

**LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION
PROGRAM**

2009- 2010



Shoreline Unitarian Universalist Society
Madison, CT

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION

PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSES

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

The living tradition which we share draws from many sources:

- Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
- Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
- Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
- Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
- Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.
- Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

Grateful for the religious pluralism which enriches and ennobles our faith, we are inspired to deepen our understanding and expand our vision. As free congregations we enter into this covenant, promising to one another our mutual trust and support.

UU PRINCIPLES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
(adapted from the *Beginning UUism* curriculum)

We believe that each and every person is important.

We believe that our congregations are places where all people are accepted.

We believe that each person must be free to search for what is true and right in life.

We believe that everyone should have a vote about the things that concern them.

We believe in working in working for a peaceful, fair and free world. We believe in caring for our planet earth.

IT'S A NEW DAY FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
(adapted from a pamphlet written by the Rev. Eugene Navias)

The goals and philosophy of Unitarian Universalist religious education are informed by:

- Respect and affirmation for the learner, which guides the development of appropriate programs.
- Unitarian Universalist Principles, which provide a vision of the quality of life and values to be fostered.
- The Unitarian tradition of the open and questing mind and the Universalist tradition of the open and loving heart.

In the enterprise of religious education, congregations are urged to be intentional in considering these three partners:

A NOTE ABOUT THE NEW UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CURRICULUM FOR ALL AGES

The Unitarian Universalist Association's Lifespan Faith Development Staff Group is in the process of producing a new lifespan curriculum, *Tapestry of Faith*, that will be completely online. One completed component we are adding to our program this year is called, *The Tool Box of Faith*.

The Tapestry of Faith integrates four strands within each component:

- Ethical development
- Spiritual development
- Unitarian Universalist identity
- Faith development

As stated in the vision statement, they envision children, youth, and adults who:

- Know that they are lovable beings of infinite worth, imbued with powers of the soul, who are obligated to use their talents, etc. for service;
- Affirm they are a part of a Unitarian Universalist religious heritage and community of faith that has value and provides resources for living;
- Accept that they are responsible for the stewardship and transformation of their religious heritage and community of faith;
- Realize that they are moral agents in many areas of life;
- Recognize the need for community, affirming the importance of families and connections among the generations;
- Appreciate the value of spiritual practice as a means of deepening faith and integrating beliefs and values with everyday life;
- Experience hope, joy, mystery, healing, and personal transformation in the midst of life's challenges.

Adapted

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

Welcome to a new year in our Religious Education Program at Shoreline UU. This year we mark the happy accomplishment which we have long been hoping to achieve. For the first time in a number of years, we have truly an exciting program for all ages. With new babies and toddlers in our midst and youth who now fill out a real high school youth group, we are offering Unitarian Universalist Religious Education to the full spectrum of our young people. This is truly a wonderful moment!

From Spirit Play to Our Whole Lives (OWL- values, decision making and sexuality), Halloween parties, environmental service projects, interfaith activities and plays, our program is rich and varied. I hope you'll find a place to be a supportive participant. One way to help is to share our program with your friends and families. Don't keep us a secret! We always have room for more people seeking a liberal, caring faith.

Religious Education is such an important part of Shoreline Unitarian Universalist Society. Thank you for helping us grow and thrive!

Faithfully,

Rev. Claudia

Rev. Claudia Elferdink, Minister

LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT SUUS

Welcome to this year's religious education programming. What you hold in your hand is an outline that we will all add to, fine tune and polish as the year progresses. We need everyone to make this plan come alive. As a Unitarian Universalist, one is never finished learning, changing, and developing. Our hope and intention is to provide as rich and supportive environment as possible for that process for all, whatever the age, background, and interests.

Our kind of religious education is multi-faceted. It encompasses not only formal content but also the rich knowing that comes from being an active participant in a community of seekers. It's exciting business that lasts a lifetime-a true adventure and a blessing. We "do" religious education when we all worship together in groups large and small; when we share a potluck dinner and help feed others; when we practice our proclaimed inclusiveness and celebrate our diversity. We grow and learn as we become safe and secure enough to share our joys and cares in community. We grow and learn when we and our young people (who are always watching and listening) experience each other putting our beliefs and our values on the line as we live out our daily lives, use our material resources and the gifts of our time and talents.

This program is funded by your pledges. Your financial support is crucial and directly affects our local programming, the resources that are available to SUUS from our district, and the UUA. If you are not a pledging member or friend, please consider a gift to support the program. All young people participating in the youth program must register annually.

SUUS is fortunate to have a dedicated group of people that have put a great deal of effort planning for this year's program. Your help and constructive ideas are always welcome; contact a committee member, or call/email me.

