

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta

Family Handbook



RE Year 2012-2013

About the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta

Our Mission

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta is a community of faith that encourages and supports our individual spiritual quests out of which we act together for social justice.

Our Values

We are grounded in the principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenanting with each other and other UU congregations to affirm and promote:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

The living tradition which we share draws from many sources:

- Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
- Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
- Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;

- Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
- Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.
- Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

Grateful for the religious pluralism which enriches and ennobles our faith, we are inspired to deepen our understanding and expand our vision. As free congregations, we enter into this covenant, promising to one another our mutual trust and support.

We value

- **Community.** We value the friendship, love, and caring that we find in our congregation. We value the varied parts of our community--our children, youth, young adults, not so young adults, and the adults who are gracefully growing old within our midst.
- **Diversity.** We believe in and value the inherent worth and dignity of all people. We believe in this even when we are in conflict with people and value the conflict resolution process for the opportunities it provides us to learn. We value people across all racial, ethnic, and religious categories.
- **Spiritual growth and development.** We value an intellectually rich spiritual environment that transforms people's lives. We value all the performing and graphic arts as they are represented in our worship and throughout our building. We value our rituals and traditions, across the life cycle from birth to death. We value experiences for our children and youth that promote their healthy development and dissemination of our socially and religiously liberal values.
- **Social justice.** We are a people moved to put our faith into action. We value our congregation's history of involvement in social justice and community activism, and we value our status as "a force to be reckoned with" for liberal activism and justice in the wider world.

- **Involvement and participation.** We value generosity and opportunities to share our time, talents, and money to sustain our community and extend our reach into the world.

Our Ends Statements - the difference we will make in the world

Acting out of our values, and in accordance with our mission, UUCA will give to the world:

- A **vibrant faith community** for spiritual seekers that worship together, embracing lifelong religious learning and respecting different spiritual journeys.
- A **loving community** that provides support and care for others through both the best and the most difficult of times.
- A **safe and welcoming community** where all are valued.
- **Children and youth**, centered in the values of our religious community and nurtured in love, who are compassionate leaders in seeking justice and peace.
- **People with a passion** for social and economic justice who work together for human rights and a sustainable environment.
- A **creative community** that challenges us to see the world with new perspectives and gives voice to the human spirit through music and the Arts.

We are a place where hope is born - Hope that we as a congregation, nation, and world can live harmoniously, with arms that can reach across great divides to offer support, find friendship, and make peace. We give these gifts to the world.

Our Congregational Covenant

“We need not think alike to love alike.” One of our Unitarian Universalist ancestors, Francis David, spoke those words more than 400 years ago to describe the foundation of our unity as a religious community. The purpose of this covenant is to increase awareness of actions that each of us can take to nurture and support our beloved community. To this end, we, the people of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta, affirm the following Covenant of Healthy Relationships:

We will be mindful of how we communication with and about others.

We intend to:

- Listen actively and seek to understand the perspectives and opinions of others
- Use “I” statements when expressing our own views, always mindful that our thoughts and opinions may not be shared by others
- Be respectful and kind in our words, tone, and body language
- Use email and other forms of electronic communication with respect, kindness, and special care

We will seek a peaceful and constructive resolution process when conflicts arise.

We intend to:

- Communicate directly with the person or group involved, instead of gossiping or speaking negatively about others in the wider community
- Assume that others act with good intentions
- Check the accuracy of our perceptions and assumptions
- Be forgiving and loving when we or others make mistakes
- Apologize, when warranted, and seek to make amends
- Call on congregational resources when help is needed

We will celebrate the diversity within our community

We intend to:

- Reach out to others with warmth and kindness in a spirit of welcome

- Recognize and honor the diversity of beliefs and spiritual paths within our community, including the words and ways people choose to express their spirituality
- Be curious, appreciative, and informed about perspectives that differ from our own
- Honor the contributions and needs of those who have been historically marginalized in the larger world and in our congregation, and seek growth in our ability to be welcoming

We will build the common good.

We intend to:

- Build mutual trust through an honest and responsible use of information
- Contribute our gifts of time, talents, and financial resources
- Encourage and support the involvement of everyone in the life of our congregation
- Express gratitude and appreciation for the contributions of others
- Respect the roles and responsibilities of congregational leaders
- Respect UUCA's established policies and procedures

This Covenant of Healthy Relationships affirms the foundation of our unity at UUCA. Our commitment to one another ensures that our community will be a safe and inspirational place in which we, as individuals and groups, can live out our spiritual journeys.

UUCA Staff Contact Information

Ministerial Staff

Rev. Anthony David, Senior Minister, adavid@uuca.org

Rev. Marti Keller, Assistant Minister, mkeller@uuca.org

Professional Staff

Scott Howell, Executive Director, showell@uuca.org

Sherri Wiseman, Business Manager, swiseman@uuca.org

Program Staff

Mr. Barb Greve, Interim Director of Religious Education, bgreve@uua.org

Michelle Bishop, RE Assistant, mbishop@uuca.org

Donald Milton III, Music Director, dmilton@uuca.org

Dana Poss, Youth Programs Coordinator, dposs@uuca.org

Kelly Schwartz, Membership Coordinator, kschwartz@uuca.org

Travis Vaughn III, Assistant Music Director, tvaughn@uuca.org

Overview of Children and Youth Ministry



Vision: The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta welcomes all children and youth to a Religious Education Program that provides opportunities to learn about and experience UU Principles and Sources in a safe environment as they begin their lifelong journey of personal spirituality.

Worship

Children and youth attend worship each Sunday in the sanctuary for the first fifteen minutes and then go to their RE classes. Periodically throughout the year, the UUCA community worships together in services for all ages. School age children are encouraged to be a Chalice Lighter at Sunday service. Contact our Director of Religious Education to learn more about child dedications, an important milestone in welcoming children into our UUCA community.

Sunday All Ages services include:

Animal Blessing service in August

Water Communion in September

Christmas Eve services in late December.

Flower Ceremony on Easter Sunday.

UUCA's once-a-month "First Sunday Sermon Series" continues with the book [A Short History of Nearly Everything](#) by Bill Bryson. In worship, people of all ages will hear a story that touches on the theme of the month. Then, children and youth will explore this theme in religious education classes while adults will hear a sermon based on the same theme.

Education

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta's religious education program is a cooperative program, which asks each family registering children to commit to at least one volunteer opportunity each year. Without our wonderful volunteers (you) UUCA's RE Program would not be able to be as vibrant as it is today.

UUCA's Sunday morning religious education classes (RE) for children and youth ages 3 through high school promote a positive, engaging atmosphere and strive to accommodate diverse learning styles and abilities. Weekly lesson plans are available online at uuca.org or at the RE information desk. Each class follows a basic outline of gathering, focusing, reflecting, exploring, integrating, and closing. To instill a sense of stewardship and generosity, program participants are encouraged to donate weekly. Each class will be equipped with a stewardship box. Collections will also be taken during monthly children's chapel services. Each month's total collection will be shared between UUCA and a recipient of the participant's choosing.

