



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Lower Bucks

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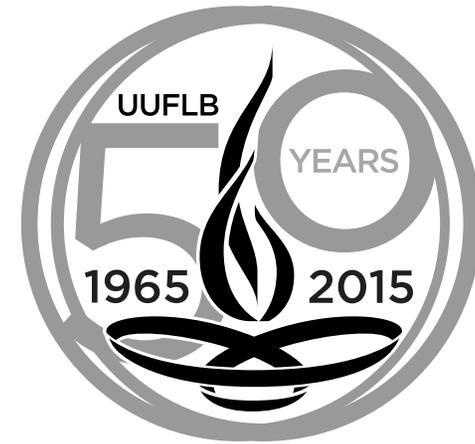
215-752-5689

www.uuflb.org

Sunday Services are 10:30 am

at

Pen Ryn School
235 South Olds Boulevard.
Fairless Hills, PA



2015 – 2016

Religious Exploration Prospectus



**Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Lower Bucks**

Religious Exploration Vision Statement

We, the Religious Exploration Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Lower Bucks, envision our focus on spirituality to incorporate what is Unitarian Universalism in the spirit of guidance and with time for reflection, while having the freedom to question.

We want our children to feel excited about being in an environment of love and support, while experiencing friendship and respect, in an exceptional Unitarian Universalist community that models shared values in the context of emotional, psychological and physical safety.

Mission Statement

UUFLB will provide relevant lifespan Religious Exploration for Preschool through High School in a nurturing and accepting environment. We commit to helping our children build a spiritual foundation that embraces diversity of thought, and encourages faith in action based on our shared values and Unitarian Universalist principles. We will expand their horizons by teaching them our UU heritage, as well as exploring other world religions and their development. By participating in social action projects, and focusing on peaceful interactions, we will encourage our children to find their place in the world and foster their individual Unitarian Universalist identity. We accept this mission fully respecting our privilege to guide our youth in releasing their talents, gifts and creativity.

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Our Goals for Religious Exploration at UUFLB

The young people of the UU Fellowship of Lower Bucks will:

- Understand the seven UU principles, and be able to incorporate them in their daily lives;
- Be able to understand and explain Unitarian Universalism, both as it has been historically, and as it is today in our congregations and as a larger movement;
- Explore the world's religions, in an effort to become effective and respectful partners in dialogue;
- Learn to put faith into action through social service and social justice opportunities;
- Deepen self-knowledge and self-worth in an atmosphere of acceptance and encouragement;
- Develop a lifelong eagerness to learn, with open minds and open hearts;
- Experience the joy of belonging to a welcoming multigenerational religious community that can become a deep-rooted spiritual home.

Words of Welcome 2015–16

Welcome to the Religious Exploration (RE) program at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Lower Bucks. We are glad that you are considering our congregation as a religious home for your family. A Unitarian Universalist (UU) education is about growing in the context of a supportive and affirming community. As UUs, we believe that there are many paths to the truth. We know that each person has a right to a free and responsible search for meaning, and we strive to support our young people as they begin that search for themselves.

A UU education allows our young people to form a strong UU identity. We want them to value the unique heritage of our liberal religious movement. We also want them to understand and appreciate the diversity of the world's faith traditions. We offer an open environment in which children can explore religious ideas in freedom, and deepen their own spiritual lives.

We foster a sense of responsibility for building a better world, by modeling values of justice, compassion, and peacefulness. Participants in our program are encouraged to challenge accepted ideas, as they arrive at their own answers to life's most perplexing questions.

We offer a carefully planned curriculum, chances for reflection and discussion, worship with our multigenerational community, and the opportunity to form lifelong friendships. We offer the inspiration to turn faith into action through service to the larger community. Through these experiences, we hope that our children and youth will grow in wisdom and understanding, and form a set of values that will provide a foundation for living well.

Please rely on this Prospectus for the information you need to feel comfortable with our RE program. Please know also that your questions and concerns are always welcome. Our community is committed to the nurture of all those who come seeking a place to belong and be accepted, and you are welcome here.

Jennifer Rehbein
Director of Religious Exploration

Registration (for classes and the nursery)

Registration forms are collected at the beginning of the RE sessions in September, or when a new family has attended for the third time. We ask that all parents register their children from nursery through senior youth group even if your child attends infrequently. Your registration helps us to organize appropriately sized class groupings with curriculum for the specific age limits in each group. Registration is also important for insurance and medical reasons as well as to keep you informed about our great program. To keep our records current, families need to re-register each year.

