

The Nursery

(For children who will be younger than 3 years old in September)

The Nursery is a place where infants and toddlers can learn the basics of safe play with their peers and adults. It opens at 9:45 AM and closes at 11:15 AM, and is located downstairs. Books, toys, and games are available. The Nursery is staffed by a combination of paid and volunteer adults/parents, with occasional assistance by youth members. Parents who prefer to stay with their children in the Nursery are welcome to do so - and may still listen to the worship service as it is transmitted via speaker system. A "Listening Room" has also been added at the rear of the sanctuary where families with infants can listen and see the worship service.

Pre-Kindergarten & Kindergarten – *Creating Home* and *Love Surrounds Us*

(For children who will be 3 to 5 years old in September)

Creating Home helps children develop a sense of home that is grounded in faith. Participants will ask questions about the purpose of having a home and the functions a home serves, for us as humans and for other animals. The program introduces the concept of a "faith home"—our congregation—which shares some characteristics with a family home. Like a family home, a faith home offers its members certain joys, protections, and responsibilities. Some goals include to identify the characteristics of a home and the functions a home serves; introduce practices from Unitarian Universalist heritage – such as the spiritual rituals of hospitality, saying grace, lighting a chalice, and sharing stories—

and invite participants and their families to consider using these on their own; and provide multiple opportunities for participants to practice artistic self-expression and have fun.

Love Surrounds Us concentrates on the communities that are most recognizable to young children—their Beloved Communities of family/home, school, neighborhood. Participants engage in activities that emphasize the love they feel in community.

1st, 2nd, & 3rd Grades: *Faithful Journeys* and *A Stepping Stone Year* (For children who will be 6 to 8 years old in September)

Faithful Journeys invites participants on a pilgrimage of faith, exploring how Unitarian Universalism translates into life choices and everyday actions. In each session, they hear historic or contemporary examples of Unitarian Universalist faith in action. Stories about real people model how participants can activate their own personal agency — their capacity to act faithfully as Unitarian Universalists — in their own lives, and children have regular opportunities to share and affirm their own stories of faithful action. Through sessions structured around the Unitarian Universalist Principles, *Faithful Journeys* demonstrates that our Principles are not a dogma, but a credo that individuals can affirm with many kinds of action.

A Stepping Stone Year offers participants the means to seek guidance in life through the lens of our Unitarian Universalist Sources, with an emphasis on love. Together we ask questions such as, "Where did we come from?" "What is our relationship to the Earth and other creatures?" "How can we respond

with love, even in bad situations?" "What happens when you die?" Participants will learn that asking questions is valued in Unitarian Universalism, even as they begin to shape their own answers.

4th, 5th, & 6th Grades- *Toolbox of Faith* and *Love Connects Us* (For children who will be 9 to 11 years old in September)

Toolbox of Faith invites participants to reflect on the 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. Each session uses a tool as a metaphor for an important quality of our faith such as reflection (symbolized by a mirror), flexibility (duct tape), and justice (a flashlight).

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.

7th & 8th Grades: *Our Whole Lives* and *Neighboring Faiths* (For children who will be 12 to 13 years old in September)

Our Whole Lives: Junior High youth are in the midst of many changes of the body, mind, spirit, and emotions. "OWL" will explore important topics in their lives and relationships within the framework of a healthy and holistic view of sexuality. In a setting that is grounded in our religious and community values, and led by a trained team

of facilitators, participants will learn how to make important, informed decisions and understand one's values as they pertain to our faith and the world at large. ***OWL Classes will be held certain Sunday mornings and evenings. Contact DLFD for information.***

Neighboring Faiths helps youth learn about the Unitarian Universalist faith and other world religions through interactive experiences such as field trips and interviews with participants of varying faith communities. These encounters with other religions are given meaning through periods of reflection and discussion about Unitarian Universalist and personal beliefs and values.

This class will take place during SOME Religious Education classes on Sunday mornings. Contact DLFD for more information.

9th thru 12th Grades -- Future Leaders at Somerset Hills (FLASH) *(For youth who will be 14 to 18 years old in September)*

Our senior high youth group will plan and participate in a wide range of experiences. Activities include community-building social events, helping with various aspects of Sunday worship services, generating social action opportunities, and attending UU events in our congregation and the larger UU community. The FLASH group strives for ongoing "youth empowerment" by developing its own activities with assistance from adult advisors. Contact DLFD for information.

Registration*

The registration form is now online. Go to our website, www.uucsh.org. The link to the form can be found under Religious

Education/Children & Youth Religious Education, or input this link directly into your browser:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Bx56uE_b5Nsyp0av2shDA3sWhOYVHcXWCuzisb8WM80/viewform

Please submit registration online. If you don't have computer access, please contact the office at 908-927-0601 for a paper registration form.

We ask that your commitment to these programs be reflected in your annual pledge to UUCSH.

*While classes are listed by grade and age, we recognize that children and youth may attend schools where their age does not match the grades as listed. Others may be home-schooled or attend non-traditional schools. Please contact the DLFD and RE Vision Team to place your child in a class that may provide a better environment for his or her physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual growth.

Volunteers

Religious Education can't happen without many dedicated volunteers! To commit as a volunteer go here:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1BCY-VQ2ZwW_enznS3-SXhSaa5kMKNIcCXoKmH_uYJ4/viewform

Religious Education for Children & Youth 2015-2016 Class Descriptions



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Somerset Hills

