

World Café, March 20, 2016

Compiled by Ellen Bell

More

Large group:

- Outreach to marginalized groups (including LGBT)
- Couples groups
- Ways to connect before & after service
- RE for teens
- Spiritual music
- Social justice involvement
- Doing of service not on Sundays
- Social activities

Individual tables:

- Social and/or non-church activities (suggestions include community, movie nights, karaoke, hiking, river cleanup, more social time at church, more structured social time, ways to connect while at service, dinners as social opportunity, social occasions for couples, informal group of young families to connect with, socializing with small groups, block off time on Sundays for socializing, have parties, go out for lunch after church) - all tables expressed a need for more social interaction**
- Homilies (including more on behavioral issues or concerns, more on secular themes, more on positive themes, more on topics like immigration and other concerns from the news)
- Music (plus comments from several sources including "More hymns," more "hymn-like," less popular music, and more spiritual music but not always Christian)
- Greeters (rotate them, train them, have laminated card with instruction, train congregation not to stand in front of the greeters, follow-up mechanisms for visitors, welcome newcomers, send follow-ups after 1st 3 visits)
- Emphasis on guiding principles (includes "need to revise thinking from belief in "nothing" to emphasis on guiding principles," "define a positive care purpose that draws us together")
- Open-mindedness, acceptance, empathy, tolerance of other religions, love, ability to use the word "God" without feeling it's a dirty word
- Rituals (includes new child dedication, water communion, reflection and/or meditation as a regular part of the service)
- Service (includes "doesn't have to be on Sundays;" UUBC could adopt a highway mile; potluck Sundays could be used for activities like packing bags for homeless people; look for service opportunities we can do at Montessori; volunteer year commitments;

- Craft Sunday intended for service giving to places like nursing homes; organized service opportunities for UUBC members and attendees, social justice involvement)
- Exploration of world religions/traditions (includes Zen meditation, speakers from other religions, UU ministers)
 - Religious education (includes more variety of topics on discussion Sundays, ongoing topics over a period of time, OWL program for adults, set aside time [perhaps 9 to 10 on Sunday mornings] for studying sacred documents of various religions, OWL program for teens, suggested reading list from Jeff for those who want to read on their own, in-depth studies from UUA website)
 - Community garden
 - Publicity/awareness-raising (ex., Facebook ads, meet-ups, newspaper ads and/or listings, ways to attract younger members, business cards, "connection" cards, membership and/or social outreach to LGBT as well as minorities (including blacks and Hispanics) and marginalized groups, promoting discussion Sundays, finding ways to draw and keep new members, announcements on the order of service and not just on Facebook or the website, updated website that is user-friendly with easier navigation)
 - Participation in interfaith organizations
 - Integration of the children
 - Ways to express care (includes contacting old regulars to find out why they are not coming back)
 - Ethical/moral teachings/principles
 - Structure to potlucks – sign up the week before to bring a salad or an entrée or a dessert, etc. (One participant also expressed a desire not to eat before noon. Another wanted more time to eat and socialize.)
 - Continuity

Keep

Large group:

- 1st & 3rd for topics and live music
- Different Sunday format
- Homilies
- Adult RE
- Welcoming environment
- Choir
- Rituals and singing closing

Individual tables:

- Welcoming environment
- Choir (3)

- Topics of a secular nature
- Participation
- All-inclusiveness
- Online presence
- Readings (which help us find new authors)
- Morals but not religiosity
- Different
- Jeff as preferred presenter
- No pastor
- Sunday RE teachers (includes children's education program)
- Our rituals on Sundays (includes beginning and ending rituals)
- Stay at Little Einstein for now
- Lunch bunch
- Discussion Sunday – pursue a topic over time as a 3rd option (TED talks, for example)
- Same people
- Same format (includes different Sunday formats , 1st and 3rd Sunday topics and music, homily Sundays, homily at least once a month, 3rd Sunday talks, 5th Sunday, short meditation, quiet reflection, monthly potluck, monthly music, song at closing, variety of speakers and having those speakers come back on discussion Sundays, lighting the tea lights, singing bowl, inspirational opening reading, good greeters who give a welcoming feeling and reach out)
- Adult religious education
- Flowers, candles, ambiance
- Place where you can discuss religion freely

Less

Large group:

- Hectic potluck
- Stilted hymns
- Putting away chairs right away
- Formality/ritual
- Secular music
- "Religious correctness"
- "Political correctness"

Individual tables:

- Formality
- Uncomfortable chairs
- Putting chairs away quickly at the end of service (2 tables)

- Time moving furniture
- Secular music (more spiritual or inspirational; less stilted hymns; more UU hymns)
- Religious correctness
- Emails (consolidate them more)
- Talk – more action
- Potlucks
- Meditation – it's a private thing
- Discussion Sundays as they are now
- Prayer
- Hurried ending of potluck
- Fear of expressing where you are in your spiritual path
- Name tags