

# **Westminster Unitarian Church**



## **Youth Religious Education Program**

**2011-2012**

## WELCOME!

Welcome to a new year of youth religious education! It is an exciting year of transition, with a wonderful new space for our young people, and some new faces at Westminster. As we settle into our new routine, we continue to celebrate our youth religious education program that is rich in offerings for all of our young people.

Religious education is an important commitment we make to our children, ourselves and our world. The goal of religious education at Westminster is to provide a loving and safe community in which our children can begin their individual spiritual journeys, and can develop attitudes of justice, love and peace as they grow into ethical adults.

Our kind of religious education encompasses both classroom learning and non-classroom experiences, as our young people become active participants in this religious community and the wider world. In the classroom, we explore the history and principles of Unitarian Universalism, as well as other faith traditions. We explore ways of living our faith in the world, using classroom experiences, multigenerational activities and social action. The age-appropriate *Our Whole Lives* (OWL) sexuality and values education curriculum is an important element of the program. Through our program, we strive to help our youth develop their own sense of faith, spirituality and values, to realize their connection to the interdependent web of life, and to gain a sense of responsibility for the world.

We need everyone to help make the programming come alive. We invite you to become an active participant in our religious education program. Your help and ideas are always welcome - contact a RE committee member or me any time to discuss how you can be a part of this vital congregational mission.

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Director of Religious Education  
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*We cannot always build the future for our youth,  
but we can build our youth for the future.*

- Franklin D. Roosevelt

## 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

### **We believe:**

That each and every person is important;

That all people should be treated fairly;

That our churches are places where all people are accepted and where we keep on learning together;

That each person must be free to search for what is true and right;

That everyone should have a vote about the things that concern them;

In working for a peaceful, fair and free world;

In caring for our planet earth.

The rainbow, with its acronym ROYGBIV, is used in our program to teach and affirm the UU Principles.

### **Our Unitarian Universalist Principles remind us to:**

Respect the importance and value of all beings.

Offer fair and kind treatment to all.

Yearn to learn throughout life.

Grow by exploring ideas and values together.

Believe in our ideas and act on them.

Insist on peace, freedom and justice for all.

Value our interdependence with nature.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Religious education relies on many volunteers to meet the needs of our young people. It is expected that each family, as well as many other members of the congregation, will contribute time to the program. A variety of volunteer options are available - speak with the DRE to see how you can help.

**Nursery care** is provided during Sunday services for children through age 3.

**Formal classes** are provided on Sundays (mid-September to mid-June) from 9 AM to 10:15 AM for children in preK (typically age 4) through grade 8. All classes begin either in the sanctuary or in the Children's Chapel for the first 15 minutes, and then children proceed to classes divided by grade level.

**PreK - Kindergarten** focus on values and the UU Principles and Purposes.

**Grades 1-6** explore Unitarian Universalist principles and purposes, the Bible and world religions, using a curriculum developed at Westminster by Judy L. Adourian. "Teaching as a Spiritual Practice" is a spiraling curriculum, consisting of two alternating years in each of three levels (grades 1&2, grades 3&4, and grades 5&6).

**Grades 7&8** will explore "Neighboring Faiths," learning about different faith traditions, visiting different places of worship and comparing and contrasting other faiths with Unitarian Universalism.

**"Our Whole Lives"** (OWL) sexuality and values education is provided, alternating years, for students in Kindergarten - grade 1, grades 4-6 and grades 7-9.

**Children's Chapel** experiences involve all children and youth together for a "one-room schoolhouse" with all-ages programming. On a few special Sundays the full class time is spent on such programming. More often, children and youth begin at 9 AM with a brief Children's Chapel, for group worship and a short lesson or discussion, before their grade level classes.

**Coming of Age (COA)** programming is offered for students in eighth grade, beginning in December. This is separate from the Sunday morning program, and includes classes on UU beliefs, practices and history and values clarification. The workshops further provide an opportunity for exploring and

expressing current beliefs. The year culminates with an overnight pilgrimage to Boston to visit historic places in UU history, and a Sunday service planned and led by the youth.

**Youth Group** meets twice a month on the first and third Sundays. This group is for youth in grades 9-12. Activities include small group ministry, field trips, and presentation of youth worship. This group is very active at the district level, hosting and attending Senior Youth Group Conferences (CONs).

**Multigenerational Services** are held periodically throughout the year. These services are held in the sanctuary, and children and youth are encouraged to attend along with the adults. There are no RE classes on these days. Check the calendar for detailed scheduling information.

**Non-classroom Activities** are important elements of the religious education program. Regular participation in these activities promotes a sense of belonging to this community, and encourages faith in action. Activities include:

**Potlucks** - Winter Holidays Party and potlucks with religious education themes

**Christmas Eve Pageant** - Our Christmas Eve service at 4:30 pm includes a dramatic presentation by the young people. Sign-ups begin in November, with rehearsals in December.

**Junior Choir** - Children and youth of all ages are encouraged to join our Junior Choir, which sings a variety of hymns, chants and popular songs during services or during Children's Chapel.

**Service projects** - Children and youth are encouraged to participate in congregational service work (such as the Sharing Locker), as well as youth oriented service projects.

**Mystery Friends** - a popular late-winter activity in which children seek to discover the identity of their "mystery friend," an adult within the congregation.

All children and youth must be **registered** in the program, including children in the nursery and members of the Senior High Youth Group. Registration is ongoing, and forms are available from the DRE.

There are **no fees** for this program; however, adult assistance with teaching and other duties is needed and encouraged.

