

Annual Report from the Children's Faith Exploration Director January 2024 - April 2024

Introduction

The Children's Faith Exploration (CFE) program at the Unitarian Universalist Society of Delaware (UUSD) has experienced significant growth and engagement during the first four months of 2024. This report highlights the curriculum, attendance, special events, and future program initiatives.

January

Curriculum: January focused on the themes of Liberating Love and Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of UUSD. Children engaged with literature such as "Everybody's Welcome," "We March," and "Unitarian Universalism is a Really Long Name."

Projects: The activities included creating 25th Anniversary and Peace Sign drawings and the Unitarian Universalist chalice drawings.

Attendance: The program saw consistent attendance ranging from 17 to 19 children.

Volunteer Teaching Assistants: Eight dedicated adult volunteers assisted with teaching during January.

February

Curriculum: February, topics coincided with themes from the main service, fostering intergenerational dialogue. Literature included "Imbolc," "Each Kindness," and "A Church for All."

Projects: Children crafted Valentine's cards for a UUSD's Care Committee event and Harbor Healthcare residents.

Special Event: The CFE Committee hosted a Family Covenant Group, fostering community spirit and creativity.

Attendance: Attendance ranged from 8 to 25 children.

Volunteer Teaching Assistants: Ten volunteers supported teaching efforts in February.

March

Curriculum: March centered around the theme of Transformation; with readings which included "Answer Mountain," "Monarch Butterfly," and "The Magical Yet."

Projects: Children engaged in creative projects fostered by engaging with guest presenters, Maureen Larkin, and Cheri Garnet. This was followed by creating butterfly-themed art.

Special Event: The Annual Easter Egg Hunt drew widespread participation and excitement. Over 30 volunteers participated in the success of this event.

Attendance: Attendance ranged from 10 to 25 children.

Volunteer Assistants: Twenty volunteers assisted with teaching and event coordination.

April

Curriculum: April's focus was on the meaning of "interdependence," which was concurrent with the reading and discussion of the book, "The Adventures of Moli and Cule" by Dr Jeri Berc.

Projects: Children explored the concept of interdependence through science coloring pages and learning about the digestive tract.

Attendance: Attendance ranged from 16 to 20 children.

Volunteer Teaching Assistants: Ten volunteers continued to support teaching efforts.

Future Plans

The CFE program anticipates continued growth as Southern Delaware becomes more and more populated. The part-time CFE Director position may not meet this growing demand, therefore additional hours are likely to be needed. The Director's role includes planning curriculum for Sunday classes, outreach into the community for speakers and guests of interest, weekly planning meetings with staff, individual meetings with parents/guardians as needed, running background checks, overseeing CFE budget, collaborating with the communications team, and attending community events.

Plans include:

Launching the OWL (Our Whole Lives) Sexuality Education program for grades 7-9 in the fall.

Expanding volunteer involvement and implementing new ideas and programs.

Assessing and implementing the growing needs of the children and youth of UUSD

Maintaining a safe environment through adherence to Safer Congregation Committee protocols and background checks for all adults working with children.

Conclusion:

The Children's Faith Exploration program at UUSD remains committed to providing a nurturing environment for learning and spiritual growth. With ongoing support from our dedicated CFE Committee, volunteers and community members, the program looks forward to welcoming new families and to foster continued exploration and engagement.

Respectfully submitted, Dr. Heather A. Hamilton, CFE Director