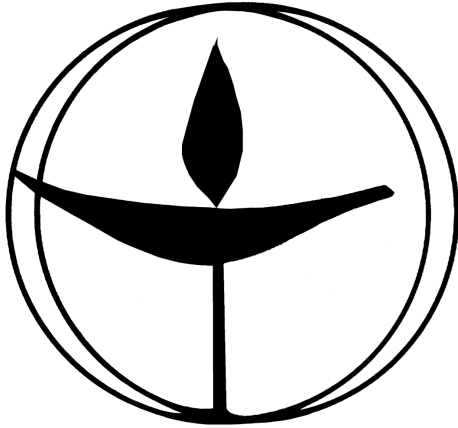


Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Blacksburg, VA.

Prospectus 2024/ 2025



Lifespan Faith Development

Welcome to Lifespan Faith Development at UUC

Unitarian Universalists believe that faith development is the lifelong journey of ethical and spiritual growth that each of us takes. UUC's goal is to provide support for our congregants' personal journeys from cradle to grave.

Beginning in the Nursery, our infants and toddlers learn that UUC is a safe and nurturing congregation. Paid caregivers provide careful supervision in a warm and welcoming environment.

At age 3, preschoolers move into the Children's Religious Education program, which provides age-appropriate religious education classes through grade 8. Our goal is to encourage each child's spiritual growth, a social conscience, and a personal UU identity. UUC does not tell a child what to believe; we support each child in the discovery of their own personal beliefs.

Middle school students can experience further bonding with each other by participation in Middle School Youth Group, which offers fun activities supervised by background-checked adult advisors. In grades 9-12, students may join YRUU, a youth-led high school youth group that meets weekly, with an emphasis on community building and service, leadership development, worship, fellowship, and social activities.

Adults also have opportunities throughout the year to participate in religious education classes. From Sunday morning discussion groups to classes that meet weekly or monthly, adults can explore their beliefs and deepen their faith.

We also offer other, specialized classes throughout the year, including the renowned Our Whole Lives sexuality education program.

We are here to help your family as you learn and explore. We know that each individual, child to adult, will have a unique religious journey, and we are here to support your travels!

~ Rachel Craine, Director of Lifespan Faith Development

Children's Programs

Finding the right religious education program for your child can seem daunting to many parents. Often, parents are seeking a community of shared values, and a way to help children form their own religious beliefs.

The Children's Religious Education program at UUC includes classes on our Judeo-Christian heritage, other world religions, our Unitarian Universalist identity, and social action / justice. We do not teach children what to believe, but help them to discover and travel their own personal paths.



If you are wondering if your child should attend church at all, consider the words of a Unitarian minister from the nineteenth century, Minot Judson Savage:

Parents tell me continuously that they do not give their children any religious training, from the feeling that it is taking unfair advantage of the child. They say, "I propose to let my child grow up as far as possible unbiased." (But) if you do not bias (your children), the first one that (they) meet on the street, or in school, or among their companions, will begin the work of biasing, of the impression of education, for this is a continuous process. Whether you will it or not, it is something over which you have no choice. It is something that will be done wisely and well— or unwisely and ill.

While here, your child will learn that all big questions have many answers, and that they will need to search responsibly for their personal answers. We will help them in their search as they consider the big questions and discover that there are as many ideas about these questions as there are people.

Goals and Themes

The goals of the RE program are:

- To encourage spiritual growth
- To provide religious literacy
- To help children in the development of their own UU identity
- To encourage a social conscience

There are five themes that are reflected within the RE curriculum:

- Jewish/Christian heritage
- Religions of the world
- UU identity
- Social responsibility
- Concepts of God



Religious Education

Nursery care is offered for infants and toddlers who have not reached their third birthday by September 1st. Nursery involves play and storytelling in a warm, nurturing atmosphere. Our Nursery is supervised by experienced, paid caregivers.

Religious Education classes are offered for preschool through grade 8 students. See page 6 for a listing of current curricula.

