

WELCOME TO THE RAINBOW PATH



(Child Dedication, June 2007)

THE RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION PROGRAM OF THE UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP OF KELOWNA

CREATIVE SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND LEARNING
OPPORTUNITIES
FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN CARING COMMUNITY

The 2007-08 Program year Begins September 9th
COME JOIN US!



WELCOME!

Religious exploration in Unitarian and Universalist congregations is built upon a unique philosophy, embracing wisdom from many religions and other sources of inspiration, including contemporary science. We live in creative tension with both the secular, consumer society and more traditional faith groups.

Growing up in a U*U community is an amazing gift to our children, who will live in a world more diverse than we can imagine. As a “Welcoming Congregation,” we celebrate people of all gender identities and sexual orientations, along with welcoming and garnering wisdom from the full spectrum of human diversity. Being part of an inclusive, inter-generational caring community from an early age is invaluable to children.

We want our children to feel valued for who they are, and to be nurtured in their capacity for caring and wonder, curiosity and imagination. Our programs empower them to think and choose for themselves, to appreciate the diversity of humankind and its spiritual traditions, to feel a sense of relatedness, reverence and responsibility towards the natural world and the “holy” (*what “makes whole”*), and to be committed to service. We are happy to answer any questions about our philosophy and programs. You are welcome to be in touch with us by e-mail, or by leaving a message on the church phone.

To the Parents:

We are excited about the religious exploration program planned for the coming year! Age groupings are constructed around the UU “Rainbow” Principles (see page 7), and we are trying something new – dividing the year into four modules. All levels will explore related material through age-appropriate curricula and resources (Details follow). Broad themes will be:

- 1) Free to be Me (self-affirmation, friendship and family)
- 2) Many ways to Celebrate (world religions)
- 3) Unitarian*Universalist Values
- 4) Connecting with the Earth

We are blessed with delightful children, wonderful ideas, caring community and inspiring faith traditions. Yet only you can make the vision real! Ours is a cooperative, volunteer-led Religious Exploration program. There are many opportunities to contribute your talents and time, and adults grow and learn along with our children. Perhaps you will join a leader team for one or more modules. Involvement is also appreciated in many other areas, including assisting leaders, holiday programs or dramatic productions, planning outings, social events and intergenerational activities. You might want to join the RE Advisory Team or assist the RE Coordinator with tasks such as obtaining supplies or organizing rooms. Eight or more volunteer hours in the course of the year is a useful guideline. We encourage people other than parents to get involved as well, as supporting and nurturing our families is a high priority.

You can also assist in creating a meaningful experience for your children by bringing them regularly, learning about the curriculum, encouraging their friendships, and participating in all-church activities. Spiritual roots sprout in the context of a family’s total involvement in their chosen religious community.

Please remember that parents are responsible for their children before and after the service. For safety and insurance purposes, children younger than grade 7 are expected to remain in the building unless accompanied by an adult, nor should they be downstairs if no adult is present

Registration:

Registration begins at the **Open House** on August 26th, and continues before and after the service on September 9th and throughout the year. All children, including infants and youth, need to be registered as soon as possible, so we have accurate, current information about everyone in the program for safety, insurance and communication purposes. Please fill in the reverse side to let us know how you will be involved!

We do not charge a fee for participating in our program. If you are not a Member or Pledging Friend, however, a donation of \$20. per semester would be welcome toward the cost of supplies. Parents automatically become "Friends" of the congregation, until and unless they decide to be Members.

Worship:

Worship (*worth-shaping*) is central to our Sunday experience, deepening our connections with one another and the Mystery we live within. All ages usually celebrate together for 15 minutes or so before the children leave for their age group program.

Several times during the year, the full service is inter-generational, often including drama and music.



Our church choir singing



Family folksingers as part of an intergenerational service

Please arrive in time for you and your children to get settled in before the service starts, so you can relax and take part in worshipping together. Children above nursery age must be upstairs with their families during this time, as there is no supervision downstairs.

