

Two new lessons by Rev. Ruth Gibson, Denver CO (FirstUniversalist) **to insert into
Travel in Time**

Lesson #1, “The King Who Listened to His Mother”

In which participants explore the beginnings of Unitarianism in Transylvania, learn about life in our Partner Church village of Kövend,^{***} and begin work on a Transylvanian Heritage craft project.

Goals for participants:

- to hear the story of Queen Isabella, her son Zsigmond Janos* and the historic proclamation of freedom in religion,
- to learn some of the early teaching of Unitarianism, through the writings of David Ferenc**, the founder of Transylvanian Unitarianism,
- to recognize and understand the symbol of Transylvanian Unitarianism,
- to learn about our Partner Church in Kovend, and see some of the ways in which we are similar and different in our beliefs and practices,
- to generate questions from the group about life in Kövend, and Unitarianism in Transylvania.

* zshig mond yah-nosh **dah-veed fair-ents

^{***}Transylvanian partner church of First Universalist, Denver

CO

Whole Group Activities

Watch video footage of worship in Kövend, comparing similarities and differences in our two churches
Travel to 1568, and the Diet of Torda
Generate questions about Transylvania
Read from the teachings of David Ferenc

Internalization Activity Options

Work on a suncatcher, pendant, pin or box, using the Transylvanian Unitarian symbol.
Learn some words in Hungarian
Read Transylvanian/Hungarian folk tales.
Work on a letter to send to children in Kovend.

Preparation:

Review the story “The King who Listened to his Mother.”
Decide whether to have a visiting Time Traveler tell it—as David, or as Isabella—or to have it read into a tape recorder. If you need a costume for David, let the RE Office know at least a week ahead of time.
Choose which of the craft projects you want to offer for this week and next
Come in early to arrange a “browsing table” with materials provided, and to set up VCR

Materials:

VCR and videotape of Kovend worship service
(or photo albums etc. of your own/others’ visits)

Handcrafts, picture books and other Transylvanian culture items.

Time line cards for 1568, 1989, and 1990
(find in next Travel inTime PCC lesson:”Visit to..”)

Materials for craft projects (listed below)

Travel in Time

revised for First Universalist

Hymnal reading #566, copies for each participant
pen pal

Handout on how to be a

Illustrations or posters of the flaming chalice
and the Transylvanian Unitarian dove and serpent symbols

1. For Boxes or Luminaria

Project pages (attached)
6 4" posterboard squares
for each participant
red pencils and pens (or blue)
red (or blue) yarn
fine tip markers or colored pencils
thick yarn needles, several thick sponges
or towels

3. For "stained glass" symbol suncatcher:

Partner church symbol pages (8.5 x 11)
Suncatcher suppy box with vinyl sheets,
paint, simulated lead.
Brushes, paper towels or newspapers,
cotton swabs, cups for water
Permanent black markers

2. For pendants

Partner Church symbol pages (8.5 x 11)
Shrink plastic sheets
colored pencils,
cookie sheets, access to an oven.

4. For Partner Church pins:

Badge maker—take home in advance
to learn to use it—and badge parts
Paper circles with partner church designs
Scissors
Fine-tip colored markers or pencils

Lesson Plan

Gathering

3-5 minutes before worship

Put on your nametag.

Set up the video so that the tape can be showing as children begin to arrive, and arrange the Transylvanian materials for browsing in a safe place; note that these items should be treated with special care.

Graffiti sheets on newsprint. Post 2 sheets, where children can write

Things we know about Transylvania

Things we wonder about Transylvania

As children come in, invite everyone to color in their space on the attendance chart and to put on their nametags. Draw their attention to the videotape of a Partner Church worship service as children come in. It is all in Hungarian so they can't expect to understand anything being said; it may be helpful to know that they are having a confirmation service, which is something like our Coming of Age service. Invite them to notice what they can of how our partner church seems different from, or similar to ours.

Those who wish to may work on the graffiti sheets instead.

Initiation

10 minutes

Travel in Time

revised for First Universalist

Give everyone about 3-5 minutes to watch the videotape. You might fast forward to the part at the end where the minister asks questions of the children. Then take their comments—things we know and things we wonder-- and record them on the two newsprint sheets.

Investigation

20 minutes

1. *Symbols—5 minutes*

Show the poster of the flaming chalice. Ask the children to say what it stands for, and anything they know about why and how the flaming chalice was chosen as the symbol of our Unitarian Universalist way of religion.

Show the Transylvanian Unitarian symbol—some of them may have some knowledge or ideas about what it stands for. Point out:

The crown—for King Zsigmond Janos,* who was the first and only Unitarian king, and one of the first rulers in the western world to establish religious freedom as the law.

