

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM**  
**Children and Youth**

**2016-2017**



**Unitarian Universalist Church of  
Muncie**

# **Unitarian Universalist Church of Muncie**

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## **MINISTER**

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## **DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

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## **COORDINATOR OF YOUTH PROGRAMMING**

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## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

The Religious Education Committee for Children & Youth works in cooperation with the Director of Religious Education to plan and develop programming for Preschool through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The committee meets monthly and is open to all who are interested.

This year's REC Children & Youth members include:

Elsbeth Fritz, Preschool liaison

Adrienne Gruver, K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade liaison

Susan Taylor, 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade liaison

Amy Shaw, 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade liaison

Velvet Miller, Chair and 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> liaison

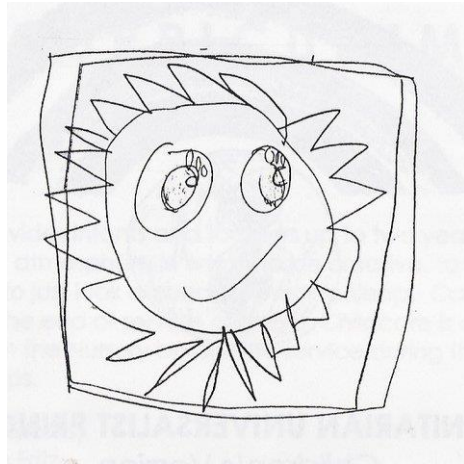
Maggie Bartlett, Special Events Coordinator

Alyssa Farnsworth, Special Events Coordinator

Tracy Whelan, MultiGen Event Coordinator

Elizabeth Carrier-Ladd, CYP

Nadine Tringali, DRE



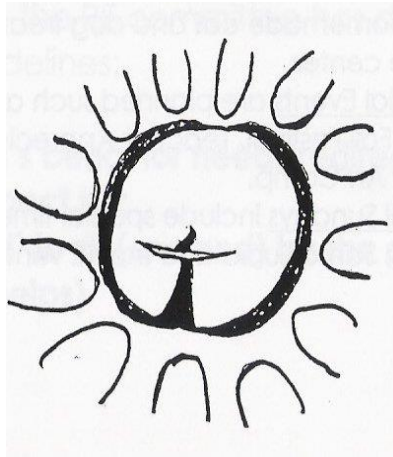
## **Welcome!**

Welcome to Religious Education for children and youth for 2016-2017. If you are new to our church community, I invite you and your family to join us. If you have been attending, or your family is actively involved, may your connection and commitment to our faith community deepen.

As teachers of religious education, we want to give our children experiences that awaken curiosity and nurture questioning as they continue their individual journeys of spiritual development. There will be lively group discussions in the classrooms and multigenerational services and activities, which will contribute to the growth of each and every child.

It promises to be a good year with exceptional teachers, an enthusiastic RE Committee chaired by Velvet Miller and a solid curriculum. Please join us.

*Nadine Tringali, Director of Religious Education*



## OUR UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST PRINCIPLES

*Children's Version*

### **“Walking the Rainbow Path”**

1. **R**espect all people. They have dignity and worth.
2. **O**ffer fair and kind treatment to everyone.
3. **Y**oung and old together in community.
4. **G**row and find your own truths.
5. **B**elieve in your ideals and voice your vote.
6. **I**nsist on Justice, Freedom and Peace.
7. **V**alue the earth and the web of life.

*(1-red, 2-orange, 3-yellow, 4-green, 5-blue, 6-indigo, 7-violet)*

## **REGISTRATION**

Parents and guardians are required to complete a registration form for children and youth.

Registrations forms are available from the Director and in the information rack in the fellowship hall throughout the year. Registering your children after three visits is required.

## **ADULT INVOLVEMENT**

Our RE program is **COOPERATIVE**; parents are expected to volunteer as a teacher, classroom aide, RE Committee member, or volunteer for special events. Job descriptions are available. We also encourage individuals without children in the program to serve as RE volunteers.

## **SAFE CHURCH POLICY**

To provide a safe and secure environment for the children and youth who participate in church sponsored programs, volunteers involved in supervising minors must complete a Background Check form. Information provided is confidential and is used solely for the purpose of determining a volunteer's qualifications for working with minors.

