

## **RMF Worship Planning Helps**

If you would like to try your hand at planning a Sunday worship service for RMF, here's a suggestion for how to go about it "first, second, and third," that we think will be helpful:

### **1. The Occasion**

- Think about what Sunday this is: Is it a particular occasion in the church year? (Such as Palm Sunday, or Peace Sunday, or the Sunday after Christmas...) One can see some of these occasions noted on the Worship/Adult study calendar posted under "Members" on the RMF website, [www.rochestermennonite.org](http://www.rochestermennonite.org). (Click on "Member Login" on the bottom right-hand corner; username is "member" and password is "menno111"). You can then click on "Members" and see a Calendar Overview and Worship Schedule.
- OR is this a Sunday that is part of a special worship series we may be following? Consult Nancy Price (764-4035; [nancyprice4@icloud.com](mailto:nancyprice4@icloud.com)) for printed resource materials drawn from the seasonal Menno publication *The Leader*. Speaking of that...

### **2. Resources: Where can I find ideas, dramas, etc. for this particular Sunday?**

- A wealth of worship resources is available on the church website under "Members" (see access instructions above), where you'll find a variety of online "Resources for Worship Leaders" (as well as "Anabaptist Bible Study Tools").
- Particular worship resources for the current season can also be found in *The Leader* (see #1 above) or at their website, [www.leaderonline.org/worship](http://www.leaderonline.org/worship). Username and password for downloading these worship resources change with each quarterly issue— and can be found on the first page of "Worship Resources" located at the back of a particular issue.

### **3. Scripture: Your scripture selection(s) will provide the focus for the rest of the worship service.**

- Select the main scripture reading(s) for this particular Sunday's theme, which will inform your choice of hymns and other worship pieces.
- If your Sunday is not part of a "series" in *The Leader*, with suggested scriptures already provided, you might get some good ideas from [www.textweek.com](http://www.textweek.com) – a site that follows the Revised Common Lectionary through its three-year cycle and will list four readings drawn from the lectionary for the date you've chosen.
- The RMF church library also offers a full complement of Bible commentaries available for checking out, including the *Believers Church Bible Commentary* volumes listed under "Resources for Worship Leaders" (see #2 above).

### **4. Music: How do I choose what we'll sing? And who will help?**

- Hymns and songs can be selected from our three main music resources, *The Hymnal: a Worship Book*; *Sing the Story*; and *Sing the Journey*. Indexes in the back of each book are helpful for matching music to the occasion, and/or the scripture reading, and/or a particular segment of the worship service (like Gathering, or Confessing, opening hymns, closing hymns, etc.) An additional book with song choices can be found on the piano at RMF. (Cont...)

- If you wish to use a song not found in our hymnbooks, you may consult Amy Durkee-Poole (314-7444; [adpblossom@yahoo.com](mailto:adpblossom@yahoo.com)) for help in getting one-time permission from publishers.
- We have a rotation of songleaders for the Sundays of each month. It is helpful if you send song selections by midweek to the leader for your upcoming Sunday:
 

1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month	Billy Dickerson 610-7666, <a href="mailto:Lockheed40books@gmail.com">Lockheed40books@gmail.com</a>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday	Ben Price 364-4035, <a href="mailto:benprice9@gmail.com">benprice9@gmail.com</a>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	Billy Dickerson
4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	Eloise Schrag 605-660-3755, <a href="mailto:eloiseschrag@gmail.com">eloiseschrag@gmail.com</a>
5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	Aaron Stuckey 217-3295, <a href="mailto:aaron.stuckey@gmail.com">aaron.stuckey@gmail.com</a>

Songleaders are willing to line up musicians (guitar, piano, violin) to accompany particular music segments as they see fit, and to offer suggestions for music.

## 5. Order of Service: How do I put things together?

- One simple pattern or ordering of the service that we often use (though not set in concrete, by any means!) offers a “flow” from beginning to end. It goes roughly like this, with songs interspersed as the planner/leader thinks appropriate:
  - Gathering songs
  - Welcome and announcements
  - Call to Worship [followed by a song]
  - Confessing [where we have missed the mark]
  - Assurance of God’s Forgiveness
  - Hearing the Word [scripture readings]
  - Children’s Time\* [see #6 below]
  - Reflection on the scripture(s) by leader [see below]
  - Offering our Gifts
  - Prayers of the People
  - Benediction/Sending
- A folder containing recent worship bulletins is available on top of the bookshelves at the back of the sanctuary, for you to consult for further guidance on the order of things in the service.
- For possible printed prayers, litanies, and other responsive pieces, you will find a wonderful array of resources in the back of each of the three songbooks— arranged according to the specific segment of worship, and/or according to liturgical seasons of the year like Advent, Lent, Easter. *Words for Worship* is another excellent resource, available in the RMF library!

## 6. Children’s Time

- If possible, schedule this element early in the worship service— after which the littlest worshipers leave for their own classrooms.
- If you yourself are leading this segment, think about how you might convey one simple point related to the day’s theme/scripture and how to make it tangible/visual for children.
- On any given Sunday, you might have children ranging in age from 3- to 10-year-olds. Can you find some ways to include both the younger and older ends of that age spectrum? (Cont...)

