

# Eastrose Fellowship Unitarian Universalist



## Program Leader Handbook

*Provided by the Eastrose Fellowship  
Sunday Services Committee*

**Thank you for volunteering to lead a Sunday service for Eastrose.** The Sunday Services Committee depends on your careful preparation to make our services the best they can be. We are committed to presenting programs of such high excellence and inspirational quality that members can't bear to miss them and visitors can't wait to come back!

When you volunteer to be a Program Leader, you run the show. It is your job to coordinate the theme of opening and closing words, responsive readings, hymns and other elements of the service with the topic of the sermon or presentation. The speaker may wish to help select the elements, but it is your responsibility to see that the service is organized and coordinated.

As program leader, you will make the announcements, introduce participants and speakers, *open and close the service on time* and keep the speaker within the appropriate time frame. Feel free to contact any member of this committee for help or if you have questions.

## **Basic Responsibilities of a Program Leader**

### **At least two weeks before the service:**

1. Consult with the speaker about elements of the service and know the parts for which you are responsible. (For example, Chalice Lighting, welcome, children's story, offering, etc.). The length of the total service should be from 10:30 to 11:45. *(If you have not received the speaker's contact information, contact a member of the Sunday Services Committee.)*
2. Refer to the order of service guide (*see page 4*) to be sure necessary elements are included in the service. Choose appropriate readings, songs, hymns, and special words, quotations or poems that complement the speaker's topic, recognize the season, or note some relevant theme.
3. Consult the **Program Leaders Resource Guide** for sample openings, chalice lightings, readings, special words about sharing and offering, etc. Other resources include the hymnal and a variety of publications on the Program Leader resource shelf in the office.
4. Consider including the children or youth members of the fellowship in the service by having them light the chalice, perform a reading, introduce the offering or some other element of the service.
5. Confer with the speaker and your Sunday Services Committee contact person about arrangements for pianist or other musicians, any special set-up, equipment, or elements of décor that may be required, and whether any special elements for the children will be included. (Note: the committee may have already arranged some of these things.)
6. Consult with the pianist and/or guest musician(s) about hymns (sometimes guest ministers like to select the hymns) and other music, such as prelude, offertory and postlude. Be certain to consider whether the choir is scheduled to perform at the service and include those elements when planning the service.
7. Ask the speaker if they welcome questions or comments after their talk, if time permits. Alternatively, ask them if they would be willing to stay for a short time after the conclusion of the service to entertain questions and discussion. Include a note about this in the order of service, if appropriate.

**When the guest is a minister:** we ask the minister to choose the readings, lead the meditation, introduce the hymn before the sermon, preach the sermon, introduce the closing hymn and offer the benediction. (In other words, the minister leads the second half of the service.)

**When the outside guest is not a minister:** we only ask them to offer a 20-minute message. The program leader is responsible for choosing and leading all the other elements of the service.

### **During the week before the service:**

1. Check in with the speaker(s), pianist, and all other persons who will be involved in the service to make certain there are no last-minute issues to be handled, etc.
2. Get the order of service information to the Eastrose office **no later than Friday 8 a.m.** so that the bulletins for the service can be produced. (*You may e-mail them to Warren James at [whjames@earthlink.net](mailto:whjames@earthlink.net). and to the Eastrose office at [office@eastrose.org](mailto:office@eastrose.org)).*)

### **If you are program leader for an outside speaker:**

1. Be sure both of you have a clear understanding of the speaker's role in the service and the time frame for their talk, and for discussion, if appropriate. (See page 4 "Elements of the Order of Service" for a description of the responsibilities of guests speakers who are ministers, and those who are not.)
2. Discuss with the speaker the religious, spiritual, moral or social dimension of their topic and how it relates to our UU principles. Depending on their awareness and knowledge of us, you may need to provide this context in the service through your introductory words and readings. Whatever the topic, encourage them to share something from their own personal experience that touches our hearts. What is it about this topic that stirs their passion?
3. Acquaint the speaker with our policy of using inclusive language in our services. Consult the **Program Leaders Resource Guide** for more on this topic.
4. Make sure the speaker knows to get to the Fellowship by 10:00 a.m. If needed, provide them with directions.