For children with special needs, UUCA provides a "buddy", a one-on-one helper who helps facilitate the child's participation in the classroom; contact Michelle Bishop if you would like a buddy for your child or to volunteer to be a buddy.

A note about snacks: UUCA offers honey rice Puffins cereal as a snack. We have selected this snack to ensure a snack that is an allergen safe food for our children. If you would like to bring a snack for sharing, please donate it to the coffee hour. We collect the Puffin box tops in the hopes to sponsor a living Puffin. If you happen to eat Puffins at home we would love your box tops too!

UUCA offers age appropriate comprehensive sexuality education through the OWL (Our Whole Lives) program each winter. OWL provides facts about anatomy and human development and helps children and youth understand the spiritual, emotional and social aspects of sexuality.

Because parents will always be the most significant religious educators in a child's life, UUCA offers programs especially for parents. For details, see the Adult Religious Education brochure.

The Arts – Music, Art, Performance Art

Our Director of Music, Don Milton III, will be organizing opportunities for our children and youth to participate creatively in different venues. Watch for more information about the Creative Arts Ensemble, the Chalice Choir, the Youth Rock Band, and more. All ages are also invited to participate in the annual 5:30 Christmas Eve “pageant” and we’re hoping to have some other times for families to sing and make music together. For details, contact Don Milton III, UUCA’s Director of Music.

Fellowship Groups

Families Together is a group of families with school aged children that aims to provide the community of UUCA families with opportunities to gather together for fun and fellowship. Some activities include family game nights, camping trips and a New Year’s Eve party that is not to be missed! For more details, join the conversation on the Families Together yahoo group. Information for joining the group can be found at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/uuca_ft/. At this time there is no designated service project for the Families Together group.

UniTots is a group of families with nursery and toddler aged children. While RE classes are not offered for infants and toddlers, our Unitarian Universalist principles guide the care provided to our children in the nursery and toddler rooms. UniTots, the Family Ministry Team for families of infants and toddlers, offers a support network through regular gatherings and park playgroups. At this time there is no designated service project for the Families Together group.

For details about these fellowship groups, contact Rev. Marti Keller, UUCA’s Assistant Minister.

Environmental Projects

Families are encouraged to participate in monthly work days at Fern Creek, the adopt-a-stream site on our property as well as the Butterfly Garden. Ens & Outs is an organization focused on environmental activities, environmental issue advocacy, and outdoor activities; in particular, it is dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of our natural environment. Group activities include weekly hiking, camping, and canoeing trips throughout Georgia and into surrounding states.

UUCA Community Service Options

Decatur Cooperative Ministry

The [Decatur Cooperative Ministry](#) is a faith-based cooperative providing a continuum of services to homeless and at-risk families to enable them to become self-sufficient. DCM also offers worship, educational, and volunteer opportunities to individuals and groups from the local community and beyond. As a member organization, UUCA provides food and other services to DCM. A collection point is located in the hallway near room 207 for all donated food. For more info, contact Rev. Marti Keller at mkeller@uuca.org or (404) 634-5134 x215.

Disability & Accessibility

UUCA is committed to being open and accessible to all, in partnership with the [Interfaith Disability Connection](#). For more info, contact Beth Valentine at atts01965@gmail.com.

Fern Creek Habitat

Located at the far end of the parking lot, Fern Creek runs along the southern edge of UUCA's property. Volunteers work monthly to restore natural habitat and beautify the area along the Access Road above the creek. For more information, contact Karen Lindauer at klindauer@bellsouth.net.

Habitat for Humanity

UUCA has built four Habitat houses with other faith-based organizations, and we are proud this year to be part of the 1,000th house built in metro Atlanta. For more information about UUCA's annual interfaith Habitat build, contact Ernie Guyton at William.Guyton@gpc.edu or 678-580-5314. [Learn more about our Habitat build.](#)

Hope School Partnership.

UUCA provides mentoring, tutoring, social, and education opportunities for John Hope Elementary students and their families. For more info, contact Larilyn Pittman at larilyn2@bellsouth.net.

Toco Hills Community Ministry

UUCA is a member of the [Toco Hills Community Alliance](#), a coalition of congregations that provides assistance and support for individuals and families living in the Northeastern part of Atlanta who face the possibility of the loss of housing and who are without food for themselves or their families. It was founded in 1998 to provide emergency assistance in time of need to individuals and families, with the primary goal of preventing homelessness. For more information, contact Rev. Marti Keller at mkeller@uuca.org or (404) 634-5134x215.



Overview of Family Ministry Teams

Family Ministry Teams engage all parents with children and youth enrolled in Religious Education classes and childcare and are designed to foster community and actively support the work of our cooperative program.

All families registering children and youth automatically become a member of a Family Ministry Team, joining in fellowship with other families to support classes and special events by donating time and energy. Families with multiple children will be assigned to appropriate grade based teams.

Family Ministry Teams provide a wonderful way to meet new people and strengthen the bonds of friendship within our faith community. Just as importantly, Family Ministry Teams insure that programs run smoothly and that special events take place without a hitch.

For those who believe their special ministry to the congregation is in the area of leadership, consider becoming a **Class Parent**. For more information, contact RE Staff for details.

Goals of Family Ministry Teams



- To provide families with opportunities to build meaningful relationships with each other through intentional conversations, social gatherings and community service projects that take place outside of busy Sunday mornings.
- To help parents understand their shared role in participating in the RE program.
- To develop lay leaders and help parents find a sense of purpose and place in the UUCA community, and become actively engaged in events.
- To ensure that volunteer duties and responsibilities are shared by many rather than carried out by few.
- To support parents in their role as primary religious educators (children and youth are only in RE classes a maximum of 38 hours in a year if they attend every RE class during the school year and during the summer).

The Children's Ministry Team

Ministry and Expectations

Mission:

To join with the RE Staff to foster the spiritual growth of children and families and to build an intergenerational faith community in covenant with one another.

Ministry:

The primary ministry of this team is in coaching and mentoring Religious Education Teachers and Class Parents in grades Pre-K through 6th grade to ensure opportunities for deepening relationships and successful execution of all events and activities. Additionally, your ministry is in helping to build an ongoing community of leaders within the Religious Education program.

Expectations:

- With RE Staff, host orientation/training event for Religious Education program volunteers at the RE Volunteer training in the fall.
- Help plan Orientation events for families.
- Help with Sunday morning greeting at RE Information desk.
- Communicate with Religious Education Teachers and Class Parents throughout the year, to check plans and progress on all events/activities and prior to Children's Ministry Team meetings.
- Work with RE Staff on volunteer recruitment.

- Regularly report progress on plans, issues and/or concerns to the appropriate RE Staff member.
- Understand operations of the RE Program sufficient to answer questions, guide Class Parents and ensure successful execution of all events and activities.
- Identify future potential members for the Children’s Ministry Team.
- Gather and organize feedback on ministry and program to facilitate continuous improvement.

