The Sources of our UU Faith: 1– The sense of wonder we all share. 2—The women and men of long ago and today whose lives remind us to be kind and fair. 3—The ethical and spiritual wisdom of the earth's religions. 4– Jewish and Christian teachings which tell us to love all others as we love ourselves. 5- The use of reason and the discoveries of science. 6– The harmony of nature and the sacred circle of life.

Children & Youth Religious Education Prospectus 2017-18

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CYRE Program Mission Statement

The mission of our CYRE Program is to prepare our children for a lifetime of spiritual and ethical growth by teaching them the UU principles and sources, exposing them to other faiths, providing experiences of a spiritual nature, and encouraging in them a questioning attitude.

It Really Does Take A Village

Our Religious Education Program for our children and youth has a full-time Director (Kathleen Carpenter) and a part-time Administrative Assistant (Belinda Parry). However, the program could not be the success it is without the volunteer efforts of parents and members of our congregation who teach / advise, coordinate events, lead social justice projects, and participate in other program activities.

The oversight of the program is charged to the Children & Youth Religious Education (CYRE) Team. The chair of this year's team is Lisa Walls.

. . . . . Sunday Mornings . . . . . .

The 2017-18 program year presents us with a wonderful opportunity to help our children delve a bit deeper into our congregation's commitment to societal, environmental, and spiritual transformation in accordance with our Board's 2017 "call to action."

Preschool: SpiritPlay 9:15 and 11:15 3s-4s, K-1st

SpiritPlay is an approach to religious education that invites children to explore life's big questions through stories, "wonderings," "work" (activities) and songs. The stories chosen for the 2017-18 year reflect the congregational focus around transformation in the areas of identity, race, and environmental justice. They are age appropriate and emphasize values and our seven Unitarian Universalist principles.

Elementary 9:15 2nd-5th / 11:15 2nd-3rd, 4th-5th

The 9:15 a.m. 2nd-5th and the 11:15 a.m. 2nd-3rd classes will use the UUA curriculum, *Moral Tales*, while the 11:15 a.m. 4th-5th class will use *Mirrors and Windows*. These curricula provide opportunities for our children to develop the spiritual and ethical tools they need to make choices and take actions reflective of their Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values. These tools will be put to use when the children engage in projects and/or visits outside the classroom later in the year as part of the "call to action."

Middle School 11:15 only

Hands on learning and relevant media supplement the UUA curriculum, *Heeding the Call: Qualities of a Justice Maker*. *Heeding the Call* is a social justice curriculum that explores linked oppressions in our society while also encouraging participants towards personal growth in values that counteract the marginalization of others.

High School 11:15 only

Our High School youth are directly addressing the two primary focus areas during this year's work of transformation: race and environmental justice. Learning, listening, sharing, developing self-awareness, action in the larger community—all are aspects of this year's work.

Sunday Schedule

Join Us at 9:15am . . .

Parents wishing to attend the first CYRE session should drop their children off no earlier than 9:00am and pick them up by 10:35.

And/Or 11:15am . . .

Those choosing to attend this service can drop off their children beginning at 11:00am. Parents should pick up their children no later than 12:35pm.

Child and Youth Protection Program

A comprehensive set of rules and policies is in place to guide all activities within the church involving children and youth. One page age-specific summaries are available: for parents of Preschool-Elementary children, for parents of Middle and High School youth, and for parents with children in the Nursery. All are available on the church's website.

All volunteers in positions that place them in regular contact with children / youth must agree to a criminal background check.

SAFETY FIRST!

Opportunities for Involvement

Our children and youth are part of the larger congregation and we want them to feel part of that community. As such, we encourage families to participate in community building and social justice events coordinated by non-CYRE groups. Older youth are welcome to attend adult RE classes, join one of the many musical groups coordinated by the Music Program, or attend the 9:15 services.

And, of course, the CYRE program offers a variety of programs and classes specifically for children, youth and/or families. These include a comprehensive sexuality program for four age groups, a 7-month, Coming of Age program for our high school youth, a children's choir for grades K-5, and a variety of family-oriented parties, and social justice events throughout the year.

Youth Cons—Not Just For Teens!

We are fortunate to have *The Mountain,* a UU retreat center, within driving distance. The Mountain offers weekend-long youth cons for three age groups (3rd-5th, 6th-8th, and 9th-12th), twice a year for each group. Our congregation always sends children/teens to these cons. In addition, our high school youth host their own con every February.

Parents are KEY!

We know that involved and interested parents send a strong message to their children about the importance of religious education and UUism itself. Consider the following:

- Try to be as consistent as possible in attendance. Familiarity is basic to your child's sense of belonging.
- Your volunteerism is necessary. And it sends a message to your children that you value their time here.
- Talk to your children about their Sunday experience. Class summaries are distributed by the teachers at the end of class each week to assist with these conversations.
- Attend to your own spiritual needs and share your beliefs with your children. If you don't "get it," chances are they won't either.

Worship Services

Children may attend worship services with their parents at any time but about once every 6 weeks, multigenerational services are offered. Included in these are two led by our youth (high school in the fall and middle school in the spring) and one led by our CYRE Program designed to include children. Only preschool classes are held on those Sundays. In addition, each of the classes (except preschool) attends two services / semester.

Registration

All children should be registered in the CYRE Program annually. Registration is REQUIRED for any overnight or special events/classes. Registration can be completed on the church's website (preferred) or with a form from the CYRE office.

Communication

Parents receive regular email updates from the CYRE Director (*CYRE News* or *Update*). In addition, information on all special programming, events, and activities are posted in *Currents* on the UUCC website, on the congregation's Facebook pages, as Facebook events, in the Sunday order of service, and in the class summaries sent home with your children.