
Program Philosophy

Sophia Fahs was an early pioneer in Unitarian Universalist religious education and editor of curriculum for the American Unitarian Association in the 1930's and 1940's. It was her belief that faith grew out of a child's own questioning, wondering, and experience. She maintained that religion isn't like an old dress or suit that you cut down to fit a child. Many of the Unitarian Universalist curricula reflect her philosophy of religious education.

Scope

The UUF RE Program attempts to address the needs of our youth who range in age from preschool through middle school. We presently offer two classes. The Preschool Class is meant for children as old as 6 (beginning 1st grade), and children as young as age 3 (by December 1, 2007) and who are toilet trained. This class meets in the preschool classroom on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month. On the 2nd, 4th and 5th Sundays, the children participate in supervised play and story time in the preschool classroom with high school student volunteers from our congregation. The Elementary Class is meant for children as young as 7 years old and children as old as 12 or 13 (middle school). This program is held each Sunday in the elementary classroom.

While the age range of these classes creates some challenges for the teachers, there are benefits as well. Our older students have an opportunity to assist the younger ones with making crafts and expanding ideas. The younger students are provided with role models and get to know older students in a nurturing atmosphere. Childcare for infants and preschoolers is provided in our nursery.

Along with the scheduled program, we plan to have four movie/discussion sessions for our middle and high school students. These programs will provide an opportunity for socialization and exploration of current news topics.

Program Organization

The Religious Education Program is planned and taught by the Religious Education Committee that is comprised of the Director of Religious Education and interested members and friends of the congregation. It is a source of pride that we have been able to offer this program free of charge through the support of our all-volunteer Religious Education Committee. We also are proud to note that in years past 30% of the adults in the congregation have volunteered to teach Religious Education lessons.



Parents are encouraged to help support this program by participating in the following activities: volunteer teacher, RE Committee member, volunteer teaching aide, volunteer in nursery to care for toddlers, shop for supplies, provide/prepare snacks for students, prepare curriculum packets, volunteer to supervise a middle/school high school evening youth group, etc.

To enroll your child simply complete a registration form (available in the church office) and submit it to the Director of Religious Education.

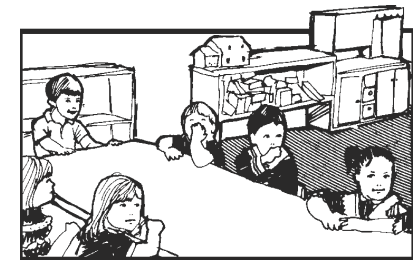
**“One hundred years from now,
it will not matter what my bank
account was, how big my house
was, or what kind of car I drove.
But the world may be a little better,
because I was important in the life
of a child.”**

- Forest Witcraft

Curriculum

The Preschool Program for the 2007/2008 year and for 2008/2009 follows the UU Curriculum Celebrating Me and My World. Its author, Debora Chandler Pratt, states in the Introduction “This curriculum begins by celebrating the wondrous qualities of the children themselves and expands outward to the things and people around them. This program provides preschoolers with experiences and opportunities to grow in their sense of trust and caring and to develop their self-identify and their sense of connectedness with all life.

The Elementary Program for the 2007/2008 year will complete the Holidays and Holy Days curriculum that we began last year. This program celebrates important holidays from a variety of religious and secular traditions. This year we also will complete the It's a Growing Up Year curriculum. This program helps the students explore issues of identity, family/community roles and personal/religious values.



Teacher Training

Each year, prior to the start of Sunday services, a teacher training workshop is held. Once trained, teachers sign up for individual Sunday lessons, selecting topics of interest from this year's curriculum. In Religious Education as in life, many hands make short work - and many teachers make fewer lessons for all to teach. Teaching provides the opportunity to interact with our bright, creative, and challenging children.

Religious Education Program



“The great end in religious instruction, whether in the Sunday school or family, is not to stamp our minds irresistibly on the young, but to stir up their own; not to make them see with our eyes, but to look inquiringly and steadily with their own; not to give them a definite amount of knowledge, but to inspire a fervent love of truth; not to form an outward regularity, but to touch inward springs; not to burden the memory, but to quicken and strengthen the power of thought . . . not to impose religion upon them in the form of arbitrary rules which rest on no foundation but our own word and will, but to awaken the conscience, the moral discernment so that they may discern and approve for themselves what is everlastingly right and good.”

-- - William Ellery Channing

Religious Education Leadership

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Religious Education Prospectus 2007-2008



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