

Our 7 Principles

We, the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

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

Our “Rainbow Promises” (The 7 Principles in kids’ language)

We promise to:

RESPECT all people,
OFFER fair and kind treatment to all,
YEARN to accept and learn about ourselves, others, and the Mystery some people call God,
GROW by exploring what is true and right in life,
BELIEVE in our ideas and act on them,
INSIST on a peaceful, fair, and free world for all,
VALUE our home, the Earth, that we share with all living things.



Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis

Guide for families with children & youth



2016-17

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RESOURCES

In addition to the resources in our children's library, check out these resources to have at home! www.uuabookstore.org

Kids' Books

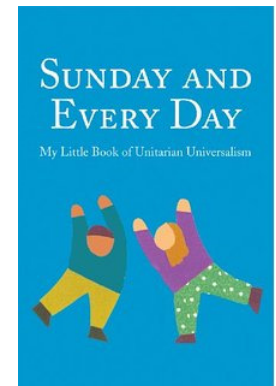
A Child's Book of Blessings and Prayers — Eliza Blanchard
Unitarian Universalism is a Really Long Name — Jennifer Dant
A Cup of Light — Pamela Baxter
A Lamp in Every Corner, A UU Storybook — Janeen Grohsmeyer
After Aesop, Stories for All Ages — Aaron McEmrys
Everybody is Important, A Kid's Guide to Our 7 Principles — Jennifer Dant
Sunday and Everyday, My Little Book of Unitarian Universalism — Patricia Frevert

Parents' Books

Tending the Flame: The Art of Unitarian Universalist Parenting — Michelle Richards
Creating Justice Together: Service Projects for Families and Multigenerational Groups — Susan Dana Lawrence
Chaos, Wonder, and the Spiritual Adventure of Parenting, an Anthology — Sarah Conover, Tracy Springberry
The Available Parent, Expert Advice for Raising Successful, Resilient, and Connected Teens and Tweens — John Duffy

Websites

questformeaning.org/programs/family-quest/uu-me-archives
UUA.org
pinterest.com/reauthor/u-u-parenting
uuworld.org/hashtag/parentingblog



CHILD BLESSINGS & DEDICATIONS

Many religious communities seek ways to welcome a new child into their midst. Families seek a way to honor the milestone that a new child brings into their lives.

Unitarian Universalists are no different. To mark the occasion of a new child entering a family through birth or adoption, we hold Blessings or Dedication Ceremonies. We call them different things, because words mean different things to different people, but ultimately they are a ritual way to name the commitment we make to the new child— as the child’s parents, extended family, and faith community. Blessings or Dedications are typically for infants under the age of 2, but we have blessed children of all ages.

Blessings or Dedications can take place during Sunday morning services — these are preferred by people who have chosen to raise their child in the church community, to have the gathered congregation witness, honor, and make their own promises of support to the child and the family.

They can also take place privately, at a family’s home, a park, or on our church property in the Sanctuary, Memorial Garden or Gazebo.

To schedule a Child Blessing or Dedication, contact Rev. Christina (cleonetracy@uuannapolis.org).



UUCA Religious Exploration (R.E.) VISION & MISSION

Vision

The vision of the UUCA Religious Exploration program is to nurture children and youth who will continue the mission of creating the Beloved Community.

Mission

Through participation in UUCA’s Religious Exploration program, children and youth will be inspired and empowered to live bold, compassionate lives by having:

- A foundation in Unitarian Universalist principles, traditions, and stories,
- Open minds and generous hearts,
- A spirit of service and a passion for justice,
- Enough love and respect for themselves to make healthy choices,
- A sense of belonging and contributing to a diverse community,
- The spiritual tools to navigate the challenges of life.

UUCA Religious Exploration (R.E.) STAFF

Rev. Christina Leone Tracy, Faith Development Minister
cleonetracy@uuannapolis.org

Elise Berrocal, Children’s Ministry Coordinator
eberrocal@uuannapolis.org

Paul Berry, Youth Coordinator (High School)
pberry@uuannapolis.org

Michele Reese, Beginner RE Facilitator, Childcare Coordinator
mreese@uuannapolis.org

Doe Payne, Nursery Care Provider

CHILDREN & YOUTH IN WORSHIP

The nursery is open for babies, ages 6 months to 3 years, starting 15 minutes before the service and through both services. Babies can go to the nursery or stay in the service with family, with the understanding that parents will step into the narthex if the child becomes disruptive.