OUR “RAINBOW PATH” PROGRAM FOR 2007-8

10:30 A.M. Sunday

Rockin’ Reds: The Nursery:

Children 3 and under are given quality care by our experienced nursery care-givers. All children must be signed in and out, and be picked up by 11:45 AM (unless service runs late). The experience of caring community is valuable as they are learning to trust their world.



Christmas “Stars”

Yogi Yellows: 4-7 year olds

“We are Many, We are One” is the curriculum this year. It explores diversity and interconnections at an age- appropriate level with lots of fun activities. Topics will be clustered in four theme modules:

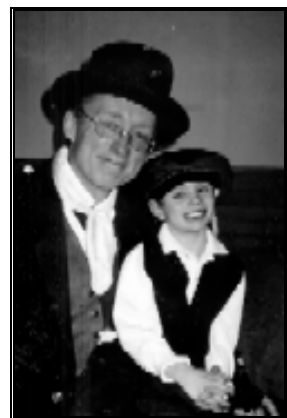
- 1) Feelings, Friends and Family
- 2) We celebrate life
- 3) Living in UU Ways
- 4) Nature Needs our Care



Care kits for the homeless



First steps on the path



“God bless us Everyone”

Groovin' Greens: 8-12 year olds

Last year our Green group explored their creativity as one way of understanding "God power." This year, we are diversifying, drawing from several curricula. The first short module will build connections and affirm our children. A longer second module will explore the celebrations of world religions, and a third will engage UU Principles. The fourth, built around four natural regions of Canada, will connect with our "Green Sanctuary" project.

- 1) Free to be Me
- 2) "Holidays and Holy Days"
- 3) "We Believe"
- 4) "Connecting with the Earth"



Hobbits find courage



Narrating X-mas Play



Donkey in "A Feast of Fools"



Teens, Spanish Dinner

BLOOMIN' BLUES: Grade 7 and up (stay tuned!)

This past year, our few teens were involved through drama, childcare and teaching, and special events including the Fall Gathering Youth Conference in October. If there is sufficient interest, we plan to offer a "Coming-of-Age" program this year. Tentative plans include a 4-session family-based Coming of Age unit in the fall (focusing on changes experienced in the young teen years), leading into a Mentoring relationship with a supportive adult. The year might include visits to other religious venues, and/or the "Our Whole Lives" sexuality program. Most youth activities times will be other than Sunday morning, though they are encouraged to attend, especially 1st Sundays.



Youth in cast of "A Christmas Carol"

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION: A RAINBOW VISION

(adapted from several sources by Rev. Linda Weaver Horton)

A "rainbow" version of our statement of Principles is one way of expressing the many dimensions we explore together.

RED: RESPECT ALL BEINGS.

Social Responsibility and faith in action.

As Unitarian*Universalists, we commit to treating all people (and other beings) as inherently valuable and worthy of care. Activities nurture compassion, addressing challenges and inequities in human relations as well as our responsibility to care for our world. Concerns embrace congregation, community, and the larger world. **Red is the heart colour.**

ORANGE: OFFER FAIRNESS AND KINDNESS TO ALL

Nurturing Relationship.

Communities such as ours, where all ages worship, work and play together, where people practice power with, not over, each other, can teach healthy and life-affirming relationship skills.

Orange is for the warmth of human caring.

YELLOW: YEARN TO LEARN BY CONNECTING

AND CARING. Intentional Community.

Through community-building and socializing, people to get to really know one another. We share values, establish trust and healthy intimacy, and practice authenticity and acceptance. We find time for celebrating and for fun. A sense of community through time and around the world also grounds us.

Yellow is the colour of memory and hope and sunshine.

**GREEN: GROW THROUGH EXPLORING NEW IDEAS
TOGETHER.** Creative Learning

With creative curricula as a resource, we create a safe place to learn more about ourselves and the world. We encourage deeper understanding of world faiths and spiritual practices, of ethical issues and resources for living, and the ability to ask questions, deepen awareness, think creatively and find meaning for oneself. **Green is for growing things and people.**

BLUE: BELIEVE IN YOURSELF YET LISTEN TO OTHERS
Empowerment and Leadership.