*The anglicized form of his name is John Sigismund. If you like, you may teach the children how to sing this ditty.

(to the tune of “Ten Little Indians”)

Good King John was Transylvanian,
The only king to be Unitarian.
From his throne he did declar-ion
People could worship either Roman
or Arian.**

***Arianism was a term used for the 4th Century teaching that while Jesus had divine qualities, as any good person may, but that only God is God. In 381 the Roman Catholic Church declared Arianism as a heresy and so all those who believed that Jesus was human and not God were declared to be heretics.*

The dove and the serpent—for the Unitarian motto, which comes from the advice Jesus gave to his followers: “I send you out as sheep among wolves, so you must be as wise as the serpent and as gentle as the dove.” Unlike the United States, where we have enjoyed democracy and religious freedom for many years—thanks in part to Unitarian and Universalist leaders who influenced our government from the beginning--Unitarians in Transylvania have experienced a great deal of persecution in the years since John Sigismund’s time.

2 *Time Travel 10 minutes*

Travel back in time to 1568, the city of Kolozsvar. Ferenc David, the first Unitarian minister of an organized Unitarian congregation and minister to the royal family, has returned from the great debate in Torda, called by the King John Sigismund to help the king make a decision about the religion of his people. You might have one of the teachers or a guest dress up as David, and tell or read the story, or play a pre-recorded narration through the “destination drive unit” (aka tape recorder). *With some adaptation, the story might also be told from the perspective of Queen Isabella.*

THE KING WHO LISTENED TO HIS MOTHER
by the Rev. Ruth Ellen Gibson

Travel in Time

revised for First Universalist

Long, long ago, when all the lands across the water were ruled by kings, and sometimes by queens, the people had very little freedom, very little money, and very little choice. Life in those days was nothing like what you hear about in fairy tales. And we probably wouldn't have liked it. In those not so golden olden days, whatever the king said you had to do, you had to do it. If the King said he wanted to take your money or your land, he could take it. Even in things as private as religion, there was no choice. Whatever religion the king belonged to, would be your religion too. If there was a new king with a different religion, all the people had to change their beliefs--or keep them secret.

Now, in the land across the water there was, long ago, a small country called Transylvania--which means "Land Beyond the Forest." Transylvania is part of another, bigger nation now. But in the old days, 400, 500 years ago, it had its very own king. In those days, nearly all the kings in that part of the world were Catholic Christians, and King John Zapolyta was Catholic too.

Old King Zapolya had a hard time keeping his country safe. To the east was the land of Turkey, where the rulers and people were not Catholic, but Muslim. They wanted to invade the western lands, to have more money and power, and to make all the Christians become Muslim. And how could they do that? They'd have to go through Transylvania! To the West were the Austrian lands, with Christian kings, who wanted to take over the land of Turkey and make all the Muslims become Christians. They also wanted more money and power. And how could these kings get to Turkey? They had to go through Transylvania!

Luckily for King Zapolya, his little country was surrounded by high mountains, and it was not so easy for soldiers from either side to go through. His little country was prosperous, with lots of good trading. So he made gifts of money to the western kings and the eastern sultans, in return for their promises not to send their soldiers into Transylvania.

King Zapolya married a young Polish princess named Isabella. She had a lively mind and was well educated, and she brought new intellectual life to Transylvania. Soon Isabella wrote home to her mother that she and the king were expecting a child. The Queen of Poland was worried about the health of her daughter so far away in the land beyond the forest, so sent her very own doctor to the Transylvanian court. His name was Giorgio Biandrata, and, it just so happened, he was Unitarian! In those days, it was very dangerous to be a Unitarian. In most places, Unitarians were killed, because both the Catholic and the Lutheran and all the other Christians, who believed God has three parts, thought the Unitarian idea of only one God was too dangerous to be talked about.

In time, Queen Isabella gave birth to a baby boy, who was named John Sigismund. Unfortunately, old King Zapolya was very sick, and he died from his illness when his son was only two weeks old. Right away, King Ferdinand attacked from the west, thinking he could take over Transylvania. But the Sultan sent soldiers from the east to help Queen Isabella. There was quite a lot of fighting for a while. Different kings continued to fight over Transylvania, and for a while, Isabella had to take the young son away to Poland for safety. When they returned, people wanted to know--was the young prince going to be Lutheran, or Catholic?

Isabella wanted peace in her land. And so, she made an amazing proclamation: "Faith is a gift from God," she said, "and no one should be punished on account of it." Now these were very wise words, and no King or Queen had ever said anything like this before. If you say these words after me, you'll probably remember them.

