

**FAITHFUL JOURNEYS**  
**A Tapestry of Faith Program for Children**  
**Grades 2-3**



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# THE PROGRAM

*Onward! to that which is endless,*

*As it was beginningless...*

*To see nothing anywhere but what you may  
reach it and pass it.*

*To look up or down no road but it stretches and  
waits for you —*

*To know the universe itself as a road —  
as many roads —*

*as roads for traveling souls. — Walt Whitman*

Because ours is a creedless faith, defining what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist can be challenging. Our adults and youth often welcome such a challenge — indeed, a questioning spirit is part of our faith. Yet, our children need to learn who Unitarian Universalists are, what we believe, and how we live in faith. Faithful Journeys equips them with language and experiences to answer these questions and help them develop a strong Unitarian Universalist identity.

Participants embark on a pilgrimage of faith, exploring how Unitarian Universalism translates into life choices and everyday actions. In each session, they hear historic or contemporary examples of Unitarian Universalist faith in action. Stories about real people model how participants can activate their own personal agency — their capacity to act faithfully as Unitarian Universalists — in their own lives, and children have regular opportunities to share and affirm their own stories of faithful action. Through sessions structured around the Unitarian Universalist Principles, Faithful Journeys demonstrates that our Principles are not a dogma, but a credo that individuals can affirm with many kinds of action. Over the course of the program, children discover a unity of faith in the many different ways Unitarian Universalists, including themselves, can act on our beliefs.

In the last session, the central story will be provided by individuals in your congregation whom you will invite to share their own experiences with the group. The children will have previously heard examples of Unitarian Universalist faithful living through the centuries. Now bring it home, and share the faithful journeys of people in your own congregation.

All sessions include hands-on activities as well as guided discussion, reflection, and self-expression to engage participants with various learning styles. Sessions that rely heavily on verbal learning and expression also offer alternate activities that may better

reach learners who are more active. Many core activities suggest adaptations to address different abilities as well as learning styles. Craft each session using activities you think will best suit the children in your Faithful Journeys group.

Each session of this program includes rituals: sharing opening words, a chalice-lighting, centering in silence before hearing a story, and singing. You may also choose to add a ritual of lighting candles of joys and sorrows (Session 1, Alternate Activity 1). Most young children love ritual, and these spiritual activities form an important element of the program.

## GOALS

Faithful Journeys will:

- Strengthen participants' Unitarian Universalist identity through exploration of people from our faith heritage and our contemporary communities whose actions have expressed their faith and our Principles and promoted positive change
- Help participants recognize and develop their capacity to be agents for positive change in the world
- Highlight ways the small and large choices we make represent our personal faith and beliefs
- Teach participants to understand our Unitarian Universalist Principles and apply them to faithful actions in their own lives
- Promote understanding of, and sense of responsibility for, the world's interconnectedness, and reinforce cooperation, nonviolence, and balance as necessary for our collective moral, ethical, and spiritual health
- Engage participants physically as well as mentally and spiritually through Move It! activities
- Foster the creation of a learning community in which everyone is respected, welcomed and honored — a community in which diversity is embraced, justice is practiced, and children learn, grow and have fun together.

## LEADERS

A team of two or more adults should lead Faithful Journeys. Having two leaders present at all times helps ensure child safety and optimum conditions for learning. While one leader implements an activity, the other can focus on logistics and children's engagement, behavior

and safety. A collaborative teaching style is preferred. It may be useful for one leader on a team to take primary responsibility for Faith in Action activities, most of which will occur outside regular session time.

Ideally, leaders will be familiar with the Unitarian Universalist Principles and how one can express one's beliefs through action. They should have experience using their own personal agency to live out their faith principles for the purpose of effecting positive change. Leaders should be able to affirm diverse beliefs and perspectives in the group; flexibility of thought and moral integrity are important.

Several sessions call for the group to participate in the life of the congregation by participating in worship or an outreach program. At least one leader should be familiar with the congregation's practices, rituals and calendar.

Finally, Faithful Journeys leaders should enjoy stories. To be comfortable telling a story, rather than reading it aloud, is desirable, though certainly not a requirement for effective learning to take place.

## PARTICIPANTS

Faithful Journeys is designed for use with children in second and third grades. You may find it useful to think about the developmental norms for this age group. Not all children arrive at each developmental stage at the same time, but knowing what to expect overall from seven-, eight- and nine-year-olds can be quite helpful, especially to first-time leaders.

In [\*Nurturing Children and Youth: A Developmental Guidebook\*](#) (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2005), Tracey L. Hurd discusses developmental characteristics of school-age children. She notes that by age seven, children's learning disabilities and behavioral or psychological issues may have appeared and been identified. Individual learning styles and strengths may also be apparent. Children who need glasses often get their first pair around this age.

In a section on moral development, Hurd notes that the typical child in this age group is "passionately interested" in moral issues:

She seeks what is fair and right... By developing games with rules, playing sports, or creating or belonging to clubs, the school-age child practices figuring out what is fair... This play is practice for more generalized moral decision making.

In general, children in second or third grade are:

- Able to use gross and fine motor skills, which are almost fully developed

- Influenced by media images and messages; beginning to compare themselves to norms perceived as desirable
- Engaging in logical thinking based on "concrete operational" thinking
- Practicing cognitive skills of acquiring, storing, and retrieving information
- Developing their individual learning style, which may be auditory visual, sensory and/or kinesthetic
- Showing their domain-specific intelligence, which may be verbal/linguistic, musical/rhythmic, logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal and/or naturalist
- Finding self-esteem in their knowledge and their student identity
- Engaging peers; learning through mutual friendships
- Able to comprehend the perspectives of others
- Likely to engage in gender-segregated play
- Interested in their own racial, ethnic and gender identity, and seeking affirmation of these identities from peers
- Learning and negotiating early understandings of social scripts about sexuality
- Aware of and able to apply the Golden Rule (treating others as they wish to be treated)
- Energized by developing rules for play or work that ensure fairness
- Interested in personal moral issues and able to wrestle with moral dilemmas in relationships
- Aware of societal moral issues
- Interested in helping to solve community and world problems
- Showing interest in concrete aspects of faith and religion
- "Doing" religion or spirituality by participating in rituals, practices and traditions.

Hurd offers a variety of strategies that speak to these developmental considerations and may help you shape your sessions effectively. You can:

- Provide for children's overall physical needs, including nutrition, exercise and rest

- Allow children to be active; avoid extended times of sitting and listening
- Provide time for play and hands-on activities
- Present challenges that promote children's use of their thinking skills
- Support different learning styles
- Encourage problem solving and discussion; allow children opportunities to experience others' perspectives through role play
- Support children's natural impulse toward rule making and peer-to-peer negotiation of what is fair
- Allow time with like-identity peers; support or facilitate mixed-peer time, as well
- Intervene appropriately against exclusion or bullying, yet affirm children's need to work out relational complexities as a part of their moral development
- Recognize the unique needs that attend the identity development of children who may be multiracial, multiethnic, transgender, and/or a "minority" in another way
- Offer children many ways to contribute to the community
- Give opportunities to "do" religion and be part of a faith community
- Welcome large spiritual questions; encourage questioning of religion
- Support self-esteem; affirm the child's developing body and identity
- Support the whole child as an individual and as a member of the group
- Provide encouragement and love.

## INTEGRATING ALL PARTICIPANTS

By adapting activities or using alternate activities, you can help make every session inclusive of children with a range of physical and cognitive abilities, learning styles, food allergies, and other needs or limitations. As you plan sessions, be aware of activities that might pose difficulties for children who are differently abled. All spaces, indoor and outdoor, need to be accessible to anyone who might be in the group. Check the width of doorways and aisles, the height of tables and the terrain of outdoor landscapes.

Find out about participants' medical conditions and their allergies, particularly to food. Sessions 5 and 13 offer food activities. Make sure all the children can eat any ingredients in any food you plan to provide.

Each session mixes active and quiet, expressive and listening, and whole group and individual activities. You may substitute alternate activities for core activities if you feel they better suit a group. As you recognize different learning styles among the participants, let this information guide your design of each session.

In the Including All Participants sections, you will often find the suggestion to bring out the fidget objects basket. A basket full of manipulable objects, such as pipe cleaners or clay, can keep restless hands and minds busy. Make fidget objects available when you feel that some or all of the children may have difficulty sitting through longer periods of listening or discussion. Find more information about fidget objects in the Before You Start section of this Introduction and in Session 2, Leader Resource 2.

Some activity descriptions mention specific concerns or suggest adaptations under the heading Including All Participants. Feel free to devise your own adaptations to meet any special needs you perceive. As the leader, you will know best how to provide a fully inclusive learning experience for the group. If you have questions about the accessibility or adaptability of a particular activity, please ask your director of religious education for advice.

In the Teacher Development section of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations website, find descriptions of a helpful resource book, [Sally Patton's Welcoming Children with Special Needs.](#)

## FAMILIES

Families are the primary influences on the faith development of their children. As a program leader, you take on a special role: supporting parents to shape their children's Unitarian Universalist faith and moral development. By involving parents in the Faithful Journeys program, you can deepen the experience for children and their families, preparing and encouraging them to act in the world in a way that reflects the Unitarian Universalist Principles.

Each session offers Taking It Home resources, including conversation topics and other ways for families to extend the session. These may include a family game or ritual, or links to informative and/or interactive websites. Exploring session topics further at home can help children and parents to practice the skills; personalize the concepts; and make connections among congregational life, home and family life, and life's daily

challenges. These experiences deepen families' experience of Unitarian Universalism.

Adapt each session's Taking It Home section to reflect the activities the group will have engaged in and, if you like, to help families prepare for sessions yet to come. If you have an email address for each family, you may wish to provide Taking It Home as a group email, either before or immediately after the session. You can also print, photocopy, and distribute Taking It Home at the session's closing.

Invite families into your sessions. Adult or teen volunteers can be extremely helpful when you implement arts-and-crafts activities. Parents who bring musicianship, storytelling or artistic skills into your sessions will help foster participants' sense of connection between their family and their religious education experience. Beginning with Session 2, Faith in Action activities for each session offer ideal opportunities to engage parents and other congregants. Find out who can enrich your long-term Faith in Action activities with their personal interests or professional networks, or simply their time.

The leader-parent relationship is very important and must be both welcoming and reassuring. When parents bring their children to Unitarian Universalist religious education, they need to feel confidence not only in the safety and enjoyment you will provide, but also in your faith leadership. Strong partnerships foster parents' commitment to becoming strong faith leaders in their own families. As a leader, you can support and inspire parents to bring intentionality and excitement to their role in their children's faith development.

## PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The Faithful Journeys program is built around our seven Unitarian Universalist Principles. Session 1 introduces the concept of a journey in faith and the actual Faithful Journeys Path, which you will create and post for use throughout the program. Starting with Session 2, two consecutive sessions explore each Principle. The first shares a story from our Unitarian or Universalist heritage that exemplifies the Principle; the second tells a more contemporary UU story in which an individual or group's actions express the same Principle. Session 16 introduces faithful action stories from your own congregation and uses the continuing image of the Faithful Journeys Path to help participants summarize and reflect on the overall program. All sessions in Faithful Journeys follow the same structure. Between an opening and a closing ritual, participants engage in up to six activities. The Opening includes a chalice lighting and the sharing of opening words. The Closing guides you to post the session's signpost — e.g., "Get

Involved," "Be Fair" — on the Faithful Journeys Path, summarize the session theme, lead a UU Principles song and distribute handouts. If time allows, immediately after the Opening or just before the Closing would be a good time to regularly insert candles of joys and sorrows (Session 1, Alternate Activity 1).

While we suggest opening words to repeat each time you meet, you may wish to settle on other opening words or vary them. Session 1, Leader Resource 1, offers alternate opening words.

Starting in Session 2, after the Opening participants are invited to articulate and share their own faithful actions in a Faithful Footprints activity. They briefly write their acts on a footprint or wheelchair shape for you to post along the Faithful Journeys Path. You will guide them to connect their actions with one or more UU Principles.

Faithful Journeys engages the body along with mind and spirit through Move It! activities in each session. Move It! amplifies the session's theme with an active game, a song, or another movement-based activity.

Every session revolves thematically around a central story from our Unitarian and Universalist faith heritage or our contemporary UU faith community. To ready the children for the story and activate their interest, an activity called Story Basket and Centering precedes storytelling in every session. The story basket will hold one or more objects you bring, related to the session's central story. The centering exercise requires an instrument, such as a chime, which makes a sound that gradually fades away. Before You Start, in this Introduction, further describes the story basket and centering. In the sessions, find suggestions for objects related to the central story.

The Faith in Action activities in each session are optional. Time for them is not included in the 60-minute core session. However, Faith in Action is an important element of the overall Tapestry of Faith curriculum series. Some Faith in Action activities can be completed in one meeting; others are longer-term and require the involvement of congregants or community members outside your group.

Most sessions offer alternate activities. Depending on time and the interests, abilities and learning styles you observe in the group, you may choose to replace one or more core activities with an alternate activity, or add an alternate activity to your session. You may also find alternate activities useful outside Faithful Journeys for gatherings such as worship retreats, intergenerational dinners or other events where some interesting, child-friendly programming is needed.

As you design your program, decide whether the group needs extra meetings to incorporate additional activities or to complete a long-term Faith in Action project. Long-term Faith in Action projects usually need meetings outside your regular session time, with different people or at another location. Before you commit to expanding or extending the program, gain support from congregational leadership and the children's families.

### How to Use This Curriculum

The Faithful Journeys program includes this Introduction and sixteen sessions. Each session has its own Introduction, followed by the Session Plan.

In each session Introduction, find:

**Quotations.** The quotations that introduce each session are intended primarily for the leaders, though at times you may wish to read one aloud to the group as an entry point to a session. Exploring a quotation together can help co-leaders feel grounded in the ideas and activities you will present. These quotations are also included in the Taking It Home section for families to consider.

**Goals.** Reviewing the goals will help you understand the desired outcomes for the session and connect its content and methodologies with the four strands of the Tapestry of Faith religious education programs: ethical development, spiritual development, Unitarian Universalist identity development and faith development.

**Learning Objectives.** These show how participants will learn and grow as a result of the experience of the session. As you plan a session, apply your knowledge of the particular group of children, the time and space you have available, and your own strengths and interests as a leader to determine the most important and achievable learning objectives for the session. Choose the activities that will serve them best.

**Session-at-a-Glance.** This table lists the session activities in a suggested order for a 60-minute session and provides an estimated time for completing each activity. The table includes all the core activities from the Opening through the Closing. The table also shows the Faith in Action activity for the session. Note: You will need additional time beyond the core 60-minute session to include a Faith in Action activity. The Session-at-a-Glance table also presents alternate activities, with their estimated times.

**Spiritual Preparation.** Taking five or ten minutes to center yourself within the session's purpose and content will support and free you to be present with the children and provide the best possible learning experience. Each session offers a short Spiritual Preparation exercise to focus you on the intangible gift being introduced and help you reflect on its connection to your own life and

your Unitarian Universalist faith. Calling forth your own experiences, beliefs and spirituality will prepare you to bring the topic to the group in an authentic manner and help you experience teaching as an event in your own spiritual growth and faith development.

### Session Plan

Following the session Introduction, the Session Plan presents every element of the session in detail in the sequence established in the Session-at-a-Glance table. The materials and preparation needed and a step-by-step description are provided for every activity, including core activities, Faith in Action and alternate activities. Additionally, the session plan provides a Taking It Home section with activities for families; Stories, Handouts, and Leader Resources for all session activities; and a Find Out More section with information and resources for leaders and parents to explore session topics further.

Adaptation to include all participants should always be part of your planning process. Under Including All Participants, many activities suggest specific modifications to make the activity manageable and meaningful for children with particular limitations or needs.

If you are reading Faithful Journeys online, you can move among a session's elements: Opening, Closing, Faith in Action, Activity 4, Story, etc. Each element occupies its own web page. You can click on "Print This Page" at any time. However, if you click on "Download Entire Program" or "Download Workshop" you will have a user-friendly document on your computer that you can customize as you choose, using your own word processing program. Once you decide which activities you will use, format and print only the materials you need.

To distribute Taking It Home sections and other handouts or letters to parents, you may wish to go green; download and adapt these documents, then use email to distribute to all children's families.

## LEADER GUIDELINES

To understand how individuals in our Unitarian Universalist history have acted faithfully, children need to understand the obstacles these people faced. As the group unpacks the stories of Harriot Kezia Hunt, Christopher Reeve, Fannie Barrier Williams and others, they will encounter difficult justice issues related to gender, skin color and physical ability. Be sensitive to children who may identify with a person who has experienced injustice, perhaps due to their own gender, mobility limitations or skin color but perhaps for another, invisible reason such as a learning disability or something in their family story. However, avoid



assuming any child identifies with a particular group or injustice. All children bring a unique perspective to stories about unfairness. Do not put any child on the spot as a spokesperson.

Be ready to talk privately with children who begin to describe situations at home that suggest a safety concern. Speak to your religious education director to ensure your congregation and state safety policies can be followed.

As children learn what it means for actions to express faith and beliefs, some may feel shame or guilt for times when they believe they have acted in ways that do not reflect our Principles. Throughout the program, remember to speak about good choices versus bad choices, rather than good people and bad people. Frequently assure the group that everyone makes mistakes, and our faith encourages us to make things right again and try to make better choices in the future.

Aim to create a learning environment that reflects the Principles you are teaching in Faithful Journeys. Communicate that everyone is welcomed and honored. Model treating everyone fairly. Identify and praise actions that reflect the Principles, as these actions take place in the group. Encourage children to resolve any conflicts by following the "directions" on the Faithful Journey signposts; when they do, mark the occasion by posting a new footprint on the path. Help participants learn experientially to apply the concepts they are learning to their own lives and choices.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Every congregation has its own approach to structuring religious education. You can implement Faithful Journeys with any model your congregation uses. This chart provides a snapshot for long-range planning.

Session	Sign post	Story
1: The Journey Begins	Traffic light lit green for "Go!"	Making a Difference — Harriot Kezia Hunt, Toribio Quimada and Annie Arnzen
2: Unconditional Love: A Gift from Our Universalist Heritage	Respect Everyone	Muddy Children — Hosea Ballou
3: Welcoming Superman	Include Everyone	A Different Kind of Superhero — Christopher Reeve
4: Be Fair	Be Fair	Belonging — Fannie Barrier Williams
5: Finding Balance	Find Balance	Finding Balance — Greater Good program of the First Unitarian Church of Rochester, New York
6: Keep Learning	Keep Learning	Learning by Heart — Sophia Lyon Fahs
7: Create Magic	Create Magic	The Perfect Peace Harvest
8: Seek Truth	Seek Truth	Finding Your Way — Ethelred Brown
9: Ask Questions	Ask Questions	A Tour of the Heavens — Clyde Tombaugh
10: Speak Out	Speak Out	Speaking Out — Maria Cook, Universalist Preacher
11: Get Involved	Get Involved	Valentines for the Governor
12: Make Peace	Make Peace	Adin Ballou and the Hopedale Community
13: Build World Community	Build World Community	Here They Come — Transylvania partner church
14: Honor Life	Honor Life	Honoring Life — Beatrix Potter
15: Protect the Earth	Protect the Earth	The Change the World Kids — Vermont UU Youth
16: Get Moving	Get Moving	Stories from members of your congregation

Generally, the sequence of sessions in Faithful Journeys — and within sessions, the sequence of activities — is designed to activate prior knowledge, pique interest, engage children in experiential learning and help children process and apply their observations and new knowledge. You may use all the sessions in sequence, or select or reorder sessions. You may also combine and adapt activities for each session to best suit your group. You know best how to shape this program to fit your congregation's religious education model, the culture of your congregation, the children in the group and the time and space you have.

Participants' learning is reinforced by activities that create bonds across generations. Faithful Journeys offers many ways to connect with the larger congregation. Talk with your minister or director of religious education about ways to integrate Faithful Journeys into multigenerational experiences. For example, you could have a month during which everyone in the congregation fills out Faithful Footprints. During the worship service, a few volunteers could share about the actions represented by their footprints. Or create and share a video that shows how members of the congregation have served as agents for positive change; this idea is described more fully in Session 16, where congregational members share stories from their own faithful journeys. By design, many Faith in Action activities in Faithful Journeys involve the larger congregation.

Many sessions will be most enjoyable if the group has access to a large, open space for a game or to your congregation's full campus for activities such as an accessibility audit (Session 3) or a treasure hunt (Session 8). Check beforehand with others who share any space you might like to visit or use.

Session 16 calls for adult visitors. Arrange visits at least a few weeks in advance and confirm the arrangements a week before the session. Another time to include adults might be for the Faithful Footprints activity, a core activity in each session. Consider inviting parents to come in to describe a principled act their child or they have done. You might engage congregational members with musical or arts-and-crafts skills to participate in particular activities.

While visits take time and effort to plan, they offer valuable opportunities for children to interact with adults in the congregation. As their circle of Unitarian Universalist role models widens, children's senses of belonging in their faith home and Unitarian Universalist identities are strengthened.

In Session 14, an alternate activity invites the group outdoors to work on a nature journal. Also, some games

suggested in various sessions would work well outdoors, depending on weather and the availability of a suitable location. Identify outdoor locations well in advance, obtain necessary permissions to take the children there, and arrange for additional adults to accompany the group, if necessary. Make sure you will not disturb others in the outdoor space at the time you plan to go there. Check ahead for insect nests or poisonous plants to avoid.

Within the sessions, you will find suggestions for adaptation. Feel free to add your own. Choose what you feel is best for your space, time and group. Remember, you are the best guide for these young learners.

## BEFORE YOU START

As soon as your program has been scheduled, prepare a calendar with the dates for each session. The more co-leaders and parent volunteers a program includes, the more useful a calendar will be. Post the calendar in your shared meeting space, and duplicate it for each adult participant.

Use the calendar as a to-do list. Once you know which activities you will include in each session, carefully read the activities' materials and preparation sections. Put advance preparations on the calendar and, if possible, assign them.

Plan to obtain any materials that your religious education program does not keep in your supply closets. Note materials that may be difficult to find, or need to be ordered in advance or collected in quantity.

For sessions with activities that need assistance from others in the congregation or community, write reminders to contact these people well in advance and to confirm their visits shortly before the session date.

Communication to families can powerfully boost the impact of Faithful Journeys. Note on your calendar when you will download, customize and distribute Taking It Home handouts for each session. If the group will go off-site for a Faith in Action activity or take a walk beyond the grounds of your congregational meeting place, mark the dates when you need to create, distribute and collect permission forms. Mark dates to email or hand out reminders or requests to parents.

If someone on your leadership team has the expertise to create a shared electronic calendar, take advantage! Designate one person to keep the calendar up to date. If different leaders will lead different sessions, make sure to assign responsibilities as appropriate for distributing permission forms, requests for volunteers and other communications to parents. Note assignments of these tasks on the calendar.

Make name tags for participants and leaders before the first session. Keep extra materials to make additional name tags for newcomers or guests.

To lead a session, you will need to download, customize, print and sometimes photocopy materials from the [Tapestry of Faith website](#). These materials may include the text of the central story; handouts for participants; the Taking It Home handout for parents; and leader resources such as arts-and-crafts templates, recipes or scenarios to use in role plays. Make sure you have all the materials you need for a session before the day of the session. Allow yourself time to become familiar with the materials and prepare completely for the session.

### **The Faithful Journeys Path**

This program invites participants on a pilgrimage of learning, a journey to explore how we each can translate being a Unitarian Universalist into actions, choices and behaviors for positive change. Make and display the Faithful Journeys Path before the first session to establish the metaphor and make participants' faith journeys concrete and visual. Participants begin to envision themselves moving forward on the path as they decorate it with trees and place their own footprints on the path with paint. You will also add a green light, for "Go!"

You can make a Faithful Journeys Path as elaborate or as simple as you wish. Find options and guidance in Session 1, Leader Resource 2.

### **Signposts**

As the program progresses, you will add a signpost to the Faithful Journeys Path during the Closing in every session. Signposts offer a two- or three-word phrase that directs participants to continue the journey with actions that express a session's Principle. For example, "Respect Everyone" is the signpost for Session 2, which focuses on our first Principle, the inherent worth and dignity of every person. A leader resource in each session provides the signpost.

Feel free to add your own signposts or other enhancements to help you teach additional concepts of faithful action you believe are important. The path's design accommodates all the concepts presented in Faithful Journeys as well as any other guidance you may wish to offer the group for using their personal agency to act in faith to transform our world.

### **Faithful Footprints**

Use Session 1, Leader Resource 3, Faithful Footprints, and Leader Resource 4, Making Tracks for Faith, to prepare cut-out footprints and wheelchair tracks. You

may wish to use a variety of colors. Children will use these to move forward on the Faithful Journeys Path as they experience translating their own Unitarian Universalist values into action. The recurring, five-minute Faithful Footprints activity begins in Session 2 (see Session 2, Activity 1).

### **Story Basket and Centering**

You are guided in each session to fill a basket with objects related to the central story, and pass the objects around to the group to focus participants' attention and build curiosity about the story. Obtain a basket large enough to accommodate items of different sizes and shapes, yet light enough for children to easily pass around, if you choose to do that.

The story basket should also have room for at least one sound-making instrument, such as a chime, rain stick, bell, or small drum. You may want to have both a soft and a loud sound instrument. A calming sound that lingers and fades is part of the centering activity that transitions the group from exploring the story basket to listening to or participating in your storytelling. At other times, you will need a sound-making instrument to start and stop the action during a game.

### **Fidget Objects**

The idea of providing children with pipe cleaners or other quiet, manipulable objects to use during sedentary, listening-oriented group activities comes from Sally Patton, author and advocate for children with special needs. It is a simple, inexpensive way to include and welcome children who find it difficult to sit still or who learn better while moving. In Tapestry of Faith curricula, we suggest a basket of fidget objects. See Session 2, Leader Resource 2, Fidget Objects, for detailed guidance.

Fidget objects may especially benefit children who are kinesthetic learners, have been diagnosed with ADD or ADHD, or simply tend to be physically restless or highly social during religious school. Get to know the particular children in Faithful Journeys. Decide whether you wish to make fidget objects available for the duration of a session or to limit access, e.g., bringing the basket out only for activities, such as storytelling, that require children to sit still for a prolonged period of time. There are quite a few stories and listening-based activities in this curriculum that require children's full engagement and active participation. At these times, it may be best not to introduce fidget objects unless there is a child who cannot attend otherwise.

### **Requirements for Your Meeting Space**

Work with your religious education team and congregational leaders to ensure that the program has

an adequate meeting space. Multiple activities occur in each session: lighting the chalice, sitting in a circle for a story or sharing, stand-up role plays, group games and hands-on projects for which children need to sit together at work tables and share arts-and-crafts materials. For some activities, having a water source nearby will be helpful.

The ideal meeting space for this program is spacious, with multiple areas that include a carpeted space for storytelling; an open space large enough for cooperative group games; and child-size tables and chairs. Identify a wall space where you can post the Faithful Journeys Path for the duration of the program. You will need additional wall space or a sturdy easel for posting newsprint and writing on it.

## PRINCIPLES AND SOURCES

There are seven principles which Unitarian Universalist congregations affirm and promote:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Unitarian Universalism (UU) draws from many sources:

- Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
- Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
- Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
- Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;

- Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.
- Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

## FACILITATOR FEEDBACK FORM

We welcome your critique of this program, as well as your suggestions. Thank you for your feedback! Your input improves programs for all of our congregations. Please forward your feedback to:

Faith Development Office  
Ministries and Faith Development  
Unitarian Universalist Association  
24 Farnsworth Street  
Boston, MA 02210-1409  
[religiouseducation@uua.org](mailto:religiouseducation@uua.org)

Name of Program or Curriculum:

Congregation:

Number of Participants:

Age range:

Did you work with (a) co-facilitator(s)?

Your name:

***Overall, what was your experience with this program?***

***What specifically did you find most helpful or useful about this program?***

***In what ways could this program be changed or improved (please be specific)?***

***Did you enrich the program with any resources that you would recommend to others?***

***What impact, if any, do you think this program will have on your life going forward?***

***What impact, if any, do you think this program will have on your congregation going forward?***

## PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FORM

We welcome your critique of this program, as well as your suggestions. Thank you for your feedback! Your input improves programs for all of our congregations. Please forward your feedback to:

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Name of Program or Curriculum:

Congregation or group:

Your name:

***Overall, what was your experience with this program?***

***What specifically did you find most helpful or useful about this program?***

***In what ways could this program be changed or improved (please be specific)?***

***What impact, if any, do you think this program will have on your life going forward?***

***What impact, if any, do you think this program will have on your congregation going forward?***

# SESSION 1: THE JOURNEY BEGINS

## INTRODUCTION

*In our era the road to holiness necessarily passes through the world of action. — Dag Hammarskjöld*

This session introduces the program and welcomes participants as faithful travelers. Children learn how beliefs about what is right and fair connect with actions people can take to express their beliefs. They are guided to begin forming concepts of faith and faith in action.

The children walk a Faithful Journeys Path, stopping to hear three stories about people who put their Unitarian Universalist faith into action. They are introduced to the Unitarian Universalist Principles, in both adult and children's language, as statements of our shared Unitarian Universalist beliefs. They create a group covenant, establishing behavior expectations for the group.

A Faithful Journeys Path is posted and decorated with its first signpost, a green light; it will be displayed throughout the program. The children learn they will move forward on the path — symbolically, by attaching cut-out footprints — as they practice different ways to turn their faith and beliefs into action.

You are encouraged to choose a standard opening for Faithful Journeys sessions and begin using it in this session. Before doing so, you may want to review Leader Resource 1, Alternate Openings.

Leader Resource 2 gives guidance for making the Faithful Journeys Path.

Alternate Activity 1, Candles of Joys and Sorrows, appears only in this session. If your sessions have time, you might make this activity a regular part of your Closing.

## GOALS

This session will:

- Introduce the idea that we can translate our Unitarian Universalist beliefs into our actions — the way we live
- Strengthen Unitarian Universalist identity by presenting the Unitarian Universalist Principles as guidelines for action and by sharing three

real stories of faithful actions by Unitarian Universalists

- Build community and emphasize mutual responsibility to create and maintain a positive learning environment
- Lay groundwork for children to progress along a Faithful Journeys Path by sharing about their own faithful actions in future sessions.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Experience the rituals and format of the Faithful Journeys sessions
- Begin to connect beliefs about what is right and fair with actions people can take that express their beliefs
- Experience themselves as beginning a journey
- Affirm, by generating a group covenant, each person's responsibility for creating the shared learning environment
- Explore the language and meaning of the seven Unitarian Universalist Principles.

## SESSION-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	5
Activity 1: Group Behavior Covenant	5
Activity 2: Move It! Song — "Woyaya"	5
Activity 3: Story Path — UU Faithful Journeys	15
Activity 4: Decorating Our Faithful Journeys Path	15
Activity 5: UU Principles Matching Game	10
Closing	5
Alternate Activity 1: Candles of Joys and Sorrows	7
Alternate Activity 2: Move It! All My Friends and Neighbors Game	10

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

If it would be helpful in creating sacred space, light a candle or chalice. Reflect upon your own journey as a Unitarian Universalist. Take a few moments to ponder:

- How do you express your Unitarian Universalism in your daily lifestyle? In your larger choices?
- How does your congregation support your spiritual growth as well as your participation in the wider community?
- What links, if any, do you see between your faith, your spiritual growth, and your action in the world?



## OPENING (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Chalice candle or LED/battery-operated candle
- Lighter and extinguisher, if needed
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Posters of the Unitarian Universalist Principles in both adult and children's language, or copies of Session 1, [Handout 1](#) (included in this document) for all participants

### Preparation for Activity

- Decide whether you will use the provided opening words or other opening words, such as those offered in Leader Resource 1, Alternate Openings. It is recommended that you use the same opening words for each session.
- Print the opening words on newsprint. Post the newsprint where the children will be able to see it when they gather for the Opening.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle. Light the chalice. Point out the chalice-lighting words on the newsprint and invite the group to read together:

We light this flame for the light of truth, the warmth of love, and the energy of action.

Indicate the poster(s) of the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Say, in your own words:

These are the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Each time we meet, we will learn more about them and what they mean. We are also going to learn how we can take action based on them. Let's get started.

### Including All Participants

If not all participants are fluent readers, take the time to teach the group to say the opening words from memory.

If the group has children who are sensitive to perfumes or other chemicals, use unscented candles or an electric or battery-operated flame. An electric or battery-operated flame is also recommended if you may not use open flames or if any participants are afraid of fire.

## ACTIVITY 1: GROUP BEHAVIOR COVENANT (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Write "Covenant" at the top of a sheet of newsprint and post it where you can write on it while leading a discussion.
- Plan for an adult to take the newsprint after the session and compile a covenant document for children and co-leaders to sign next time you meet. If your group will not do Session 2, reserve five minutes in your next session for Session 2, Activity 2, Signing the Behavior Covenant.

### Description of Activity

Making a covenant empowers children to take responsibility for their individual and collective behavior in Faithful Journeys, and helps create a safe place for learning.

Ask if any of the children know what a covenant is. Affirm/tell them it is a promise that people agree on together. Explain that the group will list the behaviors they think will help create a positive learning environment in Faithful Journeys. Then everyone, including co-leaders, will covenant to use these behaviors. Ask:

What behaviors will help our group be a place where everyone feels safe, feels welcome, and is able to learn and have fun?

Write children's suggestions on newsprint. Prompt, if needed, with: listening to one another other, including everybody, sharing, taking turns, helping one another, keeping our hands to ourselves, or kindness. Help children reframe "don'ts" (don't insult others, don't steal, don't lie) as desirable behaviors (use kind words, respect others' property, be honest).

When ideas stop flowing or the list seems complete, tell the children you will include their suggestions in a group behavior covenant for everyone in Faithful Journeys, including co-leaders, to sign next time the group meets. Say:

When you sign the covenant, it means you agree to promise the rest of us that you will follow it.

Assure the children that if anyone ever feels the covenant is being broken, they can talk to a leader, who will make sure the matter is resolved.

Note: Keep this exercise brief. If children are not engaged in the process, be sure the most important rules are included and then move on to the next activity.

## ACTIVITY 2: MOVE IT! SONG — WOYAYA (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Copies of *Singing the Journey*, supplement to the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook, *Singing the Living Tradition*, or copies of [Handout 2](#), (included in this document) "Woyaya"
- Optional: Copies of [Handout 3](#) (included in this document), "Come and Go with Me" (alternate song)

### Preparation for Activity

- If you are not familiar with "Woyaya," Hymn 1020 in *Singing the Journey*, ask your music director to teach it to you or invite a musical volunteer to come teach it to the children. Hear Rev. Lynn Ungar singing "[Woyaya](#)."
- Optional: The alternate song, "Come and Go with Me," is Hymn 1018 in *Singing the Journey*. Hear it [sung](#) by Rev. Ungar.

### Description of Activity

Gather in a circle and teach participants the song you have chosen. Sing it once or twice through. Tell participants they will sing it again in the next activity.

## ACTIVITY 3: STORY PATH — UU FAITHFUL JOURNEYS (15 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- [Leader Resource 2: Faithful Journeys Path](#) (included in this document)
- Optional: A wide ribbon, long enough to wind around the perimeter of the room, or masking tape
- A copy of each of the three "Making a Difference" stories about Harriot Kezia Hunt, Toribio Quimada and Annie Arnzen
- Optional: Objects related to each story, and colorful cloths to display and cover the objects at three story stations
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument

### Preparation for Activity

- Make and display the Faithful Journeys Path. (See program Introduction, "Before You Start," and Leader Resource 2, Faithful Journeys Path Instructions.)

- Read the three Making a Difference stories. Practice telling the stories rather than reading them off the page.
- Optional: Obtain objects to represent the story subjects. Suggestions: For Harriot Kezia Hunt, items from a play doctor kit; a female doll dressed in mid-1800s clothing; an old, hardcover medical or homeopathy book. For Toribio Quimada, a Christian bible in English or Tagalog; a globe or map with the Philippines marked on it; an agricultural plant stalk; an envelope addressed to "Unitarian Church of Wisconsin" with a return address in the Philippines. For Annie Arnzen, a printout of the "A Precious Cause" website homepage; flags of the U.S. and Botswana; alphabet blocks or other simple (non-electronic) learning toys preschoolers might play with; a collection jar with money in it.
- Set up three storytelling stations far enough apart for the children to walk from one to the next on a path. Use the Faithful Journeys Path, if you have made a very long one. Or, make a path by winding a ribbon or laying masking tape around the perimeter of the room. If the room is small, set up two storytelling areas and use one for both the first and the third stories, or set up the path and story stations outside the room.
- Lay colorful cloths to mark the story stations. On the cloths, place your copy of each story with the objects you have brought to represent it. Use another cloth to cover the objects.

### Description of Activity

This activity introduces the idea that being a Unitarian Universalist means acting in a way that reflects our beliefs and our Principles. Three examples from our Unitarian Universalist heritage model the concept that drives this program and accustom children to hearing stories of people putting their faith into action.

Ask the children why they think this program is called Faithful Journeys. Allow some responses. Then say:

A journey means a trip or an expedition. We have fun along the way, we make friends, and we learn. Sometimes, on a journey, we have to make decisions about how to solve problems or which way we should go.

On a real journey, we bring things we might need, such as food, clothes, and a toothbrush. On a faithful journey, we also bring something we need — our faith.

Faith means what we believe about life. It includes the ideas we believe about ourselves, about what is true and important, and about how people should treat each other and the Earth.

We are not the first Unitarian Universalists to take a faithful journey. Each time we meet in Faithful Journeys, we will hear stories from our heritage about people who acted in faith. Today we are going to hear about three people's journeys in faith, one long ago, one closer to now, and one that is still going on.

As we follow the ribbon (or tape), imagine this path leads back in time. We are going back almost two hundred years. Our first story is about a Universalist woman named Harriot Kezia Hunt.

Following the ribbon or masking tape, walk to your first storytelling area. Carry the sound instrument with you. Lead the group in singing a verse of the song "Woyaya."

When you arrive, show the items that represent Harriot Kezia Hunt. Use the instrument to establish listening silence. You may say:

Let's get ready to listen. When I hit the chime (or turn the rain stick over), listen as carefully as you can. See how long you can hear its sound. When you can no longer hear it, open your eyes and you will know it is time for the story to begin.

Tell the story about Harriot Kezia Hunt. Sound the instrument again to signal the end of the story.

Lead a brief discussion with these questions:

- What was Harriot's faithful journey about? (You might paraphrase by asking, "What did Harriot do?" Children may need to restate concrete events from the story, which you can reframe as actions in faith. Suggest: becoming a doctor; helping people; doing what she felt was important even when others didn't want her to and made it difficult; healing people in ways that would not make them worse.)
- I wonder, what made Harriot decide to take action and become a doctor?
- What did Harriot bring on her faithful journey? I wonder, what did she believe in that helped her know what to do? (Suggest: She believed... people who are sick need healing; medicine should not make people worse; there was no reason women should not learn to be doctors; everyone has the right to learn skills they want to use to help people.)

Tell the children, "Now it is time to continue our faithful journey." Explain that you will go forward in time, about one hundred years, to hear about a Universalist man named Toribio Quimada. As the group moves along the path to the second storytelling area, sing another verse of "Woyaya." Share the story about Toribio Quimada. Lead a discussion:

- What was Toribio's faithful journey about? (Suggest: learning to read; exploring his own beliefs and not just accepting what he was told; sticking with the ideas about God he thought were true; helping people find a place to learn together and share their beliefs about a loving God.)
- I wonder, what made Toribio decide to take action, follow his curiosity, and share a new religion with other people in his country?
- What did Toribio bring on his faithful journey? What beliefs helped him know what to do? (Suggest: He believed... people can think for themselves; people should be allowed to read and learn; people from different religions and countries might have important ideas in common; asking questions is important.)

Say, "There is one more stop on our faithful journey. We are coming back to our own time." Lead the group to the third story station, singing a verse of "Woyaya." Share the story about Annie Arnszen. Lead a discussion:

- What was Annie's faithful journey about? (Suggest: helping younger children who had lost their parents; traveling to Botswana; earning money to meet her own goals; finding a way to help a big problem.)
- I wonder, what made Annie take action, earn money for her trip, help at the SOS orphanage in Botswana, and then come home and raise more money to keep helping SOS?
- What did Annie bring on her faithful journey? What beliefs helped her know what to do? (Suggest: All children need to be loved and cared for; we are all connected on Earth; when disease hurts a community, even in a faraway country, we are responsible for helping, and we can help; even if a problem is very large, one person can help; you can make friends who do not speak your language or live the way you do; by getting other people to help, you can make an even bigger difference.)

Thank the children for coming on the faithful journey with you.

## Including All Participants

Make sure the path between the story stations is accessible to all.

## ACTIVITY 4: DECORATING OUR FAITHFUL JOURNEYS PATH (15 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path
- Footprints and wheelchair tracks for all participants ([Leader Resources 3 and 4](#) (included in this document))
- Trees cut out from copies of [Leader Resource 5](#), (included in this document) Trees for the Faithful Journeys Path
- Optional: Templates of trees ([Leader Resource 5](#) (included in this document)), blank paper and scissors to share (including left-handed scissors)
- Color markers
- Glue sticks or tape
- For Footprints
  - Newspaper to cover floor
  - Shallow basins of warm water and paper towels or rags for cleaning/drying feet
  - Tempera paint in a variety of colors
  - Roller trays or other long, shallow containers, one per color of paint
  - Blank paper, scissors and glue sticks or tape
  - Optional: Paintbrush(es) for children who do not step in paint to make footprints

### Preparation for Activity

- If you have not done so, create the Faithful Journeys Path for this program and display it in the meeting room. Leader Resource 2 provides guidance.
- Set up a station to make children's footprints. Cover floor with newspaper; fill basins with warm water for cleanup and set with towels nearby; pour tempera paints into roller trays; set blank paper for footprints and identify a nearby space for footprints to dry.
- Set cut-out trees or templates and other decorating materials on work tables.

## Description of Activity

Children will mark the Faithful Journeys Path with their own footprints, decorate the path with trees, and learn how they will mark their progress along the path in future sessions, with signposts and their own symbolic footprints and wheelchair tracks.

Gather near the Faithful Journeys Path. Say:

Faithful Journeys is a journey we will take together and this is the path we will make as we go. Each time we meet, we will find out how some other Unitarian Universalists have taken action in the world. As we go along, we will learn ways we can put our beliefs into action, too.

Show the group the cut-out footprints and wheelchair tracks. Tell them that, in future sessions, they will have a chance to record their own faithful actions on these to post on the Faithful Journeys Path. Then say:

Today we will work together to decorate our Faithful Journeys Path with trees. We are also going to put our footprints on it to show we are ready to start our journey.

Have participants remove their shoes and sit at work tables. Explain that while they make trees for the Faithful Journeys Path, children will be called up one at a time to step into the paint and then step onto a piece of paper, guided by a leader.

Label each foot-printed paper with the child's name, and set it aside to dry. Before calling up the next child, help children clean and dry their feet, using the water and paper towels, and ask them to return to their work tables to work on the trees for the poster.

### Including All Participants

Some children may be unable or unwilling to take off shoes and socks and step in paint. Help as needed. You can also trace children's shod feet on paper and help them paint their footprints a color they choose, or invite them to paint footprints cut out from Leader Resource 3.

## ACTIVITY 5: UU PRINCIPLES MATCHING GAME (10 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Copy of [Leader Resource 6](#) (included in this document), UU Principles Matching Game Cards (Note: If the group has more than seven children, make an additional copy of the cards with the children's language.)
- Two baskets

## Preparation for Activity

- Cut out the game cards from Leader Resource 6. Place the adult language version game cards in one basket and the children's version in a second basket.

## Description of Activity

Gather children in a circle at a large work table or on the floor. Show them the two baskets. Say, in your own words:

Unitarian Universalists have written down seven Principles to express what we believe. Adults worked together to get the words of the Principles exactly right.

Show the basket with the adult Principles cards. Then say:

Then adults wrote the Principles again in easier words, to help children know what they mean.

Show the basket with children's Principles. Pass this basket around, inviting children to take one card, without showing it to anyone. If you have fewer children than cards, pass the basket until it is empty (some children will have more than one card).

Now, ask a volunteer to pull a card from the adult Principles basket and give it to you. Read the adult Principle aloud to the group. Ask the volunteer to guess which child has the card with the same Principle in easier language (it's okay if a child volunteers themselves).

Read the selected child's card(s) out loud to the group and ask, "Does that seem like a match?"

Lead a brief discussion about why or why not it is a good match. If it is not a match, have the volunteer guess again. If it is a match, the child whose card matched now picks a card from the adult Principles basket. Repeat the process until all seven Principles have been matched in pairs of adult and children's language.

## Including All Participants

Make sure to read clearly from all cards to assist sight- and/or hearing-impaired participants.

## CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path
- Copies of [Leader Resource 8](#), (included in this document) UU Principles Song, for all participants
- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape

- Traffic light from [Leader Resource 7](#) (included in this document), and glue stick or tape
- Copies of [Handout 1](#) (included in this document), Unitarian Universalist Principles: Adult and Child Versions, for all participants

## Preparation for Activity

- Optional: Write the words for the UU Principles Song on newsprint and post.
- Customize, print out and photocopy the Taking It Home section for all participants.

## Description of Activity

This activity accustoms children to a closing ritual that affirms their part in the faith community.

Gather the group in a circle. Thank the children for participating and sharing their stories and ideas in this session. Tell them something you liked about the way they worked together as a community.

Point out the Faithful Journeys Path. Say, in your own words:

Our Faithful Journeys Path shows our journey to live our lives and act in ways that reflect our Unitarian Universalist beliefs. Just like Harriot Kezia Hunt, Toribio Quimada, Annie Arnsen and many other Unitarian Universalists, we each have a faithful journey. As we go forward on our path, we will find signposts to help direct us along the way. Today's signpost is a green light for GO! We are on our path!

Post the traffic light on the Faithful Journeys Path.

Distribute handouts with lyrics (or point out the words to the UU Principles Song). Tell the children it is sung to the tune of "Old McDonald Had a Farm." Lead the children in singing it once through. Collect handouts for reuse in future sessions.

Distribute the Taking It Home and UU Principles handouts.

Thank the children, tell them you look forward to seeing them next time, and dismiss the group.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Take a few minutes to evaluate the session with your co-leader immediately afterward, while it is fresh. Share your thoughts with any other team co-leaders and your director of religious education. You might find it helpful to consider these questions:

- Which activities worked well? What did not work so well?

- Were all children actively engaged? If not, who was not and why might that have been? How could they be better included next time?
- How well did the activities match the learning styles of the children in this group? What can we do differently to better accommodate different learning styles in future sessions?
- How well did the session balance physically active with sedentary activities?
- How was the timing? What might be done differently for a session to work better in our time frame?
- Were there any behavior issues? If so, how can we address them in the future? Do we need more information or help in this area?
- What connections did children make with the activities and/or central ideas? How did we know that was occurring?
- What connections did children make with each other? What connections did we make with the children? When was that most evident?
- Are we successfully creating a program characterized by inclusion, diversity appreciation, respect, a noncompetitive environment, and welcome? What might we like to do differently?
- What questions or issues arose in this session that we might like to discuss with our director of religious education?

## TAKING IT HOME

In our era the road to holiness necessarily passes through the world of action. — Dag Hammarskjöld

**IN TODAY'S SESSION...** Children were introduced to the central idea of the Faithful Journeys curriculum: Unitarian Universalists express faith in our actions and behaviors. We began the journey together, learning the song "Woyaya" and creating paint footprints to place on the Faithful Journeys Path we will travel together in the coming weeks. We played a matching game with the Unitarian Universalist Principles, matching the version of the Principles adults use with language that has been adapted for children. Faithful Journeys uses the Principles as a foundation of understanding how our beliefs translate into action.

**EXPLORE THE TOPIC TOGETHER.** Read and talk about the Principles together:

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

The inherent worth and dignity of every person;  
Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;

Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;

A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;

The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;

The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;

Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

**EXTEND THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Try...** Pay extra attention to times when your child's actions reflect the Principles. Point these instances out and help them articulate how their behavior reflects Unitarian Universalist beliefs. Your child will have the opportunity to share these actions with the Faithful Journeys group next time we meet.

## FAMILY ADVENTURE

**Walking in Principle.** Select a Principle to act on and set out together on a Faithful Journeys walk. You might clean up litter as you walk together, as an expression of the importance of the interdependent web. Or, take an observation walk in which you try to notice and learn as much as you can as an expression of the free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

## A FAMILY RITUAL

Using the Principles handout your child brought home, write down each Principle on a slip of paper. Fold the slips in half and place them in a small container. Each morning, have each member of the family pull out a slip of paper. Challenge yourselves to think of something you can do during the day to match the Principle you selected. At dinnertime, talk about what you did.

## A FAMILY GAME

Using the Principles handout your child brought home, create match game cards with adult language on one set and children's language on the other. Play a traditional match game in which the goal is to turn over the cards and find a match that pairs the children's language of a particular Principle with the adult language.



## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: CANDLES OF JOYS AND SORROWS (7 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Large nonflammable container, such as ceramic or metal bowl
- Play sand (can be found at local hardware store) or unscented cat litter
- Large number of candles
- Basket for candles
- Matches or lighter

### Preparation for Activity

- Fill your container with the play sand or cat litter.
- Put the candles in the basket.

### Description of Activity

Determine if your room and building policies allow for open flames. If not, consider doing this activity with a felt board and felt candles or with beads in a jar.

Begin by lighting a "starter" candle. Invite the children to come forward one at a time and light a candle of joy and sorrow from the starter candle and push it into the sand. The child should then face the group and tell them what the candle is for. Translate the language so they understand that their joys and sorrows are things that have made them feel very happy/grateful or sad/worried.

Candles of joy and sorrow offer the opportunity for children to experience what is a weekly ritual in many Unitarian Universalist congregations. This activity can deepen the sense of community in the Faithful Journeys group. It gives participants a chance to name those things they carry in their hearts, encourages listening to others, and, in many cases, makes a link with the adult worship experience.

**IMPORTANT:** Do not leave burning candles unattended. When all who wish to participate have done so, blow out the candles and put away the matches.

### Including All Participants

Children who are physically unable or reluctant to light candles and stand to address the group may invite other children to light candles for them, or you may offer to do it yourself. Allow children to speak joys and sorrows from where they sit.

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: MOVE IT! ALL MY FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS GAME (10 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A chair for each participant

### Preparation for Activity

- Identify a space large enough for the children to form a circle of chairs.

### Description of Activity

Children build community as they learn more about one another while having fun and being active. If your session has time, play this game immediately after the Opening as a warm-up for learning a song in Activity 2.

Invite the children to bring chairs into a circle. Have an adult leader stand in the center. Make sure there are no empty chairs. Say:

I am going to look for some friends and neighbors. I will say what friends and neighbors I am looking for. For example, I might look for people who love pizza, who are eight years old, who love to read, who have a pet, or who are wearing the color red. If what I say includes you, stand up and change to a different seat.

Meanwhile, I am going to look for a seat that becomes free. That will leave a new person in the middle to look for friends and neighbors.

Before you begin, offer these rules:

- If you are one of the friends and neighbors, you must come into the middle (or touch the leader) before finding a new seat. You may not sit down in the same seat you left.
- Optional (depending upon the size of the group): You may not sit back down in a chair right next to the one where you were just sitting.

Begin the game by saying, "I am looking for all my friends and neighbors who ... enjoy making pictures." If needed, help the person who is left in the middle to think of a phrase to add to "I am looking for all my friends and neighbors who ... "

## STORY: ANNIE ARNZEN — MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Adapted from "A Week at SOS Children's Village, Tlokweng, Botswana," by Annie Arnzen, on the "[A Precious Cause](#)" website. Used with permission.

*Annie first went to Botswana in 2006, when she was in eighth grade. She and her family attend the North Parish, Unitarian Universalist, in North Andover, Massachusetts. She is still helping to raise funds for children affected by AIDS in Botswana.*

"Look out the window, Annie," my dad exclaimed. Gripping the arm of my seat, I gazed out the plane window. For the first time, I laid eyes on the country of Botswana.

Over the years I had heard many stories from my dad about his time in Africa while in the Peace Corps. When I learned he was going to Africa on business, I asked to go along. I was eager for an adventure, to attempt to make a difference and to find my own stories in this place, which felt a world away.

My dad said he would bring me with him to Botswana. He had two conditions: One, I had to find some meaningful work to do while we were there. Two, I had to earn the money to pay for half of the ticket. With those words, I could already see my wildest dreams begin.

While earning money by babysitting, pet-sitting, and shoveling snow for our neighbors, I got my heart set on working in an orphanage. When I learned that Botswana has the second worst rate of AIDS in the world, all I could think was, there must be thousands of children whose parents cannot take care of them because of this disease.

Finding an orphanage in such a small country, so far away, that would allow a thirteen-year-old girl from the United States to volunteer doesn't sound easy. It was even harder than it sounded! Finally, five days before our trip to Botswana, we got a call saying the SOS Children's Village would be happy to have me. I felt like I was on top of the world. You can imagine the awe and joy I felt while sitting on the plane, finally flying to Botswana.

The next morning, as we pulled in through the front gate of the SOS Children's Village, it felt like we were entering another world. I was expecting something that looked like the orphanage in the movie *Annie*, but I was greeted by something very different. I was startled by a cluster of fifteen houses painted in neon shades of purple, pink, blue, green, and brown.

There are two SOS Children's Villages in Botswana. Both villages have sixteen houses as well as a few youth houses, providing a safe environment for four hundred children. In each house they build a "family" of about ten children, including a mama and an auntie to look after them. Brothers and sisters who come to SOS together are not split up. The purpose of SOS is to build families for children whose parents cannot take care of them, and educate them so they can flourish on their own in the future.

After Derrick James, the director, gave us a tour of the orphanage, my dad and I expected time for a typical American good-bye. But the principal of the kindergarten said, "Come with me," and I quickly followed. I looked back at my dad, whose face was a mixture of shock and encouragement as he watched me walk away.

We stopped in front of a small building, which stood just before the kindergarten. "This is where you will work with the babies," she said and then turned and walked away. I stood and looked at the door for a few minutes. Then I took a deep breath and walked in. I was greeted by ten little faces the color of ebony, all between the ages of one and three.

A woman walked over to greet me. She introduced herself as Mama Florence, and those were the only words of English I would hear from her all week. For the entire week, I played and worked with those ten little children.

When I arrived home, I was full of new stories, experiences, and friends. But I felt so empty thinking about the children I was leaving behind and could no longer do anything to help. This is why when I received a letter from Derrick James six months later, a bubble of joy rose within me. His letter said SOS was trying to build another orphanage, because there were still so many children who needed a safe place to live and learn. Derrick said an orphanage costs a lot of money. They were still \$300,000 short. He was writing to see if there was anything I could do to help here in the United States.

This was my chance to make a difference for those kids who had made such a difference in me. My family and I started a project called "A Precious Cause" to raise money for SOS. I have been speaking at churches and schools and selling jewelry to reach the ultimate goal of \$300,000 for a new orphanage for the children in Botswana. I have been moved by the outpouring of support from people who did not know about SOS before hearing my story. My hope is that as more people learn how the disease, AIDS, is hurting the children of the world, they too will be moved to make a difference.



## STORY: HARRIOT KEZIA HUNT — MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Adapted from multiple sources including a 2005 article, "Mrs. Mott, 'The Celebrated Female Physician,'" in *Historic New England* online magazine.

*Harriot Kezia Hunt, 1805-1875, was barred from medical study at Harvard College because male students objected to her presence. She learned medicine from Elizabeth Mott, who practiced homeopathic medicine in Boston. She applied unsuccessfully to Harvard Medical School — the first woman to try — yet became the first woman in the U.S. to practice medicine professionally. She was a Universalist.*

Harriot's younger sister, Sarah, was very sick. Harriot was beginning to feel desperate because nothing the doctors did was helping. In fact, the treatments seemed to make Sarah worse instead of better.

You see, this was more than a hundred years ago — before any of your great-grandparents were even born. No one knew about germs the way we do today, or why people got sick. Most doctors believed you had to force sickness out of a person. They would give sick people medicines made with turpentine and mercury. When the medicines made people vomit or drool, the doctors thought the medicines were working and making the sickness come out. Actually, these were signs the medicines were poison.

Sometimes doctors would cut a patient on purpose. They thought if blood came out of a sick person, it would bring the sickness out with it. Doctors thought this helped patients, but actually it made their bodies weaker and less able to fight their illness.

For one year, Harriot's sister Sarah had suffered through these sorts of treatments. It was time to try something new. Sarah went to see a new kind of doctor: Dr. Mott. She didn't care that everybody thought he was a quack, a fake doctor. He treated Sarah in an entirely new way. He explained that she should get plenty of rest, eat healthy food, and exercise every day. Finally, Sarah began to improve and after some time was cured.

Harriot was very relieved that her sister was better. But she saw other people suffering from the same sorts of treatments that Sarah had experienced. She knew someone had to do something to change things. She decided to take action and become a doctor. She tried to go to medical school, but the students were all men. They protested that they would not study with a woman. So, instead, Harriot studied medicine with Dr. Mott's wife, Elizabeth. Her sister Sarah learned with the Motts, too. Soon, Harriot was treating patients. She taught

women how to stay healthy by the same ways that had helped Sarah get better: proper exercise, eating healthy food, and getting enough sleep. Harriot became the first woman to practice medicine in the United States.

## STORY: TORIBIO QUIMADA — MAKING A DIFFERENCE

By Ellen Gold. Based on information in the book, *Maglipay Universalist*, by Fred Muir (Annapolis, Maryland: Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis, 2001) and a 2002 [review of Muir's book](#) by Rosemary Bray McNatt in *UU World* magazine.

I bet some of you love to read. Maybe you have a favorite book. Maybe you like to read street signs out loud, or read magazines at home, or read the words to your favorite songs.

Maybe you do not love reading. But most people agree that reading certainly is useful, especially if you are curious about things.

What if you were not allowed to learn to read? What if you were forbidden to read, or told you could not learn to read or write until you were older?

That is what happened to Toribio Quimada. He grew up in the Philippines in the 1930s. The Philippines are a group of islands off the southeast coast of Asia. Toribio lived on the Island of Negros.

Toribio's family were farmers. That is one reason Toribio did not learn to read when he was your age. He and his sisters and brothers worked instead of going to school. They planted rice, herded cattle, and did other farm chores. When he was ten, he started school, but school cost money and his family did not have much. He got to go to the Minglanilla School for only a few years.

There was another reason Toribio did not learn to read when he was your age. It was not important in his family's religion. They were Catholics in a time and place where only priests were allowed to read the Bible. That was one book Toribio very much wanted to read, because he was very curious about religion. But when he was your age, Toribio had no books and could not read at all.

Toribio wanted more from life. He had many questions. He wondered what was true, what God was like, and how religion and faith were connected to all that he did.

In 1937, Toribio's family moved into the home of a cousin who was not Catholic. Reading the Bible was allowed, and Toribio did it. He studied the Bible very carefully. After reading and thinking and thinking and reading, he made the choice to leave the Catholic Church. He wanted to be part of a religion where the members were allowed to read their religious book. He joined a Protestant church called Iglesia Universal de Cristo, where reading the Bible was encouraged.

Toribio took part in many activities at Iglesia Universal de Cristo. He learned so much that he was asked to teach Sunday school there. He had come a long way from not knowing how to read or write. In time, Toribio became a minister. Sometimes he traveled around the Philippine Islands, so people in many different villages could learn about Iglesia Universal de Cristo. Toribio continued to search for truth and meaning. Yet, even though he was now a minister, neither reading nor his new religion could answer all Toribio's questions.

The most important questions were about God and love. Toribio believed in a God that loved all people, no matter what country they lived in, what religion they were, what they looked like, or whether they broke any rules. He believed we all ought to love everyone, exactly the way the God in Toribio's mind would do.

One day, Toribio found out there was a church in America called a Universalist Church. "Universal" was the kind of love Toribio believed in. Toribio was curious and wrote them a letter. Although his letter got lost and nobody replied, he wrote more letters to Universalist churches in America. Can you imagine, before there was any Internet, if a letter arrived at our congregation from as far away as the Philippines? Finally, some Universalists in Massachusetts heard from Toribio Quimada and wrote back.

As Toribio read the books they sent him, he was happy that others shared his Universalist ideas. Universalism talked about a God and a love that included the whole universe — every person, and the world we share. In Universalism, everyone could read the Bible, and more: Everyone was encouraged to think their own thoughts about what they read. Toribio liked that.

In 1955, Toribio founded the Universalist Church of the Philippines. He went on to help many people in his country, working on the Island of Negros where he was raised.

Universalism talked about equal love for everyone, and that meant things should be fair. Some people in the Philippines did not agree with that. Some people thought being obedient was more important than seeking fairness. Some did not like the changes Toribio's religion might bring to their country. They set his home on fire, and he died there.

But the people who had learned from Toribio kept practicing Universalism, and so did others. His hard work was never forgotten. The Universalist Church Toribio founded was renamed the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines. Its members are part of our faith today. Like us, they continue to search for truth and meaning. They continue to look for justice and freedom for all people, just as Toribio would have wanted.

# **HANDOUT 1: UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST PRINCIPLES, ADULT AND CHILD VERSIONS**

## **Unitarian Universalist Principles**

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person
- Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

## **Unitarian Universalist Principles, Children's Version**

- We believe each and every person is important.
- We believe all people should be treated fairly.
- In our congregations, all people are accepted and we learn together.
- We believe each person is free to search for what is true and right in life.
- Everyone deserves a vote about the things that concern them.
- We believe in working for a peaceful, fair, and free world.
- We believe in caring for our planet Earth and every living thing that shares it with us.

## HANDOUT 2: SONG — WOYAYA

Hymn 1020 in *Singing the Journey*, supplement to *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook.  
Copyright unknown.

We are going,

Heaven knows where we are going,

But we know within.

And we will get there,

Heaven knows how we will get there,

But we know we will.

It will be hard, we know,

And the road will be muddy and rough,

But we'll get there,

Heaven knows how we will get there,

But we know we will.

Woyaya, woyaya, woyaya, woyaya.

## HANDOUT 3: SONG — COME AND GO WITH ME

Hymn 1018 in *Singing the Journey*, supplement to *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook.

Come and go with me to that land,

Come and go with me to that land,

Come and go with me to that land where I'm bound.

Come and go with me to that land,

Come and go with me to that land,

Come and go with me to that land where I'm bound.

There'll be freedom in that land ...

There'll be justice in that land ...

There'll be singing in that land ...

## LEADER RESOURCE 1: ALTERNATE OPENINGS

Original sources are unknown for many readings commonly used in Unitarian Universalist congregations.

*If you like, select your own opening words to use instead of those provided in the sessions. These readings could work well, or you may prefer to find or write your own. The Unitarian Universalist Association's online Worship Web provides more [chalice lightings](#) and [opening words](#), some of which may work well with children.*

We light this chalice to remind ourselves

to treat all people kindly — because they are all our siblings

to take good care of the Earth — because it is our home

to live life full of goodness and love — because that is how we will all

become the best people we can be.

We light this chalice to celebrate Unitarian Universalism

(Cup hands to make two Us)

This is the church of the open mind

(Cover eyes and open hands)

This is the church of the loving heart

(Cross arms over heart)

This is the church of the helping hands

(Stretch hands out, palms up)

May the light we now kindle

Inspire us to use our powers

To heal and not to harm,

To help and not to hinder,

To bless and not to curse,

To serve you,

Spirit of freedom. — from a Passover Haggadah, Reading 453 in *Singing the Living Tradition*

## LEADER RESOURCE 2: FAITHFUL JOURNEYS PATH INSTRUCTIONS

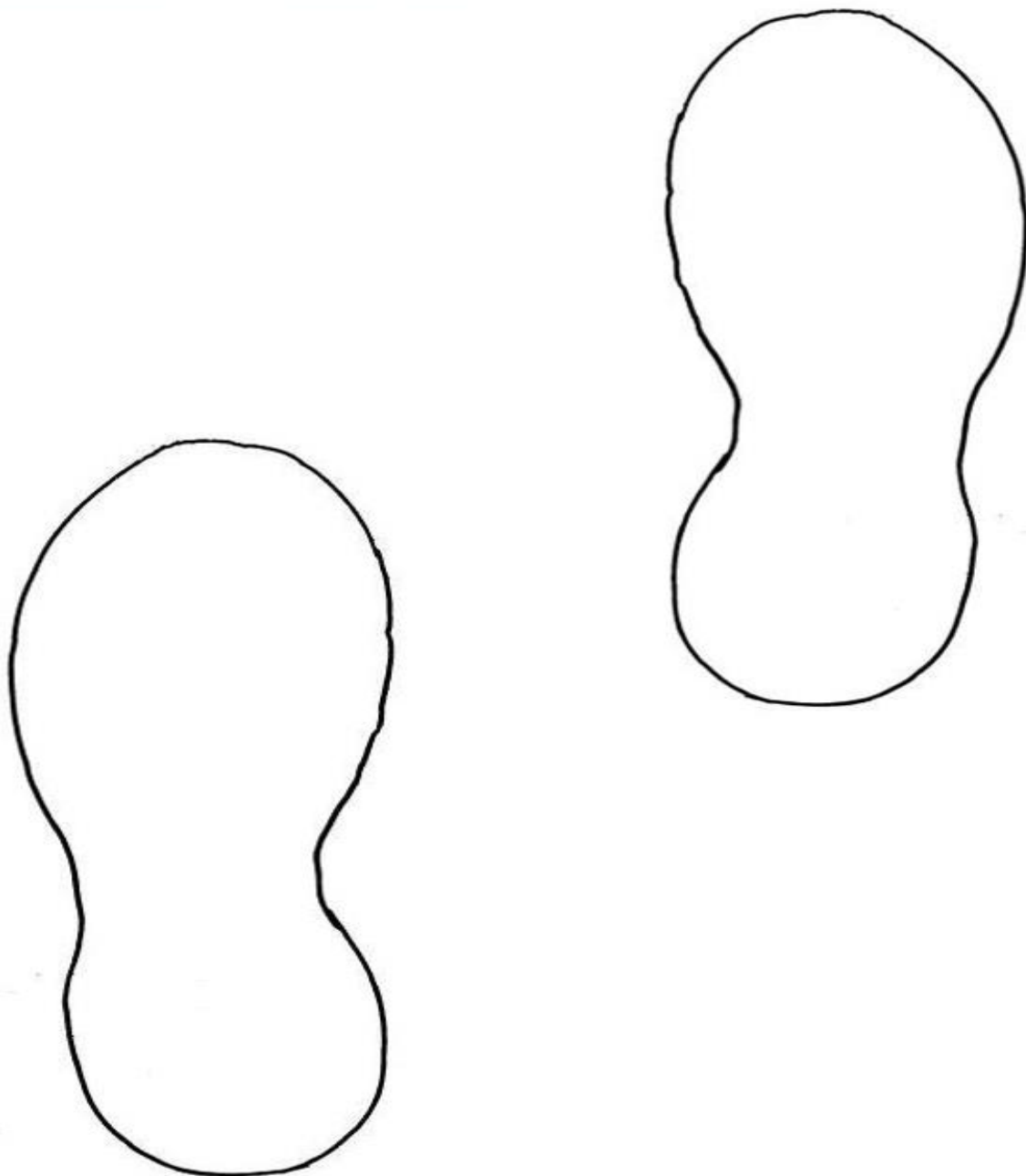
The Faithful Journeys Path is meant to be a large visual of a winding path that represents the journey we make as we translate our faith into action. In each session, you will add a signpost to the path, e.g., a green light (Session 1), Be Fair (Session 4), Build World Community (Session 13). Also in each session, you will post Faithful Footprints on the path to represent participants' faithful actions outside of the religious school time. The path should be displayed in your Faithful Journeys meeting room, ideally on a wall, but it could be on a table or even made as a three-dimensional object that you display on the floor.

Draw the path as two parallel lines that curve and bend. You might draw it on a large roll of butcher paper or gift wrap, large sheets of poster board, or pieces of paper taped together. You might attach a very wide ribbon or a length of fabric to the wall with masking tape, weaving it about the room, or drape it over cardboard to make a three-dimensional path with hills, curves, and valleys. You might put your path on corkboard and use pins to attach signposts and Faithful Footprints.

There is no one way to create the Faithful Journeys Path. Design a path that will accommodate a new signpost and participants' Faithful Footprints each time you meet. A Faithful Journeys Path that can be lengthened, if necessary, is probably a good idea.

## LEADER RESOURCE 3: FAITHFUL FOOTPRINTS

*Using different colors of paper, cut out Faithful Footprints to post on the Faithful Journeys Path. To promote inclusion, also provide wheelchairs (Leader Resource 4) as an alternative.*



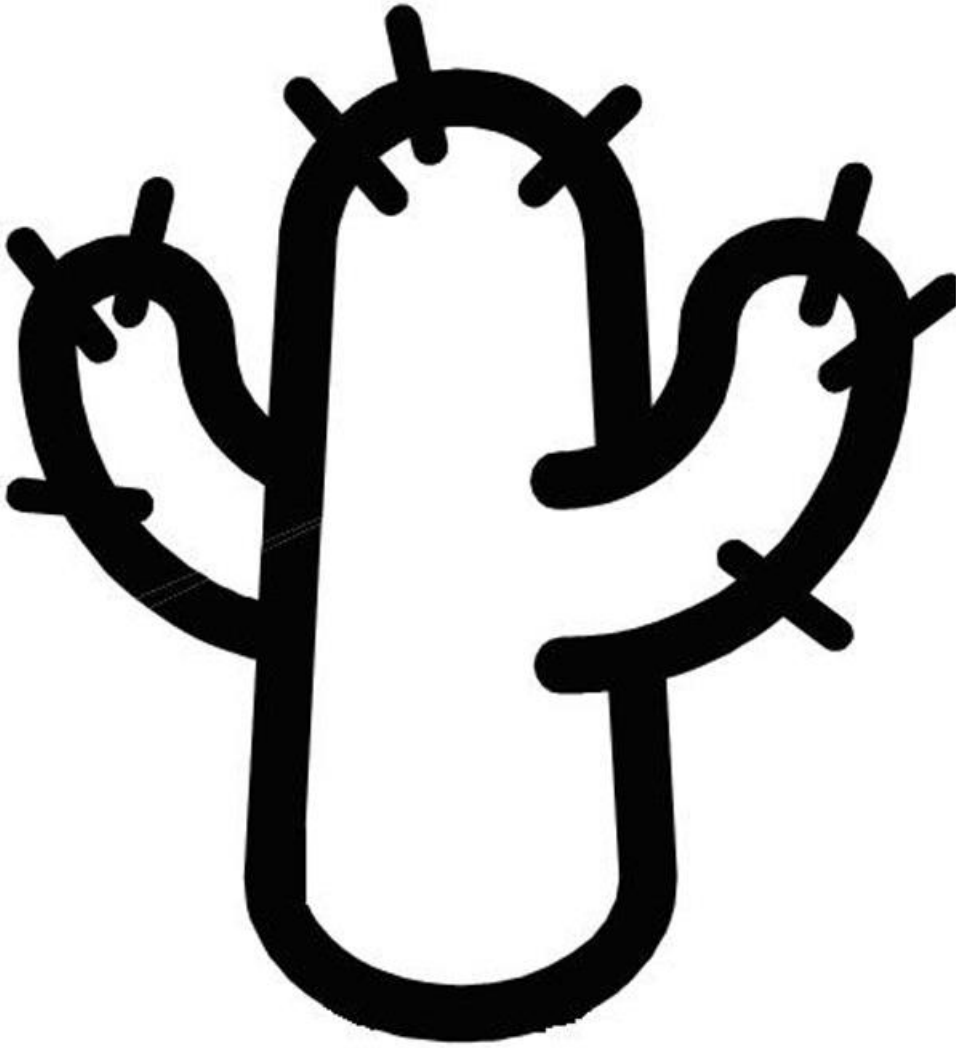


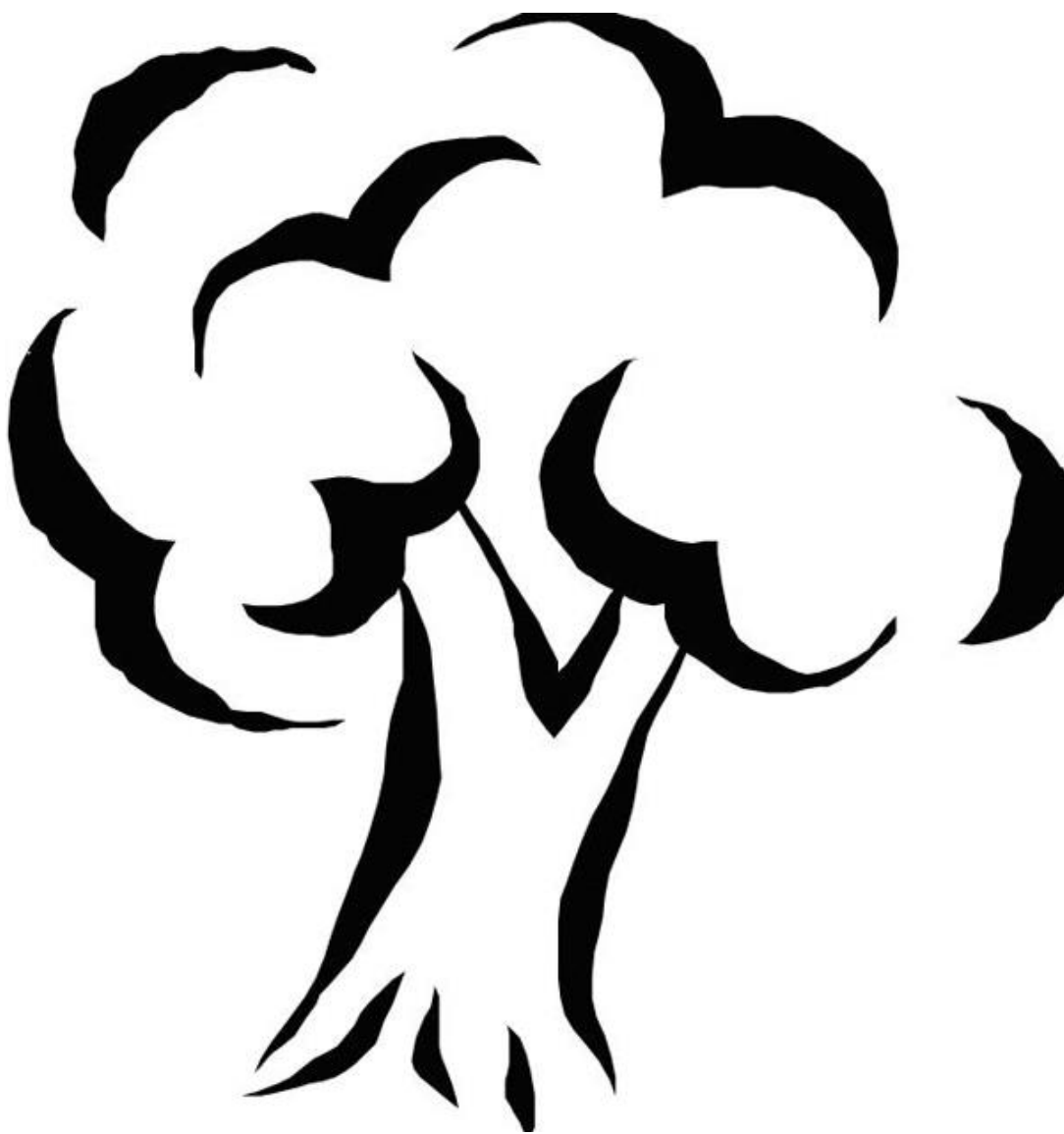
## LEADER RESOURCE 4: MAKING TRACKS FOR FAITH

*Promote inclusion by providing pictures of wheelchairs, using different colors of paper, as an alternative to Faithful Footprints to post on the Faithful Journeys Path.*



## LEADER RESOURCE 5: TREES FOR THE FAITHFUL JOURNEYS PATH









## LEADER RESOURCE 6: UU PRINCIPLES MATCHING GAME CARDS

*Cut out the game cards. Keep the adult language Principles separate from the children's version.*

**Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part**

**Caring for our planet Earth and every living thing that shares it with us.**

**The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all**

**Working for a peaceful, fair, and free world.**

**The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large**

**Everyone deserves a vote about the things that concern them.**

**A free and responsible search for truth and meaning**

**Each person is free to search for what is true and right in life.**

**Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations**

**In our congregations, all people are accepted and we learn together.**

**Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations**

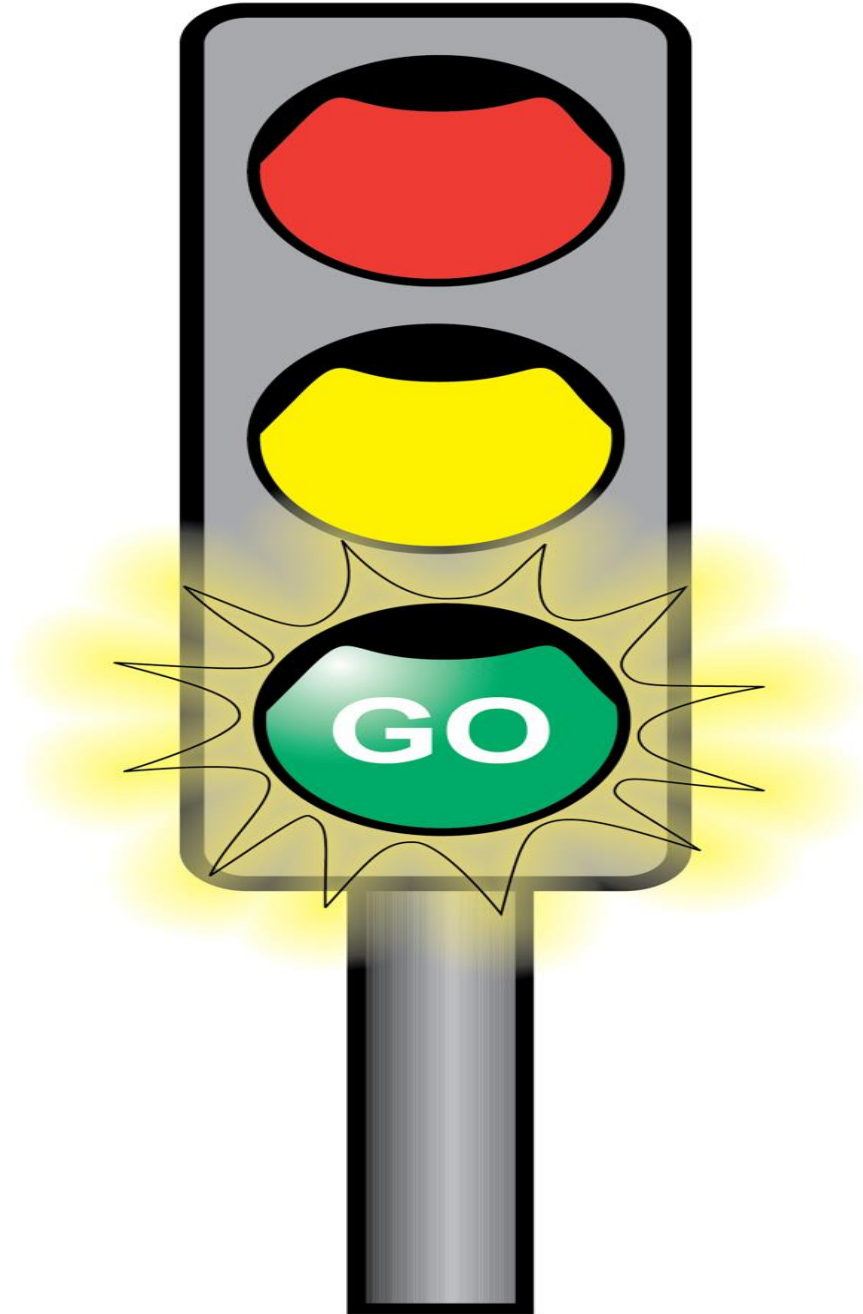
**All people should be treated fairly.**

**The inherent worth and dignity of every person**

**Each and every person is important.**

## LEADER RESOURCE 7: SIGNPOST FOR SESSION 1

*Cut out the traffic light. Color the bottom circle green if using a black and white version. During the Closing, show it to the children and attach it to the Faithful Journeys Path.*



## LEADER RESOURCE 8: UU PRINCIPLES SONG

By Lisa Rubin; used with permission.

