

Annotated Table of Contents

The annotated table of contents is to help you in your planning. Please note that the supplies listed are ones that are particular to that session. Most sessions will require many other supplies that we suggest you keep on hand. See p. 9-10 of the Introduction.

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Session One – Orienting to Compass Points	13
Goals for Participants:	
to start to build a community	
to learn how to use a compass	
to begin the spiritual discipline of keeping a journal	
Supplies:	
compasses (one for every 2-4 participants)	
bound journals, one for each youth	
Session Two – What Is the Journey?	19
Goals for Participants:	
to introduce the overall theme and objectives of the curriculum	
to give them a greater understanding of how a compass can help guide them in unknown situations	
to prepare them for the idea of going on a spiritual journey and what this means to them personally	
Supplies:	
compasses	
bags (fancy or not) for items at checkpoints on the hunt – and the various items	
CD player and meditative music (optional)	
Session Three – Where Have I Been So Far?	25
Goals for Participants:	
to create a class covenant	
to consider what/who has influenced their lives so far.	
to begin to understand that while we can't control many of our lives' events, we can control our responses to these events	
Supplies:	
paper shredder (optional)	
Session Four – What Do I Carry with Me?	31
Goals for Participants:	
to explore the individual gifts and talents that can help them on their journey	
to explore where these gifts come from and how to further develop them	
to understand personal priorities and to develop ways to understand the consequences of the choices we make	
Supplies:	
CD player and meditative music (optional)	
smooth stones, one per participant	

- Session Five – Who Is Traveling with Me?** 39
- Goals for Participants:
- to appreciate the value of friendship
 - to examine our responsibilities to friends
 - to explore ways friendships can help or hinder us on our spiritual journey
- Supplies:
- blindfold
 - Chicken Soup for the Preteen Soul* by Jack Canfield and Mark Hanson
- Session Six – Hospitality? That’s Radical!** 43
- Goals for Participants
- to hear a story of radical hospitality that affirms our First Principle
 - to do an activity which helps them be open to “the other”
 - To consider the implications of the story and the activity to their religious journey and to the rest of their lives
- Supplies:
- lemons, one per person
- Session Seven – Images of the Divine** 51
- Goals for Participants
- to consider that images and ideas about a divine presence are very diverse
 - to discuss how such images reveal something about the people who believe in them
 - to examine the many ideas and images of God which appear in the popular music of our culture
- Supplies:
- pictures, photos, statues with a variety of images of Gods and Goddesses
 - CDs (and player) with songs that contain diverse images of God/Goddess
 - DVDs (and player) with music videos that have images of God/Goddess in them (optional)
- Session Eight – Where Does Our Congregation Stand?** 57
- Goals for Participants
- to discuss ideas about God
 - to find out what the congregation believes about God
 - to take responsibility for preparing and carrying out the congregational poll
 - to interact with adults in the congregation
- Supplies:
- large pieces of poster board
 - craft (large roll) paper
 - small, bright press on dots
 - large white permanent labels (optional)
- Session Nine – The Diversity That Unites Us** 63
- Goals for Participants:
- to get a picture of their congregation’s theological diversity
 - to become acquainted with some theological terminology
 - to create a creative “report” about this diversity to share with the congregation
- Supplies:
- poster board

Session Ten – Our Living Tradition

69

Goals for Participants

- to review the six Sources of the Unitarian Universalist Living Tradition
- to be introduced to the idea of spiritual authority
- to learn that the Fourth Principle, affirming the “free and responsible search for truth and meaning”, means that UUs are their own spiritual authorities
- to understand that UUs use their Living Tradition to help in form their spiritual authority

Supplies:

CDs “Bring Many Names: Music from Our Liberal Religious Tradition” and/or “Music from Our Liberal Religious Tradition” vol. 2 from the UU Church of Oakland, CA (www.uuoakland.org/cd-page.htm)

Session Eleven – What’s the Bible to Us?

75

Goals for Participants:

- to realize the Bible is a collection of books of various genres
- to gain some understanding of how and when the Bible came to be written
- to begin to appreciate how much there is to be learned about the Bible

Supplies:

copies of the Bible (same edition, at least one copy for every two participants)
copy of a Jewish Bible and/or a Catholic Bible (optional)

Session Twelve – Sacred Texts

87

Goals for Participants:

- to gain an awareness of and appreciation for the sacred texts of several religions
- to be reminded that these writings from part of our UU Living Tradition
- to create their own (personal to their group) “sacred text”

Supplies:

copies of various sacred texts (Qu’ran, etc)
craft paper
bright, multi-colored markers, including metallic if possible
camera & photo printer, optional

Session Thirteen – It’s You Who Say That I Am

95

Goals for Participants:

- to learn about Unitarian Universalist views of Jesus
- to understand the celebrity-effect and its power
- to explore how the perception of who Jesus was is shaped by the individual

Supplies:

Bibles—several different versions, if possible
pictures of current celebrities
DVD (or VHS) of the movie *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Millennium version), player

Fourteen – What Would Jesus Do?

