



## **Unitarian Universalist Church of Reading**

A regional church serving communities north of Boston, welcoming people of all ages, religious backgrounds, cultural origins, differing abilities, gender identity, political views, and sexual orientations.

### ***Lifespan Religious Education Programs for Children, Youth & Adults***

**2016-2017**



### **Unitarian Universalist Church of Reading**

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## Lifelong Learning, Grounded in Unitarian Universalist Faith and Values

Unitarian Universalist principles and sources extend beyond words — they represent a model for an ethical, faith-filled, and compassionate life. The Unitarian Universalist Church of Reading (UUCR) strives to teach the principles and sources of Unitarian Universalism through a variety of modes, such as real-world experiences, teacher-facilitated discussions, stories and crafts, and personal reflection.



Each class is designed to give learners of all ages a chance to examine and discuss Unitarian Universalist values and help them integrate and implement those values into their lives. Programs for adults explore faith, build spiritual leadership skills, and shares the values that make the Unitarian Universalist Church of Reading a joy-filled spiritual home.

### Themes for Religious Education in our Church

An arc of learning guides the explorations of our children (Nursery through Grade 6). In 2016-2017, the lens is Jewish and Christian heritage. Youth in Grades 7-8 will engage in programming that helps them explore values-based sexuality education through the “Our Whole Lives” program. High school aged youth (grades 9-12) explore faith, values, and the ethical life through discussions, service projects, and social gatherings grounded in our UU traditions. Adults will engage in programs that reflect on studies of UU values and those derived from other faith traditions.

## The 2016—2017 Curricula

***Nursery Playschool*** (Infants through age 4) - expanded this year to **BOTH** worship services on 2-service days!

From September through mid-June, our nursery care and play space is available for the youngest members in our community for **BOTH of our worship services**, beginning at 9 AM (or, on one-service Sundays, beginning at 9:45 AM). Porta-cribs and toys, along with friendly faces, and stories, welcome our smallest church folk to Sawyer House, next door to the UUCR main building. Our program is taught by professional early childhood education experts with additional support from congregation members. Come and play with us!

***Spirit Play*** (Pre-K and Kindergarten)

How do we take care of ourselves and others? How do we build relationships? How do we choose to live our lives? What are our shared Unitarian Universalist values? *Spirit Play* introduces children to our Religious Education program and community by inviting them into a safe, comfortable, and creative classroom that allows them to explore their deepest curiosities with their classroom storytellers and guides.

***Special Times*** (grades 1 & 2)

Written by Betty Jo Middleton, "Special Times" acquaints children with our denomination's Judeo-Christian heritage and engages them in celebrating Jewish and Christian holidays and other "special times" such as the Shabbat/Sabbath, Thanksgiving, and birthdays.

***Super Heroes—Bible People*** (Grades 3 & 4) -

This curriculum, written by acclaimed religious educator Gaia Brown, is a values-based program that introduces children to people from the Bible who have acted with courage and wisdom in their attempts to lead their lives fully and make the world a better place for others. Join in the exploration of the lives of these brave and legendary characters!



### ***Bibleodeon (Grades 5 & 6)***

Bibleodeon, written by Richard and Tirrell Kimball, is a curriculum that introduces biblical scriptures by presenting the best-known Hebrew and Christian stories with fun and interactive games, and helps students explore connections between biblical events and UU principles, between biblical ideas and their own lives. During the spring, students in this age level will also study ***Our Whole Lives (OWL) for grades 5 & 6***. OWL is a values-based award-winning human sexuality education program that explores values and sexuality, communication and decision making, as well as some of the 'basic questions' that children of this age have around procreation (reproduction), what happens during puberty, and how our relationships with one another change as we grow and mature.

*Note: Regular, consistent attendance is required; parental permission is required for students to be enrolled in OWL; an information session will be held in early winter. There is no alternative programming offered for students not enrolled in this nine-week class.*



### ***Our Whole Lives (Grades 7 & 8)***

This year-long course helps young teenagers make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior. It equips participants with accurate, age-appropriate information in six subject areas: human development, relationships, personal skills, sexual behavior, sexual health, and society and culture. Grounded in a holistic view of sexuality, OWL not only provides

facts about anatomy and human development, but also helps participants clarify their values, build interpersonal skills, and understand the spiritual, emotional, and social aspects of sexuality.

*Note: This class will meet on Sunday evenings. Regular, consistent attendance is required; parental permission is required for students to be enrolled in OWL; an information session will be held in late summer. Youth in Grades 7 and 8 are encouraged to attend morning worship with their families as well.*

### ***"Sometimes on Sundays" (SOS): A Youth Group for 7th and 8th Graders***

Middle school is an important time for forming connections to peers and discovering what it means to be a teenager.

Our youth group for young teens meets about once a month (on nights when *Our Whole Lives* doesn't meet). Youth will check in on a question of interest or concern, play games, share snacks, go on outings or excursions, do projects that serve either UUCR or the wider community, and form strong bonds with one another! Join in the fun and learn about UUCR's wonderful "SOS" program!