*Sing to the tune of "Old MacDonald Had a Farm."*

Seven UU Principles,

Come and sing with me!

One!

Everyone is special,

That's what we believe!

With a high five here and a high five there,

Here a high five, there a high five, everywhere a high five ...

Everyone is special!

That's what we believe!

Two!

Treat people kindly!

That's what we believe!

With a back pat here ...

Three!

Take each person as they are!

That's what we believe!

With a welcome here ...

Four!

Grow in spirit, mind, and heart!

That's what we believe!

With a growth spurt here ...

Five!

Act and vote on your concerns!

That's what we believe!

With a "Yes" vote here, and a "No" vote there ...

Here a "Yes", there a "No", everywhere a "Yes" or "No" ...

Six!

Work for peace and justice!

That's what we believe!

With a peace sign here, and a peace sign there ...

Here a sign, there a sign, everywhere a peace sign ...

Seven!

To nature we're connected!



That's what we believe!

With a "web link" here, and a "web link" there ...

Here a link, there a link, everywhere a web link ...

Seven UU Principles,

SING WHAT WE BELIEVE!

## FIND OUT MORE

### Harriot Hunt and the Motts

The treatment Drs. Elizabeth and Richard Dixon Mott provided her sister, Sarah, inspired Harriot Kezia Hunt to learn the Motts' healing practices. However, in 1830s Boston, the Motts were considered quacks. According to the article, "[Mrs. Mott, 'The Celebrated Female Physician,'](#)" in Historic New England online magazine (2005):

Boston was also home to many alternative medical practitioners who sought to cure patients without poisonous drugs and strong interventions.... Serious competitors in the burgeoning urban medical marketplace, they advertised their cures in local newspapers and directories and gained followings well beyond Boston. Even so, Mrs. Mott was an anomaly in the early nineteenth century, when both traditional medicine and alternative medicine were male preserves. For centuries women had administered home remedies to their sick relatives, but doctors who had graduated from professional medical training programs began to supplant such female healers. It would take decades for women to gain access to medical schools.

### Unitarian Universalist Principles

For more about the Unitarian Universalist Principles read *With Purpose and Principle: Essays About the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism*, edited by Edward A. Frost (Boston: Skinner House Books, 1998).

# SESSION 2: UNCONDITIONAL LOVE, A GIFT FROM OUR UNIVERSALIST HERITAGE

## INTRODUCTION

*The law of heaven is love. — Hosea Ballou*

In this session, a story about Hosea Ballou (1771-1852), one of the most influential preachers of Universalism, introduces participants to the first Unitarian Universalist Principle, the inherent worth and dignity of every person. The story, "Muddy Children," describes a young Ballou whose father loves him unconditionally despite his tendency to get muddy. Discussion and activities amplify the story's teaching, reassuring participants that they, like Hosea Ballou, are loved and worthy even when they are literally muddy or have made a mistake. The signpost "Respect Everyone" is added to the Faithful Journeys Path.

Activity 1, Faithful Footprints, asks you to prepare in advance a footprint (or wheelchair track) for yourself for the Faithful Journeys Path. Be ready to briefly describe an action you have taken that reflects Unitarian Universalist faith. You will also need blank footprints (or wheelchair tracks) for participants; see Session 1, Leader Resources 3 and 4.

Alternate Activity 1 offers a foot-washing ritual based on a Christian tradition of expressing caring and reverence for a person in this way. If you are open to a messy art project, Alternate Activity 2, Unconditional Love Mud Art, gives children an experience making self-portraits that emphasizes the Universalist teaching of unconditional love. If you prefer not to play with mud, Alternate Activity 3 guides participants to make clay symbols of unconditional love to take home.

## GOALS

This session will:

- Strengthen Unitarian Universalist identity by teaching participants about Hosea Ballou and the idea of unconditional love as central to Universalist theology and important in our Unitarian Universalist faith heritage
- Encourage participants to understand themselves as loved unconditionally
- Guide participants to extend unconditional love to others, specifically to their peers

- Teach and reinforce our first Unitarian Universalist Principle, the inherent worth and dignity of every person, and introduce the idea that acting faithfully based on our first Principle means respecting everyone
- Build community through games, rituals, and reinforcement of group behavior covenant.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Learn about a childhood experience of Universalist preacher Hosea Ballou, that exemplifies key Universalist beliefs about universal salvation and love
- Experience their congregation as a place where they are loved and give unconditional love to others, despite imperfections, as they identify and affirm some of their own strengths and interests
- Name ways they might act that respond to the signpost "Respect Everyone"
- Name ways they have translated faith into action by participating in the Faithful Footprints exercise
- Take responsibility for creating a safe learning environment by reviewing and signing the Faithful Journeys group covenant.

## SESSION-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	2
Activity 1: Faithful Footprints	5
Activity 2: Signing the Behavior Covenant	5
Activity 3: Move It! Horrific Posing Welcome Exercise	5
Activity 4: Story Basket and Centering	5
Activity 5: Story — Muddy Children: Hosea Ballou	12
Activity 6: Gift Catchers	21
Faith in Action: Coffee Hour Interviews	
Closing	5
Alternate Activity 1: Foot-washing Ceremony	20

Alternate Activity 2: Unconditional Love Mud Art 22

Alternate Activity 3: Clay Symbols of  
Unconditional Love 20

Alternate Activity 4: Game — Darling If You  
Love Me, Won't You Please, Please, Smile 8

## **SPIRITUAL PREPARATION**

If it will help you create sacred space, light a candle or chalice. Read this session's central story, "Muddy Children." Recall times in your own life when you experienced unconditional love and what that meant to you. Take a few moments to ponder the Universalist message of love. Try to imagine a love that is bigger than the universe and encompasses all beings. Think about the children you will be working with today. Try to open up your heart to love them as fully as possible — mud and all.

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Chalice candle or LED/battery-operated candle
- Lighter and extinguisher, if needed
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Posters of the Unitarian Universalist Principles in both adult and children's language, or copies of [Session 1](#), Handout 1 (included in this document) for all participants

### Preparation for Activity

- Decide whether you will use the provided opening words or other opening words, such as those offered in Session 1, Leader Resource 1, Alternate Openings. It is recommended that you use the same opening words for each session.
- Print the opening words on newsprint. Post the newsprint where the children will be able to see it when they gather.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle. Light the chalice. Point out the chalice-lighting words on the newsprint and invite the group to read together:

We light this flame for the light of truth, the warmth of love, and the energy of action.

Indicate the poster(s) of the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Or, give each child a copy of the handout. Ask a volunteer to read the first Principle in the adult language. Ask a second volunteer to read the children's version of the first Principle. Then, say:

Today we will learn about this Unitarian Universalist Principle — what it means, and what kinds of actions show it. Let's get started.

Collect handouts for reuse.

### Including All Participants

If not all participants are fluent readers, take the time to teach the group to say the opening words from memory.

If the group has children who are sensitive to perfumes or other chemicals, use unscented candles or an electric or battery-operated flame. An electric flame is also recommended if you may not use open flames or if any participants are afraid of fire.

## ACTIVITY 1: FAITHFUL FOOTPRINTS (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path (Session 1, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))
- Cutouts of footprints and (optional) wheelchair tracks, at least one for each participant, in a variety of colors (Session 1, [Leader Resources 3](#) and [4](#) (included in this document) )
- Markers
- Push pins, glue stick or tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Think of something you have done since the group last met that represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. Identify the Principle(s) your action reflected. Write a few words about it on a footprint (or wheelchair track as appropriate for you), with your name.

### Description of Activity

This activity reinforces children's learning as they model translating faith into action for one another. To strengthen children's Unitarian Universalist identity, help participants see how their own behavior demonstrates specific Principles.

Gather in a circle. Point to the Faithful Journeys Path and say:

Together we are taking a journey to learn what it means to live as Unitarian Universalists. Each time we meet, we have a chance to talk about ways our actions show our beliefs about what is right and good. This is called "putting our faith into action."

When you share about something you have done that shows what you believe, you can choose a footprint or tracks for us to put on our Faithful Journeys Path.

Hold up the footprint you made of your own faithful action. Tell what you did and how it represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. If you can connect your action to a Principle, briefly explain. For example:

- I made phone calls to remind people to vote (or, I voted), because I believe in our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, that we all have a say in matters that concern us. When people vote,

that's one way to have every person's opinion be counted.

- I have a neighbor who was sick last week. I helped him bring his trash outside, because I believe in the second Unitarian Universalist Principle, which says we believe in being kind and fair.
- I put my water bottles and juice bottles in the recycling bin, because I believe in the seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, which reminds us to take care of the Earth that all life shares.

Ask the children to think of an act they have done, since you met last, that reflects Unitarian Universalism. You may wish to prompt:

- Did anyone do something that helped make things fair? (justice, equity, and compassion)
- Did anyone help someone else? (inherent worth and dignity, interdependent web)
- Did anyone take care of nature or another animal? (interdependent web)
- Did anyone listen to someone else who had a very different opinion? (search for truth and meaning, acceptance of one another)
- Did anyone play with someone new whom you did not know very well? (acceptance of one another, encouragement to spiritual growth)

As participants name their actions, write a word or phrase describing the action on a footprint or wheelchair tracks cutout. Invite children to write their names on their cutouts and post them along the edge of the Faithful Journeys Path. In early sessions, post cutouts near the start of the path. Have them progress along the path over the course of the program.

To stay within the time frame for this activity, use these guidelines:

- Encourage children to share their faithful act in one or two brief sentences.
- If the group is big, you may wish to limit children to sharing only one faithful act per week.

It is very important to avoid judging participants, either with criticism or praise. Avoid phrases like "Great job!" or "You're fantastic!" which might suggest that acts of faith vary in their value or encourage children to compete to share the "best" act.

You should, however, respond to each child's contribution. Listen carefully to what a child tells you. After each child shares, say something like, "Thank you

for sharing," followed by a summarizing sentence, such as:

- Being kind to new children at school is an action that treats others like they are important.
- Suggesting your friends all vote to decide what to play together is an action of democracy and fairness.
- Cleaning up garbage at the park is an action to take care of the Earth.
- Teaching your brother to talk is an action that affirms each person's learning.
- Taking care of your dog is an action of love.

Identify the Unitarian Universalist Principles each act represents; refer to the Principles poster if the room has one or indicate a relevant signpost on the Faithful Journeys Path. By responding specifically to each child's faithful actions, you will help them feel pride, a sense of accomplishment, and their own empowerment as agents whose actions and choices reflect Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values.

### **Including All Participants**

Along with cut-out footprints (Session 1, Handout 3, Faithful Footprints), provide wheelchairs (Session 1, Handout 4, Making Tracks for Faith) in the same colors of paper. Encourage all the children — not just those who use wheelchairs for mobility — to sometimes use a wheelchair instead of footprints to represent their faithful actions.

## **ACTIVITY 2: SIGNING THE BEHAVIOR COVENANT (5 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- A poster board or large sheet of newsprint with the behavior covenant rules the group generated in Session 1, Activity 1 (Note: Leave room for everyone's signatures at the bottom.)
- A variety of color markers
- Optional: Basket to hold markers
- Tape

### **Preparation for Activity**

- If possible, find a place in the meeting space to post the covenant for the duration of the program.

### **Description of Activity**

This activity gives the children ownership over the behavioral rules for Faithful Journeys and helps

establish a sense of safety and community. Show the group the covenant. Lay it on the floor, in the center of the group. Remind the children that the covenant is a promise to one another to keep a safe, cooperative community in Faithful Journeys. You may wish to tell the children that making this covenant is a way to practice Unitarian Universalism's third Principle of accepting one another and helping each other to grow.

Read the covenant aloud. You may choose to sign it first, to model. Then invite the children to sign it as a promise to abide by its rules. Ask them to go two or three at a time to sign their names, using any color marker they wish. When all have signed, including the adults, post the covenant.

Tell the children, in your own words:

Anyone who feels at any time that the rules of the covenant are not being followed can ask for a time outside of our group activities to discuss it, either with the whole group or one of the leaders.

### **Including All Participants**

If any child cannot get down on the floor, place the covenant on a table where all can reach it or bring the covenant to individual children to sign. Invite children who are physically unable to sign their names to choose another child to write it for them.

## **ACTIVITY 3: MOVE IT! HORRIFIC POSING WELCOME EXERCISE (5 MINUTES)**

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Make sure that the group has room to form a standing or sitting circle where each person can move around a bit without risk of hitting someone.
- Familiarize yourself with the activity so you can lead the exercise without reading from the sheet.

### **Description of Activity**

Gather the group in a circle. Tell them:

Horrific Posing is a way to warm up our bodies and spirits, but it is also a way of welcoming, greeting, and honoring each person in the circle. Horrific Posing has three stages. We begin with the first, simplest stage. As you try to make eye contact with each person in the circle, make the weirdest faces that you can, but use only your face; the rest of your body should remain still. Honor and welcome each person whose eyes

you meet by making a really strange face at them.

Model the first stage and give the group a half minute or so to try it. Then say:

Next we move to stage two. While continuing to stretch your face in the weirdest ways you can, move your upper body as well. You can use your arms and your torso as well as your head to move and bend in strange ways. But remember, as we do this we are trying to catch the eye of each person in the circle and salute them with our strange poses.

Again, give the group a half minute of practice. Then say:

Finally, for stage three, you are free to move your whole body as you greet and honor each person with your unique poses. Keep your place in the circle, and make sure you do not actually touch anyone, but you may use your whole body, still including your face, to salute each person in the strangest possible way.

After a half minute of stage three, invite the group to come back to stillness, and take them through all three stages again. Before you finish, ask whether anyone would like to be welcomed with more Horrific Posing, and invite everyone in the circle to direct a welcome at them. This time, you may like to give the group a bit more time for each stage. Make sure you bring the group back to stillness to conclude the activity.

### **Including All Participants**

If any children in the group use wheelchairs and do not have use of their lower bodies, to make the Horrific posing circle a seated one for all, and limit this exercise to the first two stages.

## **ACTIVITY 4: STORY BASKET AND CENTERING (5 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- A large basket
- Objects related to the story "[Muddy Children: Hosea Ballou](#)" (included in this document), such as a picture of Hosea Ballou; a copy of the book, *Treatise on Atonement*, by Hosea Ballou; a toy heart or a picture of a heart; or a picture of children who have gotten messy as with paint, food, or mud (perhaps Pig Pen from the Peanuts comic strip)
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument

- Optional: Box or small table and a decorative cloth cover to form a small altar

### Preparation for Activity

- Place the story-related items and the sound instrument in the story basket.
- Optional: Read [Unitarian Universalist Historical Society article](#) on Hosea Ballou. Print out his picture to place in the story basket.
- Place the filled basket in the storytelling area you have designated.
- If you will make an altar as a focal point for story objects, set up the box or table you will use next to your storytelling area. Place the decorative cloth on the altar. It is not necessary to ritualize the altar as a sacred place. It can simply serve as a focal point where objects related to the story will be visible while you tell the story.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle in your storytelling area. Show them the storytelling basket. Say something like, "Let's see what's in our story basket this week."

Tell the group the items in the story basket will be placed on this altar or table after the children have passed them around the circle. Take the story-related items from the basket, one at a time, and pass them around. Objects that are fragile or should not be passed around for any reason can be held up for all to see and then placed directly on the altar.

Briefly name the various objects. Show the picture of Hosea Ballou and explain that he was a Universalist minister more than two hundred years ago when most Christians believed that most people would go to hell when they died.

As the items come back to you, display them on the altar for children to look at as they listen to the story.

Now remove the sound instrument from the story basket. Tell the children that every time you tell a story in Faithful Journeys, you will first use the instrument to help them get their ears, minds, and bodies ready to listen. Invite them to sit comfortably and close their eyes (if they are comfortable doing so). You may tell them that closing their eyes can help them focus on just listening.

In a calm voice, say:

As you breathe in, feel your body opening up with air. As you breathe out, feel yourself relaxing.

Repeat this once or twice. Then, say:

Now you are ready to listen. When I hit the chime (turn the rain stick over), listen as carefully as you can. See how long you can hear its sound. When you can no longer hear it, open your eyes and you will know it is time for the story to begin.

Sound the instrument. When the sound has gone, begin telling the story.

### Including All Participants

If anyone in the group is unable to hold or pass items, or cannot see the items, make sure you or a child in the group offers the person a chance to see and touch each object, as needed.

Some people do not feel safe closing their eyes when they are in a group. If any children resist, respect their resistance and suggest that they find a single point of focus to look at instead.

If you have a basket of fidget objects for children who may listen and learn more effectively with something in their hands, make the fidget object basket available during this activity. Remind children where it is before you begin the "centering" part of this activity. For a full description of fidget objects and guidance on using them, see Leader Resource 2, Fidget Objects.

## ACTIVITY 5: STORY — MUDDY CHILDREN — HOSEA BALLOU (12 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of the story "[Muddy Children: Hosea Ballou](#)" (included in this document)
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Fidget object basket (See [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document).)

### Preparation for Activity

- Read the story a few times. Try using different voices for the different characters in the story.
- Consider telling the story rather than reading it. Practice telling it aloud.
- Think about how you might use items from the story basket as props.

### Description of Activity

In this activity you will tell the story "Muddy Children: Hosea Ballou," which presents an example of someone acting based on our first Unitarian Universalist Principle, the inherent worth and dignity of all people. In addition,



the story introduces children to basic Universalist history and theology.

Sound the instrument to indicate the story is over. Take a few minutes to guide the children in a brief discussion, using these questions:

- Have you ever been really tempted to do something your parents told you not to do?
- I wonder, why did Hosea Ballou think God would not send people to hell, even though the grown-ups around him thought God *would*?
- I wonder, what does it mean when Unitarian Universalists say we believe all people have inherent worth and dignity?

## ACTIVITY 6: GIFT CATCHERS (21 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Copy of [Leader Resource 3](#) (included in this document), Gift Catchers Instructions, or a few for children to share
- Copies of [Handout 1](#) (included in this document), Affirmations, for participants to share
- Blank sheets of 8 1/2 x 11-inch paper for all participants
- Scissors (including left-handed scissors) and pencils, pen or fine-tip markers to share
- Optional: Glue sticks
- Optional: Affirmation stickers with phrases such as "You're Great!" on them
- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Read the instructions for making a gift catcher, and make a model.

### Description of Activity

Using your own words, say something like:

Our first Unitarian Universalist Principle says that all people have inherent worth and dignity. That means every person around the world is important — and every person in this Faithful Journeys group is important, too. Today we are going to make gift catchers to take home to remind us about our first Principle.

Hand out the blank paper, scissors, and (optional) copies of Leader Resource 3 to share. Show the group the model you created in advance. Tell the children

everyone will fold their gift catchers before drawing or writing on them. Lead and help the group to complete steps 1 through 10 of the instructions.

When most children have completed folding their gift catchers, invite them to write their names on them and decorate the flat side (the opposite side from where they write numbers 1 through 8 on the triangle flaps). Suggest they make self-portraits, write their names in a decorative way and/or draw things they are good at or things they love.

Give a one-minute warning to finish. Then, gather the children in a circle, with their gift catchers. Distribute Handout 1. Explain that affirmations are nice things you say that express caring and appreciation for others. Read the affirmations aloud. Ask the group to suggest any other affirmations they would like you to spell out on the newsprint for them to use in their gift catchers.

Distribute markers and pencils and/or affirmation stickers. If you would like them to cut out affirmations from the Handout 1, pass around scissors and glue sticks. Invite the children to pass their gift catchers around for others to write or stick affirmations in one of the hidden triangle areas, and then pass along to the next child. Ask children to pay attention to whose gift catcher they are holding so they can tailor their affirmation to that person.

**Note:** Pass the gift catchers around until all are complete. In a small group, some children may write twice on each gift catcher. In larger groups, not all the children will get to write on everyone's gift catcher.

When all the gift catchers are filled with affirmations, return them to the children who made them. Show the group how to make the final folds so they can use the gift catchers, and invite them to use their gift catchers with one another.

Point out that while the affirmations were written for the owners of the gift catchers, when they use them with friends it will be an opportunity to affirm their friends, too.

### Including All Participants

At this age there is a wide range in writing abilities. Give children the option of dictating their thoughts to an adult or older child in the group or drawing a picture message.

## CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path
- Signpost for Session 2 ([Leader Resource 1](#) (included in this document)) and pins, glue stick or tape

- Copies of Session 1, [Leader Resource 8](#) (included in this document), UU Principles Song, for all participants
- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Print out Leader Resource 1, and cut out the signpost.
- Optional: Write the UU Principles Song lyrics on newsprint, and post.
- Customize, print out and photocopy the Taking It Home section for all participants.

### **Description of Activity**

This activity helps children get used to practicing a closing ritual as a way of affirming their belonging in the faith community.

Gather the group in a circle. Thank the children for participating and sharing their stories and ideas in this session. Tell them something you liked about the way they worked together as a community.

Point out the Faithful Journeys Path. Say, in your own words:

Our Faithful Journeys Path shows our journey to live our lives and act in ways that reflect our Unitarian Universalist beliefs and faith. The signposts direct us by reminding us about our Principles.

Today's signpost is "Respect Everyone." It stands for our first Unitarian Universalist Principle that everyone is important and valuable, and we need to always treat one another with respect.

Attach the signpost to the Faithful Journeys Path.

Remind the children that the next time they meet they will have a chance to add Faithful Footprints to the Faithful Journeys Path. Encourage them to do an action during the week that shows fairness or justice. Take a few minutes to brainstorm some actions together. If the children have difficulty coming up with ideas, you might suggest including someone new in your game, saying please and thank you, listening when others are talking to you, or being kind to someone.

Point out the words to the UU Principles Song. Tell the children it is sung to the tune of "Old McDonald Had a Farm." Lead the children in singing the verse about the first Principle. Then, sing the entire song together. Explain that you will learn about all of the Principles during your time together in Faithful Journeys.

Distribute the Taking It Home handout. Thank the children, tell them you look forward to seeing them next time, and dismiss the group.

## **FAITH IN ACTION: COFFEE HOUR INTERVIEWS**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Optional: Camera, or video recorder and videotape

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Arrange a date with coffee-hour coordinators for the children to interview congregants and visitors. You may wish to set up a table with chairs where the interviews can take place. Ask your minister or lay worship leaders to announce this activity during the preceding worship service.

### **Description of Activity**

Gather the children together and explain that you are going to learn more about some people in your congregation by interviewing them. Form pairs of children and have each pair interview at least two or three congregants or visitors — anyone except their Faithful Journeys peers. You may wish to write out the questions for the children to use:

- What is something you love to do?
- What is something you are really good at?

You may also ask the children if there are any other questions they would like to use.

After ten or fifteen minutes, regather the children. Give them an opportunity to share about their interviews. Ask them what they learned that was surprising or interesting.

### **Including All Participants**

Encourage a child who is particularly shy to interview a familiar person, perhaps even a parent. You can also have an adult leader be that child's partner. Do not push children to engage in conversations that they find uncomfortable.

## **LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING**

Take a few minutes to evaluate the session with your co-leader immediately afterward, while it is fresh. Share your thoughts with any other team co-leaders and your director of religious education. You might find it helpful to consider these questions:

- Which activities worked well? What didn't work so well?
- Were all children actively engaged? If not, who wasn't and why might that have been? How could they be better included next time?
- How well did the activities match the learning styles of the children in this group? What can we do differently to better accommodate different learning styles in future sessions?
- How well did the session balance physically active with sedentary activities?
- How was the timing? What might need to be done differently for a session to work better within our time frame?
- Were there any behavior issues? If so, how can we address them in the future? Do we need more information or help in this area?
- What connections did children make with the activities and/or central ideas? How did we know that was occurring?
- What connections did children make with each other? What connections did we make with the children? When was that most evident?
- Are we successfully creating a program characterized by inclusion, diversity appreciation, respect, noncompetitive environment, and welcome? What could we have done differently?
- What questions or issues arose in this session that we might like to discuss with our director of religious education?

## TAKING IT HOME

*The law of heaven is love. – Hosea Ballou*

**IN TODAY'S SESSION...** We focused on early Universalist preacher Hosea Ballou as an example of someone in history who translated Unitarian Universalist beliefs into faithful action. The children learned about the first Unitarian Universalist Principle, which states that we affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of all people. We heard the story "Muddy Children," which tells how Universalist Hosea Ballou experienced unconditional love in his family when, as a child, he had difficulty refraining from playing in mud. This childhood experience informed Ballou's preaching and theology, which emphasized love and universal salvation. We also created gift catchers with affirmations to remind us that we are all loved and endowed with inherent worth and

dignity. Our signpost to help guide us in faithful action was "Respect Everyone."

**EXPLORE THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Talk about...** As Unitarian Universalists, we want to treat every person in a way that shows we believe they have inherent worth and dignity – as if they are important. Discuss ways the members of your family show respect for one another and for other people. You may wish to play a game where one person suggests the name of someone you all know – the postal delivery person, an adult family friend, a teacher, one of your child's friends and all contribute ways you show that person you consider them important and worthy of respect.

**EXTEND THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Try...** Pay extra attention to times when your child shows respect for other people through acts of kindness and consideration. Point out instances of your child acting faithfully, that is, in a way that reflects the Principle of inherent worth and dignity. Your child will have the opportunity to share these actions with the Faithful Journeys group next time we meet.

## FAMILY ADVENTURE

Put on your play clothes and go play together in the mud or do something else that is messy – preferably something that at other times may be forbidden. When you are done, wash up and talk about the fact that when we get dirty we can clean ourselves up again. It's the same when we make mistakes. When we do something wrong we can "clean" ourselves by apologizing, trying to repair any damages we've done, and trying harder to do things differently in the future.

## A FAMILY RITUAL

Make it a daily ritual to express your unconditional love to your child. You might say, "I love you always and forever, no matter what." Be sure to say this even (or especially) when you have been angry at your child. You can say, "I am still angry at you, but that doesn't change the fact that I love you always and forever, no matter what."

## A FAMILY GAME

Play the game "Darling, If You Love Me, Won't You Please, Please Smile?" To play, one person asks another person this question. Without smiling at any point, the second person has to answer, "Darling, I am terribly sorry. I will love you forever but I just can't smile." The first person can attempt to get the second person to smile or laugh by making funny faces, telling jokes, or using other methods that don't involve physical contact. If the second person does not smile or laugh, they win. If you are playing this as a small group and the second person smiles before finishing the complete statement

above, they become "it" and must now ask someone else the question while trying to elicit a smile.

## **FAMILY DISCOVERY**

Watch the Disney movie *Lilo and Stitch* together, and discuss the Hawaiian concept of *ohana*, or family, that it portrays. Talk about the ways Stitch makes trouble and yet is still loved in a family where no one gets left behind or forgotten.

## **ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: FOOT-WASHING CEREMONY (20 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Liquid soap, preferably ecologically friendly
- Dish pans or other large basins, one for every three participants
- Paper towels for wiping the basins
- Washcloths, one per participant
- Hand towels, one per participant
- Unscented lotion
- One child-size chair for every three children

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Identify a water source near the meeting space where you can fill, empty, and refill basins.
- Shortly before beginning this activity, fill the basins with hot water so the water will be comfortably warm for use.
- Set each basin in front of a chair. Next to each chair place three washcloths and three hand towels.

### **Description of Activity**

In this activity, participants experience giving and receiving respect and caring from peers by washing one another's feet.

Have participants take off their shoes and socks. Then, form trios by counting off ones, twos and threes. (Or, you may wish to form groups of children who will likely work well together in this activity.) Ask all the "ones" to sit in a chair and the "twos" and "threes" to sit at the seated child's feet.

Explain, in your own words:

The Christian bible has a story about how Jesus washed the feet of his apostles, the people who followed him. Jesus did this to show he was not more important than the others, even though many thought he was a special teacher. He

wanted people to realize that none of us is more important or valuable than another.

Because of this story about Jesus, foot washing is a Christian ritual. When we wash each other's feet today, it is a way to show we are being humble, like Jesus was in the story. Unitarian Universalists do not think one person is more important or worthwhile than another. We will each have a chance to give and receive respect.

Tell the children if something tickles they should ask their foot-washers to press a little harder. Emphasize that when it is their turn to be a foot-washer, children should be gentle and respectful.

Have the children on the floor each wash one foot of the child in the chair, using the soap and washcloth. After a few minutes of washing, one foot-washer should towel the child's feet dry with the seated child's hand towel and rub lotion on both feet. The other foot-washer should dump out the dirty water and fill the basin with warm, clean water. If the water source is far away or the basin heavy, co-leaders should do this job.

Once there is a second basin full of clean water, one of the foot-washers should now sit in the chair. Repeat the process until all children in the trio have had an opportunity to have their feet washed.

### **Including All Participants**

If any in the group are especially ticklish, unable to feel their feet, or squeamish about the foot-washing ceremony, have the children wash one another's hands instead.

## **ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: UNCONDITIONAL LOVE MUD ART (22 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Dirt (preferably not potting soil or sandy dirt)
- A few large pitchers
- A mixing bowl or tray, a small cup, and a popsicle stick, spoon, or other mud-stirrer for each participant
- Smocks (large, old T-shirts are a good substitute)
- Newspapers or drop cloths
- Paper towels and/or wet wipes
- Optional: Small basin(s) with soapy water for cleanup

- Optional: Paintbrushes for children who resist using their hands for this activity
- Wax crayons, pastel sticks, and/or color pencils to share
- Copies of [Handout 2](#) (included in this document), I Am Loved, or blank paper for all participants, plus a few extra

### Preparation for Activity

- Cover tables and floors with newspaper or drop cloths.
- Put dirt in bowls or trays and place around work table(s).
- Fill pitchers with water. You may prefer to wait and do this while children start drawing and writing on their handouts, to avoid mischief with water during earlier parts of the session.
- Put mud-stirrers, handouts, and crayons or color pencils on work tables.
- Print and cut out Leader Resource 4, All Are Loved Banner, and post where you plan to display the completed "Unconditional Love" mud art projects.

### Description of Activity

Invite children to put on smocks and sit at a work table. Give each participant a copy of Handout 2, I Am Loved. Explain that they will draw themselves on the figure and fill in the blanks for the categories found at the bottom of the page. They can write, draw, or dictate their answers.

Give them a few minutes to do this while you distribute water to participants, pouring a small amount in their individual cups. Then, invite them to mix mud by adding water from their cup to their bowl of dirt. Avoid making the mud too watery.

Finally, direct participants to finger paint their self-portraits with the mud. They can choose how much mud to add to their pictures but should try not to cover the words and images on their paper. Avoid globs of mud that will simply harden and fall off. When everyone is done, leave the pictures to dry and then hang them up in an "Unconditional Love" gallery underneath the banner "All Are Loved."

Participants who finish quickly can be invited to play with their mud or to make mud paintings on blank paper until everyone is done.

Engage everyone in cleanup, using the paper towels, wet wipes, or wash basin.

### Including All Participants

Whether or not the group includes children of color, it is very important to avoid suggesting links between muddy faces and darker skin colors. Avoid words like "dark," "brown" and "black," as you talk about the muddy images. Use language that describes muddiness, dirtiness, or messiness.

Children who have sensory stimulation challenges may be uncomfortable painting in mud with their fingers. Provide paintbrushes or other implements.

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 3: CLAY SYMBOLS OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Self-hardening clay or modeling dough
- Smocks (large, old T-shirts are a good substitute)
- Newspapers or drop cloths

### Preparation for Activity

- Cover work tables with newspaper.

### Description of Activity

Have children sit at work tables and give each participant a handful of self-hardening clay or modeling dough. You may say:

As Unitarian Universalists, we believe all people have inherent worth and dignity. That means we think all people are important. We believe people are important even if they sometimes make bad choices or do wrong things. The first Universalists taught that God loves all people unconditionally — no matter what.

Invite the children to use the clay or modeling dough to make a symbol of love or to express what it feels like to be loved even though you are not perfect.

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 4: GAME — DARLING, IF YOU LOVE ME, WON'T YOU PLEASE, PLEASE SMILE (8 MINUTES)

### Description of Activity

Gather in a standing circle. Choose one volunteer to be the "Darling" and stand in the center of the circle. This person's goal is to get someone else in the circle to smile or laugh. If this person succeeds, the one who smiled becomes the new "Darling." The original "Darling" rejoins the circle.

The "Darling" gets others to smile by approaching someone in the circle and saying, "Darling, if you love me, won't you please, please smile." The "Darling" can make funny faces, use silly voices, tell jokes, or use other means to get the person to smile, but physically touching the person is not allowed.

The person who has been approached must respond by saying, "I am sorry, darling. I love you, but I just can't smile," without smiling before or during this statement. If the person succeeds, the "Darling" must try to make someone else smile. If the person smiles, however, the two exchange places and the person who smiled becomes the new "Darling."

## STORY: MUDDY CHILDREN — HOSEA BALLOU

By Janeen K. Grohsmeyer; from her book *A Lamp in Every Corner: Our Unitarian Universalist Storybook*.

*To make the story more engaging and to help make it very clear who is speaking during dialogues, try developing different voices for the different characters in the story, especially the father.*

*Before you begin, look around the room and make eye contact with each person. Read or tell the story.*

*Ring the chime (or other sound instrument) to indicate that the story is over.*

Over two hundred years ago, in a small house in a small town, on the edge of a forest of very big trees in the state of New Hampshire, there lived a small boy. His name was Hosea Ballou.

Hosea, just like other children, liked to learn and do new things. He was always asking questions, about what and why and how. And, just like other children, Hosea liked to play. He liked to play hide-and-seek with his nine older brothers and sisters. He liked to play word games inside when it was rainy, and he liked to play tag outside when it was sunny. In the winter, he liked to jump into snowdrifts. In the summer, he liked to jump into the creek. In the fall, he liked to jump into leaf piles. And in the spring — why, spring was Hosea's favorite season of all — because in the spring, it would rain and rain and rain, and then Hosea could jump into mud.

Hosea, just like other children, loved mud. He liked it when it was soft and squishy, and he liked it when it was thick and sticky. If it didn't rain quite enough, that wasn't a problem. Hosea would carry water to the dirt and create glorious mud puddles all of his own. He liked to poke sticks into puddles and see how deep the mud was. He liked to make mud pies and to build mud dams. He liked to jump in puddles hard with both feet and make the muddy water splash really high, so that the mud splattered all over his brothers' and sisters' clothes, and he loved to step in puddles v-e-r-y slowly, so that the mud oozed up just a little bit at a time between his toes.

Yes, Hosea loved mud.

Now, you can imagine that not everybody in his family liked mud quite as much as Hosea did. His mother had died when he was not quite two, so his older sisters took care of him. His sister, who did laundry and scrubbed the family's dirty clothes in big washtubs, didn't like

having to scrub all that mud off Hosea's clothes — or off everybody else's clothes, either, after Hosea had stomped in a mud puddle extra hard.

His other older sister, who kept the little children clean, didn't like having to scrub all that mud off Hosea. And Hosea (just like other children) didn't like having baths, either, especially when it meant he had to stand in a washtub in front of the fire and have water dumped over his head. But his sisters loved him, so they took him home and washed him and dried him and made him clean.

Then Hosea's sisters went to their father and said, "Father, please tell Hosea to stop playing in the mud."

"Hosea," said his father, very sternly, "you should not play in the mud."

"Why?" asked Hosea, because (just like other children) asking questions was another thing he loved to do.

"Because," said his father, who was one of the preachers in the Baptist church the family went to, "just as we try to live a good life, to be kind to other people and to follow God's plan, we try to stay clean."

"Yes, Father," Hosea said, and after that day, he did indeed try to stay clean.

But it wasn't easy. He stopped stomping in the mud puddles on purpose and splashing the muddy water everywhere, and he stopped making enormous mud pies, but sometimes the mud was just there. Then he had to walk through the mud to get across the yard to gather the eggs from the chickens. He had to walk in the mud to feed the pigs. And sometimes, when he was already muddy from doing his chores, he played in the mud, just a little bit, and got even muddier. His sisters, who loved him, took him home and washed him and dried him and made him all clean.

But Hosea's sisters went to their father again and said, "Father, please tell Hosea to stop playing in the mud."

"Hosea," said his father even more sternly, "you must not play in the mud."

"Yes, Father," Hosea said. He was sad, because he had truly tried not to get muddy, most of the time anyway. "Are you very angry with me, Father?"

"I am disappointed in you, Hosea, and I am a little angry with you."

Hosea hung his head and kicked at the dirt with his toes, then he dared to look up, just a little, to ask, "Do you still love me?"

"Hosea," said his father, and his father didn't sound stern anymore, "I will always love you, Hosea, no matter what you do."

"Even if I get muddy again?"

"Yes."

"Even if I get really, really muddy?"

"Yes."

"Even if I get mud all the way up to my eyebrows and between my fingers and my toes and in my hair?"

"Even then," his father said with a smile. Then he added, very stern again, "But remember, Hosea. You must try to stay clean."

"I'll remember, and I'll try," Hosea promised, and he did. He stayed clean, most of the time anyway. As he grew up, he stopped liking mud quite so much, but he still liked to ask questions about what and how and why.

"Father," Hosea asked when he was a teenager, "how can it be that our church believes that God will let only one in a thousand people into heaven, even if many of those thousand people lead good lives?" His father didn't have an answer for that question.

"Father," Hosea asked, "if I had the power to create a living creature, and if I knew that the creature would have a miserable life, would suffer and die, and then go to hell and be miserable forever, and I went ahead and created it anyway, would that be a good thing or a bad thing? And would I be good or bad?"

His father didn't have an answer for that question, either. Hosea had to find his own answers. So he read the Bible, a book with many stories about religious people and about God. He went to some Universalist churches and asked more questions there. At the age of nineteen, Hosea decided that he believed in universal salvation, which is the idea that everyone everywhere — everyone in the universe — will be given salvation. Eventually, everyone will be "saved" from hell. And not only did Hosea believe that God would let more than a thousand people into heaven, Hosea Ballou believed God would eventually let everyone into heaven, good and bad.

"How can you believe that?" asked his father. "How can you believe that God would let bad people into heaven?"

"Because, Father, I remember what you told me when I was small. I believe that even if God is disappointed with people, or a little angry with them, God will always love them and want them to be happy, no matter what they do, and no matter how muddy they are."



## HANDOUT 1: AFFIRMATIONS

Use these affirmations in Activity 6, Gift Catchers. Children may copy these phrases or cut them out to paste into the gift catchers.

I'm glad  
you are  
my friend.

Thank you  
for being  
you.

I'm glad  
I know  
you.

I like  
your  
smile.

You are  
funny.

You're  
terrific!

You are  
kind.

I am glad you  
are in Faithful  
Journeys with me.

I'm glad you  
come to my UU  
congregation.

It is good  
that you  
are you.

## HANDOUT 2: I AM LOVED

*Color in the figure as a self-portrait. Fill in the blanks at the bottom of the page with either words or pictures. Then finger paint with mud to make your self-portrait muddy, but do not cover the words or pictures at the bottom.*

# I AM LOVED

My Birthday



Something I love to do



Something I'm really good at



Something that tempts me, that  
I'm not supposed to do

---

Name

## LEADER RESOURCE 1: SIGNPOST FOR SESSION 2

*Cut out the signpost. During your closing circle, show it to the children and attach it to your Faithful Journeys Path.*





## LEADER RESOURCE 2: FIDGET OBJECTS

The idea of having a basket of "fidget objects" available during session activities comes from Sally Patton, author, workshop leader and advocate for children with special needs.

*A fidget basket is a simple, inexpensive way to include and welcome children who find it difficult to sit still or who learn better while moving.*

Provide a basket for fidget objects. Fill it with pipe cleaners, Koosh balls, and other quiet, manipulable objects.

When you introduce the fidget object basket to the group, begin by saying that some people learn best when their hands are busy. Give an example such as someone who knits while listening to a radio program or doodles during a meeting or class. Point out the fidget object basket. Tell the children they may quietly help themselves to items they may wish to use to keep their hands busy if this helps them to listen. However, also tell the children that the fidget object basket will be put away if the items become a distraction from the story or any other group activity.

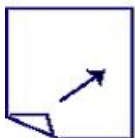
You can make the basket available for the duration of the session, or bring the basket out only during activities, such as hearing a story told, that require children to sit still and listen for a significant period of time.

## LEADER RESOURCE 3: GIFT CATCHERS INSTRUCTIONS

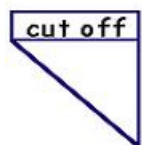
Adapted from Barb Willmer's [Squigly's Arts & Crafts website](#). Permission pending.

*There are seven principles which Unitarian Universalist congregations affirm and promote: You will need scissors, plain paper, and pencils, pens, or fine-tip markers.*

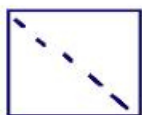
1. Fold the bottom of the paper to the side of the page to make a triangle.



2. Use scissors to cut off the flap at the top.



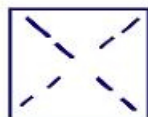
3. Open the triangle and you will have a square.



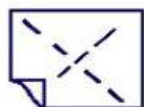
4. Fold one corner of the paper diagonally to the other corner.



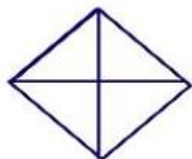
5. Open your paper. You will now have a center point marked on the paper.



6. Fold each corner of the paper towards the center.



7. When all four corners have been folded, your Gift Catcher should look like this.



8. Turn the paper over so that the folded sides are face down.



9. Then fold all the corners to the center diagonally.



10. Once you have folded in the four corners, write the numbers one through 8 on each of the triangles.



11. Hold the paper in front of you as shown and fold it into a square.



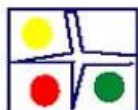
12. Now unfold and fold the square in half horizontally.



13. Open each flap and write an affirmation on each triangle.



14. Flip the Gift Catcher over and write the name of a color or animal on the flap.



15. Flip the Gift Catcher over again, so the numbers face up. Fold the square in half and slip your thumbs and pointer fingers under the four flaps.





## LEADER RESOURCE 4: UNCONDITIONAL LOVE LETTERS



## FIND OUT MORE

### Hosea Ballou

Books about Universalist history which include information on Hosea Ballou include *American Universalism: Fourth Edition*, by George Huntston Williams (Boston: Skinner House Books, 2002); *Universalism in America: A Documentary of History of a Liberal Faith*, edited by Ernest Cassara (Boston: Skinner House Books, 1997); and *The Larger Faith: A Short History of American Universalism*, by Charles A. Howe (Boston: Skinner House Books, 1993).

Hosea Ballou's Universalist theology is established in this reprint of his influential book, *A Treatise on Atonement* (Boston: Skinner House Books, 1986).

Find an [article about Hosea Ballou](#) on the website of the Unitarian Universalist Historical Society.

## SESSION 3: WELCOMING SUPERMAN

### INTRODUCTION

*One's life has value so long as one attributes value to the life of others, by means of love, friendship, indignation and compassion. — Simone de Beauvoir, 20th-century French author*

*A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles. — Christopher Reeve (1952-2004), actor, director and advocate for people with disabilities*

This session uses the story of Unitarian Universalist Christopher Reeve to examine our first Unitarian Universalist Principle, the inherent worth and dignity of every person. After a fall from a horse, Reeve went from being an active, athletic man who portrayed Superman on-screen to losing the ability to move his body below the neck. Reeve went on to live a different kind of heroism as an advocate for research and support to help people with spinal cord injuries. He spoke to Congress and many other audiences. He founded the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation, which funds research on spinal cord injuries and offers grants to improve the lives of people who have become disabled.

Christopher Reeve's story serves as a springboard to issues of inclusion as children are guided to reflect on the ways we affirm the worth and dignity of every person. They learn how our congregations affirm our first Principle when we provide accessibility to people of differing abilities, and they consider what it means when we fail to provide such a welcome. Participants explore what they can accomplish without using physical abilities they ordinarily rely on. As they broaden their thinking about what constitutes "ability" or "disability," children also learn that each of us has the capacity to use our personal agency to do good in the world — no matter how we are "abled."

When the group conducts an accessibility audit of your congregational facility (Activity 6), use the perspective of whether we would be able to welcome Superman. This activity will be most effective using a wheelchair or a large stroller to test surfaces, thresholds, and inclines for accessibility.

### GOALS

This session will:

- Use the story of Christopher Reeve and his work on behalf of people with spinal cord injuries to explore the first Unitarian Universalist Principle, the inherent worth and dignity of every person
- Educate and encourage participants to live the first Principle by being careful to welcome all people by making sure places are accessible to all
- Foster participants' empathy
- Demonstrate how to honor different people's individual gifts
- Teach children how they can and do express their faith — their ideas of right and wrong, their values, and their beliefs — with real actions.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Learn about Unitarian Universalist Christopher Reeve, whom we associate with heroism as Superman, yet whose inherent worth and dignity shone and whose actions proclaimed his faith values after he became disabled
- Explore ways to accomplish physical tasks in different ways than they usually do
- Imagine the important abilities they would retain if unable to use their bodies below the neck
- Identify ways their own congregation might not be fully accessible to people with disabilities
- Recognize the importance of fully including everyone in the congregational community and honoring their different abilities and other differences
- Name ways they did or could translate their Unitarian Universalist faith and/or Principles into action.

### SESSION-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	2
Activity 1: Faithful Footprints	5
Activity 2: Move It! Another Way Relay	7
Activity 3: Story Basket and Centering	5
Activity 4: Story — A Different Kind of	8

## Superhero: Christopher Reeve

Activity 5: Guided Meditation and Shared Reflection	6
Activity 6: Accessibility Audit	20
Faith in Action: Report on Accessibility Audit	15
Closing	7
Alternate Activity 1: Design a Superhero	20

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

If it would be helpful in creating sacred space, light a candle or chalice. Read through the story "A Different Kind of Superhero: Christopher Reeve," and familiarize yourself with its language and content. In silent meditation or in conversation with a co-leader or trusted friend, consider your own assumptions about physical abilities and people or experiences that have challenged them. Do you or a loved one have limited mobility or another physical disability? Have you ever temporarily lost physical ability due to injury? Can you recall any ways your own long-term or temporary limitations have affected your relationships with others? Have you ever experienced being excluded from an activity in which you needed or wanted to participate, because of physical limitations? If so, how did that feel? How did you handle the situation? Have you ever experienced being excluded from an activity for reasons other than physical limitations? If so, how did that feel?

Imagine your congregation as people enter for worship or other activities. What kind of welcome do people receive? Is the welcome different for newcomers vs. long-time members? How are children welcomed? Teens? Young adults? Elderly people? Imagine walking through your congregation's building(s). What do you see that conveys welcome? What do you see that might exclude some individuals?

Consider how you, as a leader, provide welcome to the children in the group. Is your time together inclusive of different learning styles? Different personalities and energy levels? Different levels of ability? If ideas occur to you about making religious education sessions more welcoming of different styles and abilities, note these for future use.

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Chalice candle or LED/battery-operated candle
- Lighter and extinguisher, if needed
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Posters of the Unitarian Universalist Principles in both adult and children's language, or copies of Session 1, [Handout 1](#) (included in this document) for all participants

### Preparation for Activity

- Decide whether you will use the provided opening words or other opening words, such as those offered in Session 1, Leader Resource 1, Alternate Openings. It is recommended that you use the same opening words for each session.
- Print the opening words on newsprint. Post the newsprint where the children will be able to see it when they gather.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle. Light the chalice. Point out the chalice-lighting words on the newsprint and invite the group to read together:

We light this flame for the light of truth, the warmth of love, and the energy of action.

Indicate the poster(s) of the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Or, give each child a copy of the handout. Ask a volunteer to read the first Principle in the adult language. Ask a second volunteer to read the children's version of the first Principle. Then, say:

Today we will learn about this Unitarian Universalist Principle — what it means, and what kinds of actions show it. Let's get started.

Collect handouts for reuse.

### Including All Participants

If not all participants are fluent readers, take the time to teach the group to say the opening words from memory.

If the group has children who are sensitive to perfumes or other chemicals, use unscented candles or an electric or battery-operated flame. An electric flame is also recommended if you may not use open flames or if any participants are afraid of fire.

## ACTIVITY 1: FAITHFUL FOOTPRINTS (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path (Session 1, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))
- Cutouts of footprints and (optional) wheelchair tracks, at least one for each participant, in a variety of colors (Session 1, [Leader Resources 3](#) and [4](#) (included in this document) )
- Markers
- Push pins, glue stick or tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Think of something you have done since the group last met that represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. Identify the Principle(s) your action reflected. Write a few words about it on a footprint, with your name.

### Description of Activity

This activity reinforces children's learning as they model translating faith into action for one another. To strengthen children's Unitarian Universalist identity, help participants see how their own behavior demonstrates specific Principles.

Gather in a circle. Point to the Faithful Journeys Path and say:

Together we are taking a journey to learn what it means to live as Unitarian Universalists. Each time we meet, we have a chance to talk about ways our actions show our beliefs about what is right and good. This is called "putting our faith into action."

When you share about something you have done that shows what you believe, you can choose a footprint or tracks for us to put on our Faithful Journeys Path.

Hold up the footprint you made of your own faithful action. Tell what you did and how it represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. If you can connect your action to a Principle, briefly explain. For example:

- I made phone calls to remind people to vote (or, I voted), because I believe in our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, that we all have a say in matters that concern us. When people vote, that's one way to have every person's opinion be counted.
- I have a neighbor who was sick last week. I helped him bring his trash outside, because I

believe in the second Unitarian Universalist Principle, which says we believe in being kind and fair.

- I put my water bottles and juice bottles in the recycling bin, because I believe in the seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, which reminds us to take care of the Earth that all life shares.

Ask the children to think of an act they have done, since you met last, that reflects Unitarian Universalism. You may wish to prompt:

- Did anyone do something that helped make things fair? (justice, equity, and compassion)
- Did anyone help someone else? (inherent worth and dignity, interdependent web)
- Did anyone take care of nature or another animal? (interdependent web)
- Did anyone listen to someone else who had a very different opinion? (search for truth and meaning, acceptance of one another)
- Did anyone play with someone new whom you did not know very well? (acceptance of one another, encouragement to spiritual growth)

As participants name their actions, write a word or phrase describing the action on a footprint or wheelchair tracks cutout. Invite children to write their names on their cutouts and post them along the edge of the Faithful Journeys Path. In early sessions, post cutouts near the start of the path. Have them progress along the path over the course of the program.

To stay within the time frame for this activity, use these guidelines:

- Encourage children to share their faithful act in one or two brief sentences.
- If the group is big, you may wish to limit children to sharing only one faithful act per week.

It is very important to avoid judging participants, either with criticism or praise. Avoid phrases like "Great job!" or "You're fantastic!" which might suggest that acts of faith vary in their value or encourage children to compete to share the "best" act.

You should, however, respond to each child's contribution. Listen carefully to what a child tells you. After each child shares, say something like, "Thank you for sharing," followed by a summarizing sentence, such as:

- Being kind to new children at school is an action that treats others like they are important.

- Suggesting your friends all vote to decide what to play together is an action of democracy and fairness.
- Cleaning up garbage at the park is an action to take care of the Earth.
- Teaching your brother to talk is an action that affirms each person's learning.
- Taking care of your dog is an action of love.

Identify the Unitarian Universalist Principles each act represents; refer to the Principles poster if the room has one or indicate a relevant signpost on the Faithful Journeys Path. By responding specifically to each child's faithful actions, you will help them feel pride, a sense of accomplishment, and their own empowerment as agents whose actions and choices reflect Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values.

### Including All Participants

Along with cut-out footprints (Session 1, Handout 3, Faithful Footprints), provide wheelchairs (Session 1, Handout 4, Making Tracks for Faith) in the same colors of paper. Encourage all the children — not just those who use wheelchairs for mobility — to sometimes use a wheelchair instead of footprints to represent their faithful actions.

## ACTIVITY 2: MOVE IT! ANOTHER WAY RELAY (7 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Slips of paper containing instructions, one for each team ([Leader Resource 1](#) (included in this document))
- Masking tape
- Objects you choose to use in the activity, such as a scarf (Leader Resource 1)

### Preparation for Activity

- Adapt Leader Resource 1 to provide brief instructions for the first team member to retrieve and the second team member to interpret, nonverbally, for the third person to follow. Print out and photocopy.
- Identify a large, safe space for the activity. Mark start and finish lines with tape.
- Place each team's slip of paper at the finish line for the team's first member to retrieve.

## Description of Activity

Children stretch mentally and physically to complete tasks without using the abilities they would ordinarily employ to accomplish these tasks.

Invite children to count off by threes to form teams. If any teams have only two members, ask a few "ones" to volunteer to be "threes" on another team after their job on the first team is complete. (This is a good assignment for children who have abundant energy and can multitask.) Tell the children:

The first member of your team must cross the room without using their feet, pick up the slip of paper they will find there without using their hands, and return to their group without using their feet.

Then, the second member of the team takes the slip of paper from the first person and reads it to themselves. Team member 2 must communicate these instructions to team member 3 without using their voice.

The third member of the team must figure out what the second member is telling them to do, complete the task, and return to tag team member 1.

The team that finishes first is the winner and has one minute to make up a victory cheer that has no words.

## Including All Participants

Not all children this age are fluent readers; be alert and ready to assist any "twos" who need to read and act out written instructions.

Tailor the instructions in this activity to make sure the assigned task is both possible and a meaningful stretch for each child. For example, if a child with limited mobility is a "one," you might ask them to cross the room slowly, stopping completely each time they need to take a breath, instead of not using their feet or hands.

## ACTIVITY 3: STORY BASKET AND CENTERING (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A large basket
- Objects related to the story "A Different Kind of Superhero: Christopher Reeve," such as such as a Superman figure or comic book, a small model horse with English-style rider, or a picture of Christopher Reeve as Superman and a picture of him after his accident

- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Box or small table and a decorative cloth cover to form a small altar

### Preparation for Activity

- Place the story-related items and the sound instrument in the story basket.
- Place the filled basket in the storytelling area you have designated.
- If you will make an altar as a focal point for story objects, set up the box or table you will use next to your storytelling area. Place the decorative cloth on the altar. It is not necessary to ritualize the altar as a sacred place. It can simply serve as a focal point where objects related to the story will be visible while you tell the story.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle in your storytelling area. Show them the storytelling basket. Say something like, "Let's see what's in our story basket this week."

Tell the group the items in the story basket will be placed on this altar or table after the children have passed them around the circle. Take the story-related items from the basket, one at a time, and pass them around. Objects that are fragile or should not be passed around for any reason can be held up for all to see and then placed directly on the altar.

Briefly name the various objects. Show the picture of Christopher Reeve and explain that he was an actor who spoke out for the rights of disabled people after he was injured in an accident.

As the items come back to you, display them on the altar for children to look at as they listen to the story.

Now remove the sound instrument from the story basket. Tell the children that every time you tell a story in Faithful Journeys, you will first use the instrument to help them get their ears, minds, and bodies ready to listen. Invite them to sit comfortably and close their eyes (if they are comfortable doing so). You may tell them that closing their eyes can help them focus on just listening.

In a calm voice, say:

As you breathe in, feel your body opening up with air. As you breathe out, feel yourself relaxing.

Repeat this once or twice. Then, say:

Now you are ready to listen. When I hit the chime (turn the rain stick over), listen as

carefully as you can. See how long you can hear its sound. When you can no longer hear it, open your eyes and you will know it is time for the story to begin.

Sound the chime or other instrument. When the sound has gone, begin telling the story.

### **Including All Participants**

If anyone in the group is unable to hold or pass items, or cannot see the items, make sure you or a child in the group offers the person a chance to see and touch each object, as needed.

Some people do not feel safe closing their eyes when they are in a group. If any children resist, respect their resistance and suggest that they find a single point of focus to look at instead.

If you have a basket of fidget objects for children who may listen and learn more effectively with something in their hands, make the fidget object basket available during this activity. Remind children where it is before you begin the "centering" part of this activity. For a full description of fidget objects and guidance on using them, see Session 2, Leader Resource 2, Fidget Objects.

## **ACTIVITY 4: STORY — A DIFFERENT KIND OF SUPERHERO — CHRISTOPHER REEVE (8 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- A copy of the story "[A Different Kind of Superhero: Christopher Reeve](#)" (included in this document)
- A chime, rain stick, or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Fidget object basket (Session 2, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Read the story a few times.
- Consider telling the story rather than reading it. Practice telling it aloud.
- Think about how you might use items from the story basket as props.

### **Description of Activity**

The story presents an example of someone acting based on our first Unitarian Universalist Principle, the inherent worth and dignity of all people. Christopher Reeve not only rediscovered his own inherent worth and dignity after becoming a quadriplegic in a devastating

accident, he also worked tirelessly for others with spinal cord injuries, reminding both the general public and lawmakers that people with disabilities have no less worth and dignity than anyone else.

Before you begin, look around the room and make eye contact with each person. Read or tell the story.

Sound the instrument to indicate that the story is over. Take a few minutes to guide the children in a brief discussion, using these questions:

- Have you ever experienced being left out of an activity because you weren't physically able to participate? How did that feel?
- Have you ever changed a game or other activity to make it possible for someone else to participate?
- What do you think makes someone a hero?

## **ACTIVITY 5: GUIDED MEDITATION AND SHARED REFLECTION (6 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- A copy of [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document), Guided Meditation
- Chime, bell, or rain stick

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Print out and familiarize yourself with the guided meditation so you can read it smoothly, with appropriate pauses for children to reflect.

### **Description of Activity**

If there is room, you may wish to invite children to lie on the floor in a comfortable position where none are touching another. Or, they can sit at work tables and rest their heads on their arms. Ask them to close their eyes and let the sound of the chime, bell, or rain stick lead them into relaxing. Read aloud the meditation, with appropriate pauses.

When you are done, say:

Gently wiggle your fingers and toes, bringing yourself back into your body as it is today. You may open your eyes and sit up.

Lead children to share their responses to the meditation. What did they think of that they could still do, with some of their abilities gone? If necessary, suggest: You could stick out your tongue; imagine; roll your eyes; do math problems. Affirm responses.



## Including All Participants

If you have a child in your group who is, in fact, a quadriplegic, you might want to omit this meditation; it may make that child feel on the spot and uncomfortable. Children with most physical limitations, however, can imagine lesser physical capability than they have.

Children who have great difficulty remaining still may benefit from access to fidget objects (Session 2, Leader Resource 2).

## ACTIVITY 6: ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A wheelchair or stroller
- Pads of sticky notes in two colors, preferably red (stop) and green (go), small notebooks, and pencils or pens
- Optional: Newsprint, markers, and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Check with others who use different parts of your congregation's building(s) during your religious education time. Ask whether the group may come through and talk briefly and quietly among themselves.
- Separate sticky notes into multiple pads for a few volunteers to carry on the walk.
- Invite a member of your congregation's board or another person in a position of authority, such as the minister or the chair of your building and grounds committee, to tour the building with you after the audit to take note of the group's observations. If this is not possible directly following this activity or session, arrange it for another time.

### Description of Activity

Explain to participants that you will do an accessibility audit of your congregation. You may say:

An audit is like a check-up. Our accessibility audit will look at how well our congregation is doing at welcoming people with different abilities and disabilities. A disability might include loss of mobility, as for Christopher Reeve or a person who is using crutches. It could also include hearing loss, loss of vision, loss of balance, and more.

Ask the children to brainstorm some disabilities people might have. Then, brainstorm some clues the children might look for to find out how welcoming your

congregation is for people with disabilities. If you have posted newsprint, write down the clues. You may suggest: stairs; bathrooms too small for a wheelchair to enter; light switches and drinking fountains too high to reach from a wheelchair; high door thresholds; small print on orders of service and hymnbooks; or loud conditions in a social hall that prevent people using hearing aids from holding conversations.

Explain to the group that you will be taking a tour of your congregation's building(s) to look for ways that full participation in your congregation is and is not available to people with disabilities. Show the sticky notes and notebooks. Say:

If we see something that shows our congregation has made an effort to fully include people with disabilities, mark it with a green (or other designated color) sticky note — for example, a wheel chair lift, an assistive listening device, a ramp, or an accessible bathroom. (You may need to explain briefly what some of these devices are.)

If we see something that might keep someone from fully participating in our congregation, we will mark it with a red (or other designated color) sticky note.

Everything we mark with a sticky note, we also will write down in a notebook. Then we will share our audit with (name of person, if someone from congregational leadership is joining you), someone who can help us make a difference.

Ask for volunteers to carry sticky notes, one or more notebooks, and pencils or pens. Gather the group and tour the congregational facility together.

It will be helpful if someone in the group takes part in the audit from a wheelchair. If a wheelchair is not available, you can have a group member push a full-sized stroller; any threshold, curb, or stair that requires picking up a stroller to proceed would probably be inaccessible to a person in a wheelchair.

Your experience will be most meaningful if, after the group has completed the audit, a member of your congregation's board of trustees, or another congregational leader, such as the minister or head of the building and grounds committee, walks the route again, with the group. Allow children to point out the issues they have noted. Collect the sticky notes and provide these with the audit notes to share with an adult committee. If possible, invite the adult to return to the group another time and report on action the children's audit has sparked.

## Including All Participants

Participants who have disabilities or have a family member with a disability may have extra insight into accessibility issues. However, do not put any child on the spot. Besides putting a child in a potentially awkward position, electing a "disability spokesperson" simplifies the fact that disabilities vary widely, and diminishes the responsibility each person in a community has to use their empathy to make sure all are welcomed.

## CLOSING (7 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path
- Signpost for Session 3 ([Leader Resource 3](#) (included in this document)) and pins, glue stick or tape
- Copies of Session 1, [Leader Resource 8](#) (included in this document), UU Principles Song, for all participants
- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Print out Leader Resource 3. Cut out the signpost.
- Optional: Write the UU Principles Song lyrics on newsprint, and post.
- Customize, print out and photocopy the Taking It Home section for all participants.

### Description of Activity

This activity helps children get used to practicing a closing ritual as a way of affirming their belonging in the faith community.

Gather the group in a circle. Thank the children for participating and sharing their stories and ideas in this session. Tell them something you liked about the way they worked together as a community.

Point out the Faithful Journeys Path. Say, in your own words:

Our Faithful Journeys Path shows our journey to live our lives and act in ways that reflect our Unitarian Universalist beliefs and faith. The signposts direct us by reminding us about our Principles.

Today's signpost is "Include Everyone." It is for our first Unitarian Universalist Principle, the inherent worth and dignity of every person. It means we treat all other people as if they are important.

Attach the signpost to the Faithful Journeys Path.

Remind the children that the next time they meet they will have a chance to add Faithful Footprints to the Faithful Journeys Path. Encourage them to do an action during the week that shows inclusion of others. Brainstorm together what sorts of action might reflect inclusion. You might suggest including someone in your game, making a new friend, changing the rules of a game or choosing another activity to allow someone with a disability to participate, or being patient with a friend who has difficulty reading.

Point out the words to the UU Principles Song. Tell the children it is sung to the tune of "Old McDonald Had a Farm." Lead the children in singing the verse about the first Principle. Then, sing the entire song together. Explain that you will learn about all of the Principles during your time together in Faithful Journeys.

Distribute the Taking It Home handout. Thank the children, tell them you look forward to seeing them next time, and dismiss the group.

## FAITH IN ACTION: REPORT ON ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT (15 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Pen and paper or laptop computer

### Preparation for Activity

- Complete the accessibility audit (Activity 6).

### Description of Activity

An accessibility audit will be truly useful and compelling to participants if the audit results are shared with congregational leaders — the adults who have the power to make changes that would increase the congregation's level of accessibility. After doing the accessibility audit, participants can gather up the sticky notes that marked accessibility efforts and deficits, and review these and their notebook comments to prepare a report for the congregation's board of trustees. This could be a written report you create, based on information the children gathered, or an oral report presented by the children to an adult committee.

Participants might also do a project to make the congregation more accessible, such as creating a sign to direct people who need one to an assistive listening device.

### Including All Participants

Shy members of the group may be happier with the role of writing down the audit results. More outgoing participants may seek the opportunity to speak in public.

Affirm the value of each child's agency in this project, whatever their contribution.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Take a few minutes to evaluate the session with your co-leader immediately afterward, while it is fresh. Share your thoughts with any other team co-leaders and your director of religious education. You might find it helpful to consider these questions:

- Which activities worked well? What didn't work so well?
- Were all children actively engaged? If not, who wasn't and why might that have been? How could they be better included next time?
- How well did the activities match the learning styles of the children in this group? What could we do differently to better accommodate for learning styles in future sessions?
- How well did the session balance physically active with sedentary activities?
- How was the timing? What might need to be done differently for a session to work better within our time frame?
- Were there any behavior issues? If so, how can we address them in the future? Do we need more information or help in this area?
- What connections did children make with the activities and/or central ideas? How did we know that was occurring?
- What connections did children make with each other? What connections did we make with the children? When was that most evident?
- Are we successfully creating a program characterized by inclusion, diversity appreciation, respect, noncompetitive environment, and welcome? What could we have done differently?
- What questions or issues arose in this session that we might like to discuss with our director of religious education?

## TAKING IT HOME

*One's life has value so long as one attributes value to the life of others, by means of love, friendship, indignation and compassion. — Simone de Beauvoir, 20th-century French author*

*A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles. — Christopher Reeve (1952-2004), actor, director and advocate for people with disabilities*

**IN TODAY'S SESSION...** We focused on the Unitarian Universalist actor, director and activist Christopher Reeve, who died in 2004. We talked about how many people thought of Christopher Reeve as a superhero because he played Superman on the big screen. However, Reeve became a different kind of superhero after a riding accident left him a quadriplegic. His loss of mobility became the springboard for his activism. He spoke out in favor of stem cell research and created a nonprofit research and advocacy foundation. The children played a game that helped them think about how they might complete a task without the abilities that ordinarily help them do it. They did an accessibility audit of our congregation to see how our facility welcomes, or fails to welcome, people with disabilities. Our signpost to help guide us was "Include Everyone."

**EXPLORE THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Talk about...** Do members of your immediate or extended family have disabilities? To include them fully, what actions do you or could you take? For instance, have you built a ramp so a wheelchair-user can visit your home? Are there people to whom children may need to talk more loudly or clearly? Do you need to make sure you are facing people who are hard of hearing when you talk with them? Identify the personal agency each of your family members does or could use to honor the inherent worth and dignity of every person through inclusion.

**EXTEND THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Try...** There are many kinds of abilities and disabilities. Explore together the particular gifts members of your family may have, such as being good at music or sports, or being good with language or writing stories. How do you share these gifts with the world? Everyone also has areas in which they struggle, from a poor sense of direction or a tendency to misplace items to learning disabilities that make it difficult to read or do math. How does your family help each other overcome or live with your limitations?

### FAMILY ADVENTURE

Watch the 1978 film, *Superman: The Movie*, starring Christopher Reeve, as a family.

### A FAMILY GAME

In today's session, an "Another Way Relay" asked participants to do tasks without using abilities they usually rely on. Some had to cross the room without using their feet, pick up a slip of paper without using their hands, and return to their team without using their

feet. Other children took the slip of paper from their teammate without using their hands, and communicated the instructions printed on the slip to a third teammate without using their voices. The third child had to figure out what the task was and complete it, which also involved using different abilities than the child would usually depend on (such as turning on a light switch without using their hands). At home, adapt this game by asking each family member to come up with a task for another family member to complete without using the ability that would first come to mind. For instance, pass a ball from person to person without using hands, cross the living room without using feet, or use pictures rather than words to convey an idea.

### **FAMILY DISCOVERY**

See an online list of [books for children that deal with disabilities](http://www.best-childrens-books.com/childrens-books-about-disabilities.html) (at [www.best-childrens-books.com/childrens-books-about-disabilities.html](http://www.best-childrens-books.com/childrens-books-about-disabilities.html)).

Review the [Teaching Tolerance](http://www.teachingtolerance.org/) website featuring activities about disabilities.

## **ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: DESIGN A SUPERHERO (20 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Paper and markers or crayons
- Optional: Comic books featuring superheroes

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Familiarize yourself with a variety of comic book superheroes and their superpowers. Be sure to learn about some who are female and/or people of color.

### **Description of Activity**

In the movies, Christopher Reeve portrayed Superman, a superhero who was "Faster than a speeding bullet. More powerful than a locomotive. Able to leap tall buildings in a single bound." There are dozens of superheroes in popular culture, with a variety of superpowers. Ask the children to name aloud some superheroes and their powers. Then say:

Of course, Christopher Reeve wasn't really a superhero. In real life, he was just a person like you or me, who chose to use his human powers to make the world a better place.

If you were going to design your own comic book superhero who would make the world a better place, what would that hero be like?

Allow some responses. Then say:

Most comic book superheroes have powers that help them win at fighting. Perhaps our superheroes could have super powers that could make the world a better place without fighting. What sort of actions might make the world a better place, without involving physically fighting?

Invite the children to draw pictures of their own imagined superheroes. Ask them to include information about the powers they use to make the world better. If you have time, ask for some volunteers to show and tell about their superheroes.

## STORY: A DIFFERENT KIND OF SUPERHERO — CHRISTOPHER REEVE

It was a hot, muggy morning. Christopher was not sure he really wanted to be out riding in a competition. His thoroughbred horse, Eastern Express, seemed a bit off, as if maybe he would rather be grazing in the field than doing the demanding work of running and jumping with a big, muscular man on his back. Maybe, Christopher thought, it would be nicer to take the kids sailing today, where there would be a cool breeze. "Well," he thought, "I'm a lucky man to be able to choose between riding and sailing."

In fact, plenty of people watching Christopher that day thought the same thing. He was many people's idea of a superhero. He was the actor who played Superman in the movies and, in real life, he fit the part: handsome, strong, always striving toward a goal, chasing his best time, or learning a new skill.

And then, in an instant, everything changed. Eastern Express balked at a jump, sending Christopher crashing to the ground. When he woke up in the hospital, Christopher couldn't move his hands or feet. He couldn't even breathe without the help of a machine. Although doctors could repair his neck, they could not fix the injury to his spinal cord. Now Christopher's brain was unable to communicate with most of his body. Even though he still had all his strength, intelligence, and will power, there was simply no way for him to move any part of his body below his head.

Despair washed over Christopher. If he could not do anything, could not be useful to anyone, why not put him out of his misery, like they did with horses that were injured too badly to walk again? "Maybe," he said to his wife, Dana, "we should just let me go."

But Dana spoke words that helped start him on the road toward his new life: "But you're still you. And I love you."

Of course, Christopher Reeve had never actually been able to leap tall buildings in a single bound, but he had been a tremendous athlete. He had always liked a goal, a challenge, something to work for. Before his accident, Christopher's challenges involved acting, directing, and sports. Now his challenges were different. Now it took all his strength and determination to sit up in a wheelchair and steer it by puffing on a straw.

His heart ached with all he had lost. He might never again be able to hug his wife and sons, or ride a horse or sail. But he realized he still had a lot — the love of his family, and money and fame from his career.

Christopher decided to use everything he still had to work for a new goal.

As always, Christopher Reeve dreamed big. He hoped there might be a cure for spinal cord injuries, not just for himself, but also for many thousands of others whose lives had changed when their backs or necks were broken. He and his wife set up the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation. They asked people for money to help pay scientists to research a cure. Then, Dana realized how lucky they were to be able to afford a ramp into their home and a big van that could fit Christopher's wheelchair. They collected money to help pay for ramps and other helpful things, so more people with spinal cord injuries could also have them.

Christopher realized that, even though he could no longer use his arms and legs, he had a power that many people do not. He was famous. People thought of him as Superman. Now he could really be a hero, not by flying through the air to rescue people, but by speaking up. Because he was famous, people would pay attention. They would listen, and they would want to help.

It wasn't easy. Christopher didn't want people to feel sorry for him. He didn't want to be embarrassed if he could not use his mouth to speak well, or if his body, as sometimes happened, jerked around without his control. But he knew this was a special chance to use the power he had and make the world a better place. So Christopher started speaking. He asked Congress to support stem cell research that might lead to a cure for spinal cord injuries. He asked groups of people to get involved and donate money. He talked with others who had experienced injuries like his. He even spoke, on television, to millions of people during the Academy Awards, showing everyone that, although his abilities had changed, his heart and his soul were strong and capable.

