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## WELCOME!

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It is with great anticipation that we look forward to the 2013-2014 church school year. We are pleased that you and your children are taking part in our program. This booklet is your guide to the religious education programs available this year.

The goals of our program are to provide a place where children can: feel welcome and have a sense of belonging, explore religious ideas in an open-minded community; define and redefine their beliefs; ask questions, and share their sense of wonder. We hope to create an environment that respects and celebrates diversity while offering children opportunities to translate their ideals into actions. We want our children to own their beliefs.

The seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism (found at the rear of the booklet) provide the backbone for our program and the Sources provide a grounding.

We have a cooperative volunteer program that needs the involvement of each parent. We encourage you to share your time and talents with us and your children, show an interest in their programs and engage them in conversations about what they are learning. We may also call upon you to substitute in a classroom or bring a healthy snack to share. Most importantly, please help your child attend classes regularly. By doing so, you will find the benefits are multiplied.

I am looking forward to getting to know each of you and your children in the coming year!

Chris Parker  
Director of Religious Education  
[re@uunashua.org](mailto:re@uunashua.org)

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## WHO WE ARE

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### Our Vision

Our vision is a welcoming and supportive congregation that is also unique and diverse. We recognize the needs of our local and global communities and act in responsible ways.

### Our Mission And Covenant

The mission of the Religious Education program is to nurture the heart, mind, and spirit of the church family. We offer programs and opportunities for all ages that embrace the UU Principles. In this spirit, we create

- \* a safe and welcoming place where everyone belongs;
- \* a nurturing place where wonder is valued;
- \* an engaging place where people listen, think, question and share;
- \* a spiritual place where people can explore world religions;
- \* a joyful place where friendship, community, music, art, worship, and service are shared;
- \* a socially responsible place that encourages all to be engaged with issues near and far;
- \* a caring place for our planet earth, the home we share with all living things;
- \* a hopeful place;
- \* a peaceful place.

### Our Value Statement

We will approach our Vision, Mission and Covenant with honesty, creativity, kindness, compassion, and good humor.

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## WHEN WE MEET

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### Sunday School Church Schedule

- 10:00 AM Children join parents in the sanctuary
- 10:15 AM Church school classes begin
- 11:00 AM Baby/Toddler pick-up  
(11:00 or immediately following the service)
- 11:15 AM All children are dismissed from their classrooms

All children, preschool and older are invited to join in the service for the first 15 minutes each week before attending church school.

During Worship for All Ages, all children, preschool and older are invited to worship together with their parents for the full church service. Babies and toddlers meet as usual in Room 1.

During Sunday services when people are traveling on holidays or school vacations, a Children's Chapel and supervised activities are provided for those children who do not wish to attend the service.

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## PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN

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### Babies & Toddlers

#### *Childcare*

*Room 1*

(Birthdays after 9-30-10)

Childcare is provided for infants and children who are still under the age of three by September 30. Our experienced caregivers, assisted by church members, take care of the youngest members of our church family. We try to make this experience for our youngest children as pleasant as possible—a warm, welcoming, and secure place away from home.

### Preschool - Kindergarten

#### *Chalice Children*

*Room 3*

(Birthdays 10-1-07 to 9-30-10)

Based on the premise that children learn best through experience, this program helps nurture spiritual growth, creativity and a sense of community through imaginative activities and rituals such as rhymes and fingerplays. The year-long curriculum introduces the children to concepts such as birth and death, dreams and the natural world.

Activities are tailored for this age group, so please dress the children for active play and sometimes-messy crafts. Also, prepare your refrigerator for new artwork!

## **First - Second Grade**

### ***World of Wonder (fall)***

***Room 5***

This program delves deep into our Unitarian Universalist Seventh Principle. It instills respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part, and appreciation of its beauty, excitement, and mystery. It is founded on the premise that direct experience in nature is essential to children's physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual development. Time spent experiencing and exploring nature during the kindergarten and first grade years can set a pattern for the rest of children's lives, bringing lasting openness to the wonder nature can spark.

### ***Love Will Guide Us (spring)***

***Room 5***

At the core of our Unitarian Universalist community are our seven Principles. The Principles encompass all the ingredients of a good and faith-filled life based on equality, freedom, peace, acceptance, truth, care, and love. This program explores all the Principles in the context of Beloved Community of family/home, school, neighborhood. Participants engage in activities that emphasize the love they feel in community.

