invites readers to consider the needs of the different generations of adults who are part of our faith communities. This book can be [purchased at the UUA bookstore](#). If time is limited, please concentrate on these excerpts:

- Chapter 1, “Redistributing Authority,” pp. 9-24
- Chapter 2, “Re-forming Community,” pp. 25-35
- Chapter 3, “Reexamining the Medium,” pp. 52-59
- Chapter 4, “Retelling the Message,” pp. 67-80
- Chapter 6, “Renewing Creation,” pp. 93-108
- Conclusion, pp. 129-38

[“Process, Not Program: Adult Faith Formation for Vital Congregations,”](#) by Diana Butler Bass (Congregational Resource Guide, 2010).

Responding to the readers, the module asks participants:

- How do your congregation’s adult programs take seriously the notion of sparking one another’s imaginations and sharing resources?
- Where do you see a longing for connection—with people and with a faith tradition—reflected in your congregation’s adult programming?
- How do we navigate the differences between digital and embodied communities?
- How does your adult programming reflect a multigenerational sensibility?



## List of Handouts

### Session 1

- 1 Schedule of Sessions and Topics
- 2 Introduction to Renaissance and RE Credentialing Programs
- 3 Preparation for Module Evaluation

### Session 2

- 4 Stories and the Human Brain
- 5 Meditation on Leftovers, from Spirit of Life, Workshop 7
- 6 Under Our Charge: The Utes and the Unitarians, from Faith like a River, Workshop 15
- 7 The Cost, from Resistance and Transformation, Workshop 11
- 8 A New Small Group, from The New UU, Workshop 6
- 9 Opening Scenario, from What We Choose, Workshop 8

### Session 3

- 10 Key Insights from *The Power of Stories* by Jacqueline J. Lewis
- 11 Special Edition of *Catalyst*
- 12 Reflection Questions
- 13 Generations Theory Summary
- 14 Program Mission

### Session 4

- 15 *Reframing Hope* Topics for Discussion
- 16 Considerations for Adult Programming
- 17 Sample Needs Assessment Survey

### Session 5

- 18 Considerations for Volunteer Facilitator Recruitment
- 19 Sharing the Floor: Some Strategies for Effective Group Facilitation
- 20 Putting It Together to Take Home Project Instructions

## List of PowerPoint Slides

### Session 1

- 1 Welcome!
- 2 Opening Worship
- 3 Introductions
- 4 Pressing Questions
- 5 Creating Our Covenant – definition
- 6 Creating Our Covenant
- 7 All Adults Are Learners
- 8 Perspectives
- 9 Perspectives on “Faith Development”
- 10 Adult Spiritual Growth
- 11 Shimmering Moments – personal reflection questions
- 12 Shimmering Moments – in congregations

### Session 2

- 13 Session 2: Transformative Learning through Stories
- 14 Video – The Relationship between Neural Pathways and Learning
- 15 Childhood Stories
- 16 Video – Transformative Learning Theory
- 17 Transformative Learning
- 18 Video – Space between the Logs
- 19 Space between the Logs
- 20 Stories in Adult Faith Development
- 21 Stories in Adult Faith Development – discussion prompts

### Session 3

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- 25 Mixing & Huddling

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- 35 Needs, Capacity, and Responsibility – discussion, continued
- 36 Needs, Capacity, and Responsibility – discussion, continued
- 37 Next Steps for Your Congregation’s Program

#### **Session 5**

- 38 Session 5: Practical Tools for Working with Volunteers
- 39 Tapestry of Faith – Introduction
- 40 Tapestry of Faith – Focus on outcomes
- 41 Tapestry of Faith – Outcomes
- 42 Tapestry of Faith – UU Identity
- 43 Tapestry of Faith – Sampling of Adult UU Identity Programs
- 44 Tapestry of Faith – Spiritual Development: The Longing of the Soul
- 45 Tapestry of Faith – Tidbits from Tapestry
- 46 Tapestry of Faith – Ethical Development: Becoming Our Best Selves
- 47 Tapestry of Faith – More Tapestry Tidbits
- 48 Tapestry of Faith – Faith Development: Growing in Faith Together
- 49 Tapestry of Faith – Faith Development: Growing in Faith Together,  
continued
- 50 Tapestry of Faith – Methodology: Stories
- 51 Tapestry of Faith – Samples of Stories
- 52 Tapestry of Faith – Methodology: Praxis
- 53 Tapestry of Faith – What’s Great about Tapestry?

- 54 Tapestry of Faith – What’s Great about Tapestry? continued
- 55 Tapestry of Faith – What’s Great about Tapestry? continued
- 56 Tapestry of Faith – What’s Great about Tapestry? continued
- 57 Tapestry of Faith – Children/youth/adults need
- 58 Tapestry of Faith – Children/youth/adult programs include
- 59 Tapestry of Faith – Other resources to check out
- 60 Tapestry of Faith Weaving the Fabric of our Faith
- 61 Volunteer Facilitator Recruitment, Training, and Support
- 62 Volunteer Facilitator Recruitment, Training, and Support – discussion
- 63 Challenging Facilitation Scenarios
- 64 Putting It Together to Take Home

**Session 6**

- 65 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 Welcome Letter
- 2 The Wisdom Tree
- 3 Challenging Facilitation Scenarios
- 4 Template for Closing Worship

## Leader Resource 1: Sample Welcome Letter

*For co-leaders or module organizer to send to participants upon receipt of registration, so that participants have ample time to prepare.*

Dear Adult Faith Development Module Participant,

We look forward to gathering at *[location]* for the Adult Faith Development Renaissance Module on *[your dates]*. This letter will let you know how to prepare in order to make the most of our time together.

There are two readers for this module, both by progressive Protestant Christian writers:

*Reframing Hope: Vital Ministry in a New Generation* (Alban Institute, 2010), by Carol Howard Merritt, which can be [purchased at the UUA bookstore](#). This book addresses the changing cultural context and invites you to consider the needs of the different generations of adults who are part of our faith communities. If you do not have time to read the entire book, please read these excerpts:

- Chapter 1, “Redistributing Authority,” pp. 9-24
- Chapter 2, “Re-forming Community,” pp. 25-35
- Chapter 3, “Reexamining the Medium,” pp. 52-59
- Chapter 4, “Retelling the Message,” pp. 67-80
- Chapter 6, “Renewing Creation,” pp. 93-108
- Conclusion, pp. 129-38

“Process, Not Program: Adult Faith Formation for Vital Congregations,” by Diana Butler Bass (*Congregational Resource Guide*, 2010), which can be found on [this module’s resource page](#).

The handouts for the module can also be found on the module's resource page. Familiarity with these handouts prior to the module will be very helpful. **Please print or save your own copy of all handouts.** Come prepared to take notes and to journal; whether you use paper or something electronic is up to you.

