

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames

Sunday Morning Program Committee

Guide to Best Practices

December, 2010

UUFA

1015 N. Hyland Ave.

Ames, IA 50014-4005

515-292-5960

uufa@uufames.org

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Sunday Morning Program Committee Guide to Best Practices

Purpose of this Guide

~~What is this guide for?~~ The purpose of this guide is to provide suggestions and pointers for those who work on the Sunday Morning Program Committee (SMPC). The committee consists of a diverse group of individuals both paid and volunteer, professional speakers, and laypersons. This diversity creates varied, interesting presentations at the UU, ~~however, occasionally presentations are not fully received by the congregation or fall a little flat most often because some preventable technical details were overlooked.~~ The goal of this guide is to help those on the SMPC attain the most effective standards in our presentations.

What are *best practices*? Best practices are simply ideas and procedures that tend to work well at the UUFA. **This is not a rule book or step-by-step manual to follow like a recipe. What follows are merely some suggestions and ideas that members of the SMPC have found worked in the past.** We have pooled our knowledge and experience here so you don't have to start from scratch.

What does the Sunday Morning Program Committee do?

The ~~Sunday Morning~~Sunday Morning Program Committee plans and implements year-round Sunday morning services during times when our ~~Minister~~Minister doesn't speak, and facilitates and/or assists the Minister when s/he is the main speaker. The UUFA minister and the Music Director/Coordinator ~~are~~ is part of the committee. The UUFA has a *shared* ministry; that is, on some Sundays the ~~Minister~~Minister plans and leads services, (with possible participation, at the Minister's discretion, by members of the committee) and- on other Sundays SMPC members make presentations, (or collaborate with the Minister in making

presentations) arrange for guest speakers, or work with members of the Fellowship who wish to deliver a presentation.

Who is the Sunday Morning Program Committee?

The SMPC is composed of 10-15 members who represent the congregation and who work together, along with the Minister and Music Director. **This group collaboratively plans and evaluates the Sunday morning worship services throughout the church year.** The SMPC is the guardian of the UUFA pulpit. Lay members of the SMPC devise and develop thematic ideas that meet the needs of the congregation.

They support minister-led worships as fFacilitators, helping create a welcoming and sacred space. For example, facilitators set up the worship table, assist with elements of the service (e.g. chalice lighting, readings, opening or closing words, etc), call to worship with bell, close and open doors, assist worshipers as needed in finding seats, and, if necessary, distribute the printed order of service and hymnals. While the elements of most minister-led worships are planned by the minister, some minister-led worships may involve greater collaboration between the minister and the lay leaders.

Lay members of the SMPC can also serve as- the a-Sshepherd of-to-worships-services that are lay-led or that involve an outside speaker. As Sshepherd, the lay leader contacts speakers, selects the specific elements for the worship, and designs and assures that the Order of Service is prepared. (In addition, the Shepherd role includes all the tasks of Facilitator.)

SMPC Member Duties

- Regularly attend Sunday Morning Services, and fill out the Rubric for evaluating the service and providing feedback at the next SMPC meeting.
- Attend monthly SMPC meetings (usually meet 2nd Sat morning each month from 10a to 11:30a.) Bring your completed Rubrics with you to the monthly meetings.
- Attend minister-led and district trainings related to worship of a congregation.
- Assess worship needs and interests of the religious community.
- Collaborate with others on the committee to create Sunday morning worship services throughout the year.
- Develop worship topics as they are suggested.
- Suggest and discuss worship topics with other members.
- Make arrangements for pulpit supply. For example, consult the UUA's

Stonetree website for possible UU speakers from out of town, confer with First Unitarian of Des Moines, and consider inviting inspiring people (not necessarily UU) who would make good speakers at our Fellowship.)

[EXAMPLES?]

- Assist Music Coordinator in scheduling and integrating music to theme of the worship.
- Serve as Ffacilitator at least one Sunday a month.