101

Goals for Participants:

- to explore what they already know and understand about Jesus and where this information comes from
- to examine the ideas which are attributed to Jesus and determine whether he really said them or not (as the Jesus Seminar has done)
- to determine what Jesus’ actions might have been, based upon what he believed to have actually said

Supplies:

- craft (large roll) paper
- Bibles, several different versions if possible
- two small boxes (like square tissue boxes)
- colored beads (red, pink, grey, black) or squares of construction paper in those colors

Session Fifteen – Wise Guys

109

Goals for Participants

- to discover that many of the great sages of history had some things in common
- to continue exploring the Third Source of our Living Tradition: “wisdom from the world’s religions”
- to affirm the understanding that as UU’s, we are our own source of authority

Supplies:

- prop microphone (optional)
- old sheets or fabric for sages’ costumes
- alphabet beads (with an abundance of W’s and U’s) and cord for bracelets

Sixteen – Transitions

121

Goals for Participants:

- to explore the idea of change as a growth experience
- to reflect on some of the transitions that occur in our lives
- to challenge the way we think about grief and loss

Supplies:

- blanket or sheet
- book *Hope for the Flowers* by Trina Paulus (Paulist Press)

Seventeen – Dead Ends

127

Goals for Participants:

- to talk about what death means to us, our society and our culture
- to share views of death and dying
- to hear the stories of persons in our congregation who have experienced grief, loss and the death of a loved one

Supplies:

- craft (large roll) paper
- votive candles (at least one per participant) and taper
- members of the congregation who are willing to share a personal story of the death of a loved one

Eighteen – The Final Destination

131

Goals for Participants:

- to examine their beliefs about life after death
- to consider the idea of near-death experiences and what these might mean about what happens after a person dies
- to explore the concept of after-death communication

Supplies:

- book *The Near Death Experience: A Reader* by Jenny Yates or a similar book
- DVD or VHS movie of *Ghost* (with Demi Moore and Patrick Swayze)
- artwork showing pictures of heaven or after-life experiences (optional)

Nineteen – Life Is What We Make of It

137

Goals for Participants:

- to explore the concepts of heaven and hell
- to explore the idea that heaven and hell are what we make for ourselves and others here on earth
- to examine ideas of what it means to live a “full” life

Supplies:

- rulers or paint stirrers
- handkerchief or torn rags
- finger foods
- CD *Imagine* by John Lennon

Twenty – From Protestors to Pilgrims

145

Goals for Participants:

- to hear how the Radical Reformation gave birth to our forebears, the Pilgrims and Puritans
- to learn about an aspect of congregational polity: that every member’s voice should be heard and considered
- to play a game to reinforce the new information they have heard

Twenty-One – From Calvinism to Channing

155

Goals for Participants

- to experience what it felt like to grow up in a Calvinist faith
- to appreciate how Unitarianism evolved as a response to Calvinism
- to name and celebrate their “capacities”, the divine within themselves

Supplies

- large bowl
- wrapped pieces of candy (lots of it)
- adult male guests who will play the parts of Jonathan Edwards and William Ellery Channing

Twenty-Two – Just Whose Religion Is It?

165

Goals for Participants:

- to consider that the United States (or Canada) is full of religious diversity
- to ponder the tension between expressing ones own religious beliefs and respecting the religious beliefs of others
- to be able to make a brief statement explaining Unitarian Universalism to a peer

Supplies:

- large labels for bumper stickers and permanent markers (optional)

Twenty-Three – Honoring Our Martyrs

171

Goals for Participants

- to learn about some important people in our UU past
- to gain a sense of the courage and sacrifice that led to our religious freedom
- to ponder their own sense of courage

Supplies:

- compass (optional)
- collage materials (optional)
- candles with cardboard holders or tea lights
- CD with soft music, or drum
- flashlight (if your room will be very dark)

