

Olympia Brown Unitarian Universalist Church

Prospectus of Religious Education Programs for Children and Youth

2010 ~ 2011



Safe Church Statement

The Religious Education program at Olympia Brown Unitarian Universalist church seeks to create an environment in which children can explore the spiritual and religious nature of their lives in a safe and nurturing environment.

All staff and volunteers who work with children and youth are screened and trained in safety policies and procedures designed to enhance healthy physical, emotional, mental and spiritual growth. Children and youth are treated with kindness, trust, respect and good humor. A copy of the Church Child and Youth Protection Policies may be obtained in electronic or paper form upon request from the Director of Religious Education.

Unitarian Universalist Principles for Children

All people are important

We should treat people fairly and kindly

We should accept each other and help each other grow

We should search for what is true and good

People should have a voice about things that concern them

We should work for peace and freedom everywhere and try to make the world one family

We should take care of the earth which gives us life

In our church we learn from and get our beliefs from many sources ~

Our own sense of the wonder of life

The Jewish and Christian religions and many other religions from around the world

Earth-centered religions which celebrate life and teach us to live in harmony with nature

Knowledge gained by people through science and reason

The lives of people who have worked to make the world a better place

Our own thoughts and experiences

We are glad we can come together to help and support each other in our efforts to grow and live good lives



Notes to Parents and Guardians

Keep in touch with what your child is learning and experiencing in Sunday School. Check in with their teachers and the RE Director and read emails or mail that may come your way. Lessons can only be started in an hour a week and religious education takes place primarily in the home.

Children in 5th grade and younger must be checked in and signed out by a parent or guardian.

Each child must have a completed registration form in order to participate in our program. This helps to keep children safe, lets us know how to contact you and allows us to plan for special health concerns or allergies.

Please bring a healthy snack and juice for Sunday School occasionally.

If an emergency occurs which necessitates evacuating the building, teachers will help the children out of George Bray Hall through the back door (through the play room) or through the lift door on the southeast corner of the building. The children will then be led either across 7th Street or into the north parking lot. Parents should not come downstairs for their children, but should plan to meet them outside.

Your ideas are important! Comments, suggestions and questions are welcome. See the Director of Religious Education or an RE Committee member.

Sunday School Teachers 2010-2011

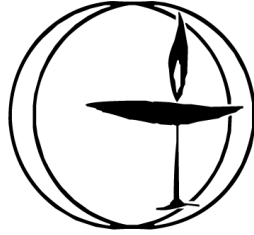
Many thanks to all our dedicated volunteers in the Children's Program this year!

Shelly Christensen	Susan Renner	Steve Shelton
Gerri Bodi	Debra Karp	Monica Johnson
Mary Siuta	Steve Smiley	Emilie Jones
Abby Carr	Lisa Friedrich	Kira Olson
Jolene Kent	Susan Binzel	Megan Polzin
Joyce Hershberger	Stephen Kalmar	Heather Kent
Cynthy McCrory	Andreanna Follensbee	Sue Hipp

Youth Advisors 2010-2011

A huge thank you to this year's Youth Advisors!

Steve Hawk	Kelly Horbinski
Trevor Lewis	Jeff Horbinski
Lucie Holmgreen	Ken Follensbee
Steven Shelton	Leanna Rea Lopez



Children's Sunday Morning Program

We have two services during the regular school year (second Sunday in September to the first Sunday in June). First service is 9:00 to 10:20 and second service is 11:00 to 12:20.

The children begin their morning with a short worship and check in service as a large group. There the lesson is introduced usually through a story or game. Children are then broken up into two groups (sometimes by age, sometimes randomly) for an activity with their Sunday School teachers that reinforces the lesson. We all come back together into a large group for the last ten minutes for a blessing and snack that we share.

This year's curriculum that we will be exploring is "Wonderful Welcome" from the Tapestry of Faith series. The "Wonderful Welcome" curriculum engages and challenges leaders and children alike to explore how and why we are willing to welcome others into our lives. We welcome not only strangers, but family, our peers, our neighbors and even entities that are not people such as our animal friends and nature itself.

