

Religious Education Program 2018-2019

Janise Rennie, Director of Religious Education

DRE office hours: Tuesday, Sunday 1-3pm or by appointment

Welcome to the Religious Education Program. The Parent Handbook describes RE programs, activities, learn how you can get involved through volunteering your time/resources, and policies and procedures. ***Our program depends on the effort of parents and congregation sharing their time and talents in this wonderful ministry!*** The director works half-time coordinating quality programming for families.

Religious Education Mission Statement:

In addition to our congregational mission, we promise to create a safe and welcoming spiritual home for children and youth by building a strong community built on honest respectful communication.

Our Goals

- To instill passion for social action
- To nurture critical thinking and compassion
- To create community among children, parents, and congregation

Nursery

The Nursery is staffed by a trained CPR certified Child Care Provider. The Nursery is open every Sunday except Christmas Eve and New Year. Infants to 4 years of age are welcome to join the nursery children.

Curriculum and Schedule

Religious Education curriculum begins September throughout the year. Educational programs begin in September through May at the 10:00 am service. During the summer months, RE provides less-structured fun summer activities.

Our activities vary week by week according to the following monthly schedule:

- **First Sunday:** Children's Chapel, a worship service based on the monthly theme.
- **Second & Third Sunday:** Soul Matters curriculum will include all or some of these activities based on the age group: Stories, role playing, hands on activities, art projects, music, cooking, building a skit for the whole congregation, a guest speaker, field trip*, or more.
- **Fourth Sunday:** Play day! Games, art, dance, music, songs, cooking, park.

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- **Fifth Sunday:** Whole Congregational Service (Children remain in the sanctuary for this family-friendly service), or RE provides a program for the whole congregational service, or there will be a special activity in RE.

**Parents will be informed any time the teachers plan to leave the premise during RE classes. A signed permission slip must be on file or the child will not be allowed to join the class.*

Curriculum Information

Infant – PreK	Nursery program includes socialization, sensory play, stories, songs, free play! PreK will add artwork, caring for our friends and our planet. Parents provide snack for all on rotation.
1 - 8th	Soul Matters – A month to month theme followed church wide
7 – 8 th	Middle School Jr. Youth – Jr. Youth group will meet 3 times for planned socials off church hours.
9 – 12 th	Senior High Youth – Coming of Age, a rite of passage program will be offered. The program will require a commitment from students to attend on a regular basis to continue in the program. Sr. High group will meet 3 times for planned socials off church hours.

Special Sunday Services for Parents and Children

September 9	Teachers Dedication, Whole Congregation Service (No RE)
October 28	Dia de Los Muertos service
November 04	Children’s Dedication
December 24	Whole Congregation Christmas program
April 21	Easter program, egg hunt to follow!
May 19	Coming of Age Service
June 2	RE Service – Teacher’s Appreciation

Religious Education Social Events:

September	Parent Potluck and meeting, child care provided. Future meetings to be determined.
Sept. 16	Ice Cream Social – the entire Congregation enjoys ice cream provided by the RE program.
Oct 26	Movie in the sanctuary to kick off Dia de Los Muertos: Cocoa 6:45pm open to whole congregation.
Dec 9	RE Service Project – Pet toys for Woods

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Dec 9	UU Fellowship Holiday Crafting! Decorate our tree! All congregation, potluck.
Jan. 18	RE Glow in The Dark Party (All RE), Potluck. (No Sleepover)
Feb 3 – Feb 24	Tentative date for Puzzle Pals
March 3	Mardi Gras: Dinner and live Jazz band (Further discussion needed)
April 21	Easter program followed with games and egg hunt.
May 18	Coming of Age dinner by invitation
June 9	Teacher Appreciation/Last day of RE party! General Meeting.
July	RE Beach Day Social (Date to be announced)
August 6,8,10	Preschool Summer Camp! 6-8 th camp counselors
August 9-11	UU Family Campout

Other activities and events may be scheduled over the course of the year.

Volunteer Commitment and Opportunities in Religious Education

Volunteer Commitment

The RE program at UUSLO are successful due to the commitment of parents and volunteers. Typically, a rotation of 1 or 2 Sundays a month will fulfill our volunteer needs. Teaching is not for everyone however there's many opportunities to volunteer, see list below.

We are a cooperative program directed by Janise Rennie, DRE and the Religious Education Committee. There is no registration fee for RE. We are supported by our congregation and parents through the fellowship budget. Your pledges and gifts to the congregation, as well as participation in fundraisers such as the Silent Auction, special dinners, Flamingo campaign, and concerts are what make our programs possible. Your financial support to the congregation will keep our programs alive and growing.

