

Youth Ministry Program Overview

Statement Of Purpose

Our mission is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for our children, one that encourages the natural growth and unfoldment of the Christ potential that is inherent in each one of us. As we recognize the uniqueness of each individual, we empower them to live their lives according to divine law and to trust their inner wisdom and guidance.

Ages

Youth Ministry classes are held for children and youth, ages 0 to 18.

Safe & Sacred Classrooms

- The Board of Trustees is creating policies that keep our children, teens, adults and church safe.
- Each classroom is designed to welcome the children/teens into an inviting and simulating environment.
- Background checks are performed for all adults working with our children and teens.
- We have 2 teachers/assistants in each classroom.

Lesson Focus by Age Group

The curriculum created here is based on the same concept that is used by the Association of Unity Churches, International - **A Living Curriculum**. It is a story-based curriculum that uses stories from the Bible and other sources to help the children understand principles of Truth. We believe that the Bible is the story of our own personal journey and when we gain a deeper understanding of the stories we are better able to use the teachings contained within them to enrich our lives. Even though each of the age-groups focuses on the same story, different elements of it are explored depending on the age of the children.

0 Years to 2 Years: The focus is on creating a loving and nurturing environment that allows the divine within to unfold.

3 to 5 Years: The main focus here is on reinforcing the idea that God is within us, around us, everywhere present and loves us unconditionally just as we are.

Kindergarten to 4th Grade: The focus with this age group is establishing a very basic understanding of Bible stories and how they reflect our Unity beliefs. This group also explores how to take responsibility for simple classroom procedures and how to come together as a community.

5th Grade & Uniteens (6, 7, 8th Grade): The focus here is to gain a deeper, more metaphysical understanding of the Bible stories. As the students learn to look beyond the appearance of the stories they are able to grasp a true inner meaning. This practice then encourages them to look beyond the appearances of what is happening in their own lives and continue to live from a more Truth based perspective. Leadership skills are also being developed.

Y.O.U. (High School): This age group uses their understanding of the Bible and Truth principles to discuss and look deeper into the issues and concerns that they encounter each day. They support one another and enjoy many opportunities to explore their spirituality through sub-regional, regional and International rallies and conferences. Leadership skills are refined here.

Sunday Morning Sign-in & Pick Up

Youth Ministry classes are held for children and teens, ages 0 to 18, during the 11:00 am Service only.

The Drop Off

- Students, ages 0 years to 4th grade, are to be escorted to the Kids Church Room just past the Book Store by a parent or other adult between 10:45 and 11:00 am. **Please fill in the sign-in sheet for each child.** (Located right outside the room. If you have not already done so, please fill out a registration form.)
- 5th Grade through High School are to report directly to the teen room at the end of the fellowship area.

The Pick Up

ALL CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 11 MUST BE PICKED UP IN THE YOUTH EDUCATION ROOM BY THEIR PARENTS OR ANOTHER ADULT IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE SERVICE. WE WILL NOT RELEASE CHILDREN TO SIBLINGS OR ON THEIR OWN.

Sunday Morning Routine

Sunday Morning Time Schedule

10:30 to 10:45	Teacher meditation and preparation.
10:45 to 11:15	Children arrive / Complete pre-session activity.
11:15 to 11:30	Sacred Circle
11:30 to 11:55	The Lesson
11:55 to Noon	Join adults in sanctuary for sharing & closing

Components of the Lesson

Welcome:

Each child is greeted as they enter the classroom. The learning begins immediately. Each week there is a pre-session activity designed to focus the children's attention on the lesson to come. The activities are self-directed and individualized so the students may work on them while we are waiting for others to arrive.

Sacred Circle:

Gather together for the affirmation; sharing; prayer; love offering; announcements, connecting activity and celebrations.

Story Time:

The story of the day is shared through reading, acting out or movie. Then an open-ended discussion is used to help the children see themselves in the story and to understand how it relates to the lesson theme.

Creative Experience:

Unity teaches PRACTICAL Christianity = the application of Truth principles to everyday living. No lesson is complete until the learning is applied. Time to practice using new concepts is built into every lesson so the students can apply his/her learning to here and now experience.

We explore and practice these new skills and concepts through role-playing, art experiences, games and discussion.

The teens enjoy journal writing, sharing, debate, interviews, and discussions in small and large groups, art projects, rotating leadership of the group, etc.

Process:

Near the end of the time together allow an opportunity for students to share how they feel about what they are learning, check for understanding and provide closure on activities. They are encouraged to try out one new idea for the coming week and report back to the class on their success. Opportunities are also given that invite the students to share and support one another in prayer.

Closing:

All classes join the adults in the sanctuary for sharing, closing prayer and song. Children 10 and under are then escorted back to the children's classroom for dismissal to their parents. Uniteens and YOUers are dismissed from the sanctuary.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

There are many opportunities to be of service on the Children & Youth Ministry Team.

Teacher

Loving facilitate Sunday school lessons and programs. Training and materials provided.

Classroom Assistant

Assist the teacher and children in facilitating the Sunday school lesson.

Substitute Teacher

Fill in when the regular teacher is unavailable. Training and materials provided.

Musician

Facilitate and direct the Children's Choir.

Youth Ministry Prayer Team

Participate in the development of a strong prayer team to fill the unique needs of children. Training and support provided.

Youth Ministry Volunteer Coordinator

Keep a record of all of the volunteers within the Youth Ministry. Notify them when needed for special events. Will work closely with the Youth Minister.

Library Guardians

Keep the children's library orderly.

Drama Ministry

Assist in all areas with the special dramatic productions within the Youth Ministry.

New Family Greeting Angels

Make contact with each of the new families at our Center. Send a welcome letter and packet of information.

Greeting Angels

Greet each of the children and parents as they enter the Sunday school room. Make sure they are registered. Direct them to the pre-session activities.

Supply Room Angels

Monitor the stock of supplies in the supply room. Put out the supplies needed each Sunday morning and return them to the appropriate boxes when the classes are finished. Supply list provided weekly.

Photographer

Periodically photograph the Sunday school classes and special activities.

Memory Maker

Arrange the photos of the children in photo albums and scrapbooks.

Newsletter

Assist the editor of the Children & Youth Ministry Newsletter in gathering material for publication.

Baker

Provide heavenly treats for special events in Youth Ministry.