

# **Church School Policy and Procedures Manual**

University Unitarian Church

*Revised August 18, 2016*



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## ***INTRODUCTION***

The policies and procedures in this manual are intended to guide the decisions and day-to-day practices of UUC Religious Education staff and volunteers. We expect all church school teachers and childcare providers to review this manual. We also encourage parents who have registered their children in the church school to become familiar with these policies and procedures.

We have tried to anticipate the many possible issues that may arise during the church school year, but we realize that unique challenges will likely occur which will necessitate a review of this document. We will do our best to keep this manual current and updated.

Each year this manual is reviewed by the Director of Religious Education and other UUC staff. An electronic copy will be provided to each church school volunteer and teacher and hard copies will be available in classrooms. We will also provide parents with an electronic copy.

*A word about pronouns:* In order to make the content of this manual more readable, we have decided to alternate the use of male and female pronouns, rather than using the generic “them” or “they.”

### *Frequently used acronyms:*

COA- Coming of Age Program  
DRE- Director of Religious Education  
EPC- Education Program Coordinator  
MS- Middle School  
OWL- Our Whole Lives (sexuality curriculum)  
RE- Religious Education  
SP- Spirit Play  
UUC- University Unitarian Church  
YG- Youth Group

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## ***PHILOSOPHY AND PROGRAMS***

*Our vision is that children and youth will . . .*

- see church school as a warm, friendly, and welcoming place
- eagerly come to church school each Sunday
- feel accepted, supported and loved by the UUC community
- develop strong friendships with other church school students
- have a meaningful connection with at least one UUC adult (other than their parents)
- understand the basics of our UU faith and our roots in liberal Christianity
- be able to explain to others what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist
- be able to describe our 7 promises (principles) and explain why we hold these values and beliefs
- feel comfortable exploring their spirituality and will have a “toolbox” of spiritual practices they can draw from
- have a strong sense of social justice and will participate regularly in service projects that benefit UUC and the community outside of our church
- participate regularly in our monthly Intergenerational Sunday services
- attend church school social events on a regular basis

*Our vision is that parents will . . .*

- see church school as a warm, friendly, and welcoming place
- feel that UUC’s church school provides a quality experience for their children
- eagerly bring their children to church school and will attend consistently
- have meaningful connections with other church school parents
- feel supported by the church staff and community
- be actively engaged in the church school community and will volunteer to support church school events and activities

## **Programs Offered at 9:30 and 11:15 a.m. Services**

***Infants-Toddlers-Preschool:*** We provide quality and loving care for our very young children. UUC offers an infant-toddler room and a room for our preschoolers (generally 2-4 years old).

***Spirit Play (PK-1<sup>st</sup> Grade):*** Spirit Play is a religious education curriculum based on the Godly Play program used in many progressive Christian churches and the methods and philosophy of the Montessori educational model. Spirit Play, which was created by UU ministers and educators, helps children to explore and understand spiritual and religious questions through storytelling.

***Roots (2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Grade):*** Roots teaches the fundamentals of Unitarian Universalism, exploring morality, UU history, age-appropriate spiritual practices and the building-blocks of our faith. Roots is inspired by the hymn Spirit of Life – “roots hold me close, wings set me free.”

***Wings (4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grade):*** Wings explores what it means to live Unitarian Universalism in the world. Students learn about justice, empowerment, UU history, and age-appropriate spiritual practices. Wings is inspired by the hymn Spirit of Life – “roots hold me close, wings set me free.”

## **Programs Offered Only At 11:15 a.m. Service**

***Neighboring Faiths (6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Grades):*** The main focus of our middle school program is to learn about other faith traditions. The students explore the five major world religions—Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. The students will visit these places of worship and meet middle school students from these traditions. Students who participate in the middle school program will not only expand their knowledge of other faiths, they also gain a deeper understanding of Unitarian Universalism.

***Our Whole Lives (8<sup>th</sup> Grade):*** Our Whole Lives, also known as OWL, is a comprehensive sexuality education program developed by the UUA in conjunction with the United Church of Christ. The OWL curriculum is designed to help our 8<sup>th</sup> graders gain the knowledge, values and skills to lead sexually healthy, responsible lives. The students explore many topics, such as anatomy and physiology, gender roles, sexual orientation, relationships, dating, pregnancy, contraception, sexually transmitted diseases, and sexual decision making.

***Coming of Age (9<sup>th</sup> Grade):*** Coming of Age, also known as COA, is a year-long rite of passage experience that provides UUC teenagers with the opportunity to explore their personal and spiritual beliefs within a Unitarian Universalist context. COA students participate in a variety of activities including a ropes course, a community service project, and a retreat featuring a six-hour solo vigil in the woods. COA students are each assigned an adult mentor from our church. Also, each student writes a statement outlining their personal and spiritual beliefs that they present to our congregation in a year end worship service.

***High School Youth Group (10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade):*** High school students meet weekly on Sunday mornings for fun and fellowship. Youth are empowered to lead sessions, along with adult facilitators and staff, about spiritual and religious topics. YG hosts social activities such as picnics and sleepovers at church. Many youth attend regional UU youth conferences, and have the opportunity to participate in regional leadership opportunities, camps and trainings.

## **2016-2017 Church School Calendar**

*\*Intergenerational Sundays: All children & youth are invited to participate in the worship service. After 20-30 minutes, the children (PK-5<sup>th</sup> grade) return to church school for special multi-age activities in Knatvold.*

September 11th – Homecoming Sunday

September 18th – Intergenerational Sunday

September 25th – Regular Classes

September 30th – October 1st – OWL Class Overnight

October 2nd – Regular Classes

October 7th – Coming of Age Class Overnight

October 9th – Regular Classes

October 16th – Intergenerational Sunday

October 21st – October 23rd – Fall Con for Youth

October 23rd – Regular Classes

October 30th – Regular Classes

November 6th – Regular Classes (Daylight Saving Time ends)

Saturday, November 12th – Church School Harvest Festival 5:00 – 7:00 pm

November 13th – Regular Classes & SPAG Con Planning Retreat for youth (1:00-4:00 pm)

November 18th – November 20th – Youth Group Overnight

November 20th – Intergenerational Sunday

November 27th – NO CLASSES – Thanksgiving break

December 4th – Regular Classes

December 11th – Regular Classes

Cookie decorating reception after each service.