As part of the registration form and safety procedures, parents/guardians are asked to sign permission for certain types of activities, which are on the registration forms. When an activity occurs that requires permission (ex: a nature walk in the neighborhood) and there is no registration form on file or permission has not been granted, then the student is brought to the parent in the service during the time of the activity. The form also allows you to make decisions about how your child's image will be used in UUFLB publications.

Visitor Forms are also available for guests to the program. "Guests" are defined as families who have attended fewer than three times. Visiting families are encouraged to speak with the Director of Religious Education or a member of the RE Team for more information about our program. Also, visitors should know that parents are always welcome to attend class with their child, until the child is comfortable with us, or at any time otherwise.

Religious Exploration Fees

Religious Exploration is a priority in our congregation and is almost entirely funded out of the fellowship's general operating budget. This budget covers purchasing curriculum, books, and supplies to benefit the students in RE. We also use this limited budget to provide continuing education for our teachers and youth advisors. Accordingly, families are encouraged to support the program financially through their pledges, in accordance with their resources and value of the program to them.

Beginning in 2015-2016, families will also be asked for a very low registration fee. That fee will be \$25 per registered child age five or older, if the family has a pledge on record for the current year with UUFLB, and \$50 per registered child age five or older, if that family is not currently pledging.

That fee may be waived by the DRE or a member of the board, if a family's financial circumstances put that fee out of reach. You will be asked for that fee when you register your child, which you must do on the third Sunday that your family attends UUFLB. No fee will be charged for families registering after the last Sunday in March. Occasionally we will request that families make donations to support the program. These may include craft supplies, snacks, trip fees, or contributions to fundraising efforts.

Sundays at UUFLB

Regular Sunday services begin at the Pen Ryn School on Sunday, September 13, 2015. They will be held every Sunday through June 5, 2015. Services are held from 10:30 am to 11:30 am, and are followed by an hour for fellowship. RE will usually be dismissed at 11:45.

Every Sunday, we provide childcare free of charge to children from six weeks to five years old. The nursery is staffed by two paid childcare providers at least 16 years old, and supervised by professional staff. The nursery is open from 10:15 until 11:45 am each Sunday morning. Please pick your children up from the nursery promptly.

About ten times a year, the service is intentionally planned to be engaging and interesting to those of all ages, and the children remain in the multigenerational community for the entire hour. They sit with their families on these Sundays. The multigenerational services are an important component of your child's RE experience, and we encourage all families to attend them regularly.

There is no RE programming on Easter Sunday, the Sunday of Memorial Day weekend, and the last Sunday in December.

During the summer, we do not hold services at Pen Ryn. Our services are held at our Fellowship Center in Langhorne. Childcare is not available at Sunday services, although there is a separate room available for children to take a break. You must supervise your children while they are in that room. More information will be available later in the year.

Communication to Parents

We encourage parents to remain informed of what is happening at UUFLB. You may sign up to receive a weekly e-newsletter, and to receive our monthly

newsletter. Announcements are also frequently made orally prior to service, or are printed in each Sunday's Order of Service. The RE Team may occasionally send out email updates about events in RE. If you have questions at any time, please contact the Director of Religious Education or some member of the RE team. That contact information is available in this booklet, and also on our website.

Attendance

Your child receives the greatest benefit when they attend religious education classes regularly. Regular attendance fosters a sense of community in the classroom and offers continuity of instruction and discussion. This helps your child understand and process the sequential curriculum being presented. When you encourage regular attendance you send your child a powerful message — that Unitarian Universalism and Religious Exploration are important in your child's life as well as your own. Strong attendance honors our teachers' commitment as UUFLB members who volunteer their time and talent. Our teachers prepare carefully to make classes exciting and enriching. If you cannot attend one Sunday, but your children would like to come, consider contacting another parent and perhaps they can escort your child.