## **PARENTS AS PARTNERS IN YOUTH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Religious Education takes place in the context of a family's total involvement in this religious community. We ask you, as the most important religious educator in your child's life, to partner with us in this education.

**Bring your child regularly and on time** for worship and classes, and other RE and church activities. This facilitates a sense of community, and enables your child to receive the full benefit of our planned curriculum. More important, time and continuity are critical for developing a real sense of belonging. If your child develops friendships in class, it will make the time spent here more enjoyable and more productive, and will foster a feeling of belonging to a group and to the church.

**Be familiar with your child'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. Ask your child what happened in class and encourage your child to reflect on the topic of the day.

**Share feedback and information with the teachers and/or the DRE.** Let us know about special things going on in your family's life - illness, needs or concerns, joyful events, etc. - so we may better serve you.

**Share your beliefs and church activities with your child.** It is important for your children to know about your religious views and about your involvement with the church. Tell them about what adults discussed in the service. Discuss current events with your child, and how these relate to your UU beliefs. Let them know about justice issues that concern you and let them see you working on these issues and putting your beliefs into action.

**Model the value of this community** in your life by being here and participating in the life of this church.

**Volunteer yourself in our religious education programming.** This program depends on your participation. Apart from the Director of Religious Education, every person involved in youth religious education is a volunteer. Many find that volunteering with the youth is one of the most rewarding parts of the church experience. There are many jobs to fit everyone's schedules, interests, and skills.

## 2011-2012 YOUTH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SCHEDULE

Sept. 11 Multigenerational Service - Water Communion Service at 10 AM  
 Sept 18 All ages combined class (DRE-led; Welcome and Introduction)  
 Teacher Orientation 11:00 - 12:30

**Term 1:** Sept 25 Regular Classes  
 Oct. 2 Regular Classes  
 Oct. 9 Regular Classes / RE Committee meeting 10:30  
 Oct. 16 Regular Classes  
 Oct. 23 Regular Classes  
 Oct. 30 Regular Classes  
 Nov. 6 Regular Classes  
 Nov. 13 Regular Classes / RE Committee meeting 10:30

**Term 2:** Nov. 20 Multigenerational Service - Thanksgiving Sunday  
 Nov. 27 All ages combined class  
 Dec. 4 Regular Classes / Pageant Rehearsal 11:00-12:00  
 Dec. 11 Regular Classes / Pageant Rehearsal 11:00-12:00  
 Dec. 18 All ages combined class / Pageant Rehearsal 11:00-12:00  
 (Sat)Dec. 24 Pageant Rehearsal at 3:30  
 Multigenerational Service (pageant performance) at 4:30  
 Dec. 25 Church closed - no classes and no service  
 Jan. 1 No classes, children attend Fire Communion service  
 Jan. 8 Regular Classes / RE Committee meeting 10:30  
 Jan. 15 Regular Classes  
 Jan. 22 Regular Classes  
 Jan. 29 Regular Classes  
 Feb. 5 Regular Classes

**Term 3:** Feb. 12 Regular Classes / RE Committee meeting 10:30  
 Feb. 19 All ages combined class  
 Feb. 26 Regular Classes  
 Mar. 4 Regular Classes  
 Mar. 11 Regular Classes / RE Committee meeting 10:30  
 Mar. 18 Regular Classes  
 Mar. 25 Regular Classes  
 Apr. 1 Regular Classes

<b>Term 4:</b>	Apr. 8	Multigenerational Service - Easter
	Apr. 15	All ages combined class / RE Committee meeting 10:30
	Apr. 22	All ages combined class
	Apr. 29	Regular Classes (play rehearsal during class)
	May 6	Regular Classes (play rehearsal during class) / RE Committee meeting 10:30
	May 13	Regular Classes (play rehearsal during class)
	May 20	Multigenerational Service - Coming of Age
	May 27	All ages combined class
	June 3	Regular Classes (play rehearsal during class)
	(Sat) June 9	Play rehearsal at 10:00
	June 10	Multigenerational Service: RE Sunday - Play production

All classes are 9:00-10:15 unless otherwise noted.

This schedule is a work in progress, and events may be added and rescheduled throughout the year.

## THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Religious Education Committee establishes, oversees, and evaluates the program's policies, goals, curriculum, and programming. It also works to ensure that the youth are integrated into the life of the congregation. The Director of Religious Education serves as an ex-officio member. The chair for 2011-2012 is Judy Adourian. Members (as of 9/11) are: Deb Wood-LaSalle, Vikki Paull, Stephen Paull, Patti Cousineau, and Nancy Reed. The Director of Religious Education is Ann Kadlecek.

## USEFUL INFORMATION

### MINISTER

Rev. Robert McKetchnie, [uuketch@gmail.com](mailto:uuketch@gmail.com)

### DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Ann Kadlecek, [akadlecek@westminsteruu.org](mailto:akadlecek@westminsteruu.org)

### YOUTH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE CHAIR

Judy Adourian

### YOUTH GROUP ADVISORS

Deb Wood-LaSalle

Stephen Paull

### NEIGHBORING FAITHS COORDINATORS

Deb Wood-LaSalle

Patti Cousineau

### NURSERY COORDINATOR

Vikki Paull

### DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Nonetta Shatakhtsian

### ADMINISTRATOR

Jennifer Burlington-Hague

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Abby Addington-May, President

Chris Lewis, Vice-President

Julia Archer, Treasurer

Sandy Hopkins, Secretary

not yet known, Program Council

Larry Burgess, Member-at-Large

Doris Duarte, Member-at-Large