

Mountain Light Service Leader Handbook

Introduction

At all Unitarian Universalist churches, we are called to give our time and our talent. We sincerely appreciate your participation in our Service Leader program. Thank you for answering the call!

Your goals as a Service Leader (SL) are to serve as the welcoming host to the person presenting (Presenter) the program or sermon (Program) and to prepare the Order of Service (OS).

Ins and Outs of This Handbook

This handbook is intended to guide you through the SL process by giving you direction and resources. Please review it. We have attempted to cover most of the possible scenarios that you might encounter while planning your OS, but use your judgment to adapt this process to your particular situation. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact any member of the Worship Team.

Preparing the Order of Service

To get started, go to your OS Template and our UU hymnal, *Singing the Living Tradition*, to use as references. Borrow the hymnal from church, but please return it. When planning your OS, it may help to see some from previous Sundays. You may also consult the online archives (see below).

As soon as possible, contact with your Presenter, to introduce yourself as her Service Leader. The Worship Team Coordinator (Coordinator) will send you the Presenter's contact information, along with any of the information already provided.

Normally, the Coordinator will already have received a presentation title (Title), and a brief description of the program (Blurb) for our newsletter and website. He also should have received a brief biography (Bio) that you will use to introduce the Presenter. In the rare event that these are unavailable at the time that you

agree to act as the SL, the Coordinator will discuss with you how to best acquire them.

If your Presenter is new to Mountain Light remind her that, traditionally, a Program at MLUUC runs for approximately 20 minutes, with about 10 minutes for discussion directly after her presentation.

Email her a copy of your Order of Service. Be sure to CC the Coordinator, Song Leader, and Slide Maker.

Usually the Music Director will pick the songs. However, the Presenter might wish to pick all, some, or none of the hymns and/or readings. She may want to read all or some of the words or have you read all or some of them. She may prefer to lead the mediation or prefer you to lead it. Often Presenters, especially ministers, will want to select all or part of the OS elements, because they want to present a cohesive Sunday Service experience. No one knows better than the Presenter which hymn will compliment her sermon. Be sure to clarify if she has preferences before you proceed.

If she wishes to create the OS in whole or part, you should explain that we have a list available of the hymns that we know, and that if she prefers a piece of music not on that list, then she should be prepared to lead us in song. Remind her that she needs to provide you with her OS, including the numbers for hymns and readings, no later than the Wednesday before her service. This will give you enough time to convey the music to be used to the Pianist and Song Leader. You should forward her OS to the Coordinator, who will make sure that it is printed in the Sunday Service Bulletin.

Your Presenter is welcome (within reason) to include items that fall outside the OS Template or our UU sources, but don't encourage this. If you, as the SL, are uneasy about the appropriateness of her ideas or how they might be received at Mountain Light, before agreeing, check with a member of the Worship Team.

Lastly, be prepared to provide detailed directions to the church, if needed. Ask your Presenter if she has any questions about either the service, the area, or anything else with which you might be able to help. If you can not answer her question, assure her that you will pass them on to the Worship Team.

Enacting the Order of Service

Arrive Early: Plan to arrive before Fellowship begins to make sure that you have everything ready for the service and so you can greet the Presenter when she arrives. As her host, make introductions as needed, and make her feel welcome at MLUUC. Offer her refreshments, and be sure she knows where the restrooms are located.

Review the OS with the Presenter: confirm which roles you each will play and address any last minute questions or concerns. Make sure the Presenter has everything that she needs for her Program.

Setup Checklist:

Set up Team should have turned on the microphone, but you will need to adjust it to a convenient height for both the Presenter and for you. Be sure that they laid out 10 plus candles, checked that lighter works, and put offertory baskets in the podium. Check; ask a Worship Team member for help, if needed.

Lay Out Your Materials:

Have the items that you will need to read laid out on the podium in a sensible order. You will need a printed script based on your OS, containing the Welcoming Statement, any words that you will be reading (or have them bookmarked in the hymnal or appropriate book), the Presenter introduction (Bio), and any other material that you may want to read.