A special word to parents about religious education for young people:

Recent research points out that the most lasting religious education comes from the home. From my personal experience as both a child and a parent I believe that this is true. The trick seems to me to integrate the community life of this congregation into your home life. Only so much can be accomplished during one Sunday School class period a week. The RE Committee and I encourage you to involve yourself in the ways listed here. We need you to be an active participant if what we do here is to be truly significant.

- Be familiar with your young person's teachers and the work going on in class, so that learning experiences begun on Sunday morning may be extended, clarified, and reinforced during the week at home.

- Share with the teachers and/or me responses to your young person's experiences here. Let us know special things going on in your family's life-illness, needs or concerns, joyful events, etc.-so we may better serve you.
- Avail yourself of all the opportunities offered at SUUS that can strengthen your skills as your young person's primary religious educator.
- Facilitate your young person's being here regularly and on time for worship and class and all the other opportunities to bond with this community. If they are to develop a real sense of belonging, time and continuity are vital.
- Model the value of this community in your lives by being here and participating in its life.
- Volunteer yourself to our religious education and social action programming as the most effective model in your young person's life. SUUS has many jobs to fit everyone's schedules, special interests, and skills.

Judy Bruce-Mangle, Director

THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Committee establishes, oversees, and evaluates the program's policies, goals, curriculum, and programming for nursery through adult. It also works to ensure that the youth are integrated into the life of the congregation. The co-chairs are chosen by the Nominating Committee and appointed by the Board of Trustees. The Director of Religious Education serves as an ex-officio member. The co-chairs for 2009-2010 are Carmen Booth and Ann Kadlecek. Members (as of 9-27-07) are: Rebecca Loew and Scott Swenson.

YOUTH PROGRAMMING

General Overview of Sunday Morning Youth Program—10:30 to 11:45 AM

Each Sunday from September 20 through June 14 (except for December 27) there will be a worship time and a class or a special "Celebration Sunday" for young people from pre kindergarten to ninth grade. Younger children will be brought down to the Coffee Hour, older ones will come down themselves. The Grade 10/11/12 Owl program and the Youth Group (Grades 8-12) will both meet at another times of their choosing. Carmen Booth, Tracy Ernst, and Ann Kadlecek are floaters who fill in as needed.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

NURSERY / TODDLERS

Kara Fikrig, Mary Jo Ross
and other helpers

Infants and toddlers will gather on the main floor in the room called the "Old Kitchen." Parents are asked to register their children and bring clearly labeled bottles or sippy cups, and diaper bags.

PRE KINDERGARTEN THROUGH LOWER ELEMENTARY

Spirit Play

Spirit Play was adapted from a Episcopal course called *Godly Play* by a UU religious educator, Nita Penfold, D. Min. It is based on the Montessori Method of education. It presents core stories of our faith, helps children to make meaning through wondering and art, creates a spiritual community, and supports multiple learning styles and challenges. Karen Pawelek, the lead teacher, received special training on the curriculum this fall.

Teaching Team

Karen Pawelek

Maria Soshea

Maria Puziello

Chris Hinckley

Sandy Austin

UPPER ELEMENTARY
Toolbox of Faith / Stepping Stone Year

Toolbox invites participants to reflect on the qualities of our faith such as integrity, courage, and love, as tools that they can use in building their lives and their own faith.

Stepping Stone Year (adapted) continues an exploration of Unitarian Universalism using as its base the big questions in life: where do we come from, what are we to do here, and where are we going.

Teaching Team

Kathy Helmrich

Harry Mangle

Neil Schultes

Sue Schaedler

GRADES SIX/SEVEN
Neighboring Faiths

This comparative religion class explores modern religious practices. The class does background research and then goes on field trips to the houses of worship for different faith communities. Later the class reflects on the similarities to and differences from their own faith community. The purpose of the class is to stimulate an interest in and respect for the diverse faith community of which we are just one member and to clarify their understanding of Unitarian Universalism.

Teaching Team

Paul Carmichael

Donna Bodden

Barb Major

GRADES EIGHT / NINE & TEN-TWELVE

Our Whole Lives (OWL) Plus

This class is based on the Unitarian Universalist curriculum *Our Whole Lives*. Led by trained instructors (one male and one female), the class explores issues related to human sexuality. This year there will be two sections. Class members also have the opportunity to have a youth group experience and be involved with the adults of the congregation in social action projects.

Teaching Team

For Grades 8/9

Jennifer Swenson
Scott Swenson

Teaching Team

For Grades 10/11/12

Barbara Francese
John Watson

Youth Group

In addition to their OWL program, young people in grades 8-12 will have the opportunity to participate in a monthly youth group which will focus on fun activities, leadership opportunities, and social justice work. The times will be decided by the group and will involve participation in the Madison Interfaith youth program. Advisors are Enrique Alvarez and Rebecca Loew.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

Adopted by the
Religious Education Committee

Procedure:

1. First Warning
2. Second Warning
3. Child/Youth is taken out of the classroom to the DRE or her substitute, but may re-enter class if behavior is acceptable and not destructive to the group.
4. Parent (s) are informed and child/youth may return with their supervision, if this does not disrupt the group process.

