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| **9/8 WCW: RE Open House** |
| **9/15** Lesson 1 |
| **9/22** Lesson 2 |
| **9/29** World Religion wkshp #1 @10:30 |
| **10/6 WCW: Communion** |
| **10/13 WCW: Holiday** |
| **10/20** Lesson 3 |
| **10/27** Lesson 4 |
| **11/3 WCW: Communion** |
| **11/10 WCW: Holiday wkend (Veterans Day)** |
| **11/17** Social Justice wkshp @10:30 |
| **11/24** Thanksgiving Group Lesson |
| **12/1 WCW: Communion** |
| **12/8** Christmas Group Lesson |
| **12/15 WCW: Christmas Pageant** |
| **12/22** Hanukkah Group Lesson |
| **12/29** Game Day |
| **1/5 WCW: Communion** |
| **1/12** Lesson 5 |
| **1/19** **WCW** |
| **1/26** Lesson 6 |
| **2/2 WCW: Communion** |
| **2/9** Lesson 7 |
| **2/16 WCW: Holiday wkend (Presidents Day)** |
| **2/23** Lesson 8 |
| **3/1 WCW: Communion** |
| **3/8** Purim Group Lesson |
| **3/15 WCW** |
| **3/22** Group Lesson |
| **3/29** Passover Group Lesson |
| **4/5 WCW: Communion** |
| **4/12 WCW: Holiday wkend (Easter)** |
| **4/19** Lesson 9 |
| **4/26** Lesson 10 |
| **5/3 WCW: Communion** |
| **5/10** Mother’s Day Group Lesson |
| **5/17** World Religion wkshp #2 @10:30 |
| **5/24** Group Lesson |
| **5/31** **WCW: Holiday wkend (Memorial Day)** |
| **6/7** RE Sunday Prep |
| **6/14 WCW: RE Sunday** |

**RE Calendar 2019-2020**

**\* “WCW” = Whole Congregation Worship**

On these Sundays all ages remain together for the entire worship service.

Join us after in the fellowship hall for a Whole Congregation RE Activity!

**\* “RE Lesson”**

On these Sundays, all youth (including MS & HS) will meet with their designated grades.

***Getting Started...***

**Children can be registered for the program beginning Sunday September 8, 2019 and any time after that. Classes start Sunday September 15, 2019 and run through June 14, 2020. Visiting friends and relatives may always join in with age appropriate classes. We ask that families complete a registration form before dropping their child(ren) off in RE class.**

**RE Committee:**

Danielle Mucciarone (co-chair)

Heather Wright (co-chair)

Kara Mason

Juliana Merlino

Jenn Smagula

AJ Ryan (YG Advisor)

Nicole Tracey (RE Director)

e-mail: ntracey@firstparishwestford.org

**Welcome to**

**Religious Education**

**A Cooperative Program**

**@ First Parish Church United**

**Westford, MA**

**Program Overview**

**2019-2020**

**Here at FPCU, we delight in the lifelong journey of spiritual growth & development. In addition to worship, fellowship, outreach and committee activity, we offer Religious Education (RE) classes.**

**Our program for Nursery Care through High School is a cooperative one, classes are facilitated and assisted by volunteers that include high school students, parents to children in the program, and other adults who love to work with children.**

**We encourage ALL to sign up & volunteer!**

***Curriculum Philosophy & Overview***

**FPCU is affiliated with both the United Church of Christ and the Unitarian Universalist Association.** We believe RE classes should present religious content and knowledge with sensitivity to the diversity of belief that is present in our congregation. We encourage families to discuss the lessons with their children and help them to see the lesson through the family's own belief structure. The Religious Education Committee is committed to providing meaningful lessons that educate our total church community (children, teens and adults). Our liberal RE program embraces the three threads that weave our program together:

**1. The Judeo-Christian Heritage**: Taught in the primary grades through Bible stories and exploration of important holidays. The primary grades also include a study of our denominational affiliations- the UUA and the UCC.

