

Ministry of Religious Education Prospectus for Children and Youth

2011~2012



UNITARIAN CHURCH—GENEVA, 1842

Our Covenant (written in 1842)

Being desirous of promoting practical goodness in the world, and of aiding each other in our moral and religious improvement, we have associated ourselves – not as agreeing in opinion, not as having attained universal truth in belief or perfection in character, but as seekers after truth and goodness.

Unitarian Universalist Society of Geneva

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Prospectus for 2011~2012

From the LRE Ministry Staff:

Hello and welcome to the Lifespan Religious Education Program at the Unitarian Universalist Society of Geneva! This year, our church school theme is “UUs and the World.” Children and youth will be exploring various religions, cultures, and ideas through age-appropriate curricula to better understand themselves and their relationships with the world around them. Adults and teens will have the opportunity to develop and explore their own interests and spiritual beliefs in discussion groups and study groups offered throughout the year.

Want to get more involved? Special events such as Games Nights, Junior High Youth Group, OWL sessions, Youth Conferences, Social Activities for Families, and the Parents’ Group are all wonderful ways to meet others and have fun. Check the LRE bulletin board in the Common Room for dates and times of all LRE events.

Lastly, we are in the midst of a search for a Church School Administrator to help run our program. We expect that process to be complete within a few months, at which point we may need to do some adjusting and updating as we welcome our new staff person. In the meantime, please consider helping in any way you feel comfortable—our religious education is valuable to our congregation and your help is needed.

If you have any questions or concerns, please see Sandra Anderson-Cordogan (our LRE Committee Chair) or any LRE Committee Member. Feel free to contact us at LRE@uusg.org. We look forward to working with all of you!

Programs for Children and Youth

We believe in learning by doing, and therefore an important part of our religious education is participation in regular worship services. There, we learn about religion by *doing* religion. Your child will begin each Sunday morning in the Sanctuary, where children are invited to help ring the bell and light the chalice. Each service contains both a Song of Community and a message during the *For All Ages* time, selected with young people in mind. Your child will then depart the Sanctuary to learn and practice Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values with their peers for the remainder of their morning program.

It is during this weekly church and class time that your child internalizes our UU teachings and builds relationships with his/her UU community. Our adult volunteer teaching teams are working right now to develop their class plans for the year, so do make it a point to participate every week so you can take full advantage of this important opportunity for UU learning and community!

Nursery Care During Worship Services

Childcare is provided for infants, toddlers, and children through PreK or age four. On Sundays when there is no church school program, childcare is extended to include children through Kindergarten or age five. In a loving and safe environment, our very youngest children explore and play together. Stories, playtime, art projects, and snacks are a regular part of our Nursery Care time.

Intergenerational Worship Services

Intergenerational worship services occur multiple times throughout the year, giving people of all ages the opportunity to worship together. These services include presentations and activities especially for our young people, so you won’t want to miss them! Also, those leading the services are aware the Sanctuary will have a livelier dynamic with youth in the pews—the added excitement is expected and a part of the fun! There is no Church School on Intergenerational Worship Service Sundays.

Sunday Morning Schedule

Childcare is available for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers (or up through age 4) from 9:15am to 12:45pm.

Early service, 9:30 am – 10:45 am:

Program begins with worship in the Sanctuary.

After *For All Ages* time, Kindergarten through 5th graders depart the Sanctuary for RE Music and RE classes. Youth older than 5th grade remain in the Sanctuary for worship.

Parents retrieve Kindergarteners through 5th graders from their classrooms at 10:45am.

Please remember the teachers cannot leave until children are picked up.

Later service, 11:15 am – 12:30 pm:

Program begins with worship in the Sanctuary.

After *For All Ages* time, Kindergarten through 5th graders depart the Sanctuary for RE Music and RE classes. Youth in 6th through 12th grade depart Sanctuary and proceed to their classrooms.

Parents retrieve Kindergarteners through 5th graders from their classroom at 12:30pm.