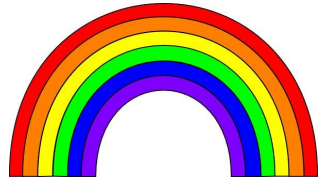
Registration

Registration is required each fall for all children and youth age 0 through high school who will be participating in the LFD Program. There is no fee for classes and activities, but families registering are expected to contribute to UUC financially as they are able, and to volunteer with the LFD program. Register online at <https://uucnr.org/learn/>

Children's RE 2024-25 Curriculum

PreK (ages 3 & 4)

Rainbow Connection



An introduction to UU Values and Principles for preschoolers, illustrating the values that all parents wish to in-still in their children, such as respect, trustworthiness, fairness, caring, responsibility and good citizenship. Each class contains a story, a fun craft project and time for free play with friends.

Grades K-1

Picture Book UU

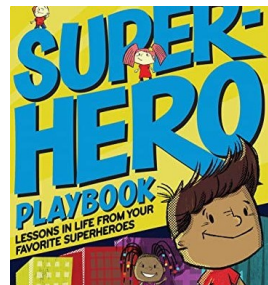
Based on the best picture books for teaching young children about the love, reason, tolerance and good works that make up our faith, this class teaches our younger UUs the art of self-expression, to value individuality, to think for themselves, and to understand that everything is connected. They will hear about people whose novel ideas and discoveries helped to transform our faith, like Maria Mitchell, Henry David Thoreau, and Fannie Farmer.



Grades 2-3

Fall: Superhero Academy

In the Fall semester, explore UU values through superheroes. Lessons are based on the *Superhero Playbook: Lessons in Life from Your Favorite Superheroes*, by Randall Lotowycz and Tim Palin.

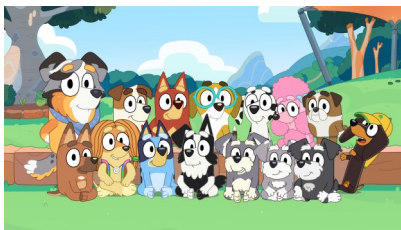


Children's RE 2024-25 Curriculum

Grades 2-3

Spring: Let's Learn with Bluey

This Spring our 2-3 class explores UU values found in the award-winning TV series Bluey. Each seven minute episode is accompanied by discussion, games and crafts that reinforce UU Values.



Grades 4-5

Magic of UU

This curriculum seeks to help participants learn that change is possible through multiple avenues, and can happen whether the problem is local or worldwide. Kids can channel their inner wizards and witches to learn about the magic of changing the world. Students will have the opportunity to make a difference in their community and the world in a meaningful way through hands-on projects that will also teach them social responsibility.



Grades 6-7

Games to Build Community

This curriculum uses a variety of games to explore UU values and develop community. Primarily for grades 6 and 7, but 8th graders not in the Coming of Age program may participate as well.



Youth Programs

Grade 8-9 *Coming of Age* and OWL

Our Whole Lives (OWL) sexuality education is offered in alternate years. Read more about the OWL program on page 12. *Not held this year.*

Coming of Age is a special program that provides youth with adult mentors in the Congregation, to prepare for the transition from childhood to adulthood. This program emphasizes self-awareness and confidence-building, as well as service to our Congregation and to the community, culminating in an affirmation ceremony. This year, we are using the Soul Matters program, *Becoming*, in our COA program.



Youth must be registered to be in Coming of Age. Regular attendance is preferred.

Teen Teacher Assistants: *Open to youth in grades 9-12*

Youth in grades 9-12 are invited to join a religious education teaching team as an assistant in the classroom. Youth are welcomed as team members and are a tremendous asset to the program, as the young children look up to them as role models. The teens gain leadership skills while remaining active in the life of the congregation.

Youth Groups

Middle School Youth Group

Open to youth in grades 6-8

Middle School Youth Group (MSYG) is the social component to our Middle School RE classes. The emphasis is on fun, with social activities and social action projects that encourage bonding among participants. Guidance is provided by adult volunteers.