Please bring an object that symbolizes your role in your congregation, which we will use for our opening circle. If you have a musical instrument and would like to accompany our singing, please bring it! And feel free to bring resources related to adult faith development to share with colleagues.

Please note that we will be starting promptly at [*time*] and will end each session at [*time*]. Attendance for the full fifteen hours of the module and completion of the module evaluation are necessary for credit.

With anticipation,

[Co-leader]

[Co-leader]

## Leader Resource 2: The Wisdom Tree

*Written by Rev. Meg Barnhouse.*

I dragged myself to the early morning Theme Talk, even though it was the last day of a week at church camp and I was tired from staying up late singing with friends and dancing my fool head off. A panel of old-timers was talking about the early days of SUUSI—the Southeastern UU Summer Institute, but no one calls it that—which has now grown to nearly a thousand Unitarian Universalists coming together every July on the campus of Virginia Tech. Here is the story that stuck in my mind; Roger Comstock, the former district executive of our Thomas Jefferson District, is the one who told it.

There was a teacher who used to come to the camp every summer, a man who could transform himself into Thomas Jefferson, Ralph Waldo Emerson, or Theodore Parker in turn. He would bring his class to sit under a large oak tree out on the quad, and the conversation would range over history, philosophy, and theology. Summer after summer folks would look forward to that class, to sitting under what they came to call “the wisdom tree.” They would look forward to having the kind of conversations where you hear and even say things yourself that surprise and delight you.

One summer night, during the church camp, a storm came through. As the people slept, winds and rain whipped the campus. Lightning flashed and struck hard. It struck close. In the morning, daylight revealed the wisdom tree scattered in splinters on the ground.

As the grounds crew came to clear it away, church people came from every corner of the campus to circle round. One by one they asked to take a piece of the tree home with them.

This story struck me. It makes such a good picture of who we UUUs are. There is a broad and spreading wisdom available to us, which shows up in history, theology, poetry, music, art, scripture, conversation, nature, and ritual. Individuals have a spark of the Divine inside, an inner wisdom that, related to sanely, responsibly, and in community, will lead to truth and peace.

Sometimes the place where you used to find wisdom gets destroyed. People fail you, a church disappoints you, new information strips away your feeling about a scripture. It's as if your wisdom tree is lying in splinters.

In the aftermath of such a coming apart, we are tempted to take our piece of wisdom home with us and stick it in a place of honor, savoring and celebrating that one little piece of wisdom of which we can be sure, pulling it out whenever there is a new question, a new issue, acting as if that piece of wisdom is self-sustaining, and as if it is enough, on its own, to sustain us.

In acting like this, we are forgetting the crucial next step. What is needed is to bring our piece of the wisdom tree back together with the others, to stand together on the roots of what wisdom we have. We do have wisdom within us, but it is not enough to hold and savor just the wisdom we can grasp. Our piece needs to be added to the others.

It is difficult to walk a good spiritual path solo. It helps to be in relationship to a community where your wisdom can be made more whole, challenged, and where it can have fresh life breathed into it by touching it, again and again, to its roots, by bringing it together with the wisdom others carry with them. Then if lightning strikes, if all the places you used to go to learn are ruined, if all the things you used to know for sure are gone, just hold up your piece of wisdom. I'll be holding mine, and we'll find each other.



## Leader Resource 3: Challenging Facilitation Scenarios

### Instructions

Print this resource and cut along the dotted lines. Give each small group a different scenario.

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#### *Challenging Facilitation Scenario 1*

You are facilitating a series of workshops on themes in Unitarian Universalist history. One of the participants, a longtime member of the congregation, is very interested in the nineteenth-century abolitionists. He has a great deal to share, sometimes going on and on adding details that you did not plan to include in the workshop. At first, others were polite and interested, even encouraging him to share what he knows. Now he is monopolizing the workshop and interfering with your planned agenda. Body language tells you that other participants are annoyed, but no one speaks.

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#### *Challenging Facilitation Scenario 2*

One member of your small group is chronically late. When the group first began meeting, she would be only a couple of minutes late, and the group was happy to wait. Of late, she has been coming in later and later. She doesn't enter quietly, but rather interrupts conversation to explain why she is late and to ask for a summary of what has been said already. It is becoming a real problem, and others have started to come late, too. You can't really get started until about 20 minutes after the appointed time, which cuts the group time short.

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### *Challenging Facilitation Scenario 3*

One member of your spirituality program is in the middle of a major family crisis. He sometimes enters the room seething and can be very abrasive in his interactions with others until he calms down. When your group has a check-in, he shares more details about his family situation than others are comfortable hearing, and the group responds with either silence or perfunctory expressions of regret that he is going through this. The group is dominated by his personal situation, and people have begun emailing you with excuses for why they “can’t make it tonight.”

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### *Challenging Facilitation Scenario 4*

A well-loved member of your congregation has joined your ethics program. At first, all was well, as her stories and her sense of humor made people more comfortable. Of late, you have noticed that others are having trouble getting a word in edgewise. She holds the spotlight, telling story after story from her own life or from her many years in the congregation. For every ethical dilemma raised in the program, she has a story. Body language tells you that others are frustrated. You like her very much and don’t want to hurt her feelings or discount her many years of service to the congregation, but she seems oblivious to the fact that her way of being in the group is getting in the way of a productive and enjoyable experience for the rest.

## Leader Resource 4: Template for Closing Worship

### *Call to Worship*

“Come, Come, Whoever You Are,” Hymn 188 in *Singing the Living Tradition*

### *Opening Words and Chalice Lighting*

Reading 447, by Albert Schweitzer

### *A Time for Sharing Gratitude and Commitment*

Invite participants, as they are moved, to share a few words about what they are taking home with them from this experience. After each one speaks, lead the group in responding, “For your presence here and your work at home, we give thanks.”

### *Music*

“We Would Be One,” Hymn 318

### *Closing Words*

Reading 687, by John W. Brigham

# **SESSION 1: Overview of Adult Learning and Faith Development**

## **Session-at-a-Glance**

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>Opening Worship and Introductions</b>                       | 30 minutes |
| <b>Agenda Review and Logistics</b>                             | 10 minutes |
| <b>Pressing Questions</b>                                      | 5 minutes  |
| <b>Creating a Covenant</b>                                     | 15 minutes |
| <b>All Adults Are Learners</b>                                 | 10 minutes |
| <b>Perspectives on Adult Programming and Faith Development</b> | 35 minutes |
| <b>Adult Spiritual Growth</b>                                  | 45 minutes |

**Total Time: 2 1/2 hours**

## **Goals**

This session will:

- Introduce participants and leaders to one another
- Model a covenant process and invite participants to consider questions of disclosure and confidentiality
- Highlight the importance of adult faith development in our congregations and our movement
- Introduce the plan for the module.

## Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- Participate in creating a covenant
- Explore the characteristics of adult learners and how these characteristics can be considered in adult faith development programming
- Learn what is meant by adult faith formation, adult faith development, adult religious education, and adult programming
- Explore personal experiences and share ideas about spiritual growth as a form of adult learning.

## Opening Worship and Introductions (30 minutes)

### Materials

- Chalice
- Candle and matches, or electric candle
- Copies of *Singing the Living Tradition* for participants to share
- Centering table with cloth
- Slides 1-3, Welcome, Opening Worship, and Introductions

### Preparation

- Invite participants to bring an object that symbolizes their role in their congregation.
- Arrange chairs in a circle around the centering table and place the chalice on it.
- Place hymnbooks on chairs.
- Display Slide 1, Welcome.
- Optional: Arrange for musical accompaniment or a participant to lead the singing.

## **Description**

Welcome participants. Display Slide 2 and invite all to sing “Enter, Rejoice, and Come In,” Hymn 361. 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. Say:

*This group will become a learning community for the next [two days, week, or whatever is appropriate] and we 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, so that we can improve and energize adult programming, religious education, and spiritual development in our congregations. And we will begin at the very beginning, with who we are.*

Display Slide 3 and invite each person (beginning with one of the leaders) to share their name, their congregation and its location, and the object they brought to symbolize their role in the congregation. After each person speaks, invite them to place their object on the centering table. After all have spoken, invite participants to focus their attention on the table and to hold in their hearts and minds good wishes for each member of the group, and for the group as a learning community.

## **Agenda Review and Logistics (10 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Sticky notes for the Parking Lot
- Handout 1, Schedule of Sessions and Topics
- Handout 2, Introduction to Renaissance and RE Credentialing Programs
- Handout 3, Preparation for Module Evaluation

## Preparation

- Arrange for someone familiar with the site to be available to explain logistical details such as location of restrooms, arrangements for meals, etc.
- Have a few extra copies of the reader and handouts available in case someone has forgotten theirs.
- Prepare a sheet of newsprint for Parking Lot contributions.
- Prepare another sheet for volunteer sign-ups for session openings and closings.
- Decide when breaks will be taken, and post their times.
- Display resource materials, including any that participants have brought.

## Description

Invite the on-site contact to review information such as policies about moving furniture in the room and using tape on the walls, the locations of bathrooms, meal and snack times, Internet access, and any other important details.

Review the session schedule on Handout 1, adding times for breaks as needed.

Ask participants about their Renaissance Module experience. Is this module their first? Fifth? Tenth? Refer them to Handout 2 and briefly describe the Renaissance program and the credentialing process. Then, referring to Handout 3, explain that participants and leaders are to complete Renaissance Module evaluations online. In order to receive credit for the module, they must submit the evaluation within one week after the module concludes. If you have Internet access, show [the online evaluation form](#).

Invite participants to use Handout 3 to take notes as the module progresses. Ask them to give any feedback about the site, lodging, or food arrangements directly to the module coordinator or the on-site contact. Encourage them to speak directly to one of the leaders as soon as possible about any problem they

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perceive with facilitation or group dynamics, so that the situation can be remedied.

Identify other resources for this module, including:

- The Parking Lot (sometimes referred to as the Bike Rack). Indicate the posted piece of newsprint or other location where you wish to record Parking Lot items as they arise. Explain that this is where participants may post questions or issues not directly related to the session topic. Say that the leaders will check the Parking Lot periodically and decide whether, how, and when to address them.
- Resource tables. Invite participants to peruse them in their free time and to add any brochures, programs, or other materials they have brought to share.
- Newsprint on which volunteers can sign up to light or extinguish the chalice, offer chalice lighting words, or lead songs at the beginning or end of each session. Remind participants that they can find texts for these on [Worship Web](#) or in [the IIIUuminations app](#).

## **Pressing Questions (5 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Pens or pencils
- Sticky notes, several for each person
- Large foam board or section of wall for displaying notes
- Slide 4, Pressing Questions

### **Preparation**

- Use Handout 1 as a schedule for the module and plan breaks and mealtimes, as appropriate.



## Description

Distribute sticky notes and pens or pencils, and invite participants to consider what questions must be addressed in this module in order for it to meet their needs and expectations. Display Slide 4 and ask them to write these questions on sticky notes—one per note—for the leaders to use in their planning. Collect them.

## Creating a Covenant (15 minutes)

### Materials

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Slides 5 and 6, Creating Our Covenant (definition) and Creating Our Covenant (our request)

### Preparation

- For your own use, list the elements of covenant that you would like to suggest as the leader. You might include:
  - Start and end on time.
  - Practice respectful dialogue.
  - Honor diversity of opinion and approach.
  - If you desire confidentiality, ask for it.
  - Share the floor.
  - Learn something new.
- Write the title “Suggestions for Our Covenant” on blank newsprint and post.

### Description

Display Slide 5 and ask for a volunteer to read aloud:

*Our Unitarian Universalist tradition is covenantal, meaning that we agree. Unitarian Universalist lay leader Walter Herz offers this definition of a covenant: “the common understandings, agreements, and promises made, one to another, that define our mutual obligations and commitments*

*to each other as we try to live our faith and vision.” As we form our Unitarian Universalist learning community, let us establish our covenant, one with another.*

Invite participants to suggest understandings, agreements, and promises that will guide the group’s work. Display Slide 6 as a prompt. Write all suggestions on the posted piece of newsprint. Then add any items you wish from the list you prepared. Ask, “What agreements will we make about how we share information about our congregations? How will we treat congregational stories that are shared in this workshop?” Allow the discussion to continue for a few minutes. Remind participants that they are representatives of their congregation and invite them to consider agreeing to speak only of events, programs, or systems in their congregation, refraining from sharing unflattering stories about individuals. Invite them also to consider agreeing to check with anyone who shares background stories or information about their congregation before sharing it outside of this group. After all suggestions have been listed, ask participants if they have concerns about or difficulty agreeing to any item. Discuss those items and amend the covenant by consensus, as needed. Make the point that participants can use this process in all adult faith development activities in their congregations.

## **All Adults Are Learners (10 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Slide 7, All Adults Are Learners

### **Description**

Invite participants to consider the last time they learned how to do something. (Give examples such as how to text, how to make some kind of food, how to say something in an unfamiliar language, etc.) Show Slide 7, brainstorm a list of recent things participants have learned, and record them on newsprint. Ask what

the items have in common. Guide participants to the idea that adults are learning all the time, and that what they want to learn are things they perceive to be important to their lives. Invite participants to test that idea against their own experience and to offer any comments or observations. Say, “This module is about the adult learning that happens through intentional programming in our congregations.”