Please remember the teachers cannot leave until children are picked up.

Youth in 6th through 12th grade are released to the Common Room at 12:30pm.

Please note that children are always welcome in the Sanctuary if they prefer to stay with their grown-up loved ones.

Religious Education Classes for Children and Youth

Each class is led by a team of adult teachers using standard Unitarian Universalist curricula. These volunteers are allowed flexibility in choosing material to present, based on the needs of their group. All parents are strongly encouraged to check in regularly with teachers. If you as parents know what was learned in class, you have the opportunity to reinforce these concepts at home during the week. Teachers can also convey the contributions your child makes to his/her religious education community.

You are welcome to look through the curriculum; please contact a member of the LRE Committee.

A map of the building is available in the Heritage Room (right inside the 110 S. 2nd Street entrance) or from Katie Phillips, our Congregational Administrator (office@uusg.org, 630-232-2350).

Our curricula and class locations for 2011-2012:

Grades	September to April	April to May	Summer
Pre-K	TBD (Nursery, MF-1)	Special Project	Nursery Care
Primary Gr.K,1,2	Stories About God (Potter Room, MF-2)	Special Project	Spirit Play
Elementary Gr.3,4,5	Holidays and Holy Days (Hawthorne Room, PH-24)	Special Project	Spirit Play
Jr. High Gr.6,7,8	Neighboring Faiths (Anthony Room, LL-S) Jr. High OWL-Gr.7-8 (overnights January through April)	Neighboring Faiths, continued	Coming of Age- Gr.8 graduates
YRUU Gr.9,10,11,12	7 Habits (or whatever the group is excited about!) combined with Habitat for Humanity (Serling Room, LL-W)		Sr. High OWL

2011-2012 UUSG Church School Calendar

August

29 Fall Teacher Start-Up Meeting

September

04 10am service - no RE classes
11 UUSG Picnic Wheeler Park - no RE classes
12 LRE Committee meeting
18 Homecoming Service- 1st day of RE Classes
return to 9:30 & 11:15 regular service schedule
25 RE class #2

October

02 RE class #3
08 Jr. High Youth Group, 6:30pm
09 RE class #4
10 LRE Committee Meeting
15 Games Night, 6:30pm
16 RE class #5
23 RE class #6
Coming of Age Services (6th gr -YRUU in Sanctuary)
OWL Parent meeting 12:30-2:00pm
30 Intergenerational Service
no RE for Prek-8th, YRUU may meet as scheduled*

November

06 RE class #7 - Daylight savings ends!
"LRE for UUSG"- sermon focus on LRE
11-13 Fall Con - YRUU in Wausau
12 Jr. High Youth Group, 6:30pm
13 RE class #8 - Veteran's Day Services
RE Music Sharing in Sanctuary (PreK-5th)
14 LRE Committee Meeting
19 Games Night, 6:30pm
20 Intergenerational Thanksgiving Service
no RE for PreK-8th, YRUU may meet as scheduled*
27 RE class #9 - Tree Trimming Party after services

December

04 RE class #10
10 Jr. High Youth Group, 6:30pm
11 RE class #11
12 LRE Committee Meeting
17 Games Night, 6:30pm
18 Intergenerational Service: Holiday Pageant (no RE)
25 **No services or classes**

January

01 Intergenerational Service
08 RE class #12
09 LRE Committee Meeting
14 Jr. High Youth Group, 6:30pm
15 RE class #13
21 Games Night, 6:30pm
22 RE class #14
29 RE class #15
30 Mid-year Teacher Meeting, 7:30-8:30pm

February

5 RE class #16
11 Jr. High Youth Group, 6:30pm
12 RE class #17
13 LRE Committee Meeting
18 Games Night, 6:30pm
19 RE class #18
26 RE class #19
YRUU Services (6th gr -YRUU in Sanctuary)