Meetings are held once a month, usually on a Friday evening. Meetings may be held at UUC or offsite. Past activities have included bowling, hiking, bonfires, and a visit to Sinkland Farms. MSYG may also participate in social action projects.

YRUU (High School Youth Group)

Open to youth in grades 9-12

Our high school youth group, Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU), is a youth-led group that allows all to have fun while sharing spiritual interests, and serving others.



Meetings are held Sundays from 6:00-8:00 p.m. Once a month, youth and advisors have an OOCE (Out Of Church Experience) such as laser tag, bowling, tubing, hiking, or other fun activity.

YRUU also participates in service projects, lock-ins at the church, a special coffeehouse fundraiser, and often a regional youth convention(known as a "CON") held out of town. YRUU also leads a Sunday morning service each year.

Youth empowerment is an important goal of YRUU. Teens gain the ability and agency to make decisions and create change in their own lives and in the lives of other people.

Additional Information

Sunday Mornings

On most Sundays, children begin in the Sanctuary at 10am with parents for the first 15 minutes of the service. After “A Time for All Ages”, the children and their teachers leave for their classrooms. RE classes last approximately one hour. Parents should pick up their children immediately following the service (around 11:15) and are encouraged to bring them to visit during the coffee hour—children’s activities are provided on a table in Elarth Hall.

Visitors

We welcome young guests in our RE classes on Sunday mornings. We ask that a Visitor’s card be completed by the adult responsible for the child. To enroll in our RE program, please visit our website or obtain a paper copy of the registration form from the DLFD or the RE Teacher.

Transitions

We know that it can be difficult for some children, particularly those who are younger, to feel comfortable in a new place, Parents are welcome to accompany their children to class for the first few visits to ease the transition to separation.

Attendance

We are here to help you educate your child, but we can’t do our part if you don’t do yours. It is important to be as consistent as possible in attendance, as familiarity is basic to a sense of belonging and ownership. A child’s comfort level and relationship to the UUC community is dependent on their attendance.

Safety Policy

All teachers and advisors involved in ongoing work with minors are required to pass background and reference checks, per UUC policy. Two teachers will be present in each classroom during regular RE classes.

Other Programs for Children & Youth

Chalice Lighters



Our Chalice Lighters light our chalice in the Sunday morning service. Chalice lighting is considered an honor, with Chalice Lighters taking turns serving on Sunday mornings. Training is provided by the Minister. Those interested may contact Rev. Pam or the DLFD.

Children's Offering

Our Children's Offering benefits the Interfaith Food Pantry. Donations of canned goods and cash will be accepted in class. All parents are encouraged to have their children participate.

Learn more at interfaithfoodpantry.org.

This Week in LFD

Don't miss out on what is happening in Lifespan Faith Development. Subscribe to our weekly newsletter. Every Monday, you will get an email with the special events and regular classes that will be taking place in the coming week.

[Subscribe Here](#)

Our Whole Lives

Our Whole Lives (OWL) is an age-appropriate sexuality education program, jointly developed by the Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ.

OWL helps participants make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior. It equips participants with accurate, age-appropriate information in six subject areas: human development, relationships, personal skills, sexual behavior, sexual health, and society and culture. Grounded in a holistic view of sexuality, OWL not only provides facts about anatomy and human development, but also helps participants clarify their values, build interpersonal skills, and understand the spiritual, emotional, and social aspects of sexuality.

UUC currently offers OWL classes for grades K-1, 4-5, 8-9 and OWL for Adults.

UUC is fortunate to be offer this renowned sexuality education program to our congregants and we encourage you to enroll your child, if eligible.

OWL Schedule:

Fall 2024: OWL for grades 4-5

Spring 2025: OWL for grades K-1

2025-2026 Year: OWL for grades 8-9

2026-2027 Year: OWL for Adults, grades 4/5 and K/1

A commitment to attend all classes is highly encouraged to participate in any OWL program.