## **Perspectives on Adult Programming and Faith Development (35 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Slides 8 and 9, Perspectives and Perspectives on “Faith Development”

### **Preparation**

- If you are not using slides, write the following texts from Slides 8-9 on three pieces of newsprint, but do not post them yet:
  - “Spirituality” is an individual’s personal experience with the sacred, and with wonder, awe, mystery, and/or connection to the whole.
  - “Faith” is a sense of hope, trust, or being at home in the universe.
  - Unitarian Universalist faith is an informed a sense of being at home in the universe shaped by the theology, traditions, values, and principles of Unitarian Universalism. Faith development (sometimes called formation) involves an interplay of spiritual experience and a religious tradition (in our case, Unitarian Universalism).

### **Description**

Show Slide 8 and ask, “What is the language used in your congregation to describe programming for adults? Is it called ‘Adult RE,’ ‘Adult Spirituality,’ ‘Adult Programs,’ or something else?” Record responses on newsprint. Ask, “Does

what the program is called make a difference? Do different names imply different approaches?”

Using newsprint, brainstorm a list of goals for adult programming in a congregation. Lead a discussion using these questions:

- Why does your congregation offer adult programming? Where are the reasons for or goals of such programming articulated?
- Why do you think people come to adult programming in your congregation?

Suggested reasons may include intellectual growth, community and friendship, making the world a better place, leadership development, and spiritual growth.

Say, “Adults come to our faith communities for a variety of reasons. Our Unitarian Universalist congregations are faith communities where people can consider questions such as ‘How shall I live my life? What values do I hold, and what commitments will I make on the basis of those values? What gives my life meaning? What do I trust? How do I connect with that which is greater than myself?’ Our congregations offer opportunities for deep learning and formative experiences not likely to be found anywhere else.”

Display Slide 9 (or post the three pieces of newsprint, if you are not using slides) and point out the definitions of spirituality, faith, Unitarian Universalist faith, and faith development. Ask participants to consider these definitions as words like “faith” and “spirituality” are used in this module.

## **Adult Spiritual Growth (45 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Pens or pencils

- Participant journals
- Slides 10-12, Adult Spiritual Growth, Shimmering Moments (personal reflection questions), and Shimmering Moments (in congregations)

## Preparation

- If you are not using slides, write on newsprint and post:
  - What were the circumstances? What happened?
  - How did you know you had experienced spiritual growth, been changed, or deepened your sense of what it means to be human?
  - Did the spiritual growth or deepening happen in the moment, or did it take place over time?
- If you are not using slides, write on newsprint, but do not post:
  - How do shimmering moments happen in our congregations, and what can we do to nurture them?
- Optional: If participants are going to be writing or meeting where they cannot see the newsprint or slides, create a handout with these questions.

## Description

Display Slide 10 and share this quote from Elizabeth J. Tisdell, who coordinates the adult education doctoral program at Pennsylvania State University, Harrisburg:

*Life is full of ups and downs. Sometimes it's rather ordinary, at other times chaotic. Spirituality helps us see the extraordinary in the ordinary business of life, and spiritual experiences can create new order out of chaos, or jazz out of discord. Sharon Welch noted in her discussion of spirituality that the famous jazz pianist Mary Lou Williams would occasionally pause in mid-performance to make audiences more attentive: "Listen! This will heal you!" she would say. This admonition, no doubt, got people's attention and helped them listen in a whole new way. Significant spiritual experiences are like that.*

*Some people report having spiritual experiences all the time. But significant spiritual experiences of deep learning seem to happen only occasionally. Such experiences offer hope, healing, or affirmation, as if to say, just like Mary Lou Williams’s admonition to her audiences, “Listen! This will heal you! This will teach you something new.” They stand out as “shimmering moments” in our lives—moments that we often go back to with awe and wonder. The ongoing power of their “shimmer” endures as we continue to make meaning. These are often moments of significant learning that lead to continued development.*

Invite participants to recall a time when they experienced a “shimmering moment” or had an experience which truly changed them, deepening their sense of what it means to be human. Display Slide 11 and invite participants to spend five minutes journaling about their experience. After five minutes, invite participants to form groups of three, in which each person in turn will share their story, answering the posted questions. Allow 15 minutes for sharing.

Invite triads to join to make groups of six, and give each group a piece of newsprint and a marker. Show Slide 12 (or post the fourth piece of prepared newsprint) and invite the groups to list on the newsprint their comments, observations, and responses to the questions. Allow ten minutes, and then invite each group to briefly share the highlights of their discussion about spiritual growth and congregational life. Limit each group’s presentation to three or four minutes.

As time allows, encourage participants to take notes about the session on Handout 3, Preparation for Module Evaluation.

## **SESSION 2: Transformative Learning through Stories**

### **Session-at-a-Glance**

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>Stories and the Human Brain</b>                 | 40 minutes |
| <b>Transformative Learning</b>                     | 50 minutes |
| <b>Space between the Logs</b>                      | 20 minutes |
| <b>Stories in Adult Faith Development Programs</b> | 40 minutes |

**Total Time: 2 1/2 hours**

### **Goals**

This session will:

- Introduce two related theories of adult learning: narrative learning theory and transformational learning theory
- Demonstrate how these theories can be applied to congregational life and adult faith development programming, and allow participants to practice doing so
- Connect adult faith development to building multiracial, multicultural, and multigenerational beloved congregational community.

### **Learning Objectives**

Participants will:

- Gain an understanding of narrative learning theory and transformational learning theory
- Explore these theories using insights, images, and stories from leading theologians and religious educators

- Practice using Tapestry of Faith materials in adult contexts
- Apply the theories to adult faith development programming and congregational life
- Consider how story can support transformative learning to build multiracial, multicultural, multigenerational beloved community.

## **Stories and the Human Brain (40 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Computer, projector, and speakers
- Handout 4, Stories and the Human Brain
- Slides 13-15, Session 2, Video – [The Relationship between Neural Pathways and Learning](#), and Childhood Stories

### **Preparation**

- Display Slide 13, Session 2.
- Review and cue the video and test all equipment.

### **Description**

Welcome participants to Session 2 and ask them to take out their copy of Handout 4. Display Slide 14 and play the video, [The Relationship between Neural Pathways and Learning](#). Invite questions, comments, and observations.

Show Slide 15 and lead a discussion using these questions as guides:

- What are some of the stories you learned in childhood about what it means to be a successful person? A good person? What stories did you learn about interacting with others?
- In what ways were the stories you learned similar to those being presented by the culture at large?



- How do narratives you learned in childhood still shape your thinking? How might these narratives we each hold make it more difficult to build multicultural, multiracial, multigenerational beloved community?
- Have you had an experience which just did not fit into your existing narratives?

## **Transformative Learning (50 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Pens or pencils
- Participant journals
- Slides 16 and 17, Video – [Transformative Learning Theory](#) and Transformative Learning – journal prompts
- Computer, projector, and speakers

### **Preparation**

- Review the video and test the equipment.
- Prepare to share personal or professional examples and anecdotes of your own to supplement the slides. Some of the stories offered by the group in the previous activity may also illustrate transformative learning.
- If you are not using slides, write on newsprint and post:
  - Recall a time when you experienced discomfort or dissonance because new information did not fit your existing story. What were the circumstances? What did you do? What did you learn? Did your story change?