Children with Special Needs

It is our goal to have our program available to all children. Please let the Director of Religious Exploration know if your child has special needs so we can provide accommodations as needed. If your child has a "behavior intervention plan" from school it is very helpful to share it with the Director of Religious Exploration so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

Behavior Policy

Our goal for the Religious Exploration Program is to provide a classroom environment that is inclusive of all children, while being safe, productive, and respectful. At the beginning of each year, every class creates a covenant. Covenant is an integral part of Unitarian Universalist life in community. The covenant provides the foundation for both children and adults, in making decisions about how we will treat one another while we are together. Children are encouraged to take that covenant very seriously, and when it is not honored, the class will spend time in discussion about how to restore "right relations" in

the group. When children find the expectations challenging, our first recourse will be to talk with the child and the family, to discuss how we might accommodate those expectations to meet the child's needs in a way that honors the covenant. Our teachers are encouraged to use positive encouragement, thoughtful accommodations, and gentle guidance, to handle challenging behaviors. In the event that a situation arises that cannot be handled in this way, a child may be temporarily returned to the family's supervision, until the DRE and the child's parent or guardian can meet to discuss possible responses.

If the inappropriate behavior has occurred during a UUFLB sponsored trip or a youth conference or as a result of the conference or trip, students may not be permitted to attend future trips for a period to be determined by the DRE. At any time while a participant is away at a UUFLB-sponsored event, the parent or guardian is responsible for coming to pick that child up, if the advisors or chaperones feel the situation warrants that response.

If your child has a Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) at school, please speak confidentially to the Director of Religious Exploration about the needs of your child, so supports can be built in.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Lower Bucks Religious Exploration Safety Policy

Adults working with children and youth in the context of our Unitarian Universalist faith have a crucial and privileged role, one that can carry a great deal of power and influence. Whether acting as a youth advisor, chaperone, childcare worker, teacher, minister, or in any other role, adults have a special opportunity to interact with young people in ways that are affirming and inspiring to young people and adults. Our commitments, as Unitarian Universalists, to the inherent dignity and worth of every person and to justice and compassion, compel us to create a safe environment that protects children and youth from harm and promotes their spiritual growth.

The Director of Religious Exploration and the Religious Exploration Team feel strongly that the UUFLB Religious Exploration program should adhere to "safe congregation" policies. The following policies are in effect for the RE program:

— All teachers must be a UUFLB member or regularly-attending friend for at least 6 months.

- Teachers and classroom assistants must undergo a screening, which includes, but is not limited to, a criminal background check and child abuse clearance. (If the volunteer has lived in Pennsylvania for fewer than 10 years, other screening checks are required.) We will comply with all Pennsylvania law in this area.
- Youth advisors attending youth cons must have an additional screening through the Joseph Priestly District.
- Two adults (teacher & assistant) must be in each classroom when students are present.
- The two adults in a classroom may not be members of the same household.
- Doors to the classroom must have a window or the door must be kept open while students are present.
- The Director of Religious Exploration (DRE) or other Religious Exploration team members will observe RE Classes regularly.
- Access to the classrooms is limited to the DRE, Religious Exploration committee members, designated teachers/assistants, and parents when they are attending to their own children.
- All students must have current registration forms on file, or visitor forms if they have attended fewer than three times.
- Parents/guardians must inform the DRE of any custodial or restraining orders and/or medical conditions, so that we can maintain a safe environment.
- All children must have a parent/guardian or “designated parent/guardian” on the premises while they attend RE.
- Photographs or videos of students will be taken and/or published only if there are current permissions to do so on file. These are renewed yearly.
- There must be an age difference of four years between teachers and young people, in any particular group.
- Each Sunday a designated person, either the Director of Religious Exploration, a member of the Religious Exploration Team, or a screened volunteer will supervise the RE classes.
- All teachers or assistant volunteers will be informed of their responsibilities under the law for reporting suspected abuse or neglect of a child.

Note: Mandated Reporting:

Pennsylvania’s Child Protective Services Law was amended in 2014. Effective December 31, 2014, every person, PAID or UNPAID who, on the basis of involvement in an organization or regularly-scheduled program, assume responsibility for supervision of a child, is considered a mandated reporter. This means that our volunteers, as well as our DRE, are required by law to report to the Department of Public Welfare any suspicion that a minor child may be being abused or neglected. It is not our responsibility to investigate that abuse or neglect, or make judgments about whether a situation qualifies as abuse or neglect. We are required by law to report the situation, and allow the appropriate agencies to investigate. A mandated reporter can be held responsible if (s)he aware of a situation, and did not report it. It is not sufficient anymore, under the law, for our volunteers to simply make concerns known to the DRE or a member of the RE team. The law expects our volunteers also to report directly. Of course, we encourage all volunteers, or any concerned person in the UUFLB community, to talk to the DRE or any member of the team, about those concerns, but this does not preclude the legal responsibility for reporting directly. Information about how to report may be found at www.pa-fsa.org, or by consulting the educational pamphlet provided to you by the DRE.

