

**FIRST PARISH IN FRAMINGHAM**

**Religious Education  
Program for  
Children and Youth  
2010-2011**

*“The great end in religious education is not to stamp  
our minds upon the young, but to stir up their own.”  
- William Ellery Channing*

**Julie Porter,  
Director of Religious Education**

**The Reverend Kathleen Hepler,  
Senior Minister**

## **Welcome to the 2010-2011 church year!**

*Our cooperative religious education program provides a variety of religious experiences to guide faith development in children and youth. Through classes, worship, youth groups, choir, social action opportunities, and multigenerational events, children and youth have many opportunities to experience values basic to Unitarian Universalism. The values of freedom, reason, justice, courage, respect, hope and love are interwoven throughout the curricula. Classes and activities provide a safe place where young people can question and wonder, learn and grow, all the while being supported by a nurturing community.*

*As we guide them on their own spiritual paths, we hope children and youth gain an appreciation of and respect for the diversity of religious thought. They learn about religious ideas from many sources - our Jewish and Christian heritage, other world religions, UU history - and are guided in developing their own religious perspective so that they can lead honest and ethical lives. We explore with them a faith that can anchor them in times of trouble and lift them in times of joy. Everything we do in this program is grounded in our Unitarian Universalist principles and aims to develop Unitarian Universalist identity.*

*This pamphlet briefly describes the program we offer to our young people. We have provided the structure for a program of religious education and exploration, but the success of our program depends on our members and friends. Parents are expected to teach one semester every other year and participate in some aspect of the program every year. We encourage other parishioners to participate as well.*

*The RE program is thriving with vibrant children and adults. We look forward to another year of religious exploration, growth and learning.*

*Julie Porter*

## **WORSHIP AND CARING FOR OTHERS**

An important part of faith development in our young people is the experience of being together with others in the

church community at a special time and place for worship. Children in grades one through eight attend the first fifteen minutes of the Worship Service in the Meeting House with their families. Worshipful moments are also included in the classes.

Six Sundays during the year will be “Justice Sundays” for 4-year-olds through 8th graders. On these Sundays, we will put our UU faith into action while working on a project to help others.

## **CHILDREN’S CHOIR AND CHIME CHOIR**

The Children’s Choir is open to singers in grades 1-6. The Chime Choir is open to youth in grades 4-8. Rehearsals are held on Sundays between the two services, alternating monthly between the two choirs. Each choir performs 4 or 5 Sundays throughout the year and for special holiday services.

## **NURSERY**

Infant care is available for children under the age of two years. For the 9:15 service, hours are 9:00-10:30. For the 11:00 service, hours are 10:45-12:15.

## **CURRICULUM**

Our curriculum has been selected from materials created by the Unitarian Universalist Association, by Unitarian Universalists who have published independently, or by the Director of Religious Education.

### **EARLY PRESCHOOL (2- and 3-yr-olds as of Sept)**

#### EXPLORING OUR WORLD

Activities for this group include stories, crafts, music, snack and play time. Emphasis is on encouraging comfort and familiarity with the religious education environment.

### **PRESCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN**

#### FALL — WONDERFUL WELCOME

Part of the UUA’s *Tapestry of Faith* curriculum, this class explores how we welcome others into our lives (friends, family, animals, and even nature). Each week focuses on intangible gifts such as kindness, empathy, covenant, friendship and other “gifts” that they can’t see or touch, but that we can share with each other.

### *SPRING — TREASURE HUNTING*

Through crafts, songs, and stories, children explore the meanings behind our Unitarian Universalist principles. Some treasures to be discovered are the power of feelings, the joy of friendship and the excitement of searching for truth. Central to the curriculum is a treasure chest, to which an object symbolic of each week's lesson is added.

## **GRADES ONE AND TWO**

### *FALL — UU SUPERHEROES*

Tied directly into our UU principles, this course is a values-based UU identity curriculum. Children will hear stories of UU's who have acted with courage and wisdom to make the world a better place. Children will be encouraged to use their own "super powers" in living their lives, and as they do so, will grow both spiritually and ethically.

### *SPRING — HONORING MOTHER EARTH*

In this curriculum, we aim to instill a respect for the interconnectedness of all things and a sense of the sacredness of our earth. It includes an exploration of Native American spiritual traditions and beliefs and also experiences in nature such as watching spring emerge.