Faith is a gift from God----(have congregation repeat)

and no one should be punished on account of it. ----(have congregation repeat)

"Everyone may hold the faith of their choice," Isabella proclaimed "without offense to anyone else," and people of different religions would not be allowed to "disturb each other's worship or do harm or inflict injury upon the other." Then she found the best teachers for her son, and encouraged him to think with an open mind. One of them, a minister named Francis David, became good friends with Dr. Biandrata. The doctor's Unitarian ideas were very interesting to the minister, and soon Francis David became a Unitarian, too.

When John Sigismund was 21, he finally became the ruler of Transylvania. At that time, there were four major religions in Transylvania: Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist and Unitarian. Since his most important teachers and

Travel in Time

revised for First Universalist

advisors were Unitarian, most people expected young King John Sigismund to announce that he was Unitarian and that he would force everyone in the whole kingdom of Transylvania to be Unitarian, too.

Instead, when the question of religion was brought up, the young king recalled his mother's wisdom. You remember her words too, don't you? Can you say them with me?

"Faith is a gift of God, and no one should be punished on account of it."

So it was, that King John Sigismund, like his mother, made freedom of religion the law of the land. He was a Unitarian--but remembering his mother's wisdom, he encouraged his people to understand and tolerate each others different ideas--and to freely live by the ideas they each thought best.

Travel in Time

revised for First Universalist

--Another version of this story written for use with an older, or intergenerational group-- which brings the history up to the present.

THE KING WHO LISTENED TO HIS MOTHER

By Rev. Ruth Ellen Gibson

Once upon a time, in the land beyond the forest, a land which we call Transylvania, but which it's own people call "Erdely" (pronounce: airr-day-yee) meaning woodland, an old king married a young princess. Princess Isabella had a head full of education and fresh new ideas. Perhaps this is because her mother and father, the King and Queen of Poland, also welcomed thinkers with different ideas. In those days, in most countries, people could only talk about things the King approved of. People with different ideas often found themselves in big trouble. But not in Poland, and not in Queen Isabella's court. This is why so many interesting people from all over Europe were glad to come to the far-off little country of Transylvania.

All in good time, Princess Isabella wrote to her mother, the Queen of Poland, that she and the king would soon be producing an heir to the throne. The Queen of Poland, full of concern for the health of her daughter and her grandchild, sent her very own personal doctor to the Transylvanian court. His name was Giorgio Biandrata. He was an Italian Unitarian humanist and he was in Poland because in Italy, Unitarians and humanists could be killed for sharing their ideas.

Now Princess Isabella was a young woman, but King Zapolya was an old man. And sadly, he died shortly after their son, John Sigismund, was born. Most of the people in Transylvania in those days were Roman Catholics, but there were some people who chose to follow the new Lutheran religion. So everyone wanted to know, in what religion would Queen Isabella bring up her son? Now, Isabella knew that if she said she would bring her son up to be a Catholic, as she was, the Lutheran princes in nearby countries would make war on Transylvania, in order to protect the religious freedom of the Lutherans who lived there. And she knew that if she chose the Lutheran religion for her son, the Catholic princes would make war on Transylvania. Either way, a war would cost many lives and endanger her son's life, as well.

Instead of taking sides, Queen Isabella came up with a creative alternative. "Faith is a gift of God" she said, and no one should be punished on account of it." She decreed that both the Catholic and the Lutheran religions would be accepted, "in order, " she said, "that each person might hold the faith that they wish, at their own free will. " Because these are very important words, I would like you to say them with me, so that you will remember them:

Faith is a gift of God—*(ask congregation or class to repeat)*

and no one should be punished on account of it. *(congregation/ class repeats)*

This was a thoroughly novel concept for a monarch, or anyone else in a position of power, to propose. In all other countries at that time it was virtually required that the people follow the faith of the monarch--or suffer consequences. And the consequences were typically jail, torture, and death at the stake. Because royalty traditionally served as defenders of the true faith, religious warfare was another source of suffering.

Do you remember Isabella's words? Can you say them after me again?

Travel in Time

revised for First Universalist

Faith is a gift of God and no one should be punished on account of it.

Isabella hoped her words would encourage a spirit of peace, but the winds of the Reformation were blowing on the coals of conflict. By the time Prince John was old enough to be crowned, in 1561, the Calvinist faith was well established in Transylvania, and our friend Dr. Biandrata had influenced the foremost preacher in the land, Francis David, to become a Unitarian. David, who served the royal family as preacher, spiritual advisor, and tutor, had a significant influence on Prince John. And as David was already in a position to proclaim Unitarianism widely, no one would have been surprised if, upon his coronation, King John Sigismund had pronounced himself, and therefore the whole kingdom, to be Unitarian.