All other children are welcome to start the service with their family in the sanctuary. Services are at 9am and 11:15am on Sundays, and at 10am during the summer months (see p.20).



After about 15 minutes, the Wonder Box “Time for All Ages” will occur, followed by the “leave-taking song” where children ages 4-9 are released to childcare.

Youth ages 10-18 stay in the service the whole time! They are encouraged to serve as ushers, greeters, lay ministers, or sound-booth techs.

SUPPORTING KIDS IN WORSHIP:

- Come regularly. Children and youth need routine, and if church is part of your family routine, it will be something to enjoy.
- There are coloring sheets and crayons near the entrance to the sanctuary, grab some!
- Help kids follow along in the Order of Service by noting when to stand up, sit down, or sing along. Help them locate the hymns in the hymn-books in advance, and follow along with them while singing.
- Introduce your child or youth to other kids or adults sitting near by. Try to remember the names of people you meet, including kids!

CAMP BEAGLE

“Vacation Darwin School”

Named for the HMS Beagle, the ship on which Darwin was aboard when he made his important discoveries...

In the spirit of the Beagle, our fun-filled, week-long camp encourages questioning, active exploration, respect for the interconnectedness of all the earth, and adventure!

Every day at Camp Beagle is packed with opportunities to explore the natural world with an emphasis on religious naturalism, evolution, and the scientific method.

July 17-21, 2017

9am to 3pm

Before-care and After-care provided for extra fee

Registration fee: \$120/ camper

Assistance is available if cost is prohibitive:

We have ten \$100 scholarships — up to three per family — first come first served unless we can raise more money to support our “Captain Fitzroy” Scholarship Fund.

Registration and volunteer recruitment for next year’s camp begin on Darwin Sunday, this year: February 12. Sign up your camper early, and be sure to let us know how you can help!



SUMMER R.E. 2016 **“After Hour”**



From the Sunday before Memorial Day, to the Sunday after Labor Day, we have a reduced Sunday-morning schedule:

We have one service at 10:00am, instead of two morning worship services.

We also have Religious Exploration (RE) for all ages during our After Hour, following the service, from 11:10-12:10.

Just like with Middle Hour, After Hour includes options for adults, and our children and youth programs are a wider-age span to account for the smaller number of attendees who come during the summer months:

Children and Youth Offerings this Summer will include:

- * Nursery for babies 6 months to 3 years
- * Multi-age (4-9 years), rising PreK-4th graders:
Nature based “Keepers of the Earth” curriculum
- * Tween group (10-13 years), rising 5th-8th graders:
Ethical Dilemmas using the “Dear UUey” “help column” format
- * Teen group (14-18 years), rising 9th-12th graders:
High School Youth group

Adult Offerings this Summer will include:

- * Going Deeper service discussions (each week)
 - * Inquirers newcomer classes (each week)
- * A range of other topics including End of Life Choices, Creating Your UU Elevator Speech, “Beyond Inquirers,” Biblical Literacy, and Building Beloved Community skills sessions

MIDDLE HOUR

Middle Hour is when our Religious Exploration (R.E. or “Sunday School”) program happens!

9:00—10:00 am — First Service

10:10—11:10 am — Middle Hour

(note: Middle School and High School R.E. starts at 10am, 10min. early)

11:15—12:15 am — Second Service

During summer months when we only have a single 10am service, we have “After Hour” from 11:10-12:10 (see p. 20).

Notes about transitions, drop off, and pick-up:

1. If your child is 9 and under, and they attended childcare during the first service, they are all set! Their RE teacher will pick them up.
2. If your child is coming directly to Middle Hour and did not attend the first service at all, please drop your child off at their classroom.
3. After Middle Hour, all children should be picked up. Middle School and High School kids will return to the narthex to locate parents, but younger kids need to be signed out from their classroom by an adult.
4. If your family is attending the second service after Middle Hour, go together to the sanctuary to enjoy worship together. After the Wonder Box, kids ages 9 and younger will be “sung out” to childcare.