## **Third - Fourth Grade**

### ***Love Connects Us (fall)***

***Room 9-10***

Love Connects Us celebrates important ways Unitarian Universalists live our faith in covenanted community. Moved by love and gathered in spirit, we embrace our responsibility toward one another and the world at large. We encourage one another's search for truth and meaning. We strive to be active in peace-making and other efforts to improve our world.

## **Third - Fourth Grade**

### ***Timeless Themes (spring)***

***Room 9-10***

The best-known stories in religious literature are presented to the children in this curriculum, providing a base of knowledge essential to the understanding of their religious heritage. Timeless themes that inspired the scriptures, such as power, responsibility, freedom, love and forgiveness, are explored.

## **Fifth-Sixth Grade**

### ***Amazing Grace (fall)***

***Rooms 6-7***

Amazing Grace intends to help sixth graders understand right and wrong and act on their new understanding. Its purpose is to equip them for moving safely and productively through the middle- and high school years, when they will be continually tugged toward both ends of the ethics continuum. Through their involvement in Amazing Grace, youth will come to recognize and depend upon their Unitarian Universalist identity and resources as they move toward independence, understanding and fulfillment of their personal promise.

## **Seventh-Eighth Grade**

### ***Our Whole Lives (O.W.L.)***

***Youth Room***

The program is a human sexuality curriculum jointly developed between the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and the United Church of Christ (UCC). This comprehensive, age-appropriate program helps participants make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior.

## Ninth Grade

### *Rites of Passage Experience (R.O.P.E.) Fellowship Room*

Through this experience, our youth will learn to express their own beliefs within the context of Unitarian Universalism, and to mark the beginning of their own spiritual path through life. Each student will work with a mentor/church member of their choosing in order to refine their beliefs. Don't miss the ROPE Affirmation Service where the students will present their statements to the congregation!

## Senior High

Youth Group meets Sunday evenings from 6:00-8:00 p.m. in the Youth Room.

R.E. for Sr. High transitions into "Youth Empowerment." Our youth group provides opportunities to develop leadership skills, strengthens a sense of community, offers peer support and a chance to travel and meet other UU Youth. The students play games, hear guest speakers and participate in workshops and topic-led discussions. They are involved in outreach and fundraising while working on life skills.

Youth are encouraged to participate in leading the group and/or contribute to decisions regarding the direction the group will take.

Youth group provides a safe and comfortable environment to explore and nurture the questions and beliefs of those who participate.

## Children's Choir

Our Children's Choir is open to anyone who wants to sing. Consistent attendance and love of singing are the only requirements to join. They generally meet at 11:30 in the Choir Room on Sundays and perform throughout the year. If you have any question, see our Music Director, Jed Holland.

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## SPECIAL EVENTS & SERVICES

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**Water Service** (September 8) – Worship for All Ages where we bring samples of water from our summer journeys to share in celebration.

**Día de Muertos Service** (October 27) A Worship for All Ages designed to remember loved ones who have died incorporating lovely imagery and stories borrowed from the Mexican culture and custom of Día de Muertos, a blend of Aztec and Christian traditions to honor "All Soul's Day".

**Thanksgiving Service** (November 24) Children and adults take time to be thankful together in a Worship for All Ages.

**Children's Chapel** (Dec. 1 & 29, April 27) – A worship service for children will precede supervised activities.

**Winter and Spring Gatherings** (December 22 and April 20) – Students begin the morning with their parents in the church service as usual, then the students gather in the auditorium for a service project, crafts, games and snacks. Preschoolers sometimes will meet in their own classroom.

**Worship for All Ages** – Opportunities for families and members of all ages to worship together.

**Senior High Service** (tba) – A service designed and led by the Senior High students. Come be amazed!

**R.O.P.E. Affirmation Service** (tba) – This is the culmination of our ninth grade coming of age service (Rite of Passage Experience). Each participant will share their personal belief statement. This is a meaningful and moving experience.

**Multigenerational Flower Service** (June 2) –A Flower Communion is held in which members of the congregation bring flowers. Everyone leaves with a different flower representing the sharing that takes place within our congregation all year long.