Instead, when the question of religion was brought up, the young king recalled his mother's wisdom. You remember her words too, don't you? (*Ask congregation or the class, to repeat these words again*)

Faith is a gift of God, and no one should be punished on account of it.

Unfortunately, there were then and have continued to be, people who would use their power to dominate and destroy everything which challenges or disagrees with them. King Sigismund died young, and the counter- Reformation swept into Transylvania, reclaiming the nation for the Catholic faith again. But the people remembered the words of King John's mother, just as you do: (*Congregation /class can respond*)

Faith is a gift of God, and no one should be punished on account of it.

The people would not easily give up the freedom they had come to expect. So the Catholic church had to compromise: As long as the religious groups prayed and baptized in the name of Jesus, celebrated communion four times a year, ordered their religious life under the supervision of a bishop, and agreed to add no new teachings to their doctrine, they could practice their faith in freedom.

Francis David, now the first Unitarian bishop, could not live within the constraints of the last provision. He kept having new ideas, and having them, could not be silent about them. For this he was imprisoned in the fortress of Deva, where he died.

In our time, Unitarians and other people of faith in Transylvania have endured even more persecution. A Hungarian speaking people, they were assimilated by the Austro-Hungarian empire, and then, after the first world war, their homeland was given to Romania, which government has done all that it could, to eradicate the Transylvanian minority through assimilation or by other means. Under communist leadership all religious groups were severely restricted, operating within policies designed to erode their traditions and faith, and to isolate them from their brothers and sisters in faith, living in other countries. Under the dictatorship of Ceaucescu, Unitarian ministers were especially targeted as a danger to the people, because, even after 400 years of suppression, they continued to encourage freedom of thought. So many were jailed, tortured, and sometimes released under a shadow of suspicion that their freedom was obtained by their informing on members of their congregations.

Travel in Time

revised for First Universalist

The flower of free thought has not withered in Transylvania. It still blooms, encouraged now by friends in the United States and Canada, through the work of the Partner Church movement. The new friendships built on a shared heritage of freedom and tolerance, strengthen, inspire and encourage North Americans as well. Working together, to promote healing and growth in our religious heartland, we recall the wisdom of a wise Queen, and proclaim the truth she spoke to a world which, as much as ever, needs to learn how to live by this teaching. Let us say it together, one more time:

Faith is a gift of God, and no one should be punished on account of it.

As we have learned to say these words, so may we learn to live them. And may we all be as wise as King John Sigismund, who listened to his mother.

3 David's ideas and ours 5 minutes

After the time travel, distribute the "Teachings of Ferenc David" handout. Invite the class to read it with a partner, and to mark those teachings that they think are similar to the sort of things preached and taught about here and now, and those things that are different.

Gather the group for a brief discussion of similarities and differences in these two Unitarian traditions' worship and teachings. As they consider what they've seen of they have seen and heard, invite them to list their own questions

For Ferenc David, if they could really talk to him

For someone from our church who has been to Transylvania and to Kovend

For Unitarian children their age in Kovend (You might try having pairs work together to

come up with 2 questions for each of the three areas.)

Save the list for next week, when you will have a guest.

Internalization

15-20 minutes

Transylvanian Heritage project.: Show the Denver-Kovend Partner Church design, a Transylvanian embroidery Kovend has given us and invite children to choose one of the following projects:

Suncatchers with the Transylvanian and American Unitarian symbols. The

suncatchers project will require more than one session to complete; the first step is outlining the design with the "liquid leading." That will take 30 minutes to dry, and some care and patience so as not to drag your hand through it while it is still wet.

Next week, they can work on the painting part..

LBoxes, with embroidery designs on the sides and the dove and snake symbol on the lid,

or Luminaria –boxes without a lid, and with holes punched in the sides, so that the

light from a votive candle can shine out.. Punching the holes may take 2 weeks as well. The items they make can be used as gifts.

Travel in Time

revised for First Universalist

Alternative activities—watching the videotape, looking at some children’s books of Hungarian folktales, books about Transylvania, and see a book written in Hungarian.

Closing

5 minutes

Distribute the copy of our UU Principles (youth version on one side/adult version on the other)

and song (hymn # 159 OR the Unitarian Youth March if you have the music to go with the words—see below), and the Ferenc David reading (hymnal #566).

Ask a volunteer to light the chalice. Read the David reading in unison or in parts.

Ask participants to identify which of our UU principles they think were lived out by Queen Isabella, King Zsigmond, and David Ferenc.

Invite participants to let you know if they would be willing to read this to assist the MRE at one of the upcoming Circle Sundays, or maybe share it in the Sanctuary. Pass on any volunteers’ names.