- Among others, either Melissa Carlson (442-1364; [melissacarlson22@gmail.com](mailto:melissacarlson22@gmail.com)) or Nancy Price (764-4035; [nancyprice4@icloud.com](mailto:nancyprice4@icloud.com)) are available for consultation on Children's Time.

## 7. Leadership Decisions: Who will participate with me?

- Decide upon "who will do what" in the service: Beside yourself and the portions *you* will lead, who else might you invite, to lead a prayer, do a scripture reading or dramatization, or etc? Feel free to invite *any* member(s) of RMF to assist in the service, and/or consult the Gift Pledge sheet, available under "Congregational Documents" in the "Members" section of the RMF website, for names of those who've expressed prior willingness. (A hard copy of the Gift Pledges is also available in the Worship folder on the shelf above the songbooks, at the back of the sanctuary.)
- Will you do the Children's Time in the service, or invite someone else to plan and lead that portion? (Consult the Gift Pledge sheet for available leaders.)
- If at all possible, try to give co-leaders or readers time to prepare by inviting them a few days in advance, rather than just before worship begins on Sunday morning! Nothing is more rattling to most people than being asked when they'e just made it to church "Would you read X/ do the prayers/or etc ten minutes from now?"— and the quality of worship is much better if folks have had time to think it through ahead of time!
- Who will present a reflection or "meditation" on the scripture reading for the day? If you'd rather not do this yourself, there are others who have expressed willingness (via the annual Gift Pledge) to be asked to "preach." For 2017-2018, those folks include Amy Durkee-Poole, Dan Giles, Kathy Kern, Gail Ricciuti, Anthony Ricciuti, and Chrissie Walls; but there are others also willing.

## 8. Worship Bulletins:

- We generally print 20-30 bulletins for regular Sunday services, distributing them on every second chair in the sanctuary. (Normally 40-50 chairs are set up.)
- Worship bulletins may be a single printed 8-1/2 x 11" sheet, or done in "booklet" form with or without a cover design. RMF has an annual subscription to artist Jan Richardson's designs found on her website at [www.janrichardsonimages.com](http://www.janrichardsonimages.com). To download a design for use on your bulletin, log in with Username [contact@rochesterMennonite.org](mailto:contact@rochesterMennonite.org) and Password **meNNo111**. (A link to Richardson's "Painted Prayerbook" can also be found under the "Members" section of the RMF website.)
- You may consult Amy Durkee-Poole or Tammy Wright (739-9920; [besse.tammynana@gmail.com](mailto:besse.tammynana@gmail.com)) on how to use the church's B/W printer, if you need it, to print up your bulletins. Alternatively, if you can have your finished bulletin in her hands by the Friday preceding your service, Amy is willing to print copies for you.

## 9. Sanctuary Set-up and "Visuals":

- To represent the theme of your particular Sunday, an array of candles, lengths of fabric, and other symbolic visual aids for the table/ focal center is available both in cupboards at the back of the sanctuary and in the church attic (using the same key as for the utility/cleaning closet). Jen Carter (624-3552; [carternc@aol.com](mailto:carternc@aol.com))

has comprehensive knowledge of what materials are available for visuals and is willing to be consulted if you have questions or special needs.

- The arrangement of seats for your service is up to you: Curved rows facing forward, with one center aisle? Rows of chairs in three sections, separated by two aisles? Rows on each side, facing a center table in the middle of the sanctuary? Chairs set up around round tables throughout the space? Feel free to be as creative as your worship service requires.
- Our faithful church cleaner, Ephraim Lemma, sets up a standard configuration of rows of chairs when he cleans the sanctuary (usually on Friday afternoons). If you wish to “tweak” the setup yourself, it is best to do that on Saturday or early Sunday morning; and/or to post printed instructions for Ephraim on the sanctuary door by 1 p.m. on Friday. You may also reach Ephraim in advance at 473-3123 (home) or at [ephraiml2002@yahoo.com](mailto:ephraiml2002@yahoo.com).

### **10. Acoustics: Making sure everyone can hear!**

- **Voice** - Our worship space is extremely “alive” with sound, to the extent that even a small cough or shuffle of papers within the congregation will drown out what a leader is saying. Slowing your words a notch, enunciating them clearly, and projecting your voice toward the farthest row back (rather than speaking quickly in your normal “private conversation” tone) will allow everyone to hear you!
- During corporate prayer time, it is also helpful to gather prayer requests first and/or to reiterate mentioned prayer requests so that they aren’t lost to hearers during people’s [usually-quiet] *spoken* prayers.

### **11. Questions?**

If you have additional questions or need further help in putting your service together, feel free to contact one of these members of the Worship Team:

- Billy Dickerson, 610-7666 [Lockheed40books@gmail.com](mailto:Lockheed40books@gmail.com)
- Nancy Price, 764-2429 [nancyprice4@icloud.com](mailto:nancyprice4@icloud.com)
- Gail Ricciuti, 473-9081 [gricciuti@crcds.edu](mailto:gricciuti@crcds.edu)
- Tammy Wright, 739-9920 [besse.tammynana@gmail.com](mailto:besse.tammynana@gmail.com)

**★ Thank you so much for your willingness to lead worship at RMF! ★**