

Lifespan Faith Development Committee

Annual report – May 2020

Members

Jane Keppel-Benson (chair), Karen Hager, Natalie Gibbs, Sara Catlett, Brandie Lemmon

Purpose of the committee

The Lifespan Faith Development (LFD) Committee provides oversight to the UUC LFD program, which is committed to creating an environment for volunteers, students, and their families that reflects our mission, Guidelines for Right Relations, our seven UU principles, and UUC covenants. Our goal is to support the development of each student to her or his fullest potential. LFD programs include: Children's RE classes; Adult RE classes; Middle School Youth Group; YRUU (High School Youth Group); YAC (Youth Adult Committee); Our Whole Lives (OWL); Coming of Age; and the UUC Library.

2019-2020 achievements

- Registration numbers to date: 127 individual children and youth are involved in 153 LFD activity slots.
- Children's RE conducted the annual It's Scary to Be Hungry campaign for the Interfaith Food Pantry, raising \$2872.33 in food and cash donations. The Interfaith Food Pantry stated that it's their largest collection since Kroger changed their solicitation rules.
- Coming of Age paired five 8th graders with adult mentors for a year of discussion and introspection, marking the end of children's RE and bridging youth to YRUU.
- MSYG and YRUU made blankets for Project Linus. MSYG also gave back to members of the congregation by making holiday gifts for our congregants, and relatives of congregants, who live at Warm Hearth.
- YRUU's fundraising efforts raised approx. \$800.
- YRUU continued social justice work and theology discussions in meetings this year.
- 8-9 OWL met in January and February, before being placed on hold for the remainder of the year.
- The Buddy Project paired 24 new adult and child Buddies this fall, helping to bridge the divide between the generations, and forging new relationships.
- A full adult RE program was implemented and included Transgender Inclusion in Congregations, Exploring UU Theology, Bridging Conversations, Spiritual Aging, the Common Read, along with the continuation of Conversations on our Faith.
- In March, the transition was made to RE at Home, with online lessons being emailed to each family for grades prK-8.
- MSYG met via zoom 4 times between April-May, as the need was expressed for increased connections during this time.
- YRUU continued to meet via Zoom Sunday evenings
- Story time was implemented 2 days/week for preK-5th grade.

Lessons learned

- The YRUU was most affected by the switch to the virtual platform, seeing attendance drop considerably. We need to find other ways to connect teens during this time.
- The Spirit of Adventure curriculum used for grades 2-3 could use an overhaul before it is used again in 2022. Improvements will include more diverse examples of Unitarian Universalists, and an increase in hands-on activities.

Expenses to date

- \$4439.83 has been spent to date, of our \$7975 budget. YRUU could not go to the Mountain Con this year, but were also unable to fundraise as much for the Boston trip, so the \$1900 in their account will be rolled into their trip fund. We are likely to spend 100% of our budget.

How LFD works to further the mission and vision of UUC

The programs of LFD are designed to help our congregants, regardless of age, to grow in their personal spiritual and ethical journeys. We emphasize covenant and compassion in all programming. Through our liberal religious education, we help our children and youth to create a bridge between our religion and other religions in the NRV, and to discover how they can make the world a better place through their own actions.

Goals for next year to further UUC's mission and vision

- Children's RE will use the following curricula next year:
 - PreK Rainbow Connections--which introduces the 7 principles
 - K-1 Picture Book UU-- a UU identity curriculum exploring the 6 sources and 7 principles
 - 2-3 will have an exciting new curriculum that is currently under development
 - 4-5 Harry and UU--a social justice themed curriculum based on the popular Harry Potter series
 - 6-8 Twilight Zone and The Simpsons--exploring big ideas and values through popular TV episodes.
- K-1 and 4-5 OWL will be offered next year. We also need to make up the rest of this year's 8-9 OWL.
- YRUU will hopefully be able to take the once every 4 year trip to Boston in Spring 2021.
- Adult RE--We will explore offering adult faith development in collaboration with other UU congregations in Virginia. Because many, if not most, classes and workshops will have to be offered on-line, we can hold a wide variety of classes to members of all the congregations.