

## “Living the Interdependent Web”

As Unitarian Universalists, our “seventh principle” calls for “respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.”

We’ll broadly and deeply explore what it means to respect, revere, and participate in the interdependent web.

Our curriculum and activities are structured across ages and grade levels to focus on this principle in ways that are holistic, multigenerational, and multidimensional.

Participants will have the opportunity to

- explore ideas,
- develop relationships,
- and put values into action.

Following the natural cycle of the year, our focus on the interdependent web includes five major sub-themes:

- I. The Growing Cycle  
(September - October)
- II. Water: Sustainer of Life  
(November – December)
- III. Energy, transformation, and conservation  
(January - February)
- IV. Growth and renewal  
(March - April)
- V. Environmental stewardship  
(May-June)

Curriculum Planning Team: Heather Brown, Susan Comstock, Valerie Curtis, Michael Drennan, Heike Eghardt, John Grant, Jen Meyer, Taryn Nelson Seawright, Rev. Connie Grant

## Sunday Morning Programming for 2016-2017

### Nursery (infants and toddlers)

Caregivers provide a safe and nurturing place for our youngest children.

### Preschool (three- and four-year-olds)

#### Kindergarten-First-Second Grades

#### Third-Fourth-Fifth Grades

“Living the Interdependent Web” is the focus of our learning and activities this year.

### Sixth-Seventh-Eighth Grades

“Popcorn Theology” uses recent films to explore ethical questions such as how the choices we make affect our lives and the lives of others and how truth and meaning relate to perspective and point of view.

### Senior High

Senior High Youth are supported and challenged as they discuss issues important in their lives and continue their commitment to their Unitarian Universalist faith and church community.

## Further opportunities for learning:

“Our Whole Lives” **sexuality education** offers an age-appropriate approach to sexuality education as part of the lifelong process of acquiring information and forming attitudes and values about identity and relationships, intimacy and health. Offered for Kindergarten-First Graders and Fourth-Fifth Graders on Sunday afternoons in February-March.

“**Journeys: Boston and Beyond**” focuses on participants’ own spiritual and religious journeys as Unitarian Universalists. The program culminates in the students’ preparation and presentation of credo statements, and the opportunity to take a trip to Boston to learn more about the historic roots of Unitarian Universalism. Offered for Seventh- and Eighth- Graders on Sunday evenings as scheduled from October-May.

## Curriculum Cycle

Future years may focus on the two other pillars of our seven Unitarian Universalist principles as part of a three-year cycle:

A free and responsible search for truth and meaning (our fourth principle)

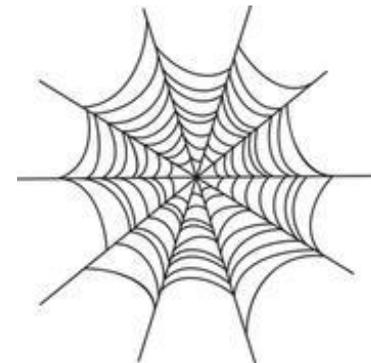
*Including such topics as the stories that shape us, myths, Christian and Hebrew scriptures, world religions, etc.*

The inherent worth and dignity of every person (our first principle)

*Including such topics as appreciating difference and diversity, racial justice, etc.*

Our Religious Education Program for Children and Youth is structured to be appropriate to developmental levels and to explore

- what it means to belong to this religious community
- Unitarian Universalist principles
- the natural world and our place in it
- our Jewish and Christian heritage
- the world’s religions
- ethics, decision making, and relationship building



## In our multigenerational religious community:

We cultivate spiritual awareness, joy and wonder through words, music, the arts and the natural world;

We foster intellectual excitement, lifelong learning, truth seeking, and respect for our traditions of reason and faith;

We build beloved community through inclusive welcoming, compassion, care, generosity and forgiveness. We create a supportive place to take risks and grow in service to others;

We are a people of diverse beliefs united in covenant. We develop relationships that open us to the lives of people in our congregation, community and world;

We act for peace and for social, economic, and environmental justice through study, advocacy and outreach.

