LEADERSHIP OF CONGREGATIONAL SINGING SYLLABUS

Faculty: Joyce Poley and Mark Freundt

UUMN Conference August 2009
Portland, Oregon
Revised March 10, 2009

Purpose

This course will develop strong, effective, and inspiring leadership of hymns/songs for congregational singing. Through the use of both practical and written assignments, candidates will use a wide range of musical styles and techniques to help them broaden and deepen the worship experience of the congregations they serve.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course they should be able to demonstrate:

- development of an individual leadership style that encourages enthusiasm and strong singing from the congregation
- an understanding of the importance of congregational singing
- effective and concise teaching of a new hymn/song in unison and in harmony
- proficiency of leadership as a singer
- proficiency of leadership from an instrument, OR effective collaboration with an instrumentalist
- familiarity with current UU hymn/song sources (e.g. STLT, STJ, MTLS)
- meaningful communication with the congregation regarding hymn/song context and background, including cultural and stylistic awareness
- proficiency in a variety of musical styles (e.g. standard hymns, folk songs, etc.)
- effective and creative use of various techniques and approaches (e.g. dynamics, modulation, instrumentation, etc.)
- a knowledge of basic copyright laws

Required Course Materials:

- *Singing the Living Tradition* (STLT)
- *Between the Lines* (background on hymns from STLT)
- *Singing the Journey* (STJ)
- Website materials relating to *Singing the Journey* found at http://archive.uua.org/publications/music/contributors.htm
- *May This Light Shine* (MTLS) a songbook for children published by the UUMN

Pre-Class Assignments

1. Read the following two documents before coming to class in Portland**:**
   a) Notes on "The Importance of Congregational Singing" and "Leading As A Vocalist" and "Leading As An Instrumentalist", available from Joyce Poley at jpoley@shaw.ca and on the UUA website.
   b) Guide to Copyright for Music, available online at www.uua.org/publications/singingjourney/50630.shtml

2. Write a brief bio (no more than 1 page) of your own musical background and areas of special interest, and the music you are involved in at present (church or otherwise). Include any questions or concerns you may have about this course that you would like addressed. Point form or paragraph – your choice.
   Due May 15, 2009.

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3. Come to class in August prepared to lead a hymn/song from STLT or STJ. (You can lead either as a singer, or as an instrumentalist.) Choose one of the following examples:
   - Prepare a song or hymn (one you assume to be unfamiliar to the congregation) and demonstrate how you would introduce and teach it.
   - Prepare a familiar song or hymn that you want to do differently (e.g. add a harmony part, use a different melody, etc.) and demonstrate how you would teach it.
   - Prepare and teach an *a cappella* round you may be doing for the first time with your congregation.

   Time of presentation: 5 minutes.

   Submit the title of your hymn or song, and a brief outline, in point form, of your proposed approach by **May 15, 2009.**

Post-Class Portfolio (due by March 1, 2010)

1. **Submit a log** (see chart titled "Song Leading Experience Log") of 6 hymns/songs that demonstrate expansion of your developing skill set, including variety of musical styles and approaches. Use at least 1 hymn/song from each hymn source (STLT, STJ, MTLS). These should be in addition to the songs you do for your video (see below). As well as leading during regular services, you may wish to include leading in other churches, in RE settings, or at social gatherings.

2. **Submit a video** of a worship service (or parts of several worship services) in which you act as Song Leader. (If possible, we ask that your video clip be compatible with Real Player or Windows Media.)

   Include the following**:**

a) A 5 - 8 minute demonstration of you teaching something new to the congregation. For example, teach an unfamiliar song or hymn, a round, a partner song, or a harmony part. This could be done as part of the ingathering before the service, or at some other event or social gathering.
b) Lead 2 hymns or songs (at the same or different services) being sure to begin with a very brief verbal introduction of each piece. This may include background information, relevance to the theme, etc.
c) Lead a short congregational piece that acts as part of the liturgy (e.g. a sung chalice lighting, meditation, children's song, etc.)

3. **Write an account** of the above leading experiences contained on your video, detailing your selection process, collaboration process, preparation and implementation. Conclude with a self-evaluation of what worked, what didn't work, and what you learned in the process.

4. **Submit an evaluation,** written by your sponsor, of your entire video project.

5. **Write a newsletter article** that speaks to the importance of congregational singing,

OR

Submit a video of a brief talk to your congregation, or to a committee in your church, about the importance of congregational singing.

All 5 of the above assignments due by March 1, 2010

Evaluation

Participants will be evaluated on the following:

1. Pre- and post-class assignments
2. Class participation during UUMN conference in August