Ring the Chime: At 10:30, you'll ring the chime to call congregants to be seated for the worship service.

Begin the Service: As Sunday Service Leader, you are responsible for leading the first part of the OS. Greet everyone with a hearty "Good Morning" and introduce yourself as Service Leader. Then read the Welcoming Statement. Ask if we have any visitors. Then ask if there are any announcements.

If appropriate, introduce the Presenter briefly: If the Presenter has expressed interest in leading a portion of the service at some point before the Program, introduce her briefly at that point in the service, and invite her to come up to the pulpit to lead those features. Otherwise, you will lead.

Lighting the Chalice: Unless otherwise agreed, you will read the Chalice Lighting and/or Opening Words. If the Presenter reads the words during the Chalice Lighting, you will probably light the Chalice. Sometimes, however, you may want someone from the congregation (especially a youth) to light the chalice while the words are being read.

Continuing the Service: If the Presenter has not asked to do them, you will likely be responsible for opening words, introducing the first hymn, leading the responsive reading, and lighting the first candle for our Candles of Community. You would then invite others to light their own. After the last person has lit his candle, you will light one final candle "for all those Joys and Concerns too close to our hearts to share". Usually, this is followed by a meditation (silent or guided). Some Presenters, especially some ministers, will prefer to lead this.

Note: When you lead the congregation in the Responsive Reading, be sure to ask them to read the italic print (or large print on the monitors).

Conduct the Offertory: For the Offertory (taking the collection), ask one or two church members to help with this prior to service. You have already checked that the baskets were in the pulpit. It is best to use offertory words from hymnal or websites. Avoid adlibbing. After the baskets have been collected, ask the congregation to stand and sing the Doxology, printed inside the front cover of the hymnal or viewed on the monitors.

If children are present, ask the congregation to sing the children to RE with "Go Now on Peace", hymn #413.

Introduce the Presenter: Read the provided Bio to introduce the Presenter and mention her presentation's title to the congregation. The Presenter will take over at this point. On some occasions you might need to keep watch on the time and hint to the Presenter, especially lay speakers, that time is running out. However,

we are not normally that strict with time and would not interrupt a Program except under pressing circumstances.

Introduce the Discussion: After her Program, thank the Presenter, and introduce the Discussion period by simply asking if anyone has any questions or comments. The Presenter will handle the Discussion from that point. If the Discussion is lively and has gone over ten minutes, it is your responsibility to step up, cut off discussion, and suggest that discussion can continue after the service if the Presenter is agreeable. Thank the Speaker.

Closing the Service: If the Presenter is not leading the closing portion of the service, ask the congregation to stand to sing the final hymn. After the song, tell them to please sit and then read the Closing Words. Lastly, extinguish the Chalice.

About the Music

When hymns are selected by the Presenter or by you, email the Music Director with the hymn numbers so that he can do any preparation that he needs to do in advance of the service. If the Pianist will not be available, there is a CD with 30 popular hymns from the hymnal (*Singing the Living Tradition*) that can be used for musical accompaniment. Please check with someone on the Worship Team about using the CD.

The online list of hymns (see below) specifies which songs we know well, which are on CD, and even some video links (although the version might vary to some degree).

Follow Up

It is a nice touch to email a thank-you note to the Presenter after the service. You may, of course, express appreciation for the topic or the visit in general. Ask about their experience and report any of their joys and concerns to the Worship Team members, so that we may address them.

Service Leader Resources

Mountain Light UUC has numerous traditional sources for the hymns and words that you will need for your service.

Singing the Living Tradition: Our hymnal has both hymns and words for just about every part of the service. You can find a helpful contents section in the front, and there are numerous indexes in the back of the hymnal to help you locate readings for specific topics.

ML2: This supplementary website (www.mluuc.org/ML2) has an entire section devoted to Sunday Services with many SL tools and resources.

The OS template

OS Archive

Welcoming Statements

Readings not in the Hymnal

Speaker Biographical Information

Unitarian Universalist Association websites:

www.uua.org's Worship Web

Church of the Larger Fellowship