Middle Hour for Adults:

While your children or youth are having meaningful time with their peers, you can too! Every Sunday there are a variety of options for learning and connection for adults. See the *Highlights* newsletter, *In the Know* weekly e-news, or view the dry-erase boards in the upstairs or downstairs entrances to see what’s happening, and where, each Sunday!



REGISTERING FOR R.E.

All children and youth should be registered!

Registering is simple and fast!

Go to the following link and complete the form:
tinyurl.com/UUCARE1617



Why register?

- So we know how to contact you about upcoming events, etc.
- So we know if your child has any special medical, allergy, or behavioral needs we should be aware of!
- So we can plan our classes accordingly
- So we have your permission (or not) to provide medical care, take photos, etc.
- So you can volunteer and support our amazing cooperative program!

MULTI-GENERATIONAL EVENTS

Stone Soup — December 11, 4-8:00pm

Our winter tradition of re-telling the favorite tale of community gifts and collective support, complete with a real soup feast! Bring a side-dish to share, and an ingredient for the soup that morning when you come to church. We'll make ornaments to decorate our tree, sing songs, and have a great time!

UU Jewish Passover Seder — April 8, 5:00-8:00pm

A family-friendly event with a UU take on the traditional Haggadah, a retelling of the Jewish exodus story, led by members of our church who identify as Jewish or having Jewish roots.



MULTI-GENERATIONAL EVENTS

Celebrating as a community of all ages is an important part of church life at UUCA! Join us— young and old, with or without children— for these fun times!

Celebration Sundays —

Each quarter we celebrate with a multi-generational Sunday service for all ages, at both 9 and 11:15am. These services will be filled with story, song, fun, ritual, and movement. No childcare; children attend with their family. Nursery IS available for babies through age 3. RE and Middle Hour DO happen in addition to the Celebration Sunday service.

Sept. 11 — Ingathering & Water Communion

Dec. 11 — Holiday Service

May 14 — Flower Communion

July 2 — Freedom!

Halloween & Fall Fun — October 30, 12-2:00pm

After services on Sunday, October 30, we'll have a potluck lunch, pumpkin carving and painting (BYO or get one from our supply, purchased from the Lighthouse Pumpkin Patch), games, face painting, and more. Wear your costumes to church today!



R.E. & SPECIAL NEEDS

We have some supplies to support kids with special needs, especially sensory needs, including “grass mats”, weighted lap-pads, and fidgets. We also have special visual timers to help kids who struggle with transitions, like those on the autism spectrum or with ADHD.

Our staff and volunteers want the best for your child, and we want every child to succeed in R.E. Please work with us to develop the best strategies for engaging with your child. We can't guess, and you are the best source of this information. Remember that kids sometimes act differently at church than they do at home or school, because it's less often and they don't always have the same teacher.



Please be patient with us and remember, our teachers are volunteers and most do not have special education training. If you need to participate, you are welcome to do so. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child or youth with special needs, please contact Elise or Rev. Christina.

SAFETY

Our church strives to be a Safe Congregation. We have extensive policies in place to protect our children, youth, volunteers, and congregation. If you'd like to see a copy of our policies, please contact Rev. Christina.

Some highlights of our safety policies include —

1. Children should never be left unattended. If you are at church, your child or youth should be with you, in childcare, or in R.E.
2. There are always a minimum of two (unmarried) R.E. volunteers with ANY number of kids. The only exceptions to this rule is COA Mentorship, or driving in a car with one adult and a few kids, and even that is rare.
3. Volunteers with children and youth must have actively attended UUCA for 6 months before being allowed to volunteer. Volunteers must apply, have two references, and may undergo a full criminal background check.
4. We have fire extinguishers and first-aid kits located throughout the building. We have an AED (defibrillator) in the front entrance of the church. Our staff are First Aid, CPR and AED trained.
5. We have an annual fire drill to practice safe escape routes.



OUR SUNDAY MORNING PROGRAMS

YOUNG RELIGIOUS UU's (YRUU)

Ages 14-18 (High-school grades 9-12) —
Brown Room, located upstairs in the Fahs House
(use the outside stairs)

This program is adult supported and youth-led for our high school youth. In addition to Sunday morning conversations about a wide range of topics including spirituality, faith, life, sexuality, being a teen, and current events, this group also has several outings each year and several service projects both for the church and the larger community. They also present a worship service for the congregation in April.