A writer for *Reader's Digest* magazine interviewed Christopher Reeve near the end of his life, in 2004, and asked him why he had joined a Unitarian church. He answered, "It gives me a moral compass. I often refer to Abe Lincoln, who said, 'When I do good, I feel good. When I do bad, I feel bad. And that is my religion.' I think we all have a little voice inside us that will guide us. It may be God, I don't know. But I think that if we shut out all the noise and clutter from our lives and listen to that voice, it will tell us the right thing to do."

Christopher Reeve showed what a real-life hero is: a person who listens to the voice inside them, and acts when that voice tells them the right thing to do.

## LEADER RESOURCE 1: ANOTHER WAY RELAY

*To conduct the Another Way Relay, form teams of three.*

*The "ones" must cross the room without using their feet, pick up a slip of paper with one of the instructions on it without using their hands, and return to their group without using their feet. The "twos" then take the slip of paper from the first person. The slip of paper contains brief instructions for a simple task. The "twos" communicate these instructions to the "threes" without using their voices. The "threes" must figure out what the task is, complete it, and return to their team.*

*Possible tasks to provide on slips of paper include:*

---

Cross the room, walking backward, to get a pencil. Pick it up without using your hands and bring it back.

---

Close your eyes. With your eyes closed, cross the room, touch the far wall, and come back again.

---

Make your hands into fists. Cross the room, find something to wear as a scarf, and put it on while keeping your hands in fists the whole time.

---

Put your hands on your head. Turn a light switch off and then back on without taking your hands off your head.

## LEADER RESOURCE 2: GUIDED MEDITATION

*Use a chime, bell or rain stick to begin and end this meditation.*

Tighten your toes, and then relax them. Let your feet become still and quiet. Tighten your leg muscles, and then relax them. Let your legs become still and quiet. Tighten your tummy muscles, and then relax them. Let your middle become still and quiet. Tighten your hands into fists, and then relax them. Let your hands become still and quiet. Tighten your arms and shoulders, and then relax them. Let your arms and shoulders become still and quiet. Let your whole body become still and quiet, so still that it seems like it might not be there at all. Keep your whole body still, except for your breathing.

What would it be like if you couldn't move your body below your neck? There are probably lots of things you do now that you couldn't do. But there are probably lots of other things that you *could* still do.

Think for a moment about what things you *would* be able to do if you couldn't move your body below the neck.

In a moment I will sound the chime/bell/rain stick, and we will come back together. After the sound, you can share something you've thought of that you could do without moving your body below your neck.

*Pause, then sound the chime, bell, or rain stick and gather the group for discussion.*

### LEADER RESOURCE 3: SIGNPOST FOR SESSION 3

*Cut out the signpost. During your closing circle, show it to the children and attach it to your Faithful Journeys Path.*







## FIND OUT MORE

### Teaching Children about Disability

In the picture book, *Dewey Doo-It Helps Owlle Fly Again* by Brahm Wenger, Alan Green, and Jean Gillmore (The Helpful Doo-its Project, 2005), a group of animal friends devise some new ways to fly for a friend who can no longer use his wings. Find a list of [books that help children explore disability](#) online.

### Christopher Reeve

Explore the website of the [Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation](#).

Read a [memorial piece about Christopher Reeve](#) by his minister, Rev. Frank Hall of the Unitarian Church in Westport, Connecticut.

### Children's Different Learning Styles and Intelligences

The Association for Childhood Education International has posted "Multiple Intelligences: Different Ways of Learning," by Judith C. Reiff, a [guide sheet for parents \(third brochure\)](#) to recognize and encourage their children's individual learning styles (e.g., visual, physical, logical, introvert, extrovert).

## SESSION 4: BE FAIR

### INTRODUCTION

*What becomes of the colored girl? The muses of song, poetry and art do not woo and exalt her. She has inspired no novels. Those who write ... seldom think of this dark-skinned girl who is persistently breaking through the petty tyrannies of cast into the light of recognition. — Fannie Barrier Williams*

*He drew a circle that shut me out*

*Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout*

*But love and I had the wit to win;*

*We drew a circle that took him in. — Edwin Markham*

In this session, participants explore the second Unitarian Universalist Principle: justice, equity, and compassion in human relations. They hear about Fannie Barrier Williams (1855-1944), a Unitarian who was active in the club movement and in creating clubs for African American women. Participants will discuss what it means to belong and how it feels to be excluded, and explore how organizing a group to fight injustice can be effective. They create their own inclusive Faithful Journeys Action Club. The signpost "Be Fair" is added to the Faithful Journeys Path.

NOTE: The Faithful Journeys Action Club will need a purpose and projects for the children to work on. Children should participate in planning the club, but this will be easier if you are ready with realistic choices. Confer with your social action committee, minister, and/or director of religious education to determine ideas for local action or ways the club could dovetail with congregational projects. Good projects for children this age are concrete, have a personal connection and can be broken down into smaller goals with measurable progress. Leader Resource 3 offers some ideas.

### GOALS

This session will:

- Strengthen Unitarian Universalist identity as children learn about Unitarian Fannie Barrier Williams and her work for justice
- Teach and reinforce our second Unitarian Universalist Principle, justice, equity, and compassion in human relations

- Demonstrate how working together for justice is one way of acting faithfully based on our second Principle
- Demonstrate how children can be agents who promote inclusion and say no to exclusion
- Explore how a club can be an effective tool for change
- Teach children how they can and do express their faith — their ideas of right and wrong, their values, and their beliefs — with real actions.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Learn about justice work in our Unitarian Universalist history, through a story about Fannie Barrier Williams
- Experience and process inclusion and exclusion
- Explore combining their individual personal agencies to accomplish change by creating a Faithful Journeys Action Club and choosing its purpose
- Identify ways they do or could act that reflect the signpost "Be Fair"
- Name ways they did or could translate their Unitarian Universalist faith and/or Principles into action.

### SESSION-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	2
Activity 1: Faithful Footprints	5
Activity 2: Move It! Part I — A Circle That Kept Me Out	8
Activity 3: Move It! Part II — A Circle That Took Me In (Amoeba Tag)	5
Activity 4: Story Basket and Centering	5
Activity 5: Story — Belonging: Fannie Barrier Williams	8
Activity 6: Faithful Journeys Action Club Project Selection	8
Activity 7: Faithful Journeys Action Club Activities	12

Faith in Action: Learn about Area Clubs 45

Closing 7

Alternate Activity 1: Building and Decorating a  
More Permanent Clubhouse

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

If it would be helpful in creating sacred space, light a candle or chalice. Read the story "Belonging" about Unitarian Fannie Barrier Williams. Recall any times when you have been part of a group that has worked together for positive change in a local institution, in your wider community, or at a global level.

Reflect on these questions:

- What spiritual growth did you experience as a result of being part of a group?
- What links do you observe among your sense of belonging in the group, your beliefs as a Unitarian Universalist, and any action for change you were able to accomplish in the group?
- In what ways did the group exclude anyone? How aware of this were you? How did it feel?

Recall, as well, times when you were excluded from such a group.

- When you have been excluded, how did you handle the experience? Did you feel powerful, powerless, or something in between?
- How can you ensure that all children feel they belong in Faithful Journeys and in the Action Club you will form today?

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Chalice candle or LED/battery-operated candle
- Lighter and extinguisher, if needed
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Posters of the Unitarian Universalist Principles in both adult and children's language, or copies of Session 1, [Handout 1](#) (included in this document) for all participants

### Preparation for Activity

- Decide whether you will use the provided opening words or other opening words, such as those offered in Session 1, Leader Resource 1, Alternate Openings. It is recommended that you use the same opening words for each session.
- Print the opening words on newsprint. Post the newsprint where the children will be able to see it when they gather.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle. Light the chalice. Point out the chalice-lighting words on the newsprint and invite the group to read together:

We light this flame for the light of truth, the warmth of love, and the energy of action.

Indicate the poster(s) of the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Or, give each child a copy of the handout. Ask a volunteer to read the second Principle in the adult language. Ask a second volunteer to read the children's version of the second Principle. Then, say:

Today we will learn about this Unitarian Universalist Principle — what it means, and what kinds of actions show it. Let's get started.

Collect handouts for reuse.

### Including All Participants

If not all participants are fluent readers, take the time to teach the group to say the opening words from memory.

If the group has children who are sensitive to perfumes or other chemicals, use unscented candles or an electric or battery-operated flame. An electric flame is also recommended if you may not use open flames or if any participants are afraid of fire.

## ACTIVITY 1: FAITHFUL FOOTPRINTS (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path (Session 1, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))
- Cutouts of footprints and (optional) wheelchair tracks, at least one for each participant, in a variety of colors (Session 1, [Leader Resources 3](#) and [4](#) (included in this document) )
- Markers
- Push pins, glue stick or tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Think of something you have done since the group last met that represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. Identify the Principle(s) your action reflected. Write a few words about it on a footprint, with your name.

### Description of Activity

This activity reinforces children's learning as they model translating faith into action for one another. To strengthen children's Unitarian Universalist identity, help participants see how their own behavior demonstrates specific Principles.

Gather in a circle. Point to the Faithful Journeys Path and say:

Together we are taking a journey to learn what it means to live as Unitarian Universalists. Each time we meet, we have a chance to talk about ways our actions show our beliefs about what is right and good. This is called "putting our faith into action."

When you share about something you have done that shows what you believe, you can choose a footprint or tracks for us to put on our Faithful Journeys Path.

Hold up the footprint you made of your own faithful action. Tell what you did and how it represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. If you can connect your action to a Principle, briefly explain. For example:

- I made phone calls to remind people to vote (or, I voted), because I believe in our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, that we all have a say in matters that concern us. When people vote, that's one way to have every person's opinion be counted.

- I have a neighbor who was sick last week. I helped him bring his trash outside, because I believe in the second Unitarian Universalist Principle, which says we believe in being kind and fair.
- I put my water bottles and juice bottles in the recycling bin, because I believe in the seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, which reminds us to take care of the Earth that all life shares.

Ask the children to think of an act they have done, since you met last, that reflects Unitarian Universalism. You may wish to prompt:

- Did anyone do something that helped make things fair? (justice, equity, and compassion)
- Did anyone help someone else? (inherent worth and dignity, interdependent web)
- Did anyone take care of nature or another animal? (interdependent web)
- Did anyone listen to someone else who had a very different opinion? (search for truth and meaning, acceptance of one another)
- Did anyone play with someone new whom you did not know very well? (acceptance of one another, encouragement to spiritual growth)

As participants name their actions, write a word or phrase describing the action on a footprint or wheelchair tracks cutout. Invite children to write their names on their cutouts and post them along the edge of the Faithful Journeys Path. While in early sessions you posted cutouts near the start of the path, have participants post cutouts so that they continue to make progress along the path over the course of the program.

To stay within the time frame for this activity, use these guidelines:

- Encourage children to share their faithful act in one or two brief sentences.
- If the group is big, you may wish to limit children to sharing only one faithful act per week.

It is very important to avoid judging participants, either with criticism or praise. Avoid phrases like "Great job!" or "You're fantastic!" which might suggest that acts of faith vary in their value or encourage children to compete to share the "best" act.

You should, however, respond to each child's contribution. Listen carefully to what a child tells you. After each child shares, say something like, "Thank you for sharing," followed by a summarizing sentence, such as:

- Being kind to new children at school is an action that treats others like they are important.
- Suggesting your friends all vote to decide what to play together is an action of democracy and fairness.
- Cleaning up garbage at the park is an action to take care of the Earth.
- Teaching your brother to talk is an action that affirms each person's learning.
- Taking care of your dog is an action of love.

Identify the Unitarian Universalist Principles each act represents; refer to the Principles poster if the room has one or indicate a relevant signpost on the Faithful Journeys Path. By responding specifically to each child's faithful actions, you will help them feel pride, a sense of accomplishment, and their own empowerment as agents whose actions and choices reflect Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values.

### Including All Participants

Along with cut-out footprints (Session 1, Handout 3, Faithful Footprints), provide wheelchairs (Session 1, Handout 4, Making Tracks for Faith) in the same colors of paper. Encourage all the children — not just those who use wheelchairs for mobility — to sometimes use a wheelchair instead of footprints to represent their faithful actions.

## ACTIVITY 2: MOVE IT! PART I — A CIRCLE THAT KEPT ME OUT (8 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of the poem by Edwin Markham

### Preparation for Activity

- Create a wide open space for a standing circle.

### Description of Activity

Have group stand in a circle without chairs. Read aloud this poem by Universalist Edwin Markham:

He drew a circle that shut me out  
 Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout  
 But love and I had the wit to win;  
 We drew a circle that took him in.

Ask what the children think this poem means. Allow some responses. Affirm that the poem is about a person who told the writer he could not belong; he was not allowed to join in the circle. Point out that, by being

smart ("wit") and loving, the writer of the poem drew a new circle to include everyone.

Say something like:

We are going to play two games about this poem. First we are going to draw a circle that shuts someone out.

Ask for a volunteer to be the first person who gets shut out. Have the person leave the circle and tell them their task is to try to get back into the circle using any means except harm to achieve this goal. **IMPORTANT:** Do not give the people in the circle instructions on how to behave. Part of the learning is allowing participants to decide for themselves how they will respond to the situation. The only rule in the game is that physical harm and destruction of property are not allowed.

Give the person on the outside no more than a minute to try to get into the circle. When that person has successfully gotten into the circle or is unable to do so after a minute of trying, ask for a second volunteer to try it.

After a few rounds have everyone rejoin the circle and sit down. Ask the group:

- What did it feel like to be outside the circle?
- What did it feel like to be inside the circle with someone on the outside?
- What worked or didn't work in getting into the circle?
- Were there any other things someone could have tried to get in? (If no one tried simply asking to be let into the circle, point this out.)
- Did the group try to keep people out or were there people who were trying to help the outsider get in?

Remind everyone that this was just a game and that the parts they may have played were part of a game.

### **Including All Participants**

If someone in the group is often excluded by other children, do not place that child on the outside of the circle. Do not create a situation that might promote real, hurtful exclusion.

## **ACTIVITY 3: MOVE IT! PART II — A CIRCLE THAT TOOK ME IN (5 MINUTES)**

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Prepare a large space in which participants can run around safely.

### **Description of Activity**

Gather the group in a circle and reread the poem by Edwin Markham:

He drew a circle that shut me out  
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout  
But love and I had the wit to win;  
We drew a circle that took him in.

Point out that you have just heard about a circle that shut someone out and now you are going to play a game where you take people in: amoeba tag. In this game one person starts as the "amoeba" and tries to catch other people. Once they are tagged, they become part of the amoeba. Holding hands, they continue to chase the other participants until everyone has been caught and is a part of the amoeba.

When you have finished playing, ask the children which game they think is more like Unitarian Universalism: a circle that shuts people out, or a circle that takes people in. Ask them to explain their answer(s). Say, in your own words:

As Unitarian Universalists, we want to include people and make them welcome. We include everyone.

### **Including All Participants**

Participants with limited mobility can still be tagged and become part of the amoeba. However, encourage the entire group to be sensitive to the other people in the amoeba and avoid moving too quickly or roughly for others. You may want to give the group the challenge of figuring out how to be an amoeba that is safe for everyone, including someone who is differently mobile.

If you observe uncontrolled mob movement that may result in children getting yanked around, pause the game. Invite children to resume it, taking more care to play safely.

## **ACTIVITY 4: STORY BASKET AND CENTERING (5 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- A large basket
- Objects related to the story "Belonging," such as a picture of Fannie Barrier Williams ([Leader Resource 1](#) (included in this document)), a bonnet, an artist's sketch pad, pictures of people from the late 1800s or beginning of 1900s, or a sign that says "BE FAIR"
- A chime, rain stick, or other calming sound instrument

- Optional: Box or small table and a decorative cloth cover to form a small altar

### Preparation for Activity

- Place the story-related items and the sound instrument in the story basket.
- Place the filled basket in the storytelling area you have designated.
- If you will make an altar as a focal point for story objects, set up the box or table you will use next to your storytelling area. Place the decorative cloth on the altar. It is not necessary to ritualize the altar as a sacred place. It can simply serve as a focal point where objects related to the story will be visible while you tell the story.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle in your storytelling area. Show them the storytelling basket. Say something like, "Let's see what's in our story basket this week."

Tell the group the items in the story basket will be placed on this altar or table after the children have passed them around the circle. Take the story-related items from the basket, one at a time, and pass them around. Objects that are fragile or should not be passed around for any reason can be held up for all to see and then placed directly on the altar.

Briefly name the various objects. Show the picture of Fannie Barrier Williams and explain that she was a Unitarian a long time ago.

As the items come back to you, display them on the altar for children to look at as they listen to the story.

Now remove the sound instrument from the story basket. Tell the children that every time you tell a story in Faithful Journeys, you will first use the instrument to help them get their ears, minds, and bodies ready to listen. Invite them to sit comfortably and close their eyes (if they are comfortable doing so). You may tell them that closing their eyes can help them focus on just listening.

In a calm voice, say:

As you breathe in, feel your body opening up with air. As you breathe out, feel yourself relaxing.

Repeat this once or twice. Then, say:

Now you are ready to listen. When I hit the chime (turn the rain stick over), listen as carefully as you can. See how long you can hear its sound. When you can no longer hear it, open

your eyes and you will know it is time for the story to begin.

Sound the chime or other instrument. When the sound has gone, begin telling the story.

### Including All Participants

If anyone in the group is unable to hold or pass items, or cannot see the items, make sure you or a child in the group offers the person a chance to see and touch each object, as needed.

Some people do not feel safe closing their eyes when they are in a group. If any children resist, respect their resistance and suggest that they find a single point of focus to look at instead.

If you have a basket of fidget objects for children who may listen and learn more effectively with something in their hands, make the fidget object basket available during this activity. Remind children where it is before you begin the "centering" part of this activity. For a full description of fidget objects and guidance on using them, see Session 2, Leader Resource 2, Fidget Objects.

## ACTIVITY 5: STORY — BELONGING — FANNIE BARRIER WILLIAMS (8 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of the story "[Belonging: Fannie Barrier Williams](#)" (included in this document)
- A chime, rain stick, or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Fidget object basket (Session 2, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))

### Preparation for Activity

- Read the story a few times.
- Consider telling the story rather than reading it. Practice telling it aloud. Note: The name W.E.B. DuBois is pronounced "du-BOYS."
- Think about how you might use items from the story basket as props.

### Description of Activity

The story about Fannie Barrier Williams, who devoted her life to working against injustice and exclusion by organizing and founding clubs, is an example of our second Unitarian Universalist Principle: justice, equity, and compassion in human relations.

Before you begin, look around the room and make eye contact with each person. Read or tell the story.



Sound the instrument to indicate that the story is over. Take a few minutes to guide the children in a brief discussion, using these questions:

- I wonder, why did Fannie Barrier Williams work so hard to make clubs where everyone could belong?
- Is it fun to be part of a club? What makes it fun?
- I wonder, how does it feel when you can't be part of a club?
- I wonder, how does being part of a club or group make it easier to work on a project or change unfair situations?
- I wonder, is there ever a time when it is OK to tell someone they cannot be part of your club?

## **ACTIVITY 6: FAITHFUL JOURNEYS ACTION CLUB PROJECT SELECTION (8 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Newsprint, markers and tape
- A copy of Leader Resource 3, Faithful Journeys Action Club Project Ideas

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Consult with your social action committee, minister, and/or director of religious education to determine ideas for local action or find ways your club could dovetail with congregational projects. The best projects for children this age are concrete, have a personal connection, and can be broken down into smaller goals with measurable progress. Leader Resource 3 suggests many possible projects.
- Write the project ideas you have selected on a sheet of newsprint and post it where it will be visible when you gather in a circle for this activity.

### **Description of Activity**

Sit in a circle. Tell participants you are going to create an action club, like the clubs that Fannie Barrier Williams helped to form. Show the children the list of possible projects on the newsprint and describe them briefly. Invite the children to add projects to the list. Once the list is complete, ask if any children wish to speak briefly in favor of a particular project. Ask also if any children strongly dislike any of the project possibilities, and remove those from the list. Then, vote for the favorite project.

Now ask the children if there should be any special rules for being part of the club. Tell the children the first rule is that anyone can belong to the club if they want to and if they agree to follow the Faithful Journeys group covenant. List all appropriate suggestions on the newsprint. You may want to ask the group if they think there might be any reasons to keep someone out or to ask them to leave; affirm that any member who breaks the Faithful Journeys covenant or acts as if they do not want to be in the club could be asked to leave. Excluding rules are only appropriate if their purpose is to keep the club — like the group meeting space — safe for everyone.

## **ACTIVITY 7: FAITHFUL JOURNEYS ACTION CLUB ACTIVITIES (12 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Blankets, sheets, pillows, duct tape, refrigerator boxes or other clubhouse-building materials
- Several large sheets of poster board, and color markers to share

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Create two different work spaces in the room: one with a large, open area, and one at a large work table or several tables pushed together.
- Set the blankets, sheets, and other club-building materials in the open area.
- Place the poster board and markers on work table(s).

### **Description of Activity**

Tell participants that this is free time to enjoy club activities. They can choose to spend their time on one activity or move around between the activities. At the tables they can make posters advertising the club. In the open area they can create a temporary clubhouse. Emphasize that the clubhouse needs to be big enough for everyone who might wish to join.

### **Including All Participants**

As children make a clubhouse, encourage them to think about the accessibility of the physical space and create a welcoming atmosphere for everyone who might want to join.

## **CLOSING (7 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Faithful Journeys Path

- Signpost for Session 4 ([Leader Resource 2](#)) (included in this document), and pins, glue stick or tape
- Copies of Session 1, [Leader Resource 8](#) (included in this document), UU Principles Song, for all participants
- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Print out Leader Resource 2 and cut out the signpost.
- Optional: Write the UU Principles Song lyrics on newsprint, and post.
- Customize, print out and photocopy the Taking It Home section for all participants.

### Description of Activity

This activity helps children get used to practicing a closing ritual as a way of affirming their belonging in the faith community.

Gather the group in a circle. Thank the children for participating and sharing their stories and ideas in this session. Tell them something you liked about the way they worked together as a community.

Point out the Faithful Journeys Path. Say, in your own words:

Our Faithful Journeys Path shows our journey to live our lives and act in ways that reflect our Unitarian Universalist beliefs and faith. The signposts direct us by reminding us about our Principles.

Today's signpost is "Be Fair." It stands for our second Unitarian Universalist Principle, justice, equity, and compassion in human relations. It means we believe we should always be fair.

Attach the signpost to the Faithful Journeys Path.

Remind the children that the next time they meet they will have a chance to add Faithful Footprints to the Faithful Journeys Path. Encourage them to do an action during the week that shows fairness or justice. Take a few minutes to brainstorm some actions together. You might suggest sharing something, playing games with fair rules, giving away some of your belongings to someone who doesn't have very many things, starting a club at school that includes everyone, or speaking out against an unfair rule.

Point out the words to the UU Principles Song. Tell the children it is sung to the tune of "Old McDonald Had a Farm." Lead the children in singing the verse about the second Principle. Then, sing the entire song together.

Explain that you will learn about all of the Principles during your time together in Faithful Journeys.

Distribute the Taking It Home handout. Thank the children, tell them you look forward to seeing them next time, and dismiss the group.

## FAITH IN ACTION: LEARN ABOUT AREA CLUBS (45 MINUTES)

### Preparation for Activity

- Find out about service clubs active in your area, such as Lions, Boys & Girls Club, and Kiwanis, and identify members of your congregation who are involved in local club projects.
- Focus on clubs that do service projects that benefit people outside their immediate community *and* welcome all who share their mission to join. Contact various clubs. Ask them about the justice or service work they do and investigate their mission to make sure it does not contradict Unitarian Universalist values.
- Invite representatives from one or more clubs to come and speak about their work to a group of adults and children during coffee hour. Ask them to be prepared to share why it has been important to them to be a part of the club. Whether or not they are UUs, see how the second Unitarian Universalist Principle resonates with them. Make sure they understand they should describe their club and its purpose and activities in a way young children can understand.
- Set up chairs in a comfortable meeting location.
- Inform parents in advance about this event and publicize for the entire congregation through newsletters, announcements, website, and e-mail.

### Description of Activity

During coffee hour, or at some other convenient time, have a brief presentation with questions and answers about the clubs, focusing on ways that they use the power of a group in action to work for justice or offer service in your local community. Invite guest speakers to share why it has been important to them to be part of the club. If desired, arrange for the Faithful Journeys Action Club and/or other members of your congregation to work with them on a future community service or charitable event.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Take a few minutes to evaluate the session with your co-leader immediately afterward, while it is fresh. Share your thoughts with any other team co-leaders and your director of religious education. You might find it helpful to consider these questions:

- Which activities worked well? What didn't work so well?
- Were all children actively engaged? If not, who wasn't and why might that have been? How could they be better included next time?
- How well did the activities match the learning styles of the children in this group? What could we do differently to better accommodate for learning styles in future sessions?
- How well did the session balance physically active with sedentary activities?
- How was the timing? What might need to be done differently for a session to work better within our time frame?
- Were there any behavior issues? If so, how can we address them in the future? Do we need more information or help in this area?
- What connections did children make with the activities and/or central ideas? How did we know that was occurring?
- What connections did children make with each other? What connections did we make with the children? When was that most evident?
- Are we successfully creating a program characterized by inclusion, diversity appreciation, respect, noncompetitive environment, and welcome? What could we have done differently?
- What questions or issues arose in this session that we might like to discuss with our director of religious education?

## TAKING IT HOME

*What becomes of the colored girl? The muses of song, poetry and art do not woo and exalt her. She has inspired no novels. Those who write ... seldom think of this dark-skinned girl who is persistently breaking through the petty tyrannies of cast into the light of recognition. – Fannie Barrier Williams*

*He drew a circle that shut me out*

*Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout*

*But love and I had the wit to win;*

*We drew a circle that took him in. – Edwin Markham*

**IN TODAY'S SESSION...** We learned about the power of working together in a group by hearing the story of Unitarian Fannie Barrier Williams (1855-1944), who was active in establishing the African American women's club movement as an agency for justice and social change. We began to put into action the second Unitarian Universalist Principle, which states that we affirm and promote justice, equity, and compassion in human relations, by forming a Faithful Journeys Action Club that welcomes all to join and will take on a justice or service project. Our signpost to help guide us in faithful action was "Be Fair."

**EXPLORE THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Talk about...** Ask your child about the Faithful Journeys Action Club that was formed today and what justice issue the group has chosen to address. Affirm why that justice issue is important. Tell your child about a justice issue that is important to you and explain how any groups you belong to – such as your congregation, a committee within it, or a local advocacy or social justice group – explicitly act on it.

**EXTEND THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Try...** Pay extra attention to times when your child acts fairly or works for justice. Point out instances of your child acting faithfully in a way that reflects the second Unitarian Universalist Principle of justice, equity, and compassion in human relations. Your child will have the opportunity to share these actions with the Faithful Journeys group next time we meet.

To work more with this session's theme of exclusion/inclusion, read together *Best Friends for Frances* by Russell Hoban, illustrated by Lillian Hoban (New York: HarperCollins, 1969). The picture-book hedgehog learns how it feels to be excluded and uses her learning to be more inclusive of her little sister, Gloria. While the text may be easy for your second- or third-grader to read, the message is timeless.

## FAMILY ADVENTURE

Create a Family Faithful Journeys Action Club. Give it a name and a logo. Find a justice issue that everyone in the family is concerned about and brainstorm ways that your family club can take action. For example, you could write a family letter to the school superintendent to protest an unfair policy, or donate some of your belongings to a charitable organization. Set aside a regular meeting time for your club when you can discuss and study your issue or take action together. Make it a

point to invite other people to join your family club from time to time, such as neighbors, extended family or friends.

### **A FAMILY RITUAL**

Create a family ritual for the beginning of your club meetings or to use whenever a member of your family acts for justice. To tie in with your Unitarian Universalist identity, light a chalice. Find or make up a song or dance together that you can use to express your commitment to justice, or perhaps as celebration for accomplishments. Take turns sharing a reading or story related to your justice issue or working for justice in general. Bring ritual to your club to emphasize the link between spiritual practices and justice, while reinforcing the Faithful Journeys idea that faith leads to action.

### **A FAMILY GAME**

For a good rainy day activity, make a clubhouse together for your Family Faithful Journeys Action Club. Be creative with blankets, large cardboard boxes, sheets, tables, pillows, overturned chairs, sleeping bags, or tents. For something more permanent, build a tree house or small shed out of wood. Then paint, put up curtains, and otherwise decorate the clubhouse with artwork and materials that reflect your club's purpose.

### **FAMILY DISCOVERY**

Learn about service clubs that are active in your area, such as [Lions](#), [Kiwanis](#) or [Boys & Girls Club](#). Find out what they do for the community and volunteer to help at a charitable event.

## **ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: BUILDING AND DECORATING A MORE PERMANENT CLUBHOUSE**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Supplies such as large pieces of plywood, 2x4s, nails, hammers, large pieces of cloth, rug remnants, pillows, large cardboard boxes, and paint/paintbrushes

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Check with your director of religious education and/or congregational board members to identify limitations and guidelines for your building plan. Select an appropriate location for a permanent structure.
- Optional: Invite a guest who has home construction experience to co-lead this activity.

### **Description of Activity**

Using your selected materials, build a very large permanent structure in the space you have selected in consultation with your director of religious education and building committee. Children can help hammer, paint, create curtains, hang artwork, and otherwise decorate the clubhouse.

If building a structure is not an option, consider decorating a corner of a room that can be dedicated for the duration of the Faithful Journeys program. If the room they meet in has enough space, the club might "nest" for a few weeks using large cardboard boxes.

## STORY: BELONGING – FANNIE BARRIER WILLIAMS

Written by Janeen K. Grohsmeyer.

Our hearts should be too warm and too large for hatred.

More than one hundred fifty years ago, back when trains were new and airplanes and cars hadn't been invented, back when women always wore long skirts and everyone wore hats, a girl named Fannie Barrier lived in a town in New York State.

Fannie lived with her older brother, George, and her older sister, Ella, and their parents. During the week, Fannie and George and Ella would get up and get dressed and eat breakfast, and then go to school. In the afternoon, they would play in the woods or maybe go sledding in the snow with their friends, then do their chores, eat dinner, do their homework, and go to bed.

On Sundays, the whole Barrier family would go to church. Fannie's father was a deacon, a leader at the church. Her mother taught Bible school. When Fannie was old enough, she played the piano while people sang hymns. She sang, too, and painted pictures. Maybe some of you like to do those things, too.

Maybe Fannie's life sounds a lot like your life, even if she did wear long skirts instead of pants and use kerosene lamps instead of electric lights and cook food on a wood stove instead of in a microwave oven. Going to school and to church, doing homework and chores, making music and playing with friends – these are all things we still do today.

But Fannie's life was different. Very different. Because back then, one hundred fifty years ago in the United States of America, most people didn't believe that everyone was equal. Most people believed that some groups of people were better than other groups. They believed that men were better than women. They believed that Protestants were better than Catholics or Jews. And they believed that people with light skin were better than people with dark skin.

Fannie Barrier had dark skin.

When she was a teenager, she went to the city of Boston to study music. Some of the other students said, "We don't want her here. She's dark, so she doesn't belong. If she stays, we'll all go." The school asked Fannie to leave.

So, Fannie went to Washington DC to study painting. She had to hide behind a screen so no one could see

her. "If the other students know you're here," the teacher told Fannie, "they'll want you to leave."

Over and over again, all through her life, Fannie was told she wasn't wanted and couldn't belong, just because she had dark skin.

When she was forty years old and living in the city of Chicago, some women invited her to join a women's club. But some other women in the club said, "We don't want her here. She's dark, so she can't belong. If she stays, we'll all go." The people in the club argued about it for more than a year. Finally, they voted to let Fannie in. But when she joined, those other women left.

Now, Fannie didn't like that. It hurts when people won't let you belong. It hurts when people don't want you around. Some days Fannie felt angry about it. Some days she felt sad.

But most days, Fannie had no time to feel angry or sad, because she was busy making groups of her own. Fannie knew how much it hurt to be left out. And she knew it would be a lot easier, and more fun, to get things done together with others, than by yourself. She and her husband, the lawyer S. Laing Williams, joined the All Souls Unitarian Church in Chicago. They helped start a hospital, where everyone was welcome, no matter the color of their skin. They created a group to study art and music.

Fannie Barrier Williams helped start a home for girls in Chicago, and she started a center where people could live together, no matter the color of their skin. She was part of the group that started the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (the NAACP), along with Frederick Douglass, Ida Wells Barnett, Frances Watkins Harper, and W.E.B. DuBois.

Fannie also worked with suffragists like Susan B. Anthony, helping women get the chance to vote. Because back then, remember, people thought that men were better than women. Women couldn't own property or have a bank account or vote in elections.

In 1920, when Fannie was sixty-five years old, women were finally allowed to vote. And about fifty years after that, people started letting everyone vote and everyone belong to groups, no matter the color of their skin.

Fannie Barrier Williams didn't live to see that. She didn't live long enough to see the United States of America become a place where most of the people believe that everyone is equal.

But she helped make it happen. When some groups kept people out, Fannie Barrier Williams started groups

that let everyone in. When the laws of our country said she and thousands of others couldn't belong because of the color of their skin or the church they went to or because they were girls instead of boys, Fannie Barrier Williams worked to change the laws so that everyone could belong – and would belong – no matter what.

## LEADER RESOURCE 1: PICTURE OF FANNIE BARRIER WILLIAMS FOR STORY BASKET

*Cut out the picture and place it in the story basket.*



## LEADER RESOURCE 2: SIGNPOST FOR SESSION 4

*Cut out the signpost. During your closing circle, show it to the children and attach it to your Faithful Journeys Path.*







## LEADER RESOURCE 3: FAITHFUL JOURNEYS ACTION CLUB PROJECT IDEAS

### Organizations and causes a club could support

- An international project for children or communities, such as [Grassroot Soccer](#) or [Heifer International](#)
- [American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals](#) (ASPCA) or local animal shelter
- Local food pantry, homeless shelter, or community action initiative
- A local chapter of [Kiwanis](#), [Lions](#), or [Boys & Girls Club](#)
- An elementary school or library that lacks financial resources
- A library or literacy program in a developing country, such as [Ethiopia Reads](#)
- [National Audubon Society](#)
- An environmental justice or Earth stewardship project (visit website of Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth, [Green Sanctuary](#) Project)
- A project of the [Unitarian Universalist Service Committee](#)

### Activities and projects to do in support of your cause

- Book drive
- Penny drive
- Bake sale
- Hosting a luncheon during coffee hour
- Mid-winter luau (set up food and decorations in your church, invite the public)
- Soliciting donations of toiletries, food, toys, clothing, etc. with skits, songs, and announcements
- Hands-on service work
- Design and sale of greeting cards with themed artwork matching your cause
- Making and sale of candles, soap, ornaments, or other crafts
- Hosting an informational table (for example, with a petition to sign, a raffle or craft sale to raise funds, and/or a collection box) to promote your cause at a local community event
- Writing letters to local newspaper or writing an editorial

## FIND OUT MORE

Find these and other quotations from Fannie Barrier Williams in *The New Woman of Color: The Collected Writings of Fannie Barrier Williams, 1893-1918*, edited by Mary Jo Deegan (Northern Illinois University Press, 2002).

We believe that the world always needs the influence of every good and capable woman, and this rule recognizes no exceptions based on complexion.

... [It] may be stated that the contentions of colored women are in kind like those of other American women for greater freedom of development. Liberty to be all that we can be, without artificial hindrances, is a thing no less precious to us than to women generally.

[T]he inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness is a maxim that will become more blessed when the hand of woman shall take it from its sepulture in books and make it the gospel of everyday life and the unerring guide in the relations of all men, women, and children.

Colored women organized have succeeded in touching the heart of the race, and for the first time the thrill of unity has been felt.

The Club movement is well purposed. There is in it a strong faith, an enthusiasm born of love and sympathy, and an ever increasing intelligence in the ways and means of effecting noble results. It is not a fad. It is not an imitation. It is not a passing sentiment. It is not an expedient or an experiment. It is rather the force of a new intelligence against the old ignorance. The struggle of an enlightened conscience against the whole brood of social miseries born out of the stress and pain of a hated past.

A book about women in Unitarian Universalist history that includes a biographical sketch and excerpted writings from Fannie Barrier Williams is *Standing Before Us: Unitarian Universalist Women and Social Reform 1776-1936*, edited by Dorothy May Emerson (Boston: Skinner House Books, 2000).

See an article about [Fannie Barrier Williams](#), by June Edwards, in the online Dictionary of Unitarian and Universalist Biography.

# SESSION 5: FINDING BALANCE

## INTRODUCTION

*To live content with small means, to seek elegance rather than luxury, and refinement rather than fashion, to be worthy, not respectable, and wealthy, not rich ... in a word to let the spiritual, unbidden and unconscious, grow up through the common, this is to be my symphony. — William Henry Channing*

*If you knew what I know about the power of giving, you would not let a single meal pass without sharing it in some way. — Buddha*

This session explores the second Unitarian Universalist Principle, justice, equity, and compassion in human relationships. Participants discover how, by finding balance in their own lives, they can promote equity across the interdependent web of life. They experience sharing resources and finding enjoyment with scant material possessions. We will add the signpost, "Find Balance," to our Faithful Journeys Path.

## GOALS

This session will:

- Demonstrate our power to make personal choices about sharing resources that can affirm second Principle values of justice, equity, and compassion
- Encourage participants to take pleasure and pride in sharing
- Introduce concepts of "balance" and "finding one's center" as spiritual practices as well as fun games
- Explore the question of what is "enough" and how one can find balance in life
- Build community through games, rituals, and reinforcement of the group behavior covenant.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Develop an understanding of equity; learn that there is such a thing as having more than you need and such a thing as not having enough
- Learn how contemporary Unitarian Universalists, including children, have chosen to share resources to help others who have less

- Become empowered as agents of change who can identify practices of material excess and explore choices of voluntary simplicity
- Experience balance and centeredness as physical qualities and learn about them as qualities of lifestyle
- Generate and follow up on ideas to reduce, reuse, and recycle
- Optional: Become agents for justice, equity, and compassion by raising money for a good cause.

## SESSION-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	2
Activity 1: Faithful Footprints	5
Activity 2: Move It! Balance Games	7
Activity 3: Story Basket and Centering	5
Activity 4: Story — Finding Balance	10
Activity 5: Minimalist Party Planning	12
Activity 6: Minimalist Party	12
Faith in Action: Birthday Fund	
Closing	7
Alternate Activity 1: Toy or Book Swap or Rummage Sale	20

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

If it would be helpful in creating sacred space, light a candle or chalice. Read the story "Finding Balance." Reflect on these questions:

- What activities in your life help you feel balanced and centered?
- Think about your experiences as a giver and a recipient of gifts. What gifts have made you happiest to give? To receive?
- How satisfied do you feel with the material things you have? Do you feel as if you have enough? Do you ever feel you have too much?
- How satisfied do you feel with your level of giving?

If you are comfortable, prepare to talk about your own choices around charitable giving with the group. You

have an opportunity in this session to model the concept of living in balance.

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Chalice candle or LED/battery-operated candle
- Lighter and extinguisher, if needed
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Posters of the Unitarian Universalist Principles in both adult and children's language, or copies of Session 1, [Handout 1](#) (included in this document) for all participants

### Preparation for Activity

- Decide whether you will use the provided opening words or other opening words, such as those offered in Session 1, Leader Resource 1, Alternate Openings. It is recommended that you use the same opening words for each session.
- Print the opening words on newsprint. Post the newsprint where the children will be able to see it when they gather.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle. Light the chalice. Point out the chalice-lighting words on the newsprint and invite the group to read together:

We light this flame for the light of truth, the warmth of love, and the energy of action.

Indicate the poster(s) of the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Or, give each child a copy of the handout. Ask a volunteer to read the second Principle in the adult language. Ask a second volunteer to read the children's version of the second Principle. Then, say:

Today we will learn about this Unitarian Universalist Principle — what it means, and what kinds of actions show it. Let's get started.

Collect handouts for reuse.

### Including All Participants

If not all participants are fluent readers, take the time to teach the group to say the opening words from memory.

If the group has children who are sensitive to perfumes or other chemicals, use unscented candles or an electric or battery-operated flame. An electric flame is also recommended if you may not use open flames or if any participants are afraid of fire.

## ACTIVITY 1: FAITHFUL FOOTPRINTS (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path (Session 1, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))
- Cutouts of footprints and (optional) wheelchair tracks, at least one for each participant, in a variety of colors (Session 1, [Leader Resources 3](#) and [4](#) (included in this document))
- Markers
- Push pins, glue stick or tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Think of something you have done since the group last met that represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. Identify the Principle(s) your action reflected. Write a few words about it on a footprint, with your name.

### Description of Activity

This activity reinforces children's learning as they model translating faith into action for one another. To strengthen children's Unitarian Universalist identity, help participants see how their own behavior demonstrates specific Principles.

Gather in a circle. Point to the Faithful Journeys Path and say:

Together we are taking a journey to learn what it means to live as Unitarian Universalists. Each time we meet, we talk about ways our actions show our beliefs about what is right and good. This is called "putting our faith into action."

When you share about something you have done that shows what you believe, you can choose a footprint or wheelchair for us to put on our Faithful Journeys Path.

Hold up the footprint you made of your own faithful action. Tell what you did and how it represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. If you can connect your action to a Principle, briefly explain. For example:

- I made phone calls to remind people to vote (or, I voted), because I believe in our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, that we all have a say in matters that concern us. When people vote, that's one way to have every person's opinion be counted.
- I have a neighbor who was sick last week. I helped him bring his trash outside, because I believe in the second Unitarian Universalist

Principle, which says we believe in being kind and fair.

- I put my water bottles and juice bottles in the recycling bin, because I believe in the seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, which reminds us to take care of the Earth that all life shares.

Ask the children to think of an act they have done, since you met last, that reflects Unitarian Universalism. You may wish to prompt:

- Did anyone do something that helped make things fair? (justice, equity, and compassion)
- Did anyone help someone else? (inherent worth and dignity, interdependent web)
- Did anyone take care of nature or another animal? (interdependent web)
- Did anyone listen to someone else who had a very different opinion? (search for truth and meaning, acceptance of one another)
- Did anyone play with someone new whom you did not know very well? (acceptance of one another, encouragement to spiritual growth)

As participants name their actions, write a word or phrase describing the action on a footprint or wheelchair cutout. Invite children to write their names on their cutouts and post them on the Faithful Journeys Path. Have them progress along the path over the course of the program.

To stay within the time frame for this activity, use these guidelines:

- Encourage children to share their faithful act in one or two brief sentences.
- If the group is big, limit children to sharing one faithful act per week.

It is very important to avoid judging participants, either with criticism or praise. Avoid phrases like "Great job!" or "You're fantastic!" which might suggest that acts of faith vary in their value or encourage children to compete to share the "best" act.

You should, however, respond to each child's contribution. Listen carefully to what a child tells you. After each child shares, say something like, "Thank you for sharing," followed by a summarizing sentence, such as:

- Being kind to new children at school is an action that treats others like they are important.

- Suggesting your friends all vote to decide what to play together is an action of democracy and fairness.
- Cleaning up garbage at the park is an action to take care of the Earth.
- Teaching your brother to talk is an action that affirms each person's learning.
- Taking care of your dog is an action of love.

Identify the Unitarian Universalist Principles each act represents; refer to the Principles poster if the room has one or indicate a relevant signpost on the Faithful Journeys Path. By responding specifically to each child's faithful actions, you will help them feel pride, a sense of accomplishment, and their own empowerment as agents whose actions and choices reflect Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values.

### **Including All Participants**

Along with cut-out footprints (Session 1, Handout 3, Faithful Footprints), provide wheelchairs (Session 1, Handout 4, Making Tracks for Faith) in the same colors of paper. Encourage all the children — not just those who use wheelchairs for mobility — to sometimes use a wheelchair instead of footprints to represent their faithful actions.

## **ACTIVITY 2: MOVE IT! BALANCE GAMES (7 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Masking tape or blue painter's tape

### **Preparation for Activity**

- In a large, open space, use tape to lay out a straight line about ten feet long on the floor.

### **Description of Activity**

Tell the group:

Today we are talking about how we find a balance in our lives between having and sharing, between getting and giving. Let's try balance with some games. We will start with walking this "tightrope," the stripe of tape on the floor. You can choose to simply walk the tightrope and see if you can keep your feet straight on the line, or if you want more challenge, you can choose a different way to go along the tightrope, say, by hopping it on one foot, or walking it with one eye closed, or straightening a leg out behind you like a gymnast after each step.

Allow each participant to move along the tightrope from start to end, in the way they choose. Affirm each child for the attempt to balance. When all who want to try it have done so, say:

For our second game, the line of tape changes from being a tightrope to being a border.

Tell them this game is optional. It is for volunteers who are willing to test their balance, knowing that their partner in the game is allowed to try to push them. Ask them to listen to the directions before they volunteer. Then, say:

A pair of people will squat on either side of the line, facing each other. The goal of the game is to get the other person to lose their balance and fall over the line. You may use your hands to push the other person, but you may not grab them. An important strategy is to think about how you can shift your balance in a way that will throw the other person off balance. Please remember that shoving hard enough to knock over another person will almost certainly knock you over instead. If you lose your own balance or come out of your squatting position, the other person automatically wins the game.

Now ask for volunteers. If you have a larger group and/or limited time, you can have two pairs do this game simultaneously at the two ends of the line of tape.

### **Including All Participants**

Adapt these games for those with impaired mobility. For instance, challenge a child in a wheelchair to wheel along the tightrope, keeping the tape squarely under the middle of the chair.

Make it clear that the second game is for volunteers only. Children who are uncomfortable being touched, or who may not like to risk being pushed, are free to pass.

## **ACTIVITY 3: STORY BASKET AND CENTERING (5 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- A large basket
- Objects related to the story, "Finding Balance," such as a picture of First Unitarian Church in Rochester, NY (Leader Resource 1), a toy or full size skateboard, wrapped gifts, or birthday party items or pictures of them (gifts, a party hat, a cake with candles)
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument

- Optional: Box or small table and a decorative cloth cover to form a small altar

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Place the story-related items and the sound instrument in the story basket.
- Place the filled basket in the storytelling area you have designated.
- If you will make an altar as a focal point for story objects, set up the box or table you will use next to your storytelling area. Place the decorative cloth on the altar. It is not necessary to ritualize the altar as a sacred place. It can simply serve as a focal point where objects related to the story will be visible while you tell the story.

### **Description of Activity**

Gather the children in a circle in your storytelling area. Show them the storytelling basket. Say something like, "Let's see what's in our story basket today."

Tell the group the items in the story basket will be placed on this altar or table after the children have passed them around the circle. Take the story-related items from the basket, one at a time, and pass them around. Objects that are fragile or should not be passed around for any reason can be held up for all to see and then placed directly on the altar.

Briefly name the various objects, and ask whether any participants have ever ridden a skateboard. If so, what did they find hardest about riding it? Affirm answers; then say:

Learning to balance is an important skill in skateboarding. The main character in our story learns about a whole new kind of balance from his skateboard riding.

Tell the children that at Christmas time a few years ago (in 2006) something happened at his Unitarian Universalist congregation that gave the boy in the story a great idea about what he wanted for a birthday present. Explain that the story is something that could happen now — even at our congregation.

As the items come back to you, display them on the altar for children to look at as they listen to the story.

Remove the sound instrument from the story basket. Tell the children that every time you tell a story in Faithful Journeys, you will use the instrument to help them get their ears, minds, and bodies ready to listen. Invite them to sit comfortably and close their eyes (if they are comfortable doing so). Suggest that closing their eyes can help them focus on just listening. In a calm voice, say:



As you breathe in, feel your body opening up with air. As you breathe out, feel yourself relaxing.

Repeat this once or twice. Then, say:

Now you are ready to listen. When I hit the chime (turn the rain stick over), listen as carefully as you can. See how long you can hear its sound. When you can no longer hear it, open your eyes and you will know it is time for the story to begin.

Sound the chime or other instrument. When the sound has gone, begin telling the story.

### **Including All Participants**

If anyone in the group is unable to hold or pass items, or cannot see the items, make sure you or a child in the group offers the person each object to explore as needed.

Some people do not feel safe closing their eyes when they are in a group. If any children resist, respect their resistance and suggest that they find a single point of focus to look at instead.

If you have a basket of fidget objects for children who may listen and learn more effectively with something in their hands, make it available during this activity. Remind children where it is before you begin the "centering" part of this activity. For a full description of fidget objects and guidance on using them, see Session 2, Leader Resource 2.

## **ACTIVITY 4: STORY — FINDING BALANCE (10 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- A copy of the story "[Finding Balance](#)" (included in this document)
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Fidget object basket (Session 2, Leader Resource 2)

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Read the story a few times.
- Consider telling the story rather than reading it. Practice telling it aloud.
- Think about how you might use items from the story basket as props.

### **Description of Activity**

The story "Finding Balance" presents examples of both an individual child and a Unitarian Universalist

congregation choosing to embody justice, equity, and compassion in human relationships by sharing their material gifts. The idea of equity is expressed by the concept of balance.

Before you begin, look around the room and make eye contact with each person. Read or tell the story.

Sound the instrument to indicate that the story is over. Then, guide the children in a brief discussion using these questions:

- What present were you happiest to get?
- What present were you happiest to give?
- Do you think that most kids you know have more stuff than they need, less than they need, or just about the right amount of stuff?
- How about you? Do you have more stuff than you need, less, or just about the right amount?
- If you have more than you need, why do you think that is? How do you decide what stuff you need, and what you don't really need?

## **ACTIVITY 5: MINIMALIST PARTY PLANNING (12 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Newsprint, markers and tape
- A chime or bell

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Familiarize yourself with materials that are generally available in your religious education space, including arts supplies. Make sure there are some items that can safely be used for party activities.
- Optional: You may wish to provide items for snacks. Choose some basic snacks that the children can make more festive for a party, such as plain crackers. Make sure materials are available to help children serve these in a special way.

### **Description of Activity**

The goal of this activity is to help participants explore the possibility of having fun with "less." Begin by asking the children to brainstorm what sorts of things they like to do at a party. Write these ideas down on newsprint. Remember that this is a brainstorming session, so write down all ideas, however outrageous, unless they involve harm to people or property. (If necessary, you can remind participants of the Principle of justice, equity, and compassion that guides our interactions.)

When the list seems complete, articulate themes that you observe, for example, "I can tell that we like parties with games and food and goodies for everyone."

Then post a new blank sheet. Tell the children:

Now we're going to try thinking about a party in a different way. We don't have a cake or a roller skating rink or a swimming pool (or whatever came up on the list). What kind of party could we come up with right now, using just what is in this room?

Give the children a few minutes to explore the resources available.

Use the chime or bell to call children back to the group, and then ask them to brainstorm party ideas using only available materials. You may wish to guide the conversation by asking "What kinds of games could we play?" / "Does anyone have a suggestion for decorations?" / "Can you think of anything we could make for gifts or party favors?" / "Do we have a way to have music at our party?" Write down suggestions. Then ask for volunteers to work on aspects of the party preparation. Be clear about how much time children have to create the party. Help children divide into smaller groups at appropriate locations to work on their party preparations.

### **Including All Participants**

Find out about food allergies or limitations before purchasing any snacks, so that everyone present can enjoy them.

## **ACTIVITY 6: MINIMALIST PARTY (12 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Items from the meeting space, identified by children in Activity 5
- Optional: Snacks or other items you wish to provide

### **Preparation for Activity**

- If you wish to include other groups of children or adults in your party, you will need to arrange beforehand for their availability.

### **Description of Activity**

Have a party! Make sure there is time for each group to present what they have prepared, whether it is a snack, a game, a craft, a song, etc. You may wish to bring in older or younger children to participate in your (brief) party.

### **Including All Participants**

Suggest adaptations, as needed, so all children can participate in activities that other children have prepared.

## **CLOSING (7 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Faithful Journeys Path
- Signpost for Session 5 ([Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document)), and pins, glue stick or tape
- Copies of Session 1, [Leader Resource 8](#) (included in this document), UU Principles Song, for all participants
- Optional: Newsprint, markers, and tape

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Print out Leader Resource 2 and cut out the signpost.
- Optional: Write the UU Principles Song lyrics on newsprint, and post.
- Customize, print out and photocopy the Taking It Home section for all participants.

### **Description of Activity**

This activity helps children get used to practicing a closing ritual as a way of affirming their belonging in the faith community.

Gather the group in a circle. Thank the children for participating and sharing their stories and ideas in this session. Tell them something you liked about the way they worked together as a community.

Point out the Faithful Journeys Path. Say, in your own words:

Our Faithful Journeys Path shows our journey to live our lives and act in ways that reflect our Unitarian Universalist beliefs and faith. The signposts direct us by reminding us about our Principles.

Today's signpost is "Find Balance." It stands for our second Unitarian Universalist Principle, justice, equity, and compassion in human relations. We believe we can make the world more fair. One way is to help people who have everything they need find ways to share with others.

Attach the signpost to the Faithful Journeys Path.

Remind the children that the next time they meet they will have a chance to add Faithful Footprints to the Faithful Journeys Path. Encourage them to try, before

your next meeting, to identify something they have enough of and take action to share with others in greater need. For example:

- Choose some clothes, toys, or books you do not need. Ask an adult to help you pack them up to donate to another child.
- Before you ask a parent to buy you something in a store, think about whether you really need it. If you do not really need it, do not ask for it. Tell your parent that, although you would like it, you realize you do not really need it.

Point out the words to the UU Principles Song. Tell the children it is sung to the tune of "Old McDonald Had a Farm." Lead the children in singing the verse about the second Principle. Then, sing the entire song together. Explain that you will learn about all of the Principles during your time together in Faithful Journeys.

Distribute the Taking It Home handout. Thank the children, tell them you look forward to seeing them next time, and dismiss the group.

## **FAITH IN ACTION: BIRTHDAY FUND**

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Your Faithful Journeys Action Club may wish to create a "birthday" fund to which children, or perhaps the entire congregation, can contribute money that would have gone toward birthday presents. Work with your congregation's treasurer to establish a fund within the congregation's budget, so that club funds can be deposited into the congregation's account, yet remain a separate line item for the group to spend on donations of their choosing.

### **Description of Activity**

Like the character Ray in the story "Finding Balance," participants may wish to ask some or all of the people who would ordinarily give them birthday gifts to contribute instead to a good cause. If you have created a Faithful Journeys Action Club (Session 4), a birthday fund is a good way for the club to raise funds for a cause they have selected.

If the group creates a birthday fund, you will need to periodically remind participants of its existence. When someone has contributed to the fund, certainly take the opportunity to tell the group during the Faithful Footprints activity.

### **Including All Participants**

Families may be in very different economic circumstances, and participants' expectations around birthday presents may vary considerably. Honor all

contributions. Announce the total funds raised, rather than the amounts of individual contributions.

You may wish to encourage children to increase the fund through their own work, such as with a car wash or a lemonade stand.

## **LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING**

Take a few minutes to evaluate the session with your co-leader immediately afterward, while it is fresh. Share your thoughts with any other team co-leaders and your director of religious education. You might find it helpful to consider these questions:

- Which activities worked well? What didn't work so well?
- Were all children actively engaged? If not, who wasn't and why might that have been? How could they be better included next time?
- How well did the activities match the learning styles of the children in this group? What could we do differently to better accommodate for learning styles in future sessions?
- How well did the session balance physically active with sedentary activities?
- How was the timing? What might need to be done differently for a session to work better within our time frame?
- Were there any behavior issues? If so, how can we address them in the future? Do we need more information or help in this area?
- What connections did children make with the activities and/or central ideas? How did we know that was occurring?
- What connections did children make with each other? What connections did we make with the children? When was that evident?
- Are we successfully creating a program characterized by inclusion, diversity appreciation, respect, noncompetitive environment, and welcome? What could we have done differently?
- What questions or issues arose in this session that we might like to discuss with our director of religious education?

## **TAKING IT HOME**

*To live content with small means, to seek elegance rather than luxury, and refinement*

*rather than fashion, to be worthy, not respectable, and wealthy, not rich ... in a word to let the spiritual, unbidden and unconscious, grow up through the common, this is to be my symphony. — William Ellery Channing*

*If you knew what I know about the power of giving, you would not let a single meal pass without sharing it in some way. — Buddha*

**IN TODAY'S SESSION...** We looked at real-life examples of people choosing to share their gifts — literally their holiday gifts and birthday presents. We talked about finding balance, and explored how sharing can create a balance of wealth. We also explored ways to have more fun with less stuff by designing a party using only materials that we had in our room. Our signpost to help guide us in faithful action was "Find Balance."

**EXPLORE THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Talk about...** Talk with your child about how your family makes financial choices. How do you choose charities to support and decide how much to give? What factors do you consider before making a substantial purchase? What activities do you enjoy as a family that cost no money?

**EXTEND THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Try...** Look through the drawers and closets of everyone in the family for clothes in good condition that you do not use. Decide together who might want them: A younger friend or relative? A thrift store? A shelter for women and children? Could you sell items in a garage sale and donate the money to a good cause? You may also like to give some durable food items to a food pantry, or extra blankets and towels to a homeless shelter or an animal shelter. Talk about how everyone wins when items get more than one life — the original owner gets to share, the new owner gets to enjoy new belongings, and the environment is healthier when we recycle.

## **FAMILY ADVENTURE**

Go as a family to donate food, clothes, toys, or linens. A trip to a food pantry, a transition house for the homeless, or an animal shelter lends immediacy to the sense of sharing and provides children a clearer picture of the need that exists.

## **A FAMILY GAME**

We played some balance games in our group today. You might want to have a family competition to see who can balance on one foot for the longest. Try standing on the left foot and standing on the right, and see which is harder for each person. For a real challenge, try standing on one foot with your eyes closed. For contrast, try standing on one foot while you focus on a particular

spot in front of you. You may find it easier to stay in balance when you hold your vision steady!

## **FAMILY DISCOVERY**

The Second Harvest website can help you [locate a food bank](#) near you that accepts food donations. Also, locate a local pet shelter to donate linens or pet care items.

## **ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: TOY OR BOOK SWAP OR RUMMAGE SALE (20 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Toys, books, or other items to be sold or exchanged
- Optional: Price tags, pens, and cash box with coins and small bills to make change

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Several weeks before your sale or exchange, begin asking children to bring in items they no longer need, to sell or give to others. You may want to send a note home before this session, asking parents to help children look through their belongings for usable books, toys, or other items they no longer use.
- Decide whether to involve only the children in this group, or a broader group such as the entire religious education program or congregation. If your exchange will be held in a social hall, courtyard or other space where your group does not usually meet, arrange for the use of this space with the appropriate congregational staff or leaders.

### **Description of Activity**

This activity demonstrates that recycling is a win-win method of sharing resources and (if you hold a sale) provides an opportunity to raise money for the Faithful Journeys Action Club (Session 4) or a particular cause.

For a simple toy or book exchange, invite children to bring toys or books they no longer use or want. Arrange those items on a table. Have participants draw numbers from a hat to determine the order in which children will have the opportunity to select an item.

Or, use the session time for children to set up items they have brought for a rummage sale to which everyone in the congregation is invited. Children can make signs that give prices (e.g., "Books, 50 cents"), direct buyers to the sale location, or inform buyers where the money raised will be donated.

## STORY: FINDING BALANCE

"So, Ray," asked his mother, "what do you want for your birthday?"

It was a surprisingly hard question to answer. What *did* he want for his birthday? "I don't know, Mom. Can I get back to you on that one?"

Ray grabbed his skateboard and went out to the driveway to think as he rode. What did he want for his birthday? It was the kind of question that deserved his best thinking. Ray remembered back to his birthday a year ago, when he unwrapped the skateboard he was riding now. He felt a wave of excitement rush over him once again as he pictured unwrapping the bright purple box. He had barely taken the time to yell: "Cool! Thanks!" before he ran off to call his best friend, Vikram, to let him know that they would be riding together now. Ray thought back to all the time he had spent on the driveway, practicing his tricks. He'd gotten pretty good in just a year! There must be something else for this year that would be as much fun.

As Ray cruised down the slope of the driveway, his mind drifted back to that first day, when Vikram had come over to teach him how to ride the board. "It's all about balance," he'd said, "and balance is all about knowing where your center is." As he approached the bottom of the driveway, Ray shifted his center of gravity just a bit to the right, pushing the board into a turn. "It's all about balance, and balance is all about knowing where your center is."

"Funny," thought Ray, "but I think my center is right here, riding my skateboard. This is where my life feels balanced, where I feel the most like *me*. What other birthday present is going to do that?"

All of a sudden, the idea came to Ray in a flash. He remembered how his church, the First Unitarian Church of Rochester, had started something different that people could do around Christmas. Every family in the congregation was asked to think about what they would usually spend on Christmas presents, and then to give half of that amount to a special fund at the church, the Greater Good program. Ray had been amazed when their one congregation had raised \$64,000! The money had gone to help local families, and to help a village in Honduras get fresh water.

Ray had worried, at first, about having only half a Christmas. But it had been, after all, a whole Christmas, only with not so many presents. And somehow the good feeling of helping out families with so much less than he had lasted longer than the excitement of unwrapping a whole pile of gifts.

Ray wondered, "What would it be like to have half a birthday?" Maybe pretty good.

"Hey, Ray!" someone called, interrupting his thoughts.

"Oh, hi, Sebastian," Ray said, jumping gracefully off his skateboard. "What's up?"

Sebastian was in Ray's class at school, but they did not usually play together outside of school. Sebastian was not a skateboarder. Now he was just sitting on the front steps of his building.

"Nothing much," Sebastian said. "I just came outside for a little while. I'm not doing anything." Ray noticed that Sebastian was looking at Ray's skateboard.

"Do you want to try it?" Ray asked.

Sebastian frowned. "Sure I do, but I don't know how. It looks hard."

"Well, I could show you. I could help you," Ray said.

Ray handed Sebastian the skateboard. Sebastian looked like he did not know what to do with it. "Okay," Ray said, taking the skateboard back. He showed Sebastian how to place his left foot and kick off with his right. Then Sebastian tried it. He wiggled too much and quickly jumped off, looking embarrassed. But then he tried it again. Ray encouraged Sebastian. He heard himself saying the same words Vikram had said to him: "It's all about balance, finding your center."

By the time Ray had to go home, Sebastian was really catching on. He hopped off the skateboard and handed it back to Ray, a big smile on his face.

"You should get a skateboard, too," Ray told him. "You could ride around with Vikram and me."

"Yeah, that would be cool," Sebastian said, "but I don't think that's going to happen. There's not a lot of money for big presents at my house, but I had fun learning how to do it. Thanks a lot."

"Sure," said Ray. "See you tomorrow."

"Yeah, see you tomorrow," said Sebastian, and went back into his building. Watching the door close behind Sebastian, Ray felt sad. It wasn't fair that some kids could have a skateboard, and other kids who would really like riding one could not. It wasn't fair when kids wanted to play a sport, and their families could not pay for all the fees and equipment and special clothes.

Suddenly, Ray knew what he wanted for his birthday. He pushed his board back up the driveway as fast as he could go. "Mom! I know what I want for my birthday! I want half a birthday!" The words tumbled out of his mouth as Ray explained. It didn't take his mother long to figure it out.

"A sports fund for kids. What a great idea! I think we could get a lot of people's help at church."

"Could a sports fund be part of the Greater Good program?" Ray asked. "There are so many people at church, and everyone has a birthday. Every year. Not just the kids, either. If all the kids and all the grown-ups at church were willing to have half a birthday, that's a lot of money for skateboards and helmets for kids whose families can't afford them."

"Frankly, I had no idea what to get you," his mother said. "Goodness knows there's enough *stuff* in your bedroom, and all you really like to play with is your skateboard."

"I could give away other stuff. But not my skateboard," said Ray.

"Well, your idea involves giving up presents you don't really need," said his mother. "Then we can use the

money to help other people get something they do need. It's kind of like having your cake and eating it too."

"Oh, I definitely want cake on my birthday."

"That's not what I meant." His mom laughed. "I just meant it's the kind of birthday present that is good in a lot of different ways. It's very... "

"Balanced?" Ray filled in.

"Yes," said his mom. "You give up some birthday presents, and you get back something much more valuable. You will know you helped make things more fair. When the gifts you gave up help someone else, that makes a kind of balance. If that makes any kind of sense."

"Yep," said Ray. "It does. If I can find my center and my balance, that's the best birthday present I can think of."



## LEADER RESOURCE 1: PICTURE OF FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF ROCHESTER

Provided by the First Unitarian Church of Rochester, New York.



## LEADER RESOURCE 2: SIGNPOST FOR SESSION 5

*Cut out the signpost to add to your Faithful Journeys Path.*







## FIND OUT MORE

### Creative Reuse

[Freecycle](#) helps people connect with others in their community to ask for free donations of items they need, or to offer to give away items they no longer want.

### First Unitarian Church of Rochester, New York

Read a [Greater Good program of the First Unitarian Church of Rochester](#), New York, which inspires this session's story, "Finding Balance."

The First Unitarian Church's web page about [Greater Good](#) provides updates about fund-recipient organizations and explains how the project works:

Each of us is asked to tally what we spend on the holiday season from presents, wrappings, trimmings, travel, food, and entertainment. Then take that number and cut it in half, and contribute that to a project at the church — a gift to the Greater Good. In 2006 we collected \$79,000, and in 2007 \$72,500, from members and friends of the church and members of the larger community. These contributions ... sure made "living simply so others can simply live" worth the effort and small sacrifice!

### Voluntary Simplicity

Voluntary simplicity, or simple living, is a way of life that emphasizes choosing time to spend as one wishes over acquiring money to spend on material possessions. Resources online include essays and books by [Linda Breen Pierce](#) on voluntary simplicity, [Clay and Judy's homepage](#), and the [Simply Living](#) website.

*The Quiltmaker's Gift* by Jeff Brumbeau, illustrated by Gail De Marcken (London: Orchard Books, 2001), is a lovely story about a king who learns to enjoy life when a quilt maker convinces him to give his possessions away.

## SESSION 6: KEEP LEARNING

### INTRODUCTION

*Life becomes religious whenever we make it so: when some new light is seen, when some deeper appreciation is felt, when some larger outlook is gained, when some nobler purpose is formed, when some task is well done. — Sophia Lyon Fahs*

In this session, children learn about and experience our third Unitarian Universalist Principle, acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth. Children find their own individual gifts and interests affirmed as the group explores a variety of spiritual practices from singing to making a Zen garden. Children learn about Unitarian religious educator Sophia Lyon Fahs, whose innovative ideas about children's faith development inform our congregations' approaches to religious education today. We add the signpost "Keep Learning" to our Faithful Journeys Path.

Alternate activities for this session introduce poetry, a walking meditation and drawing to music. The more time you have for this session, the more doorways into spiritual practice and growth you can offer the group.

### GOALS

This session will:

- Strengthen Unitarian Universalist identity
- Build children's self-esteem as learners and seekers
- Guide children to explore the concept of spiritual growth
- Promote learning and growth as ongoing human endeavors, limited neither to school nor childhood
- Teach and reinforce our third Unitarian Universalist Principle, acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations
- Teach children how they can and do express their faith — their ideas of right and wrong, their values, and their beliefs — with real actions.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Experience a variety of spiritual practices that draw on different learning styles, interests, and skills
- Find their own individual faith exploration affirmed, and affirm the explorations of their peers
- Learn about Unitarian religious educator Sophia Lyon Fahs
- Understand the history and continuity of the Unitarian Universalist religious education in which they are now engaged
- Identify their own experiences of spirituality, learning, growth, and spiritual growth
- Experience spiritual practice as a realm that engages body, mind, and heart
- Reflect on and express transcending mystery and wonder, one of the Sources of our living tradition
- Name ways they did or could translate their Unitarian Universalist faith and/or Principles into action.

### SESSION-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	2
Activity 1: Faithful Footprints	5
Activity 2: Move It! Yoga	8
Activity 3: Story Basket and Centering	5
Activity 4: Story — Learning by Heart: Sophia Lyon Fahs	10
Activity 5: Song — "Sing and Rejoice"	8
Activity 6: Mirror Dance	5
Activity 7: Create a Zen Garden	10
Faith in Action: Teaching	20
Closing	7
Alternate Activity 1: Religious Poetry	7
Alternate Activity 2: Walking Meditation	5
Alternate Activity 3: Drawing to Music	5

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

If it would be helpful in creating sacred space, light a candle or chalice. Read the story "Learning by Heart: Sophia Lyon Fahs." Reflect on these questions:

- As a student or seeker, what learning experiences have been joyful, even revelatory for you? What approaches of particular teachers have helped you the most?
- Where have you found affirmation for your spiritual learning and growth? in your congregation? In groups with a shared mission? Inside yourself? When and from whom do you receive acceptance and encouragement to spiritual growth bundled together?

Consider the young learners in Faithful Journeys and their different questions, learning styles, and modes of self-expression. Plan some specific ways you can model our third Principle in this session and offer all children in the group acceptance and encouragement to their spiritual growth.

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Chalice candle or LED/battery-operated candle
- Lighter and extinguisher, if needed
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Posters of the Unitarian Universalist Principles in both adult and children's language, or copies of Session 1, [Handout 1](#) (included in this document) for all participants

### Preparation for Activity

- Decide whether you will use the provided opening words or other opening words, such as those offered in Session 1, Leader Resource 1, Alternate Openings. It is recommended that you use the same opening words for each session.
- Print the opening words on newsprint. Post the newsprint where the children will be able to see it when they gather.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle. Light the chalice. Point out the chalice-lighting words on the newsprint and invite the group to read together:

We light this flame for the light of truth, the warmth of love, and the energy of action.

Indicate the poster(s) of the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Or, give each child a copy of the handout. Ask a volunteer to read the third Principle in the adult language. Ask a second volunteer to read the children's version of the third Principle. Then, say:

Today we will learn about this Unitarian Universalist Principle — what it means, and what kinds of actions show it. Let's get started.

Collect handouts for reuse.

### Including All Participants

If not all participants are fluent readers, take the time to teach the group to say the opening words from memory.

If the group has children who are sensitive to perfumes or other chemicals, use unscented candles or an electric or battery-operated flame. An electric flame is also recommended if you may not use open flames or if any participants are afraid of fire.

## ACTIVITY 1: FAITHFUL FOOTPRINTS (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path (Session 1, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))
- Cutouts of footprints and (optional) wheelchair tracks, at least one for each participant, in a variety of colors (Session 1, [Leader Resources 3](#) and [4](#) (included in this document))
- Markers
- Push pins, glue stick or tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Think of something you have done since the group last met that represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. Identify the Principle(s) your action reflected. Write a few words about it on a footprint, with your name.

### Description of Activity

This activity reinforces children's learning as they model translating faith into action for one another. To strengthen children's Unitarian Universalist identity, help participants see how their own behavior demonstrates specific Principles.

Gather in a circle. Point to the Faithful Journeys Path and say:

Together we are taking a journey to learn what it means to live as Unitarian Universalists. Each time we meet, we talk about ways our actions show our beliefs about what is right and good. This is called "putting our faith into action."

When you share about something you have done that shows what you believe, you can choose a footprint or wheelchair to put on our Faithful Journeys Path.

Hold up the footprint you made of your own faithful action. Tell what you did and how it represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. If you can connect your action to a Principle, briefly explain. For example:

- I made phone calls to remind people to vote (or, I voted), because I believe in our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, that we all have a say in matters that concern us. When people vote, that's one way to have every person's opinion be counted.

- I have a neighbor who was sick last week. I helped him bring his trash outside, because I believe in the second Unitarian Universalist Principle, which says we believe in being kind and fair.
- I put my water bottles and juice bottles in the recycling bin, because I believe in the seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, which reminds us to take care of the Earth that all life shares.

Ask the children to think of an act they have done, since you met last, that reflects Unitarian Universalism. You may wish to prompt:

- Did anyone do something that helped make things fair? (justice, equity, and compassion)
- Did anyone help someone else? (inherent worth and dignity, interdependent web)
- Did anyone take care of nature or another animal? (interdependent web)
- Did anyone listen to someone else who had a very different opinion? (search for truth and meaning, acceptance of one another)
- Did anyone play with someone new whom you did not know very well? (acceptance of one another, encouragement to spiritual growth)

As participants name their actions, write a word or phrase describing the action on a footprint or wheelchair cutout. Invite children to write their names on their cutouts and post them on the Faithful Journeys Path. Have them progress along the path over the course of the program.

To stay within the time frame for this activity, use these guidelines:

- Encourage children to share their faithful act in one or two brief sentences.
- If the group is big, limit children to sharing only one faithful act per week.

It is very important to avoid judging participants, either with criticism or praise. Avoid phrases like "Great job!" or "You're fantastic!" which might suggest that acts of faith vary in their value or encourage children to compete to share the "best" act.

You should, however, respond to each child's contribution. Listen carefully to what a child tells you. After each child shares, say something like, "Thank you for sharing," followed by a summarizing sentence, such as:

- Being kind to new children at school is an action that treats others like they are important.

- Suggesting your friends all vote to decide what to play together is an action of democracy and fairness.
- Cleaning up garbage at the park is an action to take care of the Earth.
- Teaching your brother to talk is an action that affirms each person's learning.
- Taking care of your dog is an action of love.

Identify the Unitarian Universalist Principles each act represents; refer to the Principles poster if the room has one or indicate a relevant signpost on the Faithful Journeys Path. By responding specifically to each child's faithful actions, you will help them feel pride, a sense of accomplishment, and their own empowerment as agents whose actions and choices reflect Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values.

### Including All Participants

Along with cut-out footprints (Session 1, Handout 3, Faithful Footprints), provide wheelchairs (Session 1, Handout 4, Making Tracks for Faith) in the same colors of paper. Encourage all the children — not just those who use wheelchairs for mobility — to sometimes use a wheelchair instead of footprints to represent their faithful actions.

## ACTIVITY 2: MOVE IT! YOGA (8 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of [Leader Resource 1](#) (included in this document), Yoga Pose
- Optional: Notes/illustrations to help you lead additional yoga poses
- Optional: Yoga DVDs/videos and appropriate player(s)

### Preparation for Activity

- Find a large, carpeted area or obtain small rugs or yoga mats for participants to use.
- Review "The Leaf," a good starting pose (Leader Resource 1). Prepare to lead additional simple yoga poses appropriate for the group to try in the time available. Use simple poses you know from your own practice of yoga, or find more with these resources:
  - Susan Kramer's [Radiant Yoga for All Kids](#)
  - *My Daddy Is a Pretzel: Yoga for Parents and Kids* by Baron Baptiste, illustrated by Sophie Fatus (Barefoot Books, 2004)

- A blog post by Clarissa Adkins on families.com describes [three yoga poses for children](#)
- Yoga poses, each on a card, in *The Kids' Yoga Deck: 50 Poses and Games* by Annie Buckley (Chronicle Books, 2003)
- DVDs and other resources for doing yoga with children on the [Gaiam website](#)
- "Little Yogi" DVDs with detailed guidance and children's demonstrations of poses and a relaxation DVD for children on [Wai Lana's website](#)
- Practice leading the poses smoothly, without stopping to consult your notes.

### Description of Activity

Gather the group and arrange the children with room to do the poses without bumping into one another. Tell them, in your own words:

Yoga is a spiritual practice that comes from the Hindu religion and Indian culture. Stretching the body and paying attention to the breath is a way of connecting with your spiritual center, as well as making your body feel stronger and more energized.

Balance is an important part of yoga poses. In yoga, balancing yourself so a pose feels right is more important than getting a pose to look right.

Lead the children in the poses you have selected. Then, invite the children to reflect:

- What parts of your body did you stretch when you did these yoga poses?
- Did learning something new stretch your mind? How did that feel?
- Did you feel you stretched your spirit? When did that happen? (Suggest: when you breathed and tried to stay centered.) What might stretching your spirit feel like? What were your body and mind doing when that happened?

### Including All Participants

Children with limited mobility may be able to do spine-stretching and breathing aspects of poses, and perhaps more. Remind the whole group before you start that everyone has a different level of physical ability. You may say:

Yoga invites people to try poses in ways that feel comfortable to them. Feeling the pose on the inside as your body tries it is more important

than how it looks on the outside to someone else.

