

Religious Education for Youth Annual Report 2007-08

Dana Regan, Director of Religious Education for Youth

The goal of First Unitarian Church's youth program is to involve all youth in the total life of the church. The balanced program includes the major components of a strong youth program: discovery, worship, social action, ministry within the congregation, leadership and fellowship. All youth classes at the second service were full with a long waiting list for the 8th/9th grade class. Even with the waiting list the second service was quite large with 25 of the 47 registered attending. Attendance was high in all classes with over 70% of the students coming each week in that classroom.

Major Accomplishments for the past year include:

- **7th Grade** -- Registration reached 28 this year. They studied world religions with an emphasis on Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. Each class designed and presented a children's chapel service for younger grades. There were several opportunities for socializing here at First Church and outside this year. There was a late summer BBQ, a holiday White Elephant party, and a trip to the beach. For social action 7th graders volunteered at the Humane Society.
- **8th/9th Grade** - Registration reached 47 this year. They participated in the Coming of Age program. It was amazingly successful even though there were not enough adult mentors from the congregation so the program had to be modified a bit. There are many special events for 8th/9th graders including a late summer BBQ, a ropes course, a White Elephant holiday party, laser tagging and a trip to Boston to learn more about their Unitarian Universalist history. For social action this age group served at the Oregon Humane Society socializing cats and dogs.
- **Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU)** -- Registration reached 41 this year. For the eleventh successful year in a row they created and offered the annual youth service to the church community in March: a look at our first and seventh principles. They made complete Thanksgiving food baskets for 7 new families in the Portland community; and studied about many social justice issues; bringing a child from Iraq to Portland for surgery and pay it forward foundation were just two of their interests. They had two overnights; a great Winter Holiday Party; raised money to visit our partner church in Budapest, conducted their own Youth Council meetings; and continue to be actively involved in the church community.
- **Campus Ministry** --The campus ministry program is working at three locations: Portland State University, Lewis & Clark and Reed Colleges. Campus coordinators participated in the Young Adult Conference in our district and hosted a luncheon for graduating seniors in the region.

In other areas:

- **Volunteers in the Religious Education Office** -- Our program could not serve the families in this church as well as we do without the service and devotion of

several volunteers who come in weekly to prepare supplies for classroom teachers, do mailings, copying and other office work as well as put those supplies away each week. Those hours add up to 210.25 hours so far this year.

- **Annual General Meeting of the Pacific Northwest District** –I helped plan a very successful one day workshop for both ministers and religious educators for the professional days before the Annual General Meeting in Tacoma, Washington. The topic was ‘Classism’ and was co-led by Cathy Cartwright.. I developed a panel workshop for religious educators about the new lifespan Tapestry of Faith curriculum from the Unitarian Universalist Association.
- I was re-elected as President of the local PNWD (Pacific Northwest District) chapter of LREDA (Liberal Religious Educators Association) and will serve three more years.
- After three long years of studying, writing and an oral exam I was recognized as a Credentialed Religious Educator by the Religious Education Credentialing Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Association.