Our goal for YRUU is that the youth form supportive and healthy relationships with peers, adults, and their church.

In addition to UUCA youth events, the larger UU district (which encompasses many UU churches) hosts district-wide youth CONs (conferences) which are chaperoned overnight weekend events. UUCA occasionally sends chaperones, but does not take responsibility for coordinating CONs. One CON will be hosted at UUCA this year, on November 11-13, 2016.



OUR SUNDAY MORNING PROGRAMS

COMING OF AGE (COA)

Age 13-14 (8th grade) —

*Note that this class registration closes on October 2.

Newcomers and visitors will attend Building Bridges.

Anthony Room, located in the Fahs House, downstairs room closest to the main church building entrance.



Coming of Age is our UU equivalent of “Confirmation” or a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. The youth spend the year in reflection on their own values, beliefs, and identity, with the help of peers, adult facilitators, and one-on-one adult mentors. They also engage in service projects, retreats for bonding and learning, and a pilgrimage to UU heritage sites in Boston, MA. Their year culminates in a worship service presented for the congregation, including their personal “credo” statements.

Our goal for COA is that youth will develop self-awareness, confidence, and a sense of themselves as a responsible youth within the context of their UU congregation and the larger world.

BEHAVIOR POLICY

Our goal is always to balance the needs of a child with the needs of the larger group. If an individual child’s behavior is disruptive to the group such that the group cannot learn, bond, or have fun together, the following steps will be taken:

1. If redirection, positive reinforcement, and other choices are not successful in altering the child’s disruptive behavior, they will be verbally warned and asked to behave more consistently with the group’s covenant.
2. If that does not address the concern, the child’s parents will be notified of the difficulty, and parents will be asked to talk to their child about behavior expectations at church.
3. If the behavior does not change, the parent will be asked to come observe the child in the group and make suggestions to the facilitators about how to best engage their child.
4. If the behavior does not change, the parent may be required to stay in the group with the child, to support the volunteer facilitators.
5. If the behavior does not change, and all other options have been tried, the parent may be asked to remove the child from the program. This last, and most drastic measure, will ONLY be taken if all other measures are unsuccessful.



VOLUNTEERING WITH R.E.

Our program is cooperative! We need you!

All adults with children or youth in the R.E. program are required to support the program through volunteering. We also encourage non-parent adults to volunteer, to get to know our wonderful kids!

When registering your child for R.E. (see p.6 for details), please indicate how you can help, and follow through on your commitment. See the next page for all the different ways you can support the R.E. program!



OUR SUNDAY MORNING PROGRAMS

OUR WHOLE LIVES (OWL)

Ages 12-13 (7th grade) —

- * Note that this class registration closes on October 2. Newcomers and visitors will attend Building Bridges.

Reeb Room, located in the Fahs House, in the middle room on the lower level.

This renowned program is a product of collaboration between the Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ. It is a comprehensive values-based sexuality curriculum. Kids will explore anatomy and physiology, decision-making, gender and sexual identity, communication with a partner, pregnancy, unintended pregnancy options, and much more. Adult facilitators have 27 hours of training. The OWL program is age-appropriate, and was updated recently in 2015.

Our goal for OWL is that our children have a safe space to explore age-appropriate and accurate information about their bodies, health, and sexuality and to learn how to make healthy decisions for themselves.



VOLUNTEERING WITH R.E.

OUR SUNDAY MORNING PROGRAMS

BUILDING BRIDGES

(formerly called Neighboring Faiths)

Ages 10-11 (5th-6th grades) — *Also ages 12-14 after Oct. 2

Emerson Room, located in the Fahs House, the room closest to the back parking lot, downstairs

This program exposes children to the religions of the world, in their own backyard. They learn in the classroom about the tenets, stories, and heroes of the religion, followed by (most of the time) a visit to a local house of worship.



Our goal for Building Bridges is that our children gain an appreciation of the diversity and importance of religion in human life, and to practice being a respectful guest — open minded and kind, despite our differences.

