

Small Talk

strengthening the small
Unitarian Universalist
congregation

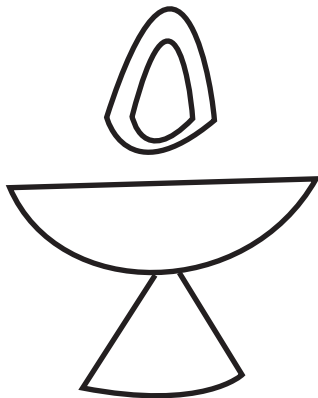
November 2004

Newsletters are...

typically produced under last-minute conditions with limited budget and printing resources. Newsletters rank far below advertisements, annual reports, and brochures when budgets are prepared, but they are likely to be distributed to a very critical and knowledgeable audience.

—Roger C. Parker,

DESKTOP PUBLISHING AND DESIGN
FOR DUMMIES



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Publications for the Small Congregation: Part One

by Dana Dwinell-Yardley,
Layout and Design Editor of SMALL TALK

The quote this month was originally intended for businesses, but it could just as easily apply to small congregations. So often our publications – newsletters, brochures, order of services – are overlooked. I am writing this issue as Guest Editor to urge you not to forget, dismiss, and neglect your congregation's publications! Your order of service (or order of worship), newsletter, and brochures are very important. Your publications are one of the first introductions to your congregation that guests may have (especially shy guests who'd rather read than talk), and so they need to be as welcoming as every other aspect of your congregation.

Your publications need to be well laid out and interesting so that they are actually read by guests and long-time members alike. They should provide a flavor of who you are as the fabulous small congregation that you are – they don't need to be the same ol' dull pieces of paper that you find in many small UU churches. Remember that your congregation's publications can be – and should be! – important and exciting tools for growth and vitality.

Here's some ways to make your publications rock.

Layout and content are equally important when creating wonderful publications. This issue – Part One – will focus on layout (making your publications look good), and Part Two will be about content (the text in your publications).

Many many books have been written on the subject of nice layouts. I highly recommend *THE NON-DESIGNER'S DESIGN BOOK* by Robin Williams. Buy a copy and give it to your newsletter editor and/or documents person. It will inspire him or her to more beautiful, interesting publications, I guarantee. You will not regret it.

Publications

continued on page 2...

About Small Talk

Small Talk is a newsletter published monthly by the Small Church Specialist of the North-east District.

SMALL TALK is devoted to strengthening the small Unitarian Universalist congregation through informative articles, resources, and good ideas.

the Rev. Jane Dwinell,
Content Editor

Dana Dwinell-Yardley,
Layout and Design

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If you have questions, comments, or good ideas for future issues...

If you'd like to publicize your small church's events...

Or if you'd like more information...

Please contact the Rev. Jane Dwinell, Small Church Specialist, at:

[sky@vtlink.net](mailto:sky@vtlink.net),  
802.229.4008, or  
1 Liberty Street  
Montpelier, VT 05602

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If you would like to receive Small Talk electronically, please e-mail sky@vtlink.net.

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*This is Volume Two, Issue Three.*

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But in the absence of that wonderful book, here are some pointers on layout:

## **Contrast**

Do draw readers' eye into the article/notice/list of 7 principles/whatever by making your headlines bold and big. At least 6-8 points larger than your body copy (the smaller font that your article is put in).

Don't ever make your headlines ALL CAPS or underlined. They are much more difficult to read that way. (And in ALL CAPS, each letter takes up more space, meaning your headline must be made smaller to fit, and therefore isn't jumping off the page like you thought it would.) Bold & big instead.

} **As with congregations, publications are better when small and well-done than when large and not well-done.**

## **Fonts**

Please don't use Times, Arial, Helvetica, Chalkboard, or

Comic Sans as the body copy (the main text) of your newsletter. They are all much too overused and, in the case of the first three, boring fonts. Comic Sans and Chalkboard are simply overused... try using them in a small notice, but not as the primary font.

Do use a serif font for your body copy (like Palatino – SMALL TALK'S body copy, Baskerville, Garamond, Bodoni...) in a newsletter, and either a bigger and bolder version of that serif font for headlines, or a bigger and bolder sans serif font, (like Stone Sans, Futura Condensed, Myriad Pro, Gadget, Gill Sans, Arial Black (if you must)...) or even a slightly (not wicked) crazy decorative font (like Chalkboard, Luna, Papyrus...). Orders of Service can be either serif or sans serif, but remember – no ALL CAPS.