## ACTIVITY 3: STORY BASKET AND CENTERING (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A large basket
- Objects related to the story "Learning by Heart," such as a picture of Sophia Lyon Fahs ([Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document)) or one of her many books
- A chime, rain stick, or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Box or small table and a decorative cloth cover to form a small altar

### Preparation for Activity

- Place the story-related items and the sound instrument in the story basket.
- Place the filled basket in the storytelling area you have designated.
- If you will make an altar as a focal point for story objects, set up the box or table you will use next to your storytelling area. Place the decorative cloth on the altar. It is not necessary to ritualize the altar as a sacred place. It can simply serve as a focal point where objects related to the story will be visible while you tell the story.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle in your storytelling area. Show them the storytelling basket. Say something like, "Let's see what's in our story basket this week."

Tell the group the items in the story basket will be placed on this altar or table after the children have passed them around the circle. Take the story-related items from the basket, one at a time, and pass them around. Objects that are fragile or should not be passed around for any reason can be held up for all to see and then placed directly on the altar.

Briefly name the various objects. Show the picture of Sophia Fahs and explain that she was a Unitarian religious educator who did more than any other one person to shape the way children learn in our congregations today. As items come back to you, display them on the altar for children to look at as they listen to the story.

Remove the sound instrument from the story basket. Tell the children that every time you tell a story in Faithful Journeys, you will use the instrument to help

them get their ears, minds, and bodies ready to listen. Invite them to sit comfortably and close their eyes (if they are comfortable doing so). Suggest that closing their eyes can help them focus on just listening.

In a calm voice, say:

As you breathe in, feel your body opening up with air. As you breathe out, feel yourself relaxing.

Repeat this once or twice. Then, say:

Now you are ready to listen. When I hit the chime (turn the rain stick over), listen as carefully as you can. See how long you can hear its sound. When you can no longer hear it, open your eyes and you will know it is time for the story to begin.

Sound the chime or other instrument. When the sound has gone, begin telling the story.

### Including All Participants

If anyone in the group is unable to hold or pass items, or cannot see the items, make sure you or a child in the group offers the person each object to explore as needed.

Some people do not feel safe closing their eyes when they are in a group. If any children resist, respect their resistance and suggest that they find a single point of focus to look at instead.

If you have a basket of fidget objects for children who may listen and learn more effectively with something in their hands, make it available during this activity. Remind children where it is before you begin the "centering" part of this activity. For a full description of fidget objects and guidance on using them, see Session 2, Leader Resource 2.

## ACTIVITY 4: STORY — LEARNING BY HEART, SOPHIA LYON FAHS (10 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of the story "[Learning by Heart: Sophia Lyon Fahs](#)" (included in this document)
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Fidget object basket (Session 2, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))

### Preparation for Activity

- Read the story a few times. To help make the story engaging and clarify who is speaking

during dialogues, try developing different voices for the different characters. Think about how you might use items from the story basket as props.

- Consider telling the story rather than reading it. Practice telling it aloud.

### Description of Activity

The story "Learning by Heart: Sophia Lyon Fahs" presents an example of someone acting based on our third Unitarian Universalist Principle, acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth.

Sound the instrument to indicate that the story is over. Then, guide the children in a brief discussion using these questions:

- What have you seen or experienced that made you feel, "Wow, that's really amazing?"
- Have you ever felt really excited to learn something? What was it, and what made it exciting?
- Do you need a teacher to tell you what things are amazing, or is that something you already know? How do you know? (Point out that our spirit is the part of us that lets us know when something is amazing.)
- What do you think "spiritual growth" might be? (You might suggest: more skill in seeing what's amazing, getting better at being quiet in yourself, figuring out your own answers to questions about what you believe, being ready to change your answers if you learn new information or have experiences that make your beliefs change.)

## ACTIVITY 5: SONG — SING AND REJOICE (8 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of *Singing the Living Tradition* or [Leader Resource 3](#) (included in this document), Sing and Rejoice
- Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Learn the song "Sing and Rejoice," Hymn 395 in *Singing the Living Tradition*. Hear Rev. Lynn Ungar sing the song.
- Make copies of Leader Resource 3 or write the words to "Sing and Rejoice" on newsprint, and post.



- Optional: Invite a musical volunteer or accompanist to help you lead the song.

### Description of Activity

Gather the group in a circle. Say:

Sophia Fahs believed we all grow spiritually through different experiences that touch our hearts and spirits, and that help us to get quiet inside or help us feel amazed. People learn in different ways and are touched by different things, so we are going to try several different spiritual practices today. Any one of these things might involve doing something that you think you won't like or do not feel you're especially good at. That is OK. To truly accept each other, we accept that we all have different interests and talents. To encourage one another in spiritual growth, we need to help one another to try things that might feel like a stretch.

Tell the group you will start stretching by singing a song they may not already know. Teach the song one phrase at a time. Then sing it all the way through. If more than one adult feels able to carry a part, try it as a round. Each subgroup will need strong leaders; children this age are generally right on the cusp of being able to sing something different from those near them.

### Including All Participants

If a co-leader or child knows American Sign Language, engage them to teach the group the hand motions for this song.

## ACTIVITY 6: MIRROR DANCE (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Music without lyrics (classical, jazz, etc.) and appropriate music player

### Preparation for Activity

- Choose music conducive to slow, contemplative movement.

### Description of Activity

Tell the children:

Many people think of spiritual activities as quiet time to focus inside yourself. But we can also use our spirituality when we connect beyond words with each other. We're going to try a movement activity that is about staying connected to another person — without touching at all.

Explain that the group will divide into pairs, with each person in the pair designated as a "one" or a "two." The

pairs will stand facing each other, fairly close, but not touching. When the music begins, the people who are "ones" will begin to move. The "twos" will mirror their movements, trying to look as much like a mirror reflection of the other person as possible. The goal of the "one" is not to trick the "two," but to move in ways that make it possible for both people to seem connected, mirror images of each other. After a couple of minutes, stop the music and tell the pairs to switch roles, so that the "twos" are initiating the movement and the "ones" are following.

When both sides have had a turn to lead a mirror dance, invite the children to reflect on their experiences. Was it harder to lead or to follow? Do you think you have more of a sense of your spirit when you move wordlessly, together with another person, or by yourself?

### Including All Participants

Participants who use wheelchairs or have balance issues can dance using their upper bodies while partners sit facing them. Participants who cannot see can do this activity touching palms with partners.

## ACTIVITY 7: CREATE A ZEN GARDEN (10 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A small, low-sided box, such as a shoe box, for each child
- Play sand (available at hardware stores) or unscented clay kitty litter and a scoop
- Small items such as attractive stones, acorns, shells, etc., a handful for each participant
- Plastic forks

### Preparation for Activity

- Begin a sample Zen garden to show the children.
- To save time during the session, mark each box with a child's name and fill it to one or two inches below the top with sand or kitty litter.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children at work tables and say:

The original Zen gardens were made by Japanese Buddhists to create an outdoor space that invited anyone who saw the garden to take quiet time to meditate. Zen gardens are usually quite simple, with gravel raked into neat patterns, and a few rocks, plants or grassy areas carefully arranged. We're going to create our own miniature Zen gardens with boxes,

sand and little objects you can arrange as you like. We'll use forks to rake our sand in any pattern you like. Arranging the items in your Zen garden and raking the sand around them is a kind of meditation, a way of getting quiet and focused, so we're going to try to be quiet as we create these gardens. Remember, a Zen garden should be simple. Do not try to crowd too many items in your garden. Leave some space just for the sand.

You may like to give a two-minute warning. Invite children to view one another's Zen gardens as they help clean up.

## CLOSING (7 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path
- Signpost for Session 6 ([Leader Resource 4](#) (included in this document)), and pins, glue stick or tape
- Copies of Session 1, [Leader Resource 8](#) (included in this document), UU Principles Song, for all participants
- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Print out Leader Resource 4 and cut out the signpost.
- Optional: Write the UU Principles Song lyrics on newsprint, and post.
- Customize, print out and photocopy the Taking It Home section for all participants.

### Description of Activity

This activity helps children get used to practicing a closing ritual as a way of affirming their belonging in the faith community.

Gather the group in a circle. Thank the children for participating and sharing their stories and ideas in this session. Tell them something you liked about the way they worked together as a community.

Point out the Faithful Journeys Path. Say:

Our Faithful Journeys Path shows our journey to live our lives and act in ways that reflect our Unitarian Universalist beliefs and faith. The signposts direct us by reminding us about our Principles.

Today's signpost is "Keep Learning." It is for our third Unitarian Universalist Principle, acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual

growth in our congregations. It means we welcome people the way they are, and we encourage each other to keep learning and growing, especially in ways that exercise our faith and spirit.

Attach the signpost to the Faithful Journeys Path.

Invite the children to reflect on their experiences of different kinds of spiritual growth and learning. Some questions you might ask include:

- Did some of the activities feel easy or natural for you?
- Did some feel hard or unnatural?
- Did you enjoy doing something that felt different or weird, or was it just uncomfortable?
- Was there an activity that felt particularly spiritual to you?

Remind the children that next time they meet they will have a chance to add Faithful Footprints to the Faithful Journeys Path. Encourage them to do an action that encourages someone else to learn and grow in body, mind, or spirit. Brainstorm actions that might reflect acceptance and encouragement to growth. You might suggest: teaching a yoga pose to a friend; trying a new sport, game, or craft together; making up a dance or a rhythm to go with a song you already know; or sitting quietly and drawing to instrumental music with someone else. Remind children that when you show others that you accept them as they are and respect what they already know, it may be easier to help them learn something new.

Point out the words to the UU Principles Song. Tell the children it is sung to the tune of "Old McDonald Had a Farm." Lead the children in singing the verse about the third Principle. Then, sing the entire song together. Explain that you will learn about all the Principles during your time together in Faithful Journeys.

Distribute the Taking It Home handout. Thank the children, tell them you look forward to seeing them next time, and dismiss the group.

## FAITH IN ACTION: TEACHING (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Yoga mats, small rugs or a carpeted space large enough for all participants
- A copy of [Leader Resource 1](#) (included in this document), Yoga Pose, and other yoga pose notes/illustrations, as needed

## Preparation for Activity

- Participants must be familiar with yoga poses used in Activity 2, Move It! Yoga.
- Arrange for the children in the group to teach yoga poses for about 10 minutes to another group of children in your RE program, from a day care center or at a multigenerational congregational social gathering.

## Description of Activity

By serving as teachers, the children experience our third Principle another way, expressing the acceptance and encouragement rather than receiving it.

Ask the children to think about the yoga poses they learned during the Move It! activity. How would they go about teaching those poses to other children? How could they convey the relaxation and the stretching of body, mind, and spirit that yoga poses can help children achieve? Would they model the poses? Explain them verbally? Put their hands on the other children to show how their bodies should move?

Organize the children's ideas about how to conduct the teaching. Who would like to talk, who would like to demonstrate, and who would like to help individuals try poses?

Remind the children that they are not teaching only yoga poses. As teachers, they are also affirming acceptance of their students and encouragement to spiritual growth.

Then, bring them to the other group of children.

It is recommended that you regather to process the experience. You might ask:

- Did you find it easy to encourage other children, or did you get frustrated at times?
- What happened when someone did not follow your instructions, or didn't do a yoga pose the way you thought it should be done?
- Did anyone get asked questions about yoga, the poses, or what yoga is for? What was that like?
- How do you think learning yoga from our group might have helped the other children's spiritual growth?
- I wonder, what might you want to do differently if you were going to teach yoga to other children again?

## Including All Participants

Some children may not be comfortable speaking or demonstrating yoga poses before a group. Some children can model the poses among the group of

learners or help them try poses, while others stand in front to lead.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Take a few minutes to evaluate the session with your co-leader immediately afterward, while it is fresh. Share your thoughts with any other team co-leaders and your director of religious education. You might find it helpful to consider these questions:

- Which activities worked well? What didn't work so well?
- Were all children actively engaged? If not, who wasn't and why might that have been? How could they be better included next time?
- How well did the activities match the learning styles of the children in this group? What could we do differently to better accommodate for learning styles in future sessions?
- How well did the session balance physically active with sedentary activities?
- How was the timing? What might need to be done differently for a session to work better within our time frame?
- Were there any behavior issues? If so, how can we address them in the future? Do we need more information or help in this area?
- What connections did children make with the activities and/or central ideas? How did we know that was occurring?
- What connections did children make with each other? What connections did we make with the children? When was that most evident?
- Are we successfully creating a program characterized by inclusion, diversity appreciation, respect, noncompetitive environment, and welcome? What could we have done differently?
- What questions or issues arose in this session that we might like to discuss with our director of religious education?

## TAKING IT HOME

*Life becomes religious whenever we make it so: when some new light is seen, when some deeper appreciation is felt, when some larger outlook is gained, when some nobler purpose is formed, when some task is well done. —Sophia Lyon Fahs*

**IN TODAY'S SESSION...** The children learned about Unitarian religious educator Sophia Lyon Fahs, who lived out our third Principle, acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth, and left Unitarian Universalist religious education the legacy of her approach. Fahs encouraged children to ask, to explore, and to develop spiritually through their own experiences of awe and wonder. In the spirit of Fahs, this session reached out to children's different interests, skills, and learning styles with a variety of spiritual practices. We sang the song "Sing and Rejoice," drew our ideas of mystery and wonder while listening to music, and created miniature Zen gardens. Our signpost to guide us in faithful action was "Keep Learning."

**EXPLORE THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Talk about...** the concept of spiritual growth. Ask your child, "What does 'spiritual' mean? What are some things that you personally do to attend to your own spiritual growth? How can you tell if a person is spiritually mature?" Listen to your child's answers, and share your own answers to the same questions.

**EXTEND THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Try...** For a week, be alert to ways you might help your child identify and take advantage of the ways they learn best. Is it easier to memorize spelling words while moving around? Does it help you to set grammar rules to a tune? Are math concepts easier to grasp with beans or kernels of popcorn to manipulate?

### **FAMILY ADVENTURE**

Sophia Fahs believed in the power of nature and science to inspire awe and wonder in children. Go on a family outing to an astronomy observatory, a nature preserve, an aquarium, or a natural history museum, keeping an eye out for those things that make you think "Wow, that's amazing!"

### **A FAMILY RITUAL**

Affirm learning something every day with a ritual time, at dinner or before bed, for each family member to share something they learned. Identify and elevate spiritual along with intellectual or physical growth, sharing items such as "Today I remembered how important it is to really listen," or "Today I was able to practice being calm instead of losing my temper."

### **FAMILY DISCOVERY**

The website of the UU Church of the Larger Fellowship offers the [KidTalk](#) web page for children, parents, and religious educators. Find ways your family might share spiritual growth, including a suggestion each month for a specific spiritual practice.

## **ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: RELIGIOUS POETRY (7 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- A copy of "[The Summer's Day](#)" by Mary Oliver, or another poem. "[Pied Beauty](#)" by Gerard Manley Hopkins is a more difficult poem, yet with a lovely sound and rhythm children may appreciate.
- Optional: Blank paper, pencils, and crayons or markers for all participants

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Choose a poem children can understand as a poet's praise, awe, and/or gratitude for the natural world. Familiarize yourself with the poem, so you can read it smoothly and with expression. You might introduce Mary Oliver as a contemporary poet whose works often point out the wondrous aspects of the natural world and how marvelous it is that we can notice and enjoy it. In the Hopkins poem, the speaker praises God by admiring amazing things in nature that are speckled, freckled, or just kind of odd.

### **Description of Activity**

Reading, listening to, or writing poetry can be a spiritual practice, especially for those with verbal facility and those who learn best by reading or hearing.

Read the poem you chose aloud. Invite children to enjoy the sound of the words, as well as listen for the meaning of the poem.

Then, ask children for any responses:

- What do they think the poem is about?
- How did the poem make them feel?
- Did any word or few words stand out for them?
- If they felt confused by the poem or some words in it, did that bother them? Or did they enjoy that little bit of mystery?
- Can hearing a poem be a way to grow spiritually? How?
- Could writing a poem be a way to grow spiritually? How?
- How is experiencing a poem by yourself different from reading or hearing one with others?

If you have time, distribute blank paper, pencils, and crayons or markers. Invite children to illustrate or

respond to the poem in a drawing, or write their own poem about how nature can be amazing.

### **Including All Participants**

Children who have difficulty sitting still to listen may benefit from having access to fidget objects (Session 2, Leader Resource 2).

## **ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: WALKING MEDITATION (5 MINUTES)**

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Choose a location for your walking meditation, preferably an outdoor area with few distractions. Obtain permission to take children outdoors, and make sure you have an adequate number of adults to accompany the group.

### **Description of Activity**

Gather the children where you will do your walking meditation. Say:

Meditation is a spiritual practice that people use to become calm and focused and in tune with themselves and the world around them. Many people practice meditation while sitting, but we're going to do it while walking.

The goal here is not to walk really fast or really slow. We are walking to be aware of ourselves as we walk, not to get anywhere.

Invite children to stand in a circle so they can extend their arms to each side without touching anyone else. Then (pausing as indicated) say:

Feel the ground under your feet, and the way your body adjusts to hold you upright.... Take a deep breath and let it out.... Again, take a deep breath, feeling it go all the way down into your belly, and then let it out.... Now, we'll begin walking. Remember, our feet are moving, but not our mouths. You can choose where you will walk, but make sure you're not interfering with anyone else.

You may wish to have the children walk in a circle. Form a few small circles if you have room and enough adults to supervise. With limited space, form several concentric circles to avoid chaos or collision. Continue:

Feel the ground under your feet.... Is it rough or smooth, hard or springy?... Feel your legs as you walk, the way your muscles tighten and relax.... As you walk, relax your shoulders, and feel your head floating, your eyes guiding your steps, but not needing to focus on anything except what is right in front of you.... Notice how you are feeling.... Happy?... Sad?... Impatient?...

Just notice the feelings and the thoughts as they come to you, and then let them go as you step past them.... Notice your breathing, how the air enters your body and then leaves again, as your thoughts enter your mind, and then you let them go.... Now gently come to a stop. Take one more deep breath and let it out, as we leave our meditation.

### **Including All Participants**

If children in the group use wheelchairs or have other mobility limitations, adapt the language of this meditation to be inclusive of their experience. For instance, call this a moving meditation rather than a walking meditation; advise the group to feel "your body pressing against the surface that holds you" rather than the "ground beneath your feet."

A blind participant may be comfortable walking in a circle with the group. Ask whether the participant would like to walk holding hands with someone and, if so, provide a willing volunteer.

## **ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 3: DRAWING TO MUSIC (5 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Blank paper and crayons, markers or pastels
- Music without lyrics (classical, jazz, world music instrumental, etc.) and appropriate music player (Note: Choose music you feel evokes mystery and wonder.)

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Set out art supplies so that children each have a sheet of paper on a writing surface and can reach crayons/markers on their own.

### **Description of Activity**

One of the Sources for our Unitarian Universalist living tradition is transcending mystery and wonder that moves us to a renewal of the spirit. Mystery, wonder, and spirit are hard to define, and they may mean something a bit different to each person. Sometimes through art we can experience and express ideas we cannot express in words.

Tell the children:

We are going to hear some music. Listen with your spirit, as well as your ears. You can draw about how the music makes your spirit feel. Draw whatever comes to you to describe mystery and wonder. It does not need to be a picture of anything real; it can be a pattern or design or just the colors you feel like using. Let

the music be the only sound we hear while we draw. Let the music speak to your spirit and your heart.

Assure them there is no right or wrong way to portray mystery and wonder, and affirm that they need not draw pictures of actual things in order to show a feeling or idea.

Allow the group at least three minutes to draw. Then, stop the music and invite them to continue working on their drawings in quiet for a minute or two more.

Ask volunteers to share their drawings and/or articulate what their spirits heard in the music or what feelings inside of them the images came from. Affirm all drawings as expressions of spirit. Focus on the process ("How did it feel to draw that?") and avoid praise, criticism, or interpretation of the product. ("Is that a horse? Are those clouds?")

Ask the group, "Do you feel you gave your spirit some exercise, doing this activity today?"

## STORY: LEARNING BY HEART — SOPHIA LYON FAHS

By Polly Peterson.

"Mama, Mama, why do we just keep going and going and not going anywhere?" asked little Sophie. Her family was crossing the wide Pacific Ocean on a big ship bound for America. Sophie Lyon was an American girl, three and a half years old, making her first trip to America. She and her older brothers and sisters had all been born in China where their father was an evangelical Christian minister and their mother had started a school for Chinese girls.

When they made that the long trip to America in 1880, Sophie's parents thought their family would go back to China after one year. But the plans changed, and Sophie never returned to China. As she grew up, her memories of China grew dim. But she hoped when she grew up she could go to other countries as a Christian teacher, like her parents.

In college, Sophie joined a club for young people who also wanted to become Christian teachers. She met another devoted volunteer named Harvey Fahs. They began writing letters to each other, and made plans to travel and teach together. Six years later, they were married. But instead of traveling to another country, Sophie and Harvey moved to New York City. Harvey had a job, and Sophia Lyon Fahs taught Sunday school and continued her studies, excited about the new ideas she was learning.

Sophia and Harvey's first child was born in 1904. In those days, many women gave up their outside work after they became mothers. But Sophia was determined to keep learning and to keep teaching Sunday school, and she did. As it turned out, being a mother also helped Sophia learn! She learned about children from being with her own children and listening to their ideas and questions.

(You may want to pause here and solicit children's comments on ways children can teach adults.)

When her children asked questions, Sophia tried her best to answer them. Her children had very interesting questions, like "Where does snow come from?" and "Where are we before we are born?" As she tried to answer her children's questions, Sophia learned how much she did not know! You might think not having all the answers took away Sophia's faith, but it was the opposite. She started to believe that to have a strong

faith, finding questions you really care about is just as important as finding answers.

One time when Sophia taught a religious education class, she told a lively story about a real person who had been a Christian teacher in another country. The children were eager to hear the story and eager to talk about it. Like her own children at home, the children asked questions — the interesting kind of questions that let Sophia know they were thinking and learning.

Sophia's ideas about religion changed over time. As a young person, she had thought Christianity was the one true religion and people all over the world should learn Bible stories. She grew to realize the Bible was not the only book with truth in it. She collected stories from all over the world, filled with truth and beauty to help children's spirits stretch and grow. She published the stories in a book called *From Long Ago and Many Lands*.

In those days, when most adults thought children's minds were like empty jars to fill with learning, Sophia thought differently. She thought children were more like gardens, already planted with seeds of possibility for learning and growing. She thought a teacher's job was to provide the good soil and water and sunlight a garden needs to grow. In religious school, a teacher could help children grow in their spirit and faith.

(Ask: What do you think would help a child grow in spirit? What should church school teachers like us give you, to help you grow?)

Affirm or suggest: Teachers can give children a safe place to learn; tools, such as books and art supplies and music. We can show you how adults worship, sing, and celebrate together in faith. We can help you know when your actions are faithful ones, for goodness and justice. We can take you on field trips and tell you stories. But no one can give a child wisdom or faith or spiritual growth. These things can only grow from within. People learn by experiencing the world for themselves — by feeling their own feelings, and by seeing and touching and doing. That is what Sophia Fahs believed.)

When Sophia Fahs wrote about her beliefs, the president of the American Unitarian Association was impressed. He asked her to talk to Unitarian religious educators — people such as *(insert your own name(s) and/or the name of your director of religious education)*. Unitarian Sunday school teachers liked her ideas very much. And that is why, when you come here, we

encourage you to see, and touch, and do ... and to ask lots of questions.

When she was 82 years old, Sophia became a Unitarian minister. Her own life was a great example of her belief that every person in a congregation should continue to learn and grow, from the smallest child to the oldest adult. Sophia Fahs lived a long, long time — 102 years — and she never stopped learning new things.

If she were alive today and came to visit us, Sophia Fahs would want to know about our experiences, like the ones we have posted on our Faithful Journeys Path, and how they have helped us learn and grow. She would want to know what stories we have read and how they have helped to awaken our spirits. She would want to know how we ask questions, seek answers, and learn from each other. Imagine how happy she would be to see us watering one another's seeds of spiritual growth in Faithful Journeys today.



## LEADER RESOURCE 1: YOGA POSE

The pose "The Leaf" comes from a series of fifteen poses with illustrations on the [Radiant Yoga for All Kids website](#) of Susan Kramer. Used with permission.

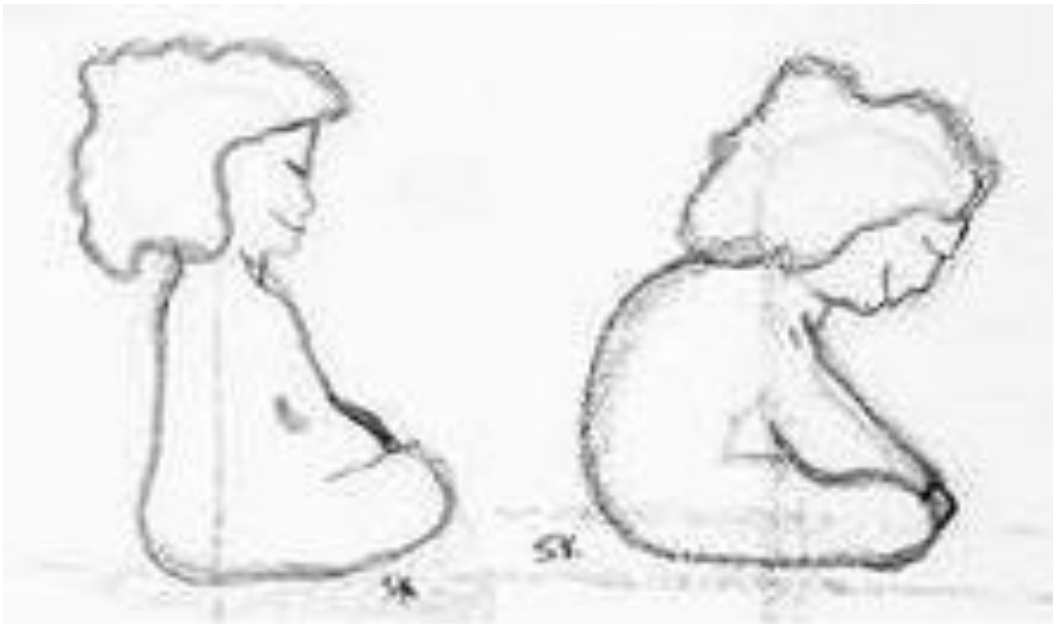
*Start with this simple pose and add a few more. Practice poses so you can lead them without having to stop to read the next step.*

*Children should remain quiet during yoga practice to maintain personal concentration.*

*Invite children to breathe in to begin a pose, breathe out to finish a pose, and breathe evenly between poses.*

The Leaf, beginning position with straight spine and then with gently rounded spine. Faint vertical lines show the approximate center of balance.

Sit with spine straight, soles of feet together, hands on ankles. Gently round spine and then return to sitting straight. Repeat several times.



## LEADER RESOURCE 2: PICTURE OF SOPHIA LYON FAHS

Courtesy of the Unitarian Universalist Association archives.



## LEADER RESOURCE 3: SONG — SING AND REJOICE

"Sing and Rejoice" is Hymn 395 in *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook.

Sing and rejoice.

Sing and rejoice.

Let all things living now

Sing and rejoice.

[Sing and Rejoice \(MP3\)](#)

## LEADER RESOURCE 4: SIGNPOST FOR SESSION 6

*Cut out the signpost to add to your Faithful Journeys Path.*





## FIND OUT MORE

### Yoga for Kids

The website [Radiant Yoga for All Kids](#) offers guidance to help children "stretch and strengthen while promoting balance, coordination, the ability to concentrate and an increase in vitality through energetic practice." The site also provides resources for yoga and meditation with adults and youth.

### About Sophia Lyon Fahs

Sophia Lyon Fahs was a religious educator who came to embrace liberal principles of education and applied them to religious education, creating a kind of religious education that relied more on tapping into a child's native sense of awe and wonder than teaching a "correct" dogma. Find biographical information about Fahs by Edith Hunter on the [Harvard Square Library website](#), and in a [2003 UU World article](#).

In a 2007 sermon, "[For So the Children Come: The Legacy of Sophia Lyon Fahs](#)," Rev. Rod Richards relates Fahs' religious education approaches to the fourth Principle, our search for truth and meaning.

A chapter by Lucinda A. Nolan in a 2006 book published by Springer Netherlands is "It Takes More than Angels: the Legacy of Sophia Lyon Fahs to Religious Education," [preview the chapter online](#).

### Books by Sophia Lyon Fahs

Of many books by Fahs, this one in particular offers stories and teaching approaches for a twenty-first-century Unitarian Universalist religious education program: *From Long Ago and Many Lands: Stories for Children Told Anew*, illustrated by Cyrus LeRoy Baldrige (Boston: Skinner House Books, 1948, reprinted 1995). These stories from religions around the world demonstrate Fahs' broad view of religion and, even so many years later, suggest fresh, enjoyable ways for children to learn core faith values from the world's religions.

Fahs explains in detail her philosophy of religious education in *Today's Children and Yesterday's Heritage: A Philosophy of Children's Religious Development* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1952).

### John Dewey and Educational Philosophy

Fahs was greatly influenced by [educational philosophies of John Dewey](#).

## SESSION 7: CREATE MAGIC, CHANGE THE WORLD

### INTRODUCTION

*Whatever you think you can do, or believe you can do, begin it. Action has magic, grace, and power in it. — Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe*

*Any ritual is an opportunity for transformation. — Starhawk*

In this session, participants explore the third Unitarian Universalist Principle, acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations. Children hear a contemporary story about Aisha, a pagan Unitarian Universalist girl, who celebrates the harvest holiday Lammas at a peace rally. During the celebration, she finds the courage to take the stage and lend her voice to the gathering.

Participants learn a concept of "magic" based on focusing one's energy on purposeful, positive action to change the world in a positive way. We discuss ways our spiritual practices, such as the pagan practice of magic, lead us to involvement and faithful action in the world. We add the signpost "Create Magic" to our Faithful Journeys Path.

Review the materials list for Activity 6, Creating Wands, well in advance of this session to obtain all the materials you will need.

### GOALS

This session will:

- Teach that we express our third Unitarian Universalist Principle, acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth, in our congregations when we engage in spiritual practices that include and promote active involvement in the world
- Strengthen Unitarian Universalist identity through connection with our sixth Source, spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions that celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature
- Demonstrate the idea that faithful intention and focusing our energy can be tools for practicing "magic" for the benefit of the world
- Teach children how their own actions can and do express their faith — their ideas of right and wrong, their values and their beliefs.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Hear a story about a child who models courage as she faces her fear and speaks publicly at a peace rally
- Experience pagan ritual and explore pagan "magic-making" in a Unitarian Universalist context
- Create a wand as a symbolic instrument for helping to focus faithful intentions
- Identify actions they might take that would reflect the signpost "Create Magic"
- Name ways they did or could translate their Unitarian Universalist faith and/or Principles into action.

## SESSION-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	2
Activity 1: Faithful Footprints	5
Activity 2: Move It! Spiral Dance	8
Activity 3: Story Basket and Guided Meditation	5
Activity 4: Story — The Perfect Peace Harvest	10
Activity 5: Defining Magic	5
Activity 6: Creating Wands	15
Activity 7: Blessing of the Wands	3
Faith in Action: Magic Month: Random Acts of Kindness and Senseless Acts of Beauty	
Closing	7
Alternate Activity 1: Meditation Paintings	25

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

If it would be helpful in creating sacred space, light a candle or chalice. Read the guided meditation in Activity 3, Story Basket and Guided Meditation. If possible, find someone to read the guided meditation to you while you close your eyes and experience it. Otherwise, read it a few times and then meditate while imagining a flame that moves through you and guides you as you engage in the work you love best.

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Chalice candle or LED/battery-operated candle
- Lighter and extinguisher, if needed
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Posters of the Unitarian Universalist Principles in both adult and children's language, or copies of Session 1, [Handout 1](#) (included in this document) for all participants

### Preparation for Activity

- Decide whether you will use the provided opening words or other opening words, such as those offered in Session 1, Leader Resource 2, Alternate Openings. It is recommended that you use the same opening words for each session.
- Print the opening words on newsprint. Post the newsprint where the children will be able to see it when they gather.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle. Light the chalice. Point out the chalice-lighting words on the newsprint and invite the group to read together:

We light this flame for the light of truth, the warmth of love, and the energy of action.

Indicate the poster(s) of the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Or, give each child a copy of the handout. Ask a volunteer to read the third Principle in the adult language. Ask a second volunteer to read the children's version of the third Principle. Then, say:

Today we will learn about this Unitarian Universalist Principle — what it means, and what kinds of actions show it. Let's get started.

Collect handouts for reuse.

### Including All Participants

If not all participants are fluent readers, take the time to teach the group to say the opening words from memory.

If the group has children who are sensitive to perfumes or other chemicals, use unscented candles or an electric or battery-operated flame. An electric flame is also recommended if you may not use open flames or if any participants are afraid of fire.

## ACTIVITY 1: FAITHFUL FOOTPRINTS (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path (Session 1, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))
- Cutouts of footprints and (optional) wheelchair tracks, at least one for each participant, in a variety of colors (Session 1, [Leader Resources 3](#) and [4](#) (included in this document))
- Markers
- Push pins, glue stick or tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Think of something you have done since the group last met that represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. Identify the Principle(s) your action reflected. Write a few words about it on a footprint, with your name.

### Description of Activity

This activity reinforces children's learning as they model translating faith into action for one another. To strengthen children's Unitarian Universalist identity, help participants see how their own behavior demonstrates specific Principles.

Gather in a circle. Point to the Faithful Journeys Path and say:

Together we are taking a journey to learn what it means to live as Unitarian Universalists. Each time we meet, we talk about ways our actions show our beliefs about what is right and good. This is called "putting our faith into action."

When you share about something you have done that shows what you believe, you can choose a footprint or wheelchair to put on our Faithful Journeys Path.

Hold up the footprint you made of your own faithful action. Tell what you did and how it represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. If you can connect your action to a Principle, briefly explain. For example:

- I made phone calls to remind people to vote (or, I voted), because I believe in our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, that we all have a say in matters that concern us. When people vote, that's one way to have every person's opinion be counted.



- I have a neighbor who was sick last week. I helped him bring his trash outside, because I believe in the second Unitarian Universalist Principle, which says we believe in being kind and fair.
- I put my water bottles and juice bottles in the recycling bin, because I believe in the seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, which reminds us to take care of the Earth that all life shares.

Ask the children to think of an act they have done, since you met last, that reflects Unitarian Universalism. You may wish to prompt:

- Did anyone do something that helped make things fair? (justice, equity, and compassion)
- Did anyone help someone else? (inherent worth and dignity, interdependent web)
- Did anyone take care of nature or another animal? (interdependent web)
- Did anyone listen to someone else who had a very different opinion? (search for truth and meaning, acceptance of one another)
- Did anyone play with someone new whom you did not know very well? (acceptance of one another, encouragement to spiritual growth)

As participants name their actions, write a word or phrase describing the action on a footprint or wheelchair cutout. Invite children to write their names on their cutouts and post them on the Faithful Journeys Path. Have them progress along the path over the course of the program.

To stay within the time frame for this activity, use these guidelines:

- Encourage children to share their faithful act in one or two brief sentences.
- If the group is big, limit children to sharing only one faithful act per week.

It is very important to avoid judging participants, either with criticism or praise. Avoid phrases like "Great job!" or "You're fantastic!" which might suggest that acts of faith vary in their value or encourage children to compete to share the "best" act.

You should, however, respond to each child's contribution. Listen carefully to what a child tells you. After each child shares, say something like, "Thank you for sharing," followed by a summarizing sentence, such as:

- Being kind to new children at school is an action that treats others like they are important.

- Suggesting your friends all vote to decide what to play together is an action of democracy and fairness.
- Cleaning up garbage at the park is an action to take care of the Earth.
- Teaching your brother to talk is an action that affirms each person's learning.
- Taking care of your dog is an action of love.

Identify the Unitarian Universalist Principles each act represents; refer to the Principles poster if the room has one or indicate a relevant signpost on the Faithful Journeys Path. By responding specifically to each child's faithful actions, you will help them feel pride, a sense of accomplishment, and their own empowerment as agents whose actions and choices reflect Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values.

### **Including All Participants**

Along with cut-out footprints (Session 1, Handout 3, Faithful Footprints), provide wheelchairs (Session 1, Handout 4, Making Tracks for Faith) in the same colors of paper. Encourage all the children — not just those who use wheelchairs for mobility — to sometimes use a wheelchair instead of footprints to represent their faithful actions.

## **ACTIVITY 2: MOVE IT! SPIRAL DANCE (8 MINUTES)**

### **Preparation for Activity**

- If possible, invite a pagan in your congregation to lead the spiral dance. You may wish to ask your minister or director of religious education to suggest someone who could lead the dance.
- Obtain a variety of percussion instruments. Or, choose simple, instrumental dance music that suggests a harvest celebration, and obtain music player.
- Create a wide open space without chairs or other furniture, for a standing circle.

### **Description of Activity**

Have group stand in a circle. Explain that a spiral dance is often used to raise energy during pagan rituals and festivals.

Introduce any guest(s) who will lead the spiral dance and invite them to briefly tell when, where, and why they have done this dance before.

Ask volunteers to distribute percussion instruments or to control the music player. Lead the dance.

When you have finished the spiral dance but are still holding hands gathered in the center of the circle, say something like:

Can you feel any energy? Imagine that the energy we just raised is flowing like light through our circle. We are going to take that energy and throw it into the air for peace.

Tell children you will count to three, and when you reach "three" they may raise their arms into the air (still holding hands) and imagine peace flowing like light from your circle into the world. Lead the group in chanting, "Peace, peace, peace ... " Start the chant at normal volume, get slowly louder, and then get slowly quieter, allowing the sound to fade away altogether. Close by saying, "Blessed be."

While still in a circle, briefly ask:

- Did you feel any special energy when we were dancing or when we were chanting for peace? What did it feel like?
- Could you imagine peace flowing into the world? What did that feel like?

End the activity by saying something like:

Many Unitarian Universalists believe that we can change the world when we send energy for good things. Pagans call this "magic."

### Including All Participants

A child with limited mobility may be able to participate in the spiral dance. Make sure there is adequate floor space for wheelchair/crutches to execute the turns, and guide the entire group to dance slowly. Or, give a child who cannot participate in the dancing a role in leading the activity, such as controlling the music player.

## ACTIVITY 3: STORY BASKET AND GUIDED MEDITATION (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A large basket
- Objects related to the story "The Perfect Peace Harvest," such as pictures of peace signs, a pentacle (pagan symbol of the five elements: spirit, fire, water, air, and earth), a drum or cymbals
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Box or small table and a decorative cloth cover to form a small altar

### Preparation for Activity

- Read the guided meditation (Description of Activity). Prepare to read it slowly and smoothly to the group. NOTE: If you plan to do Alternate Activity 1, Meditation Paintings, skip the guided meditation here and use a chime and quick centering exercise instead.
- Place the story-related items and the sound instrument in the story basket.
- Place the filled basket in the storytelling area you have designated.
- If you will make an altar as a focal point for story objects, set up the box or table you will use next to your storytelling area. Place the decorative cloth on the altar. It is not necessary to ritualize the altar as a sacred place. It can simply serve as a focal point where objects related to the story will be visible while you tell the story.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle in your storytelling area. Show them the storytelling basket. Say something like, "Let's see what's in our story basket today."

Tell the group the items in the story basket will be placed on the altar or table after the children have passed them around the circle. Take the story-related items from the basket, one at a time, and pass them around. Objects that are fragile or should not be passed around for any reason can be held up for all to see and then placed directly on the altar.

Briefly name the various objects. As items come back to you, display them on the altar for children to look at as they listen to the story.

Explain that some Unitarian Universalists are pagans. You might say:

Pagan religious practices involve celebrating nature's rhythms and seasons. In our congregations, we celebrate this way sometimes, too.

If you can, give some examples from your congregation the children will recognize.

Explain that Lammas is a pagan holiday celebrated on August 1. It is a holiday to mark the harvest time — when the crops have grown and people are gathering the food that will feed them. Talk briefly about agricultural seasons that children know about in your local area. Ask the children to name crops that are harvested to eat in your area or elsewhere.

Remove the sound instrument from the story basket. Tell the children that every time you tell a story in

Faithful Journeys, you will first use the instrument to help them get their ears, minds, and bodies ready to listen. Tell them that today you will use a new centering exercise that comes from the pagan tradition. Settle the children so they are sitting comfortably, not touching another child. Invite them to close their eyes (if they are comfortable doing so).

In a calm, slow voice, say:

Take a deep breath and imagine a fire starting down at the base of your spine [on your back.] It feels warm and soothing through your belly. It is like sitting, relaxed, in front of a bonfire, but the fire is you; it is your spirit. Keep breathing deeply as the fire begins to spread across your back and up through your chest, filling you with energy. Take another deep breath as the fire continues to move up through your neck and out through your head. Imagine this fire clearing your thoughts and allowing you to feel comfortable and sure of yourself and what you believe. You are able to listen and learn from others and share what you know with strength. As you continue to breathe, imagine this fire spreading down your arms and out your fingertips. Imagine doing the work you love most with your favorite people. Imagine all that you create and all that you touch becoming moved by your fiery spirit. Let yourself sigh. Imagine your fire moving down past your hips and through your feet. This is your spirit and the wise spirit of the Goddess. You are part of what is sacred in the world. This fire guides your feet and helps you know what path you are meant to walk. Still taking deep breaths, see yourself as glowing with this fire within. How will this fire move into the world? Where will it take you? Imagine yourself doing what matters most to you, something you feel will make a difference in the world. Let the picture form clearly in your mind. Watch what it looks like, who you are with, what you are doing, what you smell, what you hear, what you feel. This is you. You have this power within you. Breathe deeply. Allow the fire to move back up your legs, back through your arms, down from your head and chest, until it glows at the base of your spine again. Sigh out all the extra energy you don't need and imagine it sinking back into the Earth, which knows what to do with it. Breathe deeply and return to this room.

Now you are ready to listen. When I hit the chime (turn the rain stick over), listen as carefully as you can. See how long you can hear its sound. When you can no longer hear it, open

your eyes and you will know it is time for the story to begin.

Sound the chime or other instrument. When the sound has gone, begin telling the story.

### **Including All Participants**

If anyone in the group is unable to hold or pass items, or cannot see the items, make sure you or a child in the group offers the person a chance to see and touch each object, as needed.

Some people do not feel safe closing their eyes in a group. If any children resist, respect their resistance and suggest that they find a single point of focus to look at instead.

If you have a basket of fidget objects for children who may listen and learn more effectively with something in their hands, make the fidget object basket available during this activity. Remind children where it is before you begin the meditation part of this activity. For a full description of fidget objects and guidance on using them, see Session 2, Leader Resource 2.

## **ACTIVITY 4: STORY — THE PERFECT PEACE HARVEST (10 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- A copy of the story "[The Perfect Peace Harvest](#)" (included in this document)
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: A drum
- Optional: Fidget object basket (Session 2, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Read the story a few times, paying special attention to the refrain about Lammas. Practice the refrain and if possible create a drumbeat for it.
- Consider telling the story rather than reading it. Practice telling it aloud.

### **Description of Activity**

In the story "The Perfect Peace Harvest," a pagan Unitarian Universalist child describes what is going on inside her and around her as she takes the stage and leads the gathering at a peace rally on the pagan harvest holiday, Lammas. In the story, Aisha and the others gathered with her demonstrate our third Unitarian

Universalist Principle, acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth.

Teach the children the refrain that repeats through the story:

On Lammas you've gotta stomp your dancing feet,

On Lammas you've gotta raise your voice and speak,

Lammas is the harvest, we've gotta harvest peace.

If possible, create a drumbeat to use each time you chant the refrain.

Before you begin, look around the room and make eye contact with each person. Read or tell the story.

Sound the instrument to indicate that the story is over. Then, guide a brief discussion using these questions:

- I wonder, have any of you ever done something that you were afraid of, like Aisha's getting up onto the stage in front of all the people?
- If you got onto the stage to talk about peace, what sorts of things might you say?
- Some people might think it was like "magic," the way Aisha was able to get up and speak in front of all of those people. I wonder, what helped her do that?

## ACTIVITY 5: DEFINING MAGIC (5 MINUTES)

### Preparation for Activity

- Read the description of this activity to ground your understanding of what "magic" means in a pagan Unitarian Universalist context.

### Description of Activity

Gather the group in a circle. Ask the children what they think magic is. Take a few answers. Then say, in your own words:

Many people think magic is tricks, like pulling a live rabbit out of a hat or making a quarter disappear. But some people in our Unitarian Universalist congregations believe in a different kind of magic. They believe magic is something people can do and there are no tricks to it. Magic can happen when you bring all your attention and focus on one intention, something good you want to have happen, and you raise energy, like we did in the spiral dance earlier, or like Aisha did in the story when she banged

cymbals and chanted about Lammas at the peace rally.

This means you can be a magic maker when you think of something positive you want to do and you create some energy to help make it happen.

Magic has consequences. A good consequence was when Aisha found the courage to speak in front of the crowd. But a bad consequence could happen if your focus is not on something positive, or if you create lots of energy with no purpose. It is really important that you create magic for good, by focusing on intentions that hurt no one and are healthy and good for everyone.

## ACTIVITY 6: CREATING WANDS (15 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Wooden sticks or dowels, approximately 1/3 inch in diameter and 10 — 12 inches long, for all participants, at least one leader, and any visitors, and extras for children who finish quickly
- Decorating materials such as feathers; mini-"gems"; embroidery thread; gift ribbon; water-based paints, cups for water, and paint brushes; markers; and stickers that suggest the Unitarian Universalist Principles
- Tape
- Optional: Hot glue gun
- Newspaper

### Preparation for Activity

- Find sticks in nature, or purchase sticks or dowels at a craft or hardware store. Star-topped dowels for wand making are available at many craft stores; however, these are not recommended for this activity. The plainer the sticks to begin with, the more room children have to add their own "magic."
- Obtain decorating materials and adhesives. Embroidery thread can be wrapped tightly around a wand. Gift ribbon may need to be taped or glued in place. Gems or feathers will stick best on wood with a hot glue gun, which an adult should use to attach items where children want them. Representational stickers (such as of animals, natural settings, people, or a world map) or children's-language [UU Principles](#)

[stickers](#) may help children specify the positive change they wish to help create.

- Cover work tables with newspaper.
- Set out decorating materials. If you are using paints, pour them into small cups for participants to share.

### Description of Activity

Gather children at work tables. Tell them they will make their own wands as a symbol for the kind of magic they want to create. Remind them that good magic starts with a good intention. Ask them to take a moment in their own heads to develop an intention — a positive change they want to make. You may ask children to share their intentions with the group.

Now ask if they remember what else is needed to make magic the Unitarian Universalist pagan way. Affirm: focus and energy. Tell them they will have about 15 minutes to focus on their intention and raise some energy by decorating their own wand.

Distribute wands and set out decorating materials.

At least one co-leader should make a wand in order to lead the next activity, Blessing of the Wands.

Children who finish quickly can be invited to make a second wand if there are sufficient supplies.

## ACTIVITY 7: BLESSING OF THE WANDS (3 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Wands from Activity 6, including one for at least one co-leader
- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Optional: Write the blessing words on newsprint, and post.

### Description of Activity

Gather participants in a standing circle holding their wands. Explain that they will take their wands home with them today, but first the group will raise energy to bless the wands and put some of the energy from the group into them.

Teach the participants the blessing words:

Never shall this wand do evil! Always shall its magic rise from love! Bonitas!

Note: *Bonitas* is Latin for goodness, especially moral goodness, kindness, and integrity. It is pronounced *bee tas*.

Have all participants hold their wands straight out in front of them. Then, take your wand and hold it above the wand of the person on your right. In a confident voice, lead the group in saying:

Never shall this wand do evil! Always shall its magic rise from love! Bonitas!

Then tap your wand on the other person's wand. Go around the circle, with the group blessing each wand individually until all have been blessed.

## CLOSING (7 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path
- Signpost for Session 7 ([Leader Resource 1](#) (included in this document)), and pins, glue stick, or tape
- Copies of Session 1, [Leader Resource 8](#) (included in this document), UU Principles Song, for all participants
- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Print out Leader Resource 1 and cut out the signpost.
- Optional: Write the UU Principles Song lyrics on newsprint, and post.
- Customize, print out and photocopy the Taking It Home section for all participants.

### Description of Activity

This activity helps children get used to practicing a closing ritual as a way of affirming their belonging in the faith community.

Gather the group in a circle. Thank the children for participating and sharing their stories and ideas in this session. Tell them something you liked about the way they worked together as a community.

Point out the Faithful Journeys Path. Say, in your own words:

Our Faithful Journeys Path shows our journey to live our lives and act in ways that reflect our Unitarian Universalist beliefs and faith. The signposts direct us by reminding us about our Principles.

Today's signpost is "Create Magic." It is for our third Unitarian Universalist Principle: We affirm and promote acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations. It means we believe it is good to

learn and grow spiritually — to grow in our hearts, not just our bodies. It also means Unitarian Universalists have many different ways we take care of our spirits, like walking in the woods, doing rituals, helping other people, or praying. When our spirits grow, we become more loving and we can work to make the world a better place. That's how we can create magic.

Attach the signpost to the Faithful Journeys Path.

Remind the children that the next time they meet they will have a chance to add Faithful Footprints to the Faithful Journeys Path. Encourage them to try to do an action during the week that shows their acceptance of one another or encouragement to spiritual growth. Brainstorm some actions together. You might suggest: learning yoga poses and trying them with family members or friends; combining focus, intention, and energy into a prayer for the well-being of others; thinking about something that is important and raising energy for it; putting some "magic" into planting a garden or potting indoor herbs; or doing "magic" that is good for the world by being kind or helping someone.

Point out the words to the UU Principles Song. Tell the children it is sung to the tune of "Old McDonald Had a Farm." Lead the children in singing the verse about the third Principle. Then, sing the entire song together. Explain that you will learn about all of the Principles during the Faithful Journeys program.

Distribute the Taking It Home handout. Thank the children, tell them you look forward to seeing them next time, and dismiss the group.

## **FAITH IN ACTION: MAGIC MONTH, RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS AND SENSELESS ACTS OF BEAUTY**

### **Materials for Activity**

- [Leader Resource 3](#) (included in this document), Magic Month Letter to Parents

### **Preparation for Activity**

- With your minister and director of religious education, select a month for Magic Month (March and May make for good alliteration).
- Adapt Leader Resource 3 and send it to parents a few weeks before the children's Magic Month presentation. As Magic Month approaches, check in with parents to be sure they are doing the "homework" assigned in the letter.
- Schedule a time when the children can present briefly to the congregation during Sunday worship.

- On the day of the presentation, arrange for the children to meet a half hour early to practice.
- Publicize Magic Month using your congregation's communication tools. Suggest ideas from Leader Resource 3 and add your own.
- Arrange for a Faithful Journeys co-leader, your minister, or your director of religious education to briefly describe Magic Month as part of the children's presentation.

### **Description of Activity**

Choose a month during which all members of your congregation will be encouraged to make "magic" by practicing random acts of kindness and senseless acts of beauty in your congregation and/or local community. Launch the month with a presentation by the Faithful Journeys children during Sunday worship. Offer ideas for magical acts at that presentation and through your congregation's communication network. You might approach worship leaders about inviting volunteers to share about their random acts of kindness and senseless acts of beauty during worship services this month.

## **LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING**

Take a few minutes to evaluate the session with your co-leader immediately afterward, while it is fresh. Share your thoughts with any other team co-leaders and your director of religious education. You might find it helpful to consider these questions:

- Which activities worked well? What didn't work so well?
- Were all children actively engaged? If not, who wasn't and why might that have been? How could they be better included next time?
- How well did the activities match the learning styles of the children in this group? What could we do differently to better accommodate for learning styles in future sessions?
- How well did the session balance physically active with sedentary activities?
- How was the timing? What might need to be done differently for a session to work better within our time frame?
- Were there any behavior issues? If so, how can we address them in the future? Do we need more information or help in this area?



- What connections did children make with the activities and/or central ideas? How did we know that was occurring?
- What connections did children make with each other? What connections did we make with the children? When was that most evident?
- Are we successfully creating a program characterized by inclusion, diversity appreciation, respect, noncompetitive environment, and welcome? What could we have done differently?
- What questions or issues arose in this session that we might like to discuss with our director of religious education?

## TAKING IT HOME

*Whatever you think you can do, or believe you can do, begin it. Action has magic, grace, and power in it. — Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe*

*Any ritual is an opportunity for transformation. — Starhawk*

**IN TODAY'S SESSION...** We heard a story about a Unitarian Universalist child who celebrates the pagan harvest holiday, Lammas, by going to a peace rally every year. To illustrate our third Unitarian Universalist Principle, acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth, we learned about magic as a spiritual practice we can use to work for the good of the world. We created our own wands and did a spiral dance. Our signpost to help guide us in faithful action was "Create Magic."

**EXPLORE THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Talk about...** We defined magic today as combining focus, intention, and energy. Many other spiritual practices also combine focus, intention, and energy. Tell your child about a spiritual practice you are familiar with and explain how focus, intention, and energy are involved. Tell what the practice means to you and how it affirms one or more of our Unitarian Universalist Principles.

**EXTEND THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Try...** Pay extra attention to times when your child creates magic by combining focus, intention, and energy, such as making and carrying out a plan to recycle plastic and care for the Earth or making a get-well card for a relative or friend. Point out instances of your child acting faithfully in a way that reflects the Principle of acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth. Your child will have the opportunity to tell how they "created magic" the next time Faithful Journeys meets.

## FAMILY ADVENTURE

Pay attention to the evening skies for a few months, including the waxing and waning of the moon. On a clear night when the moon is full, take a family walk, preferably in a natural setting that is familiar to you and safe, with well-marked trails. When you return home, finish the evening with sparkling fruit juice or hot cider, cocoa, or tea or to celebrate the seasonal harvest in your locality or somewhere far away.

## A FAMILY RITUAL

As a daily practice, say "Thank you" to the Earth for the food, shelter, and very life it gives us. A natural time to do this would be at mealtime, but it also could be a bedtime ritual. Enhance the ritual with prayers or blessings from the book *Earth Prayers from Around the World*, edited by Elizabeth Roberts and Elias Amidon, or another like it.

## A FAMILY GAME

In "I Spy," one person says, "I spy something the color (fill in the blank)." Others take turns guessing the item and the person who guesses correctly is the next "spy." Play "I Spy" in a natural setting. Instead of identifying items by color, say, "I spy something that is a tree/a plant/an insect/a rock/made of wood."

## FAMILY DISCOVERY

Learn more paganism through the fictional Aisha in the book *Aisha's Moonlit Walk*, by Anika Stafford. The book *Circle Round: Raising Children in Goddess Traditions*, by Starhawk, is appropriate for parents of any religion who wish to encourage a love of nature in their families.

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: MEDITATION PAINTINGS (25 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of the guided meditation in Activity 3, Story Basket and Guided Meditation
- Large roll of paper and markers
- Optional: Water-based paints, paintbrushes, newspaper, containers for water, and paper towels for clean-up

### Preparation for Activity

- Identify a large, clean floor space where all participants can work on their body outlines.
- Distribute markers (and/or paint and paintbrushes) in multiple locations, so that after the meditation children will find what they need close at hand.

**Description of Activity**

Instead of using the guided meditation to help children get centered for hearing the story, use it as a lead-in to this activity. Trace an outline of each participant's body on the paper and help children cut out the outlines and write their names on the back. If children will use paint, spread newspaper under each body outline.

Then, gather children in a circle where they can sit comfortably, with their eyes closed if they so choose. Read the guided meditation to the group.

When you are done, direct the children to paint their vision from the guided meditation, painting flames or pictures of things they imagined themselves doing. Optional: Display the meditation paintings in your meeting space.

**Including All Participants**

If any participants cannot lie on the ground, represent all the children with a standard head-and-shoulders tracing.



## STORY: THE PERFECT PEACE HARVEST

From the book *Aisha's Moonlit Walk: Stories and Celebrations for the Pagan Year*, by Anika Stafford (Boston: Skinner House, 2005).

*Tell the children you will signal them with a drumbeat (or another signal) when it is time to join in the refrain.*

Every year on Lammas, we clamor our way to City Hall with posters and placards to picket for peace. Every year since I was a baby we have a big rally. Speakers and singers, dancers and screamers, we all gather to say that we want "peace now, peace now." Lammas is a time to raise your voice, even when it's hard. It's a time to say no to war and to anything else that hurts anyone, anywhere in the world.

Most of the people at the rally aren't pagans, but they all yell, "Peace now, peace now," which is as much of a Lammas celebration as anything I can think of.

We carry drums to bang and cymbals to clang. Since I've been coming here all my life, it's not too hard to get ready to clang and bang. I come ready to make some noise.

On Lammas you've gotta stomp your dancing feet,

On Lammas you've gotta raise your voice and speak,

Lammas is the harvest, we've gotta harvest peace.

This year there are at least a hundred people, maybe more. There are people with canes, people with crowns, people draped in crazy costumes, yelling, "Peace now, peace now!"

There are people with puppets taller than the treetops and people holding signs that say "No War." Standing in back are people watching in silence until we all yell, "Peace now, peace now!" Then everyone yells together.

My family and I meet people under a banner that says "Pagans for Peace." There are pagans we know who greet us with big happy hugs and pagans we don't know but we all yell, "Peace now, peace now!" for Lammas.

On Lammas you've gotta stomp your dancing feet,

On Lammas you've gotta raise your voice and speak,

Lammas is the harvest, we've gotta harvest peace.

There are babies snug in their snuggly carriers and toddlers toddling on the grass. They yell, "eace, now, eace, now," which is definitely close enough to "peace now" for any of us. "That's how you used to say it when you were little," my dad tells me. My brother Eli yells and sings, and I swing him up onto my shoulders.

There is a stage at the front of the rally with microphones and banners. Huge flags with doves and peace signs wave in the August wind. There are old women in crazy hats who step up and sing for peace. But there are no kids up there. There are teenagers in silly skirts and socks who step up and cheer and chant for peace. But there are no kids. Everyone speaks out, but there are no kids at the microphones.

"This is ridiculous," I burst out to my mom. "I have been coming here my whole entire life and I've never seen a single kid on that stage!"

"Aisha," my mom says, "what a great idea! Run up and tell them you want to speak. Hurry!"

I freeze. I hadn't meant me. Just some kid. My heart thuds in my chest. I just meant someone, anyone else. I look at the crowd: a hundred people, maybe more. I am ten years old. I do not want to speak in front of all of them.

But I have been coming here for ten years, and for ten years I've chanted the same words:

On Lammas you've gotta stomp your dancing feet,

On Lammas you've gotta raise your voice and speak,

Lammas is the harvest, we've gotta harvest peace.

My stomach is fluttery. My legs are jittery. This feels nothing like peace, but I've got to do it. I know I do. So I slowly lift my brother off of my shoulders and put him on the ground.

"I'm going to go up," I tell my mom, and she grins her biggest grin. "I'm going to go up!" I exclaim loudly to everyone around us under the "Pagans for Peace" banner. Our friend Alex comes over to me. "Hooray!" he yells. He picks me up in a big bear hug and swings me around. "Good for you!" our friends cheer. Now I have to do it.

I run all the way up to the stage before I can lose my nerve and run back. There are organizers standing next

to it. "I am here to speak," I tell the grown-ups on the stage.

One man looks at me. "There isn't enough time," he says.

I want to run back but I don't. Instead, I take a deep breath and try again. "There are never any kids speaking," I tell him. Then I turn to the other organizers. "What if I only say just four quick things?" The organizers look at each other and shrug. "Okay," they say. "Just four quick things."

I stand at the microphone with my fluttery stomach and jittery legs. I have been coming here since I was a baby, but raising my voice in front of the whole crowd is one of the hardest things I've ever done. Even though I don't feel the littlest bit of peace, I take a deep breath and begin.

"War doesn't help anything," I say. "It doesn't give us clean water."

Everyone yells back, "No!"

"It doesn't give us land to grow our food!" I say.

And again, the crowd yells, "No!"

"It doesn't let kids grow up healthy!" I call out.

"No! No! No!" everyone yells.

"We all need the Earth and the water, and we all need each other." I raise my voice loudly into the microphone. "So," I finish, "what do we want?"

And the crowd goes wild, yelling, "Peace now, peace now, peace now!"

I look down and see that our "Pagans for Peace" group is starting a big, snaking, twisting, spiral dance through the crowd. I run down and grab hands with them as more and more people join us, taking each other's hands and singing.

We sing and smile, dancing our way through the crowd and around the buildings. Our song fills me with bouncy gleefulness. With my legs strong and sturdy again, I imagine our song is like water splashing us.

On Lammas you've gotta stomp your dancing feet,

On Lammas you've gotta raise your voice and speak,

Lammas is the harvest, we've gotta harvest peace.

I have come here every Lammas since I was a baby, but speaking in front of the whole entire crowd is the most perfect peace harvest I've ever made.

## LEADER RESOURCE 1: SIGNPOST FOR SESSION 7

*Cut out the signpost to add to your Faithful Journeys*



*Path.*



## LEADER RESOURCE 2: HOW TO LEAD A SPIRAL DANCE

Adapted from the Dream Roads website, which also provides an [animated illustration](#) of a spiral dance.

*For use with Activity 2, Move It! Spiral Dance.*

Stand in a circle holding hands. Leader drops the hand of the person to their left and begins to move to the left, passing just in front of that person. Participants follow as they are guided by the leader.

Spiraling toward the center of the circle, travel one full time around the circle and then move halfway around the circle. Without dropping hands, turn toward the person on your right and move past this person and continue spiraling to your left past the other people in the circle, facing them. Continue until you pass the last person in the line.

Now continue to spiral facing out one full circle. After a full circle, turn again to face the person to your right without dropping their hand. Spiral to your left past the other people in the circle, facing them. Go a small distance past the last person in the line and begin to spiral in toward the center of the circle, making increasingly small circles as you go. Keep winding toward the center until you are huddled close together in the middle of the circle.

## LEADER RESOURCE 3: MAGIC MONTH LETTER TO PARENTS

*Customize this letter and provide to Faithful Journeys parents well ahead of the children's Magic Month presentation to the congregation.*

Dear Parents,

In Faithful Journeys, we have been discussing magic as a pagan spiritual practice that combines energy, focus, and intention to effect positive change. We would like to involve the congregation in spreading magic in our local community by practicing random acts of kindness and senseless acts of beauty by proclaiming our own Magic Month in (insert month).

The children will present Magic Month to the congregation (insert date, place and time). Please bring your child a half hour early so we can practice our presentation together.

You can also help by completing some homework by (insert the deadline): Make a family plan for an action you can take during Magic Month. Be sure to involve your Faithful Journeys child in the planning and have them practice explaining it briefly. Your child will have the opportunity to present your family plan during our group presentation.

These ideas may help you choose an action for your family to do:

- Leave flowers on someone's doorstep.
- Send thank-you cards to local librarians, firefighters, or teachers.
- Thank and compliment a grocery clerk or restaurant server.
- Take up pottery and make gifts for others.
- Write a poem and give it away.
- Clean up a neighborhood park.
- Visit residents in a nursing facility.
- Give something of yours away, perhaps even to a stranger.
- Buy grocery gift cards and instruct the cashier to give them to the next five customers.

We hope you and your family will be creative, have fun, and most importantly, help us create magic in our community.

In Faith,

(Co-leader names and contact information)

## FIND OUT MORE

### Paganism and UUism

To learn more about paganism read *Drawing Down the Moon* by Unitarian Universalist Margot Adler, or any books by Starhawk.

To explore resources for pagan Unitarian Universalists, visit the [CUUPS website](#).

## SESSION 8: SEEK TRUTH

### INTRODUCTION

*Friend, I have lost the way.  
The way leads on.  
Is there another way?  
The way is one ...  
I cannot find the way.  
The way leads on.  
Oh, places I have passed!  
That journey's done.  
And what will come at last?  
The way leads on.*

— excerpted from "The Way" by Edwin Muir, in  
*Singing the Living Tradition*

The session introduces our fourth Unitarian Universalist Principle, a free and responsible search for truth and meaning, through the story of Egbert Ethelred Brown, a Jamaican man who converted to Unitarianism. Though he experienced many hardships to fulfill his calling to the Unitarian ministry, Brown devoted his life to inviting others to learn about our free faith.

In this session the children explore the basics of a Unitarian theology. They engage in their own search for truth and meaning and investigate the concept of a call to ministry. We add the signpost "Seek Truth" to our Faithful Journeys Path.

### GOALS

This session will:

- Strengthen Unitarian Universalist identity with the story of Egbert Ethelred Brown, the first black Unitarian minister, ordained in 1912
- Affirm that listening to one's own heart and mind is an act of faith
- Teach and reinforce our fourth Unitarian Universalist Principle, a free and responsible search for truth and meaning
- Introduce the concept of ministry and the idea that faithful Unitarian Universalism might include sharing one's faith.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Learn about the Afro-Caribbean Unitarian minister Egbert Ethelred Brown

- Encounter the complexity of our faith's legacy — affirming each person's value and search for truth and meaning on the one hand, yet expressing racial prejudice on the other
- Understand the basic, historical definition of a Unitarian theology
- Have a visceral experience of searching, in a Move It! game
- Experience a treasure hunt that embodies a search for truth and meaning
- Consider their own ministry and calling
- Identify actions they might take that would reflect the signpost "Seek Truth"
- Name ways they did or could translate their Unitarian Universalist faith and/or Principles into action.

### SESSION-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	3
Activity 1: Faithful Footprints	5
Activity 2: Move It! Scarf Search	8
Activity 3: Story Basket and Centering	5
Activity 4: Story — Finding Your Way: Egbert Ethelred Brown	13
Activity 5: Truth and Meaning Treasure Hunt	19
Faith in Action: Promotional Poster	20
Closing	7
Alternate Activity 1: Conversation with a Minister	20
Alternate Activity 2: My Ministry Books	15

### SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

If it would be helpful in creating sacred space, light a candle or chalice.

Look for your own experience of our fourth Principle in your relationship with Unitarian Universalism. How did you first encounter our faith? Did you discard earlier beliefs as you embraced Unitarian Universalism? Was Unitarian Universalism an affirmation of beliefs you had long held? If you were raised as a Unitarian and/or



Universalist, have your beliefs — your ideas about what is true — changed significantly over time?

Have you met any challenges during your search for truth and meaning in our faith? What sacrifices have you made, or considered making, in order to be true to your beliefs?

What images does the word *ministry* call up for you? Do you consider yourself to have a ministry? Is there something you feel called to do (whether or not it is your paid employment)? In what ways does your calling involve sharing your own discovery of truth and meaning with others?

In this session, you will lead children to consider their own search for truth, their own special gifts, and ways they may be called to share these with others. Prepare to greet the children as truth-seekers and potential ministers today.

## OPENING (3 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Chalice candle or LED/battery-operated candle
- Lighter and extinguisher, if needed
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Posters of the Unitarian Universalist Principles in both adult and children's language, or copies of Session 1, [Handout 1](#) (included in this document) for all participants

### Preparation for Activity

- Decide whether you will use the provided opening words or other opening words, such as those offered in Session 1, Leader Resource 2, Alternate Openings. It is recommended that you use the same opening words for each session.
- Print the opening words on newsprint. Post the newsprint where the children will be able to see it when they gather.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle. Light the chalice. Point out the chalice-lighting words on the newsprint and invite the group to read together:

We light this flame for the light of truth, the warmth of love, and the energy of action.

Indicate the poster(s) of the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Or, give each child a copy of the handout. Ask a volunteer to read the fourth Principle in the adult language. Ask a second volunteer to read the children's version of the fourth Principle. Then, say:

Today we will learn about this Unitarian Universalist Principle — what it means, and what kinds of actions show it. Let's get started.

Collect handouts for reuse.

### Including All Participants

If not all participants are fluent readers, take the time to teach the group to say the opening words from memory.

If the group has children who are sensitive to perfumes or other chemicals, use unscented candles or an electric or battery-operated flame. An electric flame is also recommended if you may not use open flames or if any participants are afraid of fire.

## ACTIVITY 1: FAITHFUL FOOTPRINTS (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path (Session 1, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))
- Cutouts of footprints and (optional) wheelchair tracks, at least one for each participant, in a variety of colors (Session 1, [Leader Resources 3](#) and [4](#) (included in this document))
- Markers
- Push pins, glue stick or tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Think of something you have done since the group last met that represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. Identify the Principle(s) your action reflected. Write a few words about it on a footprint, with your name.

### Description of Activity

This activity reinforces children's learning as they model translating faith into action for one another. To strengthen children's Unitarian Universalist identity, help participants see how their own behavior demonstrates specific Principles.

Gather in a circle. Point to the Faithful Journeys Path and say:

Together we are taking a journey to learn what it means to live as Unitarian Universalists. Each time we meet, we talk about ways our actions show our beliefs about what is right and good. This is called "putting our faith into action."

When you share about something you have done that shows what you believe, you can choose a footprint or wheelchair to put on our Faithful Journeys Path.

Hold up the footprint you made of your own faithful action. Tell what you did and how it represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. If you can connect your action to a Principle, briefly explain. For example:

- I made phone calls to remind people to vote (or, I voted), because I believe in our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, that we all have a say in matters that concern us. When people vote, that's one way to have every person's opinion be counted.

- I have a neighbor who was sick last week. I helped him bring his trash outside, because I believe in the second Unitarian Universalist Principle, which says we believe in being kind and fair.
- I put my water bottles and juice bottles in the recycling bin, because I believe in the seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, which reminds us to take care of the Earth that all life shares.

Ask the children to think of an act they have done, since you met last, that reflects Unitarian Universalism. You may wish to prompt:

- Did anyone do something that helped make things fair? (justice, equity, and compassion)
- Did anyone help someone else? (inherent worth and dignity, interdependent web)
- Did anyone take care of nature or another animal? (interdependent web)
- Did anyone listen to someone else who had a very different opinion? (search for truth and meaning, acceptance of one another)
- Did anyone play with someone new whom you did not know very well? (acceptance of one another, encouragement to spiritual growth)

As participants name their actions, write a word or phrase describing the action on a footprint or wheelchair cutout. Invite children to write their names on their cutouts and post them on the Faithful Journeys Path. Have them progress along the path over the course of the program.

To stay within the time frame for this activity, use these guidelines:

- Encourage children to share their faithful act in one or two brief sentences.
- If the group is big, limit children to sharing only one faithful act per week.

It is very important to avoid judging participants, either with criticism or praise. Avoid phrases like "Great job!" or "You're fantastic!" which might suggest that acts of faith vary in their value or encourage children to compete to share the "best" act.

You should, however, respond to each child's contribution. Listen carefully to what a child tells you. After each child shares, say something like, "Thank you for sharing," followed by a summarizing sentence, such as:

- Being kind to new children at school is an action that treats others like they are important.

- Suggesting your friends all vote to decide what to play together is an action of democracy and fairness.
- Cleaning up garbage at the park is an action to take care of the Earth.
- Teaching your brother to talk is an action that affirms each person's learning.
- Taking care of your dog is an action of love.

Identify the Unitarian Universalist Principles each act represents; refer to the Principles poster if the room has one or indicate a relevant signpost on the Faithful Journeys Path. By responding specifically to each child's faithful actions, you will help them feel pride, a sense of accomplishment, and their own empowerment as agents whose actions and choices reflect Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values.

### **Including All Participants**

Along with cut-out footprints (Session 1, Handout 3, Faithful Footprints), provide wheelchairs (Session 1, Handout 4, Making Tracks for Faith) in the same colors of paper. Encourage all the children — not just those who use wheelchairs for mobility — to sometimes use a wheelchair instead of footprints to represent their faithful actions.

## **ACTIVITY 2: MOVE IT! SCARF SEARCH (8 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Two scarves, one to cover a volunteer's eyes and one for the volunteer to find

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Identify a clean, open floor space (preferably carpeted).

### **Description of Activity**

Have the children sit in a tight circle. Explain that a volunteer will wear a scarf over their eyes so they can't see. You will then drop another scarf somewhere inside the circle. The child whose eyes are covered will use intuition, hearing and touch to try to find the scarf. The searcher must remain on hands and knees at all times. Children in the circle must use their bodies as a barricade to keep the searcher safe, but not otherwise help the searcher. If time allows, give each child who wants to the opportunity to be the searcher.

You may wish to invite children to share afterward about their experience of searching. Did anyone have a gut sense of where the scarf might be? How did it feel to know that what you were looking for was nearby, but

you didn't know exactly how to find it? Did it help to know the scarf would not move while you were looking for it?

### Including All Participants

For children who use wheelchairs or have limited mobility, hold the scarf somewhere within their reach and invite them to find it with their eyes closed or covered.

## ACTIVITY 3: STORY BASKET AND CENTERING (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A large basket
- Objects related to the story "Finding Your Way: Ethelred Brown," such as a picture of Egbert Ethelred Brown ([Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document) ), a copy of *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination* by Mark Morrison-Reed, a printout of the Jamaican flag, a picture of Harlem in the 1920s, or a picture of a ship similar to one Brown might have sailed on from Jamaica to the U.S.
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Box or small table and a decorative cloth cover to form a small altar

### Preparation for Activity

- Place story-related items and the sound instrument in the story basket. Place the filled story basket in the storytelling area.
- If you will make an altar as a focal point for story objects, set up the box or table you will use next to your storytelling area. Place the decorative cloth on the altar. It is not necessary to ritualize the altar as a sacred place. It can simply serve as a focal point where objects related to the story will be visible while you tell the story.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle in your storytelling area. Show them the storytelling basket. Say something like, "Let's see what's in our story basket today."

Tell the group the items in the story basket will be placed on the altar or table after the children have passed them around the circle. Take the story-related items from the basket, one at a time.

Briefly name each item and pass it around. Objects that are fragile or should not be passed around for any reason can be held up for all to see and then placed

directly on the altar. As items come back to you, display them on the altar for children to look at as they listen to the story.

Explain that although there were no Unitarian churches where he grew up in Jamaica, Ethelred Brown felt called to become a Unitarian minister, and struggled against all odds to bring Unitarianism to his community, first in Jamaica, and later in New York City.

Now remove the sound instrument from the story basket. Tell the children that every time you tell a story in Faithful Journeys, you will first use the instrument to help them get their ears, minds, and bodies ready to listen. Invite them to sit comfortably and close their eyes (if they are comfortable doing so). You may tell them that closing their eyes can help them focus on just listening.

In a calm voice, say:

As you breathe in, feel your body opening up with air. As you breathe out, feel yourself relaxing.

Repeat this once or twice and then say:

Now you are ready to listen. When I hit the chime (turn the rain stick over), listen as carefully as you can. See how long you can hear its sound. When you can no longer hear it, open your eyes and you will know it is time for the story to begin.

Sound the chime or other instrument. When the sound has gone, begin telling the story.

### Including All Participants

If anyone in the group is unable to hold or pass items, or cannot see the items, make sure you or a child in the group offers the person a chance to see and touch each object, as needed.

Some people do not feel safe closing their eyes in a group. If any children resist, respect their resistance and suggest that they find a single point of focus to look at instead.

If you have a basket of fidget objects for children who may listen and learn more effectively with something in their hands, make the fidget object basket available during this activity. Remind children where it is before you begin the "centering" part of this activity. For a full description of fidget objects and guidance on using them, see Session 2, Leader Resource 2.

## ACTIVITY 4: STORY — FINDING YOUR WAY — ETHELRED BROWN (13 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of the story "[Finding Your Way: Ethelred Brown](#)" (included in this document) "
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Fidget object basket (Session 2, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))
- Optional: A copy of the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook, *Singing the Living Tradition* and newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Read the story a few times. Think about how you might use items from the story basket as props.
- Consider telling the story rather than reading it. Practice telling it aloud.
- Decide whether you would like to conclude the story with the song "I'm on My Way," Hymn 116 in the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook, *Singing the Living Tradition*. Prepare newsprint with the lyrics to post.

### Description of Activity

A story of Egbert Ethelred Brown presents someone from our Unitarian Universalist heritage whose choices and actions exemplify our fourth Principle, a free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

Before you begin, look around the room and make eye contact with each person. Read or tell the story.

