

Spiritual Growth for Youth (ages 12- 19) and their families

Welcome!

We are pleased to invite you and your youth to be part of our welcoming faith community, which values each young person and every family! Through worship, learning opportunities, personal reflection, peer group support, and social justice work, we are all engaged in growing our spirits that we might bring more love into the world.

Our goals for youth spiritual development are to:

Help youth embrace life fully, with its wonder and mystery as well as its challenges, sorrows, and ambiguities.

Create a caring intergenerational community where each youth is known and cherished.

Provide experiences and support to help in building a "spiritual toolkit" that helps youth respond to the situations, challenges, and opportunities that life presents to them.

Provide support for youth to engage deeply with wisdom from the sources of our Unitarian Universalist tradition.

Empower youth to figure out how they are called to carry their faith into the world.

YOUTH SPIRITUALITY

As they enter their teen years, youth begin the process of deepening their religious faith and claiming it for their very own. These are the years of identity building and increasing independence in moral decision making: What kind of person am I? Where do I fit? What is it I am called to do in the world?

For younger adolescents, the primary task of the faith community is to provide them with a sense of identity and a safe place to explore those issues which are paramount: friendships, sexuality, moral and ethical questions, generosity and compassion. Between thirteen and sixteen years old, young people do the important work of discernment: who am I as a religious person? Who am I within this religious community? Older adolescents have many opportunities to test their values and their faith against the ambiguities and difficulties of life, but need the support of peers and adult mentors.

Following the Unitarian Universalist tradition, faith development for youth at the North Parish seeks to support them as they experience changing roles in families, peer groups, and their faith community. We provide opportunities for worship, leadership, learning, community building, and social action that provide them with base from which to go forth and make the world a better place, and live their lives according to their religious values.

PROGRAMMING

SUNDAY MORNING

Six, Seventh and eighth grade, 11 AM

On the first, third, and fifth Sundays of the month, youth will begin in the sanctuary with families, then move to small groups, where they will have time to explore moral, ethical, spiritual, and identity issues important to their development.

Grades Nine through twelve, 9 & 11 AM

Youth attend worship in the sanctuary, participating fully in the life of the congregation.

Youth Groups

With the guidance of volunteers advisors, our youth groups strengthen each young person's commitment to our parish and religion and provide opportunities for peer support and friendships. Meetings include chances to participate in field trips, worship, social action projects, leadership opportunities, and plenty of fun!

Junior Youth Group (Grades six -Eight)

MEETS THE SECOND AND FOURTH SUNDAYS OF THE MONTH FROM 12:45– 2:15 PM PRECEDED BY LUNCH.

Senior Youth Group(Grades nine-twelve)

MEETS THE FIRST AND THIRD SUNDAYS OF THE MONTH FROM 6:30– 8:00 PM.

Other programs

Eighth Grade– Our Whole Lives (OWL)

OWL is a comprehensive sexuality education program informed by Unitarian Universalist values and taught by trained leaders. Underlying OWL is our understanding that our bodies are sacred and that sexuality is a gift that requires knowledge and responsibility. (Sundays 12:45-3:00 pm , January-April)

Ninth Grade-Coming of Age

COA is a mentored program to help youth assume responsibility for their faith journeys. Participants explore personal spirituality and religious questions, being part of a faith community, and how to be a religious person in the wider world. The program culminates in a ceremony, a rite of passage, where each youth presents a statement about his/her values, beliefs, hopes and experiences. (Two Sundays per month, September– March 10am-noon).

Bridging -Grade twelve or 18 years old

The Bridging Program leads to a ceremony for those who are ready to assume the challenges of adulthood.(Two Sunday eves in April).

FOR FAMILIES OF YOUTH

- Periodic “family gatherings” for families of youth in order to strengthen relationships.
- Opportunities to share concerns and wisdom with other parents about such topics as adolescent development, spirituality, sexuality, and relationships.
- Intergenerational rituals that celebrate the wonders and challenges of being human.
- Pastoral support in times of need.