### **Description**

Display Slide 16, Video – [Transformative Learning Theory](#), and play the video, stopping for questions, comments, and observations as appropriate. Then display Slide 17 and invite participants to journal in response to the questions, explaining that they will share their reflections with others. Allow five minutes for

journaling, and then invite participants to form triads and share their reflections, allowing 15 minutes for sharing before inviting participants to return to the large group.

Lead the large group in a conversation that explores the ways in which transformative learning and narrative learning (learning from stories) are already part of congregational life in their congregations. How might those experiences be strengthened, supported, and lifted up?

## **Space between the Logs (20 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Markers or colored pencils
- Lined paper
- Drawing paper
- Participant journals
- Slides 18 and 19, Video – [Space between the Logs](#) and Space between the Logs – journal prompts
- Computer, projector, and speakers

### **Preparation**

- Review the video and test the equipment. Prepare to show the Mark Hicks segment (00:56 – 4:04).

### **Description**

Show the Mark Hicks's video, telling participants before you begin that Hicks is quoting the poem, "Fire," by Judy Brown, at the beginning of the segment. When it ends, show Slide 19 and invite participants to respond to the presentation's imagery of "space between the logs" through journaling, drawing, or writing poetry. Ask, "When have you experienced the space between the logs that

allows for transformation? When have you seen spaciousness that allows for transformation in your congregation?”

## **Stories in Adult Faith Development Programs (40 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 5, Meditation on Leftovers, from Spirit of Life, Workshop 7
- Handout 6, Under Our Charge: The Utes and the Unitarians, from Faith like a River, Workshop 15
- Handout 7, The Cost, from Resistance and Transformation, Workshop 11
- Handout 8, A New Small Group, from The New UU, Workshop 6
- Handout 9, Opening Scenario, from What We Choose, Workshop 8
- Slides 20 and 21, Stories in Adult Faith Development – group instructions and Stories in Adult Faith Development – discussion prompts

### **Preparation**

- Arrange for breakout spaces for small groups.

### **Description**

Display Slide 20 and ask participants to form groups of four or five. Give a different handout to each group and ask them to read the story and use the questions to discuss it. Invite them to notice how the questions connect the story with life experiences and invite people to grow their spirits and deepen their Unitarian Universalist faith.

Allow 25 minutes for this discussion. Regather the groups and show Slide 21.

Lead a discussion, asking:

- How did the questions connect the story with life experiences?

- How did the activities hold the possibility for growing in spirit, increasing your connection to Unitarian Universalist values, or deepening your faith?
- Did you experience what you might describe as transformative learning?  
Did your story about something change?

As time allows, encourage participants to take notes about the session on Handout 3, Preparation for Module Evaluation.

## **SESSION 3: Applying Theoretical Models to Faith Community Life and Programming**

### **Session-at-a-Glance**

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>Practicing Beloved Community</b>                            | 50 minutes |
| <b>Who Are the Adults in Our Congregations?</b>                | 10 minutes |
| <b>Mixing and Huddling</b>                                     | 25 minutes |
| <b>Journaling and Sharing</b>                                  | 10 minutes |
| <b>Generations Theory and Its Implications for Programming</b> | 30 minutes |
| <b>Program Mission</b>   | 25 minutes |

**Total Time: 2 1/2 hours**

### **Goals**

This session will:

- Demonstrate how theories of learning can be applied to congregational life and adult faith development programming, and allow participants to practice doing so
- Connect adult faith development to building multiracial, multicultural, multigenerational beloved congregational community
- Consider ways in which adult programming balances opportunities both for mixing with those of other perspectives and life experiences and for huddling with those who share similar perspectives and life experiences

- Present information about generations theory and its implications for adult programming
- Demonstrate a method for creating a program mission statement.

## **Learning Objectives**

Participants will:

- Consider how story can support transformative learning to build multiracial, multicultural, multigenerational beloved community
- Explore their congregation's story and ways in which adult programming can work to broaden both personal and congregational stories
- Explore the balance of mixing and huddling in their own congregation
- Consider how to apply generations theory to their congregation's adult programming
- Learn a technique for working with a committee to craft a program mission statement.

## **Practicing Beloved Community (50 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Pens or pencils
- Handout 10, Key Insights from *The Power of Stories* by Jacqueline J. Lewis
- Handout 11, Special Edition of *Catalyst*
- Handout 12, Reflection Questions
- Slides 22 and 23, Session 3 Title Slide and Practicing Beloved Community

### **Preparation**

- Review the handouts. Be prepared to provide examples from your own experience and reminders of stories already offered by the group that illustrate Lewis's points.
- Display Slide 22.

- If you are not using slides, write on newsprint and post:
  - If you had to tell one story that summarizes what your congregation is about, what would that be?
  - How is adult programming connected to your congregation's story?

## **Description**

Explain that not only do individuals hold stories that help to make sense of their experiences, but also congregations hold stories about who they are and how they relate to the broader community and the world. Explain that Jacqui Lewis is the senior minister of Middle Collegiate Church (Dutch Reformed) in New York City, an intentional multicultural and multiracial congregation. Her work has heavily influenced many Unitarian Universalist religious leaders. Ask participants to look at Handout 10, and go over with them Lewis's work on using story as a tool for transformation in faith communities. Invite a few comments and observations about her work. Display Slide 23 and ask participants to form pairs and share with each other their responses to the questions. Allow ten minutes for this discussion.

Refer participants to Handout 11, Special Edition of *Catalyst*. Allow a few moments for participants to read the document, asking them to underline or circle words, passages, or pictures that illustrate how the Mosaic Makers conference applied some of Lewis's insights. Lead a conversation about this exercise and the implications for Lewis's work in congregational life and adult faith development programming using the reflection questions on Handout 12 to guide you:

- How can adults practice being part of beloved community through adult faith development programming?
- How can we create ways to share and broaden our personal stories and our congregation's story?

- How can we create holding environments that support transformative learning? How does Lewis's work help identify ways to pay attention to the space between the logs?

Suggest that participants may want to reflect further on these questions over time, both in personal journaling and in conversations with colleagues.

## **Who Are the Adults in Our Congregations? (10 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Slide 24, Who Are the Adults in Our Congregations?

### **Description**

Display Slide 24 and introduce the activity, reminding people that border experiences are encounters with those whose stories and perspectives are different from their own. Say that just as experiences with people of different racial, ethnic, and cultural identities and perspectives help us build beloved community, so, too, do experiences with people with different generational perspectives and identities.

