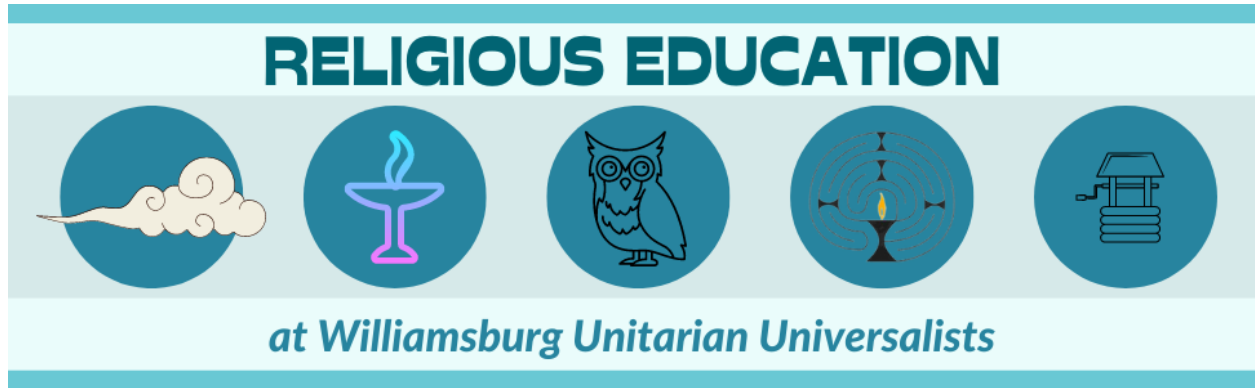


2022 Religious Education at Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists



Welcome to the Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists Religious Education Program!

Our aim is to provide a safe, welcoming, fun learning environment for everyone, acknowledging that we are all teachers and we are all learners.

We offer age appropriate religious education classes during the service here at Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists. Our awesome volunteer teaching teams prepare sessions for the children, and together we explore our Unitarian Universalist faith.

Coming in September: New Classes

On September 18, the second weekend after Labor Day, we'll launch the new schedule. Here are the details:

- Sunday Service: 10:00-11:00
- Religious Education Classes: 10:20-11:20
- Classes Offered:
 - Preschool (ages 3-5)
 - Lower Elementary (grades 1-3)
 - Our Whole Lives (grades 4-6)
 - Middle School (grades 6-8)
 - High School (grades 9-12)
 - Monthly Children's Chapel

2022-2023 Religious Education Offerings for Families

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION at WUU



Children's Chapel

Once a month, we all gather to experience a new modality of healing and wellness. See you there!

Soul Matters Lower Elementary

Join us for this class that meets to talk about the monthly theme and play, too!





Our Whole Lives Grades 4, 5, 6

Parent permission required.
Contact Austen@wuu.org for more information.

Middle School Coming of Age

What do you believe and why?
Join this group to explore life's big questions.





YRUU, High School Group

In this new 8-session program, youth participants develop the spiritual practice of gratitude, explore personal reflections on the UU Sources, and practice giving and receiving deep listening.

Volunteer at wuu.org

Preschool

Ages 3, 4, and 5

The Rainbow Connection

A central concept of Unitarian Universalism is the seven Principles that all congregations affirm and promote. These Principles are considered to be strong values and moral guides that each of us may use to guide our lives.

The Rainbow Connection uses storybooks for preschoolers to discuss those values inherent in the Principles and in Unitarian Universalism. Four sessions are devoted to each Principle, helping preschoolers to explore the values that unite us as UUs. At the preschool age, children begin to understand the concepts of justice and fairness and begin to learn about what is “right” and “wrong”, or “beneficial” and “not beneficial.” Storybooks are chosen to help illustrate the values supported by parents.

Because socialization and comfort are important goals for this age, each class contains a fun craft project, time for songs and games, and time for free play with friends.

Lower Elementary

Grades 1, 2, and 3

Soul Matters

This year our monthly themes invite us to think about not only what values our UU faith calls us to but also the actions and skills that *our times* require of us. Pandemic time, along with our racial, political, and environmental challenges, exposes the need for humanity to change and adjust in key ways. So each month we will explore a different skill that we need to lean into so that we don't just return to normal after the pandemic is over, but actually bring about a "new normal."

Grades 4, 5, and 6

Our Whole Lives

Our Whole Lives is our comprehensive science based sexuality education program. Parent permission is required. For more information, contact Austen Petersen, Director of Religious Education, by emailing austen@wuu.org.

Middle School

Grades 6, 7, and 8

This year the Middle School group will be embarking upon their Coming of Age Journey. Thanks to our awesome volunteer teachers, we work with a curriculum called *Compass Points*, through which the teens explore various ways to find their own direction in life.

The Goals of *Compass Points* are:

- To help participants sort out their feelings about themselves and their world as they do the difficult work of starting to create their adult selves
- To help them discover what they believe about life's big questions -- the nature of humanity and the divine, beliefs about life, death and faith
- To help youth think independently, assume responsibility, make decisions, explore values and adopt the practice of radical hospitality
- To guide participants in acquiring enough background in Unitarian Universalist history, polity and theology that they can know and express what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist
- To help them understand that religious liberty is a hard-won legacy that continues to need protection

High School

Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12

UU Wellspring

The teens explore their Unitarian Universalist faith together with their group facilitators. This welcoming, inclusive group explores our Unitarian Universalist faith through the lenses of deep listening and personal reflections on our Sources. Join us!

Unitarian Universalism draws from many [Sources, among them:](#)

- 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 that create and uphold life
- 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

The Religious Education program offers supervised unstructured play time for children and teens to explore the playground, play cooperatively, and to spend time in nature.

“Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children, play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood.” - Fred Rogers

Visioning Circle Goals for Religious Education

Context

Based on the feedback of the visioning circles, both the full written report asking the questions “What brings you here?”, “What are your hopes and dreams for WUU?”, and “What draws and keeps you here?”, as well as the feedback received during the Leadership Retreat, the Director of Religious Education (DRE) and Religious Education (RE) committee have identified the areas of concentration below. We have created these goals with the feedback in mind with hopes that this will create a nourishing and meaningful time for all folks at WUU. We aim to create a safe, welcoming and inclusive atmosphere that provides meaningful and fun programs.

Our 2022/2023 goals are below.

1. The DRE and RE committee will organize intergenerational events and activities. These will include but not be limited to:
 - October 2022 - Halloween
 - Friday, December 2, 2022 - Yule Sing
 - February 2023 - Fancy Dress Up Tea Party for All Ages
 - Sunday, April 9, 2023 - Easter Egg Hunt

2. To invigorate the congregation, reduce silos, and encourage multigenerational interactions, the DRE and RE committee will collaborate with the worship committee to offer monthly intergenerational worship services. These will include but not be limited to:
 - August 28 - Animal Blessing Service
 - September 11 - Ingathering, All Ages Together in Worship
 - October 30 - Day of the Dead, All Ages Together in Worship

3. Regarding communications, the DRE and RE committee will create a pamphlet for Fall describing the curriculum. The DRE will provide information on planned activities to be included in the Spiral, the weekly Family Newsletter, and Facebook pages.

4. To address mental wellbeing and social emotional health, the DRE and RE committee will plan and host monthly Children's Chapels to which adults are invited.

5. Regarding celebration of our many Sources, the DRE and RE committee will include children in earth centered services and events in collaboration with the worship team.

6. The DRE and RE committee will proactively collaborate with the Social Justice team on events, learning, and advocacy.

7. Regarding the covenanting process, the DRE and RE committee will plan covenanting exercises for each of the children's classes.