- Serve occasionally as Sshepherd, ~~as requested~~, on Sundays when the worship is lay-led.
- Incorporate the broader congregation into worship, by asking a diversity of individuals to participate in elements of the worship, such as being the speaker/preacher, reading, performing music, lighting the chalice, etc.
- Work with other UUFA groups to incorporate liturgies for special occasions such as recognition of RE teachers, welcoming new members, dedication of children, Coming of Age, etc.
- Keep track of upcoming services using the UUFA SMPC website with working schedule and planning resources: <http://edu-observatory.org/uufa/>
- Monitor the quality of services, review attendance figures, seek feedback from members of the congregation in an effort to maintain high quality standards.

Facilitator Job Duties

The Facilitators serves as an assistants to the speaker and also a host to the congregation. Facilitators prepare the area and ambience, assist the speakers with what they need, and assist with details to make the congregation comfortable and able to easily follow the order of service easily. Each service has at least two Facilitators, (THE FOLLOWING NEEDS DISCUSSION. THERE HAS LONG BEEN CONSIDERABLE FEELING IN THE SMPC THAT WE HAVE QUITE ENOUGH TO DO WITHOUT TRYING TO BE USHERS AND TAKING CARE OF ALL THE NUTS AND BOLTS AS WELL. HOWEVER, SOME PEOPLE ON THE COMMITTEE—OR SUBCOMMITTEE?--PARICULARLY NEWCOMERS, MIGHT BE MORE COMFORTABLE WITH NON-SPEAKING, NON-ORGANIZING ROLES.) ~~one to focus on the program, assisting with readings, chalice lighting, transitions, etc. and the second to serve as usher, ringing the bell, attending to the needs of the congregation as they enter the service, opening and closing doors, assisting latecomers.~~ Both Facilitators should be prepared for emergencies which might include help in setting up, or helping to set up and ~~taking down~~ the Fellowship Hall for worship.

The website with the working schedule for the SMPC is: <http://edu-observatory.org/uufa/>

Specific Facilitator Job Duties include:

- Arrive at the Fellowship 45 to 60 minutes before the service. (DISCUSSION NEEDED. Doesn't the time of arrival depend partly on whether or not the SMPC is ultimately responsible for setting up the chairs or not?)

- Turn on the lighting, check and adjust room temperature, as needed, and open or close the curtains, as needed for the service.
- **Set up the worship table first of all.** Materials for setting the worship table are located in the cupboard in the chair room. Tasks here include:
 - Select a tablecloth that best suits the theme of the service.
 - Place the chalice on the cloth. Make sure chalice has sufficient oil in it to stay lit, and replenish, as needed using the funnel and oil provided. Make certain the wick is long enough to reach the oil.
 - Place the pPlexiglas sheet on the tablecloth (for catching wax drips).
 - Replace any short Mmilestone candles with fresh ones. Place milestone candles on the Pplexiglas.
 - A candle snuffer
 - At least 10 long matches for lighting Mmilestone candles per service.
 - ~~Two short m~~Matches to light chalice from the tea light.
 - A striker pad to light the match that lights the tea light
 - A tea light candle. Light this 3-4 minutes before the service begins and extinguish it between services. Place the tea light candle in the metal ring with lid that surrounds it.
 - A small metal decorated plate that is used to place dead matches.
 - Perhaps a bell, zills or singing bowl and striker to signal the end of socializing and/or silent meditations

- It is helpful to place one dead long match on the plate as an example of others to follow.
- If someone provides flowers, arrange them on the table in the best position for visibility etc. nicely.
- The sound person will position a microphone somewhere on the table and tape it and the cord down.

Once the worship table is set-up, turn your attention to other elements of the room:

- Chairs should be set-up, if they aren't, help with that. Follow the directions for placement posted on the wall of the chair room and any direction given by the shepherd or minister.
- The Order of Service (OoS) will be duplicated and on a table in the office. Bring them to the Fellowship Hall.
- Check the OoS to see what hymn book is needed. You will know by page number. Numbers for songs and responsive readings greater than 999 are in the turquoise book, numbers below 999 are in the gray hymnal. Make sure there are hymnals on the chairs in the very back where latecomers might sit.
- Put out hymnals and order of service pages. Hymnals on every other chair. Order of service on each chair.
- Check with Sound, Accompanist, Musicians to assure they are there and ready. (???) DISCUSSION NEEDED. The previous sentence, to me, is vague, unclear, and unhelpful. Are we meant to panic if there is no musician, or no sound person, or what?) Discuss any arrangements??, placement in the OoS?? and transitions, as appropriate.)