### **On the day of the service:**

1. Be at the Fellowship by 10:00 a.m. to greet the speaker and make preparations. Give the speaker an Order of Service, confer about any last minute changes or other details, and show them where the restroom is.
2. Decide in advance which elements of the service may be eliminated (e.g., the closing hymn) if the service is running long. Discuss this with the speaker as well. (e.g. If the service is running long, do not invite congregational response, even if it was planned.)
3. Get the speaker's honorarium check, if applicable.
4. Check to see that hymnals are on chairs, that the chapel is in good order, candles are set up for lighting, and that the chalice has sufficient lamp oil. You may wish to use the gong from the minister's office.
5. If the choir will be singing at this service, they may be practicing in the chapel up until 10:15 or 10:20. Please be courteous of their needs and ensure they are not interrupted.
6. If possible, observe quiet time in the chapel from 10:15 to 10:30, and encourage others to do so as well. If needed, politely remind those gathered of this observance.
7. Turn on the PA system by pressing the on/off switch on the power strip in the far right cabinet at the front of the sanctuary, and test all microphones. Please do not make any adjustments on the amplifier. Practice adjusting the microphone position at the pulpit, as you may need to do this for the speaker and others. If congregational response is planned, be sure to hook up the second microphone with the long cord. [*Ed Hofmann-Smith, Joyce Walsh or Michael Schilmoeller can help with microphone issues or other adjustments to the PA system.*]
8. Ensure that the pulpit has a box of tissues, cup of water, order of service and hymnal for the speaker's use.
9. At about 10:25:

- ✓ remind those gathered to bring any announcements (written or otherwise) to you prior to the start of the service, and
- ✓ send someone (preferably a child) to ring the bell up and down the hall, to call people into the sanctuary for the start of the service.

10. At 10:30:

- ✓ signal the pianist to begin the prelude, and
- ✓ ring the small chime to begin the service. This invites people to become quiet and listen to the music.

### During the service:

1. After the prelude, introduce yourself and welcome everyone. Speak clearly and graciously into the pulpit microphone, and **SMILE !**
2. Be consistent about speaking into the microphone; remember that we have some members and guests who rely on the PA to hear the service. **Please urge everyone to use the microphone.**
3. We nearly always have first-time visitors, and you are providing their first impression of Eastrose. During the Welcome and Announcements invite visitors to stand and introduce themselves, sign the visitor book and stay for coffee and conversation after the service. If you ask people to take just a few seconds to greet their neighbors, this encourages everyone--newcomers and veteran members--to chat again after the service and get acquainted. *(Limit the time of these greetings to one minute.)*
4. Make certain that the children are “sung out” to RE classes on time. *(No more than 10 to 12 minutes into the service.)*
5. Call attention to printed announcements and read any late ones given to you. **Do not invite announcements from the floor!** This prevents lengthy impromptu contributions, which can interrupt the flow of the service and make people restless.
6. Be confident and competent in your pace and manner of speech. Even if you stumble or lose your place, don't make apologetic or irrelevant remarks. Pause to regain your focus, and then continue.
7. If a period for silent meditation will be included in the service, begin and end it with a ring of a chime. This provides a peaceful transition and helps people to know when to focus their attention back to the speaker.
8. Keep an eye on the clock on the back wall to make sure you are on track time-wise. Whether you have a guest speaker or you are leading an in-house program, it is your responsibility to keep track of the time during the service and move things along as necessary. You may need to gently remind people to be brief when joining in discussion, and model brevity by not rambling in your own remarks and words of transition. Make certain to **close the service on time.**
9. If discussion is part of the service, end it with a reading or song and words of benediction to provide closure. Whenever possible, it is preferable to invite the congregation to return to the chapel for discussion after the service has ended. Doing so helps to keep the service within the allotted time frame and makes it possible for those not wishing to stay for discussion to leave inconspicuously. During discussion periods:
  - The Program Leader and/or speaker facilitates the discussion, using the microphone and calling people by name
  - The microphone on long cord or the portable microphone should be passed around the congregation by you or a helper – hold on to the microphone yourself, if possible.
  - Close the discussion in time to end the service promptly.

**After the service:**

1. Be a gracious host for speakers and members who wish to chat, and help the speaker make their exit when they're ready.
2. Give the speaker their honorarium check.
3. Take a few minutes right away to fill out an evaluation form and leave it in the Sunday Services Committee mailbox. *[As Program Leader you are in an ideal position to say what went well and what needs improvement. Your input is needed].*
4. Sending a thank you note to speakers is appropriate, and much appreciated.

