

DRE Annual Report 2022 Submitted by Lee Cowan

The RE Program goals were as follows:

1. Build Community within and beyond UUCSC
2. Learning UU Principles and having consistent circle time with Roses/Buds/Thorns
3. Find more committee members
4. Continue to educate and promote OWL and Coming of Age to take steps towards having these programs in place in 1-2 years.
5. Offer separate activities for middle school youth.

The RE Committee has met every month this year. Its members are Bethany Sorrentino, Barbara Pagh, Jenny Rebecca, Amber Collins and Pam Santos.

We have a wonderful nursery staff. Jenny Rebecca is an incredible, loving addition to our staff as well as to our RE committee. Our nursery assistant is a high school student, Simon, who is incredibly attentive and wonderful with the kids.

In RE we have had anywhere from 5-20 kids on Sundays. We average about 13. We have 24 kids who are registered and we've had eight new families drop in to check it out.

We have made great progress in meeting all of our goals this year.

Our first goal of building community has been the backbone of our time together. We did a lot of identity building and sharing at the beginning of the year in RE, culminating in our paper identity collage quilt. And I think we've done a great job in uniting together as a whole congregation. By the end of June we will have done at least 8 multi-gen services and 10 Time for All Ages at the beginning of other services. These have been an important part of helping the whole congregation (including families) to come together and connect. We've held three multi-gen hikes and had a well-attended trash clean up with members of Westminster UU joining us. Also, the RE committee is hosting a family cook-out as part of Dining for Dollars and looking forward to connecting everyone in that way.

The second goal has been going really well. We have a sharing circle every Sunday with Roses/Buds/Thorns and that continues to be a really meaningful way for everyone to connect, listen and share. We have discussed principles 1-4 so far with activities, discussion and coloring pages for each one. We plan to cover the rest of the principles before the end of June.

We've found one new committee member this year and hope to add at least one more for next year. Barbara has continued to be our representative on Coordinating Council, but would like to pass on that role to someone else.

We've been in touch with Westminster UU about taking part in an OWL training that they are hosting in the fall. We could do more to educate and promote OWL within our own congregation as well as reaching out to the community to gather interest in the class.

Pam has stepped forward to offer a gathering for our middle school aged kids! We decided this would be on a different day than Sunday so that they can continue to be involved in our all ages RE or take part in service. Looking forward to cultivating a sense of community among our older kids.

And aside from our goals, I have also taken part in several trainings as part of my professional development. One was a Renaissance Module through the UUA entitled "UU Identity" that met for two hours once a week for five weeks. Another was a weekly class for six weeks through Radici Studios called "Raising Anti-racist Kids Through Art." And another was a two part training called "Youth Mental Health First Aid." These all offered really wonderful resources and information.

Something else I've worked on this year is a monthly online RE Newsletter that has stories, songs and UU resources for parents. And I create the RE column of the UUCSC enews. I'd like to be more engaged on Facebook and community outreach in the future.

We also did some wonderful organizing, cleaning and backyard improvements. Thanks to the work of several dads and kids we disassembled our old play structure and then the Grant family and I moved a free one from across town and put it together in our backyard. What a project! We've also added stumps to the spiral and planted the raised bed with peas. Inside we organized everything in the RE space, thanks to the amazing work of Elizabeth Quincy. Next step is to organize the DRE office.

Thank you all for everything you do and everything you are

Many blessings,
Lee