Sound the instrument to indicate that the story is over. If you have chosen to sing "I'm on My Way," lead the song. Then, guide a brief discussion using these questions:

- Ethelred Brown felt called to ministry. There was something inside him that he wanted to share by being a minister. What do you think it was he wanted to share? (Affirm that he wanted to share his own free search for truth and encourage others to think for themselves about what is true.)
- Is there something you love to do that you feel called to share?
- In the Christian church where Ethelred grew up, they believed there were three parts to God —

God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and the Holy Spirit. Unitarians got their name from believing in the unity of God — that God is just God. Ethelred agreed with the early Unitarians' idea of God. What do you believe about God? How do you know your idea about God is true?

Be sure to accept all beliefs and explanations the children offer about God. Affirm that, in our faith, everyone's ideas about God have equal merit.

## ACTIVITY 5: TRUTH AND MEANING TREASURE HUNT (19 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Blank paper and writing and drawing implements

### Preparation for Activity

- Print out and cut the leader resource, one word per slip. You may wish to use bright-colored paper to help children find the slips of paper.
- Hide all seven slips of paper in your meeting space.
- If you will invite children to search for items (second part of the search) beyond your meeting space, first identify the rooms or areas they can visit without disrupting others.

### Description of Activity

Tell the group:

To explore our fourth Principle — a free and responsible search for truth and meaning — we will have a special kind of treasure hunt with two different parts. The first part of the treasure hunt is for seven slips of paper hidden in this room. Each slip of paper has a word on it that represents one of our UU Principles — ideas we believe are important and true. When you find a slip of paper, come back and sit down. When all seven have been found, we can have the second part of the treasure hunt.

If the group has fewer than seven children, you can let some children find more than one slip of paper.

After children have gathered with the slips of paper they found, ask each one to read aloud the word that they found. Now say:

The next part of our treasure hunt is a bit more complicated. Each person (or pair/team) is going to search for some item they think can show the word they have on their slip of paper.

Offer some examples to help children conceive how an object can represent an abstract idea such as respect, fairness, or connection. For instance, tape, glue, or a paper clip might symbolize connection; a book might symbolize curiosity; a Braille hymnbook might symbolize fairness.

Tell the children where they may (and may not) search and, if they are leaving the meeting space, when they must return. As they search, engage in conversation to draw out children's creativity. If children have difficulty finding an item, offer them the option of drawing something that shows their word. Children who return quickly with an item can also be given the option of drawing a representation of their word while they wait for the others to return.

Gather the group and ask them to share what they chose and why. If you have time, ask them to also share an example of an action they could do to demonstrate their word. Leave time for the children to return the items to the locations where they found them.

### **Including All Participants**

If the group includes children who are visually impaired or have limited mobility, pair children to ensure that each team has a member who can search by sight. Make sure children work together, so all are fully included.

Some children may need an adult to walk with them to make sure that they stay quiet and on task and do not disrupt other children or adults.

## **CLOSING (7 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Faithful Journeys Path
- Signpost for Session 8 ([Leader Resource 3](#) (included in this document)) and pins, glue stick or tape
- Copies of Session 1, [Leader Resource 8](#) (included in this document), UU Principles Song, for all participants
- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Print out Leader Resource 3 and cut out the signpost.
- Optional: Write the UU Principles Song lyrics on newsprint, and post.
- Customize, print out and photocopy the Taking It Home section for all participants.

### **Description of Activity**

This activity helps children get used to practicing a closing ritual as a way of affirming their belonging in the faith community.

Gather the group in a circle. Thank the children for participating and sharing their stories and ideas in this session. Tell them something you liked about the way they worked together as a community.

Point out the Faithful Journeys Path. Say:

Our Faithful Journeys Path shows our journey to live our lives and act in ways that reflect our Unitarian Universalist beliefs and faith. The signposts direct us by reminding us about our Principles.

Today's signpost is "Seek Truth." It is for our fourth Unitarian Universalist Principle, a free and responsible search for truth and meaning. It means that as Unitarian Universalists we are always trying to understand the world better. We are open to other people's different ways of understanding the world. And, we are open to ways our own understanding may change as we grow and learn.

Attach the signpost to the Faithful Journeys Path.

Remind the children that the next time they meet they will have a chance to add Faithful Footprints to the Faithful Journeys Path. Encourage them to try to do an action during the week that shows they seek truth and value others' ideas of what is true. Brainstorm together what sorts of action might reflect free, responsible truth-seeking. You might suggest: talking with a friend or family member about big questions such as "How did the world begin?" and "Where do people come from?" and sharing your different answers; listening to someone else's side in an argument; or reading a book, visiting a website, or watching a television program to learn about something new.

Point out the words to the UU Principles Song. Tell the children it is sung to the tune of "Old McDonald Had a Farm." Lead the children in singing the verse about the fourth Principle. Then, sing the entire song together. Explain that you will learn about all of the Principles during the Faithful Journeys program.

Distribute the Taking It Home handout. Thank the children, tell them you look forward to seeing them next time, and dismiss the group.

## FAITH IN ACTION: PROMOTIONAL POSTER (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Large sheet(s) of poster board
- Magazines to cut up for collage
- Scissors (including left-handed scissors) and glue sticks

### Preparation for Activity

- Post a blank sheet of newsprint.
- Set materials at work tables.

### Description of Activity

Egbert Ethelred Brown spent much of his life building congregations by inviting people in, not so they would believe as he believed, but so they would find encouragement to discover their own truths. This activity gives children an experience of ministry as they think about why and how they might encourage people to visit your congregation.

Invite children to brainstorm what they like about your congregation, what is special about it, and what they think others might like to know about the congregation. When the list is complete, children can either make individual posters or cooperate on making one large poster with a heading such as "Come to (your congregation's name) because ... " or "We like (your congregation's name) because ... "

Engage children in deciding where the poster might be displayed in service of the congregation, such as a fellowship hall or entranceway. You might also photograph or scan the poster to post it on the congregation's website, as encouragement to people considering a visit.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Take a few minutes to evaluate the session with your co-leader immediately afterward, while it is fresh. Share your thoughts with any other team co-leaders and your director of religious education. You might find it helpful to consider these questions:

- Which activities worked well? What didn't work so well?
- Were all children actively engaged? If not, who wasn't and why might that have been? How could they be better included next time?

- How well did the activities match the learning styles of the children in this group? What could we do differently to better accommodate for learning styles in future sessions?
- How well did the session balance physically active with sedentary activities?
- How was the timing? What might need to be done differently for a session to work better within our time frame?
- Were there any behavior issues? If so, how can we address them in the future? Do we need more information or help in this area?
- What connections did children make with the activities and/or central ideas? How did we know that was occurring?
- What connections did children make with each other? What connections did we make with the children? When was that most evident?
- Are we successfully creating a program characterized by inclusion, diversity appreciation, respect, noncompetitive environment, and welcome? What could we have done differently?
- What questions or issues arose in this session that we might like to discuss with our director of religious education?

## TAKING IT HOME

*Friend, I have lost the way.*

*The way leads on.*

*Is there another way?*

*The way is one ...*

*I cannot find the way.*

*The way leads on.*

*Oh, places I have passed!*

*That journey's done.*

*And what will come at last?*

*The way leads on.*

— excerpted from "The Way" by Edwin Muir, in *Singing the Living Tradition*

**IN TODAY'S SESSION...** We focused on Egbert Ethelred Brown, born in Jamaica and the first black Unitarian minister, ordained in 1912. Facing racial prejudice, economic hardship, and the challenge of holding a minority theological perspective, he devoted his adult life to sharing liberal religion with others, first in Jamaica and later in Harlem. We talked about Ethelred Brown as a model of our fourth Principle, a free and responsible search for truth and meaning. We went on our own truth and meaning treasure hunt, searching first



for words that reflect our seven Principles, and then for objects to serve as symbols for those words. Our signpost to help guide us in faithful action was "Seek Truth."

**EXPLORE THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Talk about...** the concept of ministry. Many people understand ministry to be not only the work of ordained clergy, but of all people who feel called to share their gifts in a special, positive way. If this idea resonates for you, tell your child what you feel your ministry to be. Ask them to reflect on their personal gifts and how they can share them with others.

**EXTEND THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Try...** An evangelist in a liberal religious context, Ethelred Brown dedicated his life to inviting others to seek truth and meaning. How do you share your beliefs?

Talk with your children about any person or family you know that might enjoy experiencing your congregation. Discuss how you might, in a respectful way, invite this person or family to join you for worship or another congregational event. Follow through and issue the invitation. Afterward, regardless of how the invitation was received, discuss as a family how it felt to ask another person to experience your beliefs and faith community. Was it embarrassing? Empowering? Might you like to try it again?

### **FAMILY ADVENTURE**

As part of your family search for truth and meaning, experience a religious service with an unfamiliar worship style and/or theology. Afterward, discuss what each of you liked, did not like, agreed with, and disagreed with.

### **A FAMILY RITUAL**

As your child leaves for school in the morning, place your hand on their head and offer the blessing, "Be curious today."

### **A FAMILY GAME**

Play Truth Hide-and-Seek. As in traditional Hide-and-Seek, designate hiders and a seeker. Play as usual, except that, to be released, a person who is found must say one thing they believe is true, such as a scientific fact or an ethical or theological belief.

### **FAMILY DISCOVERY**

Continue the theological inquiry begun in this session by sharing a book such as *What Is God?* by Etan Boritzer, illustrated by Robbie Marantz (Buffalo, NY: Firefly Books, 1990).

## **ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: CONVERSATION WITH A MINISTER (20 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Newsprint, markers and tape

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Invite your congregation's parish minister, minister of religious education, or minister of music to meet with the group. Make the request well in advance. You may wish to schedule this activity directly following worship if the minister leads worship during your religious education time.

### **Description of Activity**

Engage children's curiosity about the work and faith journey of your congregation's own ordained clergy.

"Free and responsible search for truth and meaning" is an ongoing aspect of Unitarian Universalist ministry. Invite your guest to tell how they seek truth and meaning in the context of their faith lives and how they support others to find their own truths.

Before the minister arrives, brainstorm questions children would like to ask. Record their questions on newsprint. When the minister comes, call on children to ask these or additional questions.

Invite the minister to ask the children about *their* individual searching for truth and meaning. Explicitly ask children how their attendance at your faith home supports their search. Listen to children's comments; some may belong as Faithful Footprints on the Faithful Journeys Path.

### **Including All Participants**

Children who have difficulty sitting still to listen may benefit from having access to fidget objects (Session 2, Leader Resource 2).

## **ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: MY MINISTRY BOOKS (15 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Copies of [Handout 1](#) (included in this document) for all participants
- Crayons and pencils
- Optional: Scissors (including left-handed scissors) and stapler



## **Preparation for Activity**

- Cut each handout into quarters. Staple the quarters together to form a book, with "My Ministry" on the cover, followed by "I love to ... ," "I'm good at ... ," and "I share my gifts by... ." If you have time, you may choose to have children make their own books.
- Set crayons and pencils at work tables.

## **Description of Activity**

Tell the children that while some people feel called to serve congregations as ministers, every person can have some kind of ministry, a special way they share themselves with the world. Tell them they will each create a "My Ministry" book to help them look inside for gifts of ministry they might have to share.

Distribute blank books (or handouts, scissors, and staplers for children to make their own). Suggest they decorate the front cover last. Lead the group to start on the second page ("I love to ... ") by describing or drawing something they love to do. On the third page ("I'm good at ... "), they may describe or draw something they feel they have a special skill or talent for. On the fourth page ("I can share my gifts by ... "), invite them to describe or draw a way they can imagine sharing with others what they enjoy or are good at. Encourage them to use their imaginations, rather than reporting ways they have already shared their gifts.

Give a five-minute warning to make sure all children have some time to work on the cover of their books.

## STORY: FINDING YOUR WAY — ETHELRED BROWN

By Janeen K. Grohsmeyer.

One morning, more than a hundred years ago on the island of Jamaica, a boy named Ethelred Brown went to church. Usually at this church, the people sang their creed, their list of what they believed. But that morning was Easter Sunday, a special Sunday, and so instead of singing the creed, the pastor said one line of it, and the people would repeat it.

This is some of what Ethelred heard:

- We believe the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. And yet they are not three gods, but one God.
- So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Spirit Lord. And yet not three lords, but one Lord.
- The Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.

And Ethelred thought, "What?" He liked math, and he knew how to add. He knew that three wasn't the same as one. How could you have a unity in trinity or a trinity in unity? How can three things be one thing? How can one thing be three? It didn't make sense to him.

So right there, sitting in church, while everyone else was still saying they believed in a unity in trinity and a trinity in unity, Ethelred decided that he didn't believe that. He couldn't agree with what everyone else in the church was saying. He would have to find his own way.

That afternoon, he went to his uncle's house. On the table was a booklet with the words, "The Lord our God is one God." And Ethelred thought, "Yes, that makes sense." He borrowed the booklet from his uncle and took it home to read. That booklet was by the Reverend William Ellery Channing, who was a Unitarian minister in the United States. After reading it and some other books, Ethelred decided he was a Unitarian, too. But there were no Unitarian churches in Jamaica, and so Ethelred knew he would have to find his own way.

So that's what he did, for years and years. He still liked numbers, and when he was a grown-up he became an accountant, helping other people keep a good track of their money. He got married, and he and his wife had four children. Then, when Ethelred was thirty-two years old, he decided to become a Unitarian minister and start a Unitarian church in Jamaica. He didn't even know any other Unitarians, but Ethelred Brown didn't let that stop

him. He found his own way. He wrote a letter to "Any Unitarian Minister in New York City," and he put it in the mail.

Eventually, he got a letter back, telling him he had to go to a school in the United States to become a Unitarian minister. Now, Ethelred didn't have much money, and he'd never left Jamaica. But he didn't let that stop him. He found a way. He asked people to give him money; he said good-bye to his wife and children, then got on a boat to go to the United States.

When he finally got to the United States, they didn't let him stay because he didn't have the right papers. Ethelred didn't let that stop him, either. He found a way. He went back to Jamaica, fixed his papers, and saved more money. Finally, three years after he had decided to go, he arrived at the school. He spent two years there, learning to be a Unitarian minister, and he was ordained in 1912. He was the first Jamaican to go to that school. He was also the very first black person to become a Unitarian minister.

One hundred years ago, that made a difference. Back then, people of different colors didn't mix. The teachers at the minister school told Ethelred that he couldn't be at a church with white people; they would want a white minister. Because he was black, he had to be a minister at a church with black people. Except there weren't any Unitarian churches with black people. So the Unitarian teachers didn't think he could be a minister after all.

That didn't stop Ethelred. He found a way. He went back to his wife and children in Jamaica, and he started a Unitarian church there. It wasn't easy, because the church didn't have many people or much money, and he didn't get much help from other Unitarians, but Ethelred had made his dream of being a Unitarian minister come true.

After eight years, he decided to start another church, this time in the United States. He and his family moved to New York City, and he started the Harlem Community Church in 1920. It wasn't easy there, either. They still didn't have much money, and they still didn't get much help. His wife became sick, and one of his children died. Besides being a minister, Ethelred had to work long hours at an extra job he didn't like.

But somehow, Ethelred found a way. For the next thirty-five years, Ethelred was the minister at the Harlem Community Church. Over the years, hundreds of people found their way there to pray and learn, worship and sing. Just like we do at our congregation.

In fact, one of the songs we sing has a tune named after the Reverend Ethelred Brown. It's in our *Singing the Living Tradition* hymnbook, and it's called "I'm on My Way."

Ethelred Brown always found a way to do what he believed in, and so should we.

**HANDOUT 1: MY MINISTRY BOOK**

MY MINISTRY

I LOVE TO ...

I'M GOOD AT ...

I SHARE MY GIFTS BY ...

## **LEADER RESOURCE 1: TRUTH AND MEANING TREASURE HUNT**

RESPECT

KINDNESS

ACCEPTANCE

CURIOSITY

FAIRNESS

PEACE

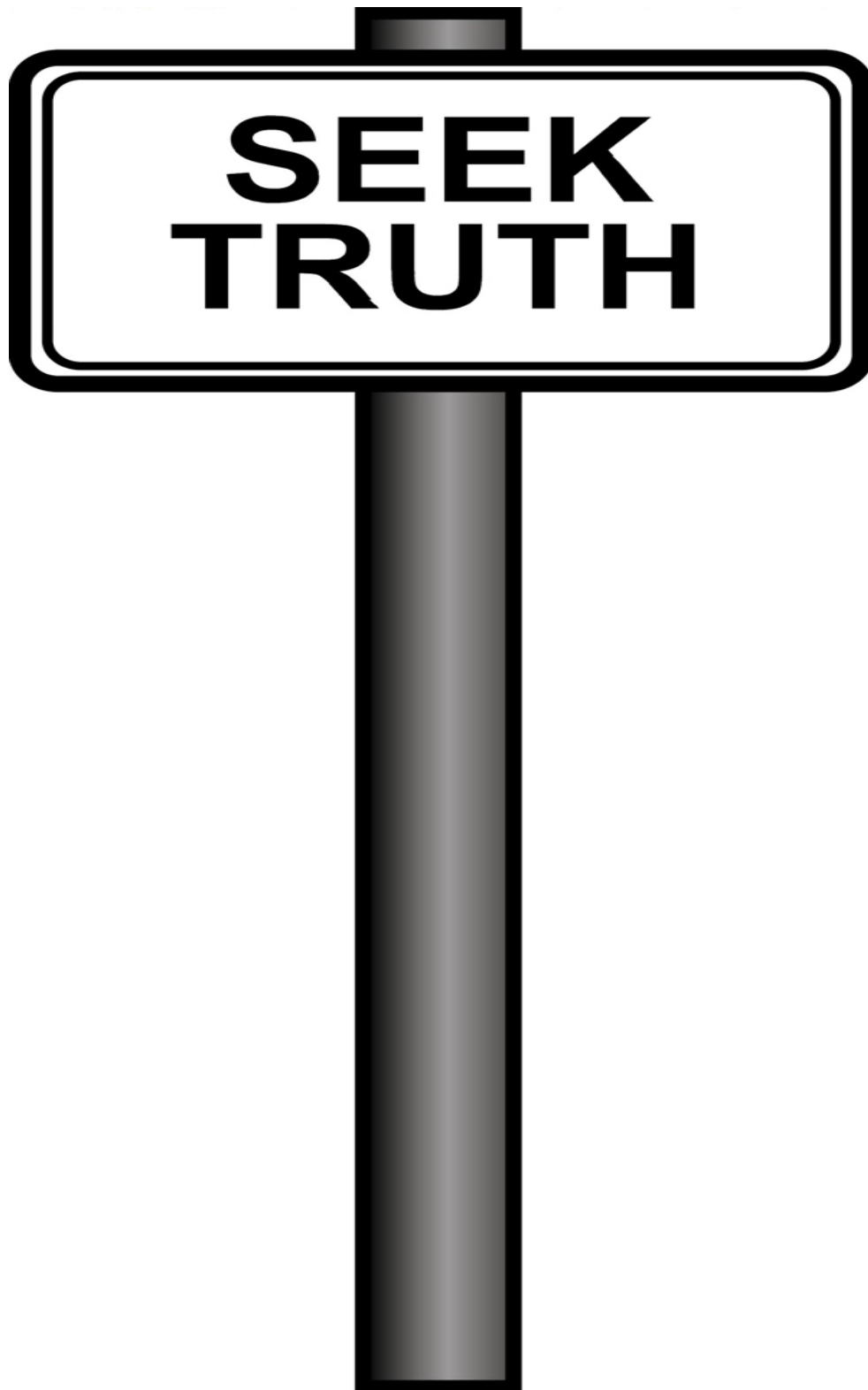
CONNECTION

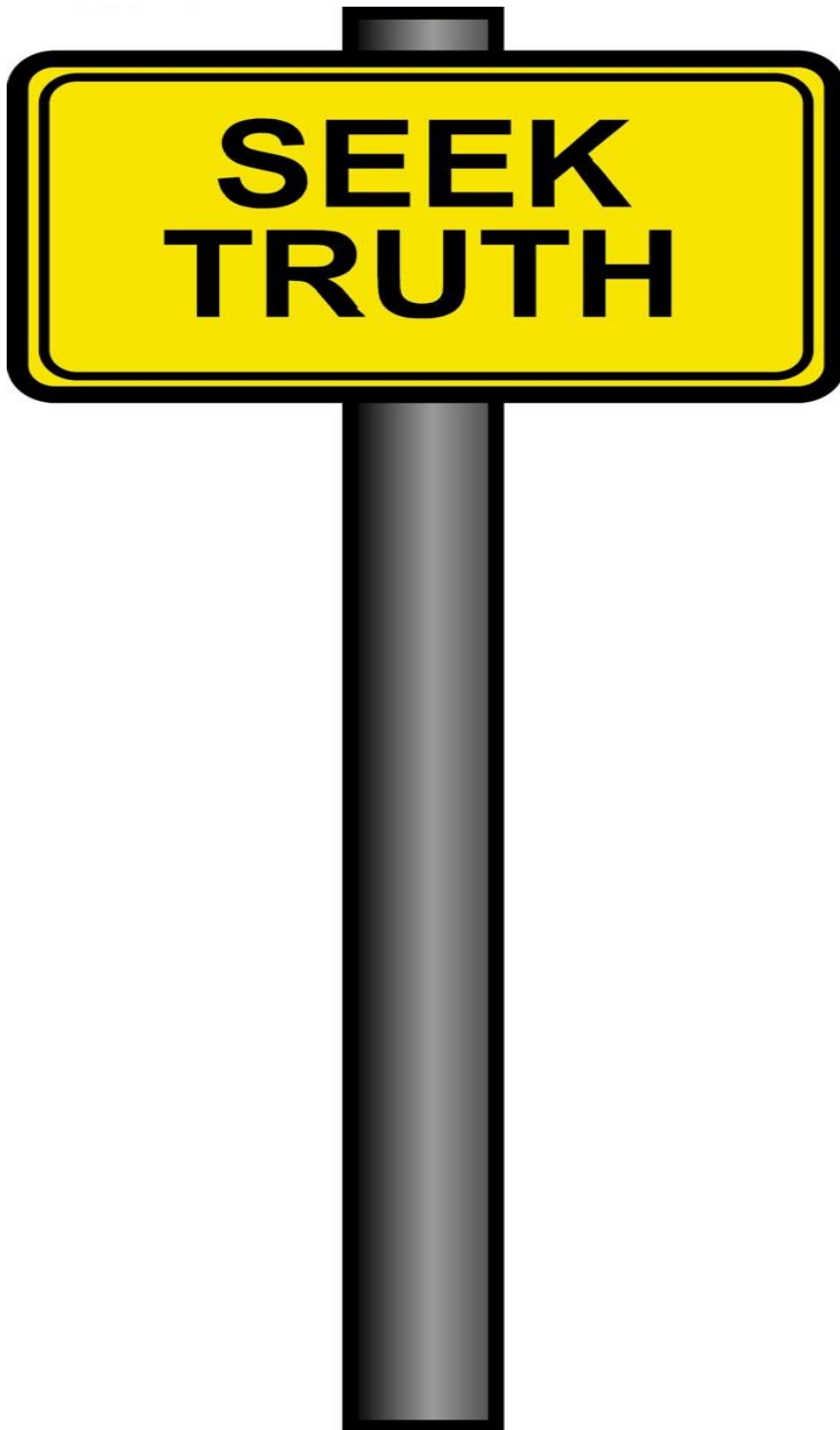
## LEADER RESOURCE 2: PICTURE OF ETHELRED BROWN



## LEADER RESOURCE 3: SIGNPOST FOR SESSION 8

*Cut out the signpost to add to your Faithful Journeys Path.*







## FIND OUT MORE

### **Egbert Ethelred Brown**

Egbert Ethelred Brown is featured in *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination* by Mark Morrison-Reed (Boston: Skinner House, 1994).

[Biographical information](#) about Egbert Ethelred Brown is available online.

### **Call to Ministry**

A [reading](#) by Gordon McKeeman beautifully describes ministry in a broad sense.

## SESSION 9: ASK QUESTIONS

### INTRODUCTION

*You have to have an alertness to deal with the unexpected. The history of science is filled with almost-made discoveries, missed by a hairline because ... [someone] didn't have the alertness to realize they had a discovery. — Clyde Tombaugh, astronomer, 1906-1997*

Our faith not only allows but also supports us to question, to seek answers, and to reevaluate our answers by posing new questions. To explore our fourth Unitarian Universalist Principle, a free and responsible search for truth and meaning, this session draws particularly on our fifth Source, humanist teachings that counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science. We demonstrate that the search for truth and meaning is an ongoing quest. The children learn about Clyde Tombaugh, the Unitarian Universalist man who discovered Pluto, and the decision in 2006 to change Pluto's status from planet to dwarf planet. The children will experience the relative scale of the planets in an activity with modeling dough. We will add the signpost "Ask Questions" to our Faithful Journeys Path.

### GOALS

This session will:

- Strengthen participants' understanding of our fourth Unitarian Universalist Principle, a free and responsible search for truth and meaning
- Demonstrate that a search for truth and meaning is an ongoing quest
- Build Unitarian Universalist identity with a story about Clyde Tombaugh, the astronomer who discovered Pluto
- Demonstrate acting faithfully based on our fourth Principle by asking questions, seeking knowledge, and being ready to reexamine and revise our theories and beliefs about the world
- Affirm scientific investigation as an expression of Unitarian Universalist faith and identity
- Teach children how they can and do express their faith — their ideas of right and wrong, their values, and their beliefs — with actions.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Learn about Unitarian Universalist Clyde Tombaugh who dedicated his life to learning about space and discovered Pluto and fourteen asteroids
- Experience hands-on learning about the scale of the planets
- Learn the fifth Source of our Unitarian Universalist living tradition, humanist teachings that affirm the guidance of reason and the results of science and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit
- Engage in asking questions to learn more about their peers
- Name ways they did or could translate their Unitarian Universalist faith and/or Principles into action.

### SESSION-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	3
Activity 1: Faithful Footprints	5
Activity 2: Move It! All About Us Scavenger Hunt	10
Activity 3: Story Basket and Centering	5
Activity 4: Story — A Tour of the Heavens: Clyde Tombaugh Discovers Pluto	10
Activity 5: Worlds in Comparison	20
Faith in Action: Night Sky Adventure	60
Closing	7
Alternate Activity 1: Observation Game	15

### SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Go outside in the nighttime and look up at the sky. If it would be helpful in creating sacred space, and weather permits, light a candle or chalice. Reflect:

- How do you engage in a search for truth and meaning in your own life? What role does questioning play in your search?
- How have your questions been met by others? Have you been encouraged to ask questions? When, and when not?

- What would you most like to learn about the world? What truly piques your curiosity? In what ways do you think your curiosity is like, or unlike, the curiosity of a seven-, eight- or nine-year-old child?
- Are there times you want the satisfaction of a single, true answer? When are you comfortable with multiple answers or changing answers to your questions?

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Chalice candle or LED/battery-operated candle
- Lighter and extinguisher, if needed
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Posters of the Unitarian Universalist Principles in both adult and children's language, or copies of Session 1, [Handout 1](#) (included in this document) for all participants

### Preparation for Activity

- Decide whether you will use the provided opening words or other opening words, such as those offered in Session 1, Leader Resource 1, Alternate Openings. It is recommended that you use the same opening words for each session.
- Print the opening words on newsprint. Post the newsprint where the children will be able to see it when they gather.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle. Light the chalice. Point out the chalice-lighting words on the newsprint and invite the group to read together:

We light this flame for the light of truth, the warmth of love, and the energy of action.

Indicate the poster(s) of the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Or, give each child a copy of the handout. Ask a volunteer to read the fourth Principle in the adult language. Ask a second volunteer to read the children's version of the fourth Principle. Then, say:

Today we will learn about this Unitarian Universalist Principle — what it means, and what kinds of actions show it. Let's get started.

Collect handouts for reuse.

### Including All Participants

If not all participants are fluent readers, take the time to teach the group to say the opening words from memory.

If the group has children who are sensitive to perfumes or other chemicals, use unscented candles or an electric or battery-operated flame. An electric flame is also recommended if you may not use open flames or if any participants are afraid of fire.

## ACTIVITY 1: FAITHFUL FOOTPRINTS (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path (Session 1, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))
- Cutouts of footprints and (optional) wheelchair tracks, at least one for each participant, in a variety of colors (Session 1, [Leader Resources 3](#) and [4](#) (included in this document))
- Markers
- Push pins, glue stick or tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Think of something you have done since the group last met that represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. Identify the Principle(s) your action reflected. Write a few words about it on a footprint, with your name.

### Description of Activity

This activity reinforces children's learning as they model translating faith into action for one another. To strengthen children's Unitarian Universalist identity, help participants see how their own behavior demonstrates specific Principles.

Gather in a circle. Point to the Faithful Journeys Path and say:

Together we are taking a journey to learn what it means to live as Unitarian Universalists. Each time we meet, we talk about ways our actions show our beliefs about what is right and good. This is called "putting our faith into action."

When you share about something you have done that shows what you believe, you can choose a footprint or wheelchair to add to our Faithful Journeys Path.

Hold up the footprint you made of your own faithful action. Tell what you did and how it represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. If you can connect your action to a Principle, briefly explain. For example:

- I made phone calls to remind people to vote (or, I voted), because I believe in our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, that we all have a say in matters that concern us. When people vote, that's one way to have every person's opinion be counted.
- I have a neighbor who was sick last week. I helped him bring his trash outside, because I believe in the second Unitarian Universalist

Principle, which says we believe in being kind and fair.

- I put my water bottles and juice bottles in the recycling bin, because I believe in the seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, which reminds us to take care of the Earth that all life shares.

Ask the children to think of an act they have done, since you met last, that reflects Unitarian Universalism. You may wish to prompt:

- Did anyone do something that helped make things fair? (justice, equity and compassion)
- Did anyone help someone else? (inherent worth and dignity, interdependent web)
- Did anyone take care of nature or another animal? (interdependent web)
- Did anyone listen to someone else who had a very different opinion? (search for truth and meaning, acceptance of one another)
- Did anyone play with someone new whom you did not know very well? (acceptance of one another, encouragement to spiritual growth)

As participants name their actions, write a word or phrase describing the action on a footprint or wheelchair cutout. Invite children to write their names on their cutouts and post them on the Faithful Journeys Path. Have them progress along the path over the course of the program.

To stay within the time frame for this activity, use these guidelines:

- Encourage children to share their faithful act in one or two brief sentences.
- If the group is big, limit children to sharing only one faithful act per week.

It is very important to avoid judging participants, either with criticism or praise. Avoid phrases like "Great job!" or "You're fantastic!" which might suggest that acts of faith vary in their value or encourage children to compete to share the "best" act.

You should, however, respond to each child's contribution. Listen carefully to what a child tells you. After each child shares, say something like, "Thank you for sharing," followed by a summarizing sentence, such as:

- Being kind to new children at school is an action that treats others like they are important.

- Suggesting your friends all vote to decide what to play together is an action of democracy and fairness.
- Cleaning up garbage at the park is an action to take care of the Earth.
- Teaching your brother to talk is an action that affirms each person's learning.
- Taking care of your dog is an action of love.

Identify the Unitarian Universalist Principles each act represents; refer to the Principles poster if the room has one or indicate a relevant signpost on the Faithful Journeys Path. By responding specifically to each child's faithful actions, you will help them feel pride, a sense of accomplishment, and their own empowerment as agents whose actions and choices reflect Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values.

### Including All Participants

Along with cut-out footprints (Session 1, Handout 3, Faithful Footprints), provide wheelchairs (Session 1, Handout 4, Making Tracks for Faith) in the same colors of paper. Encourage all the children — not just those who use wheelchairs for mobility — to sometimes use a wheelchair instead of footprints to represent their faithful actions.

## ACTIVITY 2: MOVE IT! ALL ABOUT US SCAVENGER HUNT (10 MINUTES)

### Preparation for Activity

- Create a wide open space for a standing circle.

### Description of Activity

Have group stand in a circle without chairs. Say, in your own words:

One way we act according to the Principle that we should search for truth and meaning is by asking questions that will help us learn. We are going to have a scavenger hunt for people. To find the people you are looking for, you will have to ask one another questions.

Explain that you will name a category. Each person will have to find someone in the group who fits that category, by asking each other relevant questions. Say:

If I ask you to find someone who has a pet and learn what kind of pet they have, what questions might you ask? (Affirm: "Do you have a pet?" / "What kind of pet do you have?")

Once you find someone who fits the category, go to the side of the room and stop asking questions. Other people may still come up to

you and ask, for example, if you have a pet. You are not trying to find a partner. There can be more than two people who fit the same category. You will find out only when you ask questions.

To include everyone, encourage children to try to find different people for the various questions. You might add a rule: If someone has been your match for a category, you cannot ask that person a question for a new category until you have asked everyone else!

Play the game for at least four categories, up to 10 minutes. Use these categories or your own.

### Scavenger Hunt Categories

Find someone who ...

- Has a pet, and find out what kind of pet and what its name is
- Can name three planets, and ask them to do it
- Can do a silly dance, and have them show it to you
- Has a sister or brother, and ask what their name is
- Likes candy, and ask what their favorite is
- Has gone to an interesting museum, and ask what they liked best there
- Has a library card, and ask them to name one book, CD, or DVD they have borrowed from the library
- Reads (or listens to stories) almost every day, and ask them to name one of their favorite books

### Including All Participants

Tailor the categories to the group. To make sure everyone has opportunities to be included, use information you know about the children who are present, but remember, the point of the activity is for children to ask one another questions.

## ACTIVITY 3: STORY BASKET AND CENTERING (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A large basket
- Objects related to the story "A Tour of the Heavens: Clyde Tombaugh Discovers Pluto," such as pictures of Clyde Tombaugh ([Leader Resources 1](#) and [2](#) (included in this document)); pictures of Pluto, the solar system, etc.;

planetary models or Earth ball; or a toy or real telescope

- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Box or small table and a decorative cloth cover, for a small altar

### Preparation for Activity

- Place the story-related items and the sound instrument in the story basket. Place the filled basket in the storytelling area.
- If you will make an altar as a focal point for story objects, set up the box or table you will use next to your storytelling area. Place the decorative cloth on the altar. It is not necessary to ritualize the altar as a sacred place. It can simply serve as a focal point where objects related to the story will be visible while you tell the story.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle in your storytelling area. Show them the storytelling basket. Say something like, "Let's see what's in our story basket today."

Tell the group the items in the story basket will be placed on this altar or table after the children have passed them around the circle. Take the story-related items from the basket, one at a time, and pass them around. Objects that are fragile or should not be passed around for any reason can be held up for all to see and then placed directly on the altar.

Briefly name the various objects. Show the pictures of Clyde Tombaugh and explain that he was a Unitarian Universalist who discovered Pluto (show a picture of Pluto). Explain that today's story started a hundred years ago, when Clyde Tombaugh was born, but is still changing. Point out that scientists find out new things about our universe every day.

As the items come back to you, display them on the altar for children to look at as they listen to the story.

Remove the sound instrument from the story basket. Tell the children that every time you tell a story in Faithful Journeys, you will use the instrument to help them get their ears, minds, and bodies ready to listen. Invite them to sit comfortably and close their eyes (if they are comfortable doing so). Suggest that closing their eyes can help them focus on just listening. In a calm voice, say:

As you breathe in, feel your body opening up with air. As you breathe out, feel yourself relaxing.

Repeat this once or twice. Then, say:

Now you are ready to listen. When I hit the chime (turn the rain stick over), listen as carefully as you can. See how long you can hear its sound. When you can no longer hear it, open your eyes and you will know it is time for the story to begin.

Sound the chime or other instrument. When the sound has gone, begin telling the story.

### Including All Participants

If anyone in the group is unable to hold or pass items, or cannot see the items, make sure you or a child in the group offers the person each object to explore as needed.

Some people do not feel safe closing their eyes when they are in a group. If any children resist, respect their resistance and suggest that they find a single point of focus to look at instead.

If you have a basket of fidget objects for children who may listen and learn more effectively with something in their hands, make it available during this activity. Remind children where it is before you begin the "centering" part of this activity. Find a full description of fidget objects and guidance on using them in Session 2, Leader Resource 2.

## ACTIVITY 4: STORY — A TOUR OF THE HEAVENS — CLYDE TOMBAUGH DISCOVERS PLUTO (10 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of the story "[A Tour of the Heavens — Clyde Tombaugh Discovers Pluto](#)" (included in this document)
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Fidget object basket (Session 2, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))

### Preparation for Activity

- Read the story a few times. Think about how you might use items from the story basket as props.
- Consider telling the story rather than reading it. Practice telling it aloud.

### Description of Activity

Clyde Tombaugh exemplifies our fourth Unitarian Universalist Principle, a free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

Before you begin the story, look around the room and make eye contact with each person. Read or tell the story.

Sound the instrument to indicate that the story is over. Then, guide a brief discussion using these questions:

- I wonder, what are you really curious about or what do you love to learn about?
- When you want to know more about something, what do you do?
- Have you ever really believed one thing, and then learned it was not true? (Invite volunteers, one at a time, to share: What was that like? Was it easy or hard to get used to your new belief? Do you think your belief could change again?)

### Including All Participants

Children in this age group may hold a wide range of beliefs in God, Santa Claus, tooth fairies, and Easter bunnies. Be careful to validate all children's beliefs. Affirm children's truth-seeking impulses and actions, but do not allow argument or debate about what is "true."

## ACTIVITY 5: WORLDS IN COMPARISON (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of [Leader Resource 3](#) (included in this document), Worlds in Comparison
- For each group of two to four participants
  - [Handout 1](#) (included in this document), Instructions, and [Handout 2](#) (included in this document), Planet Name Worksheet
  - 3 lbs. of modeling dough, a bread board or a sheet of waxed or parchment paper, and a plastic knife

### Preparation for Activity

- Obtain modeling dough from an arts and crafts store or an online vendor such as [Dick Blick Art Materials](#), which sells 3-lb. tubs for about eight dollars. Or, make your own (Leader Resource 4, Modeling Dough Recipe).
- Set materials on work tables as instructed in Leader Resource 3.
- It is recommended that you try this activity once yourself before leading it.

### Description of Activity

This activity allows participants to develop an understanding of the relative sizes (volumes) of the

planets in our solar system. Form small groups of two to four at work tables. Say:

Your group will start with a big ball of modeling dough. You will divide it up, following the steps on the instruction sheet. When you are done, you will see how the planets in our solar system vary in size. By the time you get to tiny Pluto, you may be quite amazed.

Guide the children in following the steps on the handouts to divide the dough and create their planets.

### **Including All Participants**

Check with your director of religious education and/or parents about participants' allergies. If there are allergies, purchase a non-food-based modeling dough.

## **CLOSING (7 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Faithful Journeys Path
- Signpost for Session 9 ([Leader Resource 5](#) (included in this document)) and pins, glue stick or tape
- Copies of Session 1, [Leader Resource 8](#) (included in this document), UU Principles Song, for all participants
- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Print out Leader Resource 5 and cut out the signpost.
- Optional: Write the UU Principles Song lyrics on newsprint, and post.
- Customize, print out and photocopy the Taking It Home section for all participants.

### **Description of Activity**

This activity helps children get used to practicing a closing ritual as a way of affirming their belonging in the faith community.

Gather the group in a circle. Thank the children for participating and sharing their stories and ideas in this session. Tell them something you liked about the way they worked together as a community.

Point out the Faithful Journeys Path. Say, in your own words:

Our Faithful Journeys Path shows our journey to live our lives and act in ways that reflect our Unitarian Universalist beliefs and faith. The signposts direct us by reminding us about our Principles.

Today's signpost is "Ask Questions." It stands for our fourth Unitarian Universalist Principle, which says we affirm and promote a free and responsible search for truth and meaning. That means we believe it's important to learn by asking questions and making investigations, and to remember that it's okay when we learn new information that changes our ideas about what is true.

Attach the signpost to the Faithful Journeys Path.

Remind the children that the next time they meet they will have a chance to add Faithful Footprints to the Faithful Journeys Path. Encourage them to do some asking and investigating about things that matter to them. Explain that children need not literally ask questions to fulfill our fourth Principle. Finding new information, carefully observing or studying someone or something, and listening to new ideas are ways of acting on the fourth Principle. You might suggest children borrow a book to help them learn; ask parents, siblings, or teachers questions about things they are curious about; or investigate the outdoors or an area in their home with a microscope, magnifying glass, or bug net.

Point out the words to the UU Principles Song. Tell the children it is sung to the tune of "Old McDonald Had a Farm." Lead the children in singing the verse about the fourth Principle. Then, sing the entire song together. Explain that you will learn about all of the Principles during the Faithful Journeys program.

Distribute the Taking It Home handout. Thank the children, tell them you look forward to seeing them next time, and dismiss the group.

## **FAITH IN ACTION: NIGHT SKY ADVENTURE (60 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Telescopes and/or binoculars
- Outdoor wear and insect repellent, appropriate for location and season

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Speak with your minister, director of religious education, or other members to identify space or astronomy enthusiasts in your congregation, and invite them to co-lead your Night Sky Adventure. If you cannot find an expert to join you, look for astronomy books at your local library that describe and depict various constellations.
- Find a safe site that offers night access and a clear view of the sky.



- Optional: If coordinating an outdoor night-time experience is not possible, research stargazing events at local science museums, universities, or nature organizations. Arrange for the children to attend a night hike, a planetarium presentation, or an astronomy/space exhibit.
- Use congregational newsletters, announcements, orders of service, website, etc. to invite congregational members of all ages to join you, along with Faithful Journeys participants' families. Make arrangements for shared transportation and permission slips if needed.

### Description of Activity

With telescopes and binoculars, go outside in the dark and enjoy the night sky. Point out particular constellations or planets if you can, or provide books and other resources to help everyone identify them. Invite participants to gaze at the stars and find their own images or patterns. Say something like:

Learning and asking questions is an important part of Unitarian Universalism. One way we learn is by studying the world around us. When we seek to learn or help others learn by observing and asking questions, we act on our fourth Principle, the free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

If a space or astronomy enthusiast is with you, invite children to ask questions. Write down any questions you cannot answer; suggest to parents they research the answers together with their children at home.

Gather the group for closure to your Night Sky Adventure. Guide the children to articulate their experience of looking, wondering, and researching about space as statements of their own faithful action — statements they might add to the Faithful Journeys Path in your meeting space. For example, "I looked carefully at the lights in the sky and asked which ones were planets, stars, or airplanes flying by." / "I compared the sky to the pictures in the book to see if I could find the constellation Orion." / "I realized the sky looks different through a telescope." Next time you meet, invite children who shared this experience to post a Faithful Footstep about their fourth Principle actions. A few may have post-Night Sky research to report!

### Including All Participants

To include participants with limited mobility, find an accessible location for your Night Sky Adventure. Invite participants who are blind to share their observations and wonderings about night noises and other sensations

outdoors and how the night seems different from the daytime.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Take a few minutes to evaluate the session with your co-leader immediately afterward, while it is fresh. Share your thoughts with any other team co-leaders and your director of religious education. You may find these questions helpful:

- Which activities worked well? What didn't work so well?
- Were all children actively engaged? If not, who wasn't and why might that have been? How could they be better included next time?
- How well did the activities match the learning styles of the children in this group? What could we do differently to better accommodate for learning styles in future sessions?
- How well did the session balance physically active with sedentary activities?
- How was the timing? What might need to be done differently for a session to work better within our time frame?
- Were there any behavior issues? If so, how can we address them in the future? Do we need more information or help in this area?
- What connections did children make with the activities and/or central ideas? How did we know that was occurring?
- What connections did children make with each other? What connections did we make with the children? When was that most evident?
- Are we successfully creating a program characterized by inclusion, diversity appreciation, respect, noncompetitive environment, and welcome? What could we have done differently?
- What questions or issues arose in this session that we might like to discuss with our director of religious education?

## TAKING IT HOME

*You have to have an alertness to deal with the unexpected. The history of science is filled with almost-made discoveries, missed by a hairline because ... [someone] didn't have the alertness to realize they had a discovery. — Clyde Tombaugh, astronomer, 1906-1997*

**IN TODAY'S SESSION...** We heard a story about Clyde Tombaugh, a Unitarian Universalist who discovered Pluto, and we talked about our fourth Principle, a free and responsible search for truth and meaning. Children learned how our faith affirms us to ask questions; investigate the world; and be open to new information, ideas, and truths, as Tombaugh would have done had he lived to see Pluto's 2006 "demotion" to dwarf planet status. Using modeling dough, we explored the scale of the planets in our universe. Our signpost to help guide us in faithful action was "Ask Questions."

**EXPLORE THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Talk about...**

Invite each family member to share about a time you had to let go of a "truth" upon learning new information. Take turns filling in the blanks: "I used to believe \_\_\_\_\_, but then I learned \_\_\_\_\_ was true instead." Discuss how it has, or has not, been easy to accept new truths.

**EXTEND THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Try...** Pay extra attention to times when your child asks questions, shows curiosity, or otherwise actively seeks to learn. Point out instances of your child acting faithfully in a way that affirms or promotes a free and responsible search for truth and meaning — their own search, or others'. Your child will have the opportunity to share their actions next time Faithful Journeys meets.

**FAMILY ADVENTURE**

Choose a topic that interests family members or a question you would like to have answered. Spend an evening in a library or online, learning everything you can about it. Challenge each person to learn at least one new thing (or five, if you are ambitious).

**A FAMILY RITUAL**

Gather as a family before an evening meal. Have each member of the family name something they are wondering about or something they learned that day. If you like, light candles as you share. Consider saying candle-lighting words that affirm asking questions, for example, "We give thanks for our curiosity and the answers it brings." Avoid editing or answering one another's questions, correcting information, or exchanging dialogue until everyone has shared. Where possible, provide resources and encourage family members to seek answers themselves. It is okay to validate questioning as a process that is as important, if not more important than, determining answers. (To keep this activity popular, avoid pressuring family members to do research every time a "wondering" is shared.)

**A FAMILY GAME**

**Twenty Questions.** One person thinks of a person, place or thing, and the others try to guess by asking

questions that can be answered yes or no. For example: "Is this a person?" / "Is the person alive?" / "Is it a character from a book?" / "Is it a man?" If someone guesses correctly before twenty questions have been asked and answered, it is their turn to think of a person, place, or thing for others to guess.

**FAMILY DISCOVERY**

Read the children's picture book *Clyde Tombaugh and the Search for Planet X*, by Margaret K. Wetterer (Carolrhoda Books, 1996).

The Astronomical Society of the Pacific's [Family ASTRO program](#) offers a multitude of activities with supporting resources, as well as online games and research tools.

**ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1:  
OBSERVATION GAME (15 MINUTES)**

**Materials for Activity**

- Dress-up items such as scarves; necklaces; bracelets; shoes; adult-size dresses, sweaters, and blazers; funny glasses (avoid hats or other items that might transmit head lice)

**Preparation for Activity**

- Collect enough dress-up items so every participant may use several.

**Description of Activity**

Ask participants to put on some dress-up clothes items. When everyone is ready, encourage the children to look very closely at one another. Have one volunteer leave the room. While the volunteer is gone, have another volunteer make changes to their "outfit," some obvious (such as removing glasses) and some less obvious (such as moving a bracelet from one wrist to the other). Then, call the first volunteer back into the room. Invite them to try to figure out who changed their outfit, and how. Repeat the process with new volunteers.

## STORY: A TOUR OF THE HEAVENS — CLYDE TOMBAUGH DISCOVERS PLUTO

Clyde had finished his farm chores. Now he was free to spend the rest of the evening doing his favorite thing: stargazing. He got out his telescope and he looked up into the night sky. While he looked at the moon and the stars he wondered about the universe.

(Leader: Pause and invite participants to suggest questions Clyde might have had as he looked at the sky. Possibilities include:

Does any other planet have life? Are there aliens out there somewhere? If there are, are they friendly or dangerous? How could we communicate with them? What are they like?

How far away are stars and planets? Will anyone ever be able to travel in space?

Could we live on another planet? What would it be like to walk on the moon?

Why does Mars look reddish? What makes a shooting star streak across the sky? Why do the planets circle around the sun?)

Clyde was filled with curiosity and questions. The telescope he had wasn't strong enough to get him answers. He wanted to see more, to see things more clearly. He decided to build his own telescope.

He searched his parents' farm for old pieces of machinery that he could use. He painstakingly ground mirrors for their reflective powers. His father let him have a shaft from his car. With these materials, Clyde made himself a powerful telescope.

Now he could see much detail when he watched the planets. He drew pictures of what he saw. But, he still wanted to know more. So he sent his drawings of Jupiter and Mars to some astronomers. He hoped they would give him some information. Instead, they were so impressed with his pictures that, even though Clyde had not gone to college yet, they offered him a job.

Another scientist, Percival Lowell, was sure there was another planet, farther away from the Earth than Neptune. But, so far, no one had been able to find it. Clyde went to New Mexico. He spent every night in an unheated observatory, looking through the telescope for Planet "X" and taking pictures of the sky. Through the

long, cold nights, Clyde tried to glimpse a new planet. Later in his life he liked to say, "I've really had a tour of the heavens."

Finally, when he was twenty-four years old, Clyde took a photograph of the night sky that showed a strange shifting of light. There was a planet beyond Neptune! He had found Planet "X." The new planet was named Pluto, for the Roman god of the underworld.

All his life, Clyde loved learning about the universe. Over the years he discovered more than one hundred asteroids, a comet, and a supercluster of galaxies. He thought exploring and learning were so important that he became an astronomy teacher. He helped other people investigate the sky, sometimes using the huge, two-story telescope he built in his own backyard.

And, he loved learning so much that he and his wife helped to start a Unitarian Universalist church where they lived in New Mexico. Clyde knew a congregation, like an observatory, could be a very good place for seeking truth.

Clyde died, a very old man, in 1997, but our story does not end there. You see, now scientists have decided Pluto isn't really a planet, after all. New telescopes see much more detail than even Clyde's most powerful telescope could ever see. We now know there are many objects in space about the same size as Pluto. Could there really be dozens and dozens more planets? Or are these smaller objects something else? The scientists voted and agreed on three rules to determine whether an object in space is a planet. It has to orbit around the sun. It must be large enough that its surface becomes smooth and round. And it must be large enough to clear other objects out of its orbit. Pluto does not meet these new rules — it's too small.

Percival Lowell had been curious to find Planet "X." Because of his questions, Clyde Tombaugh was hired to search the night sky. When Clyde discovered Pluto, everyone thought it was a planet. Then, new telescopes showed us many other objects in space like Pluto, and scientists made a new category: dwarf planet.

Clyde's wife, Patricia, said Clyde would have been disappointed about the vote, but as a scientist he would have understood. When we seek the truth, it feels good to make discoveries and find answers. But Clyde knew what's most important is to keep asking questions.

# HANDOUT 1: INSTRUCTIONS

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*This activity demonstrates the different sizes of the nine planets in our solar system. Follow the steps outlined below to see the relative size (volume) of each planet. Start with a big three-pound ball of modeling dough, which represents the volume of all the planets combined.*

**1. Divide the entire ball into 10 equal parts.** You may find it easiest to start by rolling the ball into one big hot-dog shape.

- Combine 6 parts, roll them into a ball, and put the ball into the Jupiter box.
- Combine 3 parts and put them into the Saturn box.

**2. Cut the remaining part into 10 equal parts.**

- Take 5 parts and combine them with the ball in the Saturn box.
- Combine 2 parts to put into the Neptune box.
- Put 2 parts into the Uranus box.

**3. Cut the remaining part into 4 equal parts.**

- Take 3 parts and combine them with the ball in the Saturn box.

**4. Cut the remaining part into 10 equal parts.**

- Put 2 parts into the Earth box.
- Put 2 parts into the Venus box.
- Take 4 parts and combine them with the ball in the Uranus box.

**5. Combine the remaining 2 parts and cut into 10 equal parts.**

- Put 1 part into the Mars box.
- Take 4 parts and combine them with the ball in the Neptune box.
- Take 4 parts and combine them with the ball in the Uranus box.

**6. Cut the remaining part into 10 equal parts.**

- Put 7 parts into the Mercury box.
- Take 2 parts and combine them with the ball in the Uranus box.

**7. Cut the remaining part into 10 equal parts.**

- Take 9 parts and combine them with the ball in the Uranus box.
- Put 1 part into the Pluto box.

**And now...**

Now that you have divided the modeling dough to represent the planets by volume, roll the pieces in each planet's box into balls to best represent the shapes of the planets.

## HANDOUT 2: PLANET NAME WORKSHEET

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The Sun is a star at the center of our solar system.

Mercury — closest to the Sun

Venus — second planet from the Sun

Earth — third planet from the Sun

Mars — fourth planet from the Sun

Jupiter — fifth planet from the Sun

Saturn — sixth planet from the Sun

Uranus — seventh planet from the Sun

Neptune — eighth planet from the Sun

Pluto (dwarf planet) — farthest from the Sun

**Mercury**

**Venus**

**Earth**

**Mars**

**Jupiter**

**Saturn**

**Uranus**

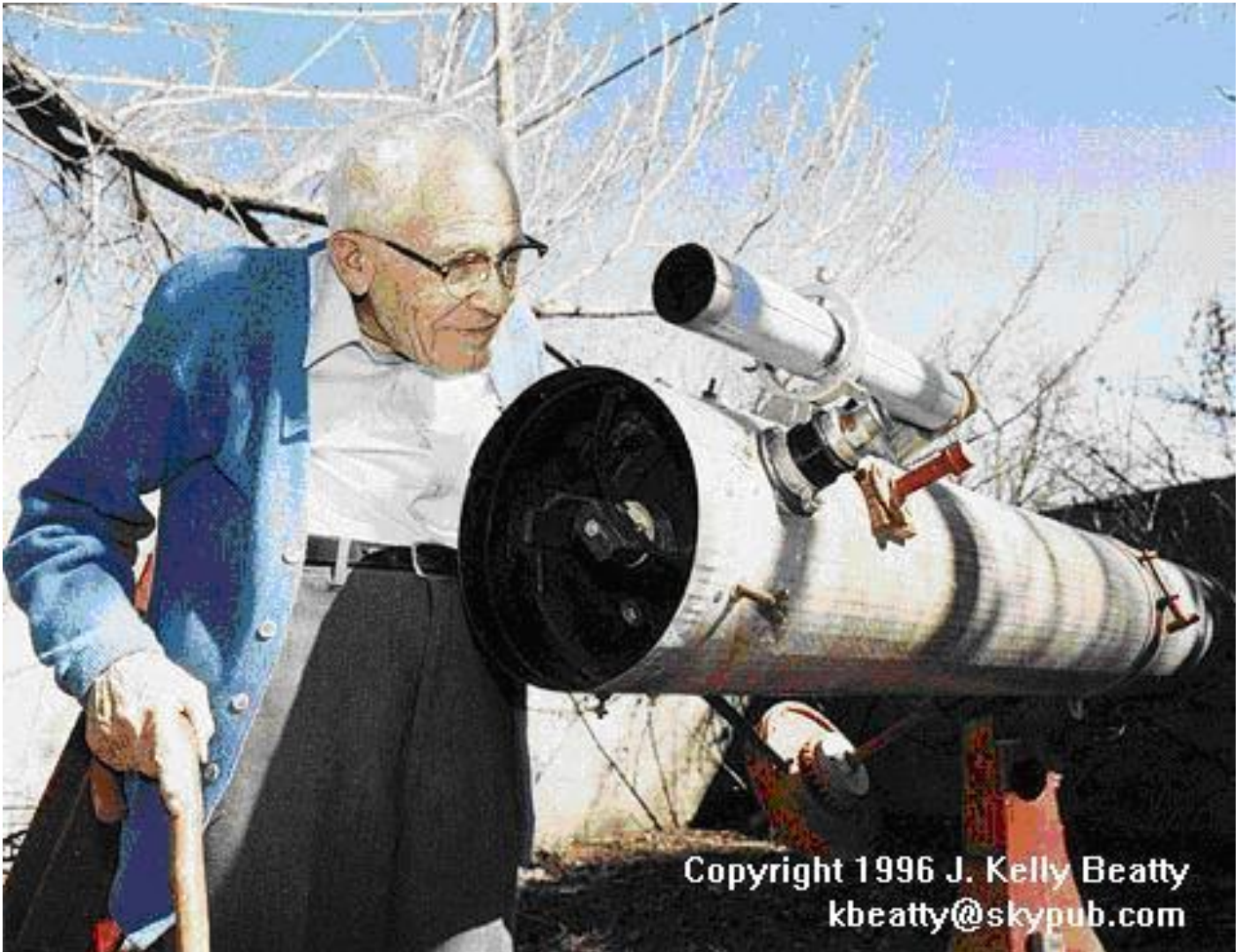
**Neptune**

**Pluto**



## LEADER RESOURCE 1: PICTURE OF CLYDE TOMBAUGH

Photo copyright 1996, J. Kelly Beatty. Used with permission.



## LEADER RESOURCE 2: PICTURE OF CLYDE TOMBAUGH 2

This photo appears on the website of the [Taipei Astronomical Museum](#). Permission pending.



## LEADER RESOURCE 3: WORLDS IN COMPARISON

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*For use with Activity 5, Worlds in Comparison. Each group will need 3 lbs. of modeling dough; a plastic knife; a bread board or sheet of waxed or parchment paper for cutting modeling dough; Handout 1, Instructions; and Handout 2, Planet Name Worksheet.*

### Setting Up the Activity

This activity works best if the Handout 2 worksheets with the planet names are placed side-by-side on a table, arranged to match the order from the Sun. In front of these sheets place Handout 1, the modeling dough, and the plastic knife on the breadboard or waxed paper. Be sure there is enough room in front of the table for the group to work together. It is crucial to have the indicated amount of modeling dough for each group. If there is less than 3 lbs., the Pluto piece will be too small to see! We recommend 3 lbs. each and urge you to try the activity for yourself before leading it.

### Suggestions for Introducing the Activity

For any of these scale model activities, it is useful to start by exploring the notion of models. Playthings, such as dolls or toy cars, can be a useful reference for talking about scale models.

This activity is designed as a self-guided station activity. Nevertheless, if you choose to do so, it can also be a facilitated activity from the beginning. If you facilitate this activity from the start, begin by asking the participants which planet they think is the largest. Which is the smallest? For whatever planet they say is the largest (it will most likely be Jupiter), ask them: If we could combine all the planets together into a big ball, what fraction of that ball would the largest planet be? Might it be  $1/9$  or  $1/5$ , for example? End the introduction by telling them they will get a better idea after completing this activity.

Note: If groups will use previously used modeling dough of various colors, reassure participants that mixing colors is fine — after all, many planets are multicolored!

### Doing the Activity

Participants start by reading the instructions handout, but they should get into working with the modeling dough as quickly as possible. They should follow the instructions as to how to divide their modeling dough and place the parts in the proper planet boxes. Each time the modeling dough is divided and parts are combined to make a planet, be sure participants roll the combined parts around in their hands until the planet has a ball shape.

### Wrap-up

Ask the group what discoveries they made regarding the sizes of the planets. Were there any surprises? Direct the discussion so they realize the smaller planets (except Pluto) are the inner planets, while the larger planets are the outer planets. Note that more than 96% of the combined volume of the planets is in Jupiter and Saturn (approximately 60% in Jupiter and 36% in Saturn). Those giant planets really *are* giants.

## LEADER RESOURCE 4: MODELING DOUGH RECIPE

*One batch makes enough for two to four children to complete Activity 5, Worlds in Comparison.*

### Materials

- Large mixing bowl
- Waxed paper or parchment paper
- Two measuring cups (for dry and wet ingredients)
- A tablespoon
- Mixing spoons
- Food coloring
- Gallon-size sealable plastic bags or plastic containers

### Directions

Mix 3 cups of water, 3 tablespoons of vegetable oil, 3 cups of salt, and 6 cups of flour.

Divide mixed ingredients into two, three, or four equal portions. Give individual children a portion to mix in a few drops of food coloring and knead on a sheet of waxed or parchment paper. To minimize food coloring mess, poke a hole in the dough for the food coloring and cover it with plain dough before kneading in the color. Add flour if the modeling dough is too sticky.

Store the modeling dough at room temperature in sealed bags or containers.

## LEADER RESOURCE 5: SIGNPOST FOR SESSION 9

*Cut out the signpost to attach to the Faithful Journeys Path.*





## FIND OUT MORE

### Clyde Tombaugh

Learn more about his life from a [UU World article](#), a [Wikipedia article](#), and the [Academy of Achievement](#).

Books about him include *Clyde Tombaugh: Discoverer of Planet Pluto*, by David H. Levy (Sky Publishing, 2007), and a picture book, *Clyde Tombaugh and the Search for Planet X*, by Margaret K. Wetterer (Carolrhoda Books, 1996).

### Astronomy for Everyone

On the NASA/JPL website, [Night Sky Network: Astronomy Outreach and Education](#), search for astronomy clubs in your area and find out about presentations and events they may offer. The site provides sky-watching resources and indoor and outdoor activities for children and multiage groups.

The Astronomical Society of the Pacific's [Family ASTRO program](#) offers a multitude of activities with supporting resources, as well as online games and research tools.

# SESSION 10: SPEAK OUT

## INTRODUCTION

*A "No" uttered from the deepest conviction is better than a "Yes" merely uttered to please, or worse, to avoid trouble. — Mohandas Gandhi*

In this session, participants are introduced to the fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, the right of conscience and the use of democratic process. We introduce Maria Cook (1779-1835), an early Universalist preacher, who responded to a trumped-up vagrancy charge by practicing passive resistance and, when jailed, preached Universalism to those who shared her incarceration. In Maria Cook, participants find a model of someone who held fast to the teachings of her conscience in the face of authority and found peaceful, dignified ways to express her views even when those around her tried to shut her down. Participants role-play responses to situations that challenge their consciences or beliefs. We will add the signpost "Speak Out" to our Faithful Journeys Path.

## GOALS

This session will:

- Strengthen Unitarian Universalist identity by introducing Maria Cook, a 19th-century Universalist minister and practitioner of civil disobedience, as an example of our second Source, words and deeds of prophetic women and men that challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love
- Explore our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process
- Demonstrate how standing up to others, including those in power, in order to follow one's conscience can be an act of faith
- Give participants inspiration, affirmation, and strategies for standing up for what they think is right in their daily lives
- Teach children how their actions can and do express their faith — their ideas of right and wrong, their values and their beliefs.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Learn about Universalist history and the UU heritage of action for justice, through a story about Maria Cook
- Build awareness of their own individual beliefs through the Move It! values continuum game
- Learn about speaking out and nonviolent resistance as strategies for social change, and consider ways to employ them in their own lives
- Experience "speak out" and nonviolence strategies by standing up for what they believe is right, in a role play
- Name ways they might act that would reflect the signpost "Speak Out"
- Name ways they did or could translate their Unitarian Universalist faith and/or Principles into action.

## SESSION-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	2
Activity 1: Faithful Footprints	5
Activity 2: Move It! Values Continuum	5
Activity 3: Story Basket and Centering	5
Activity 4: Story — Speaking Out: Maria Cook, Universalist Preacher	8
Activity 5: Justice Role Plays	20
Activity 6: I Object!	8
Faith in Action: Start a Petition	45
Closing	7
Alternate Activity 1: Democratic Decision Making	20

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

If it would be helpful in creating sacred space, light a candle or chalice. Consider times when you have spoken up for what you believed was right, in a personal or political setting. Why did you speak out? What did it cost you? What did you gain?

Have there been occasions when you wanted to speak out, but did not? What stopped you?



Think about how your own experiences can help you empower the children to recognize and claim, in faith, their right and responsibility to speak out.

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Chalice candle or LED/battery-operated candle
- Lighter and extinguisher, if needed
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Posters of the Unitarian Universalist Principles in both adult and children's language, or copies of Session 1, [Handout 1](#) (included in this document) for all participants

### Preparation for Activity

- Decide whether you will use the provided opening words or other opening words, such as those offered in Session 1, Leader Resource 2, Alternate Openings. It is recommended that you use the same opening words for each session.
- Print the opening words on newsprint. Post the newsprint where the children will be able to see it when they gather.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle. Light the chalice. Point out the chalice-lighting words on the newsprint and invite the group to read together:

We light this flame for the light of truth, the warmth of love, and the energy of action.

Indicate the poster(s) of the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Or, give each child a copy of the handout. Ask a volunteer to read the fifth Principle in the adult language. Ask a second volunteer to read the children's version of the fifth Principle. Then, say:

Today we will learn about this Unitarian Universalist Principle — what it means, and what kinds of actions show it. Let's get started.

Collect handouts for reuse.

### Including All Participants

If not all participants are fluent readers, take the time to teach the group to say the opening words from memory.

If the group has children who are sensitive to perfumes or other chemicals, use unscented candles or an electric or battery-operated flame. An electric flame is also recommended if you may not use open flames or if any participants are afraid of fire.

## ACTIVITY 1: FAITHFUL FOOTPRINTS (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path (Session 1, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))
- Cutouts of footprints and (optional) wheelchair tracks, at least one for each participant, in a variety of colors (Session 1, [Leader Resources 3](#) and [4](#) (included in this document))
- Markers
- Push pins, glue stick or tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Think of something you have done since the group last met that represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. Identify the Principle(s) your action reflected. Write a few words about it on a footprint, with your name.

### Description of Activity

This activity reinforces children's learning as they model translating faith into action for one another. To strengthen children's Unitarian Universalist identity, help participants see how their own behavior demonstrates specific Principles.

Gather in a circle. Point to the Faithful Journeys Path and say:

Together we are taking a journey to learn what it means to live as Unitarian Universalists. Each time we meet, we talk about ways our actions show our beliefs about what is right and good. This is called "putting our faith into action."

When you share about something you have done that shows what you believe, you can choose a footprint or wheelchair to add to our Faithful Journeys Path.

Hold up the footprint you made of your own faithful action. Tell what you did and how it represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. If you can connect your action to a Principle, briefly explain. For example:

- I made phone calls to remind people to vote (or, I voted), because I believe in our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, that we all have a say in matters that concern us. When people vote, that's one way to have every person's opinion be counted.
- I have a neighbor who was sick last week. I helped him bring his trash outside, because I believe in the second Unitarian Universalist

Principle, which says we believe in being kind and fair.

- I put my water bottles and juice bottles in the recycling bin, because I believe in the seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, which reminds us to take care of the Earth that all life shares.

Ask the children to think of an act they have done, since you met last, that reflects Unitarian Universalism. You may wish to prompt:

- Did anyone do something that helped make things fair? (justice, equity, and compassion)
- Did anyone help someone else? (inherent worth and dignity, interdependent web)
- Did anyone take care of nature or another animal? (interdependent web)
- Did anyone listen to someone else who had a very different opinion? (search for truth and meaning, acceptance of one another)
- Did anyone play with someone new whom you did not know very well? (acceptance of one another, encouragement to spiritual growth)

As participants name their actions, write a word or phrase describing the action on a footprint or wheelchair cutout. Invite children to write their names on their cutouts and post them on the Faithful Journeys Path. Have them progress along the path over the course of the program.

To stay within the time frame for this activity, use these guidelines:

- Encourage children to share their faithful act in one or two brief sentences.
- If the group is big, limit children to sharing only one faithful act per week.

It is very important to avoid judging participants, either with criticism or praise. Avoid phrases like "Great job!" or "You're fantastic!" which might suggest that acts of faith vary in their value or encourage children to compete to share the "best" act.

You should, however, respond to each child's contribution. Listen carefully to what a child tells you. After each child shares, say something like, "Thank you for sharing," followed by a summarizing sentence, such as:

- Being kind to new children at school is an action that treats others like they are important.

- Suggesting your friends all vote to decide what to play together is an action of democracy and fairness.
- Cleaning up garbage at the park is an action to take care of the Earth.
- Teaching your brother to talk is an action that affirms each person's learning.
- Taking care of your dog is an action of love.

Identify the Unitarian Universalist Principles each act represents; refer to the Principles poster if the room has one or indicate a relevant signpost on the Faithful Journeys Path. By responding specifically to each child's faithful actions, you will help them feel pride, a sense of accomplishment, and their own empowerment as agents whose actions and choices reflect Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values.

### Including All Participants

Along with cut-out footprints (Session 1, Handout 3, Faithful Footprints), provide wheelchairs (Session 1, Handout 4, Making Tracks for Faith) in the same colors of paper. Encourage all the children — not just those who use wheelchairs for mobility — to sometimes use a wheelchair instead of footprints to represent their faithful actions.

## ACTIVITY 2: MOVE IT! VALUES CONTINUUM (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of [Leader Resource 1](#) (included in this document), Values Continuum

### Preparation for Activity

- Create an open space to accommodate a line of people stretching out from your right and your left.

### Description of Activity

This exercise gives all participants the chance to literally take a stand for what they think is true.

Gather the children and say:

Our story today is about a Universalist woman almost two hundred years ago who stood up and spoke out on her religious beliefs. Before we hear the story, let's play a game that gives each of you a chance to place your body where your beliefs are.

I'm going to read some sentences that give you two different choices about what you think is right or true. If you agree with the first choice, come over here to my right side. If you agree

with the second choice, come over here to my left. If you think the truth is somewhere in between, that is okay. Place yourself in the spot that best shows what you think is true or right. For example, if you mostly think the first choice is true but also think the second choice is a little bit true, you could come to my right side, close to the middle.

There is no right or wrong answer to any of these questions. You just need to decide for yourself what you think is true.

Begin reading the choices in Leader Resource 1. If you have time, invite children to share after each question why they placed themselves where they did.

After you have offered all the choices, regather the children in a circle. Ask how it felt when they stood with many others. How about times when they stood in a place with fewer children, or by themselves, and realized most people did not agree with them? Ask them if being together in Faithful Journeys made it easier or harder to figure out where to stand. Would they answer every question the same way privately, if they were thinking about it alone?

### **ACTIVITY 3: STORY BASKET AND CENTERING (5 MINUTES)**

#### **Materials for Activity**

- A large basket
- Objects related to the story "Speaking Out: Maria Cook, Universalist Preacher," such as a costume prop suggesting an early 19th-century woman's traveling outfit, toy handcuffs, or an old-looking, hardcover Bible.
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Box or small table and a decorative cloth cover to form a small altar

#### **Preparation for Activity**

- Place the story-related items and the sound instrument in the story basket.
- Place the filled basket in the storytelling area you have designated.
- If you will make an altar as a focal point for story objects, set up the box or table you will use next to your storytelling area. Place the decorative cloth on the altar. It is not necessary to ritualize the altar as a sacred place. It can simply serve as a focal point where objects related to the story will be visible while you tell the story.

#### **Description of Activity**

Gather the children in a circle in your storytelling area. Show them the storytelling basket. Say something like, "Let's see what's in our story basket today."

Tell the group the items in the story basket will be placed on this altar or table after the children have passed them around the circle. Take the story-related items from the basket, one at a time, and pass them around. Objects that are fragile or should not be passed around for any reason can be held up for all to see and then placed directly on the altar.

Briefly name the various objects. Explain that our religion, Unitarian Universalism, has a long history in the U.S., and Maria Cook, a Universalist preacher, is part of it. As the items come back to you, display them on the altar for children to look at as they listen to the story.

Remove the sound instrument from the story basket. Tell the children that every time you tell a story in Faithful Journeys, you will first use the instrument to help them get their ears, minds, and bodies ready to listen. Invite them to sit comfortably and close their eyes (if they are comfortable doing so). You may tell them that closing their eyes can help them focus on just listening.

In a calm voice, say:

As you breathe in, feel your body opening up with air. As you breathe out, feel yourself relaxing.

Repeat this once or twice. Then, say:

Now you are ready to listen. When I hit the chime (turn the rain stick over), listen as carefully as you can. See how long you can hear its sound. When you can no longer hear it, open your eyes and you will know it is time for the story to begin.

Sound the chime or other instrument. When the sound has gone, begin telling the story.

#### **Including All Participants**

If anyone in the group is unable to hold or pass items, or cannot see the items, make sure you or a child in the group offers the person a chance to see and touch each object, as needed.

Some people do not feel safe closing their eyes when they are in a group. If any children resist, respect their resistance and suggest that they find a single point of focus to look at instead.

If you have a basket of fidget objects for children who may listen and learn more effectively with something in their hands, make the fidget object basket available

during this activity. Remind children where it is before you begin the "centering" part of this activity. Find a full description of fidget objects and guidance on using them in Session 2, Leader Resource 2.

## ACTIVITY 4: STORY — SPEAKING OUT — MARIA COOK, UNIVERSALIST PREACHER (8 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of the story "[Speaking Out: Maria Cook, Universalist Preacher](#)" (included in this document)
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Fidget object basket (Session 2, Leader Resource 2)

### Preparation for Activity

- Read the story a few times. Think about how you might use items from the story basket as props.
- Consider telling the story rather than reading it. Practice telling it aloud.

### Description of Activity

In this story, Maria Cook, the first woman Universalist preacher, exemplifies our fifth Principle, the right of conscience and the use of democratic process. In addition, the story introduces nonviolent resistance, a physical way of

speaking out.

Before you begin, look around the room and make eye contact with each person. Read or tell the story.

Ring the chime (or other sound instrument) to indicate that the story is over. Then, guide a brief discussion with these questions:

- Have you ever stood up for what you thought was right, even when it was uncomfortable or difficult (for example, standing up for someone who was being bullied, or telling your religious beliefs to friends who you know believe differently)?
- How did it feel?

## ACTIVITY 5: JUSTICE ROLE PLAYS (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Copies of [Leader Resource 2](#), (included in this document) Justice Role Plays, one per participant
- Optional: Scarves, jackets, or other simple costume props

### Preparation for Activity

- Read the scenarios a few times and familiarize yourself with them. Jot down any additional questions you would like to pose.
- Adapt or add to the leader resource as you wish. You may wish to cut scenarios into separate strips. Highlight one role on each strip of paper to help readers follow their own part.
- If you may not have time for all the scenarios and discussion, prioritize a few.

### Description of Activity

Gather the group so everyone can see people who will stand in the front. Solicit volunteers to perform the role in the first scenario, hand them their scripts, and offer them a few minutes and help, as needed, to prepare. You may wish to offer them simple props or costumes.

After they have presented the scenario, pose the questions provided and invite the children to suggest what should happen next. You may wish to then have children improvise what might happen if the characters followed through on participants' suggestions of what people in that scenario might do.

Present and discuss as many scenarios as time allows. Conclude by thanking children for acting the roles and considering faithful ways to act in these scenarios.

Affirm:

Though it can be hard to do, our faith asks us to be ready for chances to make things more fair by speaking out.

### Including All Participants

Give performers ample time to review the scenarios, especially if you are not sure they all read fluently. Ask if anyone has questions about how to pronounce words. You could also stand near performers to prompt as needed.

## ACTIVITY 6: I OBJECT! (8 MINUTES)

### Preparation for Activity

- Think of an example you can use to demonstrate "I Object!" — something that really bothers you, which children will be able to relate to.

### Description of Activity

This activity will give all participants an opportunity to be heard while they voice their opposition to something that bothers them.

Form a circle. Explain, in your own words:

Most of us have noticed something in our world we think is wrong. We might think it's wrong that we have to do homework. We might think it's wrong that people drop litter on the ground, or that there is war. Or, like Maria Cook, we might think it's wrong to keep people quiet just because they are girls and not boys.

Maria objected. She did it without screaming or hitting. She did it by standing up and speaking out. We are going to try that now. Each person who wants to will have the chance to come into the circle and say "I object! It is wrong that ... ."

When the person in the center has stated their objection, together, the rest of us will ask "Why?" Then we will listen carefully as the person in the center explains why they object. We are giving each other practice in standing up and speaking out. And we will learn what some of us believe is wrong.

When the person is done, we will ask, together, "What would be better?" The person in the center can then say what they think would be better.

Model entering the circle to voice an objection. A co-leader can prompt the group's unison parts. You might say:

I object! It is wrong when people drive bigger cars than they need.

Direct the children to ask you, "Why?" You might say:

Big cars use a lot of gasoline, which contributes to global warming. Then everyone on the planet suffers because of some people's cars. And big cars take up too much room on the roads and make it hard for little cars and bicycles and people walking.