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## SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

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Edith Hunter, 20th-century Unitarian religious educator, said “Isn't half the job of becoming educated learning to ask the right questions? The philosophy of our adult religious education program, or Spiritual Development as we call it, is based upon the search for truth and meaning that goes on throughout our lives. Our goal is to provide experiences and resources that encourage the personal religious development of individuals as members of our congregation and as Unitarian Universalists. We do this by offering a variety of activities, discussion groups, workshops and courses organized to foster growth within the broad dimensions of spirituality, ethical behavior, faith development and Unitarian Universalist Identity. Some programs we will be offering:

***Popcorn Theology*** - Monthly “main-stream” movies followed by a discussion focusing on issues stimulated by the movie that are relevant to being a UU in today’s society. Offered at 7:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month, in the dining room, unless otherwise announced.

***Trips and Discussion*** - Group outings to places and events of interest to us as Unitarian Universalists. We have taken trips to Walden Pond, the Shaker Village in Canterbury, NH and to the UU Arlington Street Church in Boston. Each trip includes background information and time for discussion. Events as announced.

***Pathways to Unitarian Universalism*** - The Spiritual Development Committee works with the minister and other committees in the congregation to hold introductory sessions throughout the year for potential new members or those interested in learning more about Unitarian Universalism. These are generally held after a Sunday Service, as announced.

***Courses and Workshops*** – Offered at various times during the year to enhance members’ understanding of Unitarian Universalist history and principles and to support personal development in belief, spirituality, and practice. This winter we will offer “The New And Not-So-New UU”, a workshop adapted from a the UUA Tapestry of Faith series, as well as other courses.

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## SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

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***Covenant Groups*** - To the question “Why Church?” Unitarian Universalist theologian James Luther Adams answered: “intimacy and ultimacy.” To realize our human potential we need close and supportive relationships with others while seeking to understand and make meaning of the lives we live. Our Covenant Groups are composed of 8-10 individuals each who meet regularly to share more intimately and explore issues more deeply than may be possible in other arenas of congregational life. Groups are facilitated by a trained lay person. This fall we will be offering facilitator training to expand the number of groups available. For further information, contact our minister, Rev. Olivia Holmes or Jerry Ross, Chair of the Spiritual Development Committee.

***The Nashua Buddhist Meditation Group*** offers a regular space for UU Church and Nashua community members to practice meditation and study the dharma with longtime practitioners and students of Buddhism. Every Wednesday at 7:00, group sitting and walking meditation is practiced in the auditorium. Programs may include periodic open house book discussions, opportunities for in-depth study of Buddhist teachings, and monthly dharma talks. Contact: [www.uunashua.org/adultre/buddhist.shtml](http://www.uunashua.org/adultre/buddhist.shtml). Karen Fitzpatrick, Liaison; Martha Roberts, Coordinator

***Reiki Drum Circle*** - The intention of Full Reiki Drum Circle is to broadcast the healing energy and love of Reiki and spirit drum rhythms for the purpose of Universal and community healing. Meets once a month. Participants bring their own percussion instruments to play and share if they wish. All are welcome to participate, and all spiritual practice is welcome. Facilitators: Anya Zakiewicz and Robin Panousis, both Reiki Master/Teachers and Reiki Drum Master/Teachers.

The Spiritual Development Program is overseen by Chris Parker, Director of Religious Education, and the Spiritual Development Committee, chaired by Jerry Ross. The regular meeting time and place is the first Monday of the month at 7:00 in Room 7. The committee welcomes new members.

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## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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Director: Chris Parker      603-888-1137

Interim Minister: Rev. Olivia Holmes

Church Phone      603-882-1091

### MEMBERS

Amy Savoie (Chair)

Mandy Eberle

Gillian Hinkle

Jen Saucier

Charles Savoie

Mary Ellen Wessels

Nona Storer (Volunteer Coordinator)



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## OUR UU PRINCIPLES

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Each and every person is important;

All people should be treated fairly and kindly;

We should accept one another and keep on learning together;

Each person must be free to search for what is true and right in life;

All persons should have a vote about the things that concern them;

We will work for a peaceful, fair and free world; and

Care for our planet earth, the home we share with all living things.

### The Sources of Our Principles

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 which create and uphold life;

Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;

Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;

Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;

Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.

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.