Occasionally throughout the year, children will participate in Multigenerational Services upstairs for all or part of a service. This gives all of us the opportunity to appreciate and interact with our whole church family.



UU Teens (6-8 Graders)

This younger youth group for sixth, seventh and eighth graders is concurrent with the Sunday morning 11 a.m. service. It runs one hour and 15 minutes, and meets in the Annex on Sixth Street. Together they forge friendships, develop a sense of themselves as Unitarian Universalists, envision contributions to the larger community, and provide a safe and supportive space for one another as they reflect on their personal values and spiritual journeys, and enjoy events, social service projects, and overall good times.

UU Teens meets: 11:00 – 12:15 in the Annex (619 Sixth Street)

Youth Group (9-12 grade)

The Youth Group's goal within our religious community is to:

- Provide a bridge between childhood and adulthood;
- Facilitate discovery and appreciation of personal gifts and talents, a joy of living and a belief in life's potential in a setting which accepts diversity and exploration
- Identify what participants, as adults, will need from a church and why they would choose to be a part of one.

This group runs with the assistance and support of several adult advisors. Youth Group activities come in all shapes and sizes – discussions, social service activities, "movies with a message," weekend retreats and social outings. Youth Group plans and presents Youth Sunday, an annual All Church Sunday with a theme of significance to the young people themselves. All activities involve adult advisors. Youth Group convenes each Sunday during the school year from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm in the OBUUC Annex.



Other Religious Education Opportunities

All-Church Worship Experiences

Several half-multigenerational (children begin upstairs) and multigenerational worship services occur each year. These services are provided and carefully planned so that families may have the experience of worshipping together, pondering and celebrating what is most meaningful in their lives. If children become unable to tolerate the worship environment, parents may accompany them downstairs and remain with them for more active pursuits.

Helping Hands Club

This group is the social justice arm of the RE program. It is open to people of all ages who want to make a positive difference in the world around them. Unless otherwise announced, it meets on the third Sunday of each month from 12:45 – 2:30 PM (with a light lunch served at 12:45) to plan and implement projects that can enhance the lives of others.

Social Events

The religious education committee plans several intergenerational events throughout the year. These are intended to bring the congregation together to worship, play and spend time as a multigenerational community. This year's events include an All-Church Advance, Halloween Fun Night, Movie Nights and Springtime Party.

Children's Choir

The Children's Choir, led by Ellen Schmidt, performs as part of our multigenerational services several times each year. The children rehearse each Sunday between the two church school sessions. Children in the choir learn many songs that express our UU beliefs and experience the joy of contributing to the life of the church. The choir is open to all children – it is not necessary that they be able to read.

Multigenerational Choir

Tony Larsen and Lisa Friedrich organize a choir where people of all ages can share their talents. An evening meal will be provided at 6 PM, followed by singing time. Sign-up is requested in order to plan for food. All singers are welcome – seasoned and novice, young and mature!

Overnights

Overnights provide opportunities for our children and youth to get to know each other better and to affirm the sense of community we try to engender in our church school. They also provide a chance to interact with the minister. These events are devoted to play and worship. A letter of invitation will be sent to each home telling how to register and what to bring.

Religious Education Staff

Tony Larsen	Minister
Laura Duker	Co-Director of Religious Education
Leann Pomaville	Co-Director of Religious Education

Religious Education Committee

Jennifer Stiemsma	Chairperson
Emma Holbus	Secretary
Tom Renner	Treasurer
Jerry Hershberger	All Church Retreat Coordinator
Mary Siuta	At-Large Member
Leanna Rea-Lopez	Helping Hands Coordinator
Trevor Lewis	Helping Hands Coordinator
Michael Westman	Children's Overnights Coordinator
Geri Bodi	Life Cycles Ceremonies Coordinator
Erik Gunn	Our Whole Lives Coordinator
Shelly Christensen	Party Events Coordinator