March*

04 RE Music Sharing in Sanctuary (PreK-5th)
RE class #20
10 Jr. High Youth Group, 6:30pm
11 RE class #21 - Daylight Savings begins today!
12 LRE Committee Meeting
17 Games Night, 6:30pm
18 RE class #22
25 RE class #23 - Last regular curriculum lesson
March 25 through April 1 Spring Break in the Tri-Cities

April

01 RE class #24 - Begin Spring Project lessons
08 RE class #25 - Easter Service (not Intergenerational)
09 LRE Committee Meeting
12 Jr. High Youth Group, 6:30pm
15 RE class #26
21 Games Night, 6:30pm
22 Intergenerational Service: Earth Day
29 RE class #27

May

06 RE class #28 - Naming and Dedication Services
(some children may miss class)
11 Teacher Wrap-Up Party @ Tracy's, 7:30pm
12 Jr. High Youth Group, 6:30pm
13 Intergenerational Service: Mother's Day
14 LRE Committee Meeting
19 Games Night, 6:30pm
20 RE class #29- Teacher Recognition during Services
27 Last Day of RE, class #30

June

03 Intergenerational: Flower Service, and HS & College
Graduation Recognition Ceremony
Coming of Age program begins (June thru Oct)

July

Spirit Play classes for grades Prek-5th
Habitat for Humanity trip - YRUU

Aug

Spirit Play classes for grades Prek-5th

*** YRUU: please check with your advisors and/or Facebook page to verify plans for these Intergenerational dates**

Curriculum Descriptions:

(These descriptions are adapted from the UUA's Curriculum Map on www.uua.org.)

Primary Group

(Grades K,1,2)

Stories About God: Looks at "God" as a central symbol for understanding human religiousness. This liberal and eclectic theology is story-based and covers three themes: God is a oneness that can take many forms; God is love and worth that can take many forms; and God is mystery that can take many forms. Theism and atheism are both addressed, as are the spiritual and theological needs of young children.

Elementary Group

(Grades 3,4,5)

Holidays and Holy Days: In this program, participants learn about the origins and meanings of holiday and holy day celebrations. The authors state, "Holidays are the natural, age-old vehicle of religious socialization. Their festivities tell a story which children absorb with delight, through experiences far more than through words. Decorations, colors, costumes, dances, lights, songs, foods, festivity, gifts, excitement, pageantry, solemnity, ceremony, and ritual: it is of these that tradition is woven, that memories, beliefs, values, fears, hopes, and reverence are transmitted. A holiday is not something to talk about - it's something to DO."

Springtime Special Project

(PreK-Grade 5)

In April & May of 2012, pre-kindergarteners, primary classes, and elementary classes will join in a special project together. Past topics include Diversity, Peace, Social/Moral issues, and the Seven Principles seen through a social justice lens.

Junior High Group

(Grades 6,7,8)

Neighboring Faiths: Inspired by the UU classic, *Church Across the Street*, this year-long curriculum helps youth in grades 6-8 learn about their own faith and other faith traditions through interactive experience such as field trips and interviews. These encounters with other religions are given meaning through periods of reflection and discussion about Unitarian Universalist and personal beliefs and values.

Opportunities to visit other congregations and houses of worship are a regular and necessary part of this curriculum. Such visits will often take place on Sunday morning, but may also occur at other times during the week/weekend, depending on the schedules of other religious communities.

Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU)

(Grades 9-12)

YRUU (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists) is our Senior High youth group. Youth begin with worship in the Sanctuary at 11:15am, and then proceed to their classroom.

In YRUU, youth and adult advisors work together to build community, develop youth leadership, and engage in worship and social action. Our youth develop ties to our area congregations and wider UU youth movement by attending district YRUU conferences. YRUU has also elected to be a part of Habitat for Humanity Service Project, which includes fundraising events, planning meetings, and training sessions which culminate in a ten-day out-of-state trip in July 2012.