Then say something like:

Unitarian Universalists believe that learning about the lives of others can help us to lead better lives, and make our world a better place for everyone. We are grateful for all those who lived their faith before us—holding a light of truth to shine on our path, and passing it on to us, to hold for others.

Sing “This Is My Song” (Hymnal #159)

Extinguish the candle. If someone needs to be reminded to bring snack next week do so.

Collect the name tags, and the song, principles, and reading copies, and store them for the next session.

Reflection and Planning

after class is over

Reflect on the questions below and discuss them with your co-leader(s) or the MRE.

1. What went well in this session? What did not go well, or could have been improved?
2. If we were going to lead this session again, what would we change about it? Why?
3. Do any of the group members seem to need some special attention? If so, what kind?
4. What preparation do we need to do for the next session? Do we need time to complete projects from this session? How shall we coordinate this with the next session's process?
Are we likely to need an additional “catch-up” session?

Travel in Time

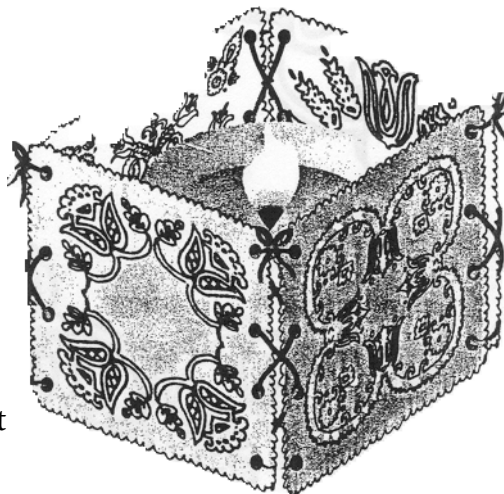
revised for First Universalist

TRANSYLVANIAN DESIGNS for BOXES or LUMINARIA

Materials and tools: thin cardboard; one copy of the next page for each item; a box top design you have made (if you decide to make it) or an extra copy of one design for each box top; a 4-inch cardboard square for the bottom of each item; scissors; paper-to-cardboard paste; red, blue and black felt markers or crayons; red, blue and/or black yarn and yarn needles; votive or tea candles and lighter; thick sponges or thickly folded towels.

Symbolism and designs The four designs on the next page are sketches from Transylvanian folk embroidery. Usually this is done in red, as a symbol of freedom. Sometimes blue is used, as a symbol of caring for people who are sad. Or black, a symbol of the good earth. Some designs are made with a continuous line, to symbolize the unbroken Hungarian heritage. Tulips appear because they are the flower of freedom. The embroideries are used to decorate churches and homes. If you are making a **box** you could create a separate design box top with the symbol of Unitarianism in Transylvania and Hungary--the symbol is a reminder of Jesus' urging his disciples to be "as wise as a serpent and as gentle as a dove." Or your top could be a repeat of your favorite of the folk patterns.

To make both a box or luminaria: first color in the designs (1--4 for the luminaria; 1--4 and 5 for the box. You might choose a symbolic color for designs 1-4. Or you can use all one color—in Transylvania they are often red. Then cut out and paste each square onto a 4" square of *thin* cardboard. (*like posterboard, or a file folder.*) You will need a blank for the bottom, and you may need a thicker blank cardboard square for the bottom of the luminaria to support the weight of the candle.



To finish a luminaria: you will need your 4 colored-in design squares already pasted onto posterboard. Next: pierce around close to the outside of the four designs with a large yarn needle to make many holes for the light to shine through. The easiest way to do this is to place the design onto a thick sponge or thickly-folded towel.

Before lacing the sides together, punch out (a hand-held hole punch works well) the holes marked along each design edge, and punch out matching holes on all 4 sides of the bottom square. Use yarn that matches the color of your designs. You can put a votive candle inside, in a holder. You can glue four small cardboard ridges to the bottom to securely hold the votive candle's metal bottom in place.