At the start of the 2015-2016 year, our DRE will make appropriate educational materials available to all volunteers. Volunteers must indicate their understanding of these materials, in writing, before spending time with our children.

Addendum:

- All adults attending youth conferences must have additional screenings through the Joseph Priestly District (JPD) and will have attended Youth Advisor Training when offered.
- The DRE is a member of LREDA (Liberal Religious Educators Association). The DRE is screened as well.
- All students and adults attending youth conferences or youth programs outside of UUFLB, must have prior approval from the DRE before the event, so the proper clearances can be processed per event and required adult to student ratios of 1 adult to 5 youth are met.
 - Youth planning on attending must complete all paperwork and submit a check to the office before our internal deadline. Youth must be registered in RE and regularly attending the RE program.
 - Once the internal deadline has passed, and we are under our ratio of 1 to 5; we will allow our advisors to chaperone students from other congregations who need advisors.

Volunteers in our Religious Exploration Program

Our Religious Exploration Program is a cooperative, volunteer program. We are fortunate that many members without children in the RE program graciously volunteer their time, but parents of children in our program are expected to help. There are many ways you can get involved. We always need assistance with the following activities: social service projects, intergenerational activities, the annual December holiday service, craft day, making reminder calls to teachers and assistants, helping with fundraising, and chaperoning field trips. You could also apply through the Director of Religious Exploration to be a part of the Religious Exploration team. The success of our program depends upon volunteers and their contributions. .

Facilitator Requirements

Teaching is a very important commitment to make to the program. All of our classes have a teacher and an assistant, or two co-facilitators. Teachers carry out lesson plans and teaching assistants help the teacher with the lesson and support individual students. To become a teacher in our program you must have been regularly attending UUFLB for at least 6 months, undergo a criminal background and child abuse clearance and attend a facilitator orientation or meet with the DRE.

If you are new to Unitarian Universalism, we first recommend volunteering for special RE events, field trips or reading a story in the nursery. When you are ready to try teaching in RE, we recommend volunteering as an assistant teacher so that you may become familiar with UU Religious Education. If a prospective volunteer does not already have current clearances, the Director of Religious Exploration will provide the paperwork and UUFLB will pay for and process the clearances.

Periodically, a teacher training is conducted by the DRE to familiarize teachers and assistants with teaching procedures, classroom management strategies and the curriculum. All teachers are expected to attend if at all possible; assistants are also welcome to attend, as are parents of children in the program who might wish to learn more.

Those teachers working with youth or teaching the Our Whole Lives (OWL) curriculum have additional training offered through the Joseph Priestly District. OWL training is about 30 hours over three days and is taught by highly certified

OWL trainers. Youth advisor training begins with an eight-hour class and then is updated yearly through web conferences, blogs, and emails. In our commitment to the students of this congregation UUFLB pays for the fees associated with these trainings.

Religious Exploration Team

The Religious Exploration Team is responsible for the coordination, communication, and policy development of the Religious Exploration Program for children and youth. The team also helps to plan and sponsor special events and multigenerational worship. The Religious Exploration Team meets monthly at the UUFLB office, Penn's Square, 404 Middletown Blvd. #308, Langhorne PA. This is an open meeting and all are invited to attend. If you have an item for our agenda, please email the DRE (dre@uufb.org) one week prior to the meeting. Each team member has specific responsibilities. We have a liaison responsible for each age level. Each teacher liaison provides support for the teachers and students of the class they are assigned to. They assist each teaching team with coordination of teacher/assistant scheduling and help make sure the teachers have what is needed to teach a lesson. They are familiar with the curriculum for their assigned level and can answer questions. Team members also share the responsibility of overseeing the program on the weeks when the DRE is not on-site.