Direct the group to ask you, "What would be better?" You might answer:

People should buy more fuel-efficient cars. Car companies should only sell cars that get reasonable gas mileage. People who do not need a really big car should get a small one, or not use a car. People should drive less and walk or bicycle more!

### Including All Participants

Children who may be uncomfortable speaking in front of the group can actively learn as they listen and respond to others in the circle. Avoid putting anyone on the spot; ask for volunteers rather than going around the circle and asking each child to take center stage.

## CLOSING (7 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path
- Signpost for Session 10 ([Leader Resource 3](#) (included in this document)) and pins, glue stick or tape
- Copies of Session 1, [Leader Resource 8](#) (included in this document), UU Principles Song, for all participants
- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Print out Leader Resource 3 and cut out the signpost.
- Optional: Write the UU Principles Song lyrics on newsprint, and post.
- Customize, print out and photocopy the Taking It Home section for all participants.

### Description of Activity

This activity helps children get used to practicing a closing ritual as a way of affirming their belonging in the faith community.

Gather the group in a circle. Thank the children for participating and sharing their stories and ideas in this session. Tell them something you liked about the way they worked together as a community.

Point out the Faithful Journeys Path. Say, in your own words:

Our Faithful Journeys Path shows our journey to live our lives and act in ways that reflect our Unitarian Universalist beliefs and faith. The signposts direct us by reminding us about our Principles.

Today's signpost is "Speak Out." It stands for our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, the right

of conscience and the use of the democratic process. It means that we believe that people deserve a voice and a vote in matters that concern them.

Attach the signpost to the Faithful Journeys Path.

Remind the children that next time they meet they will have a chance to add Faithful Footprints to the Faithful Journeys Path. Encourage them to use their voices to speak out about what they think is true or fair, or to use their votes or otherwise participate in a democratic process. Suggest children make sure a club at school includes everyone; choose something to change at school or home and start a petition to get people to sign and give to the decision-makers; or speak out to a parent, a teacher, or another person in authority to protest a decision or rule they think is unfair.

Point out the words to the UU Principles Song. Tell the children it is sung to the tune of "Old McDonald Had a Farm." Lead the children in singing the verse about the fifth Principle. Then, sing the entire song together. Explain that you will learn about all of the Principles during the Faithful Journeys program.

Distribute the Taking It Home handout. Thank the children, tell them you look forward to seeing them next time, and dismiss the group.

## **FAITH IN ACTION: START A PETITION (45 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Paper and pen, or computer and printer

### **Description of Activity**

Have the children brainstorm what they think is unfair and needs to change in your congregation (for example, you might focus on limitations turned up during the accessibility audit in Session 3) or the local or wider community to which you all belong. Write all ideas on newsprint. Then, invite the children to vote on one for which they would like to raise support by holding a petition drive.

Explain in your own words:

A petition is a request for something to change. We will write a description of the problem, and change we want to happen. People will sign the petition if they agree with the change it suggests. Then, we will give the list of signatures to a person or group that has the power to make that change happen.

A petition with a lot of signatures can be a powerful tool to convince those in power that lots of people want action or change.

Engage the children in articulating their concern and the changes they wish to suggest. Help them determine the best recipient for your petition — a person or group with the power to make the change they seek. Then, create a petition with the concern stated at the top and spaces for signatures below. (This may be easiest on a laptop computer.) Make copies, so children can circulate the petition in pairs or small groups.

Guide the children to practice how they will ask others of all ages to sign the petition. Help them articulate what the petition is about. Prepare them for encounters with individuals who might not want to sign. Arrange for the children to solicit signatures during your congregation's coffee hour.

Follow through. Send the signed petition to the designated person or group. Then, seek a response from the petition's recipient(s) if none is forthcoming, and share it with the children in the group. It is important that they learn about any impact their actions have. Raising issues and changing minds are important faithful acts in the democratic process.

## **LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING**

Take a few minutes to evaluate the session with your co-leader immediately afterward, while it is fresh. Share your thoughts with any other team co-leaders and your director of religious education. You might find it helpful to consider these questions:

- Which activities worked well? What didn't work so well?
- Were all children actively engaged? If not, who wasn't and why might that have been? How could they be better included next time?
- How well did the activities match the learning styles of the children in this group? What could we do differently to better accommodate for learning styles in future sessions?
- How well did the session balance physically active with sedentary activities?
- How was the timing? What might need to be done differently for a session to work better within our time frame?
- Were there any behavior issues? If so, how can we address them in the future? Do we need more information or help in this area?



- What connections did children make with the activities and/or central ideas? How did we know that was occurring?
- What connections did children make with each other? What connections did we make with the children? When was that most evident?
- Are we successfully creating a program characterized by inclusion, diversity appreciation, respect, noncompetitive environment, and welcome? What could we have done differently?
- What questions or issues arose in this session that we might like to discuss with our director of religious education?

## TAKING IT HOME

*A "No" uttered from the deepest conviction is better than a "Yes" merely uttered to please, or worse, to avoid trouble. — Mohandas Gandhi*

**IN TODAY'S SESSION...** We learned about the fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process. We heard about Maria Cook (1779-1835), an early Universalist preacher who responded to an unfair vagrancy charge by practicing passive resistance, and then preached Universalism to others in prison. We role-played scenarios in which people felt they were being treated unfairly and talked about ways the characters could respond. Children had the chance to stand in the middle of our group circle and voice something they object to, why they object to it, and what they think would be a better way. We added the signpost "Speak Out" to our Faithful Journeys Path.

**EXPLORE THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Talk about...** Ask your child what they or others spoke about in the "I Object!" circle. Why did they object, and what did they tell the group they thought would be better? If your child did not share an objection, they can tell you how they felt about objections raised by others in the group. Share your own thoughts on something that really bothers you, which you think is wrong. Share why, and suggest a better course. Then, thank your child for allowing you to speak out.

**EXTEND THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Try...** If Internet petitions come to your e-mail inbox or you encounter someone collecting signatures for a petition, engage your child in conversation about the petition. Do they agree with the petition? Do they think the topic is important? How might the petition make a change?

## FAMILY ADVENTURE

As a family, participate in a protest march or vigil. Talk beforehand about what to expect. Help children understand the purpose and goals of the gathering. Point out signs, chants, and other ways the group or individuals speak out.

## A FAMILY RITUAL

Any time your child begins to whine or complain, you can interrupt with a ritual declaration of "You object!" to which the child can respond, "Yes, I object!" You can follow up with the invitations we used in the "I Object!" exercise: Ask your child, "Why?" (Affirm rational arguments, even if you do not agree.). Ask, "What would be better?" and listen for suggestions of a different solution. The ritual does not assume that you will create a different outcome — bedtime can still be bedtime! It creates a way to affirm your child in speaking out and encourage them to practice rational discourse rather than whining.

## A FAMILY GAME

Take turns finishing the sentence, "I wish ... ." The sentences can range from the socially responsible (I wish there were no war) to the extremely silly (I wish there were a parrot on your head).

## FAMILY DISCOVERY

Learn about the tradition of nonviolent resistance. You can find a [brief biography of Gandhi](#), a site dedicated to [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) and [Gandhi and King's principles of nonviolence](#) online. *Martin Luther King* by Rosemary L. Bray (Rev. Rosemary Bray McNatt), illustrated by Malcah Zeldis (New York: HarperCollins, 1995) is an excellent picture book about Dr. King.

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: DEMOCRATIC DECISION MAKING (20 MINUTES)

### Preparation for Activity

- Select a topic for discussion and voting.

### Description of Activity

Use of the democratic process is part of the fifth Principle, the center of this session. Children can practice the democratic process by holding a debate and voting on a matter that interests them. Offer a topic on which they have power to make a decision, rather than an abstract question such as "Do dogs or cats make better pets?" Possible topics might be the next cause or project for the Faithful Journeys Action Club (created in Session 4), the snacks that should be served during religious education time, or how the group should spend a ten-minute play time.



## **Variation**

If an election or ballot measure is currently of keen interest to many in your community, you may wish to share information on the issue with the children. Lead them to discuss what stand they would take. Vote on the issue after the discussion. While children's votes do not count in such elections, the voting exercise will engage them in a democratic process. To conclude this activity, empower the children to share their informed opinions with adults whose vote *will* count. Tell them that advocating for the side you think has more merit is part of the democratic process.

## STORY: SPEAKING OUT — MARIA COOK, UNIVERSALIST PREACHER

Janeen K. Grohsmeyer.

In 1779, more than two hundred years ago, a girl named Maria Cook was born in New York State. When she was born, the Americans were fighting the British in the War for Independence. The Americans wanted to have their own country where they could be independent and free to make their own decisions and say what they thought.

When Maria was four, the Americans won the war. They had their own independent country, and they were free to make their own decisions. When Maria was eight years old, Americans decided to have a constitution that promised freedom of religion and freedom of speech. The Constitution promised that, in America, people had the right to choose what to believe in and the right to speak out for what they believed.

Maria chose to believe in a religion called Universalism. People called it Universalism because that religion said God loved all people, everyone in the universe, no matter what. And since God loved everyone, eventually, everyone would be with God in heaven.

Other religions said only a few people went to heaven. The rest went to hell. And not just people who did bad things. In those religions, it didn't matter if people did good things or bad things. In those religions, people who did bad things went to hell, and some people who did good things went to hell, too. God chose only a few to come to heaven.

Maria didn't believe that. She believed that God chose everyone. She believed God loved everyone in the universe, even if they did bad things. After all, sometimes she did bad things, and her mother and father still loved her. God was her parent, too. That's what Maria believed, and so she chose to be a Universalist.

When Maria was grown up, she decided to speak out for what she believed. She started talking to people about how God loved everyone and everyone would go to heaven. She talked to everyone about Universalism. She talked to people in their houses; she talked to people on the streets; she talked to people in the stores.

And then she started talking to people in church. Not just after church or before church, but during church. She actually went up to the pulpit, where preachers go, and started talking about Universalism.

Then people started talking about her. Because, back then, even though the Constitution promised all people would have freedom of speech, it didn't really work that

way. Women weren't supposed to talk in public. Women weren't allowed to vote, which is a very important way of speaking out for what you believe in. Women were not allowed to give speeches and run for office, so no one could vote for them, either. And they certainly weren't supposed to be preachers. Some people thought it said so in the Bible.

But Maria preached anyway. She spoke out for what she believed in. She traveled from town to town, preaching about Universalism. Lots of people came to listen, even though she was a woman. She spoke so well that many people started believing in Universalism, too. In 1811, a Universalist church gave Maria Cook a letter of fellowship, and today we remember her as the first woman to be a Universalist preacher.

Not everyone liked having a woman preaching in their town. They didn't want her there. In 1813, she was arrested. The police said it was because she was a vagrant and didn't have a house to live in, even though she did, because she was staying with friends at their house. When the police came, Maria didn't argue. She didn't resist.

But she didn't help either. Maria refused to walk. The police had to pick her up and carry her to a wagon. They drove the wagon to Cooperstown. Then they had to carry her out of the wagon to go see the judge. Maria knew she hadn't done anything wrong. In the courtroom, she spoke out and told the judge that. She told him she didn't recognize his authority. She did not think he had a right to be the judge of her. She refused to answer his questions.

For that, the judge sentenced her to jail. Maria wouldn't walk there, either. The police had to pick her up and carry her to jail. And once she was there, guess what she started to do? She talked to the people in jail. She talked to the police; she talked to the prisoners; she talked to everyone she met about Universalism. She just kept right on preaching.

After a few weeks, the judge let her go. Maria continued traveling to different towns and preaching about Universalism. All her life, Maria Cook spoke out for what she believed in and did what she thought was right. She didn't yell. She didn't push or hit. She spoke out.

The Universalist religion Maria Cook talked about is part of our own heritage and part of our religion's name: Unitarian Universalist. Like Maria Cook, we believe every person should stand up and speak out for what they think is right and true. We believe everyone should have a say about matters that concern them. And no one should be put in jail for speaking out.

## LEADER RESOURCE 1: VALUES CONTINUUM

- Your friend just got a haircut that you think looks terrible, and asks you how you like it. Is it more important that your answer be (a) kind or (b) truthful?
- Your teacher at school tells your class something you're pretty sure is not true. Is it more important to (a) be polite and ignore the mistake or (b) tell the teacher and the class the information you think is correct?
- Two different friends have invited you to play at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday. One is a longtime friend and one is someone you know only a little bit. Is it more important to (a) be loyal, and play with your old friend or (b) be open, and play with your new friend?
- A friend says people who haven't accepted Jesus are going to go to hell. You disagree. Is it more important to (a) say nothing, to avoid hurting your friend's feelings or having an argument, or (b) share your opinion and say you think your friend is wrong?
- You are the line leader, and your group is going to the cafeteria. A friend cuts in the front of the line and says they are really hungry. Is it more important to (a) follow the rules and tell your friend no or (b) help your friend by letting them cut in front of other people?

## LEADER RESOURCE 2: JUSTICE ROLE PLAYS

### Scenario 1

RICK: What do you think of that new guy in our class?

GREG: He seems kind of weird.

JOSH: Yeah, I mean, what kind of name is Harvinder?

GREG: A weird name.

RICK: And what's up with that funny topknot turban he wears on his head? Does he ever take it off? Like, does he leave it on in the shower?

JOSH: Probably not, and that's why he smells funny.

RICK: Well, I think we should just go over there and pull that turban thingy off him. Let him try looking like a normal person for once.

GREG AND JOSH: Yeah ... .

LEADER: If you are standing by and hear this conversation, what do you do? What would you do if Rick, Greg, and Josh were your friends? What would you do if you didn't know them?

### Scenario 2

SHANNON: Hi, Mr. Jacobs.

MR. JACOBS: Hi, Shannon.

SHANNON: This is my mom.

SHANNON'S MOM: Call me Jane.

MR. JACOBS: Hi, Jane, nice to meet you.

SHANNON: I heard about the new rugby team starting today. I want to sign up.

MR. JACOBS: (laughs) You're kidding, right? Rugby is not a girl's sport.

SHANNON'S MOM: Why not?

MR. JACOBS: It's a very rough game. She would get flattened out there. It just is not safe.

SHANNON: Well, I am a pretty tough girl. I play soccer, and I have gotten kicked before, lots of times. I can handle it.

MR. JACOBS: You say that now, but you do not even know what the game is like. No, I am sorry, but no girls.

LEADER: What would you do if you were Shannon? What would you do if you were Shannon's mom? What would you do if you were Shannon's friend, and you heard this conversation? What if you were a boy who was there to join the rugby team?

### Scenario 3

KIMI: Mrs. Brown, Chris didn't say the Pledge of Allegiance!

MRS. BROWN: Chris, is that true? What's going on?

CHRIS: Well, I just didn't say some of it.

MRS. BROWN: What do you mean?

CHRIS: The Pledge says "One nation, under God," and I do not think I believe in God, so I didn't say that part.

MRS. BROWN: But, Chris, the whole class says the Pledge of Allegiance. If you do not say it, you are not only breaking a rule. You are not being a good American.

KIMI: Nobody thinks about the Pledge of Allegiance, anyway. We just say the words. I am not sure I even know what "allegiance" *means*. Why not just say it?

CHRIS: I know a pledge is a promise. I do not want to promise something I do not think is true.

MRS. BROWN: Well, in my class everyone says the Pledge of Allegiance. That is the rule. We do not always have to like the rules, but we do have to follow them.

LEADER: What would you do if you were Chris? What if you were Kimi, or another student in Mrs. Brown's class?

#### **Scenario 4**

MR. LEE: I am so excited to meet our new minister!

SUE-LIN: We have a new minister?

MRS. LEE: Well, almost. You see, our congregation has a ministerial search committee. They found a minister who they think is right for us. She'll be here today to meet everybody and lead worship.

MR. LEE: She will meet with some of the members and answer our questions all this week. Then, everybody votes to decide if she will be our new minister or not.

SUE-LIN: Cool! So when do we vote?

MR. LEE: Sorry, Sue-Lin. Only church members get to vote. You cannot be an official member until you are sixteen.

SUE-LIN: But, that's not fair. What if I do not like her, and then I do not get a vote, and then I am stuck with her?

MR. LEE: I am sure you will like her.

SUE-LIN: Wait! You said that this week she will meet everybody and answer questions. When do the kids get to ask her questions?

MR. LEE: There is a family potluck Thursday night. You can meet her then.

SUE-LIN: And ask a lot of questions?

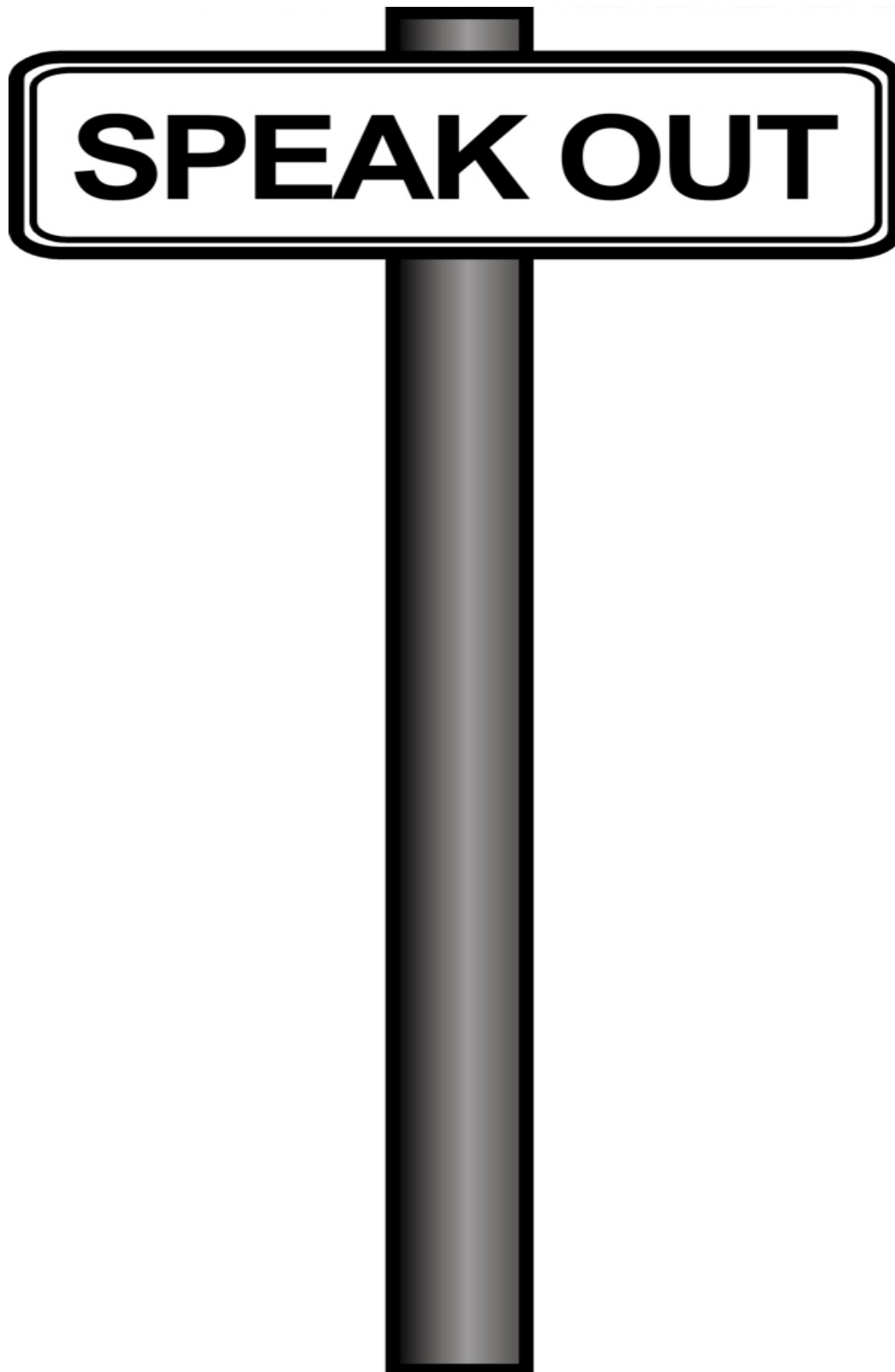
MR. LEE: Well, no, that will be more like a party.

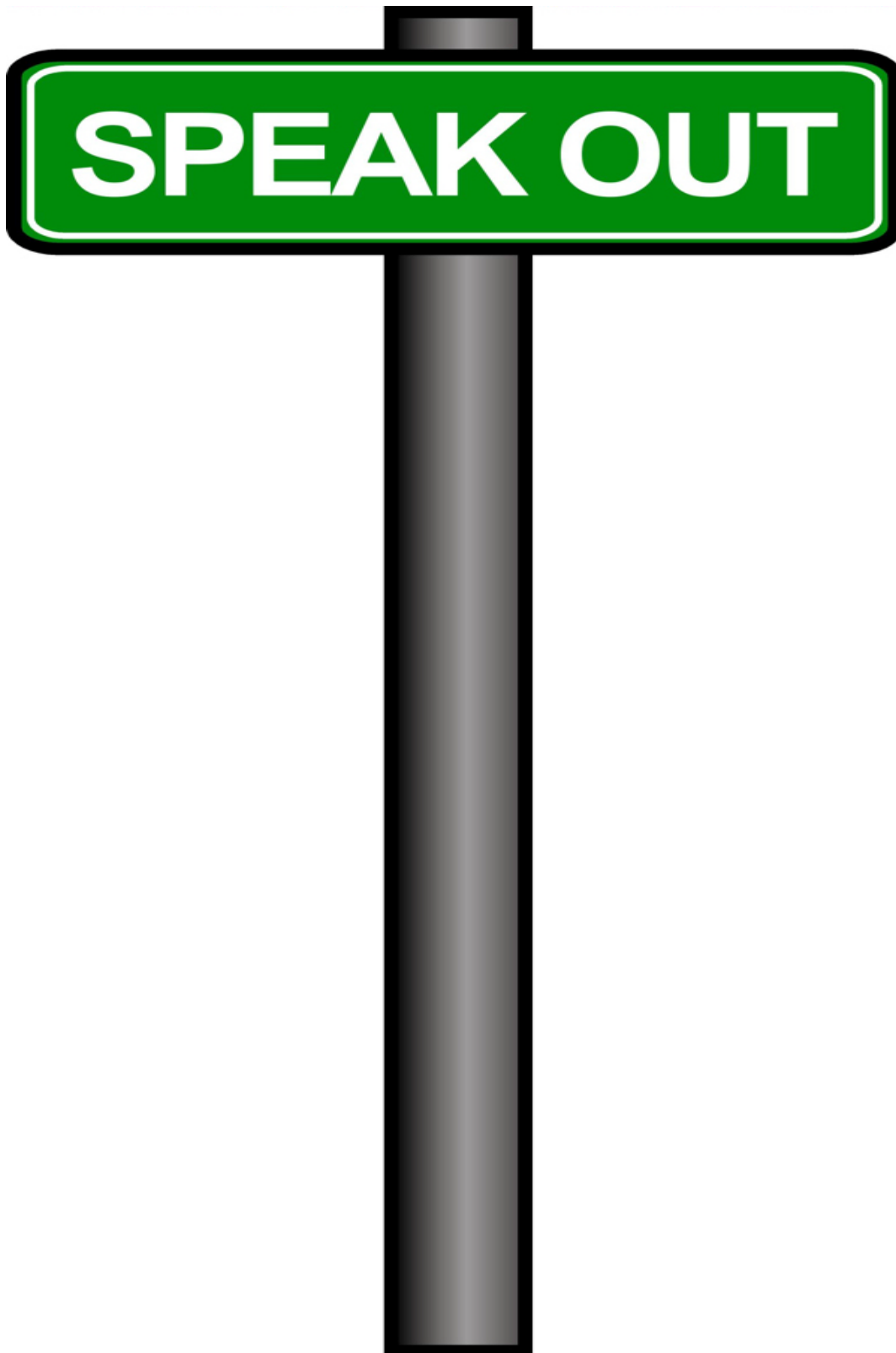
SUE-LIN: This is not right! I learned in Faithful Journeys that UUs believe everyone should have a voice and a vote. Our congregation is making a big decision, and kids do not get a voice *or* a vote!

LEADER: What would you do if you were Sue-Lin? What would you do if you were her parents?

## LEADER RESOURCE 3: SIGNPOST FOR SESSION 10

*Cut out the signpost to attach to the Faithful Journeys Path.*





## FIND OUT MORE

### **Maria Cook**

A brief [biography of Maria Cook](#) is available online.

### **Nonviolent Resistance**

Explore the tradition of nonviolent resistance by reading a [brief biography of Gandhi](#), a website dedicated to [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) and [Gandhi and King's principles of nonviolence](#).

*Martin Luther King* by Rosemary L. Bray (Rev. Rosemary Bray McNatt), illustrated by Malcah Zeldis (New York: HarperCollins, 1995) is an excellent picture book about Dr. King.



# SESSION 11: GET INVOLVED

## INTRODUCTION

*We are learning that a standard of social ethics is not attained by traveling a sequestered byway, but by mixing on the thronged and common road where all must turn out for one another, and at least see the size of one another's burden. — Jane Addams, in Democracy and Social Ethics*

This session demonstrates how children can affirm and promote our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, the right of conscience and the use of democratic process. Participants will learn about our Association's leadership role in contemporary justice issues and the impact Unitarian Universalist children and adults had when they sent thousands of handmade valentines to California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to promote marriage equality. The group will choose an issue they are concerned about and give voice to their convictions in postcards or a petition to congregational leaders or government lawmakers. We will add the signpost "Get Involved" to our Faithful Journeys Path.

Activity 5 assumes the group formed a Faithful Journeys Action Club in Session 4 and began a project. If you have not formed a club, or need to choose an issue to address, use Alternate Activity 1 to lead a democratic process for the group to choose an issue or project. Research potential issues to offer the children specific choices. Consider recruiting additional co-leaders from your congregation's social action committee to help lead these activities. Or, reach out to youth and adults who may be interested in the issue(s) you may select.

To model your action on the valentines story and send valentines for marriage equality, use Alternate Activity 2.

## GOALS

This session will:

- Teach and reinforce our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large
- Strengthen Unitarian Universalist identity by presenting contemporary Unitarian Universalists' work for marriage equality and our denomination's leadership role in this justice campaign
- Encourage civic responsibility and involvement as an expression of Unitarian Universalist faith

- Promote marriage equality as a justice issue.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Become empowered as people who can act in faith and make a difference by expressing their convictions in a democratic process
- Learn how Unitarian Universalists of all ages in California spoke up for marriage equality
- Learn about the democratic process and practice civic responsibility through participation in an action campaign
- Experience different feelings associated with justice and injustice through singing a justice song
- Name ways that they might act which would reflect the signpost "Get Involved"
- Name ways that they have translated faith into action by participating in the Faithful Footprints exercise.

## SESSION-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	2
Activity 1: Faithful Footprints	5
Activity 2: Move It! If You Want Justice and You Know It, Clap Your Hands	8
Activity 3: Story Basket and Centering	5
Activity 4: Story — Valentines for the Governor	10
Activity 5: Get Involved Action Campaign	23
Faith in Action: Congregational Action Campaign	30
Closing	7
Alternate Activity 1: Selecting a Cause for Get Involved Action Campaign	10
Alternate Activity 2: Valentines for Marriage Equality	20
Alternate Activity 3: Teach and Lead a Justice Song during Worship Service	

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

If it would be helpful in creating sacred space, light a candle or chalice. Reflect on your own feelings relative to social change, your faith, and the democratic process. What does the fifth Principle, the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process, mean to you? How does it inform your living?

Ask yourself:

- How much faith do you have in the wisdom of the democratic process?
- How confident do you feel that your participation can effect change?
- What is your experience of having an impact in the democratic process, even when your cause fails to become policy or law?
- What connections do you feel between your spiritual growth and getting involved in the world around you? How would you wish for the children in Faithful Journeys to answer this question, after experiencing this session?

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Chalice candle or LED/battery-operated candle
- Lighter and extinguisher, if needed
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Posters of the Unitarian Universalist Principles in both adult and children's language, or copies of Session 1, [Handout 1](#) (included in this document) for all participants

### Preparation for Activity

- Decide whether you will use the provided opening words or other opening words, such as those offered in Session 1, Leader Resource 2, Alternate Openings. It is recommended that you use the same opening words for each session.
- Print the opening words on newsprint. Post the newsprint where the children will be able to see it when they gather.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle. Light the chalice. Point out the chalice-lighting words on the newsprint and invite the group to read together:

We light this flame for the light of truth, the warmth of love, and the energy of action.

Indicate the poster(s) of the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Or, give each child a copy of the handout. Ask a volunteer to read the fifth Principle in the adult language. Ask a second volunteer to read the children's version of the fifth Principle. Then, say:

Today we will learn about this Unitarian Universalist Principle — what it means, and what kinds of actions show it. Let's get started.

Collect handouts for reuse.

### Including All Participants

If not all participants are fluent readers, take the time to teach the group to say the opening words from memory.

If the group has children who are sensitive to perfumes or other chemicals, use unscented candles or an electric or battery-operated flame. An electric flame is also recommended if you may not use open flames or if any participants are afraid of fire.

## ACTIVITY 1: FAITHFUL FOOTPRINTS (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path (Session 1, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))
- Cutouts of footprints and (optional) wheelchair tracks, at least one for each participant, in a variety of colors (Session 1, [Leader Resources 3](#) and [4](#) (included in this document))
- Markers
- Push pins, glue stick or tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Think of something you have done since the group last met that represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. Identify the Principle(s) your action reflected. Write a few words about it on a footprint, with your name.

### Description of Activity

This activity reinforces children's learning as they model translating faith into action for one another. To strengthen children's Unitarian Universalist identity, help participants see how their own behavior demonstrates specific Principles.

Gather in a circle. Point to the Faithful Journeys Path and say:

Together we are taking a journey to learn what it means to live as Unitarian Universalists. Each time we meet, we talk about ways our actions show our beliefs about what is right and good. This is called "putting our faith into action."

When you share about something you have done that shows what you believe, you can choose a footprint or wheelchair to add to our Faithful Journeys Path.

Hold up the footprint you made of your own faithful action. Tell what you did and how it represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. If you can connect your action to a Principle, briefly explain. For example:

- I made phone calls to remind people to vote (or, I voted), because I believe in our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, that we all have a say in matters that concern us. When people vote, that's one way to have every person's opinion be counted.
- I have a neighbor who was sick last week. I helped him bring his trash outside, because I

believe in the second Unitarian Universalist Principle, which says we believe in being kind and fair.

- I put my water bottles and juice bottles in the recycling bin, because I believe in the seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, which reminds us to take care of the Earth that all life shares.

Ask the children to think of an act they have done, since you met last, that reflects Unitarian Universalism. You may wish to prompt:

- Did anyone do something that helped make things fair? (justice, equity, and compassion)
- Did anyone help someone else? (inherent worth and dignity, interdependent web)
- Did anyone take care of nature or another animal? (interdependent web)
- Did anyone listen to someone else who had a very different opinion? (search for truth and meaning, acceptance of one another)
- Did anyone play with someone new whom you did not know very well? (acceptance of one another, encouragement to spiritual growth)

As participants name their actions, write a word or phrase describing the action on a footprint or wheelchair cutout. Invite children to write their names on their cutouts and post them on the Faithful Journeys Path. Have them progress along the path over the course of the program.

To stay within the time frame for this activity, use these guidelines:

- Encourage children to share their faithful act in one or two brief sentences.
- If the group is big, limit children to sharing only one faithful act per week.

It is very important to avoid judging participants, either with criticism or praise. Avoid phrases like "Great job!" or "You're fantastic!" which might suggest that acts of faith vary in their value or encourage children to compete to share the "best" act.

You should, however, respond to each child's contribution. Listen carefully to what a child tells you. After each child shares, say something like, "Thank you for sharing," followed by a summarizing sentence, such as:

- Being kind to new children at school is an action that treats others like they are important.

- Suggesting your friends all vote to decide what to play together is an action of democracy and fairness.
- Cleaning up garbage at the park is an action to take care of the Earth.
- Teaching your brother to talk is an action that affirms each person's learning.
- Taking care of your dog is an action of love.

Identify the Unitarian Universalist Principles each act represents; refer to the Principles poster if the room has one or indicate a relevant signpost on the Faithful Journeys Path. By responding specifically to each child's faithful actions, you will help them feel pride, a sense of accomplishment and their own empowerment as agents whose actions and choices reflect Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values.

### **Including All Participants**

Along with cut-out footprints (Session 1, Handout 3, Faithful Footprints), provide wheelchairs (Session 1, Handout 4, Making Tracks for Faith) in the same colors of paper. Encourage all the children — not just those who use wheelchairs for mobility — to sometimes use a wheelchair instead of footprints to represent their faithful actions.

## **ACTIVITY 2: MOVE IT! IF YOU WANT JUSTICE AND YOU KNOW IT, CLAP YOUR HANDS (8 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Newsprint, markers and tape

### **Preparation for Activity**

- If the children will have an opportunity to teach and lead this song during a congregational worship service, review Alternate Activity 3 before this session. Designate a co-leader to make a handout from this activity's newsprint notes.
- If you do not know the song, "If You're Happy and You Know it, Clap Your Hands," ask someone to teach it to you (most teachers of young children probably know it).
- If you are uncomfortable leading a song, invite another adult in your congregation to come and lead this activity.
- Post blank newsprint. Make two columns for "Feelings" and "Motions."

## Description of Activity

Gather in a standing circle. Introduce the song "If You Want Justice and You Know it, Clap Your Hands," sung to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It, Clap Your Hands." Say the group will create and sing their own justice version of the song.

Ask participants to name ways they might feel when something is unfair. To help the discussion, suggest frustrated, angry, discouraged, hopeful, scared or disgusted. Ask the group what motions they might make to represent each feeling — for example, stamp your feet, wave your arms, punch a fist in the air, jump up and down, say a prayer (palms pressed together), make a snarl or give a hoot. Write the feeling words with the motions on the newsprint. Phrase them to fit in the song: If you want justice and [you're disgusted], [stomp your feet].

When you have at least five ideas listed, sing the song together, using the phrases to make verses and acting out the motions for each verse. Make sure children are standing with enough room so they will not knock into one another. Begin and end with "If You Want Justice and You Know It, Clap Your Hands."

## Including All Participants

If the group includes children with limited mobility, encourage participants to name actions that everyone can do.

## ACTIVITY 3: STORY BASKET AND CENTERING (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A large basket
- Objects related to the story "Valentines for the Governor," such as Valentine's Day cards; wedding paraphernalia, such as a miniature bride-and-groom cake decoration; a heart-shaped box such as a gift box of chocolate candy; a photograph of California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger; a map of the U.S. with California highlighted; a photo-documentary book such as [Courting Equality: A Documentary History of America's First Legal Same-Sex Marriages](#), by Patricia A. Gozemba and Karen Kahn, photographs by Marilyn Humphries (Boston: Beacon Press, 2007).
- A chime, rain stick, or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Box or small table and a decorative cloth cover to form a small altar

## Preparation for Activity

- Place story-related items and the sound instrument in the story basket. Place the filled story basket in the storytelling area.
- If you will make an altar as a focal point for story objects, set up the box or table you will use next to your storytelling area. Place the decorative cloth on the altar. It is not necessary to ritualize the altar as a sacred place. It can simply serve as a focal point where objects related to the story will be visible while you tell the story.

## Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle in your storytelling area. Show them the storytelling basket. Say something like, "Let's see what's in our story basket today."

Tell the group the items in the story basket will be placed on the altar or table after the children have passed them around the circle. Take the story-related items from the basket, one at a time.

Briefly name each item and pass it around. Objects that are fragile or should not be passed around for any reason can be held up for all to see and then placed directly on the altar. As items come back to you, display them on the altar for children to look at as they listen to the story.

Ask the children, "Who knows what marriage is? What does it mean when people get married?" Affirm that marriage is a way two people affirm that they love each other and proclaim that their relationship is a special one where they agree to take care of each other, to live together as partners in life, and possibly to be parents together. Affirm that marriage is something adults can do and that some participants may want to marry someone when they are grown up.

Then say:

Some places have laws about which adults can get married and which adults cannot. In some places, two women who love each other, or two men who love each other, are not allowed to marry each other, even if they already have a home and a family together.

Many people think this is unfair. In our faith, we believe that all love matters, and nobody's love is better or worse or more or less important than anyone else's love. In our Unitarian Universalist congregations, many people have gotten involved to ask governments to change those marriage laws so every couple who wants to can marry.

Now remove the sound instrument from the story basket. Tell the children that every time you tell a story in Faithful Journeys, you will first use the instrument to help them get their ears, minds, and bodies ready to listen. Invite them to sit comfortably and close their eyes (if they are comfortable doing so). You may tell them that closing their eyes can help them focus on just listening.

In a calm voice, say, in your own words:

As you breathe in, feel your body opening up with air. As you breathe out, feel yourself relaxing.

Repeat this once or twice and then say:

Now you are ready to listen. When I hit the chime (turn the rain stick over), listen as carefully as you can. See how long you can hear its sound. When you can no longer hear it, open your eyes and you will know it is time for the story to begin.

Sound the chime or other instrument. When the sound has gone, begin telling the story.

### Including All Participants

Make sure no participants have allergies to any items you wish to include in the story basket, such as Valentine's Day candy or snacks. A severely allergic participant may react even to an empty box of chocolates.

Make sure you or a child in the group offers a chance to see and touch each object, as needed, to anyone who is unable to hold or pass items or cannot see the items.

Some people do not feel safe closing their eyes in a group. If any children resist, respect their resistance and suggest that they find a single point of focus to look at instead.

If you have a basket of fidget objects for children who may listen and learn more effectively with something in their hands, make the fidget object basket available during this activity. Remind children where it is before you begin the "centering" part of this activity. For a full description of fidget objects and guidance on using them, see Session 2, Leader Resource 2.

## ACTIVITY 4: STORY — VALENTINES FOR THE GOVERNOR (10 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of the story "[Valentines for the Governor](#)" (included in this document)
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument

- Optional: Fidget object basket (Session 2, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))

### Preparation for Activity

- Read the story a few times. Think about how you might use items from the story basket as props.
- Consider telling the story rather than reading it. Practice telling it aloud.

### Description of Activity

The story "Valentines for the Governor" introduces marriage equality as a contemporary justice issue and presents Unitarian Universalists organizing to act on our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.

Before you begin, look around the room and make eye contact with each person. Read or tell the story.

Ring the chime (or other sound instrument) to indicate that the story is over.

When you have finished the story, guide a brief discussion with these questions:

- I wonder, have you ever had a time when you thought a rule was unfair?
- What can you do if you think something is unfair?
- I wonder, what does it mean when Unitarian Universalists say we believe in the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process? When the UUs in California made valentines for their governor, what did their consciences have to do with it? How did the UUs in the story use the democratic process?

## ACTIVITY 5: GET INVOLVED ACTION CAMPAIGN (23 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Postcards or paper and envelopes; pencils, pens or other writing/drawing implements; and correct postage stamps for mailing individual cards or letters
- Optional: Large envelopes/boxes to collect pieces for mailing or delivery
- Optional: A copy of [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document), Action Campaign Ideas

- Optional: Fact sheets, legislators' voting records and other relevant information about issue(s) you will propose or the group has already chosen

### Preparation for Activity

- As needed, consult with your director of religious education and other Faithful Journeys co-leaders to determine whether the group has formed a Faithful Journeys Action Club (see Session 4) and begun work on a justice campaign. If the group has a Faithful Journeys Action Club, confer with your director of religious education, minister, and/or social action committee to ensure you link this activity with a project already selected by the children or another appropriate congregational project.
- If the group has not formed an Action Club and/or will need to select a campaign issue, incorporate Alternate Activity 1, Selecting a Cause for Get Involved Action Campaign, into this activity. Or, use Alternate Activity 2 to lead children in a Valentines for Marriage Equality campaign in your municipality or state.
- If possible, recruit extra adult helpers for this activity. Consider inviting people who are concerned about your campaign issue, or members of the social action committee.
- Determine target audiences (legislators, local officials, etc.) for all potential issues and obtain contact names and addresses.
- Make a plan for a co-leader to deliver/mail the postcards, letters, or other messages children create. Be sure, too, to schedule a specific time, some weeks hence, to report any responses to the campaign. If you have received no response, be ready to help the children reflect on the experience and plan next steps.

### Description of Activity

This activity will help children discover and implement ways they can use the democratic process to lobby government officials for a change their conscience tells them is needed. Say, in your own words:

Unitarian Universalists believe in the democratic process. For the democratic process to work, people have to get involved.

Ask the children for ideas of how to get involved in a democracy. Affirm voting for a president, a mayor, or another official; campaigning for the election of a leader you believe will make good decisions; or working to make changes in our laws or make new laws.

Say:

When you are older, you will be able to vote for leaders who, in turn, can work for change by improving our laws. But people of any age can get involved in a democracy by telling our leaders and decision-makers what we want and what we think.

Ask the children for examples of leaders and decision-makers — people who have power to change or make laws. Affirm the U.S. president; your state's governor; a mayor, selectman/woman or city council member; a senator or representative. Affirm that your congregation uses democratic process and has leaders (e.g., minister, director of religious education, music director, board president and lay leaders).

NOTE: In a child's experience, school and family also have "laws" and leaders (principals, teachers, parents) who make them. Be ready to clarify that there are situations where adults have power and responsibility to make decisions for children. However, because we live in a democracy, most schools, communities and families have rules that promote both safety and fairness. These groups provide, or could provide, ways for children to contribute their ideas about good, safe and fair rules.

You might say:

As Unitarian Universalists, we believe children have both a right and responsibility to contribute their ideas about matters that concern them, especially when their conscience tells them something isn't right or fair.

Tell the group about the action campaign you have chosen. Brainstorm to generate a list of leaders who have power to make change; record ideas on newsprint. Then, brainstorm actions the group can take to communicate to those leaders about the issue. Discuss messages or pictures they might want to send. For example, to promote protection of polar bears from global warming, the group could send postcards with artwork about polar bears, telling state and federal legislators why an icy environment is necessary for polar bears to survive. Write key words or phrases on newsprint for children to copy.

Gather participants at work tables and invite them to create messages that express their thoughts and feelings about the campaign issue. Actively circulate to help children organize materials and articulate their ideas.

Collect finished products and prepare for mailing or delivery.



## Including All Participants

Children this age show a wide range in writing ability. Give children the option of dictating their thoughts for an adult or another child to write.

## CLOSING (7 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path
- Signpost for Session 11 ([Leader Resource 1](#) (included in this document)) and pins, glue stick or tape
- Copies of Session 1, [Leader Resource 8](#) (included in this document), UU Principles Song, for all participants
- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Print out Leader Resource 1 and cut out the signpost.
- Optional: Write the UU Principles Song lyrics on newsprint, and post.
- Customize, print out and photocopy the Taking It Home section for all participants.

### Description of Activity

This activity helps children get used to practicing a closing ritual as a way of affirming their belonging in the faith community.

Gather the group in a circle. Thank the children for participating and sharing their stories and ideas in this session. Tell them something you liked about the way they worked together as a community.

Point out the Faithful Journeys Path. Say, in your own words:

Our Faithful Journeys Path shows our journey to live our lives and act in ways that reflect our Unitarian Universalist beliefs and faith. The signposts direct us by reminding us about our Principles.

Today's signpost is "Get Involved." It is for our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process. It means that we should participate in our government and take action when we think things need to change.

Attach the signpost to the Faithful Journeys Path.

Remind the children that the next time they meet they will have a chance to add Faithful Footprints to the Faithful Journeys Path. Encourage them get involved in

something during the week. Brainstorm together what sorts of action might reflect getting involved. You might suggest sending a postcard or picture to a senator, mayor, or other government leader; making and displaying a poster about an issue you are concerned about; talking with your teacher or a religious education leader about a rule you think is unfair; or writing a letter to the owner of a business who has something in their store or company that you think is not fair.

Point out the words to the UU Principles Song. Tell the children it is sung to the tune of "Old McDonald Had a Farm." Lead the children in singing the verse about the fifth Principle. Then, sing the entire song together. Explain that you will learn about all of the Principles during the Faithful Journeys program.

Distribute the Taking It Home handout. Thank the children, tell them you look forward to seeing them next time, and dismiss the group.

## FAITH IN ACTION: CONGREGATIONAL ACTION CAMPAIGN (30 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Postcards or paper and envelopes; pencils, pens or other writing/drawing implements; and correct postage stamps for mailing individual cards or letters
- Optional: Fact sheets about your campaign issue and voting records or other relevant information about the campaign "targets"
- Optional: Copies of petition about your issue and goal, and pens for signatures

### Preparation for Activity

- With your minister, director of religious education and/or lay leaders, plan for the congregation to participate in your action during a coffee hour. Set a date as close as possible to this session so the project is fresh in children's minds.
- Publicize the campaign.
  - Announce the campaign and invite congregational participation via your website, email lists and newsletter.
  - Arrange for co-leaders or young volunteers to invite the congregation to participate, during worship announcements.
  - If appropriate, send a press release announcing the campaign to local media.



- Obtain contact information for elected officials from a U.S. government [searchable website](#).
- Set up a table and chairs for people to sit and write. Place campaign supplies, informational fact sheets, stamps, envelopes and addresses on the table.

### Description of Activity

Invite the entire congregation to participate in the campaign the Faithful Journeys group has initiated by writing postcards or letters, signing petitions or contributing artwork. Have children and leaders staff the campaign table. You may wish to assign volunteers particular roles, such as keeping track of multiple copies of a petition, collecting finished postcards or dispensing postage stamps.

### Including All Participants

It is possible you will have selected an issue that lacks unanimous appeal or agreement in your congregation. Be careful to use language in your materials, (including in your announcements to the congregation) that leaves room for diversity of opinion.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Take a few minutes to evaluate the session with your co-leader immediately afterward, while it is fresh. Share your thoughts with any other team co-leaders and your director of religious education. You might find it helpful to consider these questions:

- Which activities worked well? What didn't work so well?
- Were all children actively engaged? If not, who wasn't and why might that have been? How could they be better included next time?
- How well did the activities match the learning styles of the children in this group? What could we do differently to better accommodate for learning styles in future sessions?
- How well did the session balance physically active with sedentary activities?
- How was the timing? What might need to be done differently for a session to work better within our time frame?
- Were there any behavior issues? If so, how can we address them in the future? Do we need more information or help in this area?

- What connections did children make with the activities and/or central ideas? How did we know that was occurring?
- What connections did children make with each other? What connections did we make with the children? When was that most evident?
- Are we successfully creating a program characterized by inclusion, diversity appreciation, respect, noncompetitive environment, and welcome? What could we have done differently?
- What questions or issues arose in this session that we might like to discuss with our director of religious education?

## TAKING IT HOME

*We are learning that a standard of social ethics is not attained by traveling a sequestered byway, but by mixing on the thronged and common road where all must turn out for one another, and at least see the size of one another's burden. – Jane Addams, in Democracy and Social Ethics*

**IN TODAY'S SESSION...** We learned about a contemporary action by California UU congregations to promote marriage equality in the story "Valentines for the Governor." We learned about the fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, that we affirm and promote the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large. We discussed ways children too young to vote can participate in democratic process and government decision making, and we began an action project. Our signpost to help guide us in faithful action was "Get Involved."

**EXPLORE THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Talk about...** Ask your child to tell you about their action campaign and the message or artwork they created today. Tell your child about a time when you got involved in a campaign for change. Whether or not your cause succeeded at the time, talk about the short- and long-term impact of your action. Avoid expressing cynical or discouraging thoughts. It is important that children feel empowered to make a difference in the world.

**EXTEND THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Try...** Pay extra attention to times when your child acts from their conscience and/or gets involved in a democratic process to promote justice. Point out instances of your child getting involved by communicating their opinion on an issue to a legislator, speaking up in an unfair situation, or taking action to make a game more fair or stop a

bully. Your child will have the opportunity to share such actions in the next session.

## FAMILY ADVENTURE

Go to a vigil, demonstration or other public gathering to support an issue that is important to your family. Talk ahead of time about why this issue matters and create posters together with a constructive message for change. Afterward, ask your child to tell you their observations or questions about the experience. Affirm our faithful responsibility to get involved and express our opinions in ways that are constructive, respectful and honest.

## A FAMILY RITUAL

Every year at Valentine's Day, send valentines for change to local legislators or other community leaders. Advocate for marriage equality, civil rights, reproductive freedom or another justice issue.

## A FAMILY GAME

[Geotoys'](#) Red State/Blue State puzzle is a political map of the U.S. with two puzzle pieces for each state—one red and one blue—allowing you to physically demonstrate the results of every national election since 1789. Find [election results, 1789 to the present](#), on the History Central website.

## FAMILY DISCOVERY

**Legislative Process.** Read together the picture book *My Senator and Me: A Dog's Eye View of Washington, D.C.* Written by Massachusetts Senator Edward Kennedy, it describes the political process through the eyes of Splash, his Portuguese water dog. This book is available from [Amazon](#) and may be at a local library, as well.

"I'm Just a Bill," a song by Dave Frishberg, explains the federal legislative process in a fun way young children can understand. Read the [Schoolhouse Rock script](#) that accompanied the song when first broadcast in 1975.

[Courting Equality: A Documentary History of America's First Legal Same-Sex Marriages](#), by Patricia A. Gozemba and Karen Kahn, photographs by Marilyn Humphries (Boston: Beacon Press, 2007).

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: SELECTING A CAUSE FOR GET INVOLVED ACTION CAMPAIGN (10 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape

- A copy of [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document), Action Campaign Ideas

### Preparation for Activity

- Consult with your director of religious education, minister and/or social action committee to generate a list of campaign issue ideas and actions. If possible, find ways to dovetail with congregational justice work. Select up to five ideas to present to the children for consideration. Present action ideas that require similar materials, so you will be ready to start the children working on the campaign they choose. The best projects for children this age are concrete and have a personal connection.
- List on newsprint the project ideas you will present, and post.

### Description of Activity

Tell participants you are going to have an action campaign, like the valentines that California Unitarian Universalists sent to Governor Schwarzenegger to promote marriage equality. Show the children the list of possible campaign issues and action ideas you have prepared and describe them briefly. Remind participants that Unitarian Universalists believe in using the democratic process within our congregations, and explain that the group will use a democratic process now to choose an action campaign. Invite any children to speak briefly in favor of a particular project. Ask if any children strongly dislike any of the campaign possibilities, and remove those from the list. When this is done, vote for the favorite action campaign.

Follow this activity with Activity 5, the Get Involved Action Campaign.

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: VALENTINES FOR MARRIAGE EQUALITY (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers and tape
- A copy of the story "[Valentines for the Governor](#)" (included in this document)
- Red, pink and white construction paper
- Pens, pencils, markers and crayons
- Ribbon, lace doilies, stickers and other valentine decorations; scissors (including left-handed scissors); and glue sticks and/or glitter glue
- Box or large envelope for collecting finished cards

- Optional: Smocks (large discarded T-shirts are a good substitute), and newspaper to cover work tables

### Preparation for Activity

- Set valentine-making materials on work tables.
- Write on newsprint and post words or phrases the children may wish to use, such as "valentine," "Happy Valentine's Day," "marriage," "equality," "justice," and legislators' names.
- Recruit extra adult helpers for this activity; consider inviting people who are concerned about your campaign issue, or members of the social action committee.
- Determine target audiences (legislators, local officials, etc.) and obtain contact names and addresses.
- Make a plan to deliver/mail the finished valentines. Be sure, too, to schedule a specific time, some weeks hence, to give children an update on the state or local marriage equality campaign.

### Description of Activity

Use this activity instead of Activity 5, Get Involved Action Campaign, if a state or local marriage equality campaign is timely and the session occurs near Valentine's Day. By sending valentines to elected officials, children experience our fifth Principle, using the democratic process to promote an issue of conscience. Say, in your own words:

Unitarian Universalists believe in the democratic process. For the democratic process to work, people have to get involved.

Ask the children for ideas of how people get involved in a democracy. Affirm voting for president, mayor, or another official; campaigning for a leader to win an election; and working for change to make our laws more fair. Say:

When you are older, you will be able to vote for leaders who, in turn, can work for change by improving our laws. But people of any age can get involved in a democracy by telling our leaders and decision-makers what we want and what we think. That's what the congregations in California did. Through their valentines, they told the governor that all love is equal and that California's laws about marriage should be more fair.

Ask the children for examples of leaders and decision-makers — people who have power to change or make laws. Affirm the U.S. president and your state's governor. Mention the names of elected officials to whom the children will send valentines today.

Affirm that your congregation makes decisions using a democratic process. Mention congregational leaders by name (minister, director of religious education, music director, board president, board members). Explain they are chosen by the congregation's members.

NOTE: In a child's experience, school and family also have "laws" and leaders (principals, teachers, parents) who make them. Be ready to clarify that there are situations where adults have power and responsibility to make decisions for children. However, because we live in a democracy, most schools, communities and families use rules to promote both safety and fairness. These groups provide, or could provide, ways for children to contribute their ideas about good, safe and fair rules. You might say:

As Unitarian Universalists, we believe children have both a right and responsibility to contribute their ideas about matters that concern them, especially when their conscience tells them something isn't right or fair.

Tell the group about the state or local marriage equality campaign. Explain that, like the children in California, you will send a message about love to leaders who have power to make laws about marriage. Brainstorm messages children might use in their valentines and add suggested words or phrases to the newsprint you have posted. Refer to the story "Valentines for the Governor" to spark children's ideas.

Invite participants to create valentines with messages about marriage equality. Actively circulate to help them organize materials and articulate their ideas.

Collect finished valentines and prepare for mailing or delivery.

Be sure to follow up on this campaign with the children in a future session of Faithful Journeys. Even if you receive no response, be ready to update the children on your local marriage equality campaign and help them reflect on the experience.

### Including All Participants

Children this age show a wide range in writing ability. Give children the option of dictating their thoughts for an adult or another child to write.

## **ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 3: TEACH AND LEAD A JUSTICE SONG DURING WORSHIP SERVICE**

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Arrange with your minister, music director and director of religious education a date for the group to teach and lead this song during a worship service. Ask the music director or another musical volunteer to co-lead and/or accompany the song.
- Communicate the worship service date to Faithful Journeys parents. Request they bring children 20 minutes early, to practice.
- Prepare a handout with the verses created by participants in Activity 2. Begin and end the song with the verse "If you want justice and you know it, clap your hands." Optional: Make extra copies for participants in the congregation.

### **Description of Activity**

This activity is an extension of Activity 2. Participants will teach the congregation the justice song they created to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It, Clap Your Hands."

Gather participants 20 minutes before the start of the service. Sing the song once through together. Ask for volunteers to lead the various verses. Volunteers will sing the first line of a verse alone and model its action to teach the congregation, while the entire group and congregation join in for the rest of the verse. Practice the song with volunteer leaders doing their parts.

Teach and lead the song during the worship service, as arranged.

## STORY: VALENTINES FOR THE GOVERNOR

By Joanna Solins.

Have you ever stopped to think about all the different people you love, and all the different people who love you? There are many kinds of love, and many ways to show you love someone.

Valentine's Day is a holiday that celebrates love. People often give each other cards on Valentine's Day to show they care. Receiving a valentine can make someone feel special and appreciated, especially when it's a homemade valentine. Think about the people you would give a valentine to. Would you make one for your parents or grandparents? What about your cousins, your friends, or your neighbors? What about ... your state governor?

On Valentine's Day in 2005, thousands of Unitarian Universalists in California sent valentines to their governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger. Do you think they sent him valentines because they loved him? No. They sent him valentines because they wanted to teach him something about love.

You see, California had a law about who was allowed to get married, and who was not. The law said if a man and a woman loved each other, they were allowed to show their love and become a family by getting married. But if two men loved each other, or two women loved each other, the law said they could not get married.

We are Unitarian Universalists. We value *all* love. When a law says some people's love is better, or more important, than other people's love, we believe that is hurtful and unfair. Telling two women, or two men, who love each other, they cannot get married also means the laws won't protect them as a family. The law says their community does not have to help them share their life plans, their money, or even their children the same way other couples can.

That's why UU congregations in California decided to get involved and speak out about the law. They wanted to tell the governor how important marriage equality was to them. If he understood that, they thought he would support marriage equality, too.

The California congregations could have made lots of phone calls to the governor's office or written emails to the governor. But that was not enough. They wanted to do something big, something colorful — something that would grab the governor's attention.

In the days leading up to Valentine's Day, people in almost every UU congregation in California made valentines for Governor Schwarzenegger. Children and adults alike cut out paper hearts in red, pink, and all colors of the rainbow. They glued on ribbons and lace, sequins and feathers. They wrote messages of love, acceptance, and justice, because that's what marriage equality is all about.

"Dear Governor," wrote one woman from the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, "Roses are red, violets are blue; all people deserve the same rights as you!"

Reverend Nada Velimirovic, from Oakland, California, made a giant valentine the governor could not miss — it was almost as tall as you are! "Please stand on the side of love!" it requested, in capital letters inside a huge pink heart.

At the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara, people set up tables to make valentines during coffee hour. Members of all ages showed each other how to cut hearts out of folded paper. They made each other's cards fancy with curly ribbons and other decorations. The young people and older people working together felt joyful and hopeful as they decorated their valentines. They talked about different kinds of love and how important it is for communities to support all kinds of families, to help love hold them together. They hoped their valentine message would convince the governor.

The Santa Barbara congregation mailed their valentines to the UU Legislative Ministry in Sacramento, the capital of California. So did dozens of other congregations — 3,800 valentines in all! The valentines were collected in huge, bags made of see-through gauze — the same material that is used to make a bride's wedding veil. Everyone could see all the special cards Governor Schwarzenegger was getting. The bags stuffed with valentines were brought directly to the governor's office. Imagine thousands of valentines, all going through the metal detector at the State Capitol Building! It was a bold, beautiful statement for love.

Later that year, when Governor Schwarzenegger had the chance to support marriage equality, he did not. But don't let that make you think the valentines weren't important. Sometimes it takes a while to change someone's mind. The governor did not forget the valentines. A couple of years later, he decided he agreed with many Californians that the marriage laws were not fair. Maybe next time, he will be ready stand on the side of love.

The Valentine's Day action also helped Unitarian Universalists become leaders in the campaign for marriage equality in California. The children and adults who made valentines for the governor showed everyone how our congregations work together for justice. Even though UUs' numbers are small in California, compared to other religions, some of us were invited to a meeting where the governor explained his point of view about equal marriage. Then, we led a group of people from different religions to take the marriage equality campaign into California 's courts.

It was all because of our valentines. After that, Governor Schwarzenegger, his advisors and everyone working for marriage equality in California knew how Unitarian Universalists can unite in faithful action and use the democratic process to push for fairness.

Unitarian Universalists have not given up the fight for marriage equality. The journey may be long and difficult, but we must keep acting for love and justice. We hope we can persuade leaders like Governor Schwarzenegger to make our laws more fair. We know we have to keep trying.

## LEADER RESOURCE 1: SIGNPOST FOR SESSION 11

*Cut out the signpost to attach to the Faithful Journeys Path.*







## **LEADER RESOURCE 2: ACTION CAMPAIGN IDEAS**

### **Possible Justice Issues**

- Protest global warming
- Housing for homeless families
- Animal rights or spay/neuter campaign
- Endangered species protection
- Peace
- Marriage equality

### **Possible Actions**

- Write and send emails, postcards or letters
- Create holiday cards (such as valentines) with a message; to protest global warming, send melting ice cubes in a sealed plastic bag
- Create a petition
- Create posters for a rally or candlelit vigil

### **Target Audiences**

- Municipal leaders and elected officials
- State or federal legislators
- President or other federal government official
- Global leader
- Local business owner or school official

## FIND OUT MORE

### Unitarian Universalism and BGLT Issues

The [UUA website](#) documents Unitarian Universalist involvement in and support of bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender issues.

The UUA [Welcoming Congregations](#) program supports Unitarian Universalist congregations to actively include BGLT members in our faith communities.

### Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of California

Rev. Lindi Ramsden of the UULMC provided information for this session's story, "Valentines for the Governor." She told us more about the impact of the 2005 action:

What the valentines really did was to give UUs practice working together on this issue, so that when we had to work together to sign up on the court case, where we did win, we were ready. When we had to set up phone banking on this recent ballot measure, and do other activities such as letter-writing and public witness, we were ready, as well. We lost the recent election (to defeat Proposition 8, in 2008), but every single county gained enormous numbers of supporters for marriage equality.

When you lose, if you can "lose forward" you have really made some strong gains, building a movement of people, hope, and practice working together. Each time, you get closer to your goal.

The [UUJMCA](#) website reports on continuing efforts on behalf of marriage equality, as well as other justice issues. Learn more about the February 2005 valentine project and see photos of this and other UULMC actions.

### Marriage Equality

For information about same-sex marriage laws in various states see a [May 2008 article](#) on Stateline.org.

Books about contemporary same sex partner relationships and marriage include *Gay Marriage, Real Life: Ten Stories of Love and Family* by Michelle Bates Deakin (Boston: Skinner House Books); *Confessions of the Other Mother: Non-Biological Lesbian Moms Tell All* by Harlyn Aizley (Boston: Beacon Press); *Courting Equality: A Documentary History of America's First Legal Same-Sex Marriages*, by Patricia A. Gozemba and Karen Kahn, photographs by Marilyn Humphries (Boston: Beacon Press, 2007); and *What Is Marriage For* by E. J. Graff (Boston: Beacon Press).

## SESSION 12: MAKE PEACE

### INTRODUCTION

*Surely they hitched their wagon to a star – and though it fell to Earth, it left a pathway so bright that it still points the way to perfection. – Susan Thwang, on the Hopedale Community co-founded by Adin Ballou*

In this session, participants explore the sixth Unitarian Universalist Principle, the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all. They hear about Adin Ballou, a Universalist Christian pacifist who helped establish the Hopedale Community, where members worked to create a new way of living based on the teachings of Jesus. Participants create peace pinwheels that represent their hopes for peace in our world. We add the signpost "Make Peace" to the Faithful Journeys Path.

### GOALS

This session will:

- Strengthen Unitarian Universalist identity as children learn about Adin Ballou and his work for peace
- Teach and reinforce our sixth Unitarian Universalist Principle, the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all
- Demonstrate how working for peace is a way to act faithfully based on our sixth Principle
- Encourage and empower participants as peacemakers
- Teach children how their actions can and do express their faith — their ideas of right and wrong, their values and their beliefs.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Learn about Unitarian Universalist history in working for peace through hearing a story about Adin Ballou
- Articulate their hopes and prayers for peace
- Explore strategies for making peace in situations in their own lives
- Learn, sing and share a few peace songs
- Identify ways they do or could act that reflect the signpost "Make Peace."

## SESSION-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	2
Activity 1: Faithful Footprints	5
Activity 2: Story Basket and Centering	5
Activity 3: Story — Adin Ballou	8
Activity 4: Peace Pinwheels	20
Activity 5: Move It! Peace Songs Parade	15
Faith in Action: Peace Parade, Songs or Vigil	
Closing	5
Alternate Activity 1: Conflict Resolution Role Plays	7

### SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

If it would be helpful in creating sacred space, light a candle or chalice. Surround yourself with the materials for making a peace pinwheel (Activity 4).

Think about people you know who have had direct experience with war, either in the military or as a civilian. Expand your thoughts to include people you do not know, elsewhere in the world, who are suffering as a result of war.

Consider your own prayers or hopes for peace in our world. If you have particularly angry feelings about war, try to let these go and allow yourself to be filled with a peaceful spirit. Holding in your heart all the people whom war has touched, create a peace pinwheel

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Chalice candle or LED/battery-operated candle
- Lighter and extinguisher, if needed
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Posters of the Unitarian Universalist Principles in both adult and children's language, or copies of Session 1, [Handout 1](#) (included in this document) for all participants

### Preparation for Activity

- Decide whether you will use the provided opening words or other opening words, such as those offered in Session 1, Leader Resource 2, Alternate Openings. It is recommended that you use the same opening words for each session.
- Print the opening words on newsprint. Post the newsprint where the children will be able to see it when they gather.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle. Light the chalice. Point out the chalice-lighting words on the newsprint and invite the group to read together:

We light this flame for the light of truth, the warmth of love, and the energy of action.

Indicate the poster(s) of the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Or, give each child a copy of the handout. Ask a volunteer to read the sixth Principle in the adult language. Ask a second volunteer to read the children's version of the sixth Principle. Then, say:

Today we will learn about this Unitarian Universalist Principle — what it means, and what kinds of actions show it. Let's get started.

Collect handouts for reuse.

### Including All Participants

If not all participants are fluent readers, take the time to teach the group to say the opening words from memory.

If the group has children who are sensitive to perfumes or other chemicals, use unscented candles or an electric or battery-operated flame. An electric flame is also recommended if you may not use open flames or if any participants are afraid of fire.

## ACTIVITY 1: FAITHFUL FOOTPRINTS (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path (Session 1, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))
- Cutouts of footprints and (optional) wheelchair tracks, at least one for each participant, in a variety of colors (Session 1, [Leader Resources 3](#) and [4](#) (included in this document))
- Markers
- Push pins, glue stick or tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Think of something you have done since the group last met that represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. Identify the Principle(s) your action reflected. Write a few words about it on a footprint, with your name.

### Description of Activity

This activity reinforces children's learning as they model translating faith into action for one another. To strengthen children's Unitarian Universalist identity, help participants see how their own behavior demonstrates specific Principles.

Gather in a circle. Point to the Faithful Journeys Path and say:

Together we are taking a journey to learn what it means to live as Unitarian Universalists. Each time we meet, we talk about ways our actions show our beliefs about what is right and good. This is called "putting our faith into action."

When you share about something you have done that shows what you believe, you can choose a footprint or wheelchair to add to our Faithful Journeys Path.

Hold up the footprint you made of your own faithful action. Tell what you did and how it represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. If you can connect your action to a Principle, briefly explain. For example:

- I made phone calls to remind people to vote (or, I voted), because I believe in our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, that we all have a say in matters that concern us. When people vote, that's one way to have every person's opinion be counted.

- I have a neighbor who was sick last week. I helped him bring his trash outside, because I believe in the second Unitarian Universalist Principle, which says we believe in being kind and fair.
- I put my water bottles and juice bottles in the recycling bin, because I believe in the seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, which reminds us to take care of the Earth which all life shares.

Ask the children to think of an act they have done, since you met last, which reflects Unitarian Universalism. You may wish to prompt:

- Did anyone do something that helped make things fair? (justice, equity, and compassion)
- Did anyone help someone else? (inherent worth and dignity, interdependent web)
- Did anyone take care of nature or another animal? (interdependent web)
- Did anyone listen to someone else who had a very different opinion? (search for truth and meaning, acceptance of one another)
- Did anyone play with someone new whom you did not know very well? (acceptance of one another, encouragement to spiritual growth)

As participants name their actions, write a word or phrase describing the action on a footprint or wheelchair cutout. Invite children to write their names on their cutouts and post them on the Faithful Journeys Path. Have them progress along the path over the course of the program.

To stay within the time frame for this activity, use these guidelines:

- Encourage children to share their faithful act in one or two brief sentences.
- If the group is big, limit children to sharing only one faithful act per week.

It is very important to avoid judging participants, either with criticism or praise. Avoid phrases like "Great job!" or "You're fantastic!" which might suggest that acts of faith vary in their value or encourage children to compete to share the "best" act.

You should, however, respond to each child's contribution. Listen carefully to what a child tells you. After each child shares, say something like, "Thank you for sharing," followed by a summarizing sentence, such as:

- Being kind to new children at school is an action that treats others like they are important.

- Suggesting your friends all vote to decide what to play together is an action of democracy and fairness.
- Cleaning up garbage at the park is an action to take care of the Earth.
- Teaching your brother to talk is an action that affirms each person's learning.
- Taking care of your dog is an action of love.

Identify the Unitarian Universalist Principles their act represents; refer to the Principles poster if the room has one or indicate a relevant signpost on the Faithful Journeys Path. By responding specifically to each child's faithful actions, you will help them feel pride, a sense of accomplishment, and their own empowerment as agents whose actions and choices reflect Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values.

### Including All Participants

Along with cut-out footprints (Session 1, Handout 3, Faithful Footprints), provide wheelchairs (Session 1, Handout 4, Making Tracks for Faith) in the same colors of paper. Encourage all the children — not just those who use wheelchairs for mobility — to sometimes use a wheelchair instead of footprints to represent their faithful actions.

## ACTIVITY 2: STORY BASKET AND CENTERING (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A large basket
- Objects related to the story "Adin Ballou," such as a picture of Adin Ballou ([Leader Resource 1](#) (included in this document)), pictures of the Hopedale Community, a copy of the picture book *To Live a Truer Life: A Story of the Hopedale Community*, or contemporary symbols of antiwar, world community, or peace
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Box or small table and a decorative cloth cover to form a small altar

### Preparation for Activity

- Place the story-related items and the sound instrument in the story basket.
- Place the filled basket in the storytelling area you have designated.
- If you will make an altar as a focal point for story objects, set up the box or table you will use next

to your storytelling area. Place the decorative cloth on the altar. It is not necessary to ritualize the altar as a sacred place. It can simply serve as a focal point where objects related to the story will be visible while you tell the story.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle in your storytelling area. Show them the storytelling basket. Say something like, "Let's see what's in our story basket today."

Tell the group the items in the story basket will be placed on this altar or table after the children have passed them around the circle. Take the story-related items from the basket, one at a time, and pass them around. Objects that are fragile or should not be passed around for any reason can be held up for all to see and then placed directly on the altar.

Briefly name the various objects. Show the picture of Adin Ballou and explain that he was a Universalist a long time ago who worked for peace and tried very hard to live his life peacefully. As the items come back to you, display them on the altar for children to look at as they listen to the story.

Now remove the sound instrument from the story basket. Tell the children that every time you tell a story in Faithful Journeys, you will first use the instrument to help them get their ears, minds, and bodies ready to listen. Invite them to sit comfortably and close their eyes (if they are comfortable doing so). You may tell them that closing their eyes can help them focus on just listening.

In a calm voice, say:

As you breathe in, feel your body opening up with air. As you breathe out, feel yourself relaxing.

Repeat this once or twice. Then, say:

Now you are ready to listen. When I hit the chime (turn the rain stick over), listen as carefully as you can. See how long you can hear its sound. When you can no longer hear it, open your eyes and you will know it is time for the story to begin.

Sound the chime or other instrument. When the sound has gone, begin telling the story.

### Including All Participants

If anyone in the group is unable to hold or pass items, or cannot see the items, make sure you or a child in the group offers the person a chance to see and touch each object, as needed.

Some people do not feel safe closing their eyes when they are in a group. If any children resist, respect their resistance and suggest that they find a single point of focus to look at instead.

If you have a basket of fidget objects for children who may listen and learn more effectively with something in their hands, make the fidget object basket available during this activity. Remind children where it is before you begin the "centering" part of this activity. For a full description of fidget objects and guidance on using them, see Session 2, Leader Resource 2, Fidget Objects.

## ACTIVITY 3: STORY — ADIN BALLOU AND THE HOPEDALE COMMUNITY (8 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of the story "[Adin Ballou and the Hopedale Community](#)" (included in this document)
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Fidget object basket (Session 2, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))

### Preparation for Activity

- Read the story a few times. Think about how you might use items from the story basket as props.
- Consider telling the story rather than reading it. Practice telling it aloud.

### Description of Activity

The story about Adin Ballou, an early Universalist minister who helped found the Hopedale Community as a place where members could attempt to live out the teachings of Jesus and their pacifist beliefs, exemplifies our sixth Unitarian Universalist Principle, the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.

Before you begin, look around the room and make eye contact with each person. Read or tell the story.

Sound the chime instrument to indicate that the story is over.

When you have finished, guide a brief discussion with these questions:

- I wonder, why did Adin Ballou want to create a separate community to live in with his family?
- I wonder, what rules would you make if you lived in a community like Hopedale?

- What do you think the people at Hopedale Community discovered about how to live together in peace?
- I wonder, what ways can we live as peacemakers today?

## ACTIVITY 4: PEACE PINWHEELS (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- One pencil with attached eraser and one straight pin for each participant, plus some extra
- Copies of [Handout 1](#), (included in this document) Peace Pinwheel Template and Instructions, for all participants, plus some extra
- Scissors (including left-handed scissors), color pencils or markers, and glue sticks or tape to share

### Preparation for Activity

- Make copies of Handout 1. Copy on different colors of paper for a varied array of pinwheels.
- Read the pinwheel instructions and make a practice pinwheel, so you can confidently help children make their own.
- Optional: Watch a video online that shows [how to make a peace pinwheel](#).
- Optional: Invite a few extra adults to help the group do this activity.
- Learn about the Pinwheels for Peace project from Leader Resource 2; find more on the [Pinwheels for Peace website](#).

### Description of Activity

Distribute materials at work tables, including a handout with the peace pinwheel template or a square of color paper for each participant (hold on to the pins and pencils until children are ready to assemble their pinwheels).

Invite children to decorate the pinwheels and draw pictures or write words expressing their hopes and prayers for peace. Then, help them cut out the pinwheel template and assemble their pinwheels.

### Including All Participants

Children who are not able to write may dictate their thoughts to a leader or draw their hopes and prayers for peace.

## ACTIVITY 5: MOVE IT! PEACE SONGS PARADE (15 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook and/or lyrics for the song(s) you will teach
- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape
- Peace pinwheels, made in Activity 4

### Preparation for Activity

- Consult with your minister and director of religious education to set a time and route for a peace parade. Confer with other religious education leaders if you wish to bring the parade into their rooms.
- Choose peace songs. Simple peace songs in *Singing the Living Tradition* include "There Is More Love Somewhere" (Hymn 95), "I've Got Peace Like a River" (Hymn 100), "Love Will Guide Us" (Hymn 131), "Circle 'Round for Freedom" (Hymn 155), "We Are a Gentle, Angry People" (Hymn 170), and "Vine and Fig Tree" (Hymn 399). Another is "Peace, Selam, Shalom;" hear it sung by its songwriter, Pat Humphries.
- Optional: Invite your music director to teach you some peace songs or suggest someone who can help lead this activity.
- Optional: Prepare handouts with song lyrics for all participants, or write lyrics on newsprint and post.

### Description of Activity

Teach the children the peace song(s) you have selected. Practice a few times. Then gather the children in a line with their peace pinwheels. Lead them in singing the peace song(s) while you parade, single file, through your selected route, holding their peace pinwheels. If the route is short, you can walk it multiple times. You may also sing the same song over a few times. When you are finished, return to the room. Invite participants to put aside their peace pinwheels and stand in a circle holding hands to sing a final verse or another round of a peace song.

### Including All Participants

Be sure a parade route is fully accessible for anyone who uses a wheelchair or has limited mobility; design the pace and length of route to be fully inclusive.



If anyone in the group or the congregation uses American Sign Language, ask that person to learn the peace song(s) in advance and join the parade to sign when the group sings. Invite this person to teach key ASL words from the song(s) to all of the children, before the parade.

## CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path
- Signpost for Session 12 ([Leader Resource 3](#) (included in this document)) and pins, glue stick or tape
- Copies of Session 1, [Leader Resource 8](#) (included in this document) UU Principles Song, for all participants
- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Print out Leader Resource 3 and cut out the signpost.
- Optional: Write the UU Principles Song lyrics on newsprint, and post.
- Customize, print out and photocopy the Taking It Home section for all participants.

### Description of Activity

This activity helps children get used to practicing a closing ritual as a way of affirming their belonging in the faith community.

Gather the group in a circle. Thank the children for participating and sharing their stories and ideas in this session. Tell them something you liked about the way they worked together as a community.

Point out the Faithful Journeys Path. Say, in your own words:

Our Faithful Journeys Path shows our journey to live our lives and act in ways that reflect our Unitarian Universalist beliefs and faith. The signposts direct us by reminding us about our Principles.

Today's signpost is "Make Peace." It is for our sixth Unitarian Universalist Principle, the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all. It means we believe we should work for peace and try to solve problems without violence or hurting each other.

Attach the signpost to the Faithful Journeys Path.

Remind the children that the next time they meet they will have a chance to add Faithful Footprints to the Faithful Journeys Path. Encourage them get involved in something during the week. Brainstorm together what sorts of action might reflect making peace. You might suggest working out a problem with a sibling or friend by finding a way to hear one another's side, staying calm when angry, or learning about the United Nations and other ways nations try to help each other settle conflicts without violence or war.