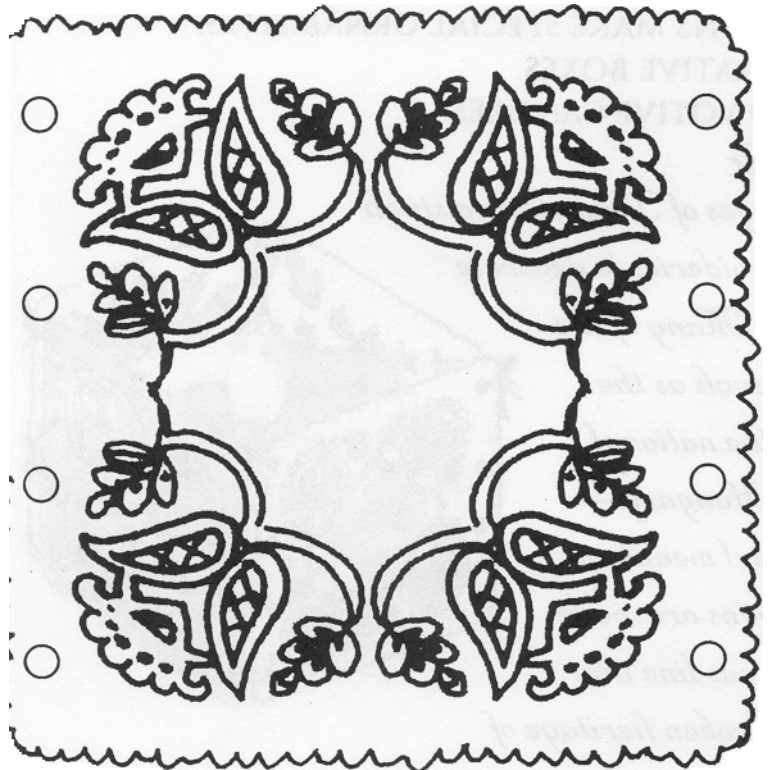
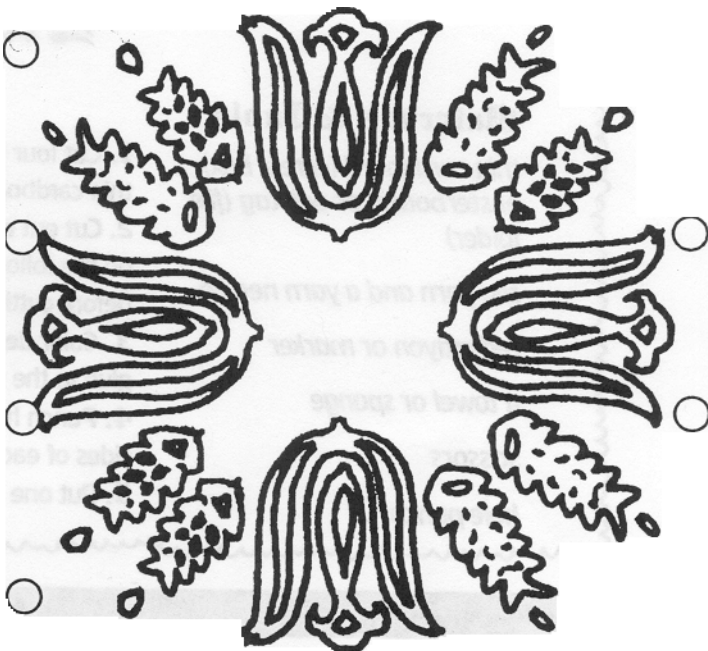
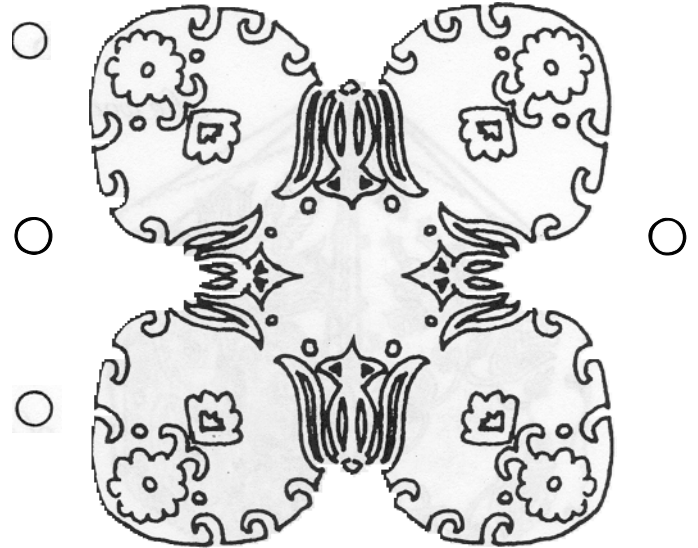
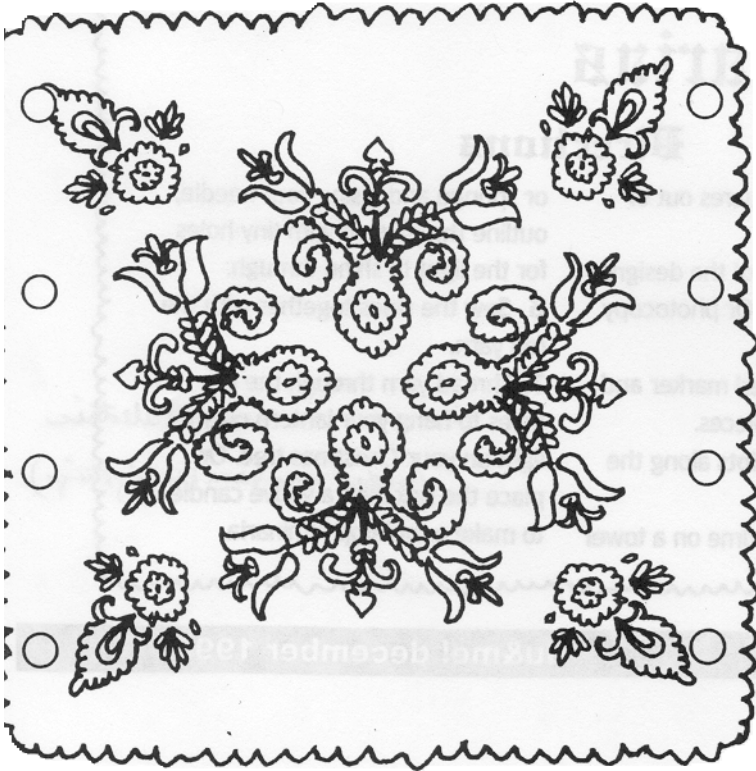
You should only light the luminaria candle with adult supervision. Always use it flat on a table. Never carry it while it is lit.

