

Alternative Services

Sacred Circle

In March 2008 a prayer service was added to the weekly schedule at Unity Village. The intention was to create a prayer space for those wanting something different than what was currently available. Each week people from a variety of departments, backgrounds, and ages come together for this time of fellowship and prayer. The goal of Sacred Circle is threefold:

- for the service to be accessible for everyone (from the never-studied Unity folk to the long-time minister)
- to create community
- give exposure to and make personal the classical writings of Unity

The following information will guide you in creating this type of service.

The service's basic timeline is:

10:50-11:00	pre-music
11:00	Welcome
11:02	Wiggle Music
11:05-07	Intro of discussion time and discussion time
11:13	Meditation with singing bowl
11:23	Exit meditation and share the affirmation
11:24	Thanks and announcements
11:25	Departure music

Environment: Create a comfortable space by placing comfy pillows around the floor in a circle interspersed with chairs, enabling all to have a way to sit that feels right for them. Place small slips of paper and pens (for prayer requests) on a table by the entrance. Also by the entrance is a place to put coats, bags, shoes etc. In the center of the circle is a large singing bowl on a short stand; affirmation cards are placed by the bowl.

Welcome: Briefly welcome everyone. Invite them to turn off cell phones and feel free and comfortable to participate at whatever level feels right for them. Turn on “wiggle” song and invite participants to dance as they feel led, also invite them to write prayer requests on the paper and place them in the singing bowl. This is also the time to pick up affirmation cards.

Wiggle music: Can be from any genre, but has to be up-beat! Generally the entry and departure music is also up-beat. Often song and quote are chosen to have a similar theme, possibly with the cards printed on paper that is a corresponding color.



Having a broad range, by style and decade, of music helps highlight the intergenerational aspect of the service.

Discussion time: Connection builds community. Read aloud the quote on the card and then ask everyone to find someone to chat with about what the affirmation means to them and if they agree, etc. Each week is a new song and quote. At Unity Village, all the quotes are from a classic Unity writer, do what works for you. You can go to the Sacred Circle blog for samples of sacred circle cards.



Visit the Sacred Circle blog
www.unitysacredcircle.blogspot.com

Meditation: Wrap up discussion time, by striking the singing bowl or some other signal, and invite everyone into a comfortable position and begin playing the singing bowl. This is mainly a time of personal meditation with just the bowl as a point of focus, but modify the meditation instructions to suit the audience.

Exit meditation: invite participants out of meditation by striking the bowl and reading the affirmation. Then, invite everyone to repeat the affirmation together. (The affirmation is created to go with the theme.)

Thanks and announcements: Thank everyone for coming and share announcements (be sure to keep it brief).

Departure music: Could be a reprise of the wiggle song or another fun song that goes with the theme. Our departure and pre music is a playlist with all the previous wiggle music on it plus some others we like.