## **AGE AND GRADE POLICY**

Children coming into the Religious Education programs are generally placed in classes according to their current grade level in school. Exceptions, at any grade level, need the approval of the Religious Education Committee.

## **FEES**

We do not charge a registration fee. However, your financial pledge supports the total church canvass which supports the RE program. Your generous financial support provides us with an adequate budget for purchase of classroom supplies, materials, curricula, etc.

## **SUNDAY MORNING ROUTINE**

The nursery is available every Sunday morning from 9:30-noon in the Green Room for infants and toddlers through the age of one.

Childcare is available in the Blue Room every Sunday from 9:30-10:30 a.m. for children two years of age and above, whose parents are in a Sunday morning Committee meeting or attending the Adult R.E. Discussion Group.

Parents with infants and toddlers are welcome to bring their child to the nursery upon arrival. All other youth will begin in the service with their

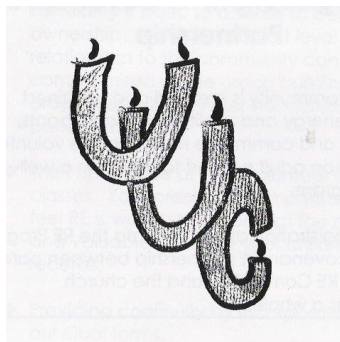
parents. As teachers may choose to use this time (10:30-11:00) to set up their classrooms or be in the sanctuary, all children & youth need to be in the custody of their parents, with the exception of infants and toddlers as stated above.

Following the *Story for All Ages* - the congregation will sing the youth out to their classes.

## **STUDENT PICK-UP POLICY**

RE classes end at noon. Parents of children in Preschool and K-2<sup>nd</sup> must go to the classrooms to pick up their children. If someone other than a parent is to pick up a child, please notify the teacher beforehand.

Please pick up your children in a timely manner, so that our teachers and aides can also enjoy coffee hour.





## **MULTIGENERATIONAL SUNDAYS, SOCIAL ACTION, and SPECIAL EVENTS**

Multigenerational Sundays are services when children join their families for youth-friendly worship together.

Throughout the year, Social Action projects are planned that involve all children and youth. To help end world hunger we have raised funds for Heifer International, UNICEF, and also thru the “Empty Bowl Project”. Some of our other projects have included: making baby crib quilts, cards for the Caring Committee, activity bags for children in need, Jane Goodall’s Chimp Guardian Project, and Saving Endangered Animals thru the World Wildlife Fund. Each year we also have great fun making homemade cat and dog treats as a fundraiser for a local animal rescue center.

In addition, Special Events are planned such as our RE Summer Camp, Game Day, Teacher Appreciation Luncheon, and Multigenerational Events.

## **R.E. Behavior Expectations - Discipline Guidelines -**

The term *discipline* as used here refers to its original meaning – to teach. We service a group of young people with a range of ages, interests and personalities. For the teachers to develop a working relationship with the children in only 45 minutes, a few times a month, presents a special challenge. Parents can help by reviewing appropriate behavior expectations with their children and by informing the DRE and teachers of any special learning styles, or considerations regarding your child.

Looking to our principles and purposes, we affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person and promote acceptance of one another. In this spirit of community building, we aspire to discipline, to teach, and to expect behavior that respects self, peers and adults.

Our valued teachers volunteer their time to prepare and engage our children in discovery and learning. While, at times, any child may need redirection, occasional individuals require more than a reasonable amount of their teachers' "re-directive" energies. It is never in the child's or the group's best interest to permit disruptive behavior. In deference to our principles of respect for the interdependent web --- as it relates to the learning environment, the RE committee has developed the following guidelines:

**When a child's behavior needs redirection they will, with love and respect be:**

- **'Invited' to sit (or stand) by the adult. (Proximity often helps)**

- **Given a helpful task and then reintegrated into the group.**
- **Offered the opportunity to read a book or draw.**
- **Escorted to sit with their parents for the remainder of the service/class time.**
- **Parents may be asked to come into the classroom.**

We will always seek to determine and address any cause for discomfort that may be contributing to the child's behavior. By informing the DRE of any special learning styles or considerations regarding your child, we can better meet their needs.

