

Holidays and Holy Days (2nd Grade)

As we learn about how other people think about God, prayer and the right ways to live, our children will be affirming their own Unitarian Universalist beliefs and the concept that “under the sky all people are one family.”

Units of Study

First Day – Introduction to each other and the curriculum
Rosh Hashana/Sukkot – two Jewish holidays
St. Francis Day – honoring the Catholic saint
Maulid al Nabi/Ramadan – two Muslim holidays
United Nations/UNICEF Day
Dussehra/Divali – two Hindu holidays
John Murray Day/UU Pilgrimage – two UU celebrations
Wampanoag Thanksgiving – Native American celebration
Hanukkah – The Jewish festival of lights
St. Lucia’s Day – The Swedish celebration of light
Posadas – The Mexican Christmas celebration
Our New Year – Looking backward and forward
Huichol Indian Day – Religious expression in yarn painting
Martin Luther King Day – Honoring Dr. King and Rosa Parks
Chinese New Year – The Kitchen God celebration
Chinese Dragon Celebration – Dragon Parade
Powamu – The Hopi bean planting festival
Susan B. Anthony Day – Honoring a famous UU
Mardi Gras – From merry making to Ash Wednesday
St. Patrick’s Day – Celebrating Ireland and its saint
No Ruz – The Iranian New Year celebration
Passover – The Jewish Festival of Freedom
Africa Day – sampling religious ideas using masks
Buddah’s Birthday – as celebrated in Japan
Henry Bergh Day – honoring the Unitarian friend of animals
Easter – celebrating Jesus’ life and renewal of spring
Earth Day – cherishing our life-giving planet
Japanese Children’s Day – with kite making
Mothers’ Peace Day – dealing with children’s concerns
Your Own Celebration – planned for you by you
UU Day – Final celebration of UU beliefs

Questions? Contact Jenn Shepard, Shepardbaskets@comcast.net

Chalice Children (Pre-school)

Designed to help young children learn about their church and congregation. The curriculum is based on the belief that pre-school children gain a sense of belonging to their religious community and the Unitarian Universalist faith when they have concrete experiences with its people and places.

Units of Study

Church is a Special Place

- A Tour of the Church
- Making Clay Chalice
- Memory Game
- Fall Planting
- The Chalice Cookie

Church Is People

- Chalice Flannel Board
- Helping Others
- A Special Jigsaw Puzzle
- Feeling Sad
- Weddings and Others Services of Love and Union
- Babies

We Celebrate Holidays

- Thanksgiving with Chalice Children
- How Many Days Until Christmas?
- Candles for Winter Holidays
- Celebrate Love for Valentine's Day
- Pussy Willows
- Easter
- Passover
- May Day

We Wonder

- Wondering About Stars
- Wondering About the Moon
- The Wonder of Snow
- Rainbows
- Dreams
- Imagination

We Make Friends

- My Shadow
- Block Sunday
- Teddy Bear Month: Friendship
- Teddy Bear Month: Fixed
- Teddy Bear Month: Lost
- Teddy Bear Party
- Closing Sunday

It Starts With Me (6th-7th Grades)

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This curriculum is designed to teach older children about community service and the idea that one's work, volunteer and otherwise, can be a form of creative expression of one's passions, talents and abilities.

Units of Study

Community service

- Community building
- What is community?
- Compassion & the spirit of giving
- Social responsibility in our family and community
- What are your gifts?
- Who am I?
- The value of creative expression
- Facing our fears
- Acknowledging our inner wisdom
- The spirit of giving in other traditions
- The importance of planning
- Some principles for helping

Little Acts of Kindness

- Welcoming the New Year
- Little acts of kindness
- The value of listening to others
- The healing power of touch
- We are all healers

Human Rights

- Human rights & peace
- Human rights & injustice
- Prejudice, stereotyping, & discrimination
- Standing up for your rights
- Standing up for the rights of others
- Young people who have made a difference

Caring for Our Planet Earth

- The interdependent web of life
- Reconnecting with the living earth
- Honoring nature

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Experiences with the Web of Life (K-1st Grades)

The goal of this curriculum is to develop awareness of the interdependence of living things and each child's place within the web of life. Learning to understand the Unitarian Universalist principle of respect for the interdependent web of all existence is a deeply religious undertaking. Our emphasis on values differentiates this curriculum from the ecological content that children often receive at their weekday schools.

Units of Study

- Experiences with our "Piece of the Earth"
- Experiences with Moths and Butterflies
- Experiences with Insects
- Experiences with Trees
- Experiences the Leaves
- Experiences Related to Bats
- Experiences with Bulbs and Seeds
- Experiences with Growth and Change
- Experiences with the Food We Eat
- Experiences with Birds
- Experiences with Recycling and Holiday Giving
- Experiences with Life in the Winter
- Experiences with Pets
- Experiences with Rain and Snow
- Experiences with Spiders and Spider Webs
- Experiences with Uniqueness
- Experiences with How We Treat Wild Things
- Experiences with Rodents
- Experiences Related to Miracles
- Experiences with Friendship and Cooperation
- Experiences with Crickets and Grasshoppers
- Experiences Related to Aging, Death and Grief
- Experiences Related to Reproduction
- Experiences with Wildflowers
- Experiences with Earthworms
- Experiences with Gardening
- Experiences with a Cat
- Experiences with Bees
- Experiences with Grass and Grains
- Experiences Related to Clean Water
- Experiences Related to Our Bodies as Miracles
- Experiences with Remembering Together

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God Images & Why Do Bad Things Happen? (5th Grade)

This combined curriculum explores the questions about the ultimate nature of life: What brought all that is into being, why must we die and what happens after death, what are the forces which control the world, why is it people have problems with each other, what makes life worth living. The second part of the curricula explores the differing responses of religions and cultures both present and past to the question “Why do bad things happen?”.