## Elements of the Order of Service

***This information is DUE AT THE EASTROSE OFFICE no later than 8 a.m. ON THE FRIDAY preceding the service, so that the bulletins can be produced. (You may e-mail it to Warren James at jamesabe6@comcast.net, and to the Eastrose office at [office@eastrose.org](mailto:office@eastrose.org)).***

The following is an example of an Order of Service, as it should be conveyed to the Eastrose Office. **Required elements** in **bold**, and *optional elements* in *italic* type.

<b>Prelude</b>	<b>[Title/Composer]</b>
<b>Welcome &amp; Announcements</b> (recognize birthdays)	
<i>Introit (choir Sundays)</i>	<i>[Title/Composer]</i>
<b>Opening Words</b>	<b>[Title/Author]</b>
<b>Opening Hymn - #___</b>	<b>[Title]</b>
<b>Chalice Lighting</b>	
<i>Sharing of Joys &amp; Concerns (first Sunday of each month only. Children are here for J&amp;C. Line up along wall to speak, please)</i>	
<b>Responsive Reading - # ___</b>	<b>[Title/Author]</b>
<b>Children Carry the Light of Our Community to the “UUniverse”, Our Religious Education Program</b> <b>Sing: “Go Now in Peace”</b>	
<b>Pastoral Moment</b>	
<b>Hymn # 123 - “Spirit Of Life”</b>	
<b>Offering</b>	<b>[Title/Composer]</b>
<b>Reading (s)</b>	<b>[Title/Author]</b>
<b>Silent Meditation</b>	
<b>Hymn #___ (unless the choir is singing) Anthem (Choir Sundays)</b>	
<b>Message / Sermon / Presentation – “Title”</b>	<b>[Speaker]</b>
<i>Discussion / Question &amp; Answer</i>	
<b>Closing Hymn - #___</b>	<b>[Title]</b>
<b>Benediction/ Closing Words</b>	
<b>Extinguish Chalice</b>	
<b>Postlude</b>	<b>[Title/Composer]</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Program Leader</b>	<b>[Name]</b>
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>[Name]</b>
<b>Music</b>	<b>[Name of special musicians, etc.]</b>
<b>Altar Flowers from [_____] in memory of [_____]</b>	

## Information Regarding Children At Services

Since our children join the adults of the congregation for the beginning of services, their needs and attention spans need to be taken into account when planning programs. It should be remembered that the purpose for including all ages is to build community and model worship. The Sunday Services Committee has made a commitment to the Religious Education Program that the children will be able to leave for their classes after 10 (and no more than 12) minutes every Sunday except the first Sunday of the month, when children participate in the Candle lighting.

To help you meet this commitment to our children the following guidelines are recommended:

- The children should only be in the Service for ten to twelve minutes as they have a Children's Worship and classes to attend. (The exceptions to this time frame are the first Sundays of the month and the intergenerational services that are planned in conjunction with the Director of Religious Education.)
- The Welcome, Chalice Lighting, Introductions, and our monthly Candles of Care and Concern are important rituals that we are sharing with our children. They are models of worship. Please speak clearly and simply, remembering they are for all ages.
- Opening words, hymns and the responsive reading should be chosen with the children's presence in mind. Children often understand more than we give them credit for, but inspirational words do not have to be difficult or confusing.
- When designing the Order of Service, please include the "Sing Children to Class" element. This helps parents and children know what to expect. The song is "Go Now in Peace" and is printed inside the front cover of the bulletin.
- In order to keep our commitment to the Religious Education program it is essential that announcements are kept short. (Don't repeat announcements that are listed in the order of service) Read the announcements that have been handed in to you on the "Announcement" form (if someone asks to make an announcement, ask them to write it out on an announcement form and give it to you for you to read). Do not ask for announcements from the floor! Finish reading the announcements and then *immediately* move on to the Chalice Lighting. Please remember to recognize birthdays! (Published in Petals)
- When making announcements, please say something such as "Here at Eastrose children join us for the beginning of our service and then leave for their own worship and classes. Childcare is available in the playroom for anyone who needs it." This lets visitors know what to expect in case the DRE has not been able to let them know. If it is an Intergenerational Service, please let people know that there will be no classes, only childcare.
- Many children are not yet readers and songs they could easily sing along to or remember would be more inclusive. A selection of child-friendly songs is included in the **Program Leaders Resource Guide**.

If you need consultation or advice, ask the Director of Religious Education or a member of the Sunday Service or Religious Education committees.

**Copyright 2002, Eastrose Fellowship Unitarian Universalist – All Rights Reserved**

**Produced by the Eastrose Fellowship Sunday Services Committee**

**Revision Date: April 19, 2002 -- January 5, 2005 – January 2008**