

Our Learning Community

Our program serves infants through high school youth and draws upon the diversity of our members to enrich our children's religious journey. We invite parents and other interested adults to join the journey by teaching in classrooms or assisting with special projects. While creating an environment in which children, youth and adults may share, interact, and explore their religious questions in a climate of cooperation and discovery, we promote spiritual growth and learning for all ages.

We offer the same programs for infants through 7th-graders at both Sunday morning sessions. Teens in 8th grade and Senior-High groups meet at single session-times. Age-appropriate curricula have been carefully selected to meet our Goals for Lifespan Religious Education. Registration begins in the summer of 2006 for the 2006 – 2007 church-school year. To ensure a sense of community and continuity for children and adults, we ask families to register for, and attend, either the 9:15 a.m. or 11:30 a.m. session rather than alternating between sessions.

A wonderful year of learning, sharing and growing is ahead. We're glad you're here.

Children's classes, begin on time and end 15 minutes after adult worship. This schedule provides an opportunity for adults to visit during coffee hour, and affords teachers and children sufficient time to complete lessons and projects. Regular attendance enables our children to feel a part of the church community and ensures that they get the most from the Religious Education program. In deference to our teachers' contributions of time and energy, parents are asked to bring and pick up their children on time.

Childcare for infants through toddlers (not yet 3 years of age by September 1) is available in the nursery during and between both worship services. It is the responsibility of each family to ensure the safety of their children by escorting them to all classes including the nursery, speaking with the teacher or caregiver on duty, and signing children in and out upon arrival and departure. *Except during scheduled class hours, parents are responsible for the direct supervision of their children.*

Parental Responsibilities

- **Safety and Supervision:** Parents are asked to sign children into their classrooms between 9:00 & 9:15 a.m. OR 11:15 & 11:30 a.m. on sign-in sheets located just inside of each classroom. Parents should then take children with them to the Sanctuary, or escort them to Chapel as appropriate. The *only* exception is the class of three-year olds who will travel to and from worship services as a group. After class, parents are asked to sign each child out before going home.
- **Childcare** for all ages is available between worship services should parents desire to attend Adult Religious Education classes. Our paid caregivers will welcome children as parents sign them in at the table located in the hallway outside the nursery. Children will be assigned to caregivers according to age and will be supervised on the playground or, in case of inclement weather, in an upstairs classroom or the R.E. Library. Parents must come to the nursery to sign their child out once their Adult R.E. class has been dismissed.
Before and after scheduled Sunday School classes, parents are responsible for the direct supervision of their children while on the playground or elsewhere on the campus.
- **Involvement:** Ours is a cooperative Religious Education Program. Parents and other church-members who have been attending church for a year or longer are strongly encouraged to teach a class for a church-school year or summer session. Our program relies on dedicated volunteers who make a significant contribution to the future of our children, our church, and the principles of Unitarian Universalism.
- When a family enrolls in our Religious Education program, parents automatically become members of the Parent Leadership Network. Detailed information about the Network can be found on the following page. In addition, parents of children in Nursery through 6th-grade are expected to assist in their children's classes on a rotating basis. This provides much-needed support to our volunteer teachers and offers parents an opportunity to experience firsthand the class and curriculum. Parents of youth in grades 7 through 12 are requested to organize and participate in various special events throughout the year.
- **Financial Commitment:** We believe that the religious education of our children is the responsibility of the entire congregation. We charge parents no fees for our classes for children and youth, and urge all families to provide strong financial support to the church through their annual pledge. Only with such support are we able to provide teacher training, clean and attractive classrooms, meaningful curricula, craft materials and classroom supplies.
- **Attendance:** A vital part of the spiritual development of our young people is the experience of being together in community. Children who attend regularly get the most from the curriculum and are able to build strong and lasting relationships by sharing their gifts with classmates and the larger Church community. Children and youth want and need to make meaningful friendships; they look forward to seeing each other each Sunday and are disappointed if their friends are absent. We hope each family will make regular church attendance a priority.