December 18th – NO CLASSES – Family Holiday Services

December 23rd – Family Candlelight Service 7:00 pm & Youth Group Reunion 6:00 pm

December 25th – NO CLASSES – one service at 9:30 am

January 1st – NO CLASSES – one service at 9:30 am

January 8th – Regular Classes Resume

January 15th – Intergenerational Sunday, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Day Weekend

January 20th – OWL Game Night and Ice Cream Social, 7:00 pm

January 21st – Coming of Age Service Project, 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

January 22nd – Regular Classes

January 29th – Regular Classes

February 5th – Regular Classes

February 11th – Youth Worship Rehearsal, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm  
February 12th – Youth Worship Service  
February 19th – Intergenerational Sunday, President’s Day Weekend  
February 26th – Regular Classes  
Saturday, March 4th – All Church Talent Show, 6:30 pm  
March 5th – Regular Classes  
March 10th – 12th – SPAG Con for Youth Group  
March 12th – Regular Classes – Daylight Savings Time Begins  
March 19th – Intergenerational Sunday  
March 24th – March 25th – OWL Spring Overnight, 7:00 pm – 12 noon  
March 26th – Regular Classes  
April 2nd – Regular Classes  
April 7th-9th – Spring Con for Youth Group  
April 9th – Regular Classes  
April 16th – Easter – Intergenerational Sunday  
Easter Egg hunt for children 9:30 am and 11:15 am  
April 21st-23rd – Coming of Age Spring Retreat  
April 23rd – Regular Classes  
April 30th – Regular Classes  
May 7th – Regular Classes – final day of classes  
May 13th – Coming of Age Worship Services Rehearsal & Celebration Dinner  
May 14th – Coming of Age Worship Services  
May 21st – Intergenerational Sunday  
May 28th – NO CLASSES—Memorial Day Weekend  
June 3rd – Youth Group Painting Party 4:00 – 8:00 pm  
June 4th – Flower Communion Worship Services & Bridging Ceremony and Luncheon for Graduating High School Seniors

## **Family Commitment**

UUC has a long and proud tradition of providing quality religious education classes for our children and youth. We use time-tested, well-designed curricula that help our young people deepen in their faith and their spirituality. We work hard to build strong relationships between students and to cultivate a feeling among our children and youth that UUC is their home.

In order to help create a quality religious education experience for all of our children and youth, we ask our families to make a strong commitment to our church school. If you register your children, we expect that you will bring them to church school on a regular basis throughout the entire church school year (September-May).

We believe regular attendance is crucial to help children have a good experience in church school. If a child attends only sporadically she will have a difficult time bonding with other kids, she will be unfamiliar with the content, and she will miss many valuable opportunities to develop her faith and spirituality. Furthermore, when kids regularly miss church school it is harder for the other children in the class to have a good experience. Each time a person is reintroduced to the community, relationships need to be reestablished and it is much more difficult to create trust within the group. This can make conversations and activities less effective.

One of the advantages of being a Unitarian Universalist is that we are supported in making individual choices. We are sensitive to the reasons why families may not attend church every Sunday. We understand that there are many competing activities on Sunday morning and we certainly do not want parents to feel guilty or ashamed because they miss church school from time to time. Nevertheless, we ask you to recognize the ways in which irregular attendance may negatively impact our church school and our students, and we strongly urge you to prioritize bringing your children on a regular basis. Though it is up to each individual family to define "regular attendance" for themselves, our hope is that registered children and youth will attend at least two class sessions per month.

## **Class Schedule**

During the church school year (September to May) UUC offers religious education classes during both Sunday morning worship services (9:30 and 11:15). Classes last for one hour and 15 minutes. **During the first service, the class session is from 9:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m., and during second service from 11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.** Classroom doors will be opened as soon as class concludes. We ask that parents please wait for their children in the hallway and not enter the classroom unless there is an urgent reason to remove your child early.

***Please note: OWL and COA have slightly longer class session times than the rest of the church school. These two classes meet from 11:15 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.***

*Drop Off Time:* You may drop off your children between 9:15 and 9:30 a.m. (first service) and 11:00 and 11:15 a.m. (2<sup>nd</sup> Service). Please do not bring your children earlier than 15 minutes before class begins because teachers need that time to prepare for class.

We provide classes for every age and grade level during Sunday morning worship services. During the first service (9:30 a.m.) we offer the following programs:

- Sprouts (Infants, toddlers, and preschool)
- Spirit Play (PK-1<sup>st</sup> grade)
- Roots (2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grade)
- Wings (4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade)

At 11:15 we offer the following:

- Sprouts (Infants, toddlers, and preschool)
- Spirit Play (PK-1<sup>st</sup> grade)
- Roots and Wings (2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Middle School (6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> graders)
- Our Whole Lives (OWL) – 8<sup>th</sup> grade
- Coming of Age (COA) – 9<sup>th</sup> grade
- High School Youth Group (10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade)

### **Summer Church School**

During the summer (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in June through 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in September), UUC offers limited church school classes and programs. To coincide with our one summer worship service—at 9:30 a.m.—church school is available from 9:30 to 10:45 a.m. We provide infant, toddler, and preschool care in the summer, as well as a multi-age elementary school program (PK-5<sup>th</sup> grade).

### **Intergenerational Sundays**

On most Sunday mornings UUC children and youth go directly to their classrooms for religious education classes. Children and youth are welcome to participate in Sunday morning services, though most will choose to attend the RE program.