Class Parents

Ministry and Expectations

Ministry:

Your primary ministry is in creating a small community with the Parents of enrolled children by getting to know them, creating opportunities for sharing of experiences, etc. You will focus on facilitating opportunities for meaningful dialogue and social interaction among parents of children in each class. In addition, you will organize (and remember to delegate) the execution of a special event or activities associated with the Religious Education class.

Expectations:

- Organize a beginning of year kick-off class gathering to engage class families, set tone for participation, and explain expectations for assigned events/activities.
- Coordinate class projects including a UUCA service project and 1-2 social events.
- Contact enrolled families regularly to check in and see how things are going and to build relationships in your small community.
- Coordinate end of year thank you card/gifts for teachers (also nice to recognize their birthdays).
- Maintain regular contact with RE staff and Children's Ministry Team, especially about any joys, concerns, or pastoral care needs (maintain confidentiality) of class families that may require support or recognition.
- Ensure new visitors and new members are welcomed into community.

Class Parent Outline

Classes are grouped by grade level, based on each child’s age as of September 1 (in accordance with the Georgia school system). Preschool through 5th grade classes meet at each service (9:30 and 11:15); there may be multiple classes based on enrollment. Classes are expected to organize several events including a **UUCA service project** and a service project for the wider community. Additional social events are encouraged!

UUCA Service Projects

The UUCA service project is a way for our children to give back to the congregation and for families to build community

| Class | UUCA Service Project | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| PreK (3-4yrs) | Organize the Night Tree event | Early/Mid December |
| K-1 st | Organize UNICEF collections | Late October |
| 2 nd -3 rd | Organize Children and Youth Art Show | February |
| 4 th -5 th | Organize Pancake Supper | Mid February |
| 6 th | Organize UUSC “Guest at Your Table” | Mid/Late November |
| 7 th | Organize food barrel collections | Throughout Year |
| 8 th (CoA) | Organize Easter morning breakfast | Easter Sunday |
| 9 th -12 th | Organize Easter Egg Hunt | Easter Sunday |

Social Events

Social events are an opportunity to build a small community of families within the class. Social events can be planned around a service project; for example, having lunch before an event or project. One event should be:

- A gathering early in the Religious Education year. The Children’s Ministry Team will start by organizing Family Orientations by class groups at the beginning of the first semester.

Examples of other events include:

- Picnic at park
- Potluck (at class member's family home or UUCA)
- Holiday party
- End of year or graduation party
- Game Night (at class member's family home or UUCA)

Social Justice Project

There are several social justice projects that all Family Ministry Teams can participate in as well as opportunities on “Kids Together” days (i.e. Sunday after Thanksgiving, Sunday after Xmas, Sunday after Easter). Some past examples: Martin Luther King Jr march, Decatur Cooperative Ministry meals, IRC “gift trees” in December. Additionally, the Tapestry of Faith curricula being used in K through 6th grades include “Faith in Action” ideas for short or longer term service projects that tie to the class themes. These are available online at <http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/index.shtml>.

Planning Class Gatherings

Objective: Build meaningful community among class families and to have fun!

Description: An enjoyable gathering with families in each RE class.

Staffing: Class Parents can decide to hold grade level gathering to include both 9:30 and 11:15 classes or have separate gatherings.

Tasks:

- Divide up the tasks.
- Who will create and mail invitations?
- Who will be responsible to follow-up with a reminder email to everyone?

- Who will follow-up with phone calls to those who forget to RSVP?
- Who will be responsible for decorations?
- Set up? Clean up?

Tip: When asking for help, a specific request will get a better response than a general appeal.

Calendar:

Month Before

- Discuss options with RE Staff and decide on a date, time and location.
- **Location.** Providing hospitality in a private home fosters a sense of intimacy among those in attendance. The Social Hall at UUCA is an option too. If the event is to be held at UUCA, reserve the room as far in advance as possible. Check with RE Staff on the availability of rooms for several different dates so you have a few dates to choose from.
- **Attendees.** Decide whether to invite families or adults only (remember to provide childcare). If children are included, after the event engage them in games, videos or some other activity so the adults can visit with each other. Your class roster will provide you the names of all families with children registered in your child's class – check with the RE Staff to make sure that the roster is up to date. Families who are new to UUCA will especially appreciate an opportunity to get to know other families.
- **Food.** Decide on food: potluck, catered or a meal prepared by a group in your own kitchen or at UUCA? Each has pros and cons. Potluck ensures that everyone can contribute; the menu will be varied so everyone will find something they enjoy, and serving dish clean-up will be shared. Ask everyone to clearly label their food including all ingredients. A meal prepared by a group in your own kitchen or in the UUCA kitchen will strengthen friendships among those involved in preparing the meal. If using UUCA's kitchen, remember to reserve the kitchen. A catered meal requires planning and research. It may require less effort to prepare but likely will be more expensive. Regardless of whether you cook or cater, be sure to solicit participant's dietary restrictions before planning the menu.

- **Beverages.** In recognition that some members of our community may be in recovery and several are under the age of 21, you are encouraged not to serve alcohol when minors are present. If you do plan to serve alcohol, please make sure to indicate so on the invitation and remember to provide plenty of tasty alternatives to alcoholic beverages.

3 Weeks Before Gathering

- Create & send out invitations *at least* three weeks prior to the event. Make sure that the invitations state “RSVP **by** (at least a week in advance of the event)”.

1-2 Weeks Before Gathering

- Follow-up with phone calls to those who forget to RSVP
- Plan age-appropriate activities for children as needed
- If needed, complete individual online UUCA childcare request forms
- If your dinner will be held at UUCA, you may request that tables and chairs be set up when you complete a Room Set Up Request form. Since UUCA is a green sanctuary, we encourage the use of UUCA’s dishes and flatware rather than disposables. Talk to RE Staff if you would like to hire a dishwasher for the event.

Day of Gathering

Decorations and set-up – 3 to 4 people to:

- Set out food, dishes and flatware
- Make lemonade or other drinks and keep stocked
- Clean up – 4 to 5 people to leave all rooms the way you found it or better
- Wash and put away pots, pans, dishes and flatware

- Clean dishwasher/disposal and sink areas
- Turn off all lights

Communications:

Sample Email Reminder for Class Gathering

Greetings Families:

We would like to invite the families of our UUCA Family Ministry Team to a Potluck Dinner.

The dinner will be held on Sunday, _____ from
Day/Date

_____ to _____ at _____.
start time end time location

After dinner, children will _____ in the
Activity

_____ from _____ - _____ while their
Location start time end time

responsible adults get to know each other.

Please RSVP by _____ with number of attendees
Date

and what you would like to bring for the Potluck dinner.

Hope to see you there!

Focusing the Group and Guiding Conversations

Following are suggestions for an opening prayer, discussion topics and a closing reading or prayer. Also feel free to use your own favorites or contact the RE Staff for other resources. Experience shows clearly that these elements are helpful in facilitating a meaningful evening for your guests.

Grace before the meal:

Grace #1

THE BREAD WE SHARE IS SACRED.

grain, gift of the earth, gives life

THE FRIENDSHIP WE SHARE THIS DAY IS SACRED.

all gatherings when people meet and touch celebrate life

THE LAUGHTER WE SHARE THIS DAY IS SACRED.

joy and sorrow that rises from love

are springs of life

THE STILLNESS WE SHARE THIS DAY

IS SACRED.

