











Worship







Central to the Life of the Small Congregation






This handout was compiled by attendees of the first Small is Beautiful Conference at Ferry Beach in Saco, Maine, 2004.

What makes for good, and meaningful, worship?













-  An opportunity to be with people
-  To be moved – by any or all aspects – and to leave with something
-  To be in a beautiful setting – flowers, candles, meaningful symbols, ambience
-  A sense of drama
-  A feeling of fellowship
-  A spiritual feeling
-  Light and energy as well as depth
-  Singable hymns!
-  Pieces that fit together – a smooth flow
-  A simple message, eloquently put, that make you think

What makes for less-than-meaningful worship?

-  Poor delivery of sermon/readings
-  Applause
-  Talkback/feedback
-  Trying to do too much – too complicated
-  Chatter
-  Inconsistency

-  Dull singing, unsingable hymns
-  Too informal
-  People not sitting together
-  People who abuse joys and concerns and/or announcements
-  The use of acronyms and insider language not welcoming to newcomers

These are the common elements of worship in our congregations. What elements are important to you?

-  Welcome/ Greetings
-  Prelude/postlude and other music to listen to
-  Chalice lighting
-  Meditation/prayer
-  Quiet and silence
-  Affirmation/covenant
-  Time with the children/family focus/story for all
-  Opening and closing words, and readings(s)
-  Offering
-  Joys and concerns
-  Hymns/songs
-  Sermon (not lecture)

©2005 the Rev. Jane Dwinell,
Small Church Specialist for the Northeast District of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Contact the Rev. Jane Dwinell at:
sky@vtlink.net  802.229.4008  1 Liberty Street, Montpelier VT 05602