Advisors lead the youth to take greater leadership in their own learning, and to select and discuss topics relevant to Unitarian Universalism and the greater world. Additionally, topics relevant to healthy adolescent development, decision-making, and relationships are also addressed. Together, these programs give our youth the opportunity to deepen their religious and moral understandings and bring their beliefs and values to bear on the world. As such, youth may become members of UUSG with limited voting privileges. Youth interested in membership or in volunteering as a worship participant should speak to our Senior Minister, the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates, for information.

Because YRUU has many specific events and functions, the advisors often use the Facebook page, in addition to emails, to inform and communicate with youth. Youth need to make sure their personal email

addresses are up-to-date with Katie Phillips, our Congregational Administrator, and that they have friended “UUSG YRUU” on Facebook.

The advisors for this year are Elba Karim, Zia Karim, Laura Laughlin, and Bill Pokorny; all the advisors can be reached by sending an email to YRUUAdvisors@uusg.org. For more information about the Summer 2012 Habitat for Humanity service project, please contact Laura Laughlin at habitat@uusg.org.

Our Whole Lives (OWL)

(Grades 7- 12)

OWL is a comprehensive curriculum dealing with relationships, sexuality, and decision making; this is also a curriculum that builds community made of strong friendships and support for its participants. Our youth often identify this course as being the first time when they really feel they are part of a religious community and understand why we gather together. Participants are asked to make a commitment to each other and the group, and to attend all of the OWL sessions.

Junior High OWL (grades 7-8) will meet on four overnights, one per month from January through April. More information will be given directly to the families of 7th/8th graders.

Senior High OWL (grades 9-12) will meet for several Sundays and/or overnights during the summer of 2012. More information will be given directly to the families of 9th-12th graders.

Coming of Age Program

(Grade 8 graduates)

This program for youth going into high school is a deeper exploration of the meaning of congregational membership and growing into adult responsibilities. Adult mentors develop relationships with youth to aid them in a deeper personal exploration and discussion of their beliefs. This curriculum prepares our youth for their changing roles and their choice of whether to join the Unitarian Universalist Society of Geneva as student members. Meetings occur on Sundays after services approximately twice each month from June through October. More information will be given directly to families of 8th graders.

Worship and Expression Through the Arts

Just as youth are encouraged to express themselves and their ideas with verbal and written words, UUSG encourages expression through the arts. Following are descriptions of the opportunities currently in place.

Religious Education Music Program

(PreK-Grade 5)

This musical component to religious education gives our children the opportunity to learn Unitarian Universalist songs created especially for young people. Each week, before going to classrooms, students will spend 5-10 minutes in the Common Room to learn and sing songs together. Lyrics and melodies will be sent home so young people can sing the songs with their family. Then, twice during the year, the songs will be shared with the congregation during the *For All Ages* time in the Sanctuary. This program is taught by Sandra Anderson-Cordogan; she can be reached at REmusic@uusg.org.

UUSG Teen/Adult Choir

(Grade 9-adult)

Our UUSG teen vocalists are highly encouraged to share their gifts during our services! This year, the choir will perform a total of four times, including the 8pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. They will also sing at both Sunday morning services each of the following days: 11/27/11, 2/19/12, and 4/8/12. Rehearsals are typically on Sundays from 12:45-2:15pm. Teens are welcome to sing for one or all weekends. Please contact Choir Director Ruth Cavanaugh at choir@uusg.org for more information.

UUSG Music Ministry

(all ages)

Our Music Ministry and musicians are an integral part of weekly worship services. Most weekends, someone from the congregation volunteers to sing, play an instrument, dance, or provide dramatic readings during the service. Children, youth, and adults of all abilities are all welcome and encouraged to share their gifts. Please contact Music Director Tracy Rosenkrans at music@uusg.org if you and/or your child are interested in performing during a service or other UUSG event.