### ***SHYP (Senior High Youth Program) (Grades 9-12)***

SHYP offers a sacred place for youth to form and nurture peer connection, community building, social action, leadership, learning, worship, and youth-adult relations.



Youth in SHYP participate in off-campus activities and retreats during the year as well as service learning trips. A team of advisors including the congregation's ministerial intern and minister help guide the program, which culminates in a spring worship service and a ceremony to celebrate seniors graduating from high school. Meetings are

held on most Sunday evenings (7:00 PM to 8:30 PM) and are facilitated by youth leaders and adult advisors.

## **A Cooperative Approach to Learning**

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Reading offers a religious education program that teams trained, dedicated teachers and staff with parents and guardians of our children to promote faith exploration.

**Your help is needed.** We ask that at least one parent/guardian in each family participate in the Religious Education Program each year that you have a child enrolled. You may work as a teacher, a leader of special multi-age programming, or as a leader of our Middle School or Senior High Youth Group, or you may assist with our special programs and workshops.



We actively seek participation from *all* members of the congregation, even if you do not have children enrolled in Religious Education programming! Please refer to our registration forms, available in print at the Religious Education table in the church Atrium, or online at <http://goo.gl/forms/J8qdfC4qedb6zKSu2> for further information and to complete the registration process.

If you have joined our church community within the last 12 months, you are exempt from our request for adult participation. If you have extenuating circumstances in your family that make this requirement a hardship, please contact Sally Liebermann, Director of Lifespan Religious Education: [dlre.uureading@gmail.com](mailto:dlre.uureading@gmail.com) .

## Special Programming

On some One-Service Sundays and on holidays or school vacation weekends, we offer multi-age programming designed to engage children and youth in activities and explorations that expand our concept of what religious growth and learning is outside of a classroom setting.

Participants may prepare a special celebration for the congregation, plant a pizza garden, play Field Games that emphasize cooperation and collaboration, explore different faith practices like meditation or yoga, or enjoy a presentation by a noted artist, story teller, or musician. Ideas for multi-age programming are always welcome and volunteers to support these programs are encouraged!

## Safety First

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Reading takes its commitment to being a safe congregation seriously. Two adult teachers (plus aides, as needed) are involved with all education programs for children and youth.

All regular teachers, aides, and special program leaders are required to complete the CORI/SORI (Criminal Offender Record Information and Sexual Offender Record Information) forms. These forms are held as confidential information by UUCR's designated CORI/SORI administrator.

## Religious Education: Not just for Kids!

The UUCR Spiritual Leadership Institute (SLI) offers education, spiritual growth, and programs to support lay leadership, throughout the church year. Programs are open to members and friends of the UUCR community and to individuals in the wider community unless otherwise specified. Our past programs included workshops



on body movement and spirituality, Joanna Macy's "Active Hope", feminine spirituality through "Rise Up and Call Her Name," embracing social justice through "Be the Change," and home fire safety for elders.

This year, we anticipate programming that continues to explore feminine spirituality, a three-part Buddhist Meditation seminar, expanded work with Chalice Circles and small group ministry, Credo Writing for adults (articulating our faith as UUs), and more.

To join the Spiritual Leadership Institute planning team, contact Sally Liebermann, Director of Lifespan Religious Education, at [fdd@uureading.org](mailto:fdd@uureading.org) or [dlre.uureading@gmail.com](mailto:dlre.uureading@gmail.com).

***Life becomes religious whenever we make it so: when some new light is seen, when some deeper appreciation is felt, when some larger outlook is gained, when some nobler purpose is formed, when some task is well done.***

— Sophia Lyon Fahs, Unitarian religious educator, c. 1950

*Photos in this brochure courtesy of UUCR members and friends. Special thanks to Andy Gatchell.*



### **Education and Leadership Staff:**

- ◇ Rev. Catherine Senghas  
Interim Minister
- ◇ Sally Liebermann  
Director of Lifespan  
Religious Education
- ◇ Liz Weber  
Ministerial Intern
- ◇ Katie Camire  
Youth Prog. Coor.
- ◇ Melissa Martin - Member Services Coor.
- ◇ Kirsten Freni - Church Administrator

## **Child and Youth Programs: Register NOW**

<http://goo.gl/forms/7m481KVdwleh9qX83>

***\*\*Join us to teach! \*\****

**Contact Sally Liebermann, Director  
of Lifespan Religious Education:  
dlre.uureading@gmail.com**

*The mission of the UUCR Religious Education (RE) Committee is to offer engaging and compelling religious education programming for all ages that will instill and support our Unitarian Universalist principles and sources.*

### **Lifespan RE Committee members:**

Robyn Matzke and Theo Noell, Co-Chairs  
Katie Camire, Lynne Champion, Chris Doucette, Melissa Plowman, Leslie Raymond, and Katie Wheeler; with Rev. Catherine Senghas, Liz Weber, and Sally Liebermann, staff.

**Religious Education Classes begin on  
September 18, 2016!**

