

North Shore
Unitarian Church



Children's Program
2017 - 2018



2017-18 PROPOSED CHILDREN'S PROGRAM CALENDAR

*Check our monthly newsletter
for confirmation of dates
and additional events not shown here.*

2017 Dates

Class Sleepovers

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| Fri. September 15 - 16 | Intermediate Group |
| Fri. Sept. 29 – 30 | Middle Group |
| Fri. October 20-21 | Primary Group |

Special Events 2017

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Sun. October 29 | Halloween Potluck 5 - 7:30 pm |
| Sun. November 19 | Gift-Making Workshop 2 – 5 pm |

Pageant Rehearsals

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Sun. November 26 | Rehearsal noon – 1:30 pm |
| Sun. December 3 | Rehearsal noon – 1:30 pm |
| Sun. December 10 | Rehearsal noon – 1:30 pm |
| Sat. December 16 | Dress Rehearsal 3-5 pm |
| Sun. December 17 | Pageant during service (10:30 am) |

2018 Dates

Secret Buddies

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| Sun. January 14 -21 | Secret Buddy Sign Up |
| Sun. January 28 | Secret Buddy Exchange starts |
| Sun. February 25 | Potluck & Games, Buddies meet |

Special Events

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Sun. January 28 | Potluck and Talent Show |
| Sun. April 1 | Easter Service & Activities |
| Sun. June 17 | Flower Communion Service |
| June 22 - 24 | Children's Spring Adventure |



GOALS OF THE NORTH SHORE UNITARIAN CHURCH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

We articulated goals for our Children's Program at a meeting of parents and connected adults. We hope children in our Religious Education Program will:

- be part of an extended spiritual family that creates a community of caring
- explore spiritual issues and the big questions in life
- develop a vocabulary for talking about spiritual matters
- gain an understanding of our Unitarian Universalist principles and how to live them in the world
- have exposure to the different religious beliefs and practices in the world, leading to acceptance and understanding
- learn that there are many different pathways of faith
- experience respect, compassion, joy, fun, freedom of expression and acceptance of differences
- learn to trust their own wisdom and develop a sense of their own self worth
- experience multigenerational connections
- develop an awe of nature and a passion to protect it

ABOUT OUR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

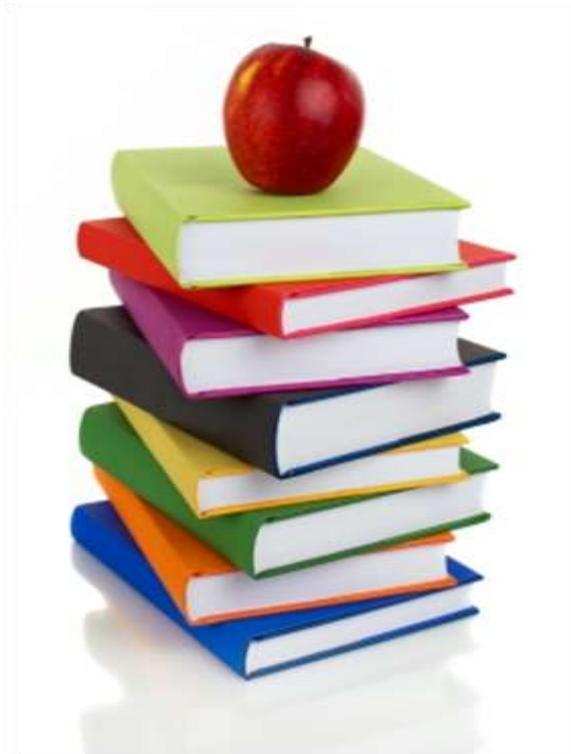
Our religious education program is a cooperative one. This means that parents and caregivers are asked to contribute financially to the Church and, where possible, volunteer in our children's program. Below is a list of some of the ways you can volunteer; more in-depth descriptions are available from the Director of Lifespan Learning.

- Children's Program Team member
- Teacher
- Musician
- Storytelling
- Crafts
- Mailings
- Annual Gift-Making Workshop coordinator or supplies purchaser
- Potluck supper coordinators
- Worship Assistance
- Tidying storage areas
- Snack preparation
- Teacher's Assistant
- Sunday lunch preparation



BIRTHDAY BOOK PROGRAM

We add books to our Children's Library through a Birthday Book Program. You are invited to donate a children's book on your child's birthday, and we will supply a bookplate inscribed with his/her name and the date at which birthday is being celebrated. You may have a favourite or you might want a suggestion from our Director of Lifespan Learning. This is a loving way to celebrate a special day and one we would remember with gratitude.