In this peace is a haven for the spirit

which nurtures life

FOR BREAD, FOR FRIENDS,

FOR JOY AND SORROW,

FOR THE COMFORT OF QUIETNESS,

LET US BE GRATEFUL AND CARING

~Rudolf Nemer

Grace 2

May we be inspired with gratitude for the wondrous gifts that are ours and be filled with the resolve to share them with all who are in need.

May we hold precious one another, and the world which provides us with sustenance and beauty.

And may a song of thanksgiving be on our lips to the creator and sustainer of life.

~Marta M. Flanagan

Grace 3

Loving spirit, be our guest,
Dine with us, share our bread,
That our table might be blessed
And our souls be fed.

~Gary Kowalski

Facilitating Intentional Conversation

- ★ Introduce yourself and tell the story of how you found this faith. Invite others to do the same.

Suggested Questions to Continue the conversation:

- ★ What do you want your child/ren to take away from the RE Program at UUCA?
- ★ How has being a care-giver shaped your spiritual growth?
- ★ How could this gathered community help and support you as a caregiver?
- ★ Is anything going on in your family you'd like us to know about or help with?

PLEASE SHARE RESPONSES WITH THE RE STAFF AFTER THE EVENT.

Suggestions for Closing Reading or Blessing

Reading 1

May we find what is good in us.

May we use what is good in us.

May we share what is good in us with one another.

~Donald T. Marshall

Reading 2

The blessing of truth be upon us,

The power of love direct us and sustain us,

And may the peace of this community preserve our going out and our coming in, from this time forth, until we meet again.

~Duke T. Gray

Reading 3

And now, may we have faith in life to do wise planting that the generations to come may reap even more abundantly than we.

May we be bold in bringing to fruition the golden dreams of human kinship and justice.

This we ask that the fields of promise become fields of reality.

~V. Emil Gudmundson

Reading 4

Connections are made slowly, sometimes they grow underground. You cannot tell always by looking what is happening. More than half a tree is spread out in the soil under your feet.

Penetrate quietly as the earthworm that blows no trumpet. Fight persistently as the creeper that brings down the tree. Spread like the squash plant that overruns the garden. Gnaw in the dark and use the sun to make sugar.

Weave real connections, create real nodes, build real houses. Live a life you can endure: make love that is loving.

Keep tangling and interweaving and taking more in, a thicket and bramble wilderness to the outside, but to us, interconnected with rabbit runs and burrows and lairs.

Live as if you like yourself, and it may happen.

Reach out, keep reaching out, keep bringing in.

This is how we are going to live for a long time: not always, for every gardener knows that after the digging, after the planting, after the long season of tending and growth, the harvest comes.

~ Marge Piercy

Sample Initial Class Leader Communication

Hello everyone and welcome to the new year of Religious Education at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta. It was great to see all the children this past Sunday and the first class was a rousing success.

I'm the Class Parent this year and I promise not to inundate you with e-mails. I'll send a few, which will be full of information and worth reading, but you won't get them often from me. I appreciate the time you will take to read the ones I send.

As you might know, UUCA embraces the philosophy that ministry is a shared endeavor. To that end, we all belong to the Family Ministry Team associated with the classes in which our child/ren are enrolled. The purpose of the Family Ministry Teams is to offer us opportunities to connect with each other on a deeper level and broaden our sense of community throughout UUCA. In addition to our shared faith, we have another source to connect around – our similarly aged children. Thus, it makes sense that we might all begin with this common connection.

Our _____ grade Family Ministry Team has a few things to accomplish this year:

1. **Two gatherings to strengthen our community of children and adults.** (*Choose these gatherings yourself (what works for you) or through a consensus of members of the team. We encourage you to make these outings/gatherings fun as well as meaningful.*)
2. **The class UUCA service project.** Information about these service projects can be found under each class heading.

3. **A social justice project.** As a Family Ministry Team, we're required to participate in at least one social justice project which benefits an organization needing our assistance.

Thanks and see you soon!



All Parents

Ministry and Expectations

Ministry:

Your ministry is in extending the hand of fellowship to other parents while supporting the programs and special events of your child's religious education in our cooperative program.

Expectations:

- The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta Religious Education program is a cooperative program between the parents of children enrolled in the religious education program and UUCA RE Staff.
- Connect with other parents in your child's class by participating in the special events and activities associated with the Religious Education Program.
- Actively participate in the planning and execution of your child's class project for the year, meeting with Parent Coordinators and others, to realize successful completion of your event/activity.
- Act as "Classroom Helper" in your child's class on your scheduled Sunday morning (once a month).

Sign Up

Because every family is expected to participate in the RE Program at some level, you become a member of the Family Ministry Team when you enroll your child/children in the RE Program. Should you desire a higher level of participation/leadership, consider becoming a Parent Coordinator, RE teacher, or

Youth Advisor. You are also encouraged to ask about joining the Children's or the Youth Ministry Teams.

District Sponsored Mountain Cons

We'll have an opportunity to attend overnight conferences(con) at The Mountain this RE year. If your children haven't attended a CON before, I really recommend it. We'll also need parent chaperones for these conferences. We expect children to attend UUCA Religious Education classes regularly (minimal 50% in the 2 months leading up to the con).

More information can be found at <http://mountaincenters.org/pages/youth/youth-conferences.php>

When NOT to bring your child to RE

Health Guidelines: In order to minimize the transmission of communicable illnesses, we ask that if your child has any of the following conditions ze NOT attend RE class:

- Fever > 100 orally
- Runny nose (thick yellow or green discharge)
- Ear ache (until under treatment or identified as not contagious)
- Sore throat (if strep throat, must be under treatment for 24 hours or more)
- "Pink Eye" (must be receiving treatment for 24 hours or more)
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Head lice (must be "nit free")
- Cough (must be receiving treatment or improving)
- Draining sore or impetigo
- Chicken Pox (all spots must be completely scabbed over)
- Rash (must be receiving treatment or identified as NOT contagious)

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact the Religious Education Staff.

Preschool-Pre K (3-4 year olds)

Curriculum: Creating Home

This curriculum helps children develop a sense of home that is grounded in faith. By exploring the roles each of us play in the homes where we live, students will be introduced to the concept of a faith home. Like a family home, a faith home offers its members certain joys, protections, and responsibilities.

UUCA Service Project: Organize Night Tree holiday event

Objective: To celebrate the 7th UU Principle “Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.”

Description: This class organizes and hosts a congregation wide Night Tree Celebration by reading *The Night Tree* by Eve Bunting near a campfire and making wild animal friendly edible gifts to hang outdoors.

Date of Event: First or second Sunday in December (or choose an evening if that works better)

Staffing: Volunteers are needed to set-up, help children decorate, serve refreshments, read the story, and clean up.