Brainstorm and record on newsprint a list of different life situations from which adults might bring different perspectives to a congregation. If necessary, prime the pump with these examples: new parents, retired people, young working adults, young adults away at school, people out of work, people in mid-career, people caring for others, couples, single people, etc. Don't try to produce an exhaustive list. The point is that there are many different voices and perspectives, from many life situations, represented in congregations.



## Mixing and Huddling (25 minutes)

### Materials

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Pens, pencils, and colored pencils or markers
- Blank paper or participant journals
- Slides 25 and 26, Mixing & Huddling – examples and Mixing & Huddling – pie chart

### Preparation

- Write the title “Mixing and Huddling” on blank newsprint and post.

### Description

Show Slide 25 and introduce the concepts of mixing and huddling, saying that “mixing” is doing things with others of different perspectives and life experiences, and “huddling” is doing things with a cohort group. Explain that the concepts apply to all axes—race and ethnicity, dis/ability, class, etc.—but this module is primarily concerned with generational mixing and huddling. For example, a young-adult group is huddling, whereas participants in a multigenerational service are mixing. Invite participants to name a few more examples of congregational groups and identify whether those groups are mixing or huddling. Write the examples on the newsprint.

Say, “A good balance of mixing and huddling opportunities is important for your adult programming.” Show Slide 26, a pie chart, to demonstrate the balance of mixing and huddling in a fictional congregation.

Invite participants to consider the groups and programs in their own congregations and to draw a pie chart in their journals or on paper, using colored pencils or markers, to show the adult programs in their congregations and

identify the relative proportions of generational mixing and huddling opportunities. Ask that their charts reflect who is *actually* part of each group, not who might be included. Lead a conversation using these questions to guide you:

- What discoveries did you make?
- Does one sort of experience—mixing or huddling—predominate in your adult faith development programming? Are their groups in your congregation (for example, young adults or elders) who are served only by one kind of experience?
- Did you include worship services, musical programming, social events, and social justice projects in your chart? If not, how would the proportions change if you did?
- What ideas do you have for better balancing mixing and huddling in your congregation?

## **Journaling and Sharing (10 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Pens and pencils
- Participant journals
- Slide 27, Journaling and Sharing

### **Preparation**

- Display Slide 27.
- If you are not using the slide, write on newsprint and post:
  - When have you had an interaction with someone of a different generation that deepened your understanding of what you value or what it means to be human?
  - When have you had an interaction with someone of a different race, culture, or economic background that deepened your understanding of what you value or what it means to be human?

## **Description**

Invite participants to spend five minutes responding to one or both of the posted questions in their journals. After ten minutes, invite participants to find a partner and share one of the stories they wrote about.

## **Generations Theory and Its Implications for Programming (30 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 13, Generations Theory Summary
- Slides 28 and 29, Generations Theory and Generations Theory – discussion prompts

### **Preparation**

- Review the handout.
- If you are not using slides, write on newsprint and post:
  - Given differing perspectives and cultures in each generation, how might adult programming recognize the presence of four or five generations of adults in a congregation?
  - What are the implications of generations theory for multigenerational programming in the congregation that includes children and youth as well as several generations of adults?
  - How can we mix several generations, and what opportunities might we offer for generational cohorts to huddle?
- Invite participants to review pp. 26-34 in *Reframing Hope*.

## **Description**

Show Slide 28 and introduce generations theory using Handout 13, noting that these summaries are generalizations that reflect the dominant culture for each generation. Invite participants to test the theory by comparing their own experiences with the characteristics listed for their generational cohort. Lead a Adult Faith Development and Programming Module – Leader’s Guide

short (five- or ten-minute) discussion, asking “How does this match with your experience? Whose perspectives are missing in these summaries?” Make sure that the discussion recognizes that those on the cultural margins (by virtue of their class, race, gender identity, affectional orientation, or other attribute) may have very different experiences than those who are more closely aligned with the dominant culture; make this point yourself if participants do not.

Show Slide 29, calling attention to the questions on the slide. Invite participants to consider what they have read in *Reframing Hope* and to share, popcorn-style ideas for applying generations theory to adult programming. Ask them to speak once, and then to wait until all others have spoken before offering a second idea. Write their responses on newsprint and ask for a volunteer to take a picture of the list of ideas and email it to everyone after the session.

## **Program Mission (25 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Pens or pencils
- Writing paper or participant journals
- Handout 14, Program Mission
- Slide 30, Program Mission

### **Preparation**

- Review Handout 14 and display Slide 30.

### **Description**

Explain that it is important that your program have a mission. Why does your congregation devote resources—volunteer time, staff time, money—to adult programming? How does adult programming support your congregation’s mission, or reason for being? Refer participants to Handout 14 and invite each person to craft a one-phrase or one-sentence mission statement for adult

programming that addresses the two questions on the slide. Allow five to ten minutes for participants to craft their statement, and then invite each one in turn to read what they have written. Engage participants in discussion about the similarities and differences between their statements. Say:

*If we were part of the same congregation, we could work further to reach consensus on a mission statement for adult programming. You might use a similar process with the adult RE committee or other group responsible for overseeing programming in your congregation. Once the group has agreed on a mission statement that is in line with the congregation's mission, publicize it widely. The mission statement should become the story that guides your program.*

As time allows, encourage participants to take notes about the session on Handout 3, Preparation for Module Evaluation.

## **SESSION 4: Responding to Cultural and Faith Community Context**

### **Session-at-a-Glance**

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>Cultural Context</b>                                | 40 minutes |
| <b>Church of the Larger Fellowship Worship Service</b> | 30 minutes |
| <b>Electronic Media in Adult Faith Formation</b>       | 20 minutes |
| <b>Needs, Capacity, and Responsibility</b>             | 20 minutes |
| <b>Next Steps for Your Congregation's Program</b>      | 40 minutes |

**Total Time: 2 1/2 hours**

### **Goals**

This session will:

- Explore the contemporary cultural context and its impact on programming and congregational life
- Present a variety of electronic communications technologies and strategies
- Offer a model for exploring applications of electronic communication in adult programming
- Provide information about practical considerations for planning and supporting adult programming.

## Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- Explore key ways in which changes in the culture affect adult programming
- Explore a variety of electronic communications technologies and strategies and their application in adult faith development programming
- Consider strategies for reaching out to seekers through adult faith development offerings online, including on social networks
- Work with others to determine practical steps to strengthen and support adult programming in their congregation.

## Cultural Context (40 minutes)

### Materials

- The Reader for this module, *Reframing Hope*
- Handout 15, *Reframing Hope* Topics for Discussion
- Slides 31 and 32, Session 4 Title Slide and Cultural Context

### Preparation

- Review Handout 15 and *Reframing Hope*.
- Arrange for breakout spaces for small groups.