To finish a box, you can color an extra design and glue it onto a posterboard square to make a lid. Make lacing holes as indicated by the dots, and make six matching holes along the top edge of one of the design squares.

Travel in Time

revised for First Universalist

Here are the designs for the box-sides
Designs and directions for the four sides of the luminaria /box appear in the December 1999
edition of UU&Me, a quarterly magazine for children (contact <bwilliams@uuaorg>)
published by the Church of the Larger Fellowship. Your RE files may have a copy. CLF
has given us permission to reproduce their drawings here, but they have not copied well.
You will need to draw in the missing wavy outlines and punch holes. :^)



Travel in Time

revised for First Universalist

Lesson #2

Lesson #2: “Visit to a Transylvanian Village” by Rev. Ruth Gibson. To be used immediately after Lesson #1: “The King Who Listened to His Mother” Both lessons are planned as an insert for Travel in Time c`lasses at congregations with a partner church.

Goals for participants:

- Children will see what has happened in Transylvania since the times of King John Sigismund and his proclamtion of religious freedom.
- They will see a slide show about our church’s visit to Transylvania, in the spring of 2000 and speak with Rev. Gibson, or with other members of our church who have been to Kovend, our Partner church in Transylvania.
- They will learn a few words in Hungarian; those who wish to may also try a letter in Hungarian. Or they might write a group letter, in English
- They will work on, maybe finish, the Transylvanian heritage project started last week.

Materials needed –the same as last week, in order to complete projects
copies of Transylvanian Unitarian History Highlights to pass out (included below)
You should contact the guest speaker to confirm their visit and to go over the plan for the morning with them.

Lesson Plan:

Gathering 3-5 minutes before worship

Put on your name tag.

Post UU Graffiti sheet before the children arrive, or write on white board (2 columns):

Invite participants to put on name tags, and color in their space on the attendance chart.

Initiation 10 minutes

As children arrive, invite them to look over the “Things We Wonder” list generated last week – which questions have been answered? Which ones might their guest (coming later today) be able to answer? Do they have any new questions to add? If they could meet with the children in Kovend, what questions would they ask?

(You may wish to spend a small time on this after worship as well.)

After worship: Briefly review Transylvanian Unitarian history highlights below, and pass out time lines (“Transylvanian Unitarian History Highlights”—see below). Children may know some of the following names:

King Zsigmond Janos, [zshig-mond yah-nohsh]

David Ferenc [dah -veed fair-ents]

Rev. Stephan Papa

Rev. Szekely Miklos [say-kay-yee meek-lohsh].

Travel in Time

revised for First Universalist

Transylvanian Unitarian History Highlights

1. **1540** Queen Isabella of Transylvania gives birth to a son, John Sigismund. (Zsigmond Janos) After the death of her husband in 1544 Queen Isabella rules in the place of her young son, and proclaims a policy of religious tolerance, saying “Faith is a gift of God and no one should be punished on account of it.” She is influenced in her thinking by David Ferenc, her Court Preacher. David, though raised Catholic, became a Lutheran and later a Calvinist, before he founded the Unitarian religion.

2. **1568:** King John Sigismund calls for a debate so that he could decide what religion to choose for himself and for the people of his kingdom. David Ferenc, by now the leader of the Unitarians, debates against Catholic, Lutheran and Calvinist religious leaders, and won. King John becomes a Unitarian. But he is also persuaded by David’s preaching to continue the policy of his mother, and proclaims religious freedom as the law of the land. Transylvania is the first kingdom to have such freedom both in law and in practice. Unfortunately King John dies not long after, and the next king takes away much of the freedoms he and his mother had established.