- Twenty-Four – Hey–Who’s in Charge Here?! (Congregational Polity)** 185
- Goals for Participants:
- to be introduced to the concept of congregational polity
 - to see in what ways our UU principles are derived from our polity
 - to make a poster about our polity that can be used to inform and teach adults in the congregation
 - to think through the ramifications of our polity
 - to prepare for next week’s guests
- Supplies:
- token prizes (optional)
- Twenty-Five – Learning from Others, Forming Bonds** 197
- Goals for Participants:
- to have their earlier learnings reinforced by conversations with the minister and a leadership representative
 - to gain a better understanding of ministry and membership
 - to do research to find a group of UU peers with whom they can form a relationship and to find a way to connect with that group
 - to review the covenant they made at the beginning of the year and possibly rewrite it
- Supplies:
- District and/or UUA directory
 - Cell phone or speaker phone (optional)
 - laptop or church computer with internet connection (optional)
 - light refreshments
- Twenty-Six – Thinkers and Doers (The Transcendental Mystery Dinner)** 201
- Goals for Participants:
- to be introduced to the concept of Transcendentalism
 - to become aware of some great mid-19th century Unitarians and to understand that these people associated with each other, and that their influence is still felt today
 - to learn how theology can influence actions
 - to meet a number of Unitarian *women*
- Supplies:
- finger food
 - small plates or napkins
 - construction paper, hole punch and yarn
- Twenty-Seven – Universalism: What Are We Good For?** 215
- Goals for Participants:
- to become acquainted with the early founders of American Universalism
 - to learn about Universalist views of humanity and God
 - to consider whether people’s behavior is based on their conscience or external factors such as reward and punishment
- Supplies:
- yellow, green and blue copy paper
 - 3 bowls or baskets
 - pencils or pens with identical ink

Twenty-Eight – UUA

221

Goals for Participants:

- to explore why and how our two faiths of Unitarianism and Universalism came together
- to understand what it means to have two faith traditions and a dual heritage
- to examine what the UUA and the CUC offer to youth

Supplies:

- computer(s) with access to the web (so youth can visit the UUA/CUC web pages—optional)
- several copies of *The UU World* magazine
- several copies of *Synapse* (YRUU publication) or *Busking on the Causeway* (the Canadian youth publication)
- chime or bell

Twenty-Nine – No Fate But What We Make

231

Goals for Participants:

- to explore whether or not there is a power that directs human affairs
- to examine how the choices we make affect the rest of our lives and the lives of others
- to see how our actions become significant when our choices affect our futures and the lives of others
- to explore the second Principle and how our actions affect how we interact with others in just, equitable and compassionate ways

Supplies:

- deck of playing cards
- art paper, paints and paint brushes
- small stones or marbles, one per participant
- meditative music (optional)

Thirty – The Devil Made Me Do It

237

Goals for Participants:

- to explore the concept of whether people are born good or bad, or whether they become that way through their life's experiences
- to further explore the idea of inherent worth and dignity – for everyone?
- to consider what makes a person do violent things
- to consider possible societal influences that could cause a person to commit an evil act

Supplies:

- several copies of the Bible
- copy of the CD, *Portrait of an American Family* by Marilyn Manson
- dominoes (if you have a small group)

Thirty-One – Going To Extremes

245

Goals for Participants:

- to come to an understanding of fundamentalist belief and the causes of religious extremism
- to understand that all fundamentalist groups have common beliefs and ideas, no matter what the religion
- to explore the responsibilities of Unitarian Universalists and the role of our Principles in light of fundamentalist beliefs

Supplies:

- a large tray
- an assortment of objects, some larger and taller than the others (such as candles, statues, religious objects, flower vases and other decorative objects)
- a towel or cloth large enough to drape over the tray with the objects on it

Thirty-Two – Do No Harm

253

Goals for Participants:

- to examine alternatives to violence in creating social change
- to explore the connections between great historical figures who believed in non-violent social change
- to think about some of the causes we believe in strongly enough to take a stand on

Supplies:

- DVD or video of the movie *Gandhi*
- copy of Thoreau's *Civil Disobedience* (optional)
- paint stirrers, heavy duty stapler, poster board

Thirty-Three – Our Place in the Universe

259

Goals for Participants:

- to examine the role of human beings in the grand scheme of things
- to take a look at how we fit into the world
- to determine the participants' thoughts and feelings about our responsibility to others and to our earth
- to explore the seventh Principle "respect for the independent web"

Supplies:

- a Bible (or several copies of one with passages from *Genesis* selected)
- artwork or books on "The Garden of Eden" (optional)

Thirty-Four – Faith

Goals for Participants:

- to explore what is of ultimate value
- to examine priorities and assigning importance
- to determine what or whom to have faith in

Supplies:

- a CD or cassette tape with meditative music (optional)
- CD or cassette tape player (optional)

Thirty-Five – Moving On

Goals for Participants:

- to review the year's highlights
- to leave a legacy for the coming class
- to consider the next phase of their spiritual journey
- to celebrate their year together

Supplies:

- letter envelopes

Our Own Multi Media Sacred Text

A project for older youth

“Make your own Bible. Select and collect all the words and sentences that in your reading have been like the blast of trumpet. . . .”