The purpose of these guidelines is to :

1. Convey to all that individual actions have an effect on the entire community and everyone's needs must be considered.
2. Provide procedures for consistent classroom guidance.

SUUS YOUTH RE SCHEDULE

Date	Event
20	Water ceremony, short class
27	Regular Class / Pool Party, 1-2 PM
Oct. 2-3	Interfaith Youth Coalition Overnight, 7:30PM - 10:30 AM
4	Regular Class / CROP Walk , 1:30 PM
11	Regular Class
18	Regular Class / YREC meeting, 12:00 Noon
25	Regular Class / Open House / Halloween Party, 5 PM
Nov. 1	Regular Class
8	Regular Class
15	Regular Class / YREC meeting 12:00 Noon
22	Regular Class
29	Celebration Sunday
Dec. 6	Play rehearsal (during class)
12	Play rehearsal 10:00 AM
13	Multigenerational Service (participants rehearse early)
20	Regular Class
27	No RE
Jan. 3	Regular Class
10	Regular Class
17	Regular Class
24	Regular Class
Feb. 7	Regular Class
14	Celebration Sunday
21	Celebration Sunday
28	Regular Class
Mar. ?	CBD Middle School Rally – March date TBA
7	Regular Class
14	Regular Class
21	Regular Class
28	Regular Class
Apr. 2	Seder
4	Celebration Sunday - Easter
11	Celebration Sunday
18	Regular Class
25	Regular Class
May 2	Regular Class
9	Regular Class
16	Regular Class
23	Regular Class
30	Celebration Sunday
June 7	Regular Class
13	Recognition Sunday / Flower Service

ADULT PROGRAMMING

There are many possibilities, limited only by our time constraints and imaginations. Below are several that only need interested participants to materialize either during an early evening, early Sunday afternoon, or whole -day Saturday workshop format. There will be on-going announcements and sign up information.

Stepping Stones

This introduction course is offered with the minister and the Membership Committee. It's intent is to introduce the history and heritage, theological spectrum, and structure of Unitarian Universalism. This year we will meet on October 27, November 3, and November 10.

Cakes for the Queen of Heaven

A UU feminist theology course. Will be offered this program year. See newsletters for details.

Being a UU Parent

This practical course offers theology and real-life child rearing help in 5 sessions of 2 hours each (over 17 handouts). One of the favorites in past years, its content is age-less.

Parents as Spiritual Guides

This curriculum, that is written in a six session format, is also adaptable to other formats. Written by the Rev. Roberta and Christopher Nelson , this program empowers parents to bring spiritual growth into the home, where the closeness and rituals of family life can support the work of our religious education classes. "We believe that most parents can be excellent spiritual guides if they take some time to honor their own yearnings, wonderings, and reflections and share them with their children....Unitarian Universalists have many definitions and interpretations of the word *spiritual*We urge you to honor yours, and in the company of seekers, to enrich and enhance your own spiritual growth." (from the preface)

Please Stop the Roller Coaster: How Parents of Teenagers Can Smooth Out the Ride

This is an eight session parenting program based on a guide book by Sue Blaney. Judy Bruce-Mangle went to a district-sponsored training program several years ago and would be happy to offer this to SUUS parents of pre-teens and teens and their friends. Topics covered include: adolescent development; changing roles and relationships; improving communications; friends, culture, and risk behavior; personality type and brain development; school, parental support, and self-esteem.

Owning Your Religious Past and Building Your Own Theology I

These courses are good sequels to the orientation program.

From the new lifespan *Tapestry of Faith* curricula:

Spirit of Life: Exploring Spirituality for UUs

This 9 session program by the Rev. Barbara Hamilton-Holway seeks to bring meaning, beauty and growth to UU adults as they deepen their spiritual awareness and connections. *Spirit of Life* is spiritually and thematically inspired by Carolyn McDade's popular song/UU hymn.

What Moves Us: UU Theology

This program by the Rev. Dr. Thandeka draws on the work of historical and contemporary theologians, inviting participants to engage in some of the major theological perspectives of our tradition and to test those points of view against their own lived experience.

Your Ideas??

Discussion based on books and/or film

Your ideas for a course, discussion group, or workshop

USEFUL INFORMATION

MINISTER

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Carmen Booth, Religious Education

Jan Poss, Member-at-Large

Ann Kadlecek serves on the Program Council for Youth Religious Education and as special coordinator for the program.

NOTES