### Description

Display Slide 31. Ask participants to take a few minutes to read Handout 15. Show Slide 32 and invite them to divide themselves into three or four different groups, which will reflect on and discuss one set of questions on the handout. Ask for a volunteer in each group to record the highlights of their conversation on newsprint. After 15 minutes, invite small groups to return to the larger group, post their discussion highlights, and share them with the larger group. Ask for a volunteer to take pictures of the newsprint and email them to all participants.

## **Church of the Larger Fellowship Worship Service (30 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Computer with Internet access, projector, and speakers
- Optional: Leader Resource 2, The Wisdom Tree

### **Preparation**

- Explore the [worship archive of the UU Church of the Larger Fellowship](#) and choose a service appropriate for your context.
- Optional: Prepare a worship service for your group. You may wish to use Leader Resource 2, The Wisdom Tree, as a reading for that service.

### **Description**

Stream your chosen worship service for the group.

Note: if you are unable to stream a CLF worship service as part of the module, refer participants to the website and suggest that they watch one on their own. Create a worship service for you and participants to hold during this session, to substitute for watching a CLF service together.

## **Electronic Media in Adult Faith Formation (20 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Slide 33, Electronic Media in Adult Faith Development

### **Description**

Display Slide 33 and lead a brainstorming discussion, asking, “What possibilities can you see for the use of electronic media in adult programming?” If your group



has watched a CLF service, invite them to explore ideas for electronic media in adult programming that arise from that experience. Record ideas on newsprint. If the conversation lags, ask them to consider ideas for new models of programming that can reach those their current programming does not serve well (e.g., people who cannot be part of adult programming because of job, family, illness, or other constraints) or that can be shared among several congregations.

Suggest that participants might do a similar brainstorming exercise with those responsible for adult programming in their congregations and consider experimenting with one or two of the ideas that are generated. Ask for a volunteer to take a picture of the list of ideas generated by the group and email it to everyone.

## **Needs, Capacity, and Responsibility (20 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 16, Considerations for Adult Programming
- Handout 17, Sample Needs Assessment Survey
- Slides 34-36, Needs, Capacity, and Responsibility – discussion prompts

### **Preparation**

- Review the handouts.
- If you are not using slides, write on newsprint:
  - How much programming can your congregation actually support, in terms of volunteers, building space, budget, and participants? How do you determine that?
  - What times of the week are available for programming? When are people likely to come?
  - Is there a formal application process, structure, or timeline for programming proposals?
  - Who decides what programs are to be offered?

- How is programming supported? Who is responsible for logistics? Advertising? Supporting volunteers? Dealing with difficult situations if they arise?

### **Description**

Explain that it is important to offer programming that fits the congregation's needs and that the congregation can support. Display Slide 34 and refer participants to Handout 16, Considerations for Adult Programming. Go over the questions on the handout and slides. Invite participants to make any suggestions or comments based on their own experience. Ask, "What else would you add?" (One example might be childcare.)

Continue with Slides 35 and 36. Suggest that one way to get a sense of the congregation's interests and expectations for programming is to do a simple needs assessment survey. Ask participants to look at Handout 17, Sample Needs Assessment Survey. Point out that it is very general, not listing specific curricula, programs, or days and times, but rather asking for a sense of what topics are most important and what schedules most feasible for people in the congregation. Invite any comments or questions.

## **Next Steps for Your Congregation's Program (40 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Slide 37, Next Steps for Your Congregation's Program

### **Preparation**

- If you are not using slides, write these topics on newsprint or create a handout listing them:
  - Mission
  - Balance: Mixing and Huddling

- Generational Balance
- Needs Assessment
- Capacity
- Defining and Assigning Responsibilities
- Creating Holding Environments for Multicultural Interaction
- Arrange for breakout spaces for small groups.

### **Description**

Display Slide 37. Using information gleaned from participants over the course of the module, help them form small groups of four or five people whose congregations have similar adult programming. For example, one group might include participants from congregations where most adult programs are led by the minister, another might include participants from congregations where most are lay-led, a third might include participants from congregations that offer a wide array of offerings, and yet another might include participants from congregations whose adult programs are dormant or non-existent.

Invite the members of each small group to help each other determine the next step each person should take to strengthen or improve their program. Remind them to take into account the topics listed on the slide and discussed in the module so far. Circulate from group to group, helping when groups are stuck.

As time allows, encourage participants to take notes about the session on Handout 3, Preparation for Module Evaluation.

# **SESSION 5: Practical Tools for Working with Volunteers**

## **Session-at-a-Glance**

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>Introduction to Tapestry of Faith</b>                        | 45 minutes |
| <b>Volunteer Facilitator Recruitment, Training, and Support</b> | 75 minutes |
| <b>Putting It Together to Take Home, Part 1</b>                 | 30 minutes |

**Total Time: 2 1/2 hours**

## **Goals**

This session will:

- Present the philosophy and approach of Tapestry of Faith, provide details about adult programming, and provide an opportunity to share experiences with Tapestry
- Explore how to recruit, train, and support facilitators for adult programming
- Offer opportunities for deeper exploration of some big-picture issues in adult learning and programming.

## **Learning Objectives**

Participants will:

- Learn about the philosophy and approach of Tapestry of Faith and details about adult programs
- Share experiences with adult Tapestry of Faith programs
- Learn and practice facilitation skills for working with adults
- Share and learn ways to recruit, train, and support facilitators for adult programming.

## **Introduction to Tapestry of Faith (45 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Computer and projector
- Slide 38, Session 5 Title Slide
- Slides 39-60, Tapestry of Faith

### **Preparation**

- Display Slide 38, Session 5 Title Slide.
- Familiarize yourself with adult and multigenerational Tapestry of Faith resources and prepare to share your own experiences as necessary to stimulate participants' sharing and conversation.

### **Description**

Introduce Tapestry of Faith Adult Programs using Slides 39-60. As you go through the presentation, invite participants to share their experiences with Tapestry of Faith programming and with programming from other sources. Urge them to explore Tapestry of Faith resources more fully by visiting [the UUA's website](#).

Let participants know that all the module's PowerPoint slides are available on the Renaissance module resource page on the UUA's website, and they can share them in their own congregations and contexts.

## **Volunteer Facilitator Recruitment, Training, and Support (75 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Leader Resource 3, Challenging Facilitation Scenarios

- Handout 18, Considerations for Volunteer Facilitator Recruitment
- Handout 19, Sharing the Floor: Some Strategies for Effective Group Facilitation
- Slides 61 and 62, Volunteer Facilitator Recruitment, Training, and Support
- Slide 63, Challenging Facilitation Scenarios

## **Preparation**

- Make a copy of Leader Resource 3, Challenging Facilitation Scenarios and cut it apart on the dotted lines. You may want to make copies available to participants so they can use them in their own congregations and contexts.
- Arrange for breakout spaces for small groups.