Once a month—typically the third Sunday of the month—UUC presents an intergenerational worship service. All children and youth are invited to join their parents and other adults in the worship service.

During the Intergenerational Sunday worship, children and youth participate in the service as readers and musicians, the Intergenerational Choir performs two choral pieces, and we provide a “Time for All Ages” activity, usually an all-ages story told by the DRE. Midway through the service, children (PK-5<sup>th</sup> grade) are “sung out” of the sanctuary and are led by parents back to church school where they will have the opportunity to be part of special multi-age activities, held in Knatvold.

Of course, children are always welcome to stay in the sanctuary for the entire service. Students in 6<sup>th</sup> grade or older (if classes are not in session) are expected to stay in the sanctuary for the full intergenerational service.

Depending on the Intergenerational Sunday, church school teachers—with the exception of infant/toddler and preschool caregivers—may not need teach on these Sundays.

Our expectation is that all UUC children and youth will attend our Intergenerational Sunday services. (In the case of infants, toddlers and preschoolers, parents can decide whether to take them directly to their classrooms or to include them in the service.) We believe it is important for all ages to be part of worship and to learn from each other. If children or youth choose to engage in other activities on Intergenerational Sunday mornings they will miss out on a valuable spiritual and faith development experience.

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

### **Church School Registration Process**

Each year, we ask all parents to formally register their children in the UUC church school. Parents can register online, by mail or in person (see appendix for form). Payment of registration fees can happen by check or credit card. If you choose register online and pay with a credit card, please visit the following web page: <http://www.uuchurch.org/religious-education/registration/>

The registration fee structure is as follows:

<i>First Child in a Family</i>	<i>\$75</i>
<i>Second Child in a Family</i>	<i>\$40</i>
<i>Third Child and Any Subsequent Children</i>	<i>\$10 each</i>
<i>Coming of Age (per student)</i>	<i>\$400</i>

These fees are for one year only. Parents are expected to register and pay the registration fee each year.

The church school registration fee supports the expenses of running a high quality church school program. Fees pay for staff and volunteer training, supplies, and materials. Scholarships are available for those families that cannot pay for all or part of the fee. Please contact the DRE for more information and to request a scholarship.

**Visitors:** If you are visiting UUC and have not yet completed the formal registration process, after three visits, if you intend to have your children attend church school on a regular basis we ask you to register your kids and pay the appropriate fee.

### **Attendance**

UUC staff will print out a roster listing who is registered in each class, along with parent contact information. When parents drop off and pick up their kids, they should use the roster to sign their children in and out. The roster will include a space to add visitors. We expect teachers to remind parents to complete the check-in and check-out process each Sunday.

In cases where the children and youth are allowed to enter and leave at will (middle school, OWL, COA and youth group), we expect the teachers to accurately record on the class roster who is in attendance. In the case of visitors, they should be added to the form.

UUC staff will use the rosters for two purposes--ensure all families have registered and paid their fees, and to follow up with parents whose children or youth have stopped attending class.

### **Check-In and Check-Out Procedures**

*Sprouts, Spirit Play and Roots:* When parents drop off their children for church school, they are expected to formally sign them in using the class roster. The printed class roster will list the child's name, the parents' names and their cell phone numbers, as well as any allergy information. The parent dropping off the child should write her initials in the appropriate date column to indicate that she left her child in the classroom. (If the child has not yet been formally registered for church school, the parent should fill out the form with all the information listed above.)

**We ask parents of infants, toddlers or preschoolers to keep their cell phones on vibrate during the worship service in case we need to contact them.**

At the end of the church school class session, when the parent arrives to pick up her child, she must "sign out" the child by writing her initials in the appropriate date column.

*Wings:* When dropping off a child in the 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade classroom, parents must follow the same procedure as listed above; however, parents may choose to allow their children to sign themselves out of the classroom. *If a parent is interested in having her 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grader leave class without parental sign-out, she is required to fill out the Church School Sign-Out Form.*

*Middle School, OWL, COA and HS Youth Group:* There is no formal check-in and check-out procedure for these classes. Students are free to come and go as necessary. Classroom teachers are responsible for keeping track of attendance.

### **Snack Coordinator**

With the exception of the infant/toddler class, every classroom will have a Snack Coordinator to coordinate the snack schedule for the children. The coordinator will ask parents to sign up to provide snack during the church school year and send parents weekly reminders. The individual who signs up for a particular Sunday morning should bring food and drink for all the children in the class.

### **Snack/Food Policy**

We believe that sharing food together ("breaking bread") is an important way people bond as a community. We also understand children and youth need to be "well-fueled" in order to stay focused on activities and lessons. To that end, we believe providing snacks in the classroom is a key part of a successful church school program.

In the Sprouts/Spirit Play rooms, UUC staff will ensure that appropriate snacks are available for the children. We expect that parents of infants and toddlers are responsible for bringing a suitable snack for their children.

For all other classes (Roots through COA), we ask parents to help in providing snacks. As coordinated by the room parent, families are expected to sign up for 1-2 Sunday mornings during the church school year when they can bring a simple, healthy snack for the classroom. We ask that parents provide enough food and drinks for all the children and youth in the class. The snack should be healthy (more or less) with a limited amount of sugar. For example, instead of donuts, a parent could bring banana bread and fruit.

The snack should be simple. It does not need to be homemade. Store-bought snacks are welcomed. The parent who brings snack on a particular Sunday should also provide—as needed—cups and plates, and should help with clean up. The parent providing the snack should take all leftover food and drink with him.

***Snacks need to be nut-free.*** If a child has specific dietary restrictions beyond a nut allergy please inform the teachers and we will make every effort to accommodate her.

