

Lifespan Faith Development Committee

Annual report – May 2021

Members

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

2020-21 achievements

- 93 children and youth were registered in this year's program. As our #1 goal this year was family retention, we are very pleased with this number.
- Children's RE conducted online Sunday RE classes all year, with good weekly attendance in PreK, grades K-5, and middle school. Supply bags were delivered monthly to families registered in the PreK and K-5 class, along with homeschool lessons for those that did not want to attend online. Staff has received many thank you notes from parents for providing these activities.
- YRUU online attendance remained a challenge throughout the year. Since March, we have implemented biweekly onsite in-person meetings to address the lack of engagement.
- Despite COVID restrictions, Children's RE implemented our traditional activities, such as the annual It's Scary to Be Hungry campaign for the Interfaith Food Pantry, and the Mitten Tree warm clothing drive.
- Children's RE also held a new event, a Valentine's Day weekend Stuffed Animal Sleepover, which culminated in the stuffies' attendance and participation in the Sunday worship service. This event received a great deal of Facebook engagement and much positive feedback.
- Coming of Age paired 5 8th graders with adult mentors for a year of discussion and introspection, marking the end of children's RE and bridging youth to YRUU.
- The Buddy Project paired 19 new adult and child Buddies this fall, helping to bridge the divide between the generations, and forging new relationships. Due to COVID, changes were made to our traditional program, many of which worked so well they will be added into future programs.
- In addition to our ongoing programs, our adult RE program also added a new program by Rev. Pam, *Sacred Language and Sacred Translation*; and *The Fifth Dimension for Adults*, facilitated by Karen Hager. We once again offered the class *Transgender Inclusion in Congregations*, with strong congregational participation. All classes were held online.

Lessons learned

- This year was a huge challenge, due to COVID restrictions. However, LFD rose to the challenge and produced excellent programming for all ages. Several of the changes made will be integrated into future in-person programs.

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

- Our number 1 goal for 2021-22 will be to work on rebuilding our sense of community among each of the age groups. Although it will remain important, content will take a back seat to simply working to reintegrating each age group into supportive, cohesive communities.