Director of Religious Exploration (DRE)

The Director of Religious Exploration is a professional employee of the congregation, not a member. This individual shares the responsibilities and administration of the program with the Religious Exploration Team. The Director of Religious Exploration helps to maintain a strong volunteer program and ensures a quality curriculum. The current DRE is a half-time employee and works 20 hours a week. She supervises the Sunday Religious Exploration program several times a month and attends workshops and conferences throughout the year. She may not always be in attendance on Sundays but is available during posted office hours or by appointment. In the 2015-2016 year, she will be available three weekdays during the day, one evening a week, and Sundays. Please note that she may not return non-emergency calls, texts, or emails outside of those times.

Religious Exploration Contact Information

Director of Religious Exploration (DRE)
Jennifer Rehbein (609) 671-9188
Email: dre@uufb.org

Religious Exploration Team Leader

From the Religious Exploration aspect, the team leader conducts committee meetings and supports the DRE and committee members in creating a program that reflects our UUFLB mission and vision statement.

Ann Fisher (215) 369-5054 • Email: annfisher11@gmail.com

Liaison to the Board

The liaison to the UUFLB Board of Trustees supports the RE committee in meeting stated goals and objectives, and communicates relevant information between the Board of Trustees and the RE committee.

Laura Smith • Email: atpwasit@gmail.com

President of the Board of Trustees

Colleen Stough • Email: president@uufb.org

Religious Exploration Teacher and Scheduling Support

Grades K- 4: Kathy White, 1kdljweiss@gmail.com
and Jen Couchoud, jcouchoud@gmail.com

Grades 5 - 7: Jocilyn Fitts, jocilynf@hotmail.com
and Marcha Gopal, marthadgopal@gmail.com

Grades 8-10: Amy Rodia, amy.rodia@gmail.com

Our Program (Class Breakdowns & Curriculum)

Class Breakdowns

Nursery (6 months through 5 years)

Our youngest children are cared for in our nursery. Our nursery has a wealth of toys and books to entertain the children. Children will be gently encouraged to understand and internalize our UU values in the context of story, play, and crafts. Nursery caregivers are all over age 16, and are supervised by adult professional staff and volunteers.

The nursery is open every Sunday from 10:15 am until 11:45 am, to allow you to attend the worship service.

Grades K-4 (Primary)

- Curricula:
 - *Faithful Journeys* — *World of Wonder*
 - *Rainbow Children*: Anti-racist, multicultural materials from *Teaching Tolerance*
- Seasonal Childrens' Chapel
- Song / Music Fests
- Winter Celebration / Project
- Multigenerational Worship
- Community and Congregational Service

Grades 5-7

- Curricula:
 - *Neighboring Faiths* — *Riddle and Mystery*
- Seasonal Childrens' Chapel
- Song / Music Fests
- Winter Celebration / Project
- Multigenerational Worship
- Community and Congregational Service

Grades 8–12

- Curricula:
 - *Be the Change!*
 - Small Group Ministry
- Song / Music Fests
- Winter Celebration / Project
- Community Service Project (Bristol Food Bank collections)
- Youth-led Service
- Multigenerational Worship
- Community and Congregational Service
- Youth CONS

Curriculum

The goals established by the RE team at UULB naturally fall into five main areas of focus, called Pillars. Our curriculum is designed so that young people who participate in our program for the entire thirteen years will be exposed to these areas multiple times during their time with us.

- Unitarian Universalist Identity
- World Religions
- Judeo-Christian heritage
- Peace and Justice
- The Web of Life

Our children spend time in multigenerational community, and also in various age-appropriate groupings, depending on the activity planned.

Curricula for Grades K–6 (Primary)

Primary children spend most Sundays in a one-room-schoolhouse environment with other children of elementary-school age. The curriculum in these years is designed to build a foundation of knowledge, allow children to grow socially, emotionally, and spiritually, and encourage children to deeply internalize our UU principles.

Children's Chapels

We mark the equinoxes and solstices through Children's Chapels. Children learn about the beliefs and practices of those who follow earth-centered paths, and develop a strong connection with the natural rhythms of the earth and the changing seasons.

World of Wonder

Children will explore our 7th UU Principle deeply, through direct experiences in the natural world, and through carefully guided discussions and activities that invite participants to draw lessons from nature that can be applied to human life and experience.

