



The Steeple

January 22, 2016

The Congregational Newsletter of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington

Welcome to the Learning Adventure!

Each of you has your own story of when and why you came to First UU. Why you continue to come, or why you came back after a time away, or why you stay connected virtually, has a common core: *the possibility of your renewed transformation.*



We connect with First UU because we seek inspiration, a restoration of calm, a reminder of assurance that all will be well, courage and strength to once again stand up for justice; and always, for a connection with our deeper, truer selves.

This is faith formation, spiritual growth. *This* is what is fed and fostered by religious education. While we tend to think of “R.E.” as what we do with children (and some would add, youth), First UU has been embracing a **lifespan scope** with respect to faith development and educational experiences. We use lots of material from the online Tapestry of Faith collection, each of which fosters spiritual growth, UU identity, and faith development. We are loving a new curricular addition,

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Our Evolving Youth Ministry Programs

by Tiffany Tilman

As the Youth Ministry Coordinator I’m committed to evolving our programs to meet the needs of our youth and their families. It is important to us, here at FUUSB to



provide opportunities for middle and high school students in “transformational spiritual growth, faith development and personal discovery” (excerpted from Spiritual Growth and Learning Ends Statement, and FUUSB Board Ends Statements).

This year the YMAT (Youth Ministry Advisory Team) created a mission for our Youth Ministry inspired from the [Web of Youth](#)

[Ministry](#) generated by the Unitarian Universalist Association.

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Our UU Principles

1st Principle: The inherent worth and dignity of every person;

2nd Principle: Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;

3rd Principle: Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;

4th Principle: A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;

5th Principle: The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;

6th Principle: The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;

7th Principle: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

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Introduction (cont'd)

Spirit Play, offered to our preschoolers and kindergartners. Children's growth is fostered also through special Justice Sunday guest presentations, and through joining everyone for multigenerational worship.

We are known and respected for our Our Whole Lives (OWL) sexuality education program, which draws UUs and others in the 8th grade year. OWL programs for five other age groups are available, and we are working on expanding our offerings.

Our teens are co-creators of their UU experience with adult advisors and we support a group of undergrad UUs based at UVM, through our Campus Ministry Coordinator.

For adults, there are many inspiring, ready-to-offer programs which await excited facilitators. UU history and theology, and spiritual practices are topics we would love to provide, so if that sparks your passion, let me know!

First UU aspires to create crucibles for everyone – of every age, and at every life stage - wherein ideas, reflection, listening, creativity, and discovery occur. These come in forms of worship, events, classes, presentations, trips, meals, small groups, theme circles, and more.

Read to learn more about our offerings, programs, and the people who bring them to life.

Welcome to the learning adventure!

Martha Dallas, Director of Religious Education

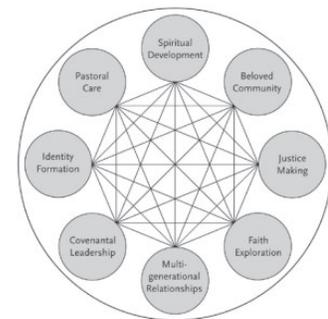
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FUUSB Youth Ministry Mission

FUUSB Youth Ministry seeks to nurture a more vibrant, inclusive, multi-generational faith community in which youth are encouraged to grow in spirit, service and leadership by sharing of their voices, gifts, and journeys within a diversity of programs and opportunities.

In addition to YUuth Group (which is geared towards high school aged youth), this year, we are offering a variety of programs to collaborate with our middle school teams, Campus Ministry and Social Justice Task Forces. Outside of traditional programming, our youth are regularly attending services, exploring ways to “youth-ify” worship services, working for justice in the community and getting involved in issues and projects of our congregation.

We invite all to explore our program offerings and get engaged. We are sure that you'll find our programs to be welcoming, fun and deeply engaging.



Web of Youth

[Source: UUA](#)

Lifespan Religious Education Staff and Volunteers

Martha Dallas, our **Director of Religious Education**, works with many volunteers, staff, and teams, to provide liberal religious education in various forms, for all ages.

Erika Reif, our **Childcare Coordinator**, supervises several adult and teen staff. As a team, they create an atmosphere of safety, happiness, and care on Sunday mornings for our littlest UUs. They also provide childcare for Society events.

Tiffany Tillman, our **Youth Ministry Coordinator**, coordinates our team of adult youth advisors and our high school **YUuth Group**. Beyond this, she works with our **Youth Ministry Advisory Team (YMAT)** on visions, goals, and programs serving middle-schoolers, as well as opportunities for teens of all ages to participate in congregational life.

Scott Krasner, our **Campus Ministry Coordinator**, studies at UVM meets weekly with a group of UU undergrads to deepen friendships and foster the spiritual side of college life.

Gabriel Ely, our **Religious Education Assistant**, provides weekday administrative support, mostly serving our Sunday children's programs. She also substitutes on Sundays for the Director of Religious Education periodically.

Our **Spiritual Growth and Learning Lead** is Nancy Hellen.

Youth Ministry Support

YMAT (Youth Ministry Advisory Team):

Rebecca Grimm, Pam Laser, Jonathan Sands, Sharon Leach, Lauren House and Noah Patullo make up the YMAT team. The Purpose of YMAT is to provide a diversity of wisdom and perspectives to inform our Youth Ministry Programs while also acting as a sounding board and support system for the Youth Ministry Coordinator. YMAT is directly overseen and supported by the YMC and falls under the wider umbrella of the DRE.