Units of Study

Introduction to each other, to UUism, to God Images

Jewish and Christian God Images

God is like that which created everything

God is like “Isness”

God can get in touch with people

God is like a ruler who wants peace and fairness

God is like a forgiving parent

An image of God can be male or female

God is like a protector

God is like a freedom Giver

God is like the power of healing

God is like love

World Religion

There is just one God

God is like the power which causes things to grow

God is like the power to create, sustain, and destroy

God is like silence and emptiness

God is like opposites together in a whole

God is like powers in nature

God is like breath

God is like light

Modern Science

God is like cosmic evolution

God is like that which is beyond space and time

God is like that which is in parts and the whole

Why Do Bad Things Happen

People or God(s) did something wrong at the very beginning

You were bad in a past life

Because of wrong thinking

Because you upset the harmony of the universe

Because you were bad, God and punishment

Because evil forces are fighting good forces

Because of Fate

That’s just the way the world is

What makes good things happen?

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Quest (9th grade)

Quest is our ninth-grade Coming of Age program. It's a yearlong curriculum that covers such things as "What Are Values?", "What is Prayer?", "The Golden Rule", "What is 'Service' and Why Do We Do It?", and "Who is Your God Figure and What Role Does He/She/It Play for You?". It begins in September with a trip to Genesee Valley and ends in May with the Coming of Age Service. In between we have two sleepovers (fall and spring), work on the Church Social Action dinner and the Church Auction, go to a youth convention together, go to Boston for five days over Easter, and end the year by writing a personal credo statement and planning our worship service for the congregation to celebrate our Coming of Age with us.

Quest meets every Sunday evening (except the first Sunday of the month). The first Sunday of the month we go to church together, then stay for lunch and discuss the sermon in an I&U session. The second and third weeks are usually curriculum programming like that listed above, and the fourth week we try to do something a little more social (for example, in November we make casseroles for Beans & Bread, in December we bake cookies for the Cookie Project). Each teen is paired with an adult in the congregation to work on a major yearlong project together (examples, teaching RE to a younger group, being part of our sound crew, running the Christmas Secret Santa Shop for the younger kids).

Interwoven with the curriculum work are bonding activities and community building. This program focuses on two things: building a supportive spiritual community and defining your individual spiritual path (at this point in your life).

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Our Whole Lives (8th Grade)

This curriculum was designed as a sexuality education program to model and teach caring, compassion, respect and justice. Such programs should be holistic, moving beyond the intellect to address the attitudes, values, and feelings that youth have about themselves and the world. The overall goal of Our Whole Lives is to create a positive and comprehensive lifespan educational program that helps participants gain the knowledge, values, and skills to lead sexually healthy, responsible lives.

Units of Study

- Group Building and Examining Values
- Sexuality and Body Awareness
- Gender and Diversity
- Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
- Relationships
- Lovemaking
- Preparing for Parenthood
- Responsible Sexual Behavior
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- Abuse of Sexuality

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YRUU (10th-12th grade)

A teen group from ages 14-20 that meets almost every Sunday evening for fellowship, service, religious education and personal growth. Each September members of the YRUU and the Youth Ministry Council develop objectives for the year that will meet their mission.

The Mission of UCC YRUU is to empower teens to create a welcoming environment that supports their social, emotional and spiritual growth. We strive to create a balanced program in order to achieve our objectives.

Objectives by August 31, 2006

1. Two YRUU trips
SUUSI
To be determined, could include Quest
2. Develop Youth Social Justice Program
3. Explore what it means to be UU
Learn about UU statements of conscience as part of this
4. Expand youth worship and Sunday participation
5. YRUU Summer Program

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Timeless Themes (3rd-4th Grade)

Timeless Themes: Stories from the Hebrew and Christian Bibles introduces children to religious literature which is central to our culture and to our heritage as Unitarian Universalists. The human issues which inspired these scriptures are ageless. Thee core beliefs and values of these stories continue to be important and include: the belief in a transcendent power, the belief that humans are responsible for their actions, the love of freedom for all people, the prophetic imperative to speak out against injustice, the respect for the beliefs of others, the love of one's neighbor, and the forgiveness for wrongdoing.

Units of Study

Adam and Eve	Cain and Abel
Noah	The Tower of Babel
Sodom and Gomorrah	Abraham and Isaac
Jacob and Esau	Joseph and His Brothers
Joseph and the Dreams	Moses in the Bulrushes
Moses and the Burning Bush	Let My People Go
The Ten Commandments	And the Walls Came Tumbling Down
Samson and Delilah	David and Goliath
Wise King Solomon	Jonah and the Large Fish
Job	The Religion of Ruth
Fiery Furnaces and Roaring Lions	The Flight to Egypt
John the Baptist	The Temptations of Jesus
Jesus and the Temple	Jesus and the Law
It's a Miracle	The Healing Power
Mary and Martha	The Teachings of Jesus
The Crucifixion of Jesus	Mary Magdalene
The Good Samaritan	

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