## **Sick Children**

In the interest of keeping our church school environment as healthy as possible, we ask parents not to bring their children to church school if any of the following conditions apply:

- the child currently has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher or has had a temperature of 100 degrees or higher in the past 24 hours
- the child has vomited in the past 24 hours
- the child has visible and/or severe flu or cold symptoms
- the child has head lice

## **Field Trips and Overnights**

*Walking Field Trips:* Occasionally, lesson plans call for short walks in the neighborhood or walks to a local park. Rather than ask for a permission slip each time, we will request that parents provide permission for walking field trips as part of the church school registration process. Unless revoked by the parents, this permission form will be valid for the entire church school year and following summer.

*Field Trips:* Before a child or youth may participate in a class field trip involving transportation on a bus or private vehicle, parents must approve in advance their child's involvement by signing the field trip permission form. If a student does not have a signed permission slip from a parent, he will not be allowed to participate in the activity/event.

*Drivers:* In order to transport students in a private vehicle as part of an organized church school field trip, an individual must be at least 18 years old and complete a Driver Information Form. The Driver Information Form requires the individual to attest that she has a current driver's license, current automobile insurance, and a car that is in good working order. Drivers must agree not to use alcohol or drugs while driving, and they should also agree to make sure all passengers use a seatbelt. Individuals interested in providing transportation must submit an updated form each church school year.

*Overnights:* UUC often hosts overnight programs for children and youth in our building. We also coordinate programs in which children and/or youth participate in conferences or retreats at other facilities. These conferences or retreats may be organized by UUC or by other churches and organizations. For retreats, conferences or programs that involve an overnight stay, in order to participate all children and youth must have a signed permission slip from their parents. The permission slip must either be provided by UUC or by the organizing group. In addition, each child or youth must review and sign a behavior agreement, which among other things, prohibits sexual activity and the use of drugs or alcohol during the entire overnight program.

# ***TEACHER AND CLASSROOM POLICIES***

## **Teacher and Volunteer Screening**

All staff and volunteers who work directly with children and/or youth must submit to an identity and criminal background check. Classroom teachers, childcare providers, COA mentors, and chaperones for overnight programs are all required to complete the background check process. (Volunteers under the age of 18 are not required to do a background check.)

*Code of Ethics:* All church school staff and volunteers who work directly with children and/or youth are also expected to review and sign the UUC Code of Ethics form.

*Exception to this policy:* Volunteers for one-time church school events (e.g. field trips not involving an overnight stay or church school social events like the spring carnival) are not expected to undergo this process.

As long as the staff member or volunteer maintains a continuous working relationship with the UUC church school, no additional background checks are required after the initial screening is completed. However, if a staff member or volunteer stops working in the church school and then returns after an absence of two years or longer, UUC requires him to complete a new background check and he should also review/sign the code of ethics form.

If someone does not pass the background check, she will not be allowed to participate in programs with direct contact with children or youth or any other at-risk population in the congregation. The senior minister will be informed any time an individual does not clear the identity and criminal background check.

*Confidentiality:* Information gathered during the background check process is only shared with UUC staff on a need-to-know basis. After the check is complete, all documents are destroyed and the volunteer's record is noted as having completed the process.

## **Age & Experience Requirements**

Volunteers who are currently in middle school (approximately 11-13 years old) may provide childcare assistance in the infant/toddler and preschool rooms and at UUC special events. To be considered as volunteers, children in this age group must provide UUC staff with documentation they have completed a certified babysitters course, such as the one offered by Seattle Children's or the American Red Cross. A copy of this documentation will be kept on file in the RE office. Middle school-aged volunteers are also required to demonstrate that they have experience caring for children.

High school-aged volunteers (approximately 14-18 years old) are required to have completed a babysitters course or have comparable babysitting experience.

Volunteers 18 and older are required to have experience caring for children. RE staff will review their background and experience to ensure they are a good fit for the church school.

## **Position Descriptions**

Please see the appendix for the position descriptions for the various volunteer roles in the church school, including Classroom Teacher and Childcare Provider. The position descriptions list qualifications and expectations.

## **Classroom Supervision**

We require a minimum of two teachers/volunteers to be present at all times in a classroom, during a field trip or on an overnight program. Under the following circumstances, it is acceptable to have only one teacher present—while accompanying children to the restroom or going to look for a parent; if the class splits up to allow two different activities to happen at the same time (e.g. some kids go play outside, while others stay in the classroom), and unique situations approved by the DRE.

In each classroom there should always be at least one teacher/volunteer present who is at least 18 years old or older. In special situations, the DRE may waive this requirement.

## **Discipline**

UUC's church school reflects the values and beliefs of our faith. We believe in the inherent worth and dignity of every person. We believe in treating all people with love and compassion. We strive to create a church school environment that is warm and welcoming. We expect our teachers to treat all our children and youth with respect and kindness. Likewise, we also expect our children and youth to treat each other and their teachers with love, compassion, kindness and respect.

Our goal is to create an environment that is most conducive to learning about our faith and for spiritual growth. If a child is disruptive, she makes it difficult for other students to have a quality learning experience. To this end, we expect all children and youth to participate in creating a covenant within their respective classrooms. This covenant addresses how the students promise to treat each other.

We are pleased that in most cases we do not have any disciplinary problems. However, there are times when our covenant is broken and we need to address a disciplinary concern. Here are our guiding principles in discipline:

- Teachers and staff should treat all children and youth with love and respect.
- We expect that children and youth will treat each other with love and respect.
- A teacher should never strike a child or grab him in anger. A teacher should never yell at or insult a child.
- Loss of snack or playground privileges should never be used as a consequence for bad behavior.
- If a student is disruptive or treats another student/teacher with disrespect, the classroom teacher should begin by pulling the student aside and addressing her directly. Point out that she is breaking the covenant, explain the impact on the group, and ask her to change her behavior. After class, the teacher(s) should inform the DRE of the incident.
- Our goal is to keep all children and youth in their classes and to work within the classroom environment to create a good experience for everyone. However, if a student is unable to control his behavior, the teacher may ask the student to leave the classroom. If this is the first time the student has been asked to leave the classroom, the teacher should send him

to meet with the DRE to discuss his behavior and work toward a solution. The teacher should complete an incident report. The DRE will inform the parent(s) of the incident and the proposed solution.