Planning Timeline:

By the end of September:

- Confirm date with RE Staff
- Reserve space (back patio for making decorations, social hall & kitchen for refreshments and story telling, and Fern Creek for decorating)

One month before event

- Decide how many trees to decorate
- Assign supplies (Try to have enough supplies so that every child can make 2-3 ornaments. Every family participating should bring pinecones. Assign 3-

4 families to bring shortening or soy nut butter (no peanut butter), bagels, oranges, and popped popcorn; 1 family to bring needles, thread and yarn; 2 families to bring big bags of birdseed; 3-4 families to bring cookies; 2 families to bring hot chocolate mix and marshmallows; 2 families to bring napkins, paper towels, and old newspapers. Ask for 6-8 large trays/cookie sheets to transport decorations)

2-6 weeks before event

- Submit write-up to Weekly Update (weeklyupdate@uuca.org), UUCA Religious Education E-Newsletters and for an Order of Service Insert (coordinate with RE Staff)
- Make and distribute flyers to RE classrooms

1 week before event

- Follow-up with families about supplies
- Copy song sheets
- Enlist a volunteer to read the story (an older child is great)
- Confirm set up with UUCA Office (3-4 folding tables on back patio for assembling decorations and 1 table in social hall for refreshments). The fire-pit is stored in the shed on the playground.

Day of the event

- Order of events: Welcome, Make Decorations, Decorate Trees, Singing, Storytelling & Refreshments
- Tables should each be designated “pine cone” table, “bagel” table, “stringing popcorn and oranges” table. Encourage participants to start at one table and rotate through stations.
- Assign at least 1 adult who knows how to make ornaments to each table. Have additional helpers stay with groups of children.

- PLEASE TAKE LOTS OF PICTURES and send a copy to RE Staff. Do not post pictures of children other than your own on social media websites or in public photo albums.
- Welcome children and make sure the purpose of these decorations is clear – to decorate trees for our friends in nature... “who can tell me our 7th principle?” ... great opportunities for discussion arise while making these decorations.
- Everyone helps to carry the decorations down to designated location (Fern Creek, garden, playground) and put decorations on trees. Sing a song to our animal friends.
- Gather in social hall for refreshments and storytelling
- Clean-up: Sweep off patio, wipe down tables, wash all dirty dishes, and make sure tables are cleaned and fold up tables and leave them leaning against wall.

After Event

- Review checklist and make suggestions for next year

Supply List – NO NUTS OF ANY KIND!

Decorations:

- bird seed
- pinecones
- Shortening (Crisco) or soy-based or sunflower seed butter (NO PEANUT BUTTER)
- bagels
- popcorn
- oranges
- needles and thread

Tree-Trimming:

- Yarn to hang items on tree
- Song sheets
- Large trays for transporting decorations

Refreshments:

- Hot chocolate mix
- Marshmallows
- Cookies

Other Supplies:

- The book The Night Tree (available in RE Staff office) – preferably 2 copies, one to read and one to show those not close to the reader
- Outdoor firepit (stored in shed)

Communications: Promote in RE handouts, weekly update, UUCA Religious Education E-Newsletters, and in an order of service insert.

Sample announcement in newsletter and Weekly update:

All are welcome to join the preschool family ministry team for a special holiday tradition UUCA’s annual “Night Tree” celebration will be on Sunday, December _____, from 4 to 6 p.m. Celebrate the beauty of the season by giving back to nature. We will read a special book by a campfire and make edible gifts for the animals, which we will hang outdoors. For more information or to volunteer to bring materials such as suet, birdseed, popcorn or berries, please contact _____.

Kindergarten-1st Grade (5-6 year olds)

Curriculum: Wonderful Welcome

Wonderful Welcome 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.

UUCA Service Project: Organize UNICEF collection

Objective: Raise money for UNICEF

Description: On the last Sunday in October, we invite all children and youth to wear costumes and Trick or Treat for UNICEF after each service. Some children choose to take UNICEF boxes home to use on Halloween and return boxes on the following Sunday.

Date of Event: Last Sunday in October

Staffing: Volunteers will be needed to: staff table in the social hall after each service on date of event, coordinate with Religious Education Teachers to hand out boxes during class, collect boxes/money at the subsequent Sunday services, and cash in coins at CoinStar™.

Planning Timeline:

Summer

- Order UNICEF boxes (RE Staff responsibility)

September (month before event)

- Submit write-up to Weekly Update (weeklyupdate@uuca.org), UUCA Religious Education E-Newsletters and for an Order of Service Insert (coordinate with RE Staff) Develop a flyer to distribute in RE classes

Week before event

- Get a couple of rolls of quarters to make change for adult congregants who may forget to bring change. (You can reimburse yourself at the end of the day Sunday)
- Get candy to give as reward to children when they return the UNICEF Boxes. (Sugar-free Lollipops are recommended (no candy containing nuts) – submit your receipt to RE Staff for reimbursement)
- Make a poster that says “Trick or Treat for UNICEF”

Trick or Treat Sunday

- Set up table
- Get extra UNICEF boxes to put out on table
- Staff table after each service (2 volunteers each time)
- Collect all paper money and checks from boxes and put in envelope for RE Staff to deposit (RE Staff will write voucher for UNICEF)

Next Sunday

- Retrieve UNICEF boxes from RE Staff after each service.
- Collect all paper money and checks from boxes and put in envelope for RE Staff to deposit (RE Staff will write voucher for UNICEF)
- Take all change to a CoinStar™ machine (grocery stores have them) and donate coins to UNICEF. Give the receipts to RE Staff.
- If boxes can be opened without damage, we can use them again – give them to RE Staff. Otherwise recycle them.

After Event

- Review checklist and make suggestions for next year

Communications: Promote in RE handouts, Weekly update, UUCA Religious Education E-Newsletters, and in an order of service insert.

Sample newsletter and Weekly update submission:

TRICK OR TREAT FOR UNICEF: Did you know that 376 million children around the world have to walk more than 15 minutes to get a drink of clean water? Or that 121 million children don't go to school? Or that 1 out of every 6 children doesn't get the food needed to be healthy? UNICEF (the United Nations Children's Fund) is working in 156 countries to provide health care, clean water, nutrition, and education to children and their families. By Trick-or-Treating for UNICEF, you can help children around the world, too! On the last Sunday in October, Our K/1 Family Ministry Team is organizing this year's *Trick or Treat for UNICEF* in the Social Hall after each service. Children (of all ages) are invited to come in costume and pick up a UNICEF box during Religious Education classes. Learn more at www.unicefusa.org

Sample email to class families for volunteer sign-up:

On the last Sunday in October, the UUCA K/1 Family Ministry Team is organizing this year's *Trick or Treat for UNICEF* service project.

We need your help! If you would like to help, please reply to this email and let me know what you would like to do. Here are the tasks that make this event possible:

- Make poster(s)
- Staff table after each Sunday service (2 after each service)
- Coordinate handing out boxes in RE classes during Sunday service (4 each service)
- Collect boxes/money first Sunday
- Collect boxes/money second Sunday
- Cash in coins

2nd-3rd Grade (7-8 year olds)

Curriculum: Faithful Journeys

This program offers students an opportunity to embark on a pilgrimage of faith, exploring how Unitarian Universalism translates into life choices and everyday actions. Each session brings examples of Unitarian Universalist faith in action through historic and contemporary stories.