Our Whole Lives

K-1 OWL

Supports parents in educating children about birth, babies, bodies and families. Parents and children attend classes together and are engaged with stories, songs and activities K-1 OWL promotes dialogue between parent and child for a healthy start to sexuality education. *Spring 2025*

4-5 OWL

Teaches children about the physical and emotional changes of puberty. Participants will examine topics such as values and sexuality, communication and decision making. A short-term optional covenant group will also be offered for parents of children enrolled in 4-5 OWL to allow parents to discuss issues raising a child nearing puberty. *Fall 2024*

8-9 OWL

Models and teaches caring, compassion, respect, and justice. This holistic program moves beyond the intellect to address the attitudes, values, and feelings that youth have about themselves and the world. Unlike many other sexuality curricula currently available, this program is comprehensive and progressive. In an inclusive and developmentally appropriate manner, it addresses sensitive topics that are typically excluded. *Next offered 2025-6.*

Adult OWL

Participants must be age 18 or older.

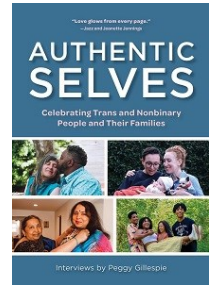
Using values, communication skills and spirituality as starting points, this program explores sexuality issues for adults of all ages. Adult OWL builds an understanding of healthy sexual relationships, affirms diversity and helps participants accept and affirm their own sexuality throughout their lives. *Next offered in 2026-7.*

Adult Programs

UUA Common Read Discussion Group

The 2024-25 UU Common Read is [Authentic Selves: Celebrating Trans and Nonbinary People and Their Families](#) (Skinner House, 2023).

The Common Read, *Authentic Selves*, is a sweeping compilation of life stories and portraits of trans and nonbinary people, as well as their partners, parents, children, siblings, and chosen family members. This important new book was developed in collaboration with PFLAG National and Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund.



Through interviews and photo portraits, the subjects of this book invite readers into their real lives--their revelations, challenges, joys, and networks of support. From the foreword by transgender activist Jazz Jennings and her mom and fellow activist, Jeanette Jennings, through the resources offered at the book's end, this Common Read invites UU groups to explore the nature of living authentically and the ways connections among us help us thrive.

Discussion group will meet in Winter/Spring 2025. Learn more about the UUA Common Read at <https://www.uua.org/read>.

Is there a class you would like to see offered?
Are you interested in facilitating a class or
workshop?

Email your suggestions to Rachel Craine at
dldf@uucnr.org

Adult Programs

Date With Death Club

Join Cynthia and Gretchen Luke and Amanda Morgan for a philosophical and spiritual exploration of mortality in community, with a balance of humor and earnest regard for the topic of mortality. This program provides a safe[r] and brave[r] space to explore the often-taboo topic of our mortality.



Session Topics

- 1: Getting Comfortable with Death Talk
2. Aging: Better than the Alternative
3. Afterlife /Afterlives
4. Circle of Life: Loving & Losing, Learning & Living
5. Dying, Death, & Poetry
6. Facing Extinction: Processing Eco-Grief
7. Good Life & Good Death
8. Resistance & Acceptance: The Mortal Dance

Sessions will be held monthly October through May 3rd Mondays from 6:30-8:30pm at UUC. Each session stands alone. Register to be on the mailing list for class notifications and information.

[Register Here](#)

Class schedules can be found on uucnr.org by clicking Calendar.

Adult Programs

Parents as Tutors

Sundays from 1-3pm

Dates: 9/15, 9/22, 10/6, 10/13



Daniel Vogler will be leading an interactive class of four sessions with each session being about 2 hours in length. Daniel has taught at the high school, community college, and university levels. He has published extensively about learning and teaching. The class sessions will address learning theories, situational thinking/feeling/acting, assessment, and contemporary writing related to issues confronting the learner of the 21st century.

Parents and middle school age children or older should benefit equally. High school aged students that are providing tutoring, should find the class helpful. Childcare can be provided for parents with younger children, just indicate the need when you register.

Oh, BTW, the class will be seriously FUN!

[Register Here](#)

Transgender Inclusion in the Congregation— Online/On Demand

This 6 session workshop from the Transforming Hearts Collective, focuses on helping our congregation to be fully inclusive, and affirming of, the full breadth of gender diversity. Gain the context and skills to help us transform into a fully welcoming congregation. Not offered in person this year, but available on demand. Contact [DLFD](#) to register.