Rainbow Children

This program has the goal of helping our children to make sense of the social construct of race, to foster a positive self-image for all our children, and to encourage our children to see themselves as forces for justice and fairness in the world. The program will be supplemented with material from *Teaching Tolerance*, a program of the Southern Poverty Law Center, and will culminate in an extended art-based self-expression project.

Faithful Journeys

This program helps our children to understand our UU Principles by introducing them to the Unitarians, Universalists, and UUs living today and from our history, whose lives exemplified each principle. The program is also a rich source for adults who have only recently come into our faith, so we would especially encourage new families to consider volunteering as assistant teachers during this portion of our year.

Curricula for Grades 5–7 (Junior Youth)

This year, our Junior Youth begin the first year of our Coming of Age program. The goal of Coming of Age, which is a three-year experience, is to support adolescents as they:

- Increase their knowledge and understanding of Unitarian Universalism.
- Discover the relevance of this faith community to their own lives.
- Deepen in their commitment to living a life based on Unitarian Universalist principles.
- Grow in self-awareness and assume responsibility for their own well-being and decision-making.

The requirements for Coming of Age are detailed in a separate booklet, which you can obtain by speaking to the DRE or any member of the RE team. The program may be revised to allow completion in less time, if a participant enrolls after we have begun. New participants may join at any time.

Riddle and Mystery

Riddle and Mystery encourages young adolescents to deepen and clarify their personal understandings of the “big questions” of life. In a program that encourages private reflection through the creation of journals, and interactive experiences with other youth and with adults, we will ask: Where do we come from? Who are we, as individuals and as a movement? What is the purpose of life? What happens after we die? What do we believe about God?

Neighboring Faiths

Neighboring Faiths introduces youth people to the faith traditions of others in our local community. Participants explore the beliefs, practices, and values of our Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic, Native, and Pagan neighbors. We also explore important religious issues like fundamentalism and the existence of cults, and cover the religious options of humanism, atheism, agnosticism, and religious naturalism. Field trips are taken to houses of worship in the region; several of these trips may take place outside Sunday mornings. Neighboring Faiths is a very important component of our program. We believe a commitment to Unitarian Universalism ought to be an informed commitment. We further believe that our young people should be comfortable with and conversant in religious difference, and able to work closely with those of all beliefs in respect and compassion.

Curricula for Grades 8–12 (Senior Youth)

Be The Change!

Be The Change! is a new curriculum for high school youth. We will use this material, as well as supplementary material from a similar program for junior-high youth, as part of our class sessions. The curriculum leads to a deep understanding of the nature of injustice and oppression, and helps to develop the skills youth need to become advocates for a fairer and more compassionate world. We will learn how to be a voice for justice during our everyday interactions with others, and also how to speak up in the larger world on issues that concern us. The curriculum focuses closely on issues of racially and ethnically motivated injustices, so that youth are equipped to respond to current events from deeply-rooted Unitarian Universalist values. We will use a variety of media, so that we may directly hear the voices of important leaders for justice.

Our class sessions will also include ample time for personal sharing, spiritual reflection, and plain, simple fun.

Youth-led Service

Each year, our youth plan and lead a Sunday worship service for the entire UUFLB community. This year, planning for the youth-led service will include time spent on intentionally developing leadership skills

Circle Worship

Circle Worship is an opportunity for youth to experience worshipful spiritual deepening, together with peers, in a safe and accepting environment.

Film Discussions

Our youth will have the opportunity to view several films, and to engage in discussion of those films through the lens of our UU Principles.

Self-Exploration within the context of Youth CONs (Conferences)

A Youth CON is a place where UU youth connect with youth from other UU congregations. CONs are planned and run by youth, with adult advisors. Youth and adults create a community for a weekend at a UU church in the region. There's time to meet people, participate in workshops and worship, music, poetry, skits, and lots of humor, in a safe, respectful, and inclusive atmosphere. CONs vary from large district-wide gatherings, to more intimate gatherings of only two or a few more youth groups. Youth CON/JPD safety policies require that chaperones be UUFLB youth advisors, and that they undergo additional screening. To send participants to CONs, we have to meet specific adult/youth ratios. Participants must also be approved by the DRE, to attend CONs. Approval is granted based on adult/youth ratio, with preference given to those who attend Sunday RE regularly. Youth must routinely meet behavioral expectations while attending UUFLB events. Both participants and parents must sign a behavior contract, register, and submit a registration fee. The Fellowship is able to provide limited financial support when needed. Please see the DRE or a youth advisor for details.

