

BYCC Curriculum Descriptions

2024-25

Sunday Mornings @9:30 AM & 11 AM

PreKindergarten: Chalice Children

Chalice Children delves deep into our Unitarian Universalist faith. It strives not just to teach about our faith, but also to provide experiences around the strength of community, the wonder and awe that transcend everyday understanding, and life issues we all share. Early childhood (the years between ages 2 and 5) is filled with curiosity and wonder. In a group setting, with loving adult guides, young children can engage in spiritual seeking, develop their openness to sharing, and experience the benefit of a supportive community. Our Preschoolers' time in Chalice Children can bring lasting benefits and set a pattern of community connectedness for the rest of their lives.

Kindergarten & 1st Grade: Love Surrounds Us & UU Values Challenge

At the core of our Unitarian Universalist community are our Shared Values. These six Values encompass all the ingredients of a good and faith-filled life based on equity, justice, transformation, interdependence, pluralism, and generosity. Love Surrounds Us explores all the Values in the context of Beloved Community of family/home, school, neighborhood where the children will engage in activities that emphasize the love they feel in community.

How do our Unitarian Universalist Values challenge us and what tools do they guide us to create as we take on life's challenges? The UU Values Challenge is a curriculum that answers this big question. Drawing from Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) and Borton's (1970) model for reflection, as well as Nature Educator Joseph Cornell's flow learning model (I love his books, definitely recommend them), this curriculum aims to support Unitarian Universalist Religious Education Teachers in helping young congregants explore the new values in an embodied way. Each session's challenge will allow children to reflect on one of the six values.

2nd & 3rd Grade: World Blessings*

An important tenet of Unitarian Universalism is an appreciation of our world and its many blessings. *World Blessings* seeks to introduce our world's diverse countries, religions, and holidays through the shared activity of cooking. Capturing a child's attention can be difficult, but this goal is made easier when children are engaged in active tasks. Most children enjoy cooking – and eating – and will particularly enjoy cooking together as a group. Cooking is fun, and there is no reason why children can't have fun while they are learning. Indeed, fun will help keep children engaged and focused, so that learning can be achieved.

***This program will also be used for our K-5th Grade One Room Schoolhouse @9:30AM.**

4th & 5th Grade: Sing to the Power & UU Values Challenge

Our Unitarian Universalist tradition has long placed an emphasis both on our human capacity to change the world and our moral obligation to exercise our powers for the common good. We believe each individual, as part of our inherent worth and dignity, has power, and there are many kinds of power as well as many ways to express one's power in the world. *Sing to the Power* uses the metaphor of the four elements—earth, air, fire, and water—to investigate different forms of power we each can express. Power does not belong only to adults. This program gives young people opportunities to experience and explore ways they can use their power as agents for positive change.

How do our Unitarian Universalist Values challenge us and what tools do they guide us to create as we take on life's challenges? The UU Values Challenge is a curriculum that answers this big question. Drawing from Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) and Borton's (1970) model for reflection, as well as Nature Educator Joseph Cornell's flow learning model (I love his books, definitely recommend them), this curriculum aims to support Unitarian Universalist Religious Education Teachers in helping young congregants explore the new values in an embodied way. Each session's challenge will allow children to reflect on one of the six values.

Sunday evenings @6 PM

6th & 7th Grade: The Fifth Dimension & The Examined Life

Competing for a youth's attention can be difficult today. Widespread television viewing, video game playing, and internet surfing has created an environment where youth need visual stimulation to maintain interest. Pop culture can help to channel this environment into a learning opportunity, allowing youth to examine ethical and theological issues, while having fun, and help them discuss important social issues with peers, particularly if the youth lives and goes to school in a conservative atmosphere and knows that their viewpoint is not necessarily shared by the majority of their peers. Referencing a television show, a movie, a song, or a website can help youth express their opinions to others.

Rod Serling, the creator of Emmy-award winning *The Twilight Zone*, was one of American television's most prolific writers and is best known for his belief that the role of the writer was to "menace the public conscience." Serling, who converted from Judaism to Unitarianism in college, incorporated his liberal social views on racial relations, war, gender roles, addiction, extremism, violence, ageism, consumerism, industrialization and other social issues of the time. *The Twilight Zone* gave voice to people who were often at the margins of society. The show questioned power and who holds the power, with corruption commonplace and no group immune to criticism. Viewers were asked to consider who had the power in society, whether power was used to help or oppress others, and how society might empower those who were shut out of power.

The Examined Life introduces 6th & 7th Graders to the philosophical questions kids and adults care about deeply. Through vibrant discussions, crafts, games and debate, middle schoolers will grapple with age-old questions about the nature of Friendship, Time, Knowledge, the Existence of God, Perception, Freedom and Society, and many more.

8th Grade: Our Whole Lives

Honest, accurate information about sexuality changes lives. It dismantles stereotypes and assumptions, builds self-acceptance and self-esteem, fosters healthy relationships, improves decision making, and has the potential to save lives. For these reasons and more, we are proud to offer *Our Whole Lives* (OWL), a comprehensive, lifespan sexuality education curricula for use in both secular settings and faith communities. Beacon offers OWL at 1st, 5th and 8th Grades.

Interactive workshops and activities engage participants, while step-by-step instructions for program planners and facilitators help ensure success. Our Whole Lives helps participants make informed and responsible decisions about their relationships, sexual health and behavior. With a [holistic approach \(PDF\)](#), Our Whole Lives provides accurate, developmentally appropriate information about a range of topics, including relationships, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, sexual health, and cultural influences on sexuality.