- If the student's disruptive behavior is an ongoing problem (i.e. over the course of a few weeks), we will contact the parents for suggestions and support. If deemed necessary, we will set a meeting with the parents, the child and the teachers to discuss how to approach the situation. Until a resolution is found, a parent may be asked to attend class with the child.
- If the problem continues, the student will be asked to not participate in one or more class sessions. The parents will be fully informed. The DRE, teachers, parents and child will meet to discuss what to do next. If after returning to the classroom the problem continues, the DRE reserves the right to ask the child not to participate in church school for the rest of the church school year. The DRE will set a meeting with the family to discuss the situation.

### **Teacher Training and Evaluation**

UUC staff will host teacher training per class, as requested or needed. New Spirit Play teachers will need to participate in a training—offered each summer—to orient themselves to this unique program.

We expect teachers to communicate regularly with UUC staff about their experiences—both positive and negative—in the classroom. At minimum, we expect teachers (within 1-2 days of the class session) to send us a brief email describing that week's class. This email should also be cc'd to co-teachers. Some questions to consider and answer in the email message are:

- Was it a good class session?
- Any highlights you'd like to share?
- Any problems (e.g. discipline issues, or activities that weren't effective)
- How effective was this week's lesson?
- Is there anything co-teachers should know in order to ensure a smooth transition to the next class session?

The DRE or EPC will review these email messages and respond accordingly. We will also check in regularly (at least once a month) with teachers to discuss the class.

In order to help our teachers be as effective as possible, it is our goal to observe each teaching team at least one time during the church school year. The DRE, EPC or trained volunteers will serve as observers. After each observation, we will set up a meeting—either in-person or over the phone—to discuss our feedback.

At least one time each year, we will ask parents to participate in an online evaluation of the church school and their child's experience in class. We will then share our findings with the teachers.

### **Bathroom/Diaper Changing**

**Infants/Toddlers:** Before dropping off a child in the Sprouts room, we expect parents to change the child's diaper. Parents should leave in the room a diaper changing bag with clean diapers, wipes, and one change of clothes. The bag should be labeled with the name of their child. If during class a child needs a diaper change, the teacher should use the diaper changing table in the infant/toddler room and then dispose of the diaper in the trash can in the classroom.

Immediately after changing the diaper, the teacher should leave the room to go wash his hands in the sink in the breezeway.

**Preschool:** Generally, we expect preschool children who participate in Sprouts to already be potty trained. However, we understand that occasionally there are young children who are developmentally ready for a preschool program, but who are not yet potty trained. We will discuss the child's needs with her parents and determine the best program fit for the child.

If staff decides to allow a non-potty trained child to participate in preschool, we will note on the printed class roster that the child is not potty trained. In these cases, teachers should follow the same diaper changing procedures listed above. Teachers will need to change the child's diaper in the infant/toddler room because the preschool room is not equipped with a changing table.

**Bathroom:** If during class a child needs to use the bathroom, one teacher must accompany him down to the restroom, while the other teacher(s) remain in the classroom to supervise the other children. If the Sunday Morning Education Assistant is available to help, the teacher may ask her to accompany the child to the bathroom and back to the classroom. If the child does not need assistance, the teacher should remain outside the restroom door. From time-to-time, ask the child if he needs help. When the child is done using the restroom, remind him to wash his hands. If the child does need assistance, the teacher should leave the restroom door propped open and enter with the child. The teacher should assist as needed and then ask the child to wash her hands. At pick up, the teacher should let the parents know that she assisted the child in the bathroom.

**Older Children:** This policy does not apply to children in 4<sup>th</sup> grade or older. These children are mature enough to be excused to go to the restroom on their own. In these cases, the teacher should make note of who has left the room and make sure they return.

### **Payment for Child Care Services**

In general, it is UUC's policy not to pay individuals who provide childcare. However, we understand that sometimes to ensure consistent and quality care, payment may be necessary or desirable. The situations in which we will pay are:

- Special events such as workshops/meetings where we provide child care in order to make it easier for families to participate. Teen workers may be offered \$10/hour.
- Summer: Due to vacation schedules it can often be difficult to fill summer childcare and teacher positions. In order to ensure we can adequately care for our children, we may offer pay of \$10/hour to reliable and capable teenagers.
- Church school year- On a case-by-case basis we may choose to offer pay (\$10/hour) to teenagers who have demonstrated over time a strong commitment to our program and who have consistently provided high quality care to our children.

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

There are many ways to help the UUC Religious Education program. The amount of time required for each of these positions varies tremendously. For example, a classroom teacher volunteers to teach 2-3 times per month for an entire church school year (September – May), Sunday Morning Education Assistants commit to one Sunday per month for the full church year, while Special

Events Volunteers commit to a few days or months, depending on the event they are helping to coordinate.

Here is a list of opportunities available in the church school:

- Classroom Teacher
- Childcare Provider in the Sprouts room
- Coming of Age Mentor
- Snack Coordinator
- Special Events
- Provide baked goods for special events
- Provide snack for your child's class
- Chalice Camp assistance

# ***SAFETY PROCEDURES***

## **Sunday Morning Logistics/Communication**

There should be a greeter at each of the two main church entrances at all times during the two morning worship services. In addition to welcoming members and guests and directing visitors to classrooms, the greeter's role is to monitor building entrances and alert staff/volunteers if a potentially dangerous person enters the building.

Each greeter desk will have a two-way radio for use in case of emergency (or in other situations when help is needed). The UUC custodian on duty and the lead usher will each have a two-way radio as well.

As a safety precaution, all classroom doors should remain locked at all times. A teacher may choose to keep the classroom door propped open during class or close the door once the class session begins.

Each teacher should provide RE staff with his cell phone number. We require teachers to keep their cell phones charged and on vibrate mode during the class session. In the unlikely event of an emergency, the DRE or EPC will text information and instructions to the teachers.