- Check with presenters to see if they need any special arrangements, or anything else. ~~(??The readings will have been assigned earlier in the week and ideally each participant in the service received their materials previously and has become familiar with the content of their assignment. Is this really necessary?)~~
- Clarify Transitions.segues. Be sure to arrange with the other Facilitator(s) and presenters for smooth Transitions between the different elements of the service.
- ~~The service runs much more smoothly when the transitions between each element have smooth segues. Briefly meet with all participants and make certain each transition is assigned.~~
- The Minister and speaker(s) need a glass of ice water. Place one by her/his chair and one on the top shelf inside the podium.
- Make sure there is a hymnal on or behind the podium, and also an order of service.
- Between three and five minutes before the start of each service take the chime/bell on the chain and slowly walk around the Fireside Room so people know it is time to get seated in the Fellowship hall. If you'd like, you can ask a responsible child if they would like to ring the bell. Accompany the child during this task.
- Light the small tea light candle so it is ready for the service.
- At 9:30a and 11:30a slowly close the sliding doors. Closing of the doors indicates a transition from social time to sacred time. Do not rush this task. Close the door solemnly. It is a signal to the congregation that worship is near.

- (NEEDS DISCUSSION. Do we want to say that this is the ushers' job, maybe with Facilitators as backup?) One of the fFacilitators should watch for latecomers to be sure they get seated and have what they need as they enter. If there is special music or a moment of silence when they enter it is best to have them wait until that moment is complete so that the entrance does not disrupt the mood.
- When there are only 2 or 3 minutes of service remaining (normally during “eClosing wWords”) one facilitator should discreetly walk to the door and stand near it. Once the presenter has completed the closing words, slowly open the door. This is a signal to the congregation that the time of worship is over and social time may begin again.
- After the service, extinguish the lighted chalice and candles with the snuffer. (Blowing the candles out can send melted wax for great distances!) and assure ensure that there are enough fresh matches and candles for the second service.
- Between services check the room to assure there are enough Orders of Service, that the hymnals are still every other chair, that there are enough chairs, people (especially people in wheelchairs)- can still get through the aisles, etc.
- Check to see if the speaker’s water glass needs to be refilled.
- Just before the second service, light the small tea light candle again, ring the bell, etc.
- At the end of the second service, extinguish the candles and put away the cloth, chalice, candles, matches, etc.
- Bring the flowers down to the table in the office.
- Assist putting away hymnals.

- Gather stray OoS papers from the podium and chairs and put in recycle box.
- Turn out the lights in the Fellowship Hall.
- Volunteers put away the chairs. Help them as you are able.
- Sound people will be putting away the mikes.
- Accompanist will cover the piano.
- The last person to leave the building locks the doors.
- A speaker or Facilitator who has had a visible role in the service can sometimes perform a very useful function by asking for volunteers to help with putting chairs away, or with cleaning up coffee cups, etc. Sometimes it is preferable to secure volunteers rather than to do it all oneself.

~~Worship~~ Shepherd Job Duties

The “**Shepherd**” coordinates and directs the entire worship program when the minister is not leading the service. As Shepherd, you might also be the main speaker, or one of the speakers, or you might be responsible for inviting and/or hosting a main speaker or presentation team. To be an effective Sunday morning leader, you must understand the purpose of worship, work with the goals of the worship topic at hand, and create cognitive and aesthetic components of worship to touch a level of depth of expression for the UUFA community. You are in charge of program content and logistics. There are many elements to an effective program. The more of these you negotiate successfully, the more enlightening and enjoyable the service will be.

Key Aspects of Shepherding a Sunday Presentation

- Begin with a compelling topic. Select a topic that not only you feel passionate about but that is also of interest to the Fellowship. This does not necessarily mean you have to pick a *popular* topic, but it should be something that inspires you. It should speak to your emotions and permeate at least some of the seven UU principles.
- If someone from the congregation approaches you about Shepherding their idea through the Fellowship work with them to make sure that their ideas are fully developed. Occasionally, you will be approached with broad ideas in the hope that you will develop them, or that you will help find other people who will be one of several speakers on the same topic. Sometimes a half-developed idea might interest you enough for you to work directly with the person, or alternatively you

might say that you will bring the idea to a SMPC meeting for input and brainstorming.

