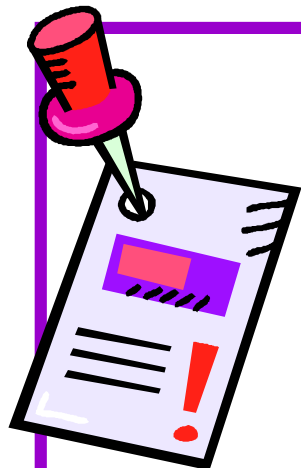


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A Newsletter for Families
West Shore Unitarian Universalist Church

May 2010

Volume 6 Issue 9



A Message from Kathy

I want to thank all of you—parents, adult volunteers, youth interns and Religious Education Committee—who helped to make this year of two sessions of church school such a success.

Last May, I didn't dare to dream that all would go so well—How great it was that parents pre-registered their children and youth, that so many adults stepped up to teach, that we achieved a good balance of attendance between the two sessions, that our teachers collaborated to offer consistent programming for both sessions, and that the previous space crunch in our classrooms was resolved! Thank you for your willingness to act on the church's mission statement, "to help MORE people lead lives of meaning and purpose." Your adaptability, support and willingness to try something new meant so much to me!

Kathy

Children/Youth Art Show

This second annual show opens **Sunday, May 2**, with a reception after both services. You will be amazed by the creativity, color and appeal of this year's 25 entries. Our young artists will be on hand to meet you!

Teacher Recognition

Please join us **Sunday, May 9, 10:30 service**, to honor and thank our 45 adult volunteers during the service and celebrate their contributions with cake, punch and gifts of appreciation afterwards in Baker Hall. It's a great opportunity for you to thank the wonderful adults who have welcomed, shared with, and taught your child (ren) this year.

Spring Program: Grades K-6, Bullying is a Big Deal

Sundays, May 16 thru June 13, at 10:30

Our regular two sessions of Sunday School will end on May 2. Beginning May 16, we will offer childcare for our infants - Pre-K, and a five-Sunday spring program for our children in grades K - 6. This year's program will focus on bullying—what it is, its effects and what children can do to respond in appropriate ways to being bullied or witnessing it. I am securing two lead teacher volunteers and a cadre of one-Sunday subs to help me offer the program.

The more I read, watch and listen, I know that bullying is a practice that needs to be addressed and stopped. Children, those who bully and those who are bullied, lose true confidence and sense of identity. When the situation escalates, the bullied child often endures physical harm, as well. Bullying almost always occurs when adults, the ones who would likely step in to stop it, are not around. UU children, like children in other non-Christian faith communities, can be an easy target for bullies because our children's views on God, baptism, death heaven, hell and sexual identity, may a bit different than the views of the rest of the kids on the playground.

I envision this spring program to include stories, film, crafts, games and sharing that allows our children to ask questions, gain knowledge, confidence, respect for others, and strategies, and to have fun. I hope our children will know we love and respect them for who they are and who they will become.

Child Dedication

In celebration of Mother's Day, the service on Sunday, May 9 at 10:30 a.m. will include a Ceremony of Child Dedication. Please contact Rev. Wayne Arnason at bergthor@aol.com to discuss your child or family's participation.



Recruitment: Church School Teachers and Coming of Age Mentors

Recruitment for next year's Sunday School classes has begun. We first contact current volunteer teachers, assess our needs based on returning volunteers (usually 40 - 55%) and next year's curriculum/classes, and then begin the brainstorming for specific people to invite to teach specific classes. It's a process that takes time and careful thought, hopefully completed by early June. We have received very good feedback from current volunteer teachers regarding their schedule of 2 Sundays in/2 Sundays out of class each month.

In addition to recruiting for Sunday School teachers, we will be securing up to 26 adults to serve as mentors for our seventh and eighth graders in next year's Coming of Age class. The Unitarian Universalist rite of passage experience for seventh and eighth graders seeks adult West Shore mentors for the coming church year. General qualifications include maturity, listening skills, and church membership. Participation involves several church gatherings, several mentor/youth outings, 1-2 Sunday School sessions for credo work and a celebration at the end of the program. The amount of time is not large, and the rewards are rich! We especially encourage adults not currently parenting young teens to be mentors.

As a gentle reminder, please note our church's *Religion Education for Children & Youth Prospectus* states, "It is our expectation that parents will contribute at least one year of service to the religious education program for each child enrolled in the church school." Please contact Kathy Strawser to offer to teach in our Sunday School next year or to be a mentor to one of our young teens.

On-Line RE Registration and Youth/Parent Survey

Church school registration for 2010 - 11 is now available on-line at the church website. Parents also have the option of downloading and completing a paper registration or securing the form at the RE table on Sundays.

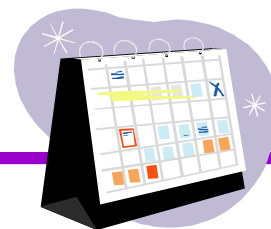
A survey that targets WSUUC high school youth and their parents is now on the church website's front page. Youth Ministry Coordinator Phil Florian created the survey and hopes to receive feedback that evaluates this year's in and out of church programming, as well as offers/suggestions for the coming year. We have the very real potential of 25 youth, grades 9 - 12, next year.

Director's Time Away

- Attend my daughter's collection graduation, Sweet Briar, VA, May 13-17
- Attend the district's Lifespan Faith Development Committee meeting, Wooster, May 20

How can I support our church's children and youth? I'm so glad you asked!

- Attend the May 9 intergenerational service where we will thank our 2010 - 2011 teacher volunteers and enjoy a song by our Youth Choir
- Be proud of the three WSUUC high school youth who participated in our church's service trip to New Orleans and the church members who provided scholarships to cover these youths' expenses.
- Volunteer to help with our spring program: "Bullying: What It Is and How to Stop It"
- Attend the youth-led, sanctuary service on May 23
- Complete the survey on our youth programming at www.wsuuc.org. if you are a high school youth or parent
- Attend the Children and Youth Art Show, opening May 2 in the Fireside Room, sponsored by the Aesthetics Committee
- Congratulate high school senior Carmen Rush as she approaches her graduation and WSUUC bridging
- Register your child(ren)/youth for Religious Education 2010 - 2011, on-line, at www.wsuuc.org.
- Volunteer to teach twice a month next year in our Sunday School
- Volunteer to be a mentor next year to one of our seventh/eighth grade youth



R. E. CALENDAR

Sunday, May 2

- 9:30 & 11:15 Sunday School — Children's Chapel for Grades K-6. *Please send a few coins with your child for the collection.*
- 10:40-11:15 Youth Choir Practice

Tuesday, May 4

- 7:30 R.E. Committee Meeting

Sunday, May 9

- 9:30 Youth Choir Practice
- 10:30 Intergenerational Worship and Teacher Recognition
Childcare for Infants to Pre-K

Sunday, May 16

- 9:30 Youth Choir Practice
- 10:30 Spring Program, Grades K-8
Childcare for Infants to Pre-K

Sunday, May 23

- 9:30 Youth Choir Practice
- 10:30 Youth Sunday, Jr. Church
Spring Program, Grades K-8
Childcare for Infants to Pre-K

Sunday, May 30

- 10:30 Spring Program, Grades K-8
Childcare for Infants to Pre-K