



**HOLSTON VALLEY  
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
CHURCH**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
PROSPECTUS  
2011-2012**

Chalice Artwork by Jane Cartwright  
Oakridge UU Church

## Message from Our Minister Reverend Jacqueline Luck

This year our congregation is embarking on an experiment by welcoming its children and youth into the worship service every Sunday—this is unique in Unitarian Universalist congregations, though not in other denominations. It is our hope that their presence will vividly affirm to them their importance in the congregation, and the importance of Sunday worship. We believe that this will encourage the development of a stronger identity with their UU congregation and worship. We will be experimenting with various elements of the service to improve the worship experience for our multigenerational congregation.

Adults and children will share the same schedule on Sunday mornings as religious education for both are the hour before worship. The kids will have a snack before attending worship, and parents of 2<sup>nd</sup> graders and below can take advantage of professional childcare during the service.

Reverend William Ellery Channing-- considered the father of the American Unitarian tradition --wrote these revolutionary words about religious education.

*“The great end in religious instruction is not to stamp our minds upon the young, but to stir their own...to stir a fervent love of truth...to prepare them for impartial, conscientious judging of whatever subjects may be offered to their decision, and to awaken the conscience and moral discernment.”*

Where do children learn the liberal religious values of the use of reason in faith, of the value of personal life experience in faith, and the value of the questioning mind and the recognition of truth in many sources including science? Who else embraces people of diverse belief within their congregation? What other faith community emphasizes the unity and inherent worth of all people? What congregation is welcoming to gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender and those questioning, and educates the whole child about healthy relationships?

I don't know another answer to those questions than within Unitarian Universalist congregations. In Holston Valley Unitarian Universalist Church's religious education classes we seek to grow the minds, souls, and the character of our youth. They learn the courage of their faith, ethical living, and respect for the web of all existence. Denee Mattioli, PhD., is the Director of Religious Education, and is passionate about HVUUC's children and their religious education.

As conscientious parents I know you will want to take advantage of this new opportunity for your family to worship and grow in spiritual wisdom and experience *together*. I am available to talk further with you anytime.

Faithfully yours,

*Jacqueline*

The Reverend Jacqueline Luck

**Message from the Director of Religious Education  
Dr. Denee Mattioli**

On behalf of myself and the Religious Education (RE) Committee, I would like to welcome you and your family to our religious education program this year! On this website you will find:

- Registration form (please complete one for each child)
- Our HVUUC Religious Education Mission Statement
- Desired Outcomes of our program for children and youth who attend regularly
- UU Principles in language children can understand
- A brief history of Unitarian Universalism for young people
- The story of the flaming chalice
- Our behavior policy
- Playground rules
- Procedure for dismissing children from R.E. on Sunday mornings
- Curriculum for each of our classes for 2011-2012

Regular attendance helps our young people derive the greatest benefit from our program. Children and youth know their teachers and develop valuable relationships with them. They are at home in the church space. They feel a part of the cycle of events and the rituals of the church year. They develop a sense of stewardship about the church and feel truly fulfilled when they have helped. They develop a sense of being part of a church family, a community where we know each other's names and care about each other's lives. Building friendships and a sense of belonging to our community is greatly enhanced by regular attendance.

We hope you will find our church a place to have fun, as well as to share your deepest feelings and ideas about the things that are important to you. Your thoughts and feelings are important. We encourage you to talk with your teachers and leaders about ideas you have for making our church an even better place for all of us. We hope too, that you will share your gifts with us—your interests, hobbies, talents, and ways of doing whatever it is you like to do. Together, let's make HVUUC what we need it to be!

Each class will have opportunities to participate in social justice projects. They will also participate in providing a worship service for the whole congregation which will be held in the spring. These are wonderful opportunities for our children and youth to develop leadership skills and feel more a part of our HVUUC community.

Over 30 adults are planning and working to provide quality religious education for our kids. We all look forward to an active and fruitful year.

Denee Mattioli  
Director of Religious Education

**Holston Valley Unitarian Universalist Church**

## Religious Education Committee Members 2011-2012

The members of the R.E. Committee meet on the 2nd Wednesday night of each month. They work hard to provide a learning program and other enriching experiences in a safe and nurturing environment.

Parents are invaluable in helping the RE committee and the teachers to continue to improve the program. Please contact any member of the RE Committee with your ideas and suggestions and how you can make them happen. You can contact us at:

RE\_Com@hvuuc.org  
RE\_Chair@hvuuc.org  
DRE@hvuuc.org

## Registration

Registration forms are available on the website or one may be obtained from the church office or from a greeter as you enter the church on Sunday morning. **All families must complete this form for each child each year.** Registration is critical to our program planning and to meeting the needs of each individual child and is the basis of our class mailing lists. Please return the registration form to the church office, your child's teacher, or the Director of Religious Education.