All Age Levels

Social Service

Our youth have the opportunity to participate in projects and events that benefit those in need in the local community. Through this participation, they learn to put their values into action to build a fairer and more inclusive world.

Service and Justice

Occasionally, our young people have the opportunity to participate in events that allow them to support important social justice issues. For instance, a significant number of our young folks have marched in the New Hope Pride parade, to show their support for marriage equality and civil rights for those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender. We will make families aware of these opportunities as they arise, and we hope that you will consider joining us.

Multigenerational Worship

Regular worship is an important part of a young person's religious development. We plan intentionally multigenerational worship services at least ten times a year, and we encourage our youth and children to attend these. As well, our children begin most Sunday mornings by attending the first fifteen minutes of worship, sitting with their families, before they gather for age-specific programming.

Spirituality through ART & MUSIC

We strive to integrate the arts into our RE program in meaningful ways, through special musical Sundays, art and craft projects, and if funds permit, field trips to regional art and music centers.

Our Whole Lives (OWL) Lifespan Sexuality Education Curricula

OWL scheduling varies from year-to-year. Please see your child's individual age level for specifics of what is offered this year. We are not planning to offer OWL in the 2015-2016 year. We will be offering three levels of this program in future years.

Our Whole Lives (OWL) is a life-affirming, comprehensive approach to learning about sexuality, relationships, and identity formation. This curriculum was developed to be used with participants at six levels of development: 5-6 years old, 9-11 years old, 12 to 14 years old, 15 to 18 years old, 18-35 years old, and for mature adults. Our Whole Lives helps participants make informed and responsible decisions about sexual health and behavior. Grounded in a holistic understanding of sexuality, OWL not only provides facts about anatomy and human development, but also helps participants clarify values, build interpersonal skills, and understand the social, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of sexuality.

OWL equips participants with accurate, developmentally appropriate information in six areas: human development, relationships, personal skills, sexual behavior, sexual health, and cultural models of sexuality. There are mandatory parent orientations for youth participation; we believe that parents are their children's primary sexuality educators.

Teachers of OWL must undergo background checks, and complete a 3-day training sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Association, the United Church of Christ, or Planned Parenthood, to become certified to teach this course. In addition, all of our OWL facilitators at UUFLB are long-time members of the Fellowship, who have exhibited a commitment to interacting with children and youth in appropriate ways, through significant time as volunteers in our RE and youth group programs.

Children and youth whose families are not members of UUFLB are welcome to attend OWL, provided the following conditions are met:

- a fee of \$55/year is asked, although it may be waived in specific instances of serious need,
- there are open seats in the class after all UUFLB members have had the chance to register,
- Parents attend the mandatory orientation, meet with the DRE to establish that OWL is a good match for the family, and the youth themselves demonstrate a sincere desire to participate fully,
- The youth attend regularly, missing no more than the allowed number of sessions for that level of OWL, and behave appropriately while attending.

Rite of Passage within the Unitarian Universalist Context

Unitarian Universalists have their own rites of passage. These rites of passage may be very different within each congregation. Our congregation regularly facilitates **Child Dedication**, **Coming of Age**, and **Bridging** ceremonies.

Child Dedication —

Most Unitarian Universalist congregations have child dedication services for infants, young adopted children, or young children whose families have recently joined the congregation. We can dedicate children at any age. The parents bring the child to the front of the sanctuary at a designated time in a regular Sunday worship service, and the minister presides over the ceremony. The dedication ceremony is generally a celebration of the blessing of new life, an expression of the parents' hopes for their child, and a call to the parents and the congregation's members to lead and nurture the child's spiritual life as it grows. One of the special elements of the ceremony is when parents bring

their children before our congregation to be dedicated, we give the babies an unopened rose, symbolizing the beauty and newness of their lives and we remove from the rose all the thorns that might cause pain. For further information about Child Dedication please contact our DRE.