Parents' Group (parents and kids of all ages)

The goal of this new group is to foster community and mutual support among UUSG parents and child caregivers. Exact programming and activities will be determined by the participants, but activities may include social gatherings, family-friendly worship, and sharing ideas and experiences raising young UUs. To accommodate busy schedules, we will incorporate both online activities and face-to-face events. To participate, look for meeting announcements in the Pioneer and weekly e-mail bulletins, and join our Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/uusgparents/>). For more information, contact Bill or Dawn Pokorny.

Social Activities Listing

Games Nights for all ages, 6:30 pm, 3rd Saturday of each month

Contact: Diane Thornton

Social Activities for Families of K-5th Grade Children, select Sundays after services (watch for announcements)

Contact: Karen Laukaitis

Jr. High Youth Group for 6th, 7th, 8th Graders, 6:30 pm, 2nd Saturday of each month

Contact: Jenny Montgomery

YRUU Activities

Contact: Elba Karim

How to Register for Programs

Registration is required as it allows us to provide for the safety and other needs of our children and to plan for our year's programming. **Parents are strongly encouraged to register their children prior to September 18, the first class date, to participate in our Nursery through YRUU religious education program.** Registration forms are available from the UUSG Office, on the bulletin board in the Common Room, or online at <http://content.uusg.org/church-school-registration/>.

On the registration form, please indicate what kind of volunteer support your family will be able to give. Our cooperative program is staffed by volunteers, and it won't succeed without a time-and-talent donation from every family. If you are new to UUSG, feel free to check the appropriate line and wait to make your volunteer commitment—we want you to have time to feel comfortable at UUSG before you volunteer.

There is no registration fee for the children and youth programs. Instead, we rely on the pledges and donations from the whole community to provide for the support of our congregation and our Lifespan Religious Education Ministry. If you are new to the congregation or have not yet made an annual pledge, we hope that you will support this general fund for the benefit of all programs and services. Please speak with our Congregational Administrator, Katie Phillips, if you have questions about how to offer your support (she can be reached at office@uusg.org or 630-232-2350).

Our Mission and Our Program

Mission Statement of UUSG

The Unitarian Universalist Society of Geneva is a diverse, welcoming community which endeavors to make its Covenant a living reality. We provide religious education and opportunities for spiritual growth. We encourage individual and mutual responsibility as together we work to be a liberal religious voice in the community and a force for compassionate social justice.

Mission Statement of the Lifespan Religious Education Committee

To provide education and ministry which will nurture the religious and spiritual growth of our members and friends throughout their life spans. We are guided by our UUSG mission statement, covenant, and the Unitarian Universalist Association purposes and principles.

Our goals:

Share and explore the meanings of Unitarian Universalist values;
 Create opportunities for spiritual growth;
 And create opportunities for intergenerational connections.

Our educational objectives:

To promote the concept that all of life is religious education;
 To provide opportunities for shared spiritual experiences;
 To promote healthy connections between individuals of different ages;
 To provide an understanding of Unitarian Universalists as a group and as individuals, past and present;
 To help individuals answer the question “What is a Unitarian Universalist?” effectively;
 To provide opportunities for learning about our Jewish and Christian heritage;
 To provide opportunities for learning about world religions;
 To provide opportunities to act on UU principles and purposes.

Lifespan Religious Education (LRE) Committee

This committee oversees UUSG’s Ministry of Lifespan Religious Education. In collaboration with the Senior Minister, we set policy and create programming in line with our vision of the Ministry of LRE. This committee meets on the second Monday of the month.

LRE Committee Members, 2011-2012

LRE@uusg.org

Committee Chair and RE Music:	Sandra Anderson-Cordogan
Preschool Representative:	Open
Elementary Grade Representative (K-Grade 5):	Tracy Rosenkrans
Junior High Representative (Grades 6,7,8):	Jenny Montgomery
Senior High Representative (Grades 9,10,11,12):	Elba Karim
Adult RE Representative:	Open
At-Large Participant:	Jim Jenkins
Library Liaison/Special Projects Coordinators:	Jeanne Neltner, Diane Thornton
Church School Administrator:	In the process of being hired