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

Time requirement:

This project needs a morning session for planning, then an extended time, like a Sunday afternoon or an overnight, for its completion. Alternatively, a group might decide to make the project the focal point of its meetings for a month or more. Note that there has to be time in between the planning and the execution for youth and their leaders to assemble resources and equipment.

Equipment/supplies suggestions:

Recording and playing equipment for DVD's and CD's
Video camera
TV or monitor
Digital camera and printer
Paints, brushes and self hardening clay
CD's brought in by participants
calligraphy pens (or chisel tip markers)
“vellum” type paper or other paper

Background requirement:

The youth should have spent some time looking at the Bible and other sacred texts, so that they know the scope and “flavor” of what they will be creating. They also should have had the opportunity to explore their own beliefs and hear about the beliefs of other members of the group.

The First Session:

Planning a Multi-Media Sacred Text.

Throughout the history of humanity, people have felt compelled to tell their own story. Before the written word, this was done orally around the campfire or by painting pictures in caves or by carving symbols into rocks. Now we

have many kinds of technology that allow us to record what is important in our lives.

Over whatever time frame you have determined, your group will be creating and compiling a multi media sacred text. This text will refer to them as a group of Unitarian Universalist high school youth living in the first part of the 21st Century. Like other sacred texts, it should tell contemporary people who they are and what's important to them. And like other sacred texts, it should preserve their ideas for future generations. The sacred text should also be a source of authority, so it should reflect truth as they perceive it. This text might:

- tell their history
- tell about how they move in the larger world (like their relation to the congregation, or their participation in cons or rallies)
- tell about their leaders – how the group is governed, or how it governs itself, what rules or laws it has
- explain their rituals and traditions
- speak to their ethics, or tell them how best to lead their lives
- introduce, explain and/or praise their god (whatever they hold to be most important in their lives)

The first session of this project will all be discussing and planning.

Brainstorm what might be included. When you have a long and varied list on newsprint, go back and have people defend the various ideas. (Remember, every sacred text is formed by what is left out as well as by what is included.)

When you have a working list of what you will include, discuss how it will be included. For instance, if you want to have a record of how you do joys and concerns, you will probably want to record that event with a digital or a video camera. Who has access to the equipment? If you want to include a certain song, who will bring in the CD?

You also might want to use art media, painting a mural (which you might then also record on camera), making a clay chalice, etc. Be sure to think through what you will need in each case and decide how you will get those things.

Decide what you want the final product to look like. Will you create a DVD and make a copy for everyone? Will you collect things in a box which you decorate and keep in your room? Will you do a dramatization and video record it? (That might require props, costumes, scenery.) Remember, your sacred text, with its wisdom and history, should be available to future generations.

Now that you've made all these decisions, remember that most sacred texts grow and change over time. Invite everyone to be thinking during the week of other things they might want included: favorite quotes (which might be gathered up as "proverbs"), music, or whatever else they might think of. They should bring these in for the next session.

The Second (Extended) Session: Creating a Multi-Media Sacred Text.

Taking time to get everyone oriented and on task will make the sacred text project go much more smoothly. Remember, it took almost 1000 years for the Jews to write the Tanakh (their Bible), and Unitarian Universalists believe that "revelation is not sealed." Guided by our experiences and our inner light, (our inner authority), we are always open to adding to or changing our beliefs. Even though you might have a product within some time frame, you should always be able to add to your sacred text at a later date.

Begin by reviewing your plans from last week. Find out who brought what they said they would. Then see what else came up for people during the week – what else should possibly be added to the sacred text? As you did last week, make sure that there is a reason for everything you decide to include. Keep your ideas on newsprint so they are accessible to the whole group.

When you have a (for now) definite plan of what will be included, you can proceed one of two ways:

- 1) As a group, you can go over each element, deciding in general how it will be accomplished and who will be responsible. Or
- 2) You can make one or more people responsible for each element, and have them figure out the logistics.