UUCA Service Project: Organize Children and Youth Art Show

Objective: To celebrate the creativity of UUCA's children and youth.

Description: Each year the children and youth display their artwork in UUCA's art gallery. Volunteers hang the artwork and children and youth supply the creations.

Date of Event: February 2012

Staffing: Volunteers are needed to supervise (optional) art workshops in January, install exhibits, type up exhibit descriptions, and take down exhibits.

Planning Timeline:

September-December

- Encourage teachers to save favorite art projects for display in the art show.
- Brainstorm with RE Staff to decide on theme, activities, special art sessions, reception

December

- (optional) Plan art workshops and reserve space so children and youth can work on pieces for the show

- Submit write-up requesting volunteers and artwork to Weekly Update (weeklyupdate@uuca.org), UUCA Religious Education E-Newsletters and for an Order of Service Insert (coordinate with RE Staff) Develop a flyer to distribute in RE classes
- Check with RE Staff to get list of people who agreed to be an art resource

January

- (optional) Hold art workshops
- Begin scheduling definite volunteers
- Follow-up on volunteer tasks
- Request large display panels from storage
- Send reminders for volunteers and artwork
- Generate signage and brochures
- Plan to put artwork up after the second service on the final Sunday in January.

February

- Final set-up
- Plan to take artwork down after the second service on the final Sunday in February.
- Submit write-up to remind families to pick up artwork for the Weekly Update (weeklyupdate@uuca.org), UUCA Children's E-News and for an Order of Service Insert (coordinate with RE Staff). Develop a flyer to distribute in RE classes
- Donate artwork not picked up by mid-March to pastoral care visiting team
- Clean-up

After Event

- Review Children and Youth Art Show Checklist and make suggestions for next year

Notes:

In storage are FoamCore panels with attached hanging hardware (wooden support and wire hanger attached to the back) designed to fit the wall space in the UUCA art gallery. We can reuse them indefinitely if we are careful. Sizes available: 10 40”x60” panels; 8 20”x40” panels and 24 20”x30” panels.

Communications: Promote the Art Show through the RE handouts, the UUCA Religious Education E-Newsletters, Weekly update, signage throughout UUCA and in an order of service insert.

Sample emails calling for volunteers

The UUCA Children and Youth Art Show will begin next month, and we are seeking volunteers to help organize and hang artwork.

In addition to a call for artwork, much help is needed putting up and taking down the display.

The final art workshop will be _____. Volunteers are needed to work with UUCA children and youth to create art and to mount art on display boards. Masterpieces from home and school are welcome too. Please, include the child’s name and the title of the piece on the back. When possible, include a brief description of each piece.

On SUNDAY (date) at 5 pm we will start hanging the art throughout the UUCA building.

Let’s help our children and youth bring joy to UUCA through ART!

4th-5th Grade (9-10 year olds)

Curriculum (September-December): Windows & Mirrors

Windows and Mirrors uses a lens of Unitarian Universalist faith and social justice to look inward (mirrors) at self and outward at communities to which we belong (windows). The class addresses questions of: How do we experience true affiliation with others who may, at first, seem very unlike us? and How do we move out from “me” to “we?”

Curriculum (January-May): Toolbox of Faith

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 mirror (reflection), duct tape (flexibility), and a flashlight (justice).

UUCA Service Project: Organize the Pancake Supper

Objective: To serve the UUCA community by hosting a Wonderful Wednesday dinner and providing an opportunity for a multigenerational get-together.

Description: The Pancake Supper began at UUCA as a Pancake Breakfast many years ago. When UUCA added RE classes at the second service, we switched to a Wonderful Wednesday Pancake Supper so that all families could attend. In 2009 we changed the Pancake Supper menu from previous years in order to have a more sustainable meal. This means using less processed foods, using local, organic, and seasonal ingredients where possible, and eating less meat. The menu should include pancakes (making our own), maple syrup and honey, vegetable frittata, vegetable quiche, bacon, apple crisp, and yogurt.

Date of Event: First Wednesday of Lent

Staffing:

Volunteers are needed to:

- Flip pancakes
- Cook and bring frittata (egg and vegetable omelets)
- Cook and bring vegetarian quiche
- Cook and bring bacon (including vegetarian bacon options)
- Create and assemble fruit salad (optional)
- Cook and bring apple crisps
- Help clean up.

We need 1 head chef, 4 kitchen helpers, two set-up people, two servers, one money-taker, 4 cleanup people, 12 apple crisps, and 24 frittata.

Head chef (1) – to coordinate kitchen

Kitchen help (4) – to arrive by 5 pm

Set-up (2) – to set up food for serving tables, arrive at 5:15

Servers (2) – to keep tables straight and well-stocked, arrive at 5:45

Money taker (1) - Wonderful Wednesday coordinator will provide cash box and check writing procedures, arrive by 5:45 pm

Clean-up (4) – to come in at 6:45 to wash serving dishes, utensils, clean area and check out with Wonderful Wednesday coordinator

Planning Timeline:

December

- Finalize menu (see sample menu)
- Submit write-up to request helpers (if needed) in Weekly update, UUCA Religious Education E-Newsletters, and Order of Service
- Contact Wonderful Wednesday coordinator to receive information about kitchen.

January

- Submit request for volunteers (if needed) in Weekly update and in the Children's e-news
- Discuss with 4th/5th grade classes allocation of funds raised (approx \$300-\$350 in the past) – get ideas from the RE Staff about how to tie into the curriculum.
- Make assignments and follow-up with helpers. Some may have done specific jobs in past years and may want to do same again. Ask! See Staffing list.

1-2 Weeks before Event

- Submit publicity for dinner in Weekly update, UUCA Religious Education E-Newsletters, and as an insert in the Order of Service
- Confirm money collection procedures with Wonderful Wednesday coordinator and volunteers
- Request childcare for volunteers who need early childcare (if needed)

Day of Event

- Preheat oven for cooking meats and for warming food
- Make pancake mix
- Warm frittata in oven
- Warm quiche in oven
- Start cooking pancakes (by 5:15 pm) and keep warm in oven
- Wash and prepare fruit
- Cook bacon (and vegetarian meat option)
- Set out yogurt, butter, margarine, syrup, and fruit on serving tables in social hall
- Make and set out labels for vegetarian and meat items at serving window
- Set out first supply of bacon, pancakes and frittata at serving window

- Open food lines between 6:00 and 6:15
- Keep food well-stocked
- Make sure helpers have dinner
- Announce/sell any left over food
- Set out dessert
- Clean up (leave kitchen as you found it)
- Pay dishwasher, reimburse grocery buyers out of proceeds. Determine profit and give 10% to Wonderful Wednesday coordinator. Give remainder to RE Staff to deposit.