Volunteers can join in RE in many ways: *(ask me about these positions!)*

Join a Teaching Team	Help with RE Socials	Provide Supplies
Story for All Ages	Help with a Skit/Play	Event Coordinator
Assist Chalice Lighting	Help with Holiday Crafting	Share your Talents
Volunteer in the Nursery	Help with Special Projects	Be a family Greeter

The RE Committee is made up of the DRE, RE Chair, and 3 other members of RE or congregation. Using the themed curriculum from Soul Matters we will pull the lesson plans for each RE group. Teachers will have the opportunity to look at the plans 2 to 3 weeks in advance to add their own ideas or activities. If you have questions, ideas, or comments regarding lesson plans, activities or overall curriculum you can contact the Director of Religious Education through email dre.uuslo@gmail.com.

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This year it would be helpful if parents could bring an old shirt for their child(ren) to use for art class. A mid to long sleeve pull over or button down that is slightly large with your child's name on the inside would be perfect. If you had an extra shirt to donate that would be handy for occasional visitors.

RE Policies and Procedures

Registration

All children must have a registration form on file. Forms are available on the website at www.UUSLO.org or on the RE color cart outside the DRE office. Please leave on the DRE desk when complete.

All children (visitors and enrolled) participating in Park day must have a permission form on file. Special field trips will require permission slips specific to that field trip.

Parents/guardians are required to remain on-site during the service. We are not a drop-off program.

Safe Child, Ouch Reports and Sick Child Policy

Safe Child

Our congregation follows a safe congregation policy - safety for all. With that in mind you can expect the following safety policies for your child(ren):

- Two leaders per classroom – one leader may be floating between classes.
- Megan's Law check for all RE staff, volunteers (teachers/assistants) and Youth advisors
- Code of Ethics Agreement for all RE staff, and volunteers
- Classroom Behavior Guidelines and teacher training
- Each classroom will develop a Covenant of expectations
- Each volunteer in the program assumes a role as a mandated reporter under the California law (training and explanation will be provided).

Ouch Reports

If your child is hurt during class a teacher will fill out an incident report. The DRE will report to the parent any incidents that occur during RE. If a child is in need of medical attention during RE the parent will be notified immediately. First aid will be applied as needed and, if warranted a call to 911 services. An incident report will be made and copied to parent, church staff, and board as required by our safe policy.

Sick Child Policy

If your child is sick, please keep your child home. All of us must protect the health and wellbeing of our church community. If your child becomes sick during class time we will isolate your child and attempt to text you, or come get you from the service.

When to keep your child home:

- Fever of 100.4 degrees (or higher) in the previous 24 hours
- Difficulty breathing and/or severe coughing
- Abnormally loose stool in the previous 24 hours
- Vomiting within the previous 24 hours
- Mucus draining from eyes (pink eye), or nose
- Any contagious condition: i.e., head lice, chicken pox, flu, etc.

Please note: Any child that presents with any of these symptoms upon arriving in RE will be returned to their parent to go home.

Nursery

We ask parents who have children in the nursery: If you are new to the nursery you may want to sit toward the back of the sanctuary just in case you want to pop out of the service to check on your little one. I will text you if there is a problem with your child. We never allow a child to "cry it out." Our policy is if a child is crying after many attempts from the child care provider and DRE to sooth your child we will text you. You will need to exit the sanctuary as quietly as possible preferably not during a meditation but as soon as you can.

**Any Questions? Contact Janise Rennie, Director of Religious Education
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Religious Education Behavior Guidelines Based on Our Seven Principles

This was developed by the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin, Texas.

We believe that each person is important.

- Safety first!
- Children must remain in designated area until parent pick up.
- Only gentle play in appropriate.
- Everyone matters. Use caring language and behavior.

We believe that all people should be treated fairly and kindly.

- Listen and follow directions.
- Be polite. Take turns.
- Care about one another.

We believe that we should accept one another and keep learning together.

- Make a commitment to regular attendance. Your friends and teachers depend upon you!
- Include everyone in activities and planning.
- Friends are welcome.

We believe that each person must be free to search for what is true and right in life.

- Share your ideas and remember to respect the ideas of others.
- Not everyone will agree with you and that's okay.

We believe that all persons should have the right to speak out and have a vote about what concerns them.

- Express your opinions constructively. It is OK to disagree with another person's ideas, but don't criticize the person or make fun.
- Respect the decision of the group.

We believe in working for a peaceful, fair and free world.

- Ask for help when you need it.
- Do your best to get along with others and to be helpful.
- Be willing to listen to reminders about behavior, yours or others.
- Do your best to participate in church social action projects.

We believe in caring for our planet earth, the home we share with all living things.

- Be careful with our space, furniture and materials
- Use only what you need. Recycle.
- Be gentle with the plants and animals on our church grounds.