Don't have more than one serif font and don't have more than one sans serif font in the same document. (you can have more than one if they're in the same family, ie Futura Condensed, Futura Bold Condensed) Two different serif (or sans serif) fonts will look similar, but be noticeably different as to be annoying, not contrasting.

Do have variety, in moderation! Try making a notice about your upcoming sale/supper/dance be a crazy dance-y fun font. It'll look better against your simple serif body copy than it would against lots of party-ish fonts.

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## Columns

Don't make your congregation's newsletter be a single column, i.e. lines of type stretch across the whole page. It's difficult and boring to read.

Do have your newsletter be at least two columns. Even better, make it, say, 7 columns – then you can have some things go across

4 columns, other things go across 3, others be 5 column articles, and others be 2. And your newsletter will still be unified by those underlying 7 columns. Cool, huh?

} **Your publications are one of the first introductions to your congregation guests may have...**

## Fun stuff

Do put graphics in your publications (especially chalices!). Put an interesting box around a notice in your newsletter or order of service. Try making pull quotes for your minister or president's column. Print out any or all of your documents on lightly colored paper. These things help draw readers' eye, and make your publication more lively and interesting.

But don't get carried away and put 5 or 6 small clip arts on one page. Oftentimes one or two larger ones will do the trick, and do it in a more stylish and less cluttered way.

## Unification

Create a newsletter where, if you looked at, say, page 1 and 3 separately, you'd know they belonged to the same document. Same goes for

your order of service and your brochures. This means consistent fonts and font sizes, consistent line sizes, and consistent

columns. Try taking it a step further and having a line across the top and bottom of all pages, or having all bullets be the same dingbat (like ☉).

## Simplicity

Remember, all these tips, which may seem quite overwhelming, can be put into beautiful practice in a newsletter that's just a single sheet of paper, or an order of service that's a half sheet. Less is often more. (But don't squash all your information on to one sheet if it really would fit better on two!) As with congregations, publications are better when small and well-done than when large and not well-done.

Next time: Content. What should you put into that well-laid-out newsletter/brochure/order of service?

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## Further Publication Resources

**The UU Editors e-mail list.** You can ask almost any newsletter or publication question here and you will receive enthusiastic advice! Visit <http://lists.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/uu-editors> to subscribe.

### Good graphics – a resource that's always needed!

☉ There's a nice selection of chalices on [uua.org](http://www.uua.org). Go to <http://www.uua.org/programs/online/> and click on Clip Art in the topical index box.

☉ Ryan Guenther of the First Unitarian Church of Victoria, BC has a lovely collection of chalices and other clips at <http://victoriaunitarian.ca/programs/newsletter/clipart.php>

☉ Microsoft has an excellent searchable database of free graphics online at <http://office.microsoft.com/clipart/default.aspx>. These work great with Macs or PCs.

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## Join the smalltalk email chat list!

An email chat list, through the UUA, has been started for lay leaders, DREs and ministers of small (less than 150 members) congregations.

**If you like email conversations, and want more ideas for your small congregation, then sign up at <http://lists.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/smalltalk>.**

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# What's Happening in November and December!

## Northeast District Events

| When?                                       | What?             | Where?         |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| November 12 <sup>th</sup> -13 <sup>th</sup> | NED Board Retreat | China Lake, ME |
| January 29 <sup>th</sup>                    | Board Meeting     | Belfast, ME    |



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## Small Church Specialist's Calendar

| When?                                       | What?               | Where?         |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| November 12 <sup>th</sup> -13 <sup>th</sup> | NED Board Retreat   | China Lake, ME |
| November 14 <sup>th</sup>                   | Leading Worship     | Dexter, ME     |
| December 1 <sup>st</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup>   | Big Complex Meeting | Boston, MA     |

**Contribute to  
SMALL TALK!**

Let me know if you have stories or concerns to share for future issues of SMALL TALK.

Email me at [sky@vtlink.net](mailto:sky@vtlink.net), or snail mail to 1 Liberty St. Montpelier, VT 05602.

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**The Rev. Jane Dwinell, Small Church Specialist, is happy to meet with your congregation!**

Just give her a call at 802.229.4008, or send her an e-mail at [sky@vtlink.net](mailto:sky@vtlink.net).



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## *Small is Beautiful!* **Resources and Networking for Small Congregations**

August 26-28, 2005 ✧ Ferry Beach Camp and Conference Center ✧ Saco, ME

Small is Beautiful is open to anyone from a small congregation (less than 150 members) from anywhere in the world.

Put this conference on your calendar – last summer's *Small is Beautiful!* was fun, mellow, and a learning experience for all. Next summer will be even better!

There will be more information in future issues of SMALL TALK.