After Event

- Send thank you notes to all volunteers
- Review Pancake Supper checklist and make suggestions for next year

Recipes:

Frittata

Ingredients

4 tablespoons olive oil
 1 cup thinly sliced onions
 3 medium zucchini, thinly sliced
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1/8 teaspoon pepper
 5 eggs
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 Pinch of pepper
 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese (optional)

Instructions

1. Heat in a large skillet over medium heat: 2 tablespoons olive oil

2. Add and cook, stirring, until golden brown: 1 cup thinly sliced onions
3. Add and cook until lightly browned, about 10 minutes: 3 medium zucchini, thinly sliced
4. Season with: 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper
5. Transfer the vegetables to a strainer to drain off the excess oil. Let cool completely.
6. Preheat the broiler.
7. Meanwhile, in separate bowl beat together until smooth: 5 eggs, 1/2 teaspoon salt and a pinch of pepper
8. Add the cooled zucchini and onion mixture along with: 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese (optional)
9. Heat in a large, ovenproof skillet over medium heat: 2 tablespoons olive oil
10. When skillet is hot, pour in egg mixture. Reduce heat and cook until the bottom is set, then place under the broiler for 30 to 60 seconds to finish cooking. Loosen the frittata with a spatula and slide it onto a plate.
11. Note: One cup of any seasonal, cooked vegetables can be substituted for the onion and zucchini.

Apple Crisp

Ingredients:

- 8 medium apples (about 2 1/2 pounds)
- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
8 tablespoons (1 stick) cold unsalted butter, cut into small pieces

Instructions:

Position a rack in the lower third third of the oven. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.

Have ready an unbuttered 2-quart earthenware or glass baking dish, 2 inches deep.

Peel and core:

8 medium apples (about 2 1/2 pounds)

Cut the apples in half and then into 1-inch chunks. Spread them evenly in the baking dish. Combine:

3/4 cup all-purpose flour

3/4 cup sugar

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

Add:

8 tablespoons (1 stick) cold unsalted butter, cut into small pieces

Using a pastry blender or 2 knives, cut the butter into the dry ingredients until the mixture resembles coarse breadcrumbs. Or do this with a mixer or in a food processor, taking care not to blend the butter too thoroughly. Scatter the topping evenly over the fruit. Tap the dish on the counter once or twice to settle in the crumbs. Bake until the topping is golden brown the juices are bubbling, and the apples are tender when pierced, 50 to 55 minutes.

Pancakes - twelve 5-inch cakes

Ingredients:

1 1/2 cups flour

3 tbsp sugar

1 1/2 tsp baking powder

1/2 tsp salt

1 1/2 cups milk

3 tbsp unsalted butter, melted
2 large eggs
1/2 tsp vanilla (optional)

Instructions:

Preheat griddle to 350 degree F, or medium heat. Whisk together in a large bowl: flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt. Whisk together in another bowl: milk, melted butter, eggs, and vanilla. Pour the wet ingredients over the dry ingredients and gently whisk them together, mixing just until combined. Spoon 1/3 cup batter onto the griddle for each pancake, nudging the batter into rounds. Cook until the top of each pancake is speckled with bubbles and some bubbles have popped open, then turn and cook until the underside is lightly browned. Keep warm in a 200 degree F oven.

Communications: Promote in RE handouts, Weekly update, UUCA Religious Education E-Newsletters, and as an insert in the Order of Service as appropriate.

Sample announcement in newsletter and Weekly update:

This year UUCA's 4th and 5th grade Family Ministry Team service project is the Pancake Supper on Wednesday, ----- . This date was chosen because it is the last Wednesday before Lent, and in honor of International Pancake Day. Legend has it that people used up rich ingredients which were forbidden during Lent such as oil and sugar to bake pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. Our class will donate the proceeds to _____. We hope you can join us for dinner. Volunteers are needed to flip pancakes, cook and bring food, and to help clean up. If you can help, please contact _____. We need 4 kitchen helpers, two set-up people, two servers, one money-taker, 4 cleanup people, 12 apple crisps, and 24 frittata. The Pancake Supper menu uses less processed foods, instead using local, organic, and seasonal ingredients where possible, resulting in a tasty meal. The menu will include UUCA made pancakes from scratch, maple syrup and honey, vegetable frittata, vegetarian quiche, bacon, soy bacon, fruit salad, apple crisp, and yogurt.

Sample email to class parents for volunteer sign-up:

Our 4th and 5th grade RE class UUCA service project this year is the Pancake Supper on Wednesday, _____. This event is always greatly anticipated and well attended. It's been done so many times before that we have the benefit of a fabulous list of instructions, a precise shopping list, easy-to-follow recipes, and a clear event check list. All we have to do is follow the directions, serve the hungry masses, sit back and take in all the praise.

We need folks for the following activities:

Coordinate workers and communicate with the Wonderful Wednesday coordinator (arrange timing and people for setting up, kitchen help, and clean-up folks). Basically, over see the big picture and keep it all moving forward.

Head Chef – coordinate kitchen and serving of all food/drinks/etc.

Make one (or more) of 24 vegetable frittatas. (to arrive by 4:45 or earlier in the day)

Four folks are needed for kitchen help. The head chef will tell you what to do and when to do it to keep the food on track. Kitchen help volunteers just need to enjoy laughing with fellow parents, be able to work a griddle/oven, and move easily around a crowded room. You need to arrive by 4:45 to start cooking.

Two folks for set-up staff. This is a great job to do with your children so an adult with a child or children would be perfect for this task. You simply ferry things out to the serving tables and make sure it's all in place. You need to arrive by 5:15.

Two servers. You stand at the kitchen window, dish out the delicious food and keep track of what you need more of so the kitchen help can

accommodate you. Often the set-up folks roll into the server role since the roles don't overlap. Let me know if you want to do either or both.

One money taker. (to arrive by 5:45)

Finally, we need **4 people to help clean-up.** These folks can arrive as late as 6:30 and will help clean the big items that can't fit in the dishwasher, wipe up the kitchen and leave it looking good.

Please let me know by Friday how you would like to participate. I will put together a final list and send it to everybody next week.

Sample email to participant families confirming final plans

Thanks to all our great families for volunteering to help with the Pancake Supper on Wednesday, _____! _____ will be the head chef.

All food and purchased groceries need to be in the UUCA kitchen by 4:45 for the cooking team

List all names and duties plus time frame

Let's be ready to start serving some pancakes at 6:00!

Sample thank you note to send to volunteers and newsletter after event

Thank you so much for making the Pancake Supper a success. We fed a full house and netted \$ for organization. The homemade frittata were fantastic and the pancakes perfect. On behalf of the 4th and 5th grade RE class and their families at UUCA – thank you!

6th Grade (11/12 year olds)

Curriculum: Compass Points

Compass Points gives students opportunities to discover what they believe about life's big questions, think independently, assume responsibility, make decisions, explore values and adopt the practice of radical hospitality. Students are exposed to Unitarian Universalist history, polity and theology in hopes that they will learn and express what Unitarian Universalism stands for.

UUCA Service Project: Organize Guest at Your Table collections

Objective: Through this special tradition, Unitarian Universalist communities celebrate the worth and dignity of all people and learn how to put these values into action.