Point out the words to the UU Principles Song. Tell the children it is sung to the tune of "Old McDonald Had a Farm." Lead the children in singing the verse about the sixth Principle. Then, sing the entire song together. Explain that you will learn about all of the Principles during the Faithful Journeys program.

Distribute the Taking It Home handout. Thank the children, tell them you look forward to seeing them next time, and dismiss the group.

## FAITH IN ACTION: PEACE PARADE, SONGS OR VIGIL

### Materials for Activity

- Peace pinwheels made in Activity 4 and/or pinwheel-making materials including copies of [Handout 1](#) (included in this document), Pinwheel Template and Instructions
- Optional: Handout with lyrics for peace songs (Activity 5)

### Preparation for Activity

- **Peace Parade during Coffee Hour.** Engage your minister, director of religious education and coffee-hour planners or hosts to plan a peace parade route through the congregational building to immediately follow worship. Have the route include all spaces where members and visitors, perhaps ending in your coffee-hour space. Ask your minister or lay leaders to announce during worship that congregants are invited to join the parade when it comes by.
- **Peace Songs during Worship.** With your minister, director of religious education and/or music director, select a date for the children to sing during a regular Sunday worship service. Ask your music director to lead or accompany the songs. Arrange a rehearsal time 30 minutes before the scheduled service, as well as extra meetings to practice the songs, if needed.
- **Peace Vigil with Pinwheels.** With your minister, director of religious education and/or



social action committee, select a date for a peace vigil at your congregation. Invite your music director to lead or accompany the peace song(s) children learned during Activity 5. Announce the vigil to the entire congregation, encouraging adults to bring children. Send a press release to local media announcing the vigil and inviting your local community to join. Choose a space for your vigil, and set up the pinwheel-making materials and instructions.

### Description of Activity

**Peace Parade during Coffee Hour.** As coffee hour begins, gather the children in a line with their peace pinwheels. Tell them they may reach out their hands and encourage people to join your parade as you walk the route. Lead the group in singing the peace song(s) while you parade in a single file through your selected route, holding the peace pinwheels. If you have a short route, walk it multiple times. You may also sing the same song over a few times. Finish in your coffee-hour space, and gather in a circle holding hands while you sing a final verse or another round of a peace song.

**Peace Songs during Worship.** Sing your selected peace song(s) during the worship service as the call to worship, prelude, offertory, or an anthem, or in place of a children's story.

**Peace Vigil with Pinwheels.** Gather for a vigil. Invite congregants and friends of all ages. Spend some time in silence and some time singing peace songs. Provide materials and instructions for participants to make peace pinwheels during the vigil and write or draw their hopes for peace. End the vigil by sharing your hopes and prayers for peace while holding the pinwheels.

### Including All Participants

Be sure a parade route is accessible for anyone who uses a wheelchair or has limited mobility, design the pace and length of route to be fully inclusive.

If anyone in the congregation uses American Sign Language, invite that person to learn the words to the song(s) in advance, and sign them while others sing.

Young children may find it difficult to complete a pinwheel on their own. Designate some older children or adults to help as needed.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Take a few minutes to evaluate the session with your co-leader immediately afterward, while it is fresh. Share your thoughts with any other team co-leaders and your

director of religious education. You might find it helpful to consider these questions:

- Which activities worked well? What didn't work so well?
- Were all children actively engaged? If not, who wasn't and why might that have been? How could they be better included next time?
- How well did the activities match the learning styles of the children in this group? What could we do differently to better accommodate for learning styles in future sessions?
- How well did the session balance physically active with sedentary activities?
- How was the timing? What might need to be done differently for a session to work better within our time frame?
- Were there any behavior issues? If so, how can we address them in the future? Do we need more information or help in this area?
- What connections did children make with the activities and/or central ideas? How did we know that was occurring?
- What connections did children make with each other? What connections did we make with the children? When was that most evident?
- Are we successfully creating a program characterized by inclusion, diversity appreciation, respect, noncompetitive environment, and welcome? What could we have done differently?
- What questions or issues arose in this session that we might like to discuss with our director of religious education?

## TAKING IT HOME

*Surely they hitched their wagon to a star — and though it fell to Earth, it left a pathway so bright that it still points the way to perfection. — Susan Thwang, on the Hopedale Community co-founded by Adin Ballou*

**IN TODAY'S SESSION...** We learned about why and how to be a peacemaker by hearing the story of Adin Ballou, an early Universalist minister and founder of the Hopedale Community. We began to put in action our sixth Unitarian Universalist Principle, that we affirm and promote the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all. We thought about our hopes and prayers for peace and made peace pinwheels. We sang

peace songs during a peace parade. Our signpost to help guide us in faithful action was "Make Peace."

**EXPLORE THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Talk about...** Ask your child to show you the peace pinwheel they made and the hopes and prayers for peace they wrote or drew on it.

**EXTEND THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Try...** Pay extra attention to times when your child is a peacemaker. Point out instances of your child acting faithfully in a way that promotes the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all. In everyday conflict situations that arise, help your child see the cause-and-effect relationship between making things fair and establishing peace. Your child will have the opportunity to share their actions next time Faithful Journeys meets.

### **FAMILY ADVENTURE**

Identify a peace organization in your area. Find a regular peace vigil to visit or a peace walk to join. Make a family poster for peace and bring it with you.

### **A FAMILY RITUAL**

Hold a family meeting once a week and include a discussion of conflicts that arose both within and outside the family. Light a chalice to start your meeting to help set a serious, worshipful atmosphere. Give everyone an equal chance to speak. Celebrate peaceful solutions that occurred, and brainstorm ways to address similar conflicts in the future. Listen to all sides of unresolved conflicts, and work as a family to generate a fair solution. Close the meeting with a song, prayer, or reading and a special, inherently peaceful activity such as playing a game, enjoying a snack or reading out loud together.

### **FAMILY DISCOVERY**

Read together books that can help children learn about peace, war and nonviolent conflict resolution.

#### **Picture Books about Peace, War and Being a Peacemaker**

*Sitti's Secret*, by Naomi Shihab Nye, illustrated by Nancy Carpenter

*Somewhere Today: A Book of Peace*, by Shelley Moore Thomas, illustrated by Eric Futran

*Whoever You Are*, by Mem Fox, illustrated by Leslie Staub

*All the Colors of the Earth*, by Sheila Hamanaka

*It's Okay to Be Different*, by Todd Parr

*What Does Peace Feel Like?* by Vladimir Radunsky

*Make Someone Smile: And 40 More Ways to Be a Peaceful Person*, by Judy Lalli, illustrated by Douglas L. Mason-Fry

*Terrible Things: An Allegory of the Holocaust*, by Eve Bunting, illustrated by Stephen Gammell

*Star of Fear, Star of Hope*, by Jo Hoestlandt, illustrated by Johanna Kang, translated by Mark Polizzotti

*The Butter Battle Book*, by Dr. Seuss (Theodor Geisel)

*Peacebound Trains*, by Haemi Balgassi, illustrated by Chris Soentpiet

*I Like Being Me: Poems for Children About Feeling Special, Appreciating Others, and Getting Along*, by Judy Lalli, illustrated by Douglas L. Mason-Fry

*The Coconut Monk and The Hermit and the Well*, both by Thich Nhat Hanh and illustrated by Vo-Dinh Mai

*If Peace Is ...*, [by Jane Baskwill](#), illustrated by Stephanie Carter

*The Peace Book*, by Todd Parr

*A Little Peace*, by Barbara Kerley

*The Wall*, by Eve Bunting, illustrated by Ronald Himler

*When I Grow Up, I Will Win the Nobel Peace Prize*, by Isabel Pin, translated by Nancy Seitz

*The Reluctant Dragon*, by Kenneth Grahame, illustrated by Inga Moore

#### **Books for Eight- to Twelve- Year - Olds about Peace, War and Being a Peacemaker**

*One Thousand Paper Cranes: The Story of Sadako and the Children's Peace Statue*, by Takayuki Ishii

*Hiroshima* (Apple Paperbacks), by Laurence Yep

*Daniel's Story*, by Carol Matas

*Peace Tales*, by Margaret MacDonald

*Peace Begins With You*, by Katharine Scholes, illustrated by Robert Ingpen

*Peace One Day*, by Jeremy Gilley and Karen Blessen

*Under the Rose Apple Tree*, by Thich Nhat Hanh, illustrated by Philippe Ames

*Paths to Peace: People Who Changed the World*, by Jane Breskin Zalben

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: CONFLICT RESOLUTION ROLE PLAYS (20 MINUTES)

### Preparation for Activity

- Read the conflict scenarios provided. Adapt as you wish and/or add your own.
- Optional: Arrange chairs for an audience in a semicircle around a performance space.

### Description of Activity

Tell participants they will have a chance to solve a conflict peacefully, with no violence. Ask for volunteers to act out the scenarios. End a role play when a conflict has been resolved peacefully. If a conflict gets stuck without resolution, you may ask new volunteers to try it, or open the scenario for a group discussion.

Optional: To emphasize the return to reality, invite role players to spin in a circle one time when they are done and return to their true selves.

At the end of each role play, ask the group:

- What helped resolve this problem?
- What was tried that did not work?
- Did anything make the conflict worse? Why?
- What else could the characters have tried?
- Has anyone here ever been in a similar situation? What did you do?

Affirm all suggestions of peaceful solution seeking. Do not belabor a non-peacemaking solution; simply move on to another contribution.

### Role Play Scenarios

- Your younger brother follows you around everywhere and wants to do everything you do. He especially loves to knock down creations you have made from blocks and Legos. You just finished making a Lego house that you worked on for two hours. You are very proud of it. Your brother is coming towards you with a ball and looks like he is about to throw it at your house. What do you do?
- There is a new child in your class at school. Your best friend is suddenly ignoring you and spending all of their time with the new child. Sitting in the cafeteria at lunchtime, you overhear the new child saying mean things about you to your best friend. Your best friend looks at you uncomfortably, but then just laughs. What do you do?

- There is a new child in your class at school. You like them a lot and have been trying to be friendly. At lunchtime they whisper insulting things to you about your best friend. What do you do?
- You brought your favorite toy to Faithful Journeys today to show your friends. You placed it on a table during coffee hour. Now another child is playing with it. You ask for it back, but they say that it is theirs — that they brought it from their house today. What do you do?

## STORY: ADIN BALLOU AND THE HOPEDALE COMMUNITY

By Elisa Davy Pearmain.

I want to tell you the story of Adin Ballou. He was born over two hundred years ago. He grew up to be a peacemaker and a Universalist minister, but he didn't start out wanting to be either.

When Adin was seven years old, he went with his family to watch a company of militia out for a parade. They marched up and down the streets to the fife and drum. They wore colorful uniforms, with swords and guns at the ready. Adin was so excited by the military men! He wanted to keep following them when they left town. He told his dad that when he was older, if there was a call to war, he would join the militia in a heartbeat. But soon he was called in a new direction.

Adin was ten years old when a new minister moved into his town and convinced his whole family to become religious Christians. After that, Adin began to read and study the Bible more than most children his age. One story in the Bible made Adin think about how people treat one another. It was a story where Jesus says if someone slaps you, you should turn peacefully, and offer them your other cheek. That would let them know you would not hurt them, and did not feel angry. Jesus also said if someone steals your coat, you should offer them your shirt, too. Jesus said we need to treat others the way that we want to be treated. He said we must act peaceful to make a peaceful world.

Adin was pretty confused by that lesson in the Bible. "When someone hurts me, I might feel like hurting them back," he thought. "And if someone steals something, I have been taught that they should be punished." But these words of Jesus stayed deep in his heart.

When he was a teenager, Adin had a strange dream. In the dream, his older brother Cyrus, who had died, told Adin he must be a minister. When Adin woke up, he felt very nervous about getting up in front of people and preaching a sermon. But he took that dream seriously.

And it just so happened that the little church in town had no minister during the summer and the people in the congregation took turns preaching. Adin worked up his courage and remembered his dream. One Sunday he stood up, and although his knees were shaking, he announced he would preach the following week.

So he did. The people at his church liked his sermon a lot. After that, Adin began to work as a Christian minister. Becoming a soldier was forgotten.

As Adin grew up, he started to notice some things that forever ended his plan to be a soldier. He noticed when people fought with each other to solve an argument, that didn't help them to be peaceful. He saw when people were punished for fighting, punishment didn't make them more peaceful. He saw when nations used war to solve an argument, that didn't make people more peaceful, either. Adin decided any solution that used violence was not for him. He started to believe that if we really want peace, in our community or in our nation, we must do as Jesus said and love our enemies.

Adin lived during the time when slavery was still allowed in this country. He thought slavery was wrong, and he preached about it. Some of his friends hated slavery, too, but they didn't all love peace as much as Adin did. Sometimes his friends got into fights with people who wanted to keep slavery. One of Adin's friends was killed in a fight with people who supported slavery. This upset Adin. He decided to start a new way of living, called "Christian nonresistance." Christian nonresistance meant people would promise never to be violent to others, even to defend themselves. Many people thought he was crazy, but he felt very sure that this was what Jesus taught.

Adin was thirty-seven years old when he decided it wasn't enough to live peacefully on his own. He wanted to live in a town full of people, all living by the rule of no violence. He hoped a small group of people could show the world a better way to live. With some friends, he bought some land and formed the Hopedale Community in Milford, Massachusetts.

People who believed in Christian nonresistance moved to Hopedale. They were very strict about not hurting others. They tried to live according to Jesus's ideas of peace, to care for the hungry and sick, and to love one another.

Adin and his wife, Lucy, and many other people in Hopedale opened their homes to people who needed a meal or a place to stay. The Hopedale community had a boarding school where many children came to live and learn, including some children who had escaped from being slaves.

Adin was a teacher in the school. One student constantly misbehaved. One day when the boy had been especially naughty, Adin called him to the front of the room. He told the boy it was the usual punishment in most schools for disobedient students to be whipped. Adin got a rod that was used in other schools for whipping children. But Adin said to the boy, "I cannot bear to whip you; perhaps it will do more good if you

whip me. At any rate, I have concluded to try it." Adin took off his coat, handed the boy the rod, and told him to whip him for as long as it took to make him a good boy. The boy looked at his teacher, and at the rod, and began to cry. He promised he would not disobey again and gave no further trouble after that.

One of the children in the Hopedale community was Susie Thwang. When she was eight years old, a man came to Hopedale saying he was hungry and sick. He was fed dinner and given some medicine. Then he told the people of Hopedale he was leaving. Late in the night, Susie's friend Lizzie Humphrey heard a noise coming from the downstairs of her house. She woke up her parents, who went down to have a look. In the glow of their lantern, they saw a pair of feet sticking out from under the sofa. Next to the sofa was a bag of things, including candlesticks and dishes the man was planning to steal.

Lizzie's parents sent her to get Adin Ballou and some of the other neighbors. When the neighbors arrived, they lifted up the sofa. They saw the thief was the same man they had fed earlier. Mr. Humphrey asked the man what he was doing there. He said, "I have lost my job. I have no home, no family, and nothing to eat. I thought if I was caught stealing you would put me in jail and they would feed me."

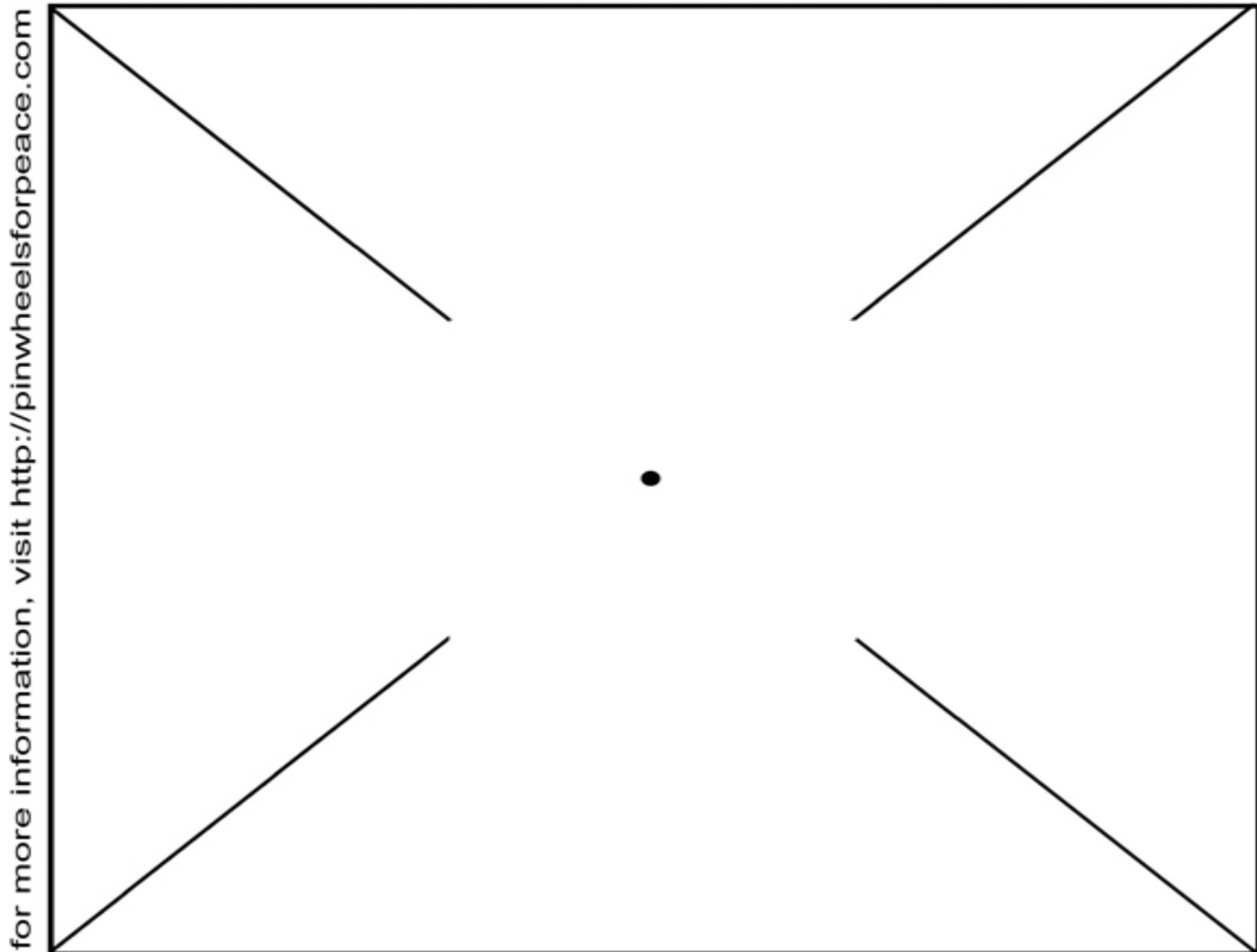
Adin Ballou told the neighbors they should put their faith into practice. They told the man, "You don't have to steal or go to jail. Stay in Hopedale. We will feed you and give you a job." He did stay at Hopedale, and he did not steal again.

The Hopedale Community lasted for fifteen years. During that time, Adin Ballou published a magazine and several books about Christian nonresistance that were read far and wide. Adin Ballou put his faith to into action and pointed us toward a better way to love and care for one another. He continued to write and speak about making a world of peace for the rest of this life. He died in 1890 at the age of eighty-seven.

# HANDOUT 1: PEACE PINWHEEL TEMPLATE AND INSTRUCTIONS

From the [Pinwheels for Peace website](http://pinwheelsforpeace.com), copyright 2005, Ayers & McMillan. Published with permission.

Follow these directions to create a pinwheel. Online, watch a QuickTime movie that shows you [how to make a pinwheel](http://pinwheelsforpeace.com).



## What you need:

Scissors  
Straight pin  
Pencil with eraser  
Colored pencils or markers to decorate

## Pinwheels for Peace

### How to get started:

Cut out the pinwheel square on this page. On one side of the paper, write down your feelings about war/peace/tolerance/living in harmony. On the other side of the paper, use markers, colored pencils, paint, or other art media to visually express your feelings. Following the lines on the template, cut in from all four corners, leaving about 2 inches of center uncut.

### To create the pinwheel:

Gently bend (don't fold) one of the cut corners to the center point. Skip the next cut corner, and bend the next one. Skip and bend until four points meet in the center. Then stick the straight pin through all four points AND the back of the pinwheel. Stick the pin into the pencil eraser. Find some wind to test it out.

Save your pinwheel in a safe place until September 21st (which is International Day of Peace) then take it to a public place and "plant" it into the ground to send a message of world peace!



Cut out this peace sign and put it in the center of your pinwheel before you put the pin in it.



## LEADER RESOURCE 1: PICTURE OF ADIN BALLOU

Find more images of Adin Ballou and images of the Hopedale Community on the [Friends of Adin Ballou website](#).



## LEADER RESOURCE 2: ABOUT PINWHEELS FOR PEACE

Excerpted from the [Pinwheels for Peace website](#). All text and images on website copyright 2007, Ayers & McMillan. Published with permission.

### The Project ...

*In today's world, peace needs to become more than just a word.*

Today's students are bombarded with television images, video games, and magazine articles/newspapers that give importance to conflict and war. Violence has become commonplace and accepted as part of our society and, for some students, it is a way of life. It is our hope that through the Pinwheels for Peace project, we can help the students make a public visual statement about their feelings about war/peace/tolerance/cooperation/harmony/unity and, in some way, maybe, awaken the public and let them know what the next generation is thinking.

This is not political. Peace doesn't necessarily have to be associated with the conflict of war; it can be related to violence/intolerance in our daily lives, to peace of mind. To each of us, peace can take on a different meaning, but, in the end, it all comes down to a simple definition: a state of calm and serenity, with no anxiety, the absence of violence, freedom from conflict or disagreement among people or groups of people.

A pinwheel is a childhood symbol — it reminds us of a time when things were simple, joyful, peaceful. A pinwheel is easily made using just about any type of material, from copy paper, to thin plastic, to lightweight metal. The stick of the pinwheel can be as simple as a pencil or as intricate as a carved stick or metal rod. Pinwheels can be made as small as one inch in diameter or as large as desired — limited only by the creator's materials and motivation. Pinwheels can be minimal or very complex — imagination, creativity (and a mild breeze) are the only variables needed.

Students will create pinwheels, pinwheels of all shapes and sizes — as part of the creation process, the students will write their thoughts about "war and peace/tolerance/living in harmony with others" on one side. The writing can be poetry, prose, haiku, or essay-style — whatever writing form is appropriate as the children express themselves. On the other side, the students will draw, paint, collage, etc. to visually express their feelings. They will assemble these pinwheels and on **International Day of Peace, Sept. 21, 2008**, everyone will "plant" their pinwheels outside (at the schools, museum, public places, etc.) as a public statement and art exhibit/installation. The spinning of the pinwheels in the wind will spread thoughts and feelings about peace throughout the country, the world!

**Pinwheels for Peace** is an art installation project started in 2005 by two Art teachers, Ann Ayers and Ellen McMillan, who teach at Monarch High School in Coconut Creek, Florida, as a way for students to express their feelings about what's going on in the world and in their lives. The project was quickly embraced by their students and the entire school community and by millions of art teachers, teachers, parents, children, and adults who desire peace in our world.

The first Pinwheels for Peace were installed on Sept. 21, 2005. Since then, we have grown from 500,000 pinwheels planted the first year, to 1.2 million pinwheels in 2007!

Please plan to join us again, on Sept. 21, 2008, as we once again celebrate International Day of Peace with "whirled peace"!

When September 21st falls on a Sunday, some schools/organizations may wish to create a community celebration of peace on Sunday and/or plant the pinwheels on their school grounds on the 22nd.

To learn about International Day of Peace, visit [Peace One Day](#) and [International Day of Peace](#).

Although the project was originally conceived as a way for students to express their feelings, we are hoping that artists, non-artists, young people, and not-so-young people — everyone! — participates. Peace is something that we all yearn for.

After we launched our project, we discovered a similar, but different, project that was created by Michele Little as a way to honor her brother, [firefighter] David M. Weiss, one of America's heroes who perished in the [World Trade Center] on 9/11. He was a Rescue 1 Firefighter from Midtown Manhattan. David's legacy of brotherhood, unity, and service will carry on through the Unite in Peace organization.

If you would like to extend your mission of peace, after your Sept. 21st installation, send your pinwheels to [Unite in Peace](#) and your pinwheels will be sent on to children all over the world. For more information, [michele@uniteinpeace.org](mailto:michele@uniteinpeace.org).





## LEADER RESOURCE 3: SIGNPOST FOR SESSION 12

*Cut out the signpost and attach to the Faithful Journeys Path.*





## FIND OUT MORE

### Resources for Teaching Peace

*Peace Tales*, by Margaret MacDonald

*Promoting a Global Community Through Multicultural Children's Literature*, by [Stanley F. Steiner](#)

*Character Builders: Books and Activities for Character Education (Through Children's Literature)*, by [Liz Knowles](#) and [Martha Smith](#)

*Kindness: A Treasury of Buddhist Wisdom for Children and Parents (The Little Light of Mine Series)*, by [Sarah Conover](#), illustrated by [Valerie Wahl](#)

*Peace Primer: Christian & Islamic Scripture & Tradition*, edited by Ken Sehested and Rabia Terri Har

*Cooperative Sports and Games Book*, by Terry Orlick

*Creative Conflict Resolution*, by William J. Kreidler

*The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander: From Preschool to High School — How Parents Can Help Break the Cycle of Violence*, by Barbara Coloroso

*Once Upon a Time: Storytelling to Teach Character and Prevent Bullying*, by Elisa Davy Pearmain

*Taming the Dragon in Your Child: Solutions for Breaking the Cycle of Family Anger*, by [Meg Eastman](#)

### Adin Ballou and Hopedale Community

Visit the [Friends of Adin Ballou website](#). Read about him on the [Dictionary of Unitarian and Universalist Biography](#) website.

*To Live a Truer Life: A Story of the Hopedale Community*, by Lynn Gordon Hughes, illustrated by Lindro (Providence, RI: Blackstone Editions, 2003) tells story told from a child's perspective.

# SESSION 13: BUILD WORLD COMMUNITY

## INTRODUCTION

*We need not think alike to love alike. — Francis David (David Ferenz), 16th-century Transylvanian Unitarian minister*

In this session, the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church program provides a doorway into our sixth Principle, the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all. The children hear a story of a girl in Transylvania whose village welcomes visitors from a U.S. partner church. They affirm world community by experiencing games, music and dance from cultures connected to our faith through the Partner Church program in Transylvania, the Philippines and India. Alternate activities introduce a Polish craft and a Hungarian dessert. We add the signpost "Build World Community" to our Faithful Journeys Path.

The Move It! activity includes guided discussion that will frame the session's theme. Do not skip the discussion.

## GOALS

This session will:

- Teach and reinforce our sixth Unitarian Universalist Principle, the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all
- Present our denomination as a builder of international connections through our Unitarian Universalist Partner Church program
- Affirm the worth and dignity of people whose cultural traditions may differ from our own
- Nurture children's international empathy by exploring cultural commonalities and differences
- Model hospitality and welcome as ways to act on our sixth Principle, through a story of a Transylvanian Unitarian community welcoming a visitor from another country.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Learn about partner church connections between Unitarian Universalist congregations in the U.S. and Unitarian churches abroad

- Experience cultural traditions from different countries connected to our faith through the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church program
- Build cooperative community in a Move It! game
- Identify actions they might take that would reflect the signpost "Build World Community"
- Name ways they did or could translate their Unitarian Universalist faith and/or Principles into action.

## SESSION-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	2
Activity 1: Faithful Footprints	5
Activity 2: Move It! Create a Cooperative Machine	5
Activity 3: Story Basket and Centering	5
Activity 4: Story — Here They Come!	8
Activity 5: Alunelul, a Romanian Dance	11
Activity 6: Chackgudo, a Philippine Game	12
Activity 7: An Indian Snack	5
Faith in Action: Heritage Feast	
Closing	7
Alternate Activity 1: Polish Gwiazdy Craft	12
Alternate Activity 2: International Cooking — Hungarian Kolacky	20
Alternate Activity 3: World Music Dance Party	12

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

If it would be helpful in creating sacred space, light a candle or chalice. Read the story "Here They Come!" Think of your own experiences when you have traveled to a foreign country or spent time with an immigrant or visitor from another country. Reflect on the circumstances that brought you together with people from a different country or culture. How did you communicate? What did you share? What kept you apart?

Were there aspects of the other person's culture you envied? Aspects that made you uncomfortable? What

did you learn about yourself from the encounter? How have your personal experiences of intercultural differences helped you be a builder of world community?

Keep your own experiences in mind today, as you guide the children in Faithful Journeys in positive explorations of other countries and cultures. Focus on activating children's international awareness and engaging them as builders and members of a world community.

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Chalice candle or LED/battery-operated candle
- Lighter and extinguisher, if needed
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Posters of the Unitarian Universalist Principles in both adult and children's language, or copies of Session 1, [Handout 1](#) (included in this document) for all participants

### Preparation for Activity

- Decide whether you will use the provided opening words or other opening words, such as those offered in Session 1, Leader Resource 1, Alternate Openings. It is recommended that you use the same opening words for each session.
- Print the opening words on newsprint. Post the newsprint where the children will be able to see it when they gather.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle. Light the chalice. Point out the chalice-lighting words on the newsprint and invite the group to read together:

We light this flame for the light of truth, the warmth of love, and the energy of action.

Indicate the poster(s) of the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Or, give each child a copy of the handout. Ask a volunteer to read the sixth Principle in the adult language. Ask a second volunteer to read the children's version of the sixth Principle. Then, say:

Today we will learn about this Unitarian Universalist Principle — what it means, and what kinds of actions show it. Let's get started.

Collect handouts for reuse.

### Including All Participants

If not all participants are fluent readers, take the time to teach the group to say the opening words from memory.

If the group has children who are sensitive to perfumes or other chemicals, use unscented candles or an electric or battery-operated flame. An electric flame is also recommended if you may not use open flames or if any participants are afraid of fire.

## ACTIVITY 1: FAITHFUL FOOTPRINTS (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path (Session 1, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))
- Cutouts of footprints and (optional) wheelchair tracks, at least one for each participant, in a variety of colors (Session 1, [Leader Resources 3](#) and [4](#) (included in this document))
- Markers
- Push pins, glue stick or tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Think of something you have done since the group last met that represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. Identify the Principle(s) your action reflected. Write a few words about it on a footprint, with your name.

### Description of Activity

This activity reinforces children's learning as they model translating faith into action for one another. To strengthen children's Unitarian Universalist identity, help participants see how their own behavior demonstrates specific Principles.

Gather in a circle. Point to the Faithful Journeys Path and say:

Together we are taking a journey to learn what it means to live as Unitarian Universalists. Each time we meet, we have a chance to talk about ways our actions show our beliefs about what is right and good. This is called "putting our faith into action."

When you share about something you have done that shows what you believe, you can choose a footprint or tracks for us to put on our Faithful Journeys Path.

Hold up the footprint you made of your own faithful action. Tell what you did and how it represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. If you can connect your action to a Principle, briefly explain. For example:

- I made phone calls to remind people to vote (or, I voted), because I believe in our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, that we all have a say in matters that concern us. When people vote, that's one way to have every person's opinion be counted.
- I have a neighbor who was sick last week. I helped him bring his trash outside, because I

believe in the second Unitarian Universalist Principle, which says we believe in being kind and fair.

- I put my water bottles and juice bottles in the recycling bin, because I believe in the seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, which reminds us to take care of the Earth that all life shares.

Ask the children to think of an act they have done, since you met last, which reflects Unitarian Universalism. You may wish to prompt:

- Did anyone do something that helped make things fair? (justice, equity, and compassion)
- Did anyone help someone else? (inherent worth and dignity, interdependent web)
- Did anyone take care of nature or another animal? (interdependent web)
- Did anyone listen to someone else who had a very different opinion? (search for truth and meaning, acceptance of one another)
- Did anyone play with someone new whom you did not know very well? (acceptance of one another, encouragement to spiritual growth)

As participants name their actions, write a word or phrase describing the action on a footprint or wheelchair cutout. Invite children to write their names on their cutouts and post them along the edge of the Faithful Journeys Path. Have them progress along the path over the course of the program.

To stay within the time frame for this activity, use these guidelines:

- Encourage children to share their faithful act in one or two brief sentences.
- If the group is big, you may wish to limit children to sharing only one faithful act per week.

It is very important to avoid judging participants, either with criticism or praise. Avoid phrases like "Great job!" or "You're fantastic!" which might suggest that acts of faith vary in their value or encourage children to compete to share the "best" act.

You should, however, respond to each child's contribution. Listen carefully to what a child tells you. After each child shares, say something like, "Thank you for sharing," followed by a summarizing sentence, such as:

- Being kind to new children at school is an action that treats others like they are important.

- Suggesting your friends all vote to decide what to play together is an action of democracy and fairness.
- Cleaning up garbage at the park is an action to take care of the Earth.
- Teaching your brother to talk is an action that affirms each person's learning.
- Taking care of your dog is an action of love.

Identify the Unitarian Universalist Principles their act represents; refer to the Principles poster if the room has one or indicate a relevant signpost on the Faithful Journeys Path. By responding specifically to each child's faithful actions, you will help them feel pride, a sense of accomplishment, and their own empowerment as agents whose actions and choices reflect Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values.

### **Including All Participants**

Along with cut-out footprints (Session 1, Handout 3, Faithful Footprints), provide wheelchairs (Session 1, Handout 4, Making Tracks for Faith) in the same colors of paper. Encourage all the children — not just those who use wheelchairs for mobility — to sometimes use a wheelchair instead of footprints to represent their faithful actions.

## **ACTIVITY 2: MOVE IT! CREATE A COOPERATIVE MACHINE (5 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- A globe or world map

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Identify a large, open area, preferably carpeted, in which all the children have room to gather and move about.

### **Description of Activity**

Gather children near a globe or world map. Explain that today we will talk about our sixth Unitarian Universalist Principle, the goal of world community, with peace, liberty, and justice for all.

Ask the group what a community is. Affirm that a community is a group of people who are somehow connected to one another, who share some goals and needs, and are willing to work together for a common purpose.

Guide the group to generate examples of a community. Affirm a family, the Faithful Journeys group, our UU congregation, my classroom in school, my entire school,



my neighborhood, and informal social groups such as a closely connected set of families, clubs such as Girl Scouts or a sports team, town or city, etc.

Now ask the group, "What do you think 'world community' might mean? How can the whole world be a community?" Allow some discussion. Affirm answers that highlight common needs, goals and purposes. Thank all children for contributions.

Then say, "Let's find out if we are a world community in this room today." Pose these questions:

- What countries did your ancestors come from?
- Were you or your parents born in a different country?
- Do you know anyone who moved here from a different country?
- Have you ever been to a different country?

Say:

The world is a very big community that includes all of us, as well as people in every other land. How do so many people connect with each other and work together? Let's build a very small community here to see how people work together in a community.

We are going to build a community by building a machine. Each of us will be one piece of the machine. We can each decide what we want our piece to do, but it needs to connect to the parts of the machine that are already there. When it is your turn to join the machine, create a movement and a noise to go with it. One at a time, we will join in to make a machine that works together. Once you are a part of the machine, keep making your movement and your noise until I let you know we are done.

Ask a volunteer to begin. Invite children to join in, as they feel comfortable, one at a time. Continue until all have joined the machine. Co-leaders may join, too, as long as one adult remains outside to stop the machine and lead the discussion.

Use these questions to guide children's reflection:

- Before you joined in, what did you think the machine's purpose was?
- How did you decide where to join in and what to do?
- After you joined in, did you notice what other people were adding? Or were you focused on maintaining your own action and noise?

- How did you connect with other people in the machine? (Ask for specific examples.)
- At the end, what did you imagine the machine might do?
- What about the people in the machine whom you could not feel, see, or hear? How did you know you were all part of the machine?

### Including All Participants

Children with limited vision or mobility may find it hard to perceive and/or join the action of a busy "machine." You may wish to invite them to go first.

## ACTIVITY 3: STORY BASKET AND CENTERING (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A large basket
- Objects related to the story "Here They Come!" such as a piece of or picture of Transylvanian embroidery; pictures of a Transylvanian landscape, village or Unitarian church; or items representing your congregation's partner church or modern Romania
- A globe or world map
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Box or small table and a decorative cloth cover to form a small altar

### Preparation for Activity

- If your congregation has a partner church, include in the story basket pictures, correspondence, or items members of your congregation have received or brought from the partner church. Be ready to indicate the location of your partner church on the globe or world map.
- Place the story-related items and the sound instrument in the story basket.
- Set the filled basket in the storytelling area you have designated. Place a globe or world map within your reach.
- For an altar to hold story objects, set up a box or table next to your storytelling area and cover it with a decorative cloth. It is not necessary to ritualize the altar as a sacred place. It can simply serve as a focal point where objects related to the story will be visible while you tell the story.

## Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle in your storytelling area. Show them the storytelling basket. Say something like, "Let's see what's in our story basket today."

Tell the group the items in the story basket will be placed on the altar or table after the children have passed them around the circle. Take the items from the basket, one at a time, and pass them around. Objects that are fragile or should not be passed around for any reason can be held up for all to see and then placed directly on the altar.

Briefly name the various objects and tell where they come from. If your congregation has a partner church, explain about that relationship, and how the pictures or gifts from the church came to be with you today. Indicate the location of your partner church on the globe or world map. Indicate Transylvania. Tell the children the Unitarian faith began in Transylvania about 350 years ago (around 1568 CE). As items come back to you, display them on the altar for children to look at as they listen to the story.

Now remove the sound instrument from the story basket. Tell the children that every time you tell a story in Faithful Journeys, you will first use the instrument to help them get their ears, their minds, and their bodies ready to listen. Invite them to sit comfortably and close their eyes (if they are comfortable doing so). You may tell them that closing their eyes can help them focus on just listening.

In a calm voice, say, in your own words:

As you breathe in, feel your body opening up with air. As you breathe out, feel yourself relaxing.

Repeat this once or twice and then say:

Now you are ready to listen. When I hit the chime (turn the rain stick over), listen as carefully as you can. See how long you can hear its sound. When you can no longer hear it, open your eyes and you will know it is time for the story to begin.

Sound the chime or other instrument. When the sound has gone, begin telling the story.

## Including All Participants

If anyone in the group is unable to hold or pass items, or cannot see the items, make sure you or a child in the group offers the person a chance to see and touch each object, as needed.

Some people do not feel safe closing their eyes when they are in a group. If any children resist, respect their

resistance and suggest that they find a single point of focus to look at instead.

If you have a basket of fidget objects for children who may listen and learn more effectively with something in their hands, make it available. Remind children where it is before you begin the "centering" part of this activity. For a full description and guidance on using fidget objects, see Session 2, Leader Resource 2.

## ACTIVITY 4: STORY — HERE THEY COME! (8 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of the story "[Here They Come!](#)" (included in this document)
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Fidget object basket (Session 2, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))

### Preparation for Activity

- Read the story a few times. Think about how you might use items from the story basket as props.
- Consider telling the story rather than reading it. Practice telling it aloud.

### Description of Activity

The story about a Transylvanian community welcoming UU visitors from the U.S. demonstrates action based on our sixth Principle, the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.

Before you begin, look around the room and make eye contact with each person. Read or tell the story.

Sound the instrument to indicate the story is over.

Guide a brief discussion with these questions:

- What did Bettje find different about the Americans who visited her village?
- What did she find they shared in common?
- Our sixth Principle talks about the goal of world community. What does that mean? How can we be a community with the whole world?
- What good things could come from people from different countries coming together?

## ACTIVITY 5: ALUNELUL, A ROMANIAN DANCE (11 MINUTES)

### Preparation for Activity

- Identify an open area large enough for the group to stand and move together in a circle.
- Listen to the tune "Alunelul." Hear it online [with lyrics](#) or [without](#).
- Prepare a CD, tape, or MP3 file with the music. You can get "Alunelul" as a [download](#) from iTunes as recorded by Bobby Morganstein or by Patxi eta Batbiru. Or, if you prefer, learn the tune so you can teach it to the children. The tune is fairly straightforward and can be sung on "da da da," "bum bum bum," or a similar nonsense syllable. If the group sings the tune rather than using recorded music, you have the opportunity to gradually increase the speed of the dance, which is a traditional and fun way to do it. Another option is to invite a member of your congregation who plays fiddle, flute, piano or accordion to learn the tune and play for you.
- Watch a [video of the dance being done](#). Practice the dance with the music, to understand how the movement and the music pair up.
- Print out and review Leader Resource 1, Alunelul Dance. Familiarize yourself with the dance steps so you are able to teach it without referring to the paper.

### Description of Activity

Explain to the group that we are going to celebrate world community today by enjoying some activities that children do in different places in the world that have partner churches connected to our Unitarian Universalist congregations in the U.S. Say:

The song "Alunelul" has a traditional dance from Romania. Transylvania is now a region in modern Romania. It is a region where Unitarian Universalism has a long history and a connection with churches there today.

If you will teach the children to sing the tune, play or sing it first and then teach them to sing it.

Then, teach the dance steps. The dance is traditionally done several times over, increasing in speed each time.

Lead the group to dance for the time remaining.

### Including All Participants

Invite children with limited mobility to control the music or to dance on the inside of the circle so they will be safe.

## ACTIVITY 6: CHACKGUDO, A PHILIPPINE GAME (12 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Masking tape or chalk

### Preparation for Activity

- Identify a large open floor space where you can lay masking tape or draw chalk lines to play this game. If you will be using a space other than your customary religious education room, make sure the noise of the game will not disturb others, and obtain permission to use the space.
- Review Leader Resource 2, How to Play Chackgudo, and familiarize yourself with the game so you can introduce and facilitate it without referring to the paper.

### Description of Activity

Tell the children the Philippines is another country where Unitarian churches have partnerships with American Unitarian Universalist congregations. Point out the Philippines on the globe or world map. Say the group is going to play a game called Chackgudo, which comes from the Philippines.

Draw or tape a line down the middle of the space. Count off by twos to form two teams. Direct each team to stand on either side of the line, and play the game.

### Including All Participants

This is a highly active game. If any children in the group have limited mobility or endurance, you may want to use an alternative activity.

## ACTIVITY 7: AN INDIAN SNACK (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Indian snack food, such as papadum, naan or samosas
- Water to drink
- Paper plates, napkins and cups

### Preparation for Activity

- Cut, break or divide snacks into child-sized individual servings.

## Description of Activity

Indicate India on your globe or world map. Explain that India is a country where Unitarian churches have Unitarian Universalist partner congregations in the U.S. Show children the snack. Tell the children what it is called, and ask whether they have tried it before. If not, what do they think it will taste like? Distribute the snack. As they taste, lead a discussion: Do they enjoy trying new foods? What other foods do they like to eat that come from different countries?

Affirm that one pleasure of world community is experiencing the gifts of different agricultural products and different recipes.

## Including All Participants

Check with your director of religious education and Faithful Journeys parents about children's allergies or food restrictions. Carefully check the ingredients in all snack foods.

## CLOSING (7 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path
- Signpost for Session 13 ([Leader Resource 3](#) (included in this document)) and pins, glue stick or tape
- Copies of Session 1, [Leader Resource 8](#) (included in this document), UU Principles Song, for all participants
- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Print out Leader Resource 3 and cut out the signpost.
- Optional: Write the UU Principles Song lyrics on newsprint, and post.
- Customize, print out and photocopy the Taking It Home section for all participants.

## Description of Activity

This activity helps children get used to practicing a closing ritual as a way of affirming their belonging in the faith community.

Gather the group in a circle. Thank the children for participating and sharing their stories and ideas in this session. Tell them something you liked about the way they worked together as a community.

Point out the Faithful Journeys Path. Say, in your own words:

Our Faithful Journeys Path shows our journey to live our lives and act in ways that reflect our Unitarian Universalist beliefs and faith. The signposts direct us by reminding us about our Principles.

Today's signpost is "Build World Community." It is for our sixth Unitarian Universalist Principle, the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all. It means that as Unitarian Universalists we care about all the people of the world. We want to build connections that help create a peaceful world where all people treat each other, and each other's countries, fairly and with kindness. It means we want to learn about people whose countries and lives are different from ours and find out what we have in common.

Attach the signpost to the Faithful Journeys Path.

Remind the children that they will have a chance to add Faithful Footprints to the Faithful Journeys Path the next time they meet. Encourage them to try to do an action before your next session that could help build a world community. Brainstorm some actions. You might suggest learning about life in another country through library or online research, asking someone you know from another country what it is like there, or trying a new food of another country or culture.

Point out the words to the UU Principles Song. Tell the children it is sung to the tune of "Old McDonald Had a Farm." Lead the children in singing the verse about the sixth Principle. Then, sing the entire song together. Explain that you will learn about all of the Principles during the Faithful Journeys program.

Distribute the Taking It Home handout. Thank the children, tell them you look forward to seeing them next time, and dismiss the group.

## FAITH IN ACTION: HERITAGE FEAST

### Materials for Activity

- Serving table(s) and tables with chairs
- Tablecloths, napkins, plates, cups and eating utensils
- Index cards and pens or markers
- A variety of foods that participants will bring from home

### Preparation for Activity

- Coordinate a date for the heritage feast. Get permission to use a space with tables, chairs and access to a kitchen.

- Assign one or more co-leaders or other adult volunteers to coordinate food assignments, serving and clean-up. You might engage Faithful Journeys participants and their families to help with setup and clean-up.
- Announce time, date, and location of heritage feast. Provide instructions on what kinds of food to bring and when and where to bring it.
- Optional: If this event will be a fundraiser, plan how and when donations will be collected.

### Description of Activity

One enjoyable way to celebrate world community is to honor the contributions of different countries through food. A heritage feast invites participants to celebrate their ancestry by sharing a dish they associate with their family's country (or countries) of origin. This activity could be a fundraiser for the congregation's partner church; for [Project Harvest Hope](#), which supports sustainable development in Transylvanian villages; or for the [Unitarian Universalist Service Committee](#), which partners with organizations around the world to confront injustice and provide for basic needs. Fundraising possibilities for this project might be a donation basket, an auction of particular special dishes, or a request for each participant to contribute financially as well as bringing food to share.

You might ask participants in advance to bring a copy of the recipe for their special food, with the name of the dish and the country or culture it represents.

### Including All Participants

Make sure to include participants whose birth families and adoptive families are each from different countries or cultures, by asking people to bring a dish representative of "your family's or your children's birth family's country of origin."

Listing ingredients on the cards that label each dish will allow people with food allergies or restrictions to avoid foods they cannot eat.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Take a few minutes to evaluate the session with your co-leader immediately afterward, while it is fresh. Share your thoughts with any other team co-leaders and your director of religious education. You might consider:

- Which activities worked well? What didn't work so well?

- Were all children actively engaged? If not, who wasn't and why might that have been? How could they be better included next time?
- How well did the activities match the learning styles of the children in this group? What could we do differently to better accommodate for learning styles in future sessions?
- How well did the session balance physically active with sedentary activities?
- How was the timing? What might need to be done differently for a session to work better within our time frame?
- Were there any behavior issues? If so, how can we address them in the future? Do we need more information or help in this area?
- What connections did children make with the activities and/or central ideas? How did we know that was occurring?
- What connections did children make with each other? What connections did we make with the children? When was that most evident?
- Are we successfully creating a program characterized by inclusion, diversity appreciation, respect, noncompetitive environment, and welcome? What could we have done differently?
- What questions or issues arose in this session that we might like to discuss with our director of religious education?

## TAKING IT HOME

*We need not think alike to love alike. — Francis David (David Ferenz, 16th-century Transylvanian Unitarian minister)*

**IN TODAY'S SESSION...** A contemporary story about a Transylvanian community welcoming visitors from a U.S. partner church demonstrated action based on our sixth Principle, the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all. The children tried activities from a variety of countries that have Unitarian partner churches: a Romanian folk dance, a game from the Philippines and a snack from India. Our signpost to help guide us in faithful action was "Build World Community."

**EXPLORE THE TOPIC TOGETHER.** Talk with your child about times when family members or friends have traveled outside the U.S. What did they find surprisingly different? What seemed surprisingly the same? Talk about countries and cultures of origin represented in



your family. How might life be different if you lived in those countries today?

**EXTEND THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Try...** One of the themes raised by the story "Here They Come!" is hospitality. One of the ways that we build community is by welcoming visitors and making personal connections. How does your family practice hospitality? Is there someone in your community who has moved from another country, such as a foreign exchange student or a new family with children at your child's school, whom you could invite to visit you for a meal? Before the visit, talk with your child: What would you need to consider and do in order to make the person or family feel welcomed? How would you share your family's customs while learning about and being respectful of any different customs your guest might practice?

### **FAMILY ADVENTURE**

Promote the goal of world community by visiting an ethnically identified neighborhood (Chinatown, Little Italy, etc.) or restaurant you have not visited before and sampling food no one in your family has tried before.

If your community has an international market, explore it. Try to identify countries of origin for different products. If you find items you cannot identify, ask a clerk or another shopper if they can tell you about the items. Notice food, language, smells, clothing and social customs, such as how people share a public space.

### **A FAMILY RITUAL**

In India and other parts of Asia, such as Sri Lanka and Nepal, people may greet one another by pressing the hands together in front of the chest and bowing slightly. This bow may be accompanied by the word *namaste*, often translated as "the divinity within me salutes the divinity within you." Your family may wish to expand the ways you say hello and good-bye, with customs such as *namaste*.

### **A FAMILY GAME**

Chackgudo, the Philippine game the children played today, requires more people than most households include. However, you could try a Philippine game that requires fewer players. You will need an open space and a slipper. Select a player to go first. They will stand with their back to the other players and throw the slipper backward over their head. The other players try to catch the slipper. Those who fail must freeze in position as statues when the first player turns around. If a statue moves, that player is out. A player who catches the slipper returns it to the first player.

Then, everyone left in the game has a second and a third chance to catch the slipper. The third time the

slipper is caught by one of the players, that player runs, and the player who threw the slipper tries to catch them. When a player is caught, start the game again with the "caught" player tossing the slipper.

### **FAMILY DISCOVERY**

Find myriad international cultural resources online. The website [gameskidsplay.net](http://gameskidsplay.net) offers a variety of international games on their website. [Hugo's Folk Dance](http://Hugo's Folk Dance) website describes international folk dances and has video clips showing how to do many of the dances. A [Kids Cooking Activities](http://Kids Cooking Activities) website has international recipes and fun facts about different parts of the world.

## **ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: POLISH GWIAZDY CRAFT (12 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Origami paper, or other paper cut into squares at least 8 by 8 inches
- Pencils and scissors (including left-handed scissors)
- Broom and dustpan, or a vacuum cleaner, for clean-up

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Set supplies so each child has access to a pencil, scissors and choices of paper.
- Optional: Obtain an [illustrated version of the instructions](#) online.

### **Description of Activity**

Poland is another country where Unitarian churches have U.S. partner congregations. This paper craft is called *gwiazdy*, which means "stars." These Polish stars resemble paper snowflakes, but with eight sides instead of five.

1. Fold a square of paper in half to make a rectangle, then in half again to make a square. Now fold in half one last time, corner to corner to make a triangle.
2. Draw a curved line from the middle point of the triangle over to the longest flat side, and cut off the top of the triangle, so that when the paper is eventually opened it will form a circle.
3. Leaving the triangle folded, draw a pattern that is the same on both sides. This pattern will indicate where to cut, so none of the lines should go all the way across the triangle, which would chop the star into pieces.
4. Cut along the lines of the pattern, then unfold to reveal the cut paper star.

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: INTERNATIONAL COOKING — HUNGARIAN KOLACKY (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Dough ([Leader Resource 4](#) (included in this document))
- Rolling pins to share, waxed paper, and flat surface for rolling
- A variety of thick jams, preserves or pie fillings
- Small spoons
- Baking sheets
- Optional: Confectioner's sugar

### Preparation for Activity

- Arrange to use the congregation's kitchen and oven.
- Print out Leader Resource 4 and use recipe to prepare dough a day ahead.

### Description of Activity

Tell that children that *kolacky*, a Hungarian cookie, could well have been offered to the Unitarian Universalists from Massachusetts when they came to visit Bettje's church in Transylvania.

Have all children wash their hands or use sanitizer immediately before they handle the dough.

Distribute waxed paper and rolling pins at work tables. Give each child a piece of dough about the size of a small walnut. Help them shape their dough into a ball, place it between the sheets of waxed paper, and roll it until quite thin (1/8"). Place rolled cookies on a baking sheet, and put a small dollop of jam or pie filling in the center. Pinch two sides together to make an "envelope" for the filling. When a baking sheet is full, bake cookies at 350 F for 7 to 8 minutes. If desired, sprinkle with confectioner's sugar while warm. Let cool before eating.

### Including All Participants

Ask your director of religious education and children's parents about allergies and food restrictions. Some children may be unable to handle the dough (vegans or those with dairy allergies), fill the cookies (those with allergies to certain preserved fruits), or eat the cookies.

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 3: WORLD MUSIC DANCE PARTY (12 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- World music CDs, tapes or MP3/iPod playlist and appropriate music player(s)
- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- [Putumayo](#) is a go-to world music resource, with tools for experiencing world music with children. Your local library is also likely to have many world music CDs. NOTE: While there is a genre called "world music," you might also include traditional folk tunes, particularly from countries where churches have partner relationships with Unitarian Universalist congregations in the U.S. or Canada.
- Gather information about the music you will play. You might bring information from the Internet (or a laptop with Internet access) or CD cases. Or, write on newsprint the names of artists, songs and countries/cultures of origin for the music you will play and post it. You might also bring world music instruments to the session.
- Identify a large, open space where children can dance and where the noise from a dance party will not bother others meeting nearby.

### Description of Activity

Children experience the variety of the world's dance music and the commonality of joyful, expressive movement that all cultures share.

Play some music and talk about it, before inviting children to dance (once the dance party begins, it will be hard to stop for a discussion). Engage children to identify the instruments or languages they hear and speculate about the geographical and cultural origins of the tunes. If any children in the group have mentioned their connection to particular country or culture, point out any music you play from that country or culture.

### Including All Participants

Do not make assumptions about country of origin, cultural affinity, or knowledge about a particular country or culture based on children's physical appearance or something you know about a family in your congregation. Children and their families are the best arbiters of their national and cultural identities.

## STORY: HERE THEY COME!

By Judith C. Campbell. Used with permission. From *UU & Me!: Collected Stories*, edited by Betsy Hill Williams (Boston : Skinner House, 2003). Originally published in *uu&me*, Volume 3, Number 3, December 1999. *UU&Me!* is published by the Church of the Larger Fellowship, Unitarian Universalist Association, Boston.

Hello. My name is Bettje and when you say it, it sounds like "Bet-tay." I live in Transylvania, in the village of Kadacs where my grandfather, Biro Josef, is the Unitarian minister. We say our last names first here, and then our given names — or what you call a first name. My mother teaches first grade in the same school that I go to. For the last three weeks, she has been teaching me and my friends a song in English called "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean." We learned it so we could sing it for some American visitors who are coming to our village today.

One of our visitors is a lady minister from our partner church in America. I've never seen a lady minister before. I didn't know there was such a thing. My grandmother, Biro Anna, has been writing letters to her for over four years. They are pen pals. She has sent things for the people in our village from the people in her village of Norwell, in Massachusetts. And she has been selling some of our folk art embroideries and beautiful tablecloths made by women in my village in America. The money from those embroideries really helps us.

We have enough to eat because we all have gardens and most of us keep pigs and chickens. Everyone works in the garden. Almost nobody has cars. We walk everywhere. It's hard in the winter and spring because it's so muddy, and the roads in our village are not paved.

Anyway, today is the day. We have all been practicing our English song. Everybody has been doing something for the visit. The ladies have been cooking all week. The men have been repairing the fences and the beautiful carved gates called *szekley kapu* that many people in the village have outside their houses. The teenagers have been practicing the folk dances of the village so they can perform them. We don't get to see them except at weddings and times like this. People are beginning to

forget how to do the folk dances. The grandparents remember, but there are so few of them left.

Unfortunately, today is also the day that the sheep are driven out to pasture for the summer, and they are going to leave a lot of "stuff" on the road as they go. My grandmother is worried that the visitors, especially the lady minister and her husband, will think our village looks this way all the time.

Here they come! I can see the van and I can see hands waving out the windows. I wonder, which lady is the minister? The van is stopping and they are getting out. Lots of people are coming out of their houses to see and greet them. They don't look that much different [from] us. Oh, that must be the lady minister, she and my grandmother are hugging each other and crying and another man is taking their picture. Wow, there are flashing lights everywhere!

The man taking pictures of the lady minister is her husband and back in America he has a garden that he loves. He spends many hours each week in that garden making all kinds of things grow. Anyone who has a garden knows that you need more than water and sun to make things grow well; you must have fertilizer. And some of the best fertilizer in the world is the "stuff" that farm animals drop wherever they go. The lady minister's husband saw the sheep droppings in the road and explained that he doesn't live on a farm so he has to pay for fertilizer for his garden. He thought it must be wonderful to live in a farming village with so much free fertilizer on the road for anyone to take. Well, I guess that's one way of looking at it. It sure cheered up the people at my grandmother and grandfather's house who were worrying that the visitors would think our town was a mess!

The Americans stayed five days, and the lady minister was actually speaking some Hungarian words by the end of the visit. Her husband looked at all the gardens in the village, but he only learned one word, *Palinka*. That's a grown-up drink. I think it tastes awful, but like many other things, I guess it depends on how you look at it. I hope they come back. The lady minister said she'd write to me ... in Hungarian!



## LEADER RESOURCE 1: ALUNELUL DANCE

Traditional, as described on [Hugo's Folk Dance Resources](#) website.

Stand in a large circle.

1. Move 3 heel steps to the right. (Put your right heel out to your right, and put your left foot behind your right.)
2. Stamp twice with the left foot.
3. Move 3 heel steps to the left. (Put your left heel out to your left, and put your right foot behind your left.)
4. Stamp twice with the right foot.
5. Repeat parts 1 through 4.
6. Move 2 side steps to the right. (Step to the right with your right foot and close with your left.)
7. Stamp with your left foot.
8. Move 2 side steps to the left. (Step to the left with your left foot and close with your right.)
9. Stamp with your right foot.
10. Repeat parts 6 through 9.
11. Move 1 side step to the right, 1 side step to the left, 1 side step to the right.
12. Stamp twice with the left foot.
13. Move 1 side step to the left, 1 side step to the right, 1 side step to the left.
14. Stamp twice with the right foot.
15. Repeat parts 11 through 14.

Start the dance again.

## LEADER RESOURCE 2: HOW TO PLAY CHACKGUDO

Adapted from the [Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council](#) website.

Draw or tape a line down the middle of the space.

Count off by twos to form two teams. Direct the teams to stand on opposite sides of the line.

A representative from one team takes a deep breath, holds it, and crosses the line to the other side, while making the sound "CHACKGUDU,GUDU,GUDU,GUDU,GUDU,GUDU,GUDU,GUDU..." They must try to tag a player on the opposite team and return to their side before running out of breath. Meanwhile, the opposing team tries to catch and hold the player until the player runs out of breath.

If the player succeeds in getting back over the line without being held, children who were touched by the player are eliminated from the game. A player who is caught and held until they run out of breath is eliminated.

Teams take turns sending a player to the opposing side. A player who has not been caught is free to cross back over the line to breathe and then return to try to tag members of the opposite team.

When all players from one team are eliminated, the opposing side wins. Depending on the number of players and the time available, you might play more than one round.

## LEADER RESOURCE 3: SIGNPOST FOR SESSION 13

*Cut out the signpost to attach to the Faithful Journeys Path.*





## **LEADER RESOURCE 4: DOUGH FOR HUNGARIAN KOLACKY**

### **Ingredients**

- 1 cup butter or margarine, softened
- 2 three-ounce packages of cream cheese, softened
- 2 cups all-purpose flour

### **Directions**

Combine butter and cream cheese completely. Add flour and mix well. Divide dough into 4 balls. Wrap each ball in plastic wrap and chill for 24 hours.

## FIND OUT MORE

The Unitarian Universalist [Partner Church Council](#) has information and an [extensive bibliography](#) about Unitarian Universalism around the world and partnerships involving U.S. and Canadian congregations.

The [Unitarian Universalist Service Committee](#) is an outstanding example of an organization working toward the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.

# SESSION 14: HONOR LIFE

## INTRODUCTION

*Thank God I have the seeing eye, that is to say, as I lie in bed I can walk step by step on the fells and rough land seeing every stone and flower and patch of bog and cotton pass where my old legs will never take me again. — Beatrix Potter*

The session introduces our seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part, through the story of British Unitarian Beatrix Potter. The creator of Peter Rabbit not only wrote and illustrated children's books featuring animal characters, but also related to nature as a dedicated amateur biologist, a professional farmer and the donor of many acres of countryside to England's National Trust. In this session, the children identify connections that form the interdependent web of an ecosystem and explore their own relationship with the natural world. We add the signpost "Honor Life" to our Faithful Journeys Path.

## GOALS

This session will:

- Unfold the concept of an ecosystem as an example of the interdependent web of all existence affirmed in our seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle
- Develop children's sense of relationship with nature and help them identify and explore ways they are connected with nature
- Encourage children's stewardship of the environment as an expression of their Unitarian Universalist faith and UU identity
- Teach children how they can and do express their faith — their ideas of right and wrong, their values, and their beliefs — with real actions.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Learn about British Unitarian author, biologist and farmer Beatrix Potter
- Understand stewardship of the Earth as faithful action that expresses our seventh Principle
- Use meditation, imagination, games and art to conceptualize an ecosystem and experience being part of the interdependent web

- Explore ways to be in respectful relationship with the nonhuman living beings of the world
- Identify actions they might take that would reflect the signpost "Honor Life"
- Name ways they did or could translate their Unitarian Universalist faith and/or Principles into action.

## SESSION-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	2
Activity 1: Faithful Footprints	5
Activity 2: Move It! Knots	5
Activity 3: Story Basket and Centering	5
Activity 4: Story — Honoring Life: A Story of Beatrix Potter	8
Activity 5: Ecosystem Guided Meditation	8
Activity 6: Ecosystem Mural	20
Faith in Action: Get to Church by People Power Day	
Closing	7
Alternate Activity 1: Nature Conversation Journal	12
Alternate Activity 2: Writing in Code	20

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

If it would be helpful in creating sacred space, light a candle or chalice.

Beatrix Potter had a strong everyday relationship with the natural world. Consider the ways you connect with the nonhuman world. Do you relate most to pets? To a garden? To the food you prepare and eat, and its plant and animal sources? To wilderness experiences, such as camping or hiking? Have you ever had an experience in which you felt an animal or plant was speaking to you, or was your friend?

How do the connections you feel or understand with the nonhuman world affect your daily choices about sharing the Earth with other beings? On a daily basis, how do you use natural resources? Interact with animal and plant life? Choose your food? Explore ways you might live more consciously as part of the interconnected web.

## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Chalice candle or LED/battery-operated candle
- Lighter and extinguisher, if needed
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Posters of the Unitarian Universalist Principles in both adult and children's language, or copies of Session 1, [Handout 1](#) (included in this document) for all participants

### Preparation for Activity

- Decide whether you will use the provided opening words or other opening words, such as those offered in Session 1, Leader Resource 1, Alternate Openings. It is recommended that you use the same opening words for each session.
- Print the opening words on newsprint. Post the newsprint where the children will be able to see it when they gather.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle. Light the chalice. Point out the chalice-lighting words on the newsprint and invite the group to read together:

We light this flame for the light of truth, the warmth of love, and the energy of action.

Indicate the poster(s) of the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Or, give each child a copy of the handout. Ask a volunteer to read the seventh Principle in the adult language. Ask a second volunteer to read the children's version of the seventh Principle. Then, say:

Today we will learn about this Unitarian Universalist Principle — what it means, and what kinds of actions show it. Let's get started.

Collect handouts for reuse.

### Including All Participants

If not all participants are fluent readers, take the time to teach the group to say the opening words from memory.

If the group has children who are sensitive to perfumes or other chemicals, use unscented candles or an electric or battery-operated flame. An electric flame is also recommended if you may not use open flames or if any participants are afraid of fire.

## ACTIVITY 1: FAITHFUL FOOTPRINTS (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path (Session 1, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))
- Cutouts of footprints and (optional) wheelchairs, at least one for each participant, in a variety of colors (Session 1, [Leader Resources 3](#) and [4](#) (included in this document))
- Markers
- Push pins, glue stick or tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Think of something you have done since the group last met that represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. Identify the Principle(s) your action reflected. Write a few words about it on a footprint, with your name.

### Description of Activity

This activity reinforces children's learning as they model translating faith into action for one another. To strengthen children's Unitarian Universalist identity, help participants see how their own behavior demonstrates specific Principles.

Gather in a circle. Point to the Faithful Journeys Path and say:

Together we are taking a journey to learn what it means to live as Unitarian Universalists. Each time we meet, we have a chance to talk about ways our actions show our beliefs about what is right and good. This is called "putting our faith into action."

When you share about something you have done that shows what you believe, you can choose a footprint or tracks for us to put on our Faithful Journeys Path.

Hold up the footprint you made of your own faithful action. Tell what you did and how it represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. If you can connect your action to a Principle, briefly explain. For example:

- I made phone calls to remind people to vote (or, I voted), because I believe in our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, that we all have a say in matters that concern us. When people vote, that's one way to have every person's opinion be counted.



- I have a neighbor who was sick last week. I helped him bring his trash outside, because I believe in the second Unitarian Universalist Principle, which says we believe in being kind and fair.
- I put my water bottles and juice bottles in the recycling bin, because I believe in the seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, which reminds us to take care of the Earth that all life shares.

Ask the children to think of an act they have done, since you met last, which reflects Unitarian Universalism. You may wish to prompt:

- Did anyone do something that helped make things fair? (justice, equity, and compassion)
- Did anyone help someone else? (inherent worth and dignity, interdependent web)
- Did anyone take care of nature or another animal? (interdependent web)
- Did anyone listen to someone else who had a very different opinion? (search for truth and meaning, acceptance of one another)
- Did anyone play with someone new whom you did not know very well? (acceptance of one another, encouragement to spiritual growth)

As participants name their actions, write a word or phrase describing the action on a footprint or wheelchair cutout. Invite children to write their names on their cutouts and post them along the edge of the Faithful Journeys Path. Have them progress along the path over the course of the program.

To stay within the time frame for this activity, use these guidelines:

- Encourage children to share their faithful act in one or two brief sentences.
- If the group is big, you may wish to limit children to sharing only one faithful act per week.

It is very important to avoid judging participants, either with criticism or praise. Avoid phrases like "Great job!" or "You're fantastic!" which might suggest that acts of faith vary in their value or encourage children to compete to share the "best" act.

You should, however, respond to each child's contribution. Listen carefully to what a child tells you. After each child shares, say something like, "Thank you for sharing," followed by a summarizing sentence, such as:

- Being kind to new children at school is an action that treats others like they are important.

- Suggesting your friends all vote to decide what to play together is an action of democracy and fairness.
- Cleaning up garbage at the park is an action to take care of the Earth.
- Teaching your brother to talk is an action that affirms each person's learning.
- Taking care of your dog is an action of love.

Identify the Unitarian Universalist Principles their act represents; refer to the Principles poster if the room has one or indicate a relevant signpost on the Faithful Journeys Path. By responding specifically to each child's faithful actions, you will help them feel pride, a sense of accomplishment, and their own empowerment as agents whose actions and choices reflect Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values.

### Including All Participants

Along with cut-out footprints (Session 1, Handout 3, Faithful Footprints), provide wheelchairs (Session 1, Handout 4, Making Tracks for Faith) in the same colors of paper. Encourage all the children — not just those who use wheelchairs for mobility — to sometimes use a wheelchair instead of footprints to represent their faithful actions.

## ACTIVITY 2: MOVE IT! KNOTS (5 MINUTES)

### Preparation for Activity

- Identify an open area with room for all the children to gather and move about a bit.

### Description of Activity

Explain to the children that today we will be talking about our seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. You may say:

This game will give us a taste of what it feels like to all be connected, and to remember those connections as we work together to solve a problem.

Gather the children in a circle. Ask everyone to extend both hands in toward the center of the circle. Invite them to each take the hands of two different people who are not next to them in the circle.

When all are connected, tell the children they have now formed an interdependent web. Invite the children to untangle the knot into a circle, without anyone letting go of the hands they are holding.

Give the group a few minutes to try to turn the knot into a simple circle, still holding one another's hands. You might suggest they loosen their grip so their linked hands pivot easily but don't lose touch entirely. As they move, affirm children for paying attention to the ways they are connected to the others.

To conclude, ask the children:

- Was it easier or harder to get untangled than you thought it would be?
- Did anyone let go? What happened when you let go? How did you reconnect?

You can point out how important it was to pay attention to the specific ways they were all connected.

If you have time, try the game again.

### **Including All Participants**

Children with mobility issues can participate from a chair or wheelchair, with others moving around them. Watch for children who may be uncomfortable being touched or crowded, and give them the choice to observe instead of play.

## **ACTIVITY 3: STORY BASKET AND CENTERING (5 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- A large basket
- Objects related to the story "Honoring Life: A Story of Beatrix Potter," such as a picture of Beatrix Potter ([Leader Resources 1, 2 and 3](#) (included in this document)), a few Beatrix Potter children's books, a picture of England's Lake Country, small stuffed animals, a ball of wool, a drawing pad and color pencils, a stick or rock with lichen on it and/or other natural items
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Box or small table and a decorative cloth cover to form a small altar

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Place the story-related items and the sound instrument in the story basket.
- Place the filled basket in the storytelling area you have designated.
- For an altar to hold story objects, set up a box or table next to your storytelling area and cover it with a decorative cloth. It is not necessary to ritualize the altar as a sacred place. It can simply serve as a focal point where objects

related to the story will be visible while you tell the story.

### **Description of Activity**

Gather the children in a circle in your storytelling area. Show them the storytelling basket. Say something like, "Let's see what's in our story basket today."

Tell the group the items in the story basket will be placed on this altar or table after the children have passed them around the circle. Take the story-related items from the basket, one at a time, and pass them around. Objects that are fragile or should not be passed around for any reason can be held up for all to see and then placed directly on the altar.

Briefly name the various objects. Show pictures of Beatrix Potter and explain that she was a Unitarian a long time ago in England.

As items come back to you, display them on the altar for children to look at as they listen to the story.

Now remove the sound instrument from the story basket. Tell the children that every time you tell a story in Faithful Journeys, you will first use the instrument to help them get their ears, minds, and bodies ready to listen. Invite them to sit comfortably and close their eyes (if they are comfortable doing so). You may tell them that closing their eyes can help them focus on just listening.

In a calm voice, say:

As you breathe in, feel your body opening up with air. As you breathe out, feel yourself relaxing.

Repeat this once or twice. Then, say:

Now you are ready to listen. When I hit the chime (turn the rain stick over), listen as carefully as you can. See how long you can hear its sound. When you can no longer hear it, open your eyes and you will know it is time for the story to begin.

Sound the chime or other instrument. When the sound has gone, begin telling the story.

### **Including All Participants**

If anyone in the group is unable to hold or pass items, or cannot see the items, make sure you or a child in the group offers the person a chance to see and touch each object, as needed.

Some people do not feel safe closing their eyes when they are in a group. If any children resist, respect their resistance and suggest that they find a single point of focus to look at instead.

If you have a basket of fidget objects for children who may listen and learn more effectively with something in their hands, make the fidget object basket available during this activity. Remind children where it is before you begin the "centering" part of this activity. For a full description of fidget objects and guidance on using them, see Session 2, Leader Resource 2.

## ACTIVITY 4: STORY — HONORING LIFE — A STORY OF BEATRIX POTTER (8 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of the story "[Honoring Life: A Story of Beatrix Potter](#)" (included in this document)
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Fidget object basket (Session 2, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))

### Preparation for Activity

- Read the story a few times. Think about how you might use items from the story basket as props.
- Consider telling the story rather than reading it. Practice telling it aloud.

### Description of Activity

The story about Unitarian Beatrix Potter, who spent her isolated, younger years observing and drawing nature and who grew up to write and illustrate children's books about animals, exemplifies our seventh Principle, respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Before you begin, look around the room and make eye contact with each person. Read or tell the story.

Sound the instrument to indicate that the story is over.

When you have finished the story, guide the children in a brief discussion using these questions:

- When do you feel closest to nature?
- Do you ever have conversations with pets or other nonhuman beings?
- What are some times and ways you make a connection with animals, fish, trees or plants during a typical day?

## ACTIVITY 5: ECOSYSTEM GUIDED MEDITATION (8 MINUTES)

### Preparation for Activity

- Familiarize yourself with the guided meditation that follows, so that you can read it smoothly. Make pauses long enough to give children time to imagine, but not so long that they lose interest.
- Identify a space where children can sit or lie down comfortably, closing their eyes if they wish, without touching others.

### Description of Activity

Tell the children that we, like Beatrix Potter, can experience our connection with the web of life by both observing and imagining. Say, in your own words:

We will try using our imaginations to explore the connections that happen in nature. In different places where people, animals, and plants live, we are all connected because every living thing needs others to survive.

Ask children if they can think of examples. Suggest: When birds eat insects, that protects some plants that people and other animals eat. When rain falls from the sky, trees grow big enough to feed and shelter birds. Then say:

Scientists call these connections an "ecosystem." There are many different kinds of ecosystems, with different kinds of animals, different kinds of plants, and different connections. A rain forest is an ecosystem. A riverbank can be an ecosystem. A desert can be an ecosystem.

Let's imagine what it might feel like to be part of an ecosystem. Since Beatrix Potter spent so much of her life on the hillsides of the English Lake Country, we will try becoming a meadow.

If there is room, it may be most comfortable for children to lie down on the floor. Invite the children to close their eyes, if they are comfortable doing so. Say:

Make yourself quiet in your body and mind. Become aware of how it feels and sounds when your body breathes.

You may wish to guide them to relax and quiet each part of their bodies, from feet to head. Then, continue:

Imagine that you are in a meadow, a grassy area with only a few trees. It is a cool day, but sunny. What would it feel like to be the grass? Not to be on the grass, but to actually be the grass? Feel the sun and the breeze on your

blades, your roots going down into the ground, pulling water and nutrients up into your body. Who else is around you?

Now, in your imagination, change. You are no longer the blade of grass. Now you are an ant, or another kind of bug, scurrying on or around the grass. What is your relationship to the grass? Do you eat it? Walk on it? Hide beneath it?

Once again, you are changing, becoming another member of this meadow community. Now you are a bird. Imagine spreading your wings and taking flight, ending up in a nearby giant oak tree. How does it feel to ruffle your feathers? How does the breeze affect your flying? What will you eat? Might it be the bug that you were just a minute ago? Where will you sleep?

Now change again. You take another shape, becoming much, much larger, until you are the oak tree the bird was sitting on. Feel the sun and the breeze in your leaves. How does being a tree feel different from being a blade of grass? How do your long, strong roots feel different from the little, hairlike roots of the grass? Who lives among your leaves and branches? Do they help you or hurt you? You have lived in this place for a hundred years — how has the world changed around you? What might you know that none of the other beings in the meadow know?

One last time, feel yourself change into another being, this time a squirrel running down from the branches of the oak tree. What do you gain from the tree? What might you give to it? Enjoy your ability to bound effortlessly across the ground, to scramble and leap through the trees, your fluffy tail providing balance behind you. What makes you happy? What scares you? Who might you see around you? As a squirrel, look around the meadow, and then say good-bye to the meadow as you return once again to your human form, back in this human community.

Invite the children to share what they saw or felt during the meditation. Was anything surprising? What other plants and animals might they have seen or been? How would the ecosystem of the meadow have been different if one of the beings was missing? Invite them to consider particular interactions, such as if the bird had not been there to eat the bugs, or the squirrel had not been there to bury acorns (which grow into new oak trees).

### **Including All Participants**

Fidget objects (Session 2, Leader Resource 2) may help some children stay quiet through the meditation.