## **GRADES THREE AND FOUR**

### *HOLIDAYS AND HOLY DAYS*

This year-long program is based on the seasonal celebrations of various religions and cultures throughout the world. As the meaning behind each celebration is explored, the connection is made to our Unitarian Universalist faith. Students learn about several world religions over the course of the year.

## **GRADES FIVE AND SIX**

### *FALL — GOD IMAGES*

Students will become acquainted with some of the ideas of God which people use to explain their world. The curriculum includes images from the Judeo-Christian tradition, from other world religions and from modern science. Through drama, art, and discussion, students will have the opportunity to develop their own images about God. A field trip to a Hindu temple is included.

### SPRING — OUR UU FOREBEARS

Unitarian Universalists have been catalysts for progressive change and social justice throughout history. Through skits and stories, the students in this class learn about early pioneers of religious freedom and observe many ways in which individuals lived their religious beliefs. First Parish history is also part of the curriculum.

### **GRADES SEVEN AND EIGHT**

#### FALL - SOCIAL ACTION

Our opening words include "...and service is our prayer". To truly put this phrase into practice, this course will include a variety of social action projects, including a Hunger Banquet. Linking the projects with our UU principles, students will deepen their UU identity while learning to become social activists.

#### SPRING - WHAT I BELIEVE

This curriculum guides students along on their spiritual journeys. Students are given the chance to reflect on their UU identity, to explore their ideas and values, and to build a "spiritual tool kit" to help them in challenging times.

### **JUNIOR YOUTH GROUP (7th & 8th grades)**

This youth group meets on the first and third Wednesdays of the month from 6:00 to 7:30 for supper, service, and socializing. They will also meet occasionally for outside activities.

### **GRADES NINE THROUGH TWELVE**

#### Y.R.U.U. (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists)

The high school program is designed to facilitate the transition between the structured children's program and the self-directed church participation of the adult. The selection of group activities will be determined by the young people with guidance from their advisors. There will be opportunities for fellowship, learning, worship, leadership, and service. This group meets on Sunday evenings from 7:00 to 9:00.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL**

The Religious Education Council is responsible for the smooth running of the religious education program. It establishes policy and budget, sets goals, welcomes new families, decides on curricula, consults with the DRE and oversees the program throughout the year. Meetings are held monthly and are open to all parishioners. Council members welcome questions, suggestions, and feedback.

### **Council Members for 2010-2011**

Nancy Benton and Deb Doucette, Co-Chairs  
Kendall Chenoweth Shannon McDonald Joanne Sarkar  
Brad Goering Jan Miller Julia Schneiderman  
Tracy Marshall Donna Nelson Jennifer Walton

### **RE CALENDAR, 2010-2011**

Sept. 12 Opening Sunday, classes begin; RE  
Ice Cream Social Kick-off  
Sept. 26 \* Justice Sunday  
Oct. 10 \* Columbus Day Wkend, Special Activities  
Oct. 31 \* Justice Sunday  
Nov. 7 Multigenerational Harvest Festival,  
Undecorate the Tree begins  
Nov. 21 Justice Sunday  
Nov. 28 \* Thanksgiving Wkend, Special Activities  
Dec. 11 Advent Saturday  
Dec. 19 \* Holiday Multigenerational Worship Service  
Dec. 24 Evening Christmas Eve Services  
Jan. 9 Fall Semester Ends, Teacher Brunches  
Jan. 16 \* # Nick Page "Power Sing" for all ages  
Feb. 6 \* Justice Sunday  
Feb. 20 \* Presidents' Day Wkend, Special Activities  
Mar. 6 Teacher and Advisor Recognition  
Mar. 20 \* Justice Sunday, Multigenerational Event  
Apr. 17 \* Patriots' Day Wkend, Special Activities  
Apr. 24 \* Easter  
May 1 \* Multigenerational Earth Service  
May 15 \* Justice Sunday  
May 22 Eighth Grade Recognition, End of semester  
May 29 \*# Memorial Day Wkend, Special Activities  
June 5 \*# Flower Communion, Special Activities  
June 12 # Youth Sunday

\* - classes only for Early Preschool

# - one 10:00 service