Youth Advisors

Josh Fairfax, Marybeth McNulty, Todd Clason, Elizabeth Clayton and Deborah DeLadurantaye are our Youth Advisors this year.

Youth Advisors support the Youth Ministry Coordinator in running and facilitating youth programming.



Our YMAT Team

Left to Right: Sharon Leach, Becca Grimm, Pam Laser, Noah Patullo, Lauren House, Jonathan Sands, Martha Dallas and Tiffany Tillman

LIFESPAN FAITH

DEVELOPMENT

2015-2016

Infants and Toddlers (0-2 Years)

We provide care for infants and toddlers in our nursery by adult supervisors and teen staff.

Children (3-13 Years)

Classroom Sundays

Draw heavily from the Unitarian Universalist Association's Tapestry of Faith curricula series, which emphasize:

- Development of UU identity
- Spiritual growth
- Acting for justice in the world
- Faith formation

Learn more about **Tapestry of Faith** here:

<http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry>

Spirit Play

Is a Montessori-based curriculum, which we offer to our Pre-school & Kindergarten classes.

Guided by the values embodied in the seven principles of Unitarian Universalism, Spirit Play uses chosen stories which are acted out by the teacher using a basket of tiny figures and props. This brings the story to life in a multisensory way. The story concludes with some "I wonder..." questions which the teacher asks to prompt children's ethical and emotional imaginations.

Learn more about Spirit Play here:

<http://www.spirit-play.com/>



OWL (8th Grade)

OWL is a comprehensive sexuality education program, with many age-appropriate modules, one of which we teach to eighth graders every year.

Learn more about OWL here:

<http://www.uua.org/re/owl>

Youth (14-18 Years)

Youth Group is supported by several adult advisors, our Youth Ministry Coordinator, and members of our **Youth Ministry Advisory Team.**

We meet three times a month on the 1st Thursday from 6-8PM, 3rd Sunday from 5-7PM and one Sunday a month from 11-1PM in the Susan B. Anthony (SBA) room. Most of our work explores this question: "What is a crying need, that rips your heart open, and calls you to work?" Stay tuned for service projects that are the result of wrestling with this question.

YUuth Group's mission statement is:

We gather to intentionally explore our developing UU faith by engaging in play, ritual and service activities as well as

connecting with the wider UU community. Together we'll create a trusting, supportive and fun environment that cultivates and further develops compassion, leadership, advocacy, and deep friendships.

Coming of Age is a rites of passage program where youth meet with members of our congregation and community to explore topics of interest. The program begins in January and culminates with a retreat to the Robert Frost Cabins where youth create credos, or statements of belief. Next year Coming of Age will be offered the entire year to 9th-10th graders.

Youth Social Opportunities

Services Together

Every Sunday when programs aren't offered we encourage you to come to services together! Usually youth sit in the balcony together and welcome others to join them.

Fundraisers

Youth serve pancakes in November, January, March and May on the second Sunday as well as the Lasagna Dinner on First Night to support the summer service trip.

Socials/Overnights

Throughout the year we host numerous social events for middle school through high school. Some are organized by youth and their parents and some by Youth Advisors and the Youth Ministry Coordinator. The next social is a Full Moon Hike on January 24th from 6-9PM. There are also 1-2 overnights scheduled each year.

Regional UU Youth Gatherings

Jericho, Middlebury, Montpelier and Burlington youth gather a few times through out the year for fun and spiritual growth. On March 5th-6th FUUSB will host an overnight here at our meetinghouse from 3PM-9AM.

To find out specific dates of the above programs you can view our calendar on the website and check out

eNews, Order of Service, and Bulletin Boards. You can also email Tiffany Tillman, Youth Ministry Coordinator at youthgroup@uusociety.org for more information or to get on the mailing list.

College

We also have a UU presence based at the University of Vermont. Contact our Campus Ministry Coordinator to get involved (campusministry@uusociety.org) or Unitarian Universalists at UV M.

Adult

Our educational offerings for adults take many forms and formats. Our program priorities include: social, racial, and/or economic justice, UU History, Theology, and Values, and creating a personal theology and/or spiritual practice.

Other upcoming programs include:

Ikebana Workshop:

Otherwise known as Japanese flower arranging, Ikebana is an ancient and deeply spiritual art form.

Vigil: the Poetry of Presence:

Pam MacPherson will present a reading from her book, followed by questions and conversation.

Demonstrating Our Values Through Eating:

This new 6-week UU adult education program explores our daily food choices and their impact on our own lives and the Earth. Informative documentaries, fun cooking sessions, and more!

Details about all of these will appear in our weekly eNews.





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of Burlington**

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.UUSOCIETY.ORG

Philosophy and Values

Children and youth can be adults' spiritual guides; posing deep, profound questions as they wonder aloud about their world.

As Unitarian Universalists, we have the responsibility of **engaging in spiritual growth and actively nurturing the development of our faith.** We must do the work of discerning our beliefs for ourselves, and live our lives accordingly.

The learning process is never finished! Active faith development is a lifelong adventure.

Ours is a large congregation, so **we nurture community and friendship through teams of teachers and small learning groups.**

Children learn through...

- The *choices and actions* modeled by their parents and other adults
- *Classroom Sundays*, with peers in the same age group
- *Justice Sundays*, when all ages combine or a theme presentation and activity
- *Worship experiences*, whether it's multigenerational, 15 minutes in the sanctuary, or a short Family Worship.

Youth learn through taking risks, building trust, and sharing group leadership with caring adult advisors.

Safety is essential to effective education. **Therefore, compliance with our Safe Congregation Policies is required of everyone.**