## ***The great end in religious instruction...***

is not to stamp our minds upon the young, *but to stir up their own;*

not to make them see with our eyes, *but to look inquiringly and steadily with their own;*

not to give them a definite amount of knowledge, *but to inspire a fervent love of truth;*

not to form an outward regularity, *but to touch inward springs;*

not to bind them by ineradicable prejudices to our particular sect or peculiar notions, *but to prepare them for impartial, conscientious judging of whatever subjects may be offered to their decision;*

not to burden the memory, *but to quicken and strengthen the power of thought;*

not to impose religion upon them in the form of arbitrary rules, *but to awaken the conscience, the moral discernment.*

In a word, *the great end is to awaken the soul, to excite and cherish spiritual life.*

William Ellery Channing (1835)

## Calendar

Watch the Religious Education bulletin boards, the newsletter, and electronic announcements for information about special services, social action projects, and other community events. The Religious Education Calendar for the year is posted on the bulletin boards and on the website.

## Child Dedications

In this ceremony, the child's name is recognized, parents' hopes for their child are expressed, and the congregation dedicates itself to the well-being of the child and all the world's children. Dedications are performed on Christmas Eve and at other times by arrangement with the ministers.

## Congregational Involvement

As a community, we explore ideas and learn together. Our Religious Education Program for Children and Youth provides many opportunities for adults to engage in their own religious growth and learning while supporting that of our young people. Adults are needed to serve as volunteer teachers and classroom assistants, leaders and helpers for social and social justice activities and special projects.

## Enrollment and Visitors

Each child and youth who participates in our Religious Education Program must be registered each year. Forms are available at the Guest and Member Services Table in the lobby and at the Welcome Table on the lower level. Visiting children are always welcome to attend. Please see the Religious Education Greeter to have your questions answered and to be directed to the appropriate classroom.

## Expectations of Parents

There is no fee for participation in our Religious Education Program for Children and Youth. The program is supported by the congregation as a whole through our operating budget, and parents are encouraged to contribute as they are able through the annual pledge drive.

Parents are expected to support the Religious Education Program in which their children and youth participate by teaching classes and/or helping with other activities on a regular basis.

Parents of children who participate in Sunday morning programs are expected to remain in the church building, and are encouraged to participate in discussion groups, classes, and worship services.

## Social Action Involvement

Social action is integrated into many of our classes, and there are many opportunities for children and their families to participate in congregation-wide projects, including year-round Giving House donations; winter holiday Guest at Your Table and Mitten Tree programs; and fall and spring soup kitchens. Watch the newsletter and electronic announcements for opportunities.

## Worship Opportunities

Participation in worship provides an opportunity for children to celebrate and explore the mysteries of life and to experience and reflect on their connections within their religious community and to the universe.

Children and youth will begin in the sanctuary each week for the first part of the worship service before going to classes.

Periodically throughout the year, the whole community participates in Worship for All Ages, designed to engage children as well as adults. On these Sundays, all children and youth are invited to attend the worship service in the sanctuary with their parents. Themed worship services for all ages in fall and spring will help bring "the interdependent web" to life.

## Sunday Mornings at the Unitarian Church of Evanston

### 9:00 am-12:30 pm

- Childcare for infants and toddlers

### 9:15-10:15 am

- Worship Service

### 9:15-10:30 am

- Religious education classes  
Preschool (three- and four-year-olds)  
Kindergarten-First-Second Grades  
Third-Fourth-Fifth Grades

### 9:30-10:30 am

- Crackerbarrel discussion group

### 11:00 am-12 noon

- Worship Service

### 11:00 am-12:15 pm

- Religious education classes  
Preschool (three- and four-year-olds)  
Kindergarten-First-Second Grades  
Third-Fourth-Fifth Grades  
Sixth-Seventh-Eighth Grades

### 11:00 am-12:15 pm

- Senior High Youth Group

## Children/Youth Program Team

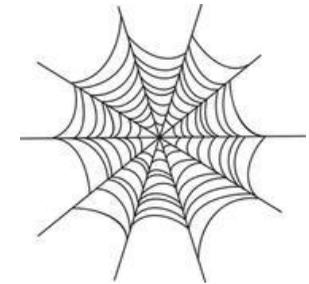
Christine Allender, youth program liaison  
Rachelle Brooks, Chair and program assessment  
Cathy Deamant, teacher liaison  
Sandy McNabb, "Our Whole Lives" program liaison  
Jen Meyer, social action involvement liaison  
Jessica Presto, multigenerational involvement liaison

## Rev. Connie Grant Minister for Lifespan Religious Education

847.864.1330 ext 103  
cgrant@ucevanston.org

# Religious Education for Children and Youth

September 2016 – June 2017



## "Living the Interdependent Web"

What does it mean to respect, revere, and participate in the interdependent web of all existence, of which we are a part?



## Unitarian Church of Evanston

1330 Ridge Avenue  
Evanston, IL 60201  
847.864.1330  
uce@ucevanston.org  
www.ucevanston.org