## Unitarian Universalist Principles In Language Children Can Understand

Adapted by Helena Chapin and Mary Ann Moore

We believe

That each and every person is important,  
That all people should be treated fairly and kindly,  
That we should accept one another and keep on learning together,  
That each person must be free to search  
for what is true and right in life,  
That all persons should have a vote  
about the things that concern them,  
In working for a peaceful, fair and free world,  
In caring for our planet earth, the home we share  
with all living things.

## **H.V.U.U.C. Religious Education Mission Statement**

The Religious Education Program of the Holston Valley Unitarian Universalist Church has as its purpose and goal to encourage growth and development of children, youth and their families...

- In the knowledge, skills and attitudes required for understanding U.U. principles
- To nurture the gift of reason and exercise curiosity and inquiry with an open mind.
- To encourage the search for an individual spiritual path.
- To learn and practice skills needed for the potential to act in the world and make a difference in their communities.
- To provide instruction about the interdependent web of life of which they are an integral part.
- To develop an identity by providing an accepting community that demonstrates democratic processes, tolerance, compassion and civility.

## **Holston Valley Unitarian Universalist Church Religious Education**

### Desired Outcomes

It is the expressed goal of the R.E. Committee and the R.E. Teaching Staff to work toward these outcomes in our religious education program. Our work throughout the year is with the plan that our children will gain knowledge, develop and practice skills and develop the attitudes listed below.

#### Content

★U.U. Values    ★World Religions    ★Identity & Responsibility  
 ★Web of Life    ★Stereotypes    ★History of U.U.    ★Race Relations  
 ★Heroes    ★Peace Studies    ★Stewardship    ★Critical Issues  
 ★Life & Teachings of Prophets    ★Social Justice    ★Sacred Texts

#### Skills

★Communication    ★Inquiry    ★Meditation    ★Democratic Process  
 ★Organization    ★Research    ★Decision-Making    ★Interpersonal  
 ★Social Activism    ★Presentation    ★Conflict Resolution    ★Listening

#### Attitudes

★Tolerance    ★Acceptance    ★Involvement    ★Compassion  
 ★Curiosity    ★Reflection    ★Self Confidence    ★Service to Others  
 ★Reverence    ★Belief that one can make a difference    ★Civility

**Holston Valley Unitarian Universalist Church**

## **Brief History of Unitarian Universalism for Young People**

Unitarian Universalism once was a part of the Christian religious tradition. But in the third century some people in Europe who studied the Bible very carefully came to feel that some of what other Christians were saying wasn't true. One group of these new scholars felt that Christians were wrong if they thought that God would punish people and send them to Hell when they died. These scholars became pretty unpopular. They were known as "Universalists" because they believed that God was kind and would offer salvation universally (to all), not just to a chosen few.

In the fourth century, the Christian church adopted the doctrine of the Trinity. This doctrine of "Father, Son and Holy Spirit" declared that Jesus was of the same substance as God. Some people rejected this idea and became known as anti-trinitarians, or "Unitarians." These scholars saw Jesus as a prophet and great teacher, but not necessarily as the son of God.

For a long time Unitarians and Universalists thought that they were just an improved form of Christianity. But as the centuries passed, they realized that there were other religions in the world that were also very good even though they didn't agree with Christianity or Judaism. These people felt that they could learn from all religions and people the world over. Since so many religions disagreed with each other about very important things, they began to understand that no one religion could claim to have all the right answers about life and how to live it.

In 1568, King John Sigismund of Transylvania (now Romania) issued the western world's first edict of religious freedom, which meant that people could choose their own religion. Francis David then formed the world's first Unitarian congregation in that country.

John Murray brought Universalism to North America from England. The first Universalist church in America was formed in Gloucester, Massachusetts in 1779. At about the same time, scientist Joseph Priestley brought Unitarianism to North America. The first Unitarian church was established in Philadelphia in 1796, and it expanded to New England congregational churches.

The American Unitarians and Universalists realized that they shared a philosophy of religious tolerance and religious questioning and a concern for causes of social justice, so they decided to merge together into one association. In 1961, the Unitarian Universalist Association was born.

Unitarian Universalists do not have a creed like many other religions do. They are encouraged to question and explore what is not known to them—such as what God is and what happens after we die. No one tells us the answers. In our congregations we are encouraged to seek and develop our own truth within a community of fellow seekers.