## **ACTIVITY 6: ECOSYSTEM MURAL (20 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Large roll of paper, and tape
- Pencils, markers, and/or paints, paintbrushes and small cups
- Optional: Information about ecosystem the mural will portray

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Identify a large, flat work surface to accommodate work on your mural. Tables pushed together are probably most comfortable. A clean, uncarpeted stretch of floor can work as well. Or, obtain permission to create the mural directly on a wall.
- Identify a wall where the completed mural can be displayed.
- Mix paints if necessary. Distribute paint in cups to give all participants easy access.
- Unroll paper and tape corners down to secure the mural during painting.

### **Description of Activity**

Tell the children they will create a mural of an ecosystem. Ask for a definition of an ecosystem. Affirm that the mural will portray the different plants and animals that together form the interdependent web of a particular place.

Tell the group about the ecosystem they will portray. You may wish to have the children depict the meadow they experienced in Activity 5, the guided meditation. Or, allow the group to choose (by vote or consensus) an ecosystem to depict, such as your local ecosystem, a rain forest, a coral reef or a riverbank. Encourage children to depict plants and bugs as well as birds and mammals. Suggest they sketch the mural in pencil before using paint or markers.

If you like, indicate pictures and information you have brought to help children choose subjects to draw or paint. As the children work, guide them with questions about the relationships between various plants and animals in the ecosystem. Who eats what? Who uses what for shelter? Who helps other things to grow? When the mural is complete, you or the children may wish to visually indicate these connections with lightly penciled dotted lines.

## Including All Participants

Whether you are using a wall, table or floor, make sure the mural paper and art supplies are accessible to all participants.

## CLOSING (7 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path
- Signpost for Session 14 ([Leader Resource 4](#) (included in this document)) and pins, glue stick or tape
- Copies of Session 1, [Leader Resource 8](#) (included in this document), UU Principles Song, for all participants
- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape

### Preparation for Activity

- Print out Leader Resource 4 and cut out the signpost.
- Optional: Write the UU Principles Song lyrics on newsprint, and post.
- Customize, print out and photocopy the Taking It Home section for all participants.

### Description of Activity

This activity helps children get used to practicing a closing ritual as a way of affirming their belonging in the faith community.

Gather the group in a circle. Thank the children for participating and sharing their stories and ideas in this session. Tell them something you liked about the way they worked together as a community.

Point out the Faithful Journeys Path. Say, in your own words:

Our Faithful Journeys Path shows our journey to live our lives and act in ways that reflect our Unitarian Universalist beliefs and faith. The signposts direct us by reminding us about our Principles.

Today's signpost is "Honor Life." It stands for our seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle: respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. It means that we remember that all beings of the Earth, human, plant, or animal, are connected, so we need to act in ways that care for our planet, Earth, and everything that lives here with us.

Attach the signpost to the Faithful Journeys Path.

Remind the children that they will have a chance to add Faithful Footprints to the Faithful Journeys Path the next time they meet. Encourage them to try to do an action before your next session that shows respect for nature and the web of life. Take a few minutes to brainstorm some actions together. If the children have difficulty coming up with ideas, you might suggest helping their families recycle bottles and paper at home, spending time outdoors paying respectful attention to the different life forms they find in their own ecosystem, and asking parents or teachers or looking in books to learn one new thing about interconnections in their local ecosystem or another one.

Point out the words to the UU Principles Song. Tell the children it is sung to the tune of "Old McDonald Had a Farm." Lead the children in singing the verse about the seventh Principle. Then, sing the entire song together. Explain that you will learn about all of the Principles during your time together in Faithful Journeys.

Distribute the Taking It Home handout. Thank the children, tell them you look forward to seeing them next time, and dismiss the group.

## FAITH IN ACTION: GET TO CHURCH BY PEOPLE POWER DAY

### Materials for Activity

- Poster board or paper, and markers
- Light snacks for those arriving to church by "people power"

### Preparation for Activity

- Consult your congregational calendar to choose a Get to Church by People Power Day. Look for a date when congregational members may be willing to take the extra time traveling by "people power" may require.
- Arrange with lay and worship leaders to publicize Get to Church by People Power Day with an announcement during worship, newsletter and website notices, and word of mouth.

### Description of Activity

To do something beneficial for our ecosystem and foster connections between individuals and nature and among congregants, engage the Faithful Journeys group to sponsor a "Get to Church by People Power" day. People power could include sharing rides or joining together in using public transportation or literal human energy, such as walking or bicycling.

Lead the children in promoting the event. Participants might make and display posters, write a piece for the congregational newsletter, make an announcement during a worship service, create an invitation to photocopy or scan to send to members, and/or personally invite congregants to participate. Include the message that participating in Get to Church by People Power Day is a way to take faithful action that is particularly expressive of our seventh Principle.

On Get to Church by People Power Day, the group might provide cool drinks or light snacks for those who walked or rode.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Take a few minutes to evaluate the session with your co-leader while it is fresh. Share your thoughts with any other team co-leaders and your director of religious education. You might find it helpful to consider these questions:

- Which activities worked well? What did not work so well?
- Were all children actively engaged? If not, who was not? Why might that have been? How could they be better included next time?
- How well did the activities match the learning styles of the children in this group? What can we do differently to better accommodate different learning styles in future sessions?
- How well did the session balance physically active with sedentary activities?
- How was the timing? What can we do differently for a session to work better within the time frame?
- Were there any behavior issues? If so, how can we address them in the future? Do we need more information or help in this area?
- What connections did children make with the activities and/or central ideas? How did we know that was occurring?
- What connections did children make with each other? What connections did we make with the children? When was that most evident?
- Are we successfully creating a program characterized by inclusion, diversity appreciation, respect, a noncompetitive environment, and welcome? What could we have done differently?

- What questions or issues arose in this session that we might like to discuss with our director of religious education?

## TAKING IT HOME

*Thank God I have the seeing eye, that is to say, as I lie in bed I can walk step by step on the fells and rough land seeing every stone and flower and patch of bog and cotton pass where my old legs will never take me again. — Beatrix Potter*

**IN TODAY'S SESSION...** We introduced Beatrix Potter, author of *Peter Rabbit* and many other children's classics, who was a naturalist and farmer, an author and illustrator, and a Unitarian. We talked about our seventh Principle, respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part, imagined ourselves as various parts of an ecosystem, and created a mural depicting the connected nature of an ecosystem. Our signpost to help guide us in faithful action was "Honor Life."

**EXPLORE THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Talk about...** Talk with your child about encounters with nature that stand out vividly in your own life. When have you felt especially connected with nonhuman life? What have you learned from animals or plants? How can observing or listening to other beings in our interdependent web of life teach us how to care best for the Earth we share? Encourage your child to share their own responses to these questions.

**EXTEND THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Try...** Our session centered on the interdependent web and introduced the concept of ecosystems. How would you describe the ecosystem your family belongs to? Where does your food come from? Where do you get shelter? Who beyond your family shares food or shelter with you? You may wish to expand your family's role in your ecosystem by building a bird house or bird feeder, composting, planting a butterfly garden or planting vegetables you can harvest and share.

## FAMILY ADVENTURE

A family camping trip or hike can be a great way to connect both with nature and with one another. Even a picnic in the park or backyard can bring your family in closer contact with the natural world. While you are outdoors, talk about the various life forms you find around you.

## A FAMILY RITUAL

*Mitakuye oyasin* is a Lakota Sioux phrase that is generally translated as "all my relations." It is a prayer of oneness with all forms of life: other people, animals, birds, insects, trees and plants, and even rocks, and



expresses much the same concept as the interdependent web of all existence. You may wish to use *mitakuye oyasin* or its English translation, "all my relations," as a prayer of gratitude and appreciation, particularly when you notice beauty in nature or evidence of nature's interconnections. The words can also serve as a closing phrase for other prayers, such as table grace or prayers at bedtime.

### A FAMILY GAME

Play a game based on the connections of an ecosystem. Have one family member self-identify as a plant or animal. The next person self-identifies as another plant or animal and tells how it relates to the first. For instance, if the first person said, "I am a bear," the second person might say, "I am a salmon that was eaten by the bear." The game continues as each person self-identifies in connection to the previous beings: "I am a bug that was eaten by the salmon that was eaten by the bear." / "I am a shrub that sheltered the bug that was eaten by the salmon that was eaten by the bear." A player who cannot add to the list of beings in relationship may start the game over by introducing a new animal or plant.

### FAMILY DISCOVERY

An extensive [Beatrix Potter website](#) has information about Potter's life and world, as well as games for children, and you can find [many of her books](#), complete with pictures, online. Your family may enjoy watching the 2006 movie, *Miss Potter*, or the 1971 movie, *Tales of Beatrix Potter*, featuring the Royal Ballet.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has an excellent [Environmental Kids Club](#) with environmental information and games for children. Fans of Dr. Seuss's environmental children's book, *The Lorax*, will enjoy this [Lorax Save the Trees game](#). On the [BBC website](#), find interactive games for elementary-school-age children that explore interconnections in the natural environment and other science, health and ecology topics.

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: NATURE CONVERSATION JOURNAL (12 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Pencils and small notebooks, or blank paper and clipboards, for all participants

### Preparation for Activity

- Identify an outdoor area where the children can safely spend some time. If necessary, get permission to use the space and permission to bring children outdoors.

- If children will use clipboards, attach a few sheets of paper to each clipboard.

### Description of Activity

Beatrix Potter's stories grew out of her observations of nature, combined with her active imagination that filled in the animals' sides of a conversation. Guide children to initiate conversation with something in nature, such as a plant, an animal, a stone or a twig.

Bring the group outdoors. Distribute pencils and notebooks or clipboards and paper. Ask children, without speaking to one another, to find something in the natural world that they can greet as an old friend or that they would like to get to know better. Invite them to ask questions of their conversation partner, and to use their imaginations to fill in what the plant/animal/stone might say in response. This, of course, will not be an actual conversation, and should be conducted without speaking aloud.

Explain that they can record their conversation any way they like — word for word, or by taking notes or drawing pictures to help remember the questions and answers.

Back indoors (or in a circle outdoors, if the weather is nice), invite volunteers to share what they chose to talk with, and what was said.

## ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: WRITING IN CODE (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Paper and pencils for all participants
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Optional: Faithful Journeys Path and pins, glue stick or tape

### Description of Activity

For many years, Beatrix Potter kept a diary, which she wrote in a special code that she created. No one figured out the code until twenty years after she died. In this activity, children create their own code to write out an instruction on caring for our planet, such as "Walk to school" or "Don't litter."

Gather participants at work tables, seated a bit apart so everyone has a private space. Invite the children to think silently about a brief message they might like to give to others about how to take care of the ecosystem of our planet.

Distribute paper and pencils. Ask the children to write down their message, without showing it to anyone — except a leader, who may be able to help with phrasing or spelling. Then, direct the children to write the

alphabet as a list along the side or bottom of their page. Demonstrate on newsprint.

When their alphabets are finished, explain how children can create their own secret code by assigning each letter its own symbol. A code symbol might be a different letter, a number, or an invented symbol or picture. Tell the children they do not need symbols for the entire alphabet — only for the letters that are actually in their secret message.

As children finish creating their codes, give them a fresh sheet of paper. Tell them this will be the solving sheet another child will use to decode their secret message. Instruct the children to make a small line for each letter in their message, leaving extra space between words. Again, demonstrate on newsprint; for example, "Save Water." would look like: \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_.

Then, below these spaces in which the decoder will write the message, the children should write the key to cracking the code, showing which symbols stand for which letters. Suggest they scramble the order of the letters in the key, so the answer to the coded message is not obvious.

When all the children have composed a coded message and created a solving sheet with a key, collect the solving sheets and redistribute them. Make sure no one gets their own sheet back.

Give the children time to decipher the codes, and read aloud the conservation messages they have decoded. You may wish to post these messages as new signposts on your Faithful Journeys Path.

Conclude by sharing that learning how to treat the nonhuman beings in our world can seem a little like decoding a message. You might say:

It may seem that we can't communicate with the nonhuman beings of the world. But every living being, human and nonhuman, does communicate. If we pay attention, perhaps we can decode the messages we receive from the beings that share the Earth with us. We can learn what animal and plant life needs us to do so they can survive and keep our ecosystem balanced. And we must make sure our actions communicate the thoughts and beliefs we really care about.



## STORY: HONORING LIFE — A STORY OF BEATRIX POTTER

You might think that Beatrix Potter was a lonely child. Perhaps you would be right. True, she lived in a large city: London, England. True, the only child she had to play with was her brother, Bertram, and he was usually away at boarding school. Beatrix had no school friends, because she didn't go to school; instead, a governess taught her at home. There were no other children her parents would let her play with in their London neighborhood.

But Beatrix was not as lonely as you might think. She had the friendship she felt for all the animals and plants she met on her rambles through the countryside. Beatrix's family took long vacations in Scotland and the Lake District of England. She brought the countryside back to London by taming wild rabbits as pets. She kept country mice in a cage, and also lizards, snakes, and even a pet bat! In the countryside, Beatrix loved to spend hours out of doors. She drew detailed pictures of the plants and the animals she found. She wanted to know everything about the natural world. She planned to be a scientist when she grew up.

But Beatrix was young more than a hundred years ago. It wasn't considered proper for a middle-class girl to have a job, particularly as a scientist. Beatrix's parents were very concerned that she grow up to be a proper young lady. No one encouraged her to draw animals and plants, but Beatrix kept studying her friends in the natural world on her own. The drawings and paintings she made were greatly respected by scientists who wanted to learn more about animals and plants and appreciated a close and careful look at nature. Beatrix was especially interested in mushrooms and mosses. By observing these plants, she discovered that the lichen that grows on rocks and trees is actually a combination of a moss and a fungus.

Her scientific sketches of nature, even though they helped make discoveries, were not the same as having a real job as a scientist. But when Beatrix was grown up, her loving attention to the natural world earned her a different success than she had ever imagined. In 1893, Beatrix sat down to write a letter to five-year-old Noel, who had been sick in bed for a long time. She started her letter, "I don't know what to write to you, so I shall tell you a story about four little rabbits whose names are Flopsy, Mopsy, Cotton-tail, and Peter." Have you ever heard of these little rabbits? Well, Beatrix Potter made them up, based on rabbits she had watched closely, and on her imagination. She drew Noel a picture of the four

young rabbits and their mother. So began the tale of Peter Rabbit, which you may know, and children have been enjoying for more than a hundred years.

Beatrix wrote and illustrated twenty-two more books, all about the animals that had been her friends in the English countryside: hedgehogs, frogs, ducks, house mice and field mice, and squirrels. She knew them very well from spending time among them and observing their ways.

Beatrix earned enough money from her books to buy a farm in the English Lake District, a place she had always loved. She raised sheep on her farm. Over time she bought more country land, to keep it as a natural home for animals and plants and not used for factories and houses. When Beatrix Potter died in 1943, she gave four thousand acres to the National Trust, an English organization that protects and preserves beautiful, natural lands. If you travel to England today, you can visit Beatrix Potter's farmhouse. You can walk in the countryside, just as she did so many years ago when she was a young child. Yet you need only to open one of her books to meet the animals and plants she loved. By observing, loving, and drawing her friends, she preserved her connection with the world of nature for children like all of you, and all of us, to share.

## LEADER RESOURCE 1: PICTURE OF BEATRIX POTTER

*Cut out to include in the story basket.*



## LEADER RESOURCE 2: PICTURE OF BEATRIX POTTER 2

*Cut out to include in the story basket.*



### LEADER RESOURCE 3: PICTURE OF BEATRIX POTTER 3

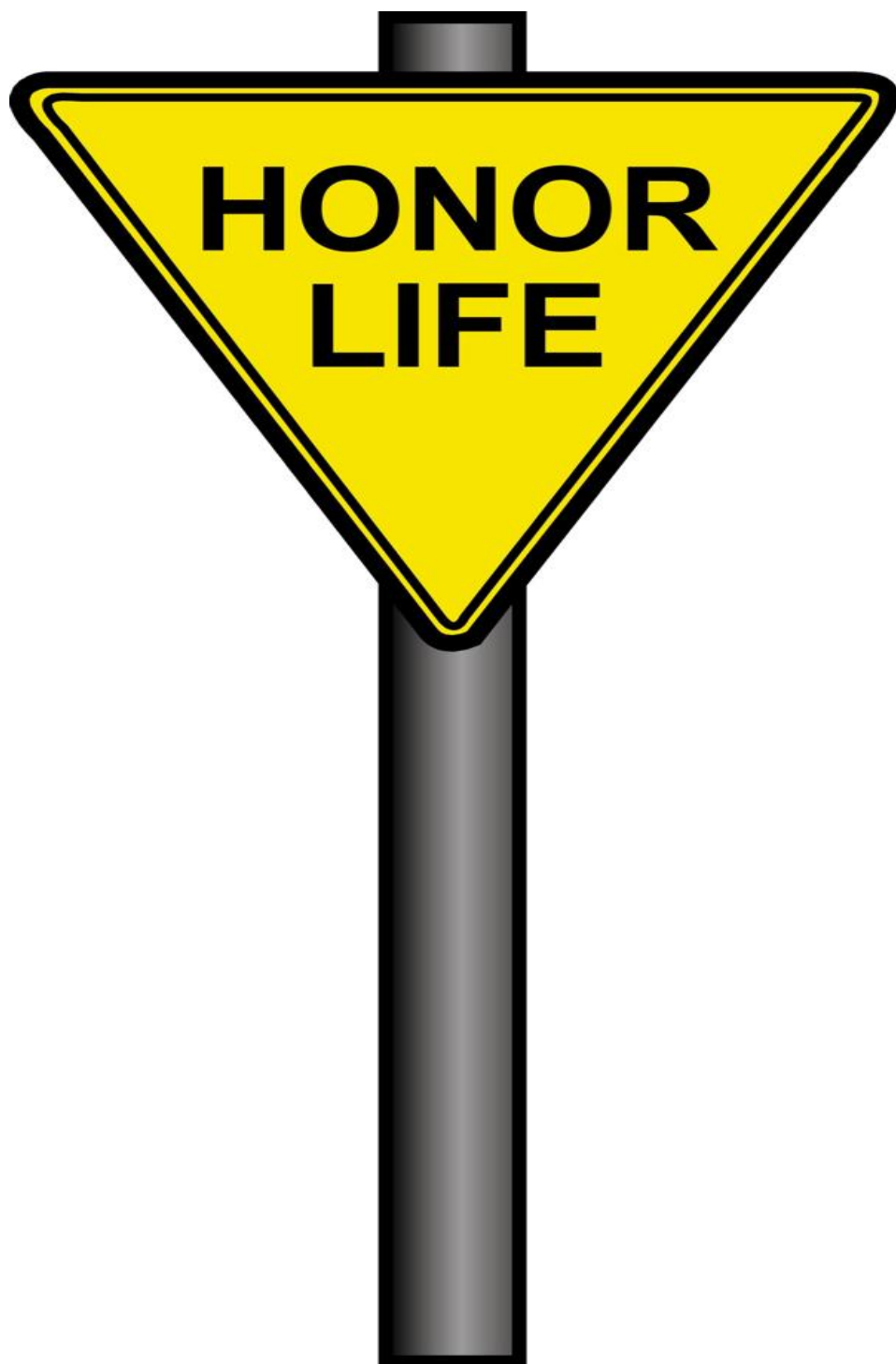
*Cut out to include in the story basket.*



## LEADER RESOURCE 4: SIGNPOST FOR SESSION 14

*Cut out the signpost and attach to the Faithful Journeys Path.*





## FIND OUT MORE

### Beatrix Potter

Biographies of Beatrix Potter include *Beatrix Potter: A Life in Nature*, by Linda Lear (St. Martin's Griffin, 2008) and *Beatrix Potter: Artist, Storyteller, and Countrywoman* by Judy Taylor (New York: F. Warne, 1996).

A Wikipedia article about the [English Lake Country](#) where Beatrix Potter had her farm includes pictures. An [article about Hill Top](#), the farm she lived on and donated to the National Trust, includes pictures of the farmhouse itself. Bowness-on-Windermere in Cumbria, England, boasts a [themed attraction dedicated to Beatrix Potter](#).

### Ecosystems and Ecology

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has an excellent [Environmental Kids Club](#) with environmental information and games for children.

Fans of Dr. Seuss's environmental children's book *The Lorax* will enjoy a [Lorax Save the Trees game](#).

On the [BBC website](#), find interactive games for elementary school-age children that explore interconnections in the natural environment and other science, health, and ecology topics.

# SESSION 15: PROTECT THE EARTH

## INTRODUCTION

In this session, participants hear about the Change the World Kids, an action club started by children of the North Universalist Chapel Society congregation in Vermont. They learn about the club's work to rehabilitate a bird migratory channel in Costa Rica — an example of action to promote the seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, respect for the interdependent web of life of all existence of which we are a part. Participants decorate reusable cloth bags and make posters that offer simple ways people can protect the Earth in their homes and in your congregation. We add the signpost "Protect the Earth" to the Faithful Journeys Path.

You may wish to use Alternate Activity 1, a game with a ball of yarn, to tangibly demonstrate the concept of the interdependent web of life.

## GOALS

This session will:

- Strengthen Unitarian Universalist identity
- Offer contemporary Unitarian Universalist role models as children learn about the Change the World Kids, a group that originated in the religious education program of Vermont's North Universalist Chapel Society
- Demonstrate how caring for the environment is one way of acting faithfully based on our seventh Principle, respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part
- Encourage and empower participants to protect the Earth.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Connect Unitarian Universalism with actions that affirm human responsibility to protect the interdependent web of all life of which we are a part
- Identify with contemporary children who act in faith to help the environment
- Engage in environmentally responsible action by creating "Make a Difference" signs to display at home and in your congregation and/or making

reusable cloth bags their families can use instead of plastic bags

- Identify actions they might take that would reflect the signpost "Protect the Earth"
- Name ways they did or could translate their Unitarian Universalist faith and/or Principles into action.

## SESSION-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	2
Activity 1: Faithful Footprints	5
Activity 2: Move It! Penguins and Icebergs	8
Activity 3: Story Basket and Centering	5
Activity 4: Story — The Change the World Kids	10
Activity 5: Creative Exploration — Make a Difference Posters and Reusable Cloth Bags	25
Faith in Action: It's Easy to Be Green: Sale and Fundraiser	
Closing	5
Alternate Activity 1: Interdependent Web Game with Yarn	8

## SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Spend a few minutes sitting quietly in a natural setting or, a quiet indoor spot. Light a candle or chalice if it would be helpful in creating sacred space. Visualize a web connecting all living things and imagine yourself as part of it. Now imagine places where the web has been torn, stretched, or broken. Visualize yourself gently pulling the strands together and mending the web. Make a promise to do something to protect nonhuman life on the Earth.



## OPENING (2 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Chalice candle or LED/battery-operated candle
- Lighter and extinguisher, if needed
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Posters of the Unitarian Universalist Principles in both adult and children's language, or copies of Session 1, [Handout 1](#) (included in this document) for all participants

### Preparation for Activity

- Decide whether you will use the provided opening words or other opening words, such as those offered in Session 1, Leader Resource 1, Alternate Openings. It is recommended that you use the same opening words for each session.
- Print the opening words on newsprint. Post the newsprint where the children will be able to see it when they gather.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle. Light the chalice. Point out the chalice-lighting words on the newsprint and invite the group to read together:

We light this flame for the light of truth, the warmth of love, and the energy of action.

Indicate the poster(s) of the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Or, give each child a copy of the handout. Ask a volunteer to read the seventh Principle in the adult language. Ask a second volunteer to read the children's version of the seventh Principle. Then, say:

Today we will learn about this Unitarian Universalist Principle — what it means, and what kinds of actions show it. Let's get started.

Collect handouts for reuse.

### Including All Participants

If not all participants are fluent readers, take the time to teach the group to say the opening words from memory.

If the group has children who are sensitive to perfumes or other chemicals, use unscented candles or an electric or battery-operated flame. An electric flame is also recommended if you may not use open flames or if any participants are afraid of fire.

## ACTIVITY 1: FAITHFUL FOOTPRINTS (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

Push pins, glue stick or tape

- Faithful Journeys Path (Session 1, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))
- Cutouts of footprints and (optional) wheelchair tracks, at least one for each participant, in a variety of colors (Session 1, [Leader Resources 3](#) and [4](#) (included in this document))
- Markers

### Preparation for Activity

- Think of something you have done since the group last met that represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. Identify the Principle(s) your action reflected. Write a few words about it on a footprint, with your name.

### Description of Activity

This activity reinforces children's learning as they model translating faith into action for one another. To strengthen children's Unitarian Universalist identity, help participants see how their own behavior demonstrates specific Principles.

Gather in a circle. Point to the Faithful Journeys Path and say:

Together we are taking a journey to learn what it means to live as Unitarian Universalists. Each time we meet, we have a chance to talk about ways our actions show our beliefs about what is right and good. This is called "putting our faith into action."

When you share about something you have done that shows what you believe, you can choose a footprint or tracks for us to put on our Faithful Journeys Path.

Hold up the footprint you made of your own faithful action. Tell what you did and how it represents your Unitarian Universalist beliefs. If you can connect your action to a Principle, briefly explain. For example:

- I made phone calls to remind people to vote (or, I voted), because I believe in our fifth Unitarian Universalist Principle, that we all have a say in matters that concern us. When people vote, that's one way to have every person's opinion be counted.

- I have a neighbor who was sick last week. I helped him bring his trash outside, because I believe in the second Unitarian Universalist Principle, which says we believe in being kind and fair.
- I put my water bottles and juice bottles in the recycling bin, because I believe in the seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, which reminds us to take care of the Earth that all life shares.

Ask the children to think of an act they have done, since you met last, that reflects Unitarian Universalism. You may wish to prompt:

- Did anyone do something that helped make things fair? (justice, equity, and compassion)
- Did anyone help someone else? (inherent worth and dignity, interdependent web)
- Did anyone take care of nature or another animal? (interdependent web)
- Did anyone listen to someone else who had a very different opinion? (search for truth and meaning, acceptance of one another)
- Did anyone play with someone new whom you did not know very well? (acceptance of one another, encouragement to spiritual growth)

As participants name their actions, write a word or phrase describing the action on a footprint or wheelchair cutout. Invite children to write their names on their cutouts and post them along the edge of the Faithful Journeys Path. Have them progress along the path over the course of the program.

To stay within the time frame for this activity, use these guidelines:

- Encourage children to share their faithful act in one or two brief sentences.
- If the group is big, you may wish to limit children to sharing only one faithful act per week.

It is very important to avoid judging participants, either with criticism or praise. Avoid phrases like "Great job!" or "You're fantastic!" which might suggest that acts of faith vary in their value or encourage children to compete to share the "best" act.

You should, however, respond to each child's contribution. Listen carefully to what a child tells you. After each child shares, say something like, "Thank you for sharing," followed by a summarizing sentence, such as:

- Being kind to new children at school is an action that treats others like they are important.

- Suggesting your friends all vote to decide what to play together is an action of democracy and fairness.
- Cleaning up garbage at the park is an action to take care of the Earth.
- Teaching your brother to talk is an action that affirms each person's learning.
- Taking care of your dog is an action of love.

Identify the Unitarian Universalist Principles each act represents; refer to the Principles poster if the room has one or indicate a relevant signpost on the Faithful Journeys Path. By responding specifically to each child's faithful actions, you will help them feel pride, a sense of accomplishment, and their own empowerment as agents whose actions and choices reflect Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values.

### **Including All Participants**

Along with cut-out footprints (Session 1, Handout 3, Faithful Footprints), provide wheelchairs (Session 1, Handout 4, Making Tracks for Faith) in the same colors of paper. Encourage all the children — not just those who use wheelchairs for mobility — to sometimes use a wheelchair instead of footprints to represent their faithful actions.

## **ACTIVITY 2: MOVE IT! PENGUINS AND ICEBERGS (8 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Large sheets of newsprint, one per participant
- Music and appropriate player

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Choose music to play and pause to play the game.
- Create a wide open space. Place sheets of newsprint on the floor with space between them.

### **Description of Activity**

Tell the children they are penguins and the sheets of newsprint on the floor are icebergs. Explain that penguins go fishing in the ocean and can swim for long distances, but they need the icebergs to stay safe from orca whales and to rest when they are tired. Also, some of the fish they eat live beneath icebergs. With the Earth's climate getting warmer, icebergs are melting. This is causing problems for the penguins.

Explain that this game is like musical chairs. When the music is on, the penguins can swim in the ocean and look for fish to eat. When the music stops, the penguins

have to get on an iceberg. But as the icebergs melt, there will be fewer and fewer for the penguins. Tell the group that instead of having some children become "out," this is a cooperative game. The goal is to work together to keep all the penguins alive.

For the first round, leave one sheet of newsprint on the floor for each participant. Start the music. Then, turn the music off. Remind the penguins to find safety on the icebergs.

Start the music again. This time, remove a sheet of newsprint before stopping the music.

Repeat this process until only one sheet of newsprint remains for all the penguins to share. End the game and briefly ask the children what they did in order to save everybody.

To conclude, say:

In this game, the penguins could work together to survive. Sadly, real penguins may run out of icebergs completely. Humans have learned that we have to work together, too, to help keep planet Earth safe for all the animals and plants that are part of the web of all existence, including humans ... and penguins. Working together, we might be able to help the real penguins.

### ACTIVITY 3: STORY BASKET AND CENTERING (5 MINUTES)

#### Materials for Activity

- A large basket
- Objects related to the story "The Change the World Kids," such as a globe or world map, a picture of the Change the World Kids ([Leader Resources 1](#) and [2](#) (included in this document)), a toy bird, pictures that represent alternate energy sources or green practices (such as clothespins), or a toy spider web or picture of a web
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Box or small table and a decorative cloth cover to form a small altar

#### Preparation for Activity

- Place the story-related items and the sound instrument in the story basket.
- Set the filled basket in the storytelling area you have designated.

- For an altar to hold story objects, set up a box or table next to your storytelling area and cover it with a decorative cloth. It is not necessary to ritualize the altar as a sacred place. It can simply serve as a focal point where objects related to the story will be visible while you tell the story.

#### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle in your storytelling area. Show them the story basket. Say something like, "Let's see what's in our story basket today."

Tell the group the items in the story basket will be placed on the altar or table after the children have passed them around the circle. Take the items from the basket, one at a time, and pass them around. Briefly name the various objects and tell where they come from. Objects that are fragile or should not be passed around for any reason can be held up for all to see and then placed directly on the altar.

Show the picture of the Change the World Kids. Explain that these children belong to an action club that started at a congregation like yours. You might say:

Though they live in Vermont, these children do faithful acts to try to make a difference in many places around the Earth.

Now remove the sound instrument from the story basket. Tell the children that every time you tell a story in Faithful Journeys, you will first use the instrument to help them get their ears, their minds, and their bodies ready to listen. Invite them to sit comfortably and close their eyes (if they are comfortable doing so). You may tell them that closing their eyes can help them focus on just listening.

In a calm voice, say, in your own words:

As you breathe in, feel your body opening up with air. As you breathe out, feel yourself relaxing.

Repeat this once or twice and then say:

Now you are ready to listen. When I hit the chime (turn the rain stick over), listen as carefully as you can. See how long you can hear its sound. When you can no longer hear it, open your eyes and you will know it is time for the story to begin.

Sound the chime or other instrument. When the sound has gone, begin telling the story.

#### Including All Participants

If anyone in the group is unable to hold or pass items, or cannot see the items, make sure you or a child in the

group offers the person a chance to see and touch each object, as needed.

Some people do not feel safe closing their eyes when they are in a group. If any children resist, respect their resistance and suggest that they find a single point of focus to look at instead.

If you have a basket of fidget objects for children who may listen and learn more effectively with something in their hands, make it available. Remind children where it is before you begin the "centering" part of this activity. For a full description and guidance on using fidget objects, see Session 2, Leader Resource 2.

## ACTIVITY 4: STORY — THE CHANGE THE WORLD KIDS (10 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of the story "[The Change the World Kids](#)" (included in this document)
- A chime, rain stick, or other calming sound instrument
- A large, shallow dish filled with water, to demonstrate ripple effect
- A globe or world map
- Optional: Picture of a spider web or a toy spider and web
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Optional: Fidget object basket (Session 2, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))

### Preparation for Activity

- Read the story a few times. Consider telling the story rather than reading it. Practice telling it aloud.
- Plan how you will use the dish of water, the globe or world map, and any items from the story basket while telling the story. Set these items close at hand.
- Post blank newsprint near the storytelling area.

### Description of Activity

In this activity you will tell the story "The Change the World Kids," about contemporary Unitarian Universalist children in Vermont who formed a group for action based on our seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. You might say:

Unitarian Universalists believe our world is like one big web we share with all the plants and

animals and people that live on Earth. If the web is so big, how can one child or even a group of children help take care of it? That's what our story is about.

Before you begin, look around the room and make eye contact with each person. Read or tell the story.

Sound the instrument to indicate that the story is over.

Ask children to describe the projects mentioned in the story. Hold up the globe or world map and point out Vermont, Costa Rica and Rwanda. Then ask:

- I wonder, what does it mean when we say we are a part of an interdependent web of all existence?

Allow discussion. One way to describe the web of life would be to show a picture or toy spider web and say:

When a spider makes a web, every part is connected to another part. If you pull one part of the web, that pulls the whole web. Nature is like that. If you do something that affects one part of nature, it can affect all of nature.

Continue discussion with these questions:

- Could that mean every place on the globe is connected? Is everything that lives in other places connected to us? Do you think the Change the World Kids would agree with that idea?
- I wonder, why did the Change the World Kids decide to form an action club?
- I wonder what their motto means: "No one can do everything, but everyone can do something." (Affirm that no one needs to feel they must help a big problem by themselves, but if everyone does a little, together it can help a lot.)

Say:

Phebe and Nika in this story realized that children can make a difference. Do you believe kids' actions can start a ripple effect for positive change? I wonder, what ideas do you have for ways children can help protect the Earth? I wonder, what things could we do in our congregation to help protect the Earth?

Indicate the newsprint. Tell the children you will list their ideas for how children can help protect the Earth and the living beings that share our interconnected web. Allow the children to respond without adult input, at first. As concrete ideas emerge for protecting the Earth, briefly note them on the newsprint. Use phrasing the children can copy on their "Make a Difference" posters in the next activity. If needed, prompt:

- Turn off lights when you are not using them.
- Ride a bicycle, walk, or take a bus instead of driving a car.
- Dry your clothes in the sun on a clothesline.
- Use cloth bags instead of asking for plastic bags at a store.
- Recycle used papers, bottles, and cans.
- Turn off the water in the sink while you brush your teeth.
- Turn down the heat or air conditioning in your house.
- Plant trees.
- Change your light bulbs to ones that use less electricity.
- Throw food wrappers in the trash instead of on the ground.

Thank all the children for their ideas. Reinforce that there are indeed many things children can do to help protect the Earth.

## ACTIVITY 5: CREATIVE EXPLORATION — MAKE A DIFFERENCE POSTERS AND REUSABLE CLOTH BAGS (25 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- "Make a Difference" Posters
  - Sheets of blank poster paper for all participants
  - Copies of Handout 1, Bright Ideas to Protect the Web, for all participants
  - Scissors (including left-handed scissors), glue sticks, and markers or colored pencils to share
  - Newsprint with list of children's ideas from Activity 4
  - Optional: Tape, push pins or sticky putty to display posters
- Cloth Bags
  - Plain (undecorated) cloth bags
  - Fabric markers or squeezable fabric paint
  - Smocks for children and newspaper to cover worktables

### Preparation for Activity

- Purchase plain cloth bags from [Oriental Trading Company](#) or at an arts and crafts store. Bags should be large enough to prove useful. If you plan to sell decorated cloth bags at an It's Easy to Be Green sale and fundraiser (Faith in Action), you may wish to buy extra.
- Set up two work stations, one for decorating cloth bags and another for making posters.
  - Place newspaper or other protective table covering over the table where you will decorate cloth bags. Set smocks, cloth bags, and fabric markers or paints on the table.
  - Set copies of Handout 1 on table with blank sheets of poster paper, scissors, glue sticks, and markers or colored pencils. Post newsprint with list of children's ideas nearby.
- Optional: Confer with your minister, director of religious education, and building committee chair to determine where, when, and how to hang "Make a Difference" posters in your congregational facilities without damaging painted or wooden surfaces.
- Optional: Select community venues such as libraries, health clubs, stores or restaurants and ask proprietors to display posters.
- Optional: Arrange to visit community venues to post the posters.

### Description of Activity

Tell the children they can choose to do either or both activities: decorate a cloth bag and/or make a poster.

Explain that cloth bags can be used over and over again, which helps people use and discard fewer plastic bags. Invite children to think of times they might use a cloth bag; affirm grocery shopping, collecting shells at a beach, bringing lunch to school, or carrying extra clothes to school or to sleep over at a friend's house. Tell them they may decorate bags any way they like. If you plan to offer cloth bags at an It's Easy to Be Green sale and fundraiser (Faith in Action), invite children to decorate some to sell.

Explain that the "Make a Difference" posters will share ideas for protecting the Earth. Children may write or draw about an idea from the group discussion (indicate the newsprint with the list, from Activity 4), an idea from the handout they will find on the work table, or another idea they think of for protecting the Earth. Tell them they may take their posters home. Or, if you have arranged to



display the posters in the congregation or at community venues, tell children the plan and how many posters you hope they will make today.

Ask children to select an activity and move to the appropriate table. Explain that they can leave that table when they are done and work on the other project also. Or, you might form two groups, one for each activity, and invite children to switch to the other activity after 10 minutes.

Have children put on smocks to decorate cloth bags. If you are using fabric paint, set completed bags aside to dry.

### **Extension Activity: Displaying "Make a Difference" Posters**

During coffee hour, help children post their "Make a Difference" posters at pre-arranged places in the congregational building. You might announce the poster display at coffee hour so members will be sure to notice the messages.

Have children bring "Make a Difference" posters to community venues as a group or in small, adult-led groups — ideally, immediately after the session or on another day soon afterward. Invite a representative at each venue to tell the children about their establishment's environmentally friendly practices.

## **CLOSING (5 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Faithful Journeys Path
- Signpost for Session 15 ([Leader Resource 3](#) (included in this document)) and pins, glue stick or tape
- Copies of Session 1, [Leader Resource 8](#) (included in this document), UU Principles Song, for all participants
- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape
- Participants' list of simple ways to protect the Earth (Activity 4)

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Print out Leader Resource 2 and cut out the signpost.
- Optional: Write the UU Principles Song lyrics on newsprint, and post.
- Customize, print out and photocopy the Taking It Home section for all participants.

### **Description of Activity**

This activity helps children practice a closing ritual as a way of affirming their belonging in the faith community.

Gather the group in a circle. Thank the children for participating and sharing their stories and ideas in this session. Tell them something you liked about the way they worked together as a community.

Point out the Faithful Journeys Path. Say, in your own words:

Our Faithful Journeys Path shows our journey to live our lives and act in ways that reflect our Unitarian Universalist beliefs and faith. The signposts direct us by reminding us about our Principles.

Today's signpost is "Protect the Earth." It is for our seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, that we respect the interdependent web of all life of which we are a part. It means we believe we should take care of the Earth so the Earth is a healthy, safe place for humans and all other living beings.

Attach the signpost to the Faithful Journeys Path.

Remind the children they will have a chance to add Faithful Footprints to the Faithful Journeys Path the next time they meet. Encourage them to try to do an action that protects the Earth before the next meeting. Refer to the ideas children generated in Activity 4; suggest they present ideas to their parents and/or post their "Make a Difference" posters at home.

Point out the words to the UU Principles Song. Tell the children it is sung to the tune of "Old McDonald Had a Farm." If the group has completed at least one session about each of the Principles, congratulate the children on having learned about all seven Unitarian Universalist Principles. Lead them in singing all the verses of the song.

Distribute the Taking It Home handout. Thank the children, tell them you look forward to seeing them next time, and dismiss the group.

## **FAITH IN ACTION: IT'S EASY TO BE GREEN — SALE AND FUNDRAISER**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Donations of items to sell
  - Gently used clothing or household items
  - Alternative energy items, such as clotheslines and clothespins, clothes-drying racks, or solar-powered appliances

- Environmentally friendly products, such as biodegradable soap, detergent, or shampoo; recycled-paper products such as greeting cards and handmade jewelry; organic clothing; or cloth bags (including bags decorated by participants in Activity 5)
- Poster board, markers and tape or sticky putty
- Blank stickers and pens for pricing items
- Optional: Basket(s) of items to raffle, roll of raffle tickets, pens and container for raffle ticket stubs

### Preparation for Activity

- With your minister, director of religious education, and/or social action committee, choose a date for an It's Easy to Be Green sale and fundraiser. Consider Earth Day or the date of a congregational or community festival.
- Decide how to use proceeds. You might use the money to make environment-friendly changes at your congregation, or donate it to an organization such as the [Natural Resources Defense Council](#), the [Audubon Society](#), [Greenpeace](#) or [The Nature Conservancy](#). Obtain information about the intended use or recipient(s) of funds to include in publicity and to display at the event.
- Announce the event to the congregation. Request item donations via congregational announcements, mailings, website, and email. Clearly indicate the kinds of items you want and where members should bring their donations.
- Solicit donations from local merchants such as grocery stores, health establishments, spas, outdoor sports retailers, energy alternatives, or hardware stores. Ask for new green products or coupons to redeem for environmentally friendly products or services.
- Send a press release to local media and distribute flyers announcing the event.
- Schedule Faithful Journeys participants, their parents, and additional volunteers to set up, price items, staff tables, keep track of money, and clean up.
- Obtain tables, chairs, coins and small bills to make change, and one or more cash boxes.
- Optional: Make one or more raffle baskets of environmentally friendly products and coupons donated by local merchants.

### Description of Activity

Run this event as you would a yard sale. You may wish to present sale items on three separate tables: "Reduce," "Reuse," and "Recycle." Make signs for each table. On the "Reduce" table, display and sell energy-saving devices. On the "Reuse" table, display and sell tote bags. On the "Recycle" table, display and sell gently used donated items. Teach the children about the different categories by engaging them to sort the donated items before the sale.

This event may be a good project for the group's Faithful Journeys Action Club. Involve the children in publicity (making posters before the event), setup, running the event, and cleanup. They can price items, make signs, sell raffle tickets, give buyers change, bag purchases and help pack up unsold items to donate to an appropriate organization.

Keep track of individual children's specific tasks and accomplishments. Next time the group meets, help them articulate their contributions as Faithful Footsteps that affirm our seventh Principle.

After the event, tell the group how much the event earned and where the money will go. If you receive a thank-you or learn something about the donation's impact, be sure to tell the children. Even if the Faithful Journeys program has ended, let the parents and the entire congregation know the ripple effect of these children's actions.

### Including All Participants

Offer children tasks that fit their skills and abilities. If any in the group have special learning needs, talk with their parents or your director of religious education about how to best activate their individual strengths and interests. Some children may thrive sorting items, others counting money and giving change, still others talking with buyers about environmental issues. Be creative. Invent tasks, if necessary, to help all children contribute meaningfully.

## LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Take a few minutes to evaluate the session with your co-leader immediately afterward, while it is fresh. Share your thoughts with any other team co-leaders and your director of religious education. You might consider:

- Which activities worked well? What didn't work so well?
- Were all children actively engaged? If not, who wasn't and why might that have been? How could they be better included next time?

- How well did the activities match the learning styles of the children in this group? What could we do differently to better accommodate for learning styles in future sessions?
- How well did the session balance physically active with sedentary activities?
- How was the timing? What might need to be done differently for a session to work better within our time frame?
- Were there any behavior issues? If so, how can we address them in the future? Do we need more information or help in this area?
- What connections did children make with the activities and/or central ideas? How did we know that was occurring?
- What connections did children make with each other? What connections did we make with the children? When was that most evident?
- Are we successfully creating a program characterized by inclusion, diversity appreciation, respect, noncompetitive environment, and welcome? What could we have done differently?
- What questions or issues arose in this session that we might like to discuss with our director of religious education?

## TAKING IT HOME

*No one can do everything, but everyone can do something. — The Change the World Kids*

*When we see what others are doing to change the world, when we affirm each other's longing for a healthier future, when we join hands to work together to make a difference, we are choosing hope instead of despair. — Rev. Katherine Jesch, UU Ministry for Earth*

**IN TODAY'S SESSION...** We learned about our responsibility and ability to protect the Earth. Children heard the story of the Change the World Kids from Vermont and some global and local efforts they have made. We began to put in action the seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle, respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part, by decorating reusable cloth bags and creating "Make a Difference" posters. Our signpost to help guide us in faithful action was "Protect the Earth."

**EXPLORE THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Talk about...** Ask to see and display your child's "Make a Difference" poster and/or use the cloth bag they decorated. Talk

about ways your family members work to protect the Earth in your home.

**EXTEND THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Try...** Pay extra attention to your child's actions that help protect the Earth and reflect our seventh Principle. Enact energy-saving and other Earth-friendly practices in your home. Find suggestions on your child's "Make a Difference" poster or ask them about new ideas they would like your family to try. Your child will have the opportunity to share their actions with the group next time we meet.

## FAMILY ADVENTURE

Make "Make a Difference" posters as a family and bring them on a "Green Tour" of your community. Visit restaurants, libraries, schools, supermarkets, toy stores, and other community facilities. Be on the lookout for green practices, such as recycling projects and use of alternative energy sources, energy-efficient light bulbs, Earth-friendly cleaning products or recycled papers. Ask merchants or community workers about green policies they have adopted. Ask permission to post a "Make a Difference" poster on their site.

## A FAMILY RITUAL

Our "daily bread" is a constant reminder that the interdependent web of life ensures our survival. Take a moment at mealtime to acknowledge the journey your food made to arrive on your plates. Thank the people who planted and harvested crops; the animals that gave their lives for your meat or fish; the insects that pollinated; the rain that helped crops grow; the people who packaged, transported, and labeled the food, stocked the grocery shelves and sold the food, and prepared and served the meal. Point out that we need all the Earth's life to survive. Ask each family member to name one way they took care of the Earth that day or will do so in the future.

## A FAMILY GAME

Form two teams for a friendly green competition. Set a timer for a half hour and then race to list all the environmentally friendly items or practices you can find in your home. You may also want to search for non-environmentally friendly items or practices. Or, work as one team to beat the clock and find at least ten items for each list before the timer goes off.

## FAMILY DISCOVERY

Borrow library books about global warming and ways children can work to protect the Earth, and read them as a family. Commit to an action you will take together to care for the Earth.



## **ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: INTERDEPENDENT WEB GAME WITH YARN (8 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- A large ball of yarn

### **Description of Activity**

Creating their own web of yarn makes the notion of interconnectedness tangible for a group of seven-, eight- and nine-year-olds. Invite the children to sit in a circle. When everyone is settled, hold the ball of yarn in your hand and say:

We are going to make a web to represent the interdependent web of life. Each of us will choose an animal or plant to be in our web.

Hold one end of the yarn. Choose an animal or plant that exists in the real interdependent web — for example, an oak tree, a frog, a honeybee, seaweed, a tiger. Tell the children what you are in the web, hold your end of the yarn, and toss the ball to someone else in the circle. Prompt that person to select a living being to be in the web. Instruct them to hold their piece of the yarn, name an animal or plant, and toss the ball of yarn to someone else. Encourage children to gently toss the yarn across the circle; if the yarn is only passed and never tossed, a web cannot form.

When all participants have joined the web, ask the last person to toss the yarn back to you. Invite everyone to stand up, still holding the yarn, and gently pull the web taut.

Tug on the yarn you are holding. Ask the group:

If I pull on my yarn, who here can feel it?

You may wish to address children by the animal or plant they chose to represent: "If Maya, the dolphin, tugs on our web, can Elias, the coyote, feel her tug?"

Then, drop the yarn you are holding. Ask:

When I drop my yarn, what happens to the web?  
What would happen if more people dropped their yarn?

Choose a few volunteers to drop their yarn to see what happens. After the children have offered a few observations, tell the group in your own words:

The Earth is a lot like this web. We are connected to everything in our world by a web just like this one. We are connected to ... (mention some animals and plants the children have named). In real life, you can't see the web. Even so, when we pull on it or if we break it, all

the other animals and plants can feel it. Just as you could all feel it when I pulled on the yarn. Just as our web of yarn fell apart as some of us began to let go.

Our seventh Unitarian Universalist Principle reminds us we are all part of the interdependent web of all life. When we do faithful actions that follow our seventh Principle, we are respecting the web of life and helping protect everything that lives on the Earth we all share.

Ask two or three volunteers to untangle the web and roll up the ball of yarn.

### **Including All Participants**

Invite the group to stand to form the web only if all participants are able to do so.

## STORY: THE CHANGE THE WORLD KIDS

Thanks to the Change the World Kids, Meg Miller and Phyllis Arata-Meyers for information and permission to tell their story.

*Place a large, shallow dish filled with water in front of you, where children can see it. Place a globe or world map within your reach.*

Phebe and Nika were two girls, both eight years old. Sometimes they heard about bad things going on around them in the world – things like terrible wars where people would die, or earthquakes that would shake the ground and destroy people's homes. They wanted to help. But they weren't sure what kids could do.

They decided to talk to the kids in their congregation, the North Universalist Chapel Society in Woodstock, Vermont. This was the beginning of the Change the World Kids – a group of children who work together to protect many different parts of the interconnected web of all life. When they learn about problems in the world, the Change the World Kids think of ways they can act to make a difference. They learned there is plenty kids can do to help.

The Change the World Kids are an action club. Their motto is: "No one can do everything, but everyone can do something."

Repeat the motto, slowly, so children can listen carefully to it: No one can do everything, but everyone can do something.

Nika, Phebe, and all the other Change the World Kids learned about the ripple effect. They learned when one person takes action, even in one small way, that action can send ripples into the world around us, just as water ripples in a lake.

Indicate the dish filled with water.

Watch the surface of the water. When I poke my finger in it, you can see the ripples all around.

Demonstrate this. Pause and let the water settle. Repeat until all children have seen the ripples.

In Vermont, where the Change the World Kids live, many had birdfeeders in their backyards. The birdfeeders attracted beautiful songbirds. When Vermont got very cold, birds migrated south, to warmer places for winter. One springtime, a couple of Change the World Kids noticed fewer birds came back to their birdfeeders

after the winter. They wanted to know: What had happened to the birds?

A scientist told the Change the World Kids about endangered species – animals that might become extinct if nobody helped save the natural woods and forests and oceans the animals needed to live. The children learned that the birds they saw in Vermont in the spring and summer were losing their winter homes in Costa Rica, because people were cutting down trees. People in Costa Rica wanted the wood to build new homes. Or, sometimes they wanted to cut the forest to make more pastureland to feed beef cattle or to grow crops. But the trees were already being used as homes – by the birds. The children learned that tropical birds, like the three-wattled bell bird, will not even fly over land that has no trees, and when northern birds migrate for food in the winter and find none, they die.

What could the kids do? The problem was happening thousands of miles away, in Costa Rica.

Point out Costa Rica on the globe or world map. Point out Vermont.

How could the kids help? Vermont was so far away from Costa Rica, and the kids were just kids!

I will give you a hint. Watch the water again.

Indicate the dish filled with water. Poke the water surface. Repeat until all children have seen the ripples.

The Change the World Kids remembered the ripple effect. Maybe they couldn't do everything to save the bell birds, but they could do something! They raised money to help start a tree nursery, Bosque para Siempre – that means "forest forever" in Spanish. They used some of the money they raised to buy land for a new habitat for the migratory birds. Some of the kids took trips to Costa Rica to help plant trees. They have replenished the forest with more than forty thousand trees that provide fruit and shade for many species of birds.

One time in Costa Rica, the Change the World Kids helped put tags on birds. Tags help scientists keep track of the birds and learn more about them. The Change the World Kids got to hold a red-breasted grosbeak and a wood thrush – both birds that spend part of the year in Vermont. In time, as the effects of their actions in Costa Rica are felt all around the world, like the ripple effect, the Change the World Kids know they will begin to hear and see more birds in Vermont again!

Nika and Phebe grew older. New children joined the Change the World Kids. Now the action club has

teenagers and middle-schoolers from many different religions. They know that every action, no matter how small, can have ripples that spread around them. To help protect the Earth, the Change the World Kids designed and sold reusable shopping bags. They made clotheslines so people could use the power of the sun, instead of electricity, to dry their clothes. The Change the World Kids do projects as simple as shoveling snow for an elderly person in their community and as complicated as raising money for children's schools and health care in Rwanda, where communities have suffered from war.

Point out Rwanda on the globe or world map.

With every action, big or small, the Change the World Kids prove what Phebe and Nika learned: No, nobody can do everything, but yes, each person can do something to protect the Earth and all life on it. Each action makes a ripple, and the ripples change the world.

## **HANDOUT 1: POSTER — BRIGHT IDEAS TO PROTECT THE WEB**

Turn off lights when you leave a room.

Recycle paper, bottles, and cans.

Unplug your charger after your cell phone is charged. Turn off water in the sink while you brush your teeth.

Change to energy-efficient light bulbs.

Bike, walk, or take a bus instead of driving a car.

Dry your clothes outside in the sunshine, not in a dryer. Reuse your grocery bags.

## LEADER RESOURCE 1: PICTURE OF THE CHANGE THE WORLD KIDS IN VERMONT

Photo courtesy of the [Change the World Kids](#).

*The Change the World Kids helped a woman in Vermont who could not afford to repair her house. These two girls learned how to install a new membrane to fix the roof. Others helped fix the plumbing, insulation, and electrical wiring in the house and build a new bathroom, with the help of adult donations and supervision.*



## LEADER RESOURCE 2: PICTURE OF THE CHANGE THE WORLD KIDS IN COSTA RICA

Photo courtesy of the [Change the World Kids](#).

*The Change the World Kids purchased a parcel of land to help reforest a migratory corridor in Costa Rica used by many species of birds. Here, a group from Vermont fills sleeves of dirt to plant fruit trees, at the Change the World Kids Vivero (tree nursery).*



## LEADER RESOURCE 3: SIGNPOST FOR SESSION 15

*Cut out the signpost and attach to the Faithful Journeys Path.*







## FIND OUT MORE

### **The Change the World Kids**

Started by children in the religious education program of North Universalist Chapel Society (Woodstock, Vermont), the [Change the World Kids](#) is now a self-governing, 501(c)3-incorporated action club of middle- and high-school-age youth in Vermont's Upper Valley region. The group meets regularly to choose and implement projects, both local and international. Their ad in a local paper ("Kids can help!") brought requests from community members for help stacking wood, shoveling snow, renovating substandard housing, and more. Visit the website and contact the group to learn more about their projects or find out how to start a local chapter such as the Island Chapter (Maine) and chapters in Westhampton, Massachusetts, and Little Rock, Arkansas.

### **UU Ministry for Earth**

UU Ministry for Earth has developed many resources for action to protect the Earth, including the [Green Sanctuary](#) process, which helps congregations and their members adopt environment-friendly practices.

### **Environmental Projects for Children**

The book, *Earth Child 2000: Earth Science for Young Children: Games, Stories, Activities and Experiments*, by Kathryn Sheehan and Mary Waidner, provides active ways to introduce children to nature and earth sciences, divided by age categories and topic.

The [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#) website has games, activities, and more for children, presented in categories including "Garbage & Recycling," "Plants & Animals," "Got a Question?" and "You & Your Environment," plus resources for teachers.

## SESSION 16: GET MOVING

### INTRODUCTION

*The best way to keep good acts in memory is to refresh them with new. — Cato*

This session concludes the Faithful Journeys program. The children use a game to review the Unitarian Universalist Principles they have explored in previous sessions. Rather than a story from UU history or contemporary life, children hear personal stories of acting in faith told by youth or adult members of their own congregation. Invite visitors well in advance.

The children revisit the Faithful Journeys Path they have created together, and affirm actions and choices they have described in their Faithful Footprints. Our final signpost on the Faithful Journeys Path is "Get Moving."

### GOALS

This session will:

- Support children's identification with Unitarian Universalism as they review and apply the Unitarian Universalist Principles learned in previous sessions
- Strengthen children's understanding of religious faith in terms of values affirmed in our Principles and shared across our entire faith, which guide our choices and actions
- Empower children to regard themselves and their Unitarian Universalist congregation as agents of positive change.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Solidify their understanding of each and all of the Unitarian Universalist Principles
- Internalize the Principles as statements that represent the values Unitarian Universalists share, values which can guide and affirm faithful actions and choices
- Commit to specific ways they will act on the Principles
- Learn about real faithful actions taken by youth and/or adults in their own Unitarian Universalist community

- Affirm their individual and collective acts of agency represented on the Faithful Footprints on the Faithful Journeys Path.

### SESSION-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	5
Activity 1: Move It! Step Up	7
Activity 2: Story Basket, Centering and Congregational Stories	20
Activity 3: Celebrating the Journey	20
Faith in Action: Congregational Activism Video	
Closing	8
Alternate Activity 1: Personal Path	12

### SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

If it would be helpful in creating sacred space, light a candle or chalice. Think about your experiences leading Faithful Journeys.

What have you learned about yourself, the children and Unitarian Universalism? What has surprised you? In what ways have your expectations been met, and in what ways not?

Are there ways in which leading this curriculum has activated your sense of yourself as a person of faithful action, someone whose choices affirm Unitarian Universalist Principles? What changes in your own life has this experience led you to make?

What more do you hope to communicate or experience in this last session today?

## OPENING (5 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Chalice candle or LED/battery-operated candle
- Lighter and extinguisher, if needed
- Newsprint, markers and tape
- Posters of the Unitarian Universalist Principles in both adult and children's language, or copies of Session 1, [Handout 1](#) (included in this document) for all participants
- Copies of Session 1, [Leader Resource 8](#) (included in this document), UU Principles Song, for all participants

### Preparation for Activity

- Print the opening words on newsprint. Post the newsprint where the children will be able to see it when they gather.
- Optional: Write the UU Principles Song lyrics on newsprint, and post.

### Description of Activity

Gather the children in a circle. Light the chalice. Point out the chalice-lighting words on the newsprint and invite the group to read together:

We light this flame for the light of truth, the warmth of love, and the energy of action.

Indicate the poster(s) or handouts of the Unitarian Universalist Principles.

Today we celebrate our final session of Faithful Journeys. We have learned a lot about how we, like other Unitarians and Universalists through history, can put our Principles into action every day. Let's go through our Principles one more time by singing the song we have sung during our closing time.

Indicate the newsprint or handouts with the words to the UU Principles Song. Lead the group in singing the entire song to the tune of "Old McDonald Had a Farm."

### Including All Participants

If the group has children who are sensitive to perfumes or other chemicals, use unscented candles or an electric or battery-operated flame. An electric flame is also recommended if you may not use open flames or if any participants are afraid of fire.

## ACTIVITY 1: MOVE IT! STEP UP (7 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A copy of Session 1, [Handout 1](#) (included in this document), Unitarian Universalist Principles, Adult and Child Versions, copies of for all participants, or posters of the Principles in adult and [children's language](#)
- A roll of masking tape or a length of rope

### Preparation for Activity

- Identify an open area where children can move from a start line to a finish line in seven steps. Mark "start" and "finish" lines with masking tape.
- Optional: Create your own stickers with each of the seven Principles in very simple language.

### Description of Activity

Explain that today is the final session of Faithful Journeys. Say:

Each time we have met, we have learned about the Unitarian Universalist Principles and what they mean by sharing stories about how we and others in our faith have turned these Principles into actions. Today we will play a game about all of the Principles. The game will help us share more ideas about how we can turn them into actions in our lives.

Invite the children to stand at the start line. Stand behind the finish line. Tell the children they will all reach the finish line, one step at a time, by telling how they will "step up" — take a step forward in faith — based on each of the Principles. Everyone will get from the start to the finish in seven steps.

Introduce each Principle by reading both the adult and children's versions. Ask, "How will you step up to this Principle?" Invite the children, one at a time, to offer a commitment to act on this Principle. For instance, if the Principle is "the inherent worth and dignity of every person," a child might offer: "I will step up by not teasing a friend," or "I will step up by listening calmly to someone I don't agree with."

Tell the children one rule of this game is that they may help each other. You might say:

This game will give us practice acting as a Unitarian Universalist community. We support each other to take faithful actions, and we know

we can make a bigger difference when we work together.

Prompt children by reminding them of actions they wrote on Faithful Footprints or Making Tracks wheelchairs in earlier sessions. As the game goes on, you may wish to help children who are having a harder time thinking of examples by making suggestions. ("Jesse, will you be a peacemaker by helping friends talk through a problem?")

You may wish to give a prize of stickers printed with the Unitarian Universalist Principles to each child who reaches the finish line. If you award prizes, make sure that every child eventually has the chance to cross the line.

### Including All Participants

If anyone in your group uses a wheelchair, substitute "move forward" for the phrase "step up."

## ACTIVITY 2: STORY BASKET, CENTERING AND CONGREGATIONAL STORIES (20 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- A large basket
- Objects related to social action, justice or service projects, or personal faithful actions the congregation and/or members have done; photographs of actions, name tags or photos representing the guests who will speak to the group; or items related to a story a guest plans to tell
- A chime, rain stick or other calming sound instrument
- Optional: Box or small table and a decorative cloth cover to form a small altar
- Copies of [Leader Resource 1](#) (included in this document), Preparing to Share Your Faithful Journey
- Optional: Fidget object basket (Session 2, [Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document))

### Preparation for Activity

- Several weeks ahead, identify one or more youth or adults from your congregation whom you admire for their "faithful action" and use of personal agency for positive change. Invite one or several to come and tell their personal story to the group. Provide them with Leader Resource 1 to help them prepare. Tell them the

time frame for the presentation, a question-and-answer period, and remaining activities for which you hope they will remain with the group. Confirm guests' participation two or three days before the session.

- Optional: Invite guest(s) to bring an item for the story basket that reflects the story they will tell the group.
- Place the story-related items and the sound instrument in the story basket.
- Place the filled basket in the storytelling area you have designated.
- To make an altar as a focal point for story objects, set up a box or table in your storytelling area. Place a decorative cloth on the altar. It is not necessary to ritualize the altar as a sacred place. It can simply serve as a focal point where objects related to the story will be visible as stories are told.

### Description of Activity

For this final session of Faithful Journeys, rather than a story about someone from another place or time, the children will hear one or more members of your congregation share their own stories of agency for positive change. Their action(s) might encompass political action, social service, advocacy, environmentalism, teaching, or thoughtful help to others in need — anything that connects with one or more of our Unitarian Universalist Principles.

Gather the children and guest(s) in your storytelling area. Show the storytelling basket. Say something like, "Let's see what's in our story basket today."

Tell the group the items in the story basket will be placed on this altar or table after the children have passed them around the circle. Take the items from the basket, one at a time, and pass them around. Objects that are fragile or should not be passed around for any reason can be held up for all to see and then placed directly on the altar.

Briefly name the various objects. As the items come back to you, display them on the altar for children to look at as they listen to the story.

Now remove the sound instrument from the story basket. Invite the children to let the sound help them get their ears, their minds and their bodies ready to listen. Suggest that guests may use this time to relax and get ready to tell their story to the group. Invite everyone to sit comfortably and close their eyes (if they are comfortable doing so). In a calm voice, say, in your own words:

As you breathe in, feel your body opening up with air. As you breathe out, feel yourself relaxing.

Repeat this once or twice and then say:

Now you are ready to listen. When I hit the chime (turn the rain stick over), listen as carefully as you can. See how long you can hear its sound. When you can no longer hear it, open your eyes and you will know it is time for the story to begin.

Sound the chime or other instrument. When the sound has gone, introduce the first guest briefly and invite them to tell their story. After each story, invite the children to ask questions of the storyteller; use questions from Leader Resource 1 to prompt. If you have several guests, you may prefer to have a single question-and-answer period after all have told their stories. Be aware of the time, so it is allocated as you wish.

Thank guests for joining you. Tell them what the group will do next, and invite them to stay for the remainder of the session.

### **Including All Participants**

If anyone in the group is unable to hold or pass or cannot see the items, make sure someone in the group offers the person a chance to see and touch each object, as needed.

Some people do not feel safe closing their eyes when they are in a group. If any children resist, respect their resistance and suggest that they find a single point of focus to look at instead.

If some children in the group find it difficult to sit still while listening to a story, you may wish to make fidget objects available. Fully described in Session 2, Leader Resource 2, fidget objects can provide a non-disruptive outlet for a child who needs to move or who benefits from sensory stimulation.

## **ACTIVITY 3: CELEBRATING THE JOURNEY (20 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Faithful Journeys Path
- A copy of Session 1, [Handout 1](#) (included in this document), or posters of the Unitarian Universalist Principles in both adult and children's language
- Pictures of the protagonists in all stories the group has heard in Faithful Journeys
- Snacks, and serving and clean-up items

- Optional: Instructions for one or more Move It! games from previous sessions

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Review the Faithful Footprints and Making Tracks wheelchairs the group posted during the program. Detach from the Faithful Journeys Path or make notes about some that illustrate a particular session theme or Principle.
- Make a list of all the stories this group has heard in Faithful Journeys. Note the protagonists and the Principles illustrated.
- If you have not kept copies, reprint pictures that represent the stories (see each session's Leader Resources).

### **Description of Activity**

Gather the children and say:

Since this is our last time in Faithful Journeys, we will have a special celebration. One of the most important parts of a party is the guests. You will have a special guest (or guests) who have shared their stories of faithful action with you. But we can also, in our imaginations, invite all the people whose stories we have learned before.

Help children recall the protagonists of stories the group has heard. Show pictures in the order in which they were originally introduced, and remind children of the "guests" from that story who can join the party in everyone's imagination.

Ask the children to try to recall the Unitarian Universalist Principle each person's story illustrated. Use the list of stories and a handout or poster of the Principles to fill in information the children may not remember. You might give hints: "This person liked to get muddy." As each guest is identified, set their picture down at a large table to join the party. You may wish to make, or have children make, drawings of the snack you are eating to "feed" to your imaginary guests.

As snack time ends, bring out the Faithful Footprints you have posted during the course of the program. Explain to the children that they, like your historical guests, have taken many actions that express Unitarian Universalist Principles. Read aloud some of the Faithful Footprints and try to identify which Principles the actions might express. Place these footprints next to the pictures of the historical figures who represent those Principles. Conclude by saying something like:

We belong to a stream of living souls who have worked for goodness and justice across the centuries. Our lives connect to those who have

lived before us. May we be good role models for those who come after us.

Engage children in cleaning up the snack. If you have time, play one or more "Move It!" games from previous sessions.

### Variation

If you plan to have a parade during the Closing, engage children to help you choose items from the Faithful Journeys Path to take along. Children might carry a signpost or one or more Faithful Footprints or Making Tracks for Faith wheelchairs with acts written on them. Some might carry pictures from stories from our faith heritage and contemporary congregations that the group has heard during the program.

### Including All Participants

Check about food allergies and restrictions before purchasing party snacks.

## CLOSING (8 MINUTES)

### Materials for Activity

- Faithful Journeys Path
- Signpost for Session 16 ([Leader Resource 2](#) (included in this document)) and pins, glue stick or tape
- Optional: Newsprint, markers and tape
- Copies of *Singing the Journey*, supplement to the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook, *Singing the Living Tradition*, or copies of Session 1, [Handout 2](#) (included in this document), "Woyaya"
- Optional: A copy of the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook, *Singing the Living Tradition*, for the alternate song "I'm On My Way"

### Preparation for Activity

- Print out Leader Resource 2 and cut out the signpost.
- Customize, print out and photocopy the Taking It Home section for all participants.
- If you are not familiar with "Woyaya," Hymn 1020 in *Singing the Journey*, ask your music director to teach it to you. Or, invite a musical volunteer to come teach it to the children. Online, listen to a [recording](#) of Rev. Lynn Ungar singing "Woyaya."
- Optional: Prepare to teach and lead the alternate song "I'm on My Way," Hymn 116 in *Singing the Living Tradition*. You may wish to

review Session 8 to learn about Egbert Ethelred Brown, the Unitarian minister after whom this hymn is named.

- Optional: Write song lyrics on newsprint and post.
- Optional: Arrange with worship leaders and your director of religious education to take the song on a parade around your congregation or into the worship service. Check with anyone who might be conducting other meetings or activities along your intended parade route.

### Description of Activity

Gather the group in a circle. Thank the children for participating and sharing their stories and ideas in this session. Share a couple of your favorite moments from previous Faithful Journeys sessions.

Point out the Faithful Journeys Path. Say, in your own words:

We've been on a journey together across hundreds of years and seven Principles. Our signposts helped guide our journey, just as the Principles can help us know the right things to do on our own life journeys. I hope you will all continue to make faithful footprints and make tracks in faith, even after our time in Faithful Journeys together is done. We have one more signpost to add.

Post the signpost "Get Moving" on the Faithful Journeys Path. Use examples from the talks by today's visitors or the children's own Faithful Footprints to explain what the signpost means.

Tell the children the closing song will be one they sang in the first session, "Woyaya." Re-teach it if necessary and sing the song together. This song lends itself to repetition; you may wish to sing it a few times through. If you will use "I'm On My Way" instead, teach the song and then lead it.

Distribute the Taking It Home handout. Thank the children, and tell them how much you have appreciated their participation. If you will continue your religious education program with the same group of children and a new curriculum, you may wish to briefly describe what to expect at their next meeting, before dismissing the group.

### Variation

Turn the song into a parade through your congregation or a closing song for the day's congregational worship service. If your Faithful Journeys Path is portable, remove it from its display location and have a few



children carry it as they walk. Or, detach Faithful Footprints and signposts for children to carry.

## **FAITH IN ACTION: CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVISM VIDEO**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Equipment for videotaping, editing video (optional) and playing back video

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Plan the videotaping. Will children take turns handling the video camera and asking questions of people during coffee hour? Will you invite people to come to your religious education space? Will you invite particular people to be interviewed or allow the children to ask whomever they choose?
- Identify someone on your religious education team or an adult volunteer with the skills and equipment to edit the videotape. If no one can do this, instruct videographers to press "record" only to capture the material you want to present.
- Arrange a showing of the finished video, such as on a video monitor at coffee hour or projected as part of an evening event or worship service. Especially if this is the last session of Faithful Journeys, make sure to inform parents as well as others in the congregation when and where you plan to show the video.
- Make copies of Leader Resource 1 to help both interviewers and video subjects prepare.

### **Description of Activity**

Videotape members telling their own stories of faithful action and/or activism to celebrate the children's shared Faithful Journey and document the stories for your congregation. Invite members to share their stories of times they have taken action for the larger good.

This will truly be a project of the children of this group if they come up with questions to ask people, serve as interviewers and shoot the footage. (Use Leader Resource 1 as a starting point for questions.)

Ideally, someone in the congregation can edit footage to create a more polished product. You might even group the interviews into seven sections about actions that express each of the Principles. Youth and young adults are often good prospects for sharing these artistic and technological skills.

You might use a screening of the videotape as a fundraiser for your Faithful Journeys Action Club (see Session 4), or for another good cause.

## **LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING**

Take a few minutes to evaluate the curriculum as a whole with your co-leader immediately afterward, while it is fresh. Share your thoughts with any other team co-leaders and your director of religious education. You might find it helpful to consider these questions:

- Which activities worked well today? What didn't work so well?
- Were all children actively engaged? If not, who wasn't and why might that have been? How could they have been better included?
- How well did the activities match the learning styles of the children in this group? What could we do differently, in future programs, to better address learning styles?
- How well did this session balance physically active with sedentary activities?
- How well did this session work in our time frame, and in terms of the logistics of engaging members of our congregation?
- Were there any behavior issues? If so, how can we address them in the future? Do we need more information or help in this area?
- What connections did children make with the activities and/or central ideas? How did we know that was occurring?
- What connections did children make with each other? What connections did we make with the children? When was that most evident?
- Overall, did we successfully create a program characterized by inclusion, diversity appreciation, respect, a noncompetitive environment, and welcome? What could we have done differently?
- What questions or issues arose in this session that we might like to discuss with our director of religious education?

## **TAKING IT HOME**

*The best way to keep good acts in memory is to refresh them with new. — Cato*

**IN TODAY'S SESSION...** We concluded our Faithful Journeys program. Our Move It! game challenged the

children to voice ways they will "step up" to act on Unitarian Universalist Principles we studied in earlier sessions. We also heard a personal story of faithful action told by a member of our own congregation, and had a party to which we invited — in our imaginations — the people from our Unitarian Universalist heritage and contemporary communities whose faithful journeys we have learned about. Our final signpost to help guide us in faithful action was "Get Moving."

**EXPLORE THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Talk about...** a decision you had to make — large or small — and how you chose a course of action based on your values. Identify which Unitarian Universalist Principle(s) encompass the particular values involved in this decision. Engage your child to look for how the Principles appear in the ways your family spends money and time. Invite your child to share a recent choice that was influenced by their trying to do the right thing, and see if you can attach one of the Principles to their choice.

**EXTEND THE TOPIC TOGETHER. Try...** Make an "I Can." In Faithful Journeys, children reflected on ways they expressed the Unitarian Universalist Principles. They wrote about their actions on Faithful Footprints that we posted on our Faithful Journeys Path. Continue the practice of affirming your child's agency and ability to act for good by creating an "I Can." Write "I can..." on a piece of construction paper and wrap it around an empty, clean tin can. Any time you observe your child acting in a way that reflects our Principles or values, such as kindness, honesty, compassion and fairness, drop a coin in the "I Can." When the can is full, as a family, select a charitable use for the money.

## **FAMILY ADVENTURE**

The image of a journey along a path structured the Faithful Journeys program. Explore an actual path your family has never taken in your neighborhood or a local park. As you go, consider what it means to find and follow a new path. What might make a new path scary? What might make it fun? How can you be sure you leave the path in a condition at least as good as you found it?

## **A FAMILY GAME**

The children played "Step Up," progressing toward a finish line by offering ways they could "step up" to act out a given Unitarian Universalist Principle. If you'd like to try this game at home, [here's](#) a copy of the Principles with language for both adults and children.

## **FAMILY DISCOVERY**

While not a specifically Unitarian Universalist program, the [Giraffe Heroes Project](#) collects wonderful stories of people who have chosen to "stick their necks out for the

common good," demonstrating the kind of agency the Faithful Journeys curriculum has promoted.

## **ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: PERSONAL PATH (12 MINUTES)**

### **Materials for Activity**

- Legal-size or larger sheets of paper for all participants
- Pencils, crayons and/or markers

### **Preparation for Activity**

- Set out supplies on work tables.

### **Description of Activity**

Tell the children:

The Faithful Journeys Path has helped us see how moving along in our lives is like traveling on a path. We have used the path to pay attention to the actions we do when we make good choices. But every choice we make is really its own small journey.

Invite the children to draw a path from one corner of the paper diagonally across to the opposite corner. Say:

In one corner, draw a picture of a problem, when something is not fair or someone is not being nice or kind. In the opposite corner, draw a successful solution. Connect the problem to the solution with a path. Along the way, use words or pictures to describe the actions the people involved might take to get from the problem to the solution.

Leave time for volunteers to share about the paths they have drawn.



## LEADER RESOURCE 1: PREPARING TO SHARE YOUR FAITHFUL JOURNEY

Thank you for agreeing to visit our Faithful Journeys group to share a story of putting your faith into action. During this program, the children have explored ways they can and do act on their values and beliefs and have learned about past and present Unitarians, Universalists, and UUs who also put their faith into action.

We look forward to seeing you on (day, date, time and place). You may like to prepare with these questions:

- When was the first time you remember taking action to express a belief or value?
- What are some other times you have acted to express your beliefs and values?
- Prepare to tell about one particular time you put your faith into action.
  - What was your action? Did you act alone or with others?
  - What inspired you to act?
  - How did you decide what action to take?
  - When you took action, what happened?
  - How did you feel at the time? How do you feel about it now?
- Have you ever been afraid to stand up for what you thought was right? Why?
- How does our Unitarian Universalist community support you in putting your faith into action?
- How do our Unitarian Universalist Principles inform or affirm the choices you make in life?
- Is one of our Unitarian Universalist Principles particularly important to you? Prepare to tell why it matters to you and some ways you act to affirm that Principle.
- Do you have a Unitarian, Universalist, or UU hero from our faith heritage? Prepare to tell how you believe they put their faith into action.
- What advice do you have for someone who wants to make a difference in the world?

## LEADER RESOURCE 2: SIGNPOST FOR SESSION 16

*Cut out the signpost and attach to the Faithful Journeys Path.*