3. **1920:** At the end of the First World War, the Transylvanian lands are taken away from Hungary and given to the country of Romania. The Romanian governments in later years, try to force the Hungarian-speaking Transylvanians to give up their language, their culture, their religions, and their love of freedom. But many Transylvanians practice their religion and teach it to their children, in secret—sometimes in spite of being jailed and other harsh punishments.

4. **August 1989:** Rev. Stephan Papa, his wife Patty and their baby daughter visit the village of Kovend in Transylvania, and meets the Rev. Szekely Miklos, his wife Ilona, and their young boys. In those days it was still illegal for Romanians to have foreign visitors or even to write and receive letters from outside the country. So Rev. Szekely invites Stephan and Patty into the church, and talks with them there. The next day he must go to the police and confess what he had done and repeat what was said.

5. **December 1989:** The Romanian Government is overthrown. Two weeks later, the President and Moderator of the Unitarian Universalist Association, a Unitarian Universalist United States congressman, and a Unitarian Canadian member of Parliament visit the new leaders of the Romanian government. They encourage the new government leaders to restore religious freedom. A few months later, the Partner Church program starts, and First Universalist in Denver and Kovend in Transylvania ask to be become partners.

6. **April 2000:** Rev. Ruth Gibson and three more members of First Universalist visit Kovend. Rev.

Gibson is invited to preach the Easter Sunday sermon, serve communion, and assist in baptizing two babies. The Denver visitors learn how to make special red eggs for Easter and sample lots of special cakes! Rev. Szekely asks Ruth if it would be possible for the congregation in Denver to help fund scholarships, so that the Kovend village children would be able to go to high school.

Travel in Time

revised for First Universalist

Investigation

15- 20 minutes

Activity: You will want to get the children started on completing their activity (crafts started last week) before the guests arrive. And consider if the work they are doing can be done as they listen to the visitor, or if you would prefer them to leave it.

Internalization

15-20 minutes

Presentation: Introduce the guests, allow 15- minutes for their slide show or talk, and another 10-15 for questions and discussion.

Discussion If a child from Kovend were to visit their family, what would they want to show them or do with them around Denver? (record this on the white board).

Take home activity: Children who wish to ask for a personal pen pal, and who are willing to answer any letters they receive, may write individual letters using the pen pal guide in order to do it in Hungarian. Future letters will probably come in English, as the children there study English in school from 3rd or 4th grade on. But Ruth will translate any that come in Hungarian. Letters can be answered in English too.

Closing 5 minutes

Gather in a circle where everyone can see the VCR. Distribute handouts with readings. Distribute the UU Principles reading and song cards.

Ask a volunteer to light the chalice and another to lead the reading of the UU Principles and Purposes.

Sing “Spirit of Life (hymnal #21) in first Hungarian and then in English. Watch VCR (or listen to tape) of Transylvanian children singing “The Unitarian Youth March” (or “Spirit of Life” in Hungarian and English—get from the worship section of the PCC website) and the second time through sing along with them.

Closing Words: Unitarian Universalists believe that ...helps us to lead better lives, and make our world a happier place. We are grateful for all the ways we help one another to put our faith into practice.

Extinguish the candle. If someone needs to be reminded to bring snack next week do so. Collect the name tags, and the song and reading sheets, and store them for the next session.

Travel in Time

revised for First Universalist

In the days of communism, children in Romania often belonged to Young Pioneers clubs. Where they had meetings, had fun, did service projects, went to camp, and marched with special songs and flags. Children whose parents belonged to a church were not allowed to be in Pioneers. In those days, Unitarians wrote this march for their children and youth.

Unitarian Youth March:

Now night is gone, we greet the day
Singing as we go on our way!

Strong is the faith which calls us to work
Following Jesus and his words.

One is the God who leads us,
Guiding us away from evil.
Marching together, we will seek the truth!
Onward together onward, as one!
Trusting a happier new day!

Hold our flag high, for our God is One!
Though the earth quake, we will keep our faith!

Now night is gone, we greet the day!
Singing as we go on our way!

Travel in Time

revised for First Universalist

Reflection and Planning

after class is over

Reflect on the questions below and discuss them with your co-leader(s) or the MRE.

1. What went well in this session? What did not go well, or could have been improved?
2. If we were going to lead this session again, what would we change about it? Why?
3. Do any of the group members seem to need some special attention? If so, what kind?
7. What preparation do we need to do for the next session? Do we need time to complete projects from this session? How shall we coordinate this with the next session's process? Are we likely to need an extra session?