Description: To collect money for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee by distributing and collecting Guest at Your Table boxes

Date of Event: Sunday before Thanksgiving through beginning of January and a pizza lunch in January to count the money.

Staffing: Volunteers will be needed to staff table and hand out boxes at Sunday service and collect boxes/money at Sunday services.

Planning Timeline:

October (month before event)

- Order Guest at Your Table boxes (RE Staff/UUCA UUSC representative's responsibility)
- Decide with UUSC representative a date to return boxes (and money)

- Submit write-up to weekly update, UUCA Religious Education E-Newsletters, via an order of service insert.
- Use materials to learn more about UUSC
- Have boxes on tables Wednesday nights
- Start organizing youth to give out boxes the Sunday before Thanksgiving.
- Submit table request at <http://www.uuca.org/quick-links/facility-usage/table-reservation-form> for a table after each service on the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

Sunday before Thanksgiving

- Decorate table
- Get extra Guest at Your Table boxes to put out on table
- Hand out boxes to people as they go into service (4 child volunteers)
- Staff table after each service (2 child/parent volunteers)
- Youth can visit other RE classes to explain project and distribute boxes

First or Second Sunday in January

- Collect Guest at Your Table boxes
- At pizza party, children count money and memberships. Give money to UUSC representative
- If boxes can be opened without damage, we can use them again – give them to the UUSC representative. Otherwise recycle them.

Communications: Promote in RE handouts, UUCA RE E-newsletters, and weekly update

Sample announcement

Our annual collective social justice spiritual practice of filling colorful Guest at Your Table boxes with coins, bills, and checks in support of our Unitarian Universalist human rights organization, the UU Service Committee, should be going full tilt now. Please remember to put your box in a prominent place in your home or workplace. If you don't yet have one, please ask. The UU Service Committee works in partnership with local grassroots community organizations in the United States and around the world as they confront unjust power structures and challenge oppressive policies. Current priorities are economic justice, humanitarian rights; defending civil liberties; and environmental justice. You are encouraged to consider joining the UUSC as a member by filling out the bottom of your box.

Sample newsletter/weekly update reminder announcement

We hope that your UU Service Committee “Guest at Your Table” boxes have overflowed with \$\$ donations for the work of our human rights organization. If you have not already done so, it's time now to convert those coins and bills to a check made out to the UUSC and indicate on the bottom of your box the level of membership you desire. Memberships are what create the collective strength of this key organization, fueled by your generous contributions. There will be a place inside the Sanctuary to place your box up until Sunday, _____.

7th Grade (12 year olds)

Curriculum: Neighboring Faiths

Neighboring Faiths is an updated version of “The Church Across the Street”, first published in 1947. As the world grows ever more connected never has it been more important to move beyond the recognition of religious diversity to an active engagement with that diversity, and to move beyond tolerance to an active search for understanding. This class involves visits to other faith communities throughout the year, which the class will plan together.

UUCA Service Project: Organize a collection for the food barrel

Objective: Raise awareness of the food barrel and contribute to the work of Decatur Cooperative Ministries “Project Take Charge”.

Description: Organize a collection/s for the food barrel.

Date of Event: Choose a month/s and theme for the collection (if desired), e.g. baby food or breakfast foods.

Staffing: Publicize food drive and Organize delivery of the food. Optional: Take a tour of Project Take Charge.

Calendar:

Month before event

- Develop a flyer to distribute as an insert in the order of service.
- Include information in weekly updates and UUCA’s RE e-newsletters.
- Arrange for a representative from Decatur Cooperative Ministries to talk to the group and/or consult with Rev. Marti Keller

During the collection:

- Monitor the barrel and arrange for pick-up (or delivery) of food to Project Take Charge

Communications: Create flyer for insert in order of service

Sample Communication:

As you may know, the 7th grade Family Ministry Team has taken on the task of replenishing Project Take Charge's cupboards! Project Take Charge is a program of the Decatur Cooperative Ministry, focused on helping families who are struggling to avoid homelessness. This group has struggled with bare cupboards, and they need our help. YOU can HELP by bringing in healthy, non-perishable food items and dropping them in the food barrel in the hallway near the social hall! This is an easy way to help fight hunger in our own backyard!

Thanks in advance for your help and support for this project. Feel free to print out the attached flier and put it on your fridge as a "friendly" reminder to remember this project the next time you head to the grocery store!!!

8th Grade (13 year olds)

Coming of Age

Curriculum: Coming of Age

The goal of this program is to help youth better appreciate Unitarian Universalism, their own beliefs and values, and how these intersect. Some elements of the program include developing a personal belief statement, a mentor program, social justice involvement, several retreats and special celebrations.

UUCA Service Project: Easter Sunday breakfast

Objective: To provide a service to the congregation and to raise funds for end of year service trip.

Description: Outline to be provided

Date of Event: Easter Sunday

High School (14-18 year olds) – Young Religious Unitarian Universalists

Curriculum: YRUU

The Youth Group is comprised of high school age youth (grades 9-12) who gather weekly for worship, fun, social action, and deepening relationships. It is an ongoing group that seeks to foster spiritual depth, clarify both individual and universal religious values and create a peaceful community on Earth. A part of the Unitarian Universalist youth movement, this group welcomes all high school students in our faith community.

Levels of participation:

Sunday morning classes – any UUCA youth in grades 9-12 are welcome to attend Sunday morning classes (which are more like meetings than classes).

Extra-curricula events & meetings – In order to attend any overnight or off-grounds trips, youth must be in compliance with the following expectations:

As Individual members:

Regularly attend & participate in weekly Sunday morning classes (at least 2 of the 4 classes preceding any given activity/overnight)

Attend UUCA Sunday morning worship at least once per month (unless teaching/helping in RE)

Adherence to the permission slip expectations, the Youth Group Covenant and (as appropriate) the activity/outing/Con covenant

As a group:

Complete at least 1 social justice project that focuses outside of the UUCA community. *Project possibilities include providing meals to homeless, river cleanup, etc.*

Complete at least 1 service project that benefits the UUCA community. *Project possibilities could be a yard clean-up day, painting a room, etc.*

Provide one worship service that is open to the entire FUSN community. *A date will be reserved in the Sunday morning worship schedule for a YG service.*

UUCA Service Project: Easter Egg Hunt

Objective: To provide a service to the congregation and to raise funds for end of year service trip.

Description: Planned by the YAC (Youth Adult Committee)

Date of Event: Easter Sunday

APPENDIX: General Information

COMMUNICATION

There are several ways to communicate with families and the wider UUCA community:

weeklyupdate@uuca.org noon on Tuesday please cc RE Staff

The Children and Youth Ministry e-newsletters are sent bi-weekly

Children's email mbishop@uuca.org and bgreve@uuca.org

Youth email dposs@uuca.org and bgreve@uuca.org

UUCA Announcements uuca_announcements@yahoo.com

To email parents in your particular class:

The rosters are updated every week and are available either printed in the RE Teacher's class binder and are posted electronically in the UUCA-RE yahoo group.

Uuca-re@yahoo.com