Coming of Age —

Coming of Age Ceremonies (COA), marking the transition from childhood to young adult, are as old as history. They have included confirmations, vision quests, and bar and bat mitzvahs, all to help youth learn about themselves and prepare for adulthood. Our Religious Exploration program marks this transition with a two-year Coming of Age program which emphasizes self-reflection, confidence building, service to the fellowship and community, and a culminating affirmation ceremony where students read their statement of faith. During this two year program, students usually participate in a Heritage Trip to Boston, Massachusetts to visit the UUA and learn more about our UU history. Coming of Age Programs are generally started in the middle school years as part of our Junior Youth group program. Our current Coming of Age program will begin this year, and be held over three years. It will culminate with a special service in Spring 2018.

Bridging —

This is the rite of passage, held during a Spring congregational Sunday service, in the youths' twelfth-grade year. Bridging marks the transition from being a teen to young adulthood. The Bridging ceremony recognizes, honors, and celebrates the youth who have, in many cases, been in our Religious Exploration program for many years and now are moving on. We also give an unopened rose to the youth, but this time the thorns have not been removed which represents life with all of its joy but also difficulties. At this time bridging youth also address the congregation with their self-reflection of their years with the congregation and what they will take with them as they go forth. For further information about Bridging please contact Jennifer Rehbein, DRE.

Parents as Partners in Religious Exploration

Religious Exploration takes place in the context of a family's total involvement in their chosen religious community. We ask you, as the most important religious educator in your child's life, to partner with us in this process of Religious Exploration. Please consider devoting as much time to your child's spiritual health as to their physical health.

- Bring Your Child Regularly
- Take Interest in Your Child's Class.
- Share Your Beliefs and Church Activities with Your Child
- Volunteer your time to the RE Program.

Commonly Used Acronyms

While it is our intention to define commonly used acronyms throughout this Prospectus, we may have missed a few. We realize that use of acronyms can be overwhelming to someone new to Unitarian Universalism.

Here is a list of acronyms possibly used in this Prospectus:

DRE — Director of Religious Exploration

DYSC — District Youth Steering Committee (part of JPD)

JPD — Joseph Priestly District (a regional part of UUA)

OWL — *Our Whole Lives* (A sexuality program written by UUA and United Church of Christ)

UU — Unitarian Universalist

UUA — Unitarian Universalist Association (the overall governing body for UU's)

UUFLB — Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Lower Bucks

YES — Youth Empowering and Supportive

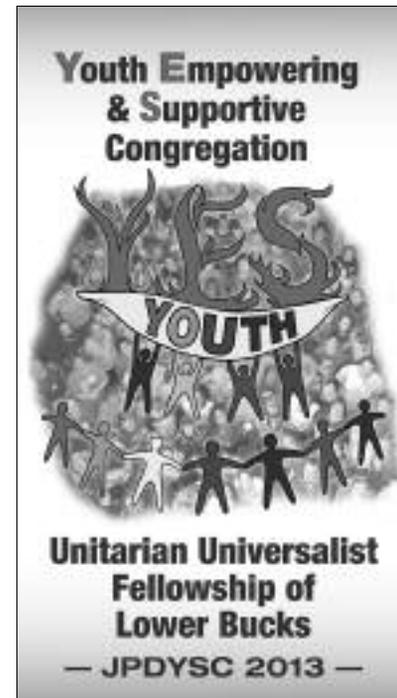
CON — (Youth) Conference

YUUTES — Young Unitarian Universalist Teens Exploring Spirituality

YES Award

We are very proud of our YES AWARDS. (2008–2009, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015)

This past year, UUFLB was once again the recipient of the YES (Youth Empowering and Supportive) Congregation Award at the Joseph Priestley District Assembly. This is the fourth time that we have received this award. The congregation, the advisors to our youth group, and the Religious Exploration Team supported the Senior Youth in fulfilling the requirements for this award. We are all very proud of our young people.



7 Principles

(Children's Version)

As Unitarian Universalists, we believe that...

- 1 Each person is important and valuable.
- 2 All people should be treated fairly.
- 3 We should accept one another and keep on learning together.
- 4 Each person should be free to search for what is true and right.
- 5 All people have the right to speak out and vote on things that matter to them.
- 6 We should help build a peaceful, fair and free world.
- 7 We need to take care of the earth, the home we share with all living things.

The Principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association

*We, the member congregations of the Unitarian
Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote*

- 1 The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- 2 Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- 3 Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- 4 A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- 5 The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- 6 The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all;
- 7 Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.