- Ask the person ~~them~~ to describe his or her ~~their~~ ideas fully. Really listen to the details. ~~Occasionally, you will be approached with broad ideas in the hope that you will develop them~~(The previous sentence has been pasted above): Ask the member ~~to~~ jot down the ~~10 or 12~~ elements that would make this presentation special. If the member can only think up three or four such elements, that indicates the concept may not yet have sufficient legs to carry an entire presentation. Perhaps you and/or the SMPC can come up with sufficient ideas to add to the topic to make an effective presentation.

- However, ~~So~~ some ideas need to sit and quietly grow for a while before they become robust enough for a presentation. Some broad topics have germinated for years in brainstorming sessions at SMPC meetings before they finally became (very effective) presentations Ideas worthy of presentations have many “hooks”, many aspects from which the speaker ~~and~~ develops ideas. Each one of these avenues may take a few minutes to share. If you are working with a concept with ten or more hooks, you have enough material for a presentation.

- Of course a Sunday morning presentation is much more than speaking for 30 minutes. Consider these additional elements:
 - Readings
 - Music
 - Hymns
 - A short story, fable, or parable.
 - A short play or “reader’s theatre”

- Dance
- Poetry
- Visual arts
- Handouts
- Power Point displays

- The Sshepherd's role includes considering these elements, selecting them (either as the leader or communally with the group). You assure quality of the elements, plan the flow of the worship and manage transitions to create a meaningful experience to affirm the human spirit.

- Sometimes as Sshepherd you may have a major role as the speaker, or as one of several speakers, but whether you are speaking yourself or not , as Shepherd you are responsible for the following things.—You will:

- Deliver a draft Order of Service (OoS) to the Office Coordinator by the Tuesday preceding your presentation
- Work with the Music Director to coordinate music,
- Work with the Director of Youth and Children Ministries (DYCM) regarding children's worship, stories, or participation of children and families, Membership Committee when there is a new member ceremony, etc.

Developing the Presentation

The idea for the worship is usually born in a SMPC meeting. The SMPC may suggest a title for the program and speaker, or may give you more vague direction. (This next bit NEEDS DISCUSSION AND CLARIFICATION The SMPC should provide the Worship Shepherd a written goal of what the worship should achieve. All planning will flow from that ??).

The worship may involve an outside speaker who already has a prepared presentation on a topic of interest to the SMPC.

- This could be a minister or lay leader from another church
- This could be an outside speaker, not based in a church, who has presented an interesting topic.
- This could be an outside reader's theater, a short play or skit, or some other format.
- The worship may be a "home-grown" presentation that involves a member of the UUFA as a main speaker, or a collaboration of several UUFA members who each present her/his experience or perspective with the topic.

As shepherd, you will be responsible for coordinating, advising and developing the worship so it works with the goals of the program. **The speaker may need assistance in paring down a presentation to fit the time limit or editing to accomplish the goal of the worship.** Keeping a speaker within time limits is very important and necessary, but it needs to be handled with both tact and firmness. Be sure to make the time constraints clear early in the planning stage. Then, if you suspect that a speaker might ignore you and exceed his/her time limit despite anything you say, ask the Minister and/or an experienced member of the Program Committee for assistance.

The website with a UUFA working schedule is: <http://edu-observatory.org/uufa/>

Planning with the Presenter

If a person or group from outside the Fellowship is presenter, contact the speaker(s) **at least 2 months before the anticipated worship date.**

- Work with the speaker(s) to firm the date of the worship.
- Let the speaker(s) know we have 2 services on Sunday mornings at which we are asking her/him to speak. (If summer, only 1 service).
- Provide the times of the services.

SARAH A SMALL TABLE THAT SHOWS A TIME TABLE WOULD BE GREAT.
PERHAPS A "COUNTDOWN TO PRESENTATION"

If this is a homegrown worship, at least 2 months before the worship date gather those who agreed to speak or assist with the service and have a planning session.

