

## Here are some of the ways Religious Education takes place beyond the classrooms!

**First Sundays:** Multi-aged class groups on “big” themes on the first Sunday of each month.

**Infant and Child Dedications:** Infants and young children are formally welcomed into our community twice a year. Contact one of the ministers or the DRE for more information.

**Multigenerational Services** Children and youth are occasionally invited to attend all of the church service. Look for notices in the *Chanticleer* newsletter regarding dates of these services. Signage at church entryways will also indicate Multigenerational Service days.

**Multigenerational Gatherings:** Meaningful mingling between the generations! The *Chanticleer* will keep you informed of upcoming events.

### CRE Safety Policies

- ❖ Class volunteers are screened prior to working with children.
- ❖ Each classroom or sponsored activity shall have a minimum of two adults present whenever feasible.
- ❖ Children in our nursery – ninth grade classes **MUST** have a parent, guardian, or adult designee on church premises during RE programming.
- ❖ Seat belts will be used for all passengers when riding in a motor vehicle for church sponsored events or activities. Drivers must be insured.

## Classroom Behavior Policy

Children are guided by teachers and advisors in establishing expectations for classroom behavior at the beginning of the church year. If a child’s behavior becomes an issue, the following procedure will be carried out:

1. If a child’s behavior is disruptive to the point that it interferes with their own or another’s ability to benefit from the classroom experience, the child will be given a verbal warning. Leaders will attempt to redirect the child.
2. If the child is unable to manage their behavior with assistance from the teacher, the child will be removed from the classroom until s/he is ready to return to class. The child’s parents/guardian may be contacted to retrieve the child.
3. An “incident report” will be prepared by the class leader at any time there is an injury or behavior problem; a parent/guardian will be asked to sign these.
4. No verbal or physical aggression will be tolerated; the child’s parent/guardian will be contacted to come and get the child if this occurs.
5. A third party may be asked to mediate and/or act as a resource person should the child’s behavior in the Sunday Program become a recurring problem.

### Remember:

*Sunday School is a LEARNING experience provided by volunteer teachers and assistants; parents are encouraged to discuss expectations for proper behavior with their children.*

The congregation of The First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee affirms and promotes the full participation of persons in our activities without regard to race, color, gender, physical or mental challenge, sexual identity or orientation, age, class, national origin, or ancestry. Indeed, we are interested in actively promoting more diversity within our congregation.

The First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee

# Family Guide to Religious Education for Children and Youth



## The First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee

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# Welcome!

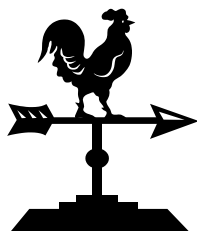
... to the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee. This guide is intended to help parents and guardians navigate their way through the policies, procedures and scope of our Religious Education program for children and youth.

## Overview

The Religious Education (RE) program for children and youth has a foundation in our Sunday classes, but often extends to other opportunities. Through such activities as our Children's Chapel, whole-church worship experiences and community events, our young people are able to freely explore "the big questions," and are encouraged to live their lives richly, broadly and deeply. The RE program at First Church is staffed by our full-time Director of Religious Education and part-time Youth Program Coordinator and RE Administrative Assistant, as well as a volunteer staff of more than one hundred good people!

## Registration

All children and youth participating in the RE Program must be registered. To receive a full or partial waiver of registration fees, please contact the Director of Religious Education (DRE). We never want financial concerns to stand in the way of a child's participation! Because community building is an important part of our program, children must register for, and attend, a specific session of Sunday School. Please note that some classes are offered only at one of the RE sessions (9:00 a.m./11:00 a.m.) and register accordingly.



## Visitors

Visitors are welcome to our Religious Education classes! Please seek out the RE Greeter who will introduce you and your first-time visiting children to teachers. We ask that visiting families fill out a "Visitors Form" so that we might provide you with appropriate information about our program. After three visits, we will ask families to make a decision about registering in our program.

## Attendance

Although we recognize that it is not always possible for a child to attend Sunday School every week, we also know that children and youth who *do* attend on a regular basis tend to build positive relationships with their peers, teachers and church community. Children who attend sporadically may feel like outsiders, which is a no-win situation for everyone. Please strive to have your children attend regularly.

## Reconnecting after the Service

Children in second grade or younger must be picked up from classes or Nursery by a parent or designee. Please pick up younger children on time, and make arrangements to meet up with older children. Our Elementary–8th grade religious education classes are about 90 minutes long, which gives you a little time to socialize after the service. Listen for the bell during Coffee Hour to remind you it is time to pick up children. After class, children must be under your supervision. Introduce them to the community during Coffee Hour; check out the kids table in the Common Room!

### UU Kindness Tip:

*Greet your child's teachers each week, even if your kids are older. These are volunteers who are choosing to be with our children and youth!*

## Family Responsibilities:

**Arrive on Time and Come Often!** Our RE leaders are asked to be in their classrooms 15 minutes before services start. RE classes begin at the same time as our church services. It is often disconcerting to children to arrive late, and late arrivals can also disrupt discussions. Please plan for parking issues and other disruptions in order to be on time! To be fully engaged, please consider participating in some extracurricular activities as well.

**Stay Informed!** Our weekly printed announcements and electronic "e-announcements" are important sources for church information and updates. And look for the DRE's "RE-flections" column and the Youth Program Coordinator's "Youth in Action" columns in the monthly *Chanticleer* newsletter. Make sure that your email and street addresses are on file at the church. Check the bulletin board over the Sermon Rack in the Common Room for info on class activities.

**Volunteer!** Ours is a cooperative program. We expect that families will actively volunteer in the RE program in which they have children participating. There are all sorts of ways to contribute your time and talent! Please fill out the parent information on your child's Registration Form and note where you can be involved. The quality of our offerings for children and youth depend on you!

**Inform us of Changes — Big and Small!** Please notify us if your family is grieving or in crisis; we want to offer support to your family and help our teachers prepare to meet your child's needs in class. Also, we often mail /email information to families regarding upcoming class activities and church events, and occasionally we need to call a parent or guardian. Should you change your address, phone number, or email during the church year, please notify the RE Administrative Assistant.

**Talk With Your Children!** Discuss what they did in their classes (check the bulletin board over the Sermon Rack in the Common Room for info on weekly class happenings). Share with them why you come to church and what needs of yours are met in our faith community. Let your children know your thoughts, opinions and values, and listen to theirs!