- **Childcare Volunteers** — Our childcare program provides activities during the services (9am and 11:15am) for kids ages 4-9. Childcare is supported by two staff members. If you want to lead an activity (anything you are excited about!) we would love your help. Commitment is ONE Sunday a year, at both services that one day.
- **Nursery Assistants** — We need one person per Sunday (a team of eight rotate once a month) to assist our paid caregiver in the nursery during the 9am and 11:15am services.
- **R.E. Facilitators** — These are leaders who teach on Sundays during Middle Hour with an assistant. All age-levels have facilitators. Typical commitment is once or twice a month, depending on the class.
- **R.E. Assistants** — Many of our classes have a rotating team of assistants who volunteer alongside the facilitators and whose presence is invaluable even though they don't "teach." They help as an extra set of eyes, and hands, and serving as the second adult in the room to support our safety policy. Commitment is once a month.
- **COA Mentors** — Our 8th grade Coming of Age (COA) program includes a one-on-one mentorship relationship between our COA youth and adults. Mentors meet about once a month in the class with youth during Middle Hour, and also meet outside of class for fun and conversation about once a month.
- **Youth Advisors** — Our high school youth are led by a staff Youth Coordinator, but advisors are needed to serve once a month as support, and as the second adult in the room per our safety policy. We also need (in addition to regular advisors) CON Advisors who commit to chaperoning district-wide overnight retreats a few times a year.
- **Event Support** — We need volunteers to support our events, such as the Carnival, Stone Soup, or the Seder. (see pp. 18-19).
- **General Support** — We need volunteers to help with organizing, supply purchasing, cleanup days, events, or administrative support.

OUR SUNDAY MORNING PROGRAMS

BEGINNER R.E.

Ages 2-3

Clara Barton, located inside the RE Sanctuary downstairs

This program is led by a staff member every Sunday. The emphasis is on introducing children to the structure and rhythms of Religious Exploration, while also having choices and free play.

Our goal for beginner R.E. is that the children know they are safe and loved.



SPIRIT PLAY I

Ages 4-5 (Pre-K to Kindergarten)

Frank Lloyd Wright Room, located at the end of the hall downstairs

This program is a Montessori-style UU program developed by Nita Penfold, a UU Religious Educator. After lighting the chalice, the children first hear a story in circle time, accompanied by props from a “story box.” After the story is Wondering Time, and then Work Time where the children have many choices for work, including art, games, stories, or other activities. Spirit Play I focuses exclusively on our 7 UU Principles, or “Rainbow Promises.” Each session closes with a snack, a song, and closing words and chalice extinguishing.

Our goal for Spirit Play is that the children begin to explore UU values and stories in a free, loving, and supportive environment.

OUR SUNDAY MORNING PROGRAMS

SPIRIT PLAY II

Ages 6-7 (1st to 2nd grade)

Angebrannt Room, located at the end of the hall downstairs

This program is a Montessori-style UU Religious Exploration program. After lighting the chalice, the children first hear a story in circle time, accompanied by props from a “story box.” After the story is Wondering Time, and then Work Time where the children have many choices for work, including art, games, stories, or other activities. Spirit Play II alternates its focus annually: One year the 7 UU Principles, and one year the 6 UU Sources of Inspiration. Each session closes with a song, closing words and chalice extinguishing.

Our goal for Spirit Play is that the children begin to explore UU values and stories in a free, loving, and supportive environment.

U.R.U.U. & BIBLEODEON

Ages 8-9 (3rd to 4th grade)

Alcott Room, located inside the RE Sanctuary downstairs



Our 3rd and 4th graders alternate curricula every year — one year they do URUU, a UU identity curriculum written by Rev. Christina, and the following year they do Bibleodeon, a UU Biblical literacy program, followed again by URUU, and so on. Both programs emphasize UU values of openness, tolerance, diversity, and love, with lots of hands-on activities, crafts, games, and exploration.

New for 2016-17!! Our URUU year will include 8 weeks of 4th-grade OWL (Our Whole Lives), an age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education program led by trained facilitators.

Our goal for URUU/ Bibleodeon is that the children begin to see themselves as valued and valuable members of our UU church community.