With the speaker or group involved in the presentation, meet to plan the service. If the facilitators have a significant part of the services be sure to include them.

- Discuss the goal of the worship and how the speaker(s) would fit into the whole.
- Discuss the timeframe of the presentation or sermon. Shoot for no longer than 15 minutes (Hmm . . .Do we want to discuss this?).
- Obtain or create a title and description of the worship to appear in the UUFA Newsletter.

- Identify any pre-arranged musicians, accompanists and discuss how they might incorporate music into the worship. Involve the Music Director if something specific is needed.
- Discuss and select all elements of the service beyond the presentation using the *Template for the Order of Service (OoS)* as a guide.
 - What opening words, chalice lighting, songs, readings, music, etc., should be incorporated to make the experience of worship complete and in sync with the goals of the program?
 - In what order should they occur to achieve the best effect? Some of these selections may take place over time. Be sure to have a deadline for when they must be in place, and a point person to make final decisions. (See notes on copyright laws below.)
- Ask If the outside speaker ~~is a minister, ask~~ what, if any, elements of the service beyond the sermon she/he wants help with—are there readings, words, music, etc., that she/he wants to have incorporated, or does she/he want you to put those pieces together?
- Ask about special needs (room set up, special décor, AV, podium, traveling mike, other sound, and accessibility issues) the speaker and worship will require to meet the goals of the worship or to enhance the worship experience.
- If the speaker is not from the UUFA, discuss travel and lodging arrangements. Home hospitality or motel arrangements may need to be made. Be sure you have approval if Fellowship will be paying a stipend to cover time, travel or lodging.

Send the title and description of the worship to the Office Coordinator by the 20th of the month before the program so it can be placed in the upcoming Newsletter.

Contact both facilitators to assign parts of the services and readings if they were not involved in the presentation meeting.

Selecting Music

Work with the Music Director to arrange special music, offertory music, prelude, musical meditations, special musical groups, etc.

The dark gray and turquoise books hymnals are sources for songs and hymns. The general rule of thumb is to have at least one familiar and perhaps one unfamiliar hymn. If the hymn is unfamiliar, talk to the accompanist or Music Director to assist the congregation in singing it.

At times we may use recorded music. However, be aware that copyright laws apply to music and art that is reproduced, distributed, performed, or publicly displayed. **To avoid infringement, ask permission from the copyright owner.** Many owners will grant permission, but others will charge a fee or refuse. It's important to remember that acknowledging the source of the copyrighted material does not protect you from copyright infringement. Therefore, plan ahead to obtain permission from the artist.

Selecting Opening Words, Closing Words, Chalice Lightings, Spoken Meditations, Responsive Readings

- The dark gray hymnal is a resource for many readings.

- The UUA website has worship resources, with permissions for use by most of the authors.
- If an outside reading is used, again be aware that copyright laws apply and **always ask permission of the copyright owner**.

Planning the “Moment for all Ages”—a multigenerational time that includes children.

- Do this early in the service and usually before milestones. (Do we want to discuss whether it should ALWAYS come before Milestones?)
- Keep it short.
- Try to select something that will speak to children as well as adults. Ask the Director of Youth and Children’s Ministries (DYCM) for advice or assistance in what is selected.
- If a book is read, select a reader who reads with a sense of drama, and try to have some visual effect and/-or participation.

Preparing the Order of Service

Use the *Template for the Order of Service* as a working draft of the OoS for the Sunday Worship. You may rearrange, add or delete elements, but you should always have:

- Welcome by a Board member—to draw the community focus together and create a welcoming space.
- Opening Words to set the tone—to ground and focus people on a thought related to the goal of the service. Sometimes this is separate from

Chalice Lighting; sometimes it can be combined with the Chalice Lighting is in addition to words said at the Chalice Lighting in one reading or statement.

