

**UNITARIAN
CONGREGATION
OF
NIAGARA**

**GUIDELINES
FOR
SERVICE LEADERS**

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2005**

THANK YOU FOR SIGNING UP TO BE A SERVICE LEADER!

Your participation in our Program is very important and necessary. Participating in the Program as a service leader is a nice, gentle introduction to public speaking in the Unitarian Congregation of Niagara because it is completely non-threatening. In addition, what you are doing is a service to the congregation and helps us to keep the program going.

In other words, don't worry about making a mistake because you won't! As service leader, you have the freedom not to follow the Order of Service to the letter. If you decide you don't want to have a responsive reading, for example, you don't have to have it. There *are* some elements that are particularly cherished by the members of the congregation, such as the Joys and Concerns, and other elements that are required, such as the Offertory and Announcements, but you still have a good deal of freedom. You can offer up a particularly treasured poem or little story; you can have more than two (2) hymns; you can have an interactive story for children or even a little participatory exercise. On the other hand, if you aren't the most adventurous person or you just like tradition, you can follow the Order of Service and just put in your own selection of hymns and reading.

Here are some steps that you might wish to follow if it's your first time:

About three (3) weeks prior to your Sunday:

1. You should probably save your Order of Service so that you have a guide and take a hymnbook, *Singing the Living Tradition*, home with you.
2. If you don't have an email address or phone number for the speaker, contact your Program Director. She or he will have a contact number or address.
3. Contact your speaker and get her or him to give you the particulars of their address, such as a final title (the Program Committee may have only been given a tentative or working title or the speaker may have changed her or his mind about the title and

topic and redesigned it), and a précis or summary of the contents. That will help you to choose hymns and readings that are appropriate.

4. You should also contact Bruce Millar at calpal@aol.com to advise him of the information about the speaker and topic so that he can do the advertising.
5. Ask your speaker for a little biography that will help you to introduce her or him on the Sunday on which she or he is speaking.
6. Also ask your speaker if there are any readings that she or he would like read. You can substitute the speaker's reading for your own or, if you think there is time, include your own as well.
7. Remind your speaker that she or he has about thirty (30) minutes for the talk and should allow for about ten (10) minutes of discussion afterwards. Reminding him or her doesn't *ensure* that she or he will actually stick to that timeline but you can always try! One of your jobs as service leader on your Sunday, when your speaker is giving her or his address, is to keep an eye on the time and notify them that they are running out or going over.
8. Once you have the information from the speaker, you can then go through the hymnbook to find opening words, chalice lighting words, responsive readings, and, of course, hymns! At the back of the book, starting on page 635, you will find various indices. I find the Topical Index of Readings on page 641 very helpful. On page 669 you will find the Topical Index of Hymns. These two indices will give you a good orientation to the kinds of topics that are covered. You may have to be a little creative in your search, but, again, know that you will not make a mistake! Whatever you choose will be fine! You don't have to stick to hymns on a particular topic, you can choose readings and hymns that are completely different. Who cares? You're in charge and your congregation will be satisfied with whatever you decide. I often

choose hymns that are familiar to the congregation but you can be adventurous and choose a hymn we've never done before.

9. The Internet is another useful tool for finding readings. Type "Unitarian" into a search engine and you'll find a whole host of websites and resources! It's very exciting!

By Wednesday before your Sunday (i.e. about 5 days prior):

10. You must give the information about the readings and hymns to Darcy Ewanchuk, our Office Administrator, and Theresa (Terri) Pothier, our pianist. Here are their email addresses:

Darcy — solution@vaxxine.com

Terri — theresapothier@sympatico.ca

The easiest thing to do is just direct your email to Darcy and copy Terri. If you don't have the Internet, just phone Darcy and then phone Terri:

Darcy Ewanchuk – 905-684-3484

Terri Pothier – 905-935-5142

You can also fax Darcy at 905-704-0242.

On the Sunday on which you are the Service Leader:

10. You might want to get there at about 10:30 a.m. Then you can be there to greet the speaker when she or he arrives! Introduce yourself and go over the biography and summary of the talk just to make sure that everything is on track. You might want to introduce the speaker to a few people to make her or him feel more

comfortable. If it's somebody who's been with us on a previous occasion, you probably won't need to worry about this.

11. Get a glass of water for the speaker and put it to the right side of the podium, letting the speaker know that the water is there. You can get yourself a glass as well, putting it on the left side so they don't get mixed up!
12. Make sure the microphone is on and at a comfortable level for you. The people who put out the mics are usually good about turning them on and making sure they're working but it won't hurt for you to double-check. Also, when you're speaking, please ensure that you speak at the microphone or it won't pick up your voice. Remember, we have a number of people in the congregation who have trouble hearing and they depend on your voice to be amplified by the microphone to enjoy the service.
13. While your speaker is giving her or his address, keep an eye on the clock. If she or he is going over her or his allotted time, you will have to signal them to wrap it up.
14. Relax! This is a completely non-threatening environment where the congregation will help you out if you need it. Nobody will heckle you or humiliate you if you make a mistake. Enjoy yourself and the experience you are about to have.

Hopefully these guidelines will help to make your experience as a service leader less intimidating and confusing. If you can think of anything that should be added, please let me know at nmomirov@cogeco.ca.

Thanks again!