Adult Programs

Anti-Racism Discussion Group

All are welcome to join our ongoing anti-racism discussion group. Meets the second Sunday 1:00-2:00 p.m. on Zoom. Topics are announced via email. Email ddfd@uucnr.org to join the listserv to receive links to the discussion articles. [Zoom link](#).



Conversations on Our Faith

Bring your lunch and join the conversation, as we discuss a book that deepens our spiritual journey. All are welcome, even if you have not read the chapters being discussed. Group members share their insights and personal experiences and all thoughts and opinions are welcome.

Meets Wednesdays at noon in the Library and on zoom. [Zoom Link](#)



InSpire Group

InStill Mindfulness--Let's Talk, Meditate and Connect. Meets Tuesdays from 3:00-4:30 p.m. at UUC. All are welcome.

Adult Programs

Meditation Group

Start or deepen your meditation practice. Centering words and basic instruction are followed by sitting practice. Non-experienced and experienced meditators are welcome.



Yoga

For many years, free yoga classes have been held at UUC. The sessions are generally lightly strenuous though participants can adjust the poses or stretches to match their level of experience or fitness. The sessions are held each Wednesday from 5:30 – 6:30 PM outdoors, weather permitting, or in Elarth Hall. Bring your own mat or use one of the mats that are provided for you. Feel free to drop in.

Labyrinth Meditation

Walk UUC's own labyrinth. Our labyrinth is available for your use as needed.



Adult Programs

Sunday Circle

Join us for stimulating conversation on a variety of topics. Meets the first Sunday of the month at 8:30am, October-May, in the library and on [zoom](#).

October 6: Jamie McReynolds and Carolyn Rude lead discussion on topics from the book *Tyranny of the Minority*, by Levitsky and Ziblatt. No need to have read the book beforehand.

November 3: Jim Bohland, from *Defending Democracies*, will lead a discussion on the upcoming election.

December 1: Join Carol Davis to learn about the sustainability projects and programs in the Town of Blacksburg.

All Ages Monthly Fun and Game Nights

Come to UUC for a night of fun and games. Games will be set up in Elarth for people of all ages. Candy land, Chutes and Ladders, Jenga, Uno, Tellestrations, Settlers of Catan, Chess, Scrabble and many, many more. Feel free to bring your favorite games as well.



A light kid-friendly meal will also be provided—Pasta, Salad and rolls. Vegan and gluten free options too!. Nursery care will be provided for the very young. Please RSVP to [Rachel](#) if you require infant/toddler care or if you have special dietary concerns.

Friday, 9/27, Saturday, 10/26, and Saturday 11/23.

5:30-8:30pm

Multi-Generational & Family Programs

The Buddy Project



Children and adults are paired together for a fun way to make new friends of another generation! Participants exchange notes and small gifts without revealing their identity. Buddies meet each other at our holiday intergenerational service. Sign up in October to participate.

It's Scary to be Hungry

Food donations are solicited for the Interfaith Food Pantry at a local Kroger store during October by kids in costumes. A great social action event for the family!



Mitten Tree

The entire congregation brings mittens, hats, and scarves to decorate our Christmas tree. All items are donated to the Montgomery County Christmas Store.

Easter Egg Hunt for the Animals

Our annual egg hunt goes to the dogs . . . literally! Children hunt for items for our furry friends which are then donated to Montgomery County's Humane Society and the Animal Care and Adoption Center.



Parent Covenant Group

Meets monthly on Fridays from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Parent Covenant Group meets once a month on a Friday from 5:30-7:30pm. A light, child-friendly meal and childcare are provided at no cost, but please RSVP for each meeting so we can plan appropriately. Register for PCG to get monthly email invites and reminders.

[Please register your family here.](#)

Multi-Generational Services

Holiday Service

Sunday, December 22, 2024

Join us for a holiday multi-generational service meant for kids of all ages. Holiday music, holiday stories and our annual "no rehearsal" holiday pageant make for a fun, yet meaningful, service. Our Buddy Project concludes on this date, with buddies meeting at the end of the service.



