

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013

DIRECTOR OF R.E.'s REPORT

We have been blessed with some wonderful, bright new students this year. We have, happily, retained our six "old faithful" students, and added EIGHT new regulars!! This gives us a healthy total of fourteen regular/consistent attendees, with a handful of others appearing on a "drop in" basis.

Professional Development: Under the leadership of Rev. Korb, the R.E. Director has developed a better understanding of UU theology, and more focus on the structure and meaning of UU worship. The DRE has also reached a better understanding of her job's role, re: inter-committee/staff collaboration. Enhanced understanding in these areas will benefit our students and congregation in the short and long term.

The D.R.E. confidently anticipates that our current batch of students will continue to grow with the program and reach new levels of classroom community.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2012 R.E. MEETINGS & PROGRAM:

- July 2012 – * Began increasing **visual recognition**, with R.E. name tag flags, and Chairwoman's consistent table staffing on Sundays.
 - * Produced a **pamphlet** to answer questions of **potential volunteers**.
- August 2012 – * Suspended the "**Esprit De Corps**" group, as group leader Vandana Dillon's work schedule changed, and R.E. had to erase four tweens/teens from enrollment, due to family decisions beyond our control. (One, for example, is starting early college classes in Washington.)
 - * Ministry began reading up on "**Navigators**," a co-ed program similar to Boy Scouts, but inclusive of all religious beliefs and sexual orientations; on hold, pending replacement parent leadership.
 - * R.E. Director wrote and presented an original **Inter-Generational Worship Service**, with acting help from regular program volunteers.
- September 2012 – * Began transition of working alongside **new minister**.
 - * Updated RE UU St. Pete **web presence**.
 - * Resiliency /**Security Policy** upstairs procedures discussed and fire/safety drills run.
- October 2012 – * New "**What Do We Teach?**" **brochure** approved.
 - * Rev. Korb and RE Director consulting with Worship Ministry on later **RE-themed Sunday** service.
 - * **Our Whole Lives** (comprehensive UU sexuality education program) deemed vital to long term church growth. OWL teacher training opportunities to be aggressively

pursued by RE Ministry! Earlier training opportunities have been missed due to budgetary or logistical problems; new date is set.

- January 2013 – * Leaders of the new **Adult Religious Education** program included the children's DRE in the process of drafting their charter.
- February 2013 – * Older youth began working as **greeters**.

DRE attended the District's "Dream Builders" **conference** in Orlando.

* **Promotional video** (introducing potential families to the program, via website) in early phases of crew recruitment.

* Idea of submitting **budget line item** for additional upstairs staff member (to facilitate consistent "two age level" classrooms) under discussion.

* Full consensus to add OWL to 2013-2014 proposed Church budget; **two delegates** (Careena Cornette-MacCue and Jill McCracken) will attend **OWL training** in Gainesville in spring of 2013.

- March 2013 – *Very **successful Inter-Generational Day** held, under leadership of Anne Justiss. I.G. Day ran smoothly, with ground plan and time table that reflected the team's learning experiences from previous years. Attendance was good and anticipation was enthusiastic; outdoor activities attracted the notice (and participation) of some passers-by.
- * Annual **Easter Egg Hunt** was executed successfully.

D.R.E.'s REPORT ON ATTENDANCE AND AGES:

Due to continued low numbers of adult classroom volunteers (typically, the same three or four individuals), our class was again mostly run in a "one room schoolhouse" mixed-ages format. This has the benefit of older students serving as role models for younger students and the additional benefit of building community, but several pitfalls (the extreme difficulty of keeping five year olds on the same discussion level as pre-teens foremost among those). Mrs. Cornette-MacCue's and Mr. Joe Benjamin's pedagogical techniques for said difficulty-- and skills for adaptability in lesson planning and presentation-- continue to build.

Our core group of "regulars" (taking into account families who have since moved on) included 17 different students. The classroom was attended by an average of 6.5 students per week. A typical "light" week falls around 4 or 5 students, with "heavy" weeks hovering around 8 or 9.

AMONG OUR COMMITTEE GOALS:

- Increase the visibility of UUSP Religious Education Ministry for Children and Youth within the congregation and in the greater community.
- Broaden the adult direct participation in the classroom and external RE activities

and programs.

Respectfully submitted,

Dolores Benjamin, RE Ministry Chair
Careena Cornette-MacCue, Director of RE