CHILDREN'S SUNDAY PROGRAMS

All our programs coincide with the 10:30 am Sunday services. Our morning begins with the whole group sharing in a brief worship circle. We often join the congregation upstairs for the first part of the service. A sign posted on the window to the left of the front door will indicate whether the children will be upstairs or down for the opening worship. For those children who arrive well before 10:30, there are activities and games on tables downstairs in our social hall. The children will be involved in Thanksgiving, Christmas, Parents' Peace Day and Flower Communion Services.

Our children experience religious growth and enrichment by exposure to the diversity our members bring to this Church. The quality of our Lifespan Learning program depends upon each one of us.

FORMS

Registration and Photo Release forms are available downstairs after the service from our Director of Lifespan Learning, Lynn Sabourin.



NURSERY (under 3 years)

Each Sunday, we have a qualified daycare person who will provide loving care to our littlest people while parents attend church services. She will sometimes be assisted by youth caregivers who have qualified in the Red Cross babysitting course. Free play, stories, music and snack-time will make the time away from parents enjoyable.



SPIRIT PLAY (3-6 years)

Spirit Play is an innovative program which has been developed by Dr. Nita Penfold, D.Min., as a way of responding to children's wonderings about the big questions in life, such as:

Who am I?
Where did I come from?
What is my purpose?
What are my gifts?
How do I choose
to live my life?
What happens when I die?
Why am I lonely and sad
sometimes?



Based in Montessori theory and growing out of Jerome Berryman's ***Godly Play***, Nita has created a unique Unitarian Universalist approach.

Each week a story is presented using manipulative materials. Wondering questions are posed for the children to consider. Following this the children are free to choose their "work"; either an art activity to respond to the story or to re-tell a story themselves. The weekly story and its related materials are stored in baskets and will be available to the children. The teacher becomes a guide rather than a leader, creating a safe and sacred space for children to make meaning of their lives.

This program takes into account the importance of the creative aspect of play. Deep play is how children learn everything that is important to them. The possibilities are exciting!

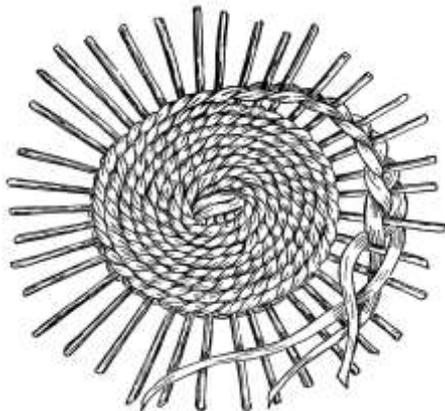
TAPESTRY OF FAITH

For our Primary and Middle groups we will be primarily using the *Tapestry of Faith* curricula series.

These are programs and resources for all ages that nurture Unitarian Universalist identity, spiritual growth, transforming faith and vital communities of justice and love. The programs are on-line, down-loadable and available to everyone.

The programs are comprehensive, giving adult guides (teachers) the goals, learning objectives, focus stories and discussions, preparation suggestions and even spiritual preparation before class begins. There are activities that alternate between sedentary and active, with suggestions for including children who are challenged physically or behaviourally. Every session has suggestions for long or short term social action projects called "Faith in Action." There are "Taking It Home" sections to connect parents to what their children are doing, a brief description of what each session was about with suggestions for extending the lesson and possible follow-up activities. These will be sent to parents via email.

We are excited about this series and welcome questions and feedback.



PRIMARY GROUP (7-8 years)



TRUTH, HEALING AND RECONCILIATION

We will field test this hot-off-the-presses program from the CUC Task Force. The Reflections Guide is a value-based program focusing on the values embedded within our Unitarian Universalist (UU) principles and the Indigenous values shared through the Seven Grandfather Teachings. It will include experiential activities and discussions of our principles and themes of belonging, acceptance, fairness and standing on the side of love. There is a call to action at the end of each session and home link pages to help parents support their children at home.

TAPESTRY OF FAITH: LOVE WILL GUIDE US

In this program participants learn to see guidance in life through the lens of our (UU) sources, with an emphasis on love. Together we ask questions as, “Where did we come from?” “What is our relationship to the Earth and other creatures?” “How can we respond with love, even in bad situations?” “What happens when you die?” Sessions apply wisdom from our Sources to help participants answer these questions. Participants will learn that asking questions is valued in Unitarian Universalism, even as they begin to shape their own answers.