Easter Service

Sunday, April 20, 2025

A UU Easter Service, celebrating the joy of the season, while remembering this important story from our Christian heritage. The service concludes with our annual Easter Egg Hunt for the Animals. (See adjacent page.)



Volunteer with LFD

Children's RE Teachers

RE Teachers teach as part of a 4-teacher team. Teachers volunteer for a semester commitment, responsible for leading 4 classes and assisting in 4 classes. The total commitment is 8-10 Sundays per semester.

Adult RE Teachers

ARE teachers teach alone or as part of a team. The commitment is dependent on the class needs.

MSYG Advisors

MSYG Advisors serve as part of a team, supervising youth at monthly meetings September through May,

YRUU Advisors

YRUU Advisors rotate as part of a six-member team, supervising youth at weekly meetings September through May.

Classroom Aide

Aides are needed to help with children in the lower grades that benefit from one-on-one attention. No prep is needed.

OWL Teachers

OWL teachers require special training to teach. Teachers are part of a team for a class that runs 8-12 Sundays, depending on the class age. Classes rotate biannually; teachers are asked to commit for multiple years, due to the cost of training.

Lifespan Faith Development Committee Members

The LFD committee is responsible for overseeing the overall LFD program and for policy creation.

Volunteer with LFD

Other Volunteer Opportunities

We have a wide variety of short-term volunteer opportunities available. Every family is asked to volunteer to help with the RE program.

- ◆ Take a shift at Kroger for It's Scary To Be Hungry
- ◆ Check in Buddies or help set up and clean up at The Buddy Project Buddy Meeting
- ◆ Provide childcare at our annual Volunteer Appreciation Childcare Event
- ◆ Help set up and clean up for the Ice Cream Social
- ◆ Fill or hide eggs for the Easter Egg Hunt for HSMC
- ◆ Help YRUU with fundraising, lock-ins, planning the annual trip, or the annual YRUU Coffeehouse
- ◆ Host a family party or movie night
- ◆ Teach or assist with a Summer RE class
- ◆ Help with multi-generational services

Please see Rachel Craine for more information on any of these volunteer opportunities.



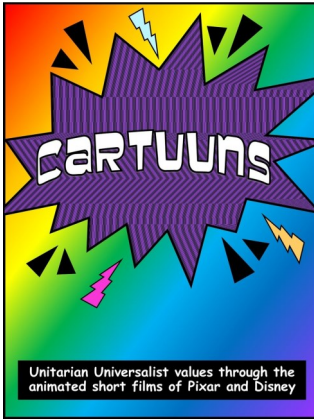
[Sign up online to volunteer](#)

Summer RE

Summer RE runs June 8 through August 17, 2025.

CartUUs

This summer the children of the UUC will explore our values through animated Pixar and Disney shorts, followed by crafts and games.



Come build community this summer at the UUC!