- Chalice Lighting—a centering activity which reminds us of how topic relates to UU values/principles. Aesthetically it gives meaning to the worship through the comfort of ritual.
- Milestones—to build support of community, connections and to give an aesthetic and ritualized reminder of caring for each other.
- Time to greet others—to build community and connect with old and meet new friends.
- Moments for everyone to participate (like hymns—generally there are 2 or 3 hymns—or responsive readings). To give a collective voice to our values, to “try on” the thoughts of others. Music gives memory to words and mood after the service is over.
- Quieter, contemplative time—for personal centering, meditation, reflection on self and the world around, and transformative goals (for example, silent or musical mediation). A few moments of silence are especially helpful in the event that there have been any very sad Milestones.
- Offertory—a way for congregation to participate, and put values into action, affect transformation, add meaning.
- Special music—to touch the aesthetic senses for further depth of meaning.
- Presentation—providing cognitive, emotional and spiritual learning to the experience to encourage self reflection and commitment to action.
- Closing Words—to remind us of our transformation and charges us to be mindful of the worship experience as we leave each other. It can be is helpful to have this just after a closing hymn, while people are still on their

feet, as it can be a call to action.

Completed Order of Service

- Send the first draft of the OoS to the office coordinator and others involved in the worship on the **Tuesday before the Sunday Worship.**
- Identify all elements that will be included and the individuals or groups who will carry out that element.
- The Office Coordinator will type up create an OoS and send it to all participants for feedback.
- Review the details, work out any issues, and return a final copy to the Office Coordinator by **Thursday before the Sunday Worship.**
- Send the accompanist the hymn/song selections at least one week in advance so there is adequate time to practice.
- Send the Facilitators a copy of any pre-prepared readings, Opening Words or Chalice Lightings that they will be doing. Sometimes, of course, Chalice Lighters will want to prepare their own script.
- ?(DISCUSSION NEEDED. Sometimes the OoS is sufficient script . Does the previous point take care of this? Can we substitute the previous point for this one?) Write a script for Facilitators to follow during the service, identifying people who have been assigned specific parts, so Facilitators can prepare and practice their parts.
- Notify sound people of any special arrangements.
- The Office Coordinator will send the final copy via email to all participants and will duplicate the number of the OoS needed for both services. You will need to pick them up in the office before the service.

- Check with presenter(s) to verify her/his ability to arrive at the time you designate, and ask if there are any last minute questions or needs.

Day of the Worship

Arrive (?? DISCUSSION NEEDED an hour-before) the first service to direct preparation of the Fellowship Hall, walk through the details of the OoS in your mind, meet worship participants, and assure all participants have arrived.

- Assure the worship table has been set up properly by facilitators.
- Talk to sound people to resolve any issues with microphone, sound and AV.
- Assure chairs are set up correctly.
- Assure programs and hymnals are placed on chairs appropriately.
- Greet outside speaker and show her/him where to hang coat, where to sit, where restroom is, where she/he will present, how you will signal time issues during the worship.
- Check lighting and window curtains.
- Make sure accompanist or musicians have all they need.
- At the end of service, assure people will be putting things away and closing the building. Sometimes a request from a Facilitator who has played a visible part in the service can work wonders in getting help!
- Write and send a thank-you note to the speaker.
- Complete RUBRIC of self-evaluation of the service to share at the next SMPC meeting.

Suggestions for Facilitating Milestones

BEFORE Milestones:

“It is the custom in our Fellowship to nurture our sense of community by sharing the Milestones of our lives, our joys and sorrows, by lighting candles and sharing with one another. So if you have a Milestone you'd like to share, you are invited to come up, tell us your name, light a candle, and share your joy or your worry.”

- Hand each person a match as she/he comes up and move slightly so the person can speak into the microphone—which might be taped to the surface of the table.
- You may take the used match from the Milestone giver if she/he does not set the used match down on the metal plate.
- Generally people will light the match from the chalice and then light the candle, but people get nervous and it is okay if they light from other candles.
- Someone may need your assistance with lighting a candle if they are shaky or cannot see well.
- If the person is emotional, you may need to support the person with needed hugs, pats on the shoulder, laughs, brief appreciative comments, etc.
- Wait a bit and look around after each Milestone for others who are coming up. Sometimes you have to pause as someone may be hesitant in getting up.
- When it appears that all who came up have done so, you will say a few words to end Milestones.

AFTER Milestones, say some version of the following:

If there is an unlit candle left:

"I will now light one final candle for all those Milestones that remain unspoken. Let us hold all these Milestones, spoken and unspoken, in our hearts as we continue to support each other in the days and weeks ahead."