## **Description**

Show Slide 61 and say in your own words:

*The four strands that underlie Tapestry of Faith—spiritual development, ethical development, Unitarian Universalist identity development, and faith development—are central to our work with adults in our congregations. That means that the program facilitator has a much bigger responsibility than just to be a presenter of something; they must be committed to creating conditions that foster the development of the people in the programs they lead. Some programs may be led by professional staff, but, in many congregations and groups, volunteers are responsible for facilitating at least some of the adult programming, whether it is small group ministry, a workshop series, a discussion group, a book or movie group, a one-time presentation, or some other kind of adult programming. Because of the responsibility those volunteers bear to support the development of participants and the health of this aspect of the congregation's ministry, we must be intentional in our recruitment, training, and support of the volunteer facilitators who make programs happen.*

Ask, “Whom should we recruit to lead or facilitate programs in our congregations, and how do we support them?” Refer participants to Handout 18, Considerations for Volunteer Facilitator Recruitment, and display Slide 62. Use these questions and those in Handout 18 to lead a discussion:

- What practices are in place in your congregation to recruit volunteers to facilitate or lead adult small group ministry programs? Adult workshops? Other adult programming?
- What recruitment efforts have been successful? What is not as successful?
- Might any of the practices used to recruit facilitators for one sort of program (such as small group ministry) be good ways to recruit facilitators for other sorts?
- Once facilitators have been recruited, how are they supported on a purely practical level? Who unlocks the building, sets up chairs, makes coffee? Who makes copies?
- How are facilitators supported in their program work? Who answers questions about content or provides a sounding board when they are preparing to lead or facilitate a workshop, presentation, or small reflection group? Who helps them when there is a problem with their group, workshop, class, or presentation?

Allow 20 minutes for this part of the discussion. Record highlights of the conversation on newsprint and ask for a volunteer to take a picture and distribute it to everyone electronically. Ask participants to read the list of highlights and to suggest other considerations they might add to the handout. Invite them to take this handout back to their own context and share it with others who oversee adult programming.

Explain that you will explore a tool for training and supporting volunteer facilitators. Have participants look at Handout 19, Sharing the Floor: Some Strategies for Effective Group Facilitation, and go over the highlights (the title of

each numbered section Take only about five minutes for this; your goal is to help participants learn what is in the handout, not to present every point in detail.

Show Slide 63 and invite participants to form four groups of up to six people. Give each group a challenging facilitation scenario from Leader Resource 3. Ask each group to prepare to role-play the scenario twice, first with a disastrous outcome and then with a better one. (In the second role-play, the person playing the facilitator will employ strategies from Handout 19, Sharing the Floor.) Allow 15 minutes for the groups to meet, and then five minutes each for them to present the two versions of their scenario (2 1/2 minutes per scenario). Suggest that the handout and this exercise could be used as part of a volunteer facilitator training. Invite any additional thoughts or insights about supporting and training facilitators.

## **Putting It Together to Take Home, Part 1 (30 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Notes on pressing questions from Session 1
- Handout 20, Putting It Together to Take Home Project Instructions
- Slide 64, Putting It Together to Take Home

### **Preparation**

- Review the handout.
- Arrange for breakout spaces for small groups.
- Decide on project groups by examining the “pressing questions” notes and considering issues that have emerged from discussions over the course of the module. Decide on four or five different pressing concerns and list them on newsprint; each will be discussed by one small group. Be prepared to help participants choose the group most appropriate for them.



These groups may overlap somewhat with the “next steps” small groups, but they will not be the same. There, the task was to determine each individual’s next step. In this activity, the group is to work together to address a big-picture issue that is relevant to all their congregations. Here are some suggestions for possible groups; you will probably have others:

- We have no program at all and need to start one.
- We have difficulty balancing the needs of those who want “content” and those who want “spirituality.”
- We need to find an organizational structure for adult RE that is appropriate to the congregation’s culture and resources (staff, volunteers, funds).
- We’re looking to set up a pathway for intentional adult faith development.
- We want to explore electronic media as a vehicle for adult programming.
- We need to plan how we will recruit and support volunteers.

### **Description**

Point out the posted list of groups and help any participants who are uncertain which is most appropriate for them. Display Slide 64.

Refer participants to Handout 20 and give each project group newsprint and markers. Invite members of each group to work together to propose a plan to address a big-picture concern they share. Remind them that when they take the plan home, it will need to be adapted to their particular context. Ask them to create a presentation to share with the large group, addressing the points in Handout 20. If participants have access to a laptop or tablet, encourage them to create their presentations electronically so that they can be easily shared. Explain that they will have a total of 75 minutes, the remainder of this session plus time in the next one, to create a ten-minute presentation.

As time allows, encourage participants to take notes about the session on Handout 3, Preparation for Module Evaluation.

## **SESSION 6: Presentations, Evaluations, and Closing**

### **Session-at-a-Glance**

**Putting It Together to Take Home, Part 2** 50 minutes

**Presentations and Feedback** 60 minutes

**Parking Lot** 20 minutes

**Closing Worship** 20 minutes

**Total Time: 2 1/2 hours**

### **Goals**

This session will:

- Offer opportunities for deeper exploration of some big-picture issues in adult learning and programming.

### **Learning Objectives**

Participants will:

- Create and present a proposal for addressing a big-picture concern for adult religious education and programming
- Offer feedback, express gratitude, and share commitments for work going forward.

## **Putting It Together to Take Home, Part 2 (50 minutes)**

### **Description**

Have groups finish preparing the plans and presentations they began in the previous session.

## **Presentations and Feedback (60 minutes)**

### **Description**

Invite each breakout group to present its proposal to the larger group. Divide the hour equally among the groups, and tell participants how much time they have to both give their presentations and respond to comments and questions. Explain that it is important to be brief when presenting a new idea; it is better to give people time to absorb the material and ask questions than to go into great detail.

## **Parking Lot (20 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Parking Lot newsprint
- [“Process, Not Program”](#) reader

### **Preparation**

- Review Parking Lot items and prepare to answer questions.

### **Description**

Use this time to review any questions or topics remaining in the Parking Lot and ensure that all questions have been answered. Refer participants to the “Process, Not Program” Reader, by Diana Butler Bass. This document is designed to be a resource for them as they return to their congregation.

## Closing Worship (20 minutes)

### Materials

- Chalice
- Candle and matches, or electric candle
- Materials for decorating centering table
- Copies of *Singing the Living Tradition*
- Leader Resource 4, Template for Closing Worship
- Slide 65, Closing Worship

### Preparation

- Prepare a closing worship service. Use the template (Leader Resource 4) or create your own.
- If you do not have enough copies of *Singing the Living Tradition* (or another hymnbook, as appropriate), write the lyrics of the hymn(s) you have chosen on newsprint and post them, or create a slide to display.

### Description

Display Slide 65 and conclude the module with the worship service you have planned.

Remind participants to submit their module evaluation online within one week.

Thank everyone for participating in the module.