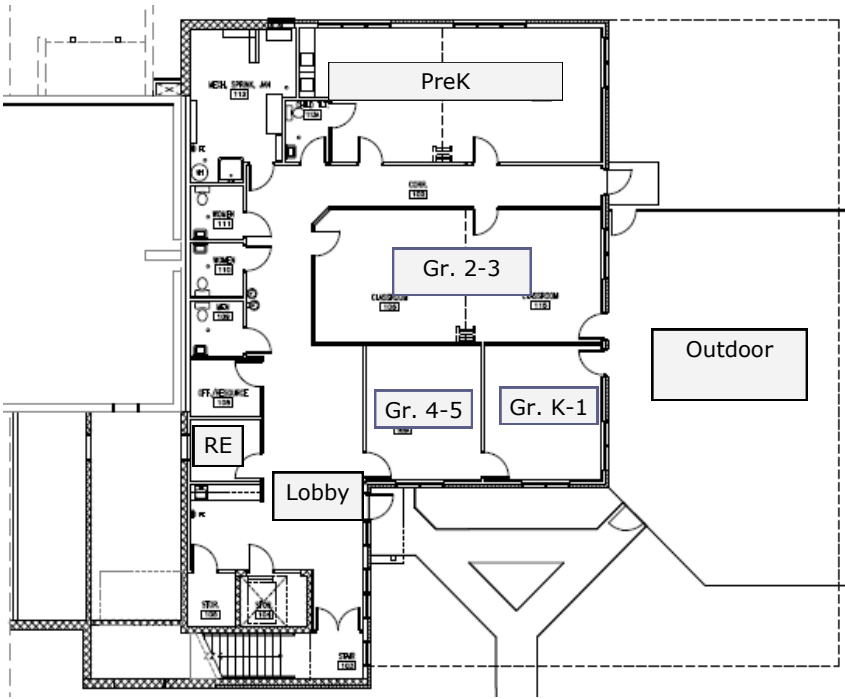
Sunday Funday Program

PreK

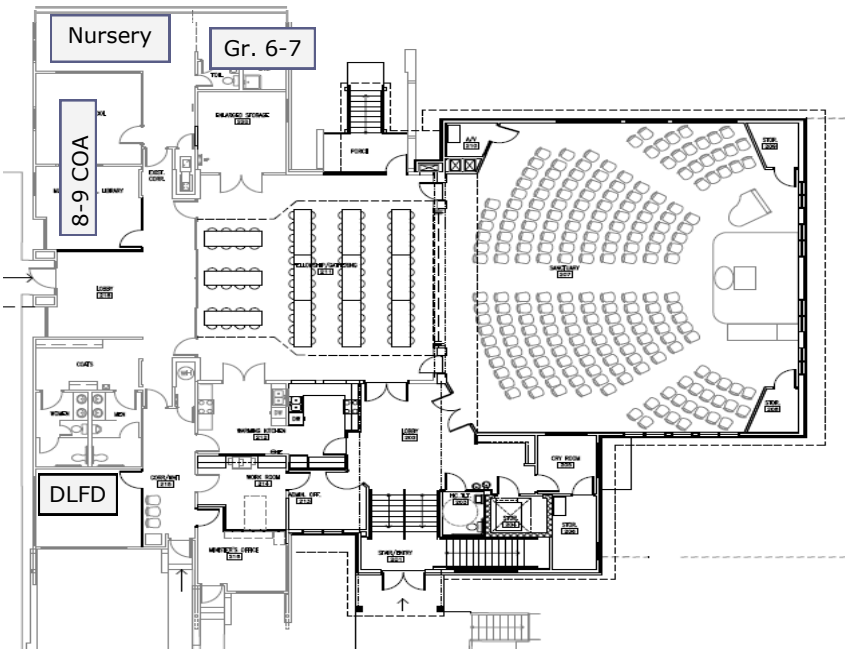
Bring a toy to share, and come have fun with your friends at our Sunday Funday program. Playtime, a story and a coloring sheet will help our littlest friends get comfortable at UUC before the next RE year begins.



Please note: Children do not go upstairs first to the Sanctuary during the summer. Please report directly downstairs.



LOWER LEVEL FLOOR PLAN



MAIN LEVEL FLOOR PLAN

Contact Information

Unitarian Universalist Congregation

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www.uucnr.org

Director of Lifespan Faith Development (DLFD)

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Minister

Rev. Pam Philips
minister@uucnr.org
(540) 552-9716

Administrator

administrator@uucnr.org

Additional information about Lifespan Faith Development programs is communicated via our weekly email newsletter. Contact the DLFD to be added to the listserv at dlfd@uucnr.org.

Welcoming Congregation

UUC is officially recognized by the UUA as a Welcoming Congregation. We welcome participation by all kinds of families and recruit our RE teachers regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

Our UU Values

Love is the power that holds us together and is at the center of our shared values. We are accountable to one another for doing the work of living our shared values through the spiritual discipline of Love. Inseparable from one another, these shared values are...



Unitarian Universalist Congregation

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Director of Lifespan Faith Development

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