

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MINISTRY REPORT

Careena Cornette, April 19, 2012

**EVENTS:** Our 2012 "Inter-Generational Day" festival was even bigger and better than the first year's IGD. With Anne Justiss' master plan, and the input of several volunteers, we welcomed not just our own students, but young visitors from the larger community, as well. IGD included many new activities, and seems to have all of the "bugs" worked out for 2013. Our 2012 Easter Egg Hunt had high attendance, and just the right amount of eggs/candy/toys for all participants.

**YOUTH GROUP:** Esprit De Corps is now in its second year, and still led by Vandana Dillon. The 2011-2012 school year Autism Awareness Yoga-Thon was hugely successful, and raised hundreds of dollars to benefit autistic children. The Esprit De Corps Youth Group is preparing scripts for their next Autism Awareness event, which will include original theatrical material. "EdC" also reached out to the youth at U.U. Clearwater by volunteering for their Halloween haunted house fund raiser.

**BUDGET:** This year's allotted R.E. budget has been used more boldly than last year's, which has resulted in a higher quality program. The décor of the Nursery received a major overhaul, and some badly needed equipment (sanitizers, furniture, et cetera). Our improved prop, costume, and "who knows what" expenditures for the Time For All Ages skits (often from thrift stores) have resulted in a more entertaining message, thus engaging the children more effectively. Classroom snacks have been upgraded from last year, which has resulted in noticeably higher morale. In general, we continue to look for sales and other bargains, but are judiciously monitoring which expenditures will produce a better or more enjoyable educational experience for the students.

**CLASSROOM:** Our general attendance has grown, with some of our "new since last year" students joining us on a very regular basis, and others coming when their parents' work schedule permits. Although attendance generally drops off over the summer (depending on vacation/sport/camp schedules), the school year R.E. class numbers have shown much more consistent attendance by some of our newer families.

**PLANS FOR THE NEXT YEAR:** The R.E. committee has been exploring ideas for regular family pizza and movie nights, and has also been researching the process of starting a Navigators troupe (a co-ed "scouting" type of organization that is inclusive of LGBTQ and agnostic scouts, as well as gay/lesbian leaders). The R.E. committee has been outlining new safety procedures (such as fire drill and other emergency plans) for the upstairs class space.