**2. Comparative World Religion:** Our Youth spends some time focusing on the many religions in the world today. By examining and comparing various religions students are able to expand their understanding of others and of themselves. Students are introduced to a world religion each year through workshops and various large group activities.

**3. Social Consciousness**: Church and community outreach projects provide children with the opportunity of putting their faith into action. These range from local needs (e.g. leaf raking & food pantry donations) to supporting global organizations (e.g. Habitat for Humanity & The Wish Foundation) in an effort to relieve suffering around the world.

***Sunday Class Time***

**RE classes for children in PK through Grade 12** meet approximately two/three Sundays a month, during the worship hour. Everyone gathers together at the start of worship in the Sanctuary, and then children are invited to leave for RE class during the second hymn. Adults should walk their child to class, and pick them up once the service is over. Lessons are non-sequential, so students don't need to attend every class to keep up.

**We value family worship time** and plan Whole Congregation Worship services throughout the year. At these times we are blessed by the enlivening presence of all ages for worship!

WCW INFO: Whole Congregation Worship allows all ages to worship together. It is a great opportunity for our youth to learn from others in the church and to experience the ways of the worship service. We encourage all to join us on these WCW Service days, as it will only benefit our youth in the future, and keep them connected to and engaged within the church longer into adolescence and adulthood.

***Special Programs***

There are approximately 3 WORKSHOPS each year; two focusing on a World Religion and one focusing on Social Justice. There are also a number of group lessons and holiday lessons planned throughout the year. Group Lessons & Workshops allow for inspiring hands-on learning, cooperation and community building with all youth.

\* The ***World Religion Workshops*** focus on the world religion of the year; introducing children to the different traditions, customs and the beliefs of that religion. Through stories, visual aids, activities and crafts the children learn about the ways of others; making connections to their own lives while recognizing and appreciating the differences as well. **This Year's World Religion Focus: Native American Spirituality**

\* The ***Social Justice workshop*** focuses on applying UCC & UUA values, recognizing current issues/events, helping others & making a difference. The lesson that takes place helps the children gain a better understanding of the issue/event at hand and helps them to appreciate the importance of values-theirs and those of others.

***\* Group Lessons*** are flexible and fun. The lessons revolve around a theme, usually seasonal based-not necessarily religious-focusing on the time of year.

***\* Holiday Lessons*** are based on a specific holiday and focus on how that holiday is celebrated. Holiday Lessons may include: Advent, Hanukkah, Christmas Around the World, Easter and Passover/Seder.

**RE Offering**

**A collection basket is passed around at the start of each RE class.**

**The RE offering is separate from the Church offering, as the RE students get to vote on where their offering goes! The offering is split 50/50, between an out-reach program and an in-reach gift for the church.**

**Out-reach programs have included The Heifer Organization, Lutheran Services for New Americans: Backpack Drive, Habitat for Humanity, and Lowell Wish Foundation. In-reach gifts have included the swing and slide in the nursery room and granite benches for an outside sitting area next to the church.**

**You're continued support is greatly appreciated!**

**Pre-School & Pre-K Curriculum Info**

Continuing this year, PS & Pre-K students will be using the UU curriculum **Chalice Children: A Tapestry of Faith Program for Children.** This curriculum introduces the basic tenets of our UU faith to young children and their families. Those tenets are our love, our covenantal community, our celebration of diversity, a personal sense of wonder and awe, and our hope and work for a better world. **Chalice Children** is based on the belief that preschool children gain a sense of belonging to their religious community and the UU faith when they have concrete experiences with its people and places. Young children learn about their congregation's people and explore the physical building and surroundings that the congregation calls "home." **Chalice Children** is also based on the philosophy that a child’s spiritual development is related to the child’s own direct experiences. They question and wonder most vividly when in contact with real phenomena through touch, sight, or sound. Children learn the worth of other people when they encounter other children, experience conflicts in play, and discover that others have feelings, too.