## **First Aid Kits**

Each classroom has a small first aid kit (with bandages, alcohol swabs, antibiotic ointment, and gloves) prominently located in the room.

There are also two larger, more fully-equipped first aid kits available on the first level of the building. One is kept on the wall in the breezeway and the other on the wall next to the greeter's desk. Prominent signage will be made available to identify the location of these two kits.

Each year during the summer, UUC staff should review the contents of the first aid kits and replace supplies as necessary.

## **Fire Extinguishers**

Fire extinguishers are located in the following locations on the first level of the building:

- On wall just inside parking lot doors
- On wall just outside of the men's restroom
- On wall across from & just north of Dix
- At end of the north hallway, just inside the exit door (next to Emerson)

All teachers will be informed as to the location of the extinguishers.

## **Fire Alarms**

In case of fire, pull the alarm to alert the fire department and the occupants of the building. The fire alarm pulls are located in the following locations on the first level of the building:

- On wall just inside parking lot doors
- On wall just outside of the men's restroom
- On wall just outside of Howe
- Next to the first aid kit in the breezeway
- At end of the north hallway, just inside the exit door (next to Emerson)

## **Automated External Defibrillator (AED)**

UUC has one automated external defibrillator (AED) for cardiac emergencies. It is located on the north wall of the volunteer/photocopy room (next to the church office) on the 2<sup>nd</sup> level of the building.

## **Medical Emergency**

1. Identify the affected individual(s)
2. Provide first aid within the scope of your training
3. Call 9-1-1
4. Contact parents using the information provided on the printed class roster.
5. Contact Fred (206-853-0380) or Melody (715-297-1820) immediately
6. CPR and first aid trainings will be made available to church school staff and volunteers.

## **Fire**

1. In the case of a fire, teachers should gather all the children and youth in their classroom and evacuate the building quickly and calmly. Teachers should use the evacuation route designated on the emergency procedure sheet posted in their classroom.
2. Teachers should take the attendance sheet with them as they leave the classroom.
3. If caught in smoke, have everyone drop to their hands and knees and crawl to the exit.
4. If needed, pull clothing over nose and mouth to use as a filter for breathing.
5. If clothing catches fire, STOP, DROP AND ROLL until the fire is out.
6. Gather in the parking lot (for classrooms in the south end of the building) or on the sidewalk on NE 68<sup>th</sup> Street (for classrooms in the north end of the building).
7. Once the group arrives at the gathering spot, teachers should account for all students and volunteers in their classroom.
8. Call 9-1-1 from outside the building.
9. Do NOT re-enter the building until cleared to do so by the fire department.

## **Earthquake**

1. Move away from windows, unsecured tall furniture and heavy appliances.
2. Everyone should DROP, COVER and HOLD: DROP to the floor, COVER head and neck with arms and take cover under sturdy furniture or against an interior wall, and HOLD onto furniture if under it and hold position.
3. Keep talking to children in a calm manner until safe to move
4. Do NOT attempt to run out of room or leave the building while the earth is shaking
5. Check yourself and others around you for injuries
6. Be prepared for aftershocks.
7. Treat injuries within the scope of your training.
8. Once shaking is over, evacuate the building according to the route posted on the wall of your classroom.
9. Teachers should bring the class attendance sheet with them.
10. Gather in the parking lot (for classrooms in the south end of the building) or on the sidewalk on NE 68<sup>th</sup> Street (for classrooms in the north end of the building).
11. Once the group arrives at the gathering spot, teachers should account for all students and volunteers in their classroom.

## **Allergy/Anaphylactic EpiPen Procedure**

To use an EpiPen auto-injector:

1. Form a fist around the auto-injector with the tip pointing down. Pull off the safety cap.
2. Place the black tip against the fleshy portion of the outer thigh. You may give the injection directly through your clothing. Do not put your thumb over the end of the unit.
3. With a quick motion, push the auto-injector firmly against the thigh. This will release the spring-loaded needle that injects the dose of EpiPen. Hold the auto-injector in place for a few seconds after activation.
4. Remove the auto-injector from the thigh. Carefully re-insert the used device needle-first into the carrying tube. Re-cap the tube and take it with you to the emergency room so that anyone who treats you will know how much EpiPen you have received.
5. Seek emergency medical attention after any use of epinephrine to treat a severe allergic reaction. The effects of epinephrine may wear off after 10 or 20 minutes. You will need to receive further treatment and observation.

## **Suspicious Person**

The greeters should personally welcome all people who enter the building. If someone appears suspicious, ask if you can help her. If the person asks for money, explain that we do not provide money at church, then direct her to a public phone to dial 2-1-1 for King County Emergency Assistance. If the person persists, ask her politely and firmly to leave the building. If the person smells strongly of alcohol, ask her to leave the premises. If she refuses, contact the UUC custodian and/or RE staff for back up. Call 9-1-1 if needed.

Sunday Morning Education Assistants and greeters should radio the other greeter and custodian to inform them that someone suspicious is in the building.

If a potentially dangerous person enters the building—especially if you observe a weapon—immediately alert the other greeter and custodian and call 9-1-1.

If a dangerous person is in the building, the custodian or DRE should calmly enter the sanctuary and quietly inform the minister on duty.

## **Lockdown Procedures**

Every Sunday morning as they set up the RE classrooms, RE staff will ensure that all classroom doors are locked, but propped open. The DRE and EPC will carry with them the cell phone numbers of all RE teachers. If they determine the need to initiate a lockdown, they will call 9-1-1 and then text the message “lockdown” to all the teachers on duty. As soon as possible, the DRE or EPC will calmly enter the sanctuary and quietly inform the minister, or they will request the custodian-on-duty or another staff member to do so.

A teacher should initiate lockdown procedures in the following situations:

- She hears the sound of gunfire in the building, even if she has not been informed that a shooter is in the building.
- She receives a text from the DRE or EPC with the message “lockdown,” even if she does not hear any gunfire.