If there are no unlit candles left.:

"Let us hold all these Milestones, spoken and unspoken, in our hearts as we continue to support each other in the days and weeks ahead."

If silent meditation follows Milestones:

Preface the above remarks with something like the following:

"We will now have a moment of silent meditation while we hold these Milestones, spoken and unspoken, in our hearts"

Allow a good amount of time (until it almost starts to feel uncomfortable) for silence. Then after the silent meditation, you may sound the gong /[singing bowl](#) if you wish and then say:

"Let us remember these Milestones as we continue to support each other in the days and weeks ahead."

If a spoken mediation follows Milestones:

Begin reading the words after the silent meditation.

If a musical mediation follows Milestones:

Signal to the musician or singer when to begin.

People who are used to facilitating Milestones and who are confident about it often begin the Milestone Ending by saying something that refers to or summarizes the particular joys and concerns that have been mentioned (for example, "This mixture of tragedy and joy ..."), but this is not necessary and may not be advisable for someone facilitating milestones for the first time.)

Managing Transitions between Elements (this needs work and discussion)

The goal is for the service to flow smoothly from one element to the next, rather than appearing choppy and disjointed. Smooth transitions help to hold the mood and spiritual ambiance we are trying to create in a worship service.

Smooth transitions help people know where they are in the Order of Service and help visitors not feel awkward or ashamed by not knowing what to do. It can be helpful to have words ready to ease transitions.

| Discuss ahead of time with the [Facilitators](#) how transitions should be handled.

General Transition

- People have an Order of Service—avoid prefacing each element “we will now do the (opening words, milestones, etc). Starting right into the next element often better keeps the mood.
- Avoid making any transition words sound like hollow memorization. Say them all with meaning.
- When you get to the mike, pause a moment before speaking to make the moment solemn and to hold people’s attention.
- It is not necessary to introduce the words that you will be reading if the author is acknowledged in the Order of Service.
- Read slowly.

Transition to a Song

- It is helpful to announce songs with the page number and title. “Our song is number ____ in the gray hymnal.” You can also state the

title. Hold up the hymnal and say “gray hymnal” or “turquoise hymnal” if both books are being used in the service.

- It is helpful to invite people to stand as they are willing and able, or tell people they should remain seated for a song.
- If a song is new to the congregation or seldom sung, talk to the accompanist for suggestions on how to help the congregation learn the song.
- When the song is finished, the congregation is ready for the next element.

Transition when Children Leave

- This is typically the time when congregants are invited to greet their neighbors.
- “As our children leave to go to their religious education classes, please turn to those around you, visitors, and people who you do not know, and welcome them. I will raise my hand (or sound this gong) when it is time to come back together.”
- Sometimes children are “sung” out of the service.

Transition After Greeting

- Give people time to say hello to 2-3 other people and then gather them back in for the next element.
- People get busy talking and are often faced away from the podium at this time.

- Raise your hand to signal time is over, or use a gong, or simply stand, with extreme stillness, behind the microphone.
- Begin speaking as stragglers get back to their chairs.

Transition to Special Music

Transition After an Emotional Moment

Transition from Special Music

Transition from a Moment of Silence

Transition to the Offering

Ending the Worship

ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT THINGS FOR FACILITATORS AND SPEAKERS TO REMEMBER:

ALWAYS:

- Speak with cadence and modulation.

- Pause to let a deep thought settle in.
- Listen for the rhyme or the melody of a passage.
- Speak clearly, and more SLOWLY than you probably think is necessary!

(THESE ARE DIRECTIONS FOR BOARD MEMBERS AND DON'T BELONG HERE.)

