

MS & HS Youth Group
RE Calendar 2017-2018

9/10	Intergenerational-RE Open House & Registration
9/17	
9/24	Discussion Group with Karin Drowne
10/1	Traditional Communion: 4th-12th remain in worship
10/8	Holiday NO RE Classes / NO Nursery Care
10/15	
10/22	Discussion Group with Karin Drowne
10/29	Intergenerational Service
11/5	Alternative Communion: 6th-12th remain in worship
11/12	Intergenerational: Leaf Raking Sunday
11/19	Discussion Group with Karin Drowne
11/26	
12/3	Traditional Communion: 4th-12th remain in worship
12/10	
12/17	Intergenerational- Christmas Pageant
12/24	
12/31	
1/7	Alternative Communion: 6th-12th remain in worship
1/14	
1/21	Discussion Group with Karin Drowne
1/28	Intergenerational Service
2/4	Intergenerational-Communion Service
2/11	
2/18	Holiday NO RE Classes / NO Nursery Care
2/25	
3/4	Intergenerational-Drumming Service
3/11	
3/18	
3/25	
4/1	Holiday NO RE Classes / NO Nursery Care
4/8	
4/15	
4/22	
4/29	
5/6	Intergenerational: Music Sunday
5/13	8th grade Affirmation
5/20	
5/27	Holiday NO RE Classes / NO Nursery Care
6/3	Traditional Communion: 4th-12th remain in worship
6/10	RE Sunday & Picnic Celebration

In RE we Respect Everyone:

D ifferent
I ndividuals
V aluing
E ach other
R egardless of
S kin
I ntellect
T alents or
Y ears

RE Committee

Jen Scarano (chair)
Kara Mason
Erin Nielson
Nicole Tracey (RE Director)
e-mail: ntracey@firstparishwestford.org

Middle School & High School
Youth Group
Grades 6-12
2017-2018

Religious
Education

A Cooperative Program
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Westford, MA

*Youth Group meets in the
Cozy Corner
Volunteers & Guest Speakers are
welcomed and encouraged!*

Middle School & High School Youth Group

We not only want our older youth to be engaged in *religious education*, but also to feel like they belong to the church and are needed within the larger community.

Beginning this year we are combining our middle school students and our high school students into one large Youth Group. Our goal is to provide an open atmosphere where students in grades 6-12 can know they matter. Where students can be honest, open, heard, and accepted. The hope is that sharing in an open discussion & working together on church & community efforts, will have a positive influence on decision-making and connectedness.

The lessons, discussions, activities, and field trips for the Youth Group Program are all created and carried out by adult volunteers. There is a sign-up sheet for volunteers to fill out with date & lesson info. For those interested in orchestrating any field trips or community service outings, please coordinate with the DRE (ntracey@firstparishwestford.org) for field trip permission forms & the needed safety procedures. **Following our policy, the youth group needs to be supervised by 2 un-related adults at all times.**

Any student in middle school and high school is welcome to attend these gatherings. On Sundays when the group

does not meet we welcome the participation of middle school and high school students to participate in the worship service. High school students are also welcome to volunteer in the nursery and/or to teach younger grades in RE. Community Service hours will be documented for those who volunteer. Students are also welcome and strongly encouraged to join in with the monthly communion worship service- held the first Sunday of every month.

Discussion Group with Deacon Karin Drowne

As part of our commitment to on-going spiritual growth & development, Deacon Karin Drowne meets with the group 7-8 times throughout the school year. The meeting is typically a discussion based format through which our youth can share their reflections, insights, and questions on a number of topics ranging from what goes on in worship, what goes on in the world, what goes on in their own lives, and what spirituality or religion has to do with any of it. The goals are to get students thinking about their own lives and those of people around them and to have an honest discussion on a topic and explore ideas that are not always easy to talk about.

In addition, Karin also tries to incorporate more activities that break away from the discussion format and reach out to our church community & the larger community

outside of church. This includes things like helping out with lessons for the younger RE grades, community service projects (collecting and sorting donations to local charity), or planning and organizing church events. As well as mission-driven opportunities like *City Reach* and *Habitat for Humanity*.

The exact dates are mailed out in the first letter to all students in early September. If you are a middle school or high school student, or the parent of one, and you do not receive a letter by mid-September, please email Karin Drowne at karindrowne@gmail.com to be added to the distribution list.

Students are also welcome to bring their friends to the discussion, even if they do not attend First Parish. Discussions are filled with lots of good treats such as cookies, Danishes, and juice, so bring your appetite! The topics discussed are as varied as the people who make up the group, and they are different each month. Over the years, we've talked about things such as: gambling, alcohol, guns, tobacco, legal and illegal drugs, offensive statements, prejudice, FOUND, nicknames, recycling, setting free 21 balloons, creativity, homelessness, and making the "right" decision.

All participants & visitors will need to fill out a Youth Group Registration form!