In a lockdown situation, teachers should take the following steps:

1. Close the classroom door(s). The door will already be locked, which will make it more difficult for a shooter to enter the room.
2. Close any window blinds.
3. Turn off lights, computers and any equipment that has sound.
4. Ask the children to remain calm and quiet.
5. Make every effort to keep the children out of sight; for example, they may hide behind furniture, in closets, or under tables.
6. Call 9-1-1 to inform emergency personnel of the situation.
7. Do not leave the room until you receive the "all clear" from RE staff or the police.

### **Incident Report**

If someone is hurt during church school—whether or not a 9-1-1 call is made—teachers and/or staff are expected to complete an incident report describing what happened. The report should be submitted to the DRE immediately following the incident. The teacher and/or the DRE are responsible for informing parents of the incident.

The incident report should also be used to inform RE staff about a seriously misbehaving child or a bullying/harassment situation.

### **Informing Volunteers of Safety Procedures**

All RE teachers are expected to attend the two teacher trainings (summer and winter). Part of the training time will be used to update volunteers and staff on safety procedures. In addition, all RE teachers will receive a hard-copy of the Church School Policy and Procedure Manual, which will they will be strongly encouraged to read. Finally, the basic safety procedures will be posted next to evacuation maps in each classroom.

## ***APPENDIX***

- UUC Covenant of Safety
- Registration Form
- Driver Information Form
- Field Trip/Overnight Permission Form
- Incident Report Form
- Church School Sign-Out Form
- Volunteer Church School Teacher Position Description
- Church School Childcare Provider Position Description



## **Our Commitment to Safety**

Welcome to University Unitarian Church. To preserve the health, safety and well-being of everyone, we expect you to honor the following rules of conduct while at UUC or participating in a UUC sponsored event:

- \* No violent behavior
- \* No weapons
- \* No sexual misconduct, such as indecent exposure, offensive touching or sexual harassment
- \* No threatening, disruptive, obscene, or discriminatory behavior or language
- \* No marijuana or illegal substances are allowed. No alcohol is allowed unless it is being served at an approved church sponsored event. If you are intoxicated by alcohol or under the influence of illegal drugs or marijuana, you will be asked to leave.
- \* No smoking within the building, the Memorial Garden, or the playground
- \* Treat the church building and its contents with care
- \* Do not distribute any materials at UUC unless they have been approved by a staff member or are under the auspices of a church sponsored group or committee.

We make every effort to apply these rules in a fair, respectful and positive manner for the benefit of all. Individuals whose actions violate these rules will be asked to stop such actions and to leave the facility. Thank you for your cooperation. Together, we can ensure that UUC is a safe, welcoming community for all.

# Church School Registration

*University Unitarian Church*

**Families are required to register and pay for church school each year**

***Parent/Guardian #1***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street                      City                      Zip

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

***Parent/Guardian #2***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street                      City                      Zip

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Children live with:    \_\_\_ Parent #1    \_\_\_ Parent #2    \_\_\_ Both    \_\_\_ Other:

**When signing up your children, please note that  
 Middle School, OWL, COA and Youth Group meet only at 11:15**

Last Name of Child	First Name	Birth Date	Age	Grade (as of Sept.)	Class Time
					___ 9:30 ___ 11:15
					___ 9:30 ___ 11:15
					___ 9:30 ___ 11:15
					___ 9:30 ___ 11:15

Please tell us confidentially anything we need to know about your children so that we can best serve them (for example, does your child have any allergies or behavioral/learning challenges?):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Please complete other side of form*

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:** I would like to help support the UUC Church School as a  
\_\_\_ Classroom Teacher    \_\_\_ Childcare Worker (Infant, Toddler, Preschool)    \_\_\_ Coming of Age Mentor  
\_\_\_ Special Events Volunteer    \_\_\_ Snack Coordinator (for my child's class)  
\_\_\_ Baker for special programs (for example, the Cookie Decorating Reception in December)

### **Church School Registration Fee**

<i>Number of Children In Family</i>	<i>Amount you should pay</i>	<i>Amount Owed</i>
One	\$75	
Two	\$115	
Three or more	\$125	
COA (per student)	\$400	
<b>TOTAL DUE</b>		

- If paying for COA students, the listed fee is per student. (For ex, one student costs \$400, two cost \$800, etc.)
- If you are paying for COA and you also have students in other classes, you must add the fee for COA to the fee for the appropriate number of additional children.
- Students registering for the COA program are expected to complete a more comprehensive registration form.
- Registration fee is valid for September through August. If registering mid-year, we will pro-rate the fee.

### **How to Pay My Registration Fee**

\_\_\_ I would like to pay by personal check– Send a check payable to UUC along with your registration form to the address below.

\_\_\_ I would like to pay by credit card. Please visit our web page:  
<http://www.uuchurch.org/religious-education/registration/>

*Scholarships and payment plans are available for families who need assistance.*

**Walking Field Trips:** By completing this form, I acknowledge that my child's class may occasionally go on walking field trips in the neighborhood. I hereby give permission for my child to participate in these field trips. I understand that any field trips involving transportation on a bus or private vehicle will require a separate permission slip signed by me.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** Church School, University Unitarian Church, 6556 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, Seattle, WA 98115  
**Any questions:** Melody Moberg, Director of Religious Education, 206-454-7720, [melody.moberg@uuchurch.org](mailto:melody.moberg@uuchurch.org)

# Driver Information Form

*University Unitarian Church*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

I am willing to provide transportation for UUC Church School Field Trips.

I understand as the driver that I am primarily responsible for the safety and well-being of my passengers. I promise to abide by all posted speed limit and traffic laws.

I can attest that the vehicle I am driving is in good maintenance and repair, and that all possible safety precautions have been taken to ensure a safe trip.

I agree not to use alcohol or non-prescription drugs while on church school field trips. Furthermore, I promise to abstain from the use of alcohol and non-prescription drugs in the 12 hours immediately preceding the field trip.