Additional Facilitator Duties

ALWAYS

- ~~Introduce yourself and your role in the Fellowship:~~
 - ~~“Welcome to the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames. My name is _____. I serve on the Fellowship Board. Here we gather to support and challenge each other in our quest for understanding. Here we seek ways of living more fully in accord with our religious beliefs and values. Here we strive to create the community that will provide hope in our lives and possibility for the world around us. Thank you for joining us today.”~~
- ~~Pass baskets for the offering.~~
- ~~After collection, find another board member and count the offering (number of checks and total of loose money). The count form is in the metal wall basket next to this clipboard. Seal everything in an envelope and put into the safe.~~
- ~~Count people:~~
 - ~~All people in the room are counted, including adults, visitors, children, presenters, musicians, sound technicians, etc.~~
- ~~Return clipboard to the Fellowship office.~~
- ~~INSERT PROTOTYPE OoS~~
- ~~INSTRUCTIONS FOR DEALING WITH PAUL~~
- ~~Style~~
 - Speak with cadence:(PASTED ABOVE)
 - Pause to let a deep thought settle in.
 - Listen for the rhyme or the melody of a passage.
 - Speak clearly.

If Minister is not presenting: (USUALLY THESE ARE ALL BOARD MEMBER DUTIES — PART OF THE BOARD WELCOME.)

- Highlight any particularly critical announcements from the bulletin.
 - There may be none worth mentioning.
 - Mention the collection split.
- Invite visitors to introduce themselves.

“It is a tradition in the Fellowship to nurture our sense of community by welcoming visitors. If you have a friend with you, or if you’ve come for the first time on your own, I invite you to stand and introduce yourself.”

Sample Order of Service

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames

Date of Service, YEAR

Title of Service

Welcome Board member's name

Prelude..... Optional

Title, author/composer

Opening Words Name of speaker

Title, author (optional)

Chalice Lighting..... Name of person

Title, author (optional)

Story or song with children..... Name of song or speaker

Greet neighbors as children leave for religious education program. (when needed, check newsletter)

Children leave for religious education while those remaining greet their neighbors.

Milestones

Moment of Silent Meditation

* **Song 000**..... *Title of song*

Special Music..... Name of performer(s)

Title, author/composer

Offertory with Special Music..... Name of performer(s)

Title, author/composer

Half of today's non-pledge offerings will go towards (organization).

Responsive Reading 000 *Title of reading*

Reading..... Name of reader

Title, author (optional)

Presentation Name of presenter

TITLE OF PRESENTATION

Closing Words.....Name optional

Title, author (optional)

Extinguishing the Chalice..... Name optional

** Please rise in body or spirit*

If you are able, please help put away chairs after the service.

Presenter: Fname Lname

Accompanist: (for offertory and songs unless otherwise noted above)

Facilitators: Fname1 Lname1 & Fname2 Lname2

~~BOARD MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENT BASICS (THESE DON'T BELONG
IN THE SMPC HANDBOOK)~~

WELCOME

Welcome to our service. I am _____, a member of your Board of Trustees. I choose to serve the Fellowship this way because _____.

~~If this is your first time with us, we are especially glad you are here!~~

~~If you are interested in learning more about us, please feel free to speak with me or a member of the Welcome Team at the table just outside these doors after the service, and we will be happy to answer your questions.~~

~~If you have children with you today, we have child care available for small children in the Nursery, and a religious education program for *grades 1-8* (9:30 Service)/ *grades 1-6* (11:30 service). Our High School youth meet in the Tower Room between Sunday services as well as on Wednesday evenings.~~

~~We are a diverse community of caring individuals who come together to provide an environment that nurtures and educates our children, stimulates the study and practice of ethical and liberal religious ideals, supports the creative spirit in us all, and demonstrates concern for the environment and the broader community.~~

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Good Morning! For those of you who may not have already done so, now would be a good time to turn off your cell phones so that everyone can enjoy the service without distraction.

We are an active congregation with many opportunities for participation. Please note the calendar of activities and announcements on the back of your orders of service and visit the church website (uufames.org) for more detailed information.

We have the following special announcements:

Read Board announcements and any others already arranged

Again, welcome to you all. Please take a few moments now to greet your neighbors, making a point to greet someone you do not know or haven't seen for some time.

SMPC TOOLBOX

SMPC job description

~~SMPC worship shepherd job description with tasks~~

~~SMPC worship facilitator job description with tasks~~

What is worship?

~~Welcome words read by Board member (ask Charlotte for words she has been using)~~

~~Suggestions for facilitating Milestones~~

Managing Transitions

Rubric to evaluate worship