



Worship Service as a Journey

Some have suggested that a Sunday service is a journey or pilgrimage in which we are drawn out of our own concerns to join a community in exploration and to feel a renewed connection with the sacred in life. The service may be partly a time of reflection, partly an opportunity to experience a challenge, partly a time to mourn or celebrate, and partly a time to serve Life. At the end of the journey, the individual is alone again, but renewed and inspired to go out into the world.

There are many models that seek to identify elements of worship. Here is the model we tend to use at Cedar Lane:

- **Ingathering** - coming together to worship. Celebrate the fact that the congregation is together again as a worshipping community.
 - Welcome & Announcements, Prelude, Opening Words, Lighting the Chalice, and Opening Hymn.
- **Connecting** - Recognize and affirm the presence of children and visitors, welcome new members, or share the joys and sorrows of the gathered community. This segment of worship enables the congregation to realize and honor their connections with one another.
 - Time for All Ages followed by short hymn.
 - Special ritual like New Member Recognition, Child Dedication, Board Member Recognition, etc.,
 - Sharing of Joys & Sorrows
- **Reflecting** - A time for introspection; giving oneself some space to experience connection with oneself, each other, and the Holy; Exploring ideas, being nourished and challenged intellectually, morally, emotionally, and spiritually; receiving the offering that sustains and supports the mission and ministry of the congregation.
 - Prayer/Meditation, Silence, Hymn
 - Reading(s), Special Music, Reflection/Sermon
 - Offering
- **Closing** - Once renewed, making new commitments, taking ideas, feelings, and values back out into day-to-day living; rededication to UU faith and values.
 - Hymn, Closing Words, Postlude.
- **Dispersing** – “*After worship, the service begins.*” – Quaker saying