**K-2nd Grade Curriculum Info**

The curriculum for grades K-2 is based on Bible stories. Children will become familiar with stories from both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures (Old and New Testaments.) The focus is to gain a basic understanding of the story and characters, as well as exploring possible interpretations of these stories. Bible stories are taught as meaningful stories, but "what to believe" is left to parents-and, later, children themselves- to determine. Bible stories are taught using the UU based curriculum **Picture Book Bible Tales*.*** This curriculum is fun, friendly and concise with teachable moments that introduce classic Bible Tales to young elementary children, taught through the UU lens of cultural and historical context. This program will encourage children to be wise and informed decision makers in their journey toward spiritual maturity. It will acquaint them with tales that are part of our culture and guide them how to find universal messages of inspiration and hope. Each lesson is complete with a specific book that illustrates the classic Bible tale, using age appropriate language for young children. Each story highlights a specific UU principle, identity and belief.

**3rd Grade Curriculum Info**

3rd grade RE lessons continue to build on the foundations of Bible Stories learned in earlier grades and also take a closer look at what our church and faith deems important. Students will delve into well known Bible stories/characters as they go through the Bible from Adam & Eve to Jesus in chorological order, interpreting, reflecting and discussing the history and geography of the world.

Lessons are planned by the DRE and specific topics are inspired by the students.

Religious Education in 3rd grade marks a special milestone at FPCU, as students spend the year exploring Bible stories and prepare to move onto UU curriculums. At the end of the RE year, 3rd grade students will receive 2 special books:

**1. The *Newly Revised Standard Version* (NRSV) *Gift & Award Bible***

A Bible that speaks in words that are used in everyday language, making it easier for young people to read and understand. \*Personalized as a keepsake.

***2. Unitarian Universalism is a Really Long Name* by: Jennifer Dant.**

"Simple language and appealing illustrations offer children accessible answers to commonly asked questions such as: Who are we?"

**4th & 5th Grade Curriculum Info**

4th & 5th grade alternate between two UU curriculums. This year ***Windows & Mirrors: A Tapestry of Faith*** will nurture student's ability to identify their own experiences and perspectives and to seek out, care about and respect those of others. This program teaches that there are always multiple viewpoints and everyone's viewpoint matters and presents UU as a faith that is lived through identifying and acting on responsibility toward one another. The metaphor of windows and mirrors represents the dynamic relationship among our awareness of self, our perceptions of others, and others' perceptions of us. Students will begin by exploring how their own individuality creates the "Lens" through which we all view others. In time, students will develop a heightened awareness of how they bring their own lenses to diverse experiences outside themselves. Students will also be introduced to the reality and the impact of multiple perspectives and multiple experiences as we live in this world through the lesson's central stories and activities.

**4th grade and older are invited to help with each communion service (1st Sunday of each month). We ask that you arrive 15 minutes early on these Sundays and meet with the deacons for direction.**

**Youth Group Information**

**Our older youth in Middle School and High School (6th-12th grade) has laid the foundation to building a strong and lasting youth group that will have powerful impacts on the lives of many students.**

**Focus this year: Self Reflection Introspection, and Faith.**

**We will be focusing on faith, what that means to us, and how it affects our beliefs, philosophies, and daily lives. Through 10 planned Sunday lessons, various service trips, and reflections we want to help the youth to gain a firmer grasp of their own faith and what it means to them as well as themselves as a whole.**

**-Youth Group will meet in the cozy corner on all “RE Lesson” Sundays. Students will also have opportunities to help lead group lessons and workshops for the PK-5th graders!**

**-Any outings/field trips will be announced as they are planned, and will require chaperones and drivers!**

**-We will be looking into a City Reach trip for March 27th!**

**Religious Education**

**Grade Specific Curriculum Info**

**PS & PK Chalice Children Room #2**

K-2nd Picture Book Bible Tales Room #1

**3rd Bible Review / Intro UU Room #3**

4th/5th Windows & Mirrors Room #4

**6th-12th Youth Group Cozy Corner**

**\*Nursery information is printed in a**

**separate pamphlet**