### **To Help Your Child Benefit the Most from Their Church Experience Consider . . .**

- ❖ Being as consistent as possible in attendance. Familiarity is basic to a sense of belonging and ownership. A child's comfort level and relationship to the community can be compromised as the group building process progresses without his or her consistent presence.
- ❖ The importance of your volunteer time in their classes. Your presence demonstrates that you feel RE is worthwhile, perhaps the most lasting and valuable message your children could receive.
- ❖ Providing continuity by incorporating some of our ritual forms.

# CURRICULUM

## **NURSERY**

The Nursery provides infants and toddlers through one year of age with a warm, caring atmosphere in which to be creative, to hear stories, to play together, to just look around, or even to sleep. Care is provided from 9:30 until the end of service at noon.

**Supervisor:** Nadine Tringali, DRE

**Childcare Coordinator:** Christie McCauley

## **PRESCHOOL**

Rainbow Connections uses storybooks for preschoolers to discuss those values inherent in the Principles and in Unitarian Universalism, helping preschoolers explore the values that unite us as UUs.

**Liaison:** Elsbeth Fritz

## **K-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade**

Picture Book World Religions introduces world religions through stories and allows young children to explore the differences and similarities to their own lives. The stories illustrate concepts such as the value of wisdom and loyalty, the importance of family, and the practice of compassion for all living beings.

Rainbow Children is a program of affirmation. It affirms the inherent worth and beauty of self, family, community, and human diversity.

**Liaison:** Adrienne Gruver

## **3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> GRADES**

Toolbox of Faith invites participants to reflect on qualities of our Unitarian Universalist faith, such as integrity, courage and love, as tools they can use in living their lives and building their own faith.

Love Connects Us celebrates important ways Unitarian Universalists live our faith in covenanted community. Moved by

love and gathered in spirit, we embrace our responsibility toward one another and the world at large. We encourage one another's search for truth and meaning. We strive to be active in peace-making and other efforts to improve our world.

**Liaison:** Susan Taylor

### **6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> GRADES**

Fifth Dimension and D'oh, God! – using episodes from the *Twilight Zone* and the animated television series *The Simpsons*, the curriculums seek to help our youth:

- Consider differing religious beliefs and the ways in which our faith can help us understand our questions, seek answers, and deal with issues in our lives.
- Consider social issues and the ways in which our faith can help us understand our values.
- Understand ways in which the right of conscience calls us to do what's right, even if there are possible negative consequences.
- Examine how our choices affect others around us, as well as ourselves.
- Explore how taking a stand is related to perspective and point of view.

**Liaison:** Amy Shaw

### **9<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> GRADES**

Principled Music – A Social Justice curriculum using music as a teaching tool.

We will also explore and discuss current events, social justice issues, world religions, and our monthly themes while creating works of art.

**Liaison:** Velvet Miller

# Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Muncie will be offering two *Our Whole Lives (OWL)* programs this year, beginning in October.

*Our Whole Lives* was developed by the Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ. Although the OWL series (K-1, 4-6, 10-12, Young Adults, Adults) was developed by two progressive religious denominations, it is completely secular and free of specific religious doctrine or reference. However, the underlying values of the program reflect the justice-oriented traditions of both denominations.

*The Our Whole Lives: Sexuality Education for Grades 4-6* is an eight-session curriculum designed to help fourth, fifth, and sixth-grade children gain the knowledge, life principles, and skills they need to express their sexuality in life –enhancing ways. The curriculum covers a broad range of topics – health and safety, love and family, puberty and growing up, sex and gender, communication and decision making – in age appropriate language. Activities, stories, and resources set the context for learning about diversity and practicing respect.

*The Our Whole Lives: Sexuality Education for Grades 7-9* is a life affirming program, consisting of 25 sessions, that offers students the opportunity to identify, clarify, and discuss issues about self-esteem, media images, gender identity, relationship building, communication and caring, as well as learn important facts about the human body, sexual harassment and abuse, and sexual

practices. Grounded in a holistic view of sexuality, OWL provides facts about anatomy and human development and helps participants clarify their values, build interpersonal skills and understand the spiritual, emotional and social aspects of sexuality.



The trained OWL facilitators are Denise and Ben Ewing (7-9 Grade), and Elizabeth Carrier-Ladd and Nadine Tringali (4-6 Grade).

## **Youth Groups**

Unitarian Universalists believe that all people are precious and worthy of love. As this message can feel particularly difficult to connect to and necessary during our pre-teen and teenage years, we offer special programming to these age groups that honors their unique experiences during this transformational time in their lives. We gather for sharing what is most on our hearts and making meaning of our experiences. We gather to work together for justice in our communities and in the world. We gather to build community, play games and laugh together.