I have a current driver's license and automobile insurance and will provide copies of these documents to RE staff.

My vehicle has a functioning seatbelt for all passengers. I promise to ensure that all passengers wear a seatbelt.

Any Comments?

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

# Field Trip/Overnight Permission Slip

Class or group: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of event: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Starting time/place: \_\_\_\_\_ Ending time/place: \_\_\_\_\_

Adult sponsors for this event: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional information: \_\_\_\_\_

**For more information, contact:**

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

*I give consent for my child, \_\_\_\_\_, to participate in the abovementioned event sponsored by University Unitarian Church. I understand that the church does not accept responsibility for any bodily injury incurred during this event. I give permission for any emergency medical, surgical, diagnostic and hospital care, treatment, and procedures to be performed by a licensed physician or hospital when deemed immediately necessary or advisable by a physician to safeguard my child's health when I cannot be contacted. I agree to be responsible for any expenses not covered by my insurance which may be incurred as a result of an accident or medical emergency involving my child.*

---

My child has the following allergies, dietary restrictions, or medical conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In case of emergency, I can be reached at (phone): \_\_\_\_\_

If unable to reach me, please contact:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of parent/guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Student Agreement for Attending Overnights

Class or group: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of event: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Because this event will require my cooperation, interest, and good will in order to succeed,  
Because I want to make and strengthen friendships, and  
Because I want the adult sponsors to enjoy their experience in hosting this event...

I agree that:

I will stay inside the church building during the overnight. Doors will be locked at 11:00PM. I will not leave or enter the building without sponsor permission.

I will respect the property of others and the church.

I will obey the rules prohibiting drugs, alcohol, tobacco and sex.

I will help clean up the church so we can leave it as we found it.

I will follow the requests of sponsors.

I will respect the quiet sleeping room.

I will not bring a guest.

I will help others abide by this agreement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Youth

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Incident Report

University Unitarian Church

Date & Time of Incident \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Completing Form \_\_\_\_\_

Your Role at UUC (e.g. RE teacher, DRE) \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom or Location Where Incident Occurred \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of Any Children Or Youth Involved \_\_\_\_\_

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**Description of Incident (include the names of any witnesses):**

*Continue on back if necessary*

**What Actions Did You Take?/What Follow-Up Is Needed?**

*Continue on back if necessary*

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Church School Sign-Out Form

*University Unitarian Church*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, parent of

\_\_\_\_\_ agree that my child can be released from church school—at the conclusion of the session—to meet me in the social hall or elsewhere in the church. By signing this form, I release my child’s teachers from the responsibility of holding my child in the classroom until I pick him/her up. I also absolve the church from the responsibility of direct supervision of my child once he/she is released from class. I will instruct my child about where to meet me after class. I understand that this form is in effect every Sunday morning that my child participates in church school, until I rescind in writing my permission. I further understand that this form must be renewed each year.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Church School Sign-Out Form

*University Unitarian Church*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, parent of

\_\_\_\_\_ agree that my child can be released from church school—at the conclusion of the session—to meet me in the social hall or elsewhere in the church. By signing this form, I release my child’s teachers from the responsibility of holding my child in the classroom until I pick him/her up. I also absolve the church from the responsibility of direct supervision of my child once he/she is released from class. I will instruct my child about where to meet me after class. I understand that this form is in effect every Sunday morning that my child participates in church school, until I rescind in writing my permission. I further understand that this form must be renewed each year.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# ***Volunteer Church School Teacher Position Description***

## Expectations

- Commit to teach church school for full church year (Sept -June)
- Teach Sunday school class on a regular basis (2-3 times per month)
- Collaborate with teaching team members and UUC Religious Education staff to plan lessons and activities
- Review assigned curriculum and prepare weekly lessons and materials
- **Arrive in the classroom at least 15 minutes before the class session begins and remain 15 minutes after the worship service ends.** With the exception of OWL and COA, all class sessions are held at the following times- 9:30-10:45 and 11:15-12:30.
- Take attendance each week and submit attendance sheets to RE staff
- Participate in class activities (e.g. service project or social events) outside of Sunday school time
- Attend semi-regular teaching team meetings throughout the year
- Maintain regular communication with UUC Religious Education staff

## Desired Qualifications

- Member/active participant at UUC for at least one year. Previous involvement at another UU church may apply toward this requirement.
- Successfully pass a criminal background screening
- Review and sign the volunteer code of ethics statement
- Enjoy working with children and/or youth
- Past teaching and/or childcare experience is desired, though not required
- Strong identity as a Unitarian Universalist
- Effective interpersonal communication skills

## Teacher Evaluation

Periodically throughout the church school year, UUC Religious Education staff and/or trained volunteers will observe each volunteer teacher during class sessions. Feedback will be provided to the teacher to help her/him improve in her/his role.

At the end of the church school year, UUC Religious Education staff will review the performance of church school teachers and determine if they will be asked to continue as a volunteer.

# **Church School Childcare Provider Position Description**

## Expectations

- Commit to provide childcare for infants/toddlers or preschool for full church year (Sept. – June)
- Commit to provide childcare on a regular basis (1-5 times per month, including Intergenerational Sundays)
- Collaborate with teaching team members and UUC Religious Education staff.
- **Arrive in the classroom at least 15 minutes before the class session begins and remain 15 minutes after the worship service ends.** With the exception of OWL and COA, all class sessions are held at the following times- 9:30-10:45 and 11:15-12:30.
- Take attendance each week.
- Maintain regular communication with UUC Religious Education staff.

## Desired Qualifications

- Member/active participant at UUC.
- Successfully pass a criminal background screening.
- Review and sign the volunteer code of ethics statement
- Enjoy working with children
- Teen childcare providers under 18 must take a babysitting class
- Strong identity as a Unitarian Universalist
- Effective interpersonal communication skills
- Responsible and able to take direction