

RE Committee Meeting - July 2011

1) 2011-12 Teacher recruitment

Denee reports that teacher recruitment is progressing although not complete. We are almost set for the fall, but need a few more for the winter spring.

2) 2011-12 Curriculum

Denee has done a great job of finding curriculum for the coming year. OWL dictates that the Jr. Youth be 7-9th grade, so the lower grades will be 4-6, 1-3, and PK-K. The Sr. Youth will be using non-UU curricula focusing on ethics. Similarly exciting material has been identified for the other grades.

3) OWL for Jr. Youth and Sr. Youth (Our Whole Lives – Human Sexuality Lifespan Education)

We have general agreement from 5 of the 6 trained teachers to teach again this year (and we are optimistic about the 6th once reached). We expect to move forward with OWL for the Jr. Youth for 24 weeks, followed by 8 weeks for the Sr. Youth (selected topics focusing on emotional intelligence). OWL will take place at the normal RE time. The teachers need to get together to finalize the teaching schedule and there need to be parent meetings in the month of August. We will offer parents not interested in having their children participate in OWL to either move them up or down to one of the other classes. While we recognize that this may not work for everyone, we believe that most will benefit, and as regular attendance will be expected, we believe that this will boost attendance at the start of the new schedule.

4) Adult RE issues

We are adding a second adult class in addition to the already ongoing self-managed first class. Denee presented an exciting schedule for the second class, including several 12-week or so classes. Two sessions on the topic of author Karen Armstrong are planned to take place at different times during the year. Denee is planning to initiate a class on UU Parenting. After a few sessions, Denee expects classes to become self-managed, where session leadership will be shared among the attendees. We expect new topics to be suggested by the congregation, and hope that congregants will step up to offer to kick off new topics for a few sessions before moving to sharing session leadership responsibilities. Concern has been expressed that the two adult RE classes will compete for attendance. The committee consensus is that choice is a good thing and that by offering a second session we can serve a new segment of the community.

5) DRE New hire search

We have begun our search for a new DRE. We plan to advertise the position in the next month, allow 2 months for advertisement with concurrent interviewing, and expect to hire by the end of December. The board has said that this position will be 1/4-time. The search committee consists of the RE Com, Programs Trustee, Past-President, President, and Vice-President. We expect to advertise the position to the church community first and then expand the search to the wider community if an acceptable candidate does not arise. The committee is working on the devising a set of objective criteria by which to rank candidates.

6) Other

The summer RE kids will be doing the 4th Sunday community building meal in August. Skip Jones has agreed to head-chef responsibility. The children will be preparing vegetables from their garden. The garden looks great Denee!

Denee has made plans for Youth Chapel August 7, 14, and 21 to take place at the time of the Service. Children will go to the REZ instead of the service to be given instruction on expectations for behavior. Several congregants have been asked to speak for a few minutes each on the topic of "if Church is so boring, why do I keep coming".

The board has scheduled the October meeting to be dedicated to RE issues.

Denee presented an opportunity for Summer Camp next year. There is a Mennonite camp in the Tri-Cities that is offering us 3-4 days next year (June or July mid-week). The cost is a very reasonable \$27/day/kid (no minimums and no down-payment). We gave Denee permission to book this for next year. We would need to supply the adult and Sr. Youth counselors, but food and camp equipment are supplied.