Developing the leadership skills of children, youth and adults is critical to the future of our faith community and the larger world. Our congregations teach and model participatory forms of decision-making and empowering leadership. Freedom of conscience is supported for people of all ages, as is the courage to practice it. **Blue is the colour of tranquility, and of the nurturing sea and embracing sky.**

INDIGO: INSIST ON A PEACEFUL WORLD
Embracing diversity.

A key component of religious growth in U*U congregations is appreciative education about diversity, including culture and theology, spiritual practice, gender identity and sexual orientation, diverse abilities and psychological bents. We celebrate and garner wisdom from that rich diversity. We also promote peace-making skills, as well as a sense of personal responsibility to make a difference by the way we live our lives. **Indigo is a rich colour, saturated with life and depth.**

VIOLET: VALUE THE WEB OF ALL LIFE
Spiritual practice & worship.

This principle has two dimensions. One is the ecological, which is also part of social responsibility. The other is mindful awareness, and the practices that remind us we are connected to the earth and all that is, helping us to “give shape to what is of worth” (*worth-ship*), and to draw strength from the depth dimension of life. In valuing, we celebrate and center and reflect upon how we can live lives true to the deepest potential of who we are. **Violet unites warm and cool into harmony.**

2007-08 CALENDAR OF EVENTS (Tentative)

August: Hogwarts-Okanagan Open House August 26th

September:

Adult RE Leader Orientation September 9th

In-gathering Sunday/Water Communion Sept. 9th

Sorrento Family Camp Sept. 23-25th

October

Thanksgiving Intergen service/Community lunch Oct. 7th

Garage Sale October 13th

Intergenerational Halloween Party Oct. 26th

November

Community lunch November 4th

Church Goods & Services Auction (date to be set)

December

Community lunch/Christmas Crafts workshop Dec. 2nd

Christmas Carolling Saturday December 15th

Christmas Pageant December 23rd

January

Community lunch January 6th

Secret Friends sign-up!

February

New Year of the Trees/Community lunch February 3rd

Games night?

March

Kwanyin Day/Community lunch March 2nd

Easter March 23rd

Church Goods & Services Auction (date to be set)

April

Community lunch April 6th

Talent Show?

Church Garage Sale (date to be set)

May

Coming-of-Age (tentative)/Community lunch May 4th

CUC Annual General Meeting May 16-19

June

Flower Communion Intergen/Community lunch 6/1

End-of-year RE Celebration

Family Picnic June 29th

SPECIAL EVENTS & PROGRAMS

Green Sanctuary – This year, our congregation will be taking action toward being designated a “Green Sanctuary.” The 15 steps required for this certification involve activities for all ages. Our RE program will be focusing upon our relationship with the earth during the 4th module (after Easter). Children and youth and their families will be encouraged to get involved in other steps as well.

Community Sundays (1st Sunday of the month) – We hope to continue offering lunch, providing a longer time to socialize and encouraging folks from a distance or with difficult schedules to join us at least once a month. We will, however, need volunteers for the Hospitality Committee in order for this to happen!

Intergenerational Services – Thanksgiving and Christmas, a Spring Interger (Kwanyin Day) and Flower Communion the 1st Sunday in June (plus the Sorrento retreat service) are fully intergenerational. A Coming-of-Age service is tentatively set for May.

Social Events –In addition to our August Open House we hope to host a Halloween Party, a games night (a great success last year) perhaps a talent show, as well as other activities that folks think of.

Winter Holiday activities – Last year’s Christmas Carolling was much appreciated by those we visited and great fun. A Christmas gift-making workshop has been suggested as a way to support a less commercial season. There will be practices for a Pageant.

Secret Friends – Beginning in January, we have a “Secret Friends” project, matching up children and adults. They exchange letters with hints about identity, and are revealed to each other at the end of 6 weeks. It is a great builder of cross-generational connections.

Partner Church – Like many U*U congregations, we have a Partner Church in Transylvania (Romania) where the oldest continuing roots of our Unitarian Tradition are found. Churches there suffered greatly under communism, and are struggling to rebuild with few resources, so we support their efforts.