



First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church of Chelmsford, MA
Coming of Age – RE Faith Formation 2018-2019

Program Information

WHO WILL FACILITATE AND PARTICIPATE IN COMING OF AGE?

Dolores GHeredia-Wood (DREFF&YP) and Emma Buckley (RECoA); Minster: Reverend Ellen Rowse-Spero High School youth that are invited to participate.

Youth will be matched with an adult church member of First Parish who will serve as their Coming of Age mentor during the program. Facilitators, Youth & Mentors meet at COA sessions only.

HOW WILL IT ALL BEGIN?

- ☞ September 23; 3:00 to 6:00pm Start- up Orientation Retreat for COA mentees only
- ☞ September 30; 4:00 to 6:00pm Orientation Retreat for mentors only
- ☞ September 30; 6:00 pm youth & parents join mentors; COA Commencement Family Meet & Greet Dinner

WHEN WILL WE MEET? Please note: these dates are tentative until orientations & beyond...

September 23 COA Mentee Start-up Orientation Mini-Retreat	October 14 Snack: Walden Pond Retreat Mentor, Mentee	November 4 Snack: Brown Bag UU Historical Walk	December 9 Snack: P.J. & Chris Concord Prison Project; Target Field Trip	January 6? Snack: Braden & Sarah Worship
September 30 COA Mentor Start-Up Training Retreat & Dinner	October 28 Snack: Brown Bag UU Historical Walk planning	November 11 Snack: Nina & Beth Prep for Concord Prison Project	December 16 Snack: Bring Ingredients or Baked Goods	January 27 COA family evening service Snack: Catherine & Kathy
February 10 Snack: Ashanti & Aggie February 24 Snack: Kevin & Dennis	March 17 Snack: Amelia & Jayne March 24 Snack: Hunter & Dave	April 7 <Wrap up> Snack: Heather & Jill	Retreat: April 26-28 COA retreat Possible dates	Rehearsal: Saturday May 18th COA Ceremony May 19th

WHAT TIME WILL WE MEET EACH WEEK?

Starting in October COA will meet twice a month on Sunday Afternoon from 3:00 to 5:30 (exception retreats.) Coming of age sessions will consist of workshops and activities based on the theme of the evening. These will include projects for the entire group, small groups, youth-mentor pairs and individual reflection.

HOW CAN PARENTS HELP WITH COMING OF AGE?

Parents can help by choosing one or two COA nights to bring snack for the group—this could be popcorn, cookies, veggies or cream puffs!

WHAT IF YOUTH DON'T KNOW WHO THEY WANT FOR A MENTOR?

We will come up with a list of possible mentors for youth to choose from. If youth don't know mentors well enough to choose one, the COA facilitators will pair them with a mentor that they believe will be a good match.



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WHAT IS THE ATTENDANCE POLICY?

This program is for the benefit of our youth and the program is planned and led with the intention that youth experience and learn from all stages of the program. It is up to each individual involved to come and take responsibility for participating as fully as they are able in the program that they signed up for.

WHY PARTICIPATE IN THE COMING OF AGE PROGRAM?

Rites of Passages like COA give our youth a sense of worth, confidence and belonging to our community.

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT GOALS ARE OF PARTICIPATE IN THE COMING OF AGE PROGRAM?

Our most important goals are: have fun, create a credo, plan a COA service!

Our more comprehensive goals are to offer our youth a safe, fun, and stretching environment to:

- Discuss, reflect on, and clarify his or her personal religious beliefs as a part of lifespan faith development.
- Develop knowledge and appreciation of the wide diversity of belief with in the Unitarian Universalist tradition.
- Have opportunities for independent thinking, assuming responsibility, decision-making, and exploration of values
- Put faith into action in his or her own life and community
- Have recognized and celebrated rite of passage from childhood to adolescence.
- Develop an understanding of the meaning, responsibility, and privileges of church membership in a Unitarian Universalist congregation.
- Build positive youth/adult relationships with mentors and facilitators.
- Be empowered to explore and express one's own spirituality in the context of a serious AND fun search with others.

WHAT WILL WE COVER IN COMING OF AGE?

The Coming of Age program is meant to be two parts, the first part is incorporated into the Morning sessions where youth explore Unitarian Universalism through service projects, fieldtrips and activities. The evening COA program focus on setting the context for Coming of Age to give participants a good foundation in Unitarian Universalism from a more individual perspective. However, evening sessions will incorporate UU Identity outings if not covered recently in morning sessions. The focus is supporting and empowering the participants to create and express their unique experiences and understandings of what it means to come of age as a Unitarian Universalist youth.

Topics that are included are:

- Covenants
- Discuss personal values & beliefs
- Discuss how UU values/beliefs passed down in our tradition using the "Five Smooth Stones"
- Discuss images of God
- Faith in action
- Love and Evil (GOAL: Explore how we apply UU theological values and ideas to help us understand difficult situations in the real world)
- What is worship?
- Worship planning/ building an altar/evening service
- Other Interest expressed by youth
- Credo writing