We value one another and the support we receive in community. Our regular meetings at the church center around a ritualized sharing of what is happening in our lives called Check-in. During this time we celebrate each other's joys together and support each other in our pain and burdens. It brings us closer together and helps us to navigate the ups and downs of our lives.

We also have special events throughout the year, such as field trips, community service opportunities, lock-ins, parties and regional conferences called CONs. Through these events we strengthen our community by sharing experiences with one another. Many of the events help us to explore our UU faith together – though some are just fun for the sake of fun!

Due to the current makeup of our youth, we are meeting both as separate Middle and High School groups and combined into one large group. We meet almost every Sunday of the month, 12:30-2 pm in the Violet Room, depending on other events and holidays. Lunch is provided.

To find out about variations to this schedule and special events, send an email to [elizabeth@uuchurchmuncie.org](mailto:elizabeth@uuchurchmuncie.org) to be added to our mailing list.

## **4U: Ball State University Unitarian Universalist Union**

4U is a gathering of Unitarian Universalists and religious seekers for fellowship, conversation and worship in order to learn about religious paths, grow as individuals, find belonging with like-minded people, develop our faith and experience something transcendent. Ivy Tech and other students are welcome to join us for our meetings! Join our Facebook group to receive more information about our meetings. The school schedule creates variation in our meeting schedule so joining our group is the best way to be sure you know when we are meeting. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/160755377315949/>



# **SPECIAL CELEBRATIONS**

## ***Growing Up in Our UU Faith***

### **Age of Reading Ceremony – K-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade**

We celebrate the “joy of reading” and wish to recognize our young readers in this ceremony with the gift of a special book and bookmark.

### **Youth Sunday**

Each year our youth create and present a Sunday worship service for the whole congregation called Youth Sunday. This is an opportunity for them to share a message that is particularly relevant to them and the larger community. It is a chance for the community to get to know them better and to be inspired by their wisdom. It is a way in which the congregation honors that they are not only our future, but are present leaders and teachers with particular talents and gifts to share.

### **Child Dedication Ceremony**

Child Dedication Ceremonies are Unitarian Universalist celebrations for welcoming a baby or child into our community. This is an opportunity to dedicate ourselves and the child to a life of meaning and a search for his or her truths on the path to a religious or spiritual self. Please contact our Minister, Seth Carrier-Ladd for more information on planning a Dedication Ceremony.

### **Bridging Ceremony for our High School Graduates**

Each spring, we celebrate the passage of our seniors into adulthood. As we build a “bridge” between their role as a senior youth and their new identity as young adults, we recognize the achievements and contributions each have made to the world and our community and emphasize our ongoing support as they make their own way in our complex world.

# CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

July 3 - Aug.	21	“Percy Jackson’s the Gods of Olympus!” – RE Summer Camp
August	28	<b>Multi-Gen Service</b> , Water Ceremony
September	4	Game Day! – Labor Day Weekend
	11	Teacher Dedication, RE Kick Off and Open House
	18	Curriculum begins!
October	<b>2</b>	<b>No RE Classes – Nursery &amp; Preschool only</b> Annual Family Retreat at Pokagon State Park, 9/30-10/2
	16	<b>Multi-Gen Service</b>
	30	Halloween Parade
November	5	Bazaar in the Woods
	19	Harvest Feast
December	10	Making Saffron Buns
	11	<b>Multi-Gen Service</b> , Santa Lucia Ceremony
	<b>25</b>	<b>No RE Classes – Nursery &amp; Preschool only</b>
January	22	Age of Reading Ceremony, K-2 <sup>nd</sup> grade
February	26	<b>Multi-Gen Service</b> , Youth Sunday
April	16	<b>Multi-Gen Service</b> , Easter Sunday – Easter Egg Hunts
	30	RE Teacher Appreciation Luncheon
May	14	High School Bridging Ceremony
	21	RE Teacher Appreciation & Volunteer Appreciation
	28	Game Day! – Memorial Day Weekend
June	4	Social Action Sunday – Heifer International
	11	<b>Multi-Gen Service</b>
	18	Flower Sunday
	25	Game Day!

Subject to change. Please consult the *Unigram* for the most up-to-date information.