The weekly rituals, hands-on activities, games, crafts and role-playing will help build community and allow the children to integrate sessions in their own unique way.

MIDDLE GROUP (9–10 years)

TAPESTRY OF FAITH: LOVE CONNECTS US

This program celebrates important ways UU's live our faith in covenanted community. Moved by love and gathered in spirit, we embrace responsibility toward one another and the world at large. We encourage one another's search for truth and meaning and thrive to be active in peace-making and other efforts to improve our world.



Crafts and games that use tying and knots make tangible the concept of connections we share with one another. Children will physically explore what it means to be linked to others and how one person's actions can affect the whole system to which they belong.

TAPESTRY OF FAITH: WINDOWS AND MIRRORS

Through a lens of Unitarian Universalist (UU) faith and justice Children look inward at themselves (mirrors) and outward at the Communities to which they belong, especially their congregation (windows). How do they experience true affiliation with others who may, at first, seem very unlike themselves? How do they acknowledge their own perspectives and respect the perspectives of others? How do they move from “me” to “we”? We hope to guide participants to identify and respect their own values, views and needs as well as those of others in a variety of contexts -- to do so is a faith practice. An ongoing project is to create their own window/mirror panel that will illustrate their interpretation of the concepts of each Sunday's session.



INTERMEDIATE GROUP (11 & 12 years)

INQUIRING SOULS

This group has a program that is uniquely theirs, one that is now in its third year. Leaders, Jessica Motherwell and Bill Richardson, will create the program with the participants as they explore/investigate answers to their burning questions. Each week one of the kids' questions is brainstormed and, as they do, a number of them create a large graphic of their findings. A combination of drawings and words summarize the discussion and remains as a reminder of their exploration. It is an exciting and creative process!



CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINE

Our Children's Program has been designed to provide children with a stimulating and spiritually nourishing environment. Our volunteer teachers and staff are committed to the safety and well-being of the younger members of our community. To this end we have some structures in place for the protection of both children and their adult guides:

- Each classroom has a window in the door so that classroom activities can be viewed from the hallway, thus lowering the risk potential for all parties.
- A first aid kit is located in the hallway for emergency situations and there is a telephone in Room 305, Room 302 and in the Daycare Room 313.
- The Director of Lifespan Learning (DLL) and Assistant circulate through all the classroom spaces during the morning program.
- Children 7 years and younger are picked up after the service by their parent/guardian and are under their care from that point on.
- Each class develops its own covenant or class rules for being together.
- There is zero tolerance of any behaviour that may cause bodily or emotional harm.

While we encourage children to solve their own problems and grow towards self-control, there are times when staff or volunteers must intervene. When handling a discipline problem, we try to start with simple solutions. Sometimes ignoring an isolated or unobtrusive breach of discipline is best. Looking at the child and calling his or her name gently, moving near to the child, changing seating arrangements or having a private conference with the child can result in a change of behaviour. Often a time-out from the classroom with the DLL is necessary. When those steps are unsuccessful, the teacher and DLL can have a discussion

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINE cont.

with the child and parents/guardians, describing the unacceptable conduct, as well as the expected behaviour. The DLL will document in writing the proceedings of this meeting.

If unacceptable behaviour continues, the DLL may, with the approval of the Children's Program Team, suspend a child. The length of suspension would be determined on a case by case basis. This is an extremely rare occurrence at North Shore Unitarian Church.

Because of our aim to uphold our first principle, the dignity and worth of all people, once a child is welcomed back, it is with the understanding that they have a fresh start and, hopefully, a positive relationship in our Church community.

SUGGESTIONS TO PARENTS

- Bring your children to church school on time and pick them up promptly after the service.
- While each lesson can stand alone, regularity of attendance enhances both understanding of the curriculum and rapport with classmates.
- Encourage your child to express ideas, feelings, values and beliefs and accept them as legitimate and important.
- Respond to questions which lead your child to explore.
- Feel free to check out books from our library. We have books for children and adults.
- Share your feelings, ideas, values and beliefs with your children.

Although we know parents bear the major responsibility for the religious education of their children, we offer an exciting program which will enrich their religious growth and learning.



NORTH SHORE UNITARIAN CHURCH

370 Mathers Ave

West Vancouver, BC V7S 1H3

604-926-1621

Website: northshoreunitarians.ca

Email: info@northshoreunitarians.ca

Lynn Sabourin

Director of Lifespan Learning

604-926-1621

Cara Elrod

Assistant

604-929-4858