If someone asks about our religion, the easiest thing to say is that Unitarian Universalism is the democratic faith. It believes in freedom, tolerance, and helping other people.



## Story of the Flaming Chalice

The flaming chalice has become the symbol of our faith. A chalice is a sort of fancy cup, and it is an ancient Greek symbol for wisdom and good fortune.

The chalice symbol we all know was designed by an Austrian refugee, Hans Deutsch, during World War II. Hans had fled Nazi Germany and was working with the Unitarian Service Committee to help refugees find food, shelter, clothing, and medical assistance. The Unitarian Service Organization asked him to design a symbol that would be recognized as a sign of help available to people based on their need and not their religion or race. He came up with the flaming chalice inside a circle. The flame symbolized the light of mercy and hope, and the circle meant all were included.

Now the flaming chalice means the light of hope, the light of freedom to those deprived of freedom, and the light of truth to those seeking it. Surrounding the light is the circle—where truth, freedom, and mercy are dependent upon one another within the circle of human life.

## Parent Participation



The registration form is the means by which we share in this cooperative venture. More volunteers means stronger, richer and more varied programs for our young people. Consider what our Religious Education Program means to you and your family and what it is that you can do to help.

Can you ...drive on a field trip? ... organize and host a monthly family activity? ...chaperone youth at a weekend con? ...substitute? ... prepare snacks on Sunday mornings? Perhaps it is something different than what is listed on the form...being a democratic institution we honor write-ins!

**PLEASE PARTICIPATE!**

## Offering

We will be collecting weekly offerings in church during the Lesson for All Ages. The money will support good works linked to a social action project that the children and youth will help determine.

Please talk at home about the importance of giving and help your children decide how much of their money they will give to the church. Also help them remember to bring their money when they come to the front of the church for the Lesson for All Ages.

## Our Playground

Our playground is behind the church and observable from the Fellowship Hall and the deck.

We want to assure that our playground is a fun, safe place for all children. To that end, the Religious Education Committee has established playground rules. **Please go over these with your children and help to see that they are followed on the playground.**

### **Playground Rules**

- ☺ Safety First!
- ☺ No climbing trees
- ☺ Eat at picnic tables
- ☺ Trash in can
- ☺ No throwing –sticks, stones, etc.
- ☺ No fighting or rough playing
- ☺ Mulch remains on the ground
- ☺ Respect one another
- ☺ Stay off of the bocce ball courts



## **Dismissal of Children**

Parents of pre K-Kindergarten and 1st-2nd-3rd grade children should go to their classroom immediately following R.E (10:45AM) and pick your children up for either the worship service or for childcare on the lower level. All children will be served a snack at the end of R.E. Please check-out with the teacher before taking your child from the classroom or the playground.

Older children and youth will be excused from class on their own. At 12:00PM parents assume responsibility for their children whether in the fellowship hall or on the playground. On days when we have pleasant weather, coffee will be available in the lower level kitchen so parents may visit while watching their children on the playground.

## **Behavior Policy**

In order for everyone to have a positive learning experience, encouraging social atmosphere and a nurturing environment, the Religious Education Committee has developed the following behavior policy for RE classes and activities.

All Religious Education students are expected to work together to create a respectful and cooperative learning community. Teachers will guide participants in making their own agreement about how they will behave in class. This covenant will be posted, reviewed periodically and communicated to parents.

If a problem arises, the teacher will ask the child to abide by the class covenant. If the child chooses not to behave according to the covenant, the following action(s):

- Time away from the group within the classroom
- Parents will be asked to come to the RE class
- Teacher will talk with the parent(s) about an ongoing problem.
- Conference with parent(s), teacher and the Director of Religious Education

Teachers will consult with the Director of Religious Education about specific or on-going behavior problems and the DRE will inform the parents. At times other than during religious education programming, all adults in our caring community serve as guides for our children, but parents are ultimately responsible for their children's well-being and behavior. Parents or guardians are expected to remain at the church on Sunday mornings.

## **Youth Chapel**

Once every quarter children and youth 3rd grade and older will leave the service after the Story for All Ages for their own worship service.

## **Other Activities for Children and Their Families**

Sunday mornings may be our “meat and potatoes/beans and rice” but rest assured, we have dessert as well! Throughout the year our church community comes together for special gatherings, holiday events, service projects, and convocations. Reading the church newsletter is the best way to keep abreast of extra opportunities for children, youth, families, and intergenerational groups to have fun and build a sense of community. We welcome your ideas and energy in creating special times together and hope to see you both on Sundays and at special occasions.



