



March 2018 Report to the Board of Trustees
First Unitarian Society of Westchester
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The 2017 – 2018 RE calendar, class schedules and FUSW curriculum maps are listed online. You are welcome to view them at any time. [Click here.](#)

Meetings, Training & Outreach

Weekly and Monthly

- Weekly with the Minister
- Weekly meeting with Staff
- Monthly Religious Education Ministry
- Monthly Board of Trustees
- Monthly Committee on Ministry
- Monthly Metro NY LREDA Chapter (Liberal Religious Educators Association)

Others

- Biweekly [PrideWorks Board](#) and Planning Committee as we near March 14th conference
- *Future of Faith Formation* Webinar Series
- RE planning for the April 22nd Westchester UU worship and RE
- Met with Rev. Peggy and Rev. Michael Tino to begin 2018-2019 planning

Future of Faith Formation

The RE team has been discussing a path for the future of faith formation and family ministry at FUSW, exploring various short-term and long-term ideas. Later this month, RE Ministry Team members will call current RE families to ask what would help their family find or keep their center during these times, about their needs in faith community, how we can support parents as the primary educators at home, and what it might look like to balance meaningful programming with their already over-scheduled lives. The thoughts, hopes and needs families share in these conversations will inform our path ahead.

We are putting together a RE-Vision Working Group that will meet April through December of this year to shepherd this work forward by engaging in creative, outside-the-box thinking to re-imagine how we can offer some new programming or a new way of offering current programming beginning in September. They will also help put shape to the ideas we have been discussing about collaborating with the Mt. Kisco UU for COA, youth programming and adult RE, as well as community OWL and other offerings. They will also be people who can share ideas and answer questions informally in the months ahead. The RE-Vision Working Group will consist of some current RE team members, some parents who are new to FUSW, and some long-term members who have been committed to this congregation for years, even decades. Currently, John Scheuneman, Laurie Schneider and Carla Shane have confirmed participation. Rob Carroll has been invited. I am approaching others.

Since last September, I have participated in multiple webinars, workshops and discussions with other UU religious educators related to changing family needs, current demographics and the future of faith formation. I am currently attending the six-session *Future of Faith Formation* webinar series.

Highlights from the Past Month

Led the combined children's RE classes February 11th, which 11 children attended.

William visited the children's RE class and the middle school class to talk about Paganism. The children and youth enjoyed hearing about his practice. His sword has become legend.

Talked with a mother and child at the tag sale whose family is planning to visit us for worship and RE. Updated the RE webpages to keep them current with programming and activities.

Met with DREs and RE leaders from the Westchester UU congregations to plan RE for children and youth Sunday, April 22nd when the five Westchester UU congregations worship together. RE will be in three parts that day: Why we must change, how we can change and committing to change. There will be educational stations for children, a presentation for youth about the [Truth in Ten](#) project and a letter writing campaign to request a composting facility in Westchester County.

We are still working on offering a parent group. Peggy agreed to lead it in March but we did not have enough participants to schedule it. As Peggy wrote in her report, there seems to be interest but when we schedule activities attendance tends to be low. With volunteerism stretched and busy calendars, I prefer not to ask people to work and add activities to the calendar unless we know there will be participation.

The [PrideWorks Conference for LGBTQ Youth and Allies](#) is this Wednesday, March 14th. This is an important outreach of our youth ministry and the Westchester UUs will be well represented. Attached is the half sheet with information about Westchester UU youth groups we hand out at PrideWorks. We also have Side with Love stickers, buttons and "What We Believe" cards.

Denominational Service

I serve as a [Good Officer for LREDA Continental](#) and provided support for one colleague last month.

February 26th-28th, I attended the meeting of the Guiding Team for the [Fahs Collaborative of the Meadville Lombard Theological School](#). It was good to hear about all the work they have been doing with their programs and curricula. Our conversations focused on ways to extend the work of the Collaborative. Two initiatives are particularly exciting to me: They are working on developing their [Beloved Conversation curriculum](#) for congregations into a family curriculum. As a member of the Guiding Team, I will eventually attend training for Beloved Conversation. We also talked about adding to the existing RE archives they have been building by creating a Youth Voices collection. Next week, I will participate in a conversation about developing a process for collecting and organizing Coming of Age belief statements, Bridging reflections, worship reflections and other resources. These will be archived in a way that allows searches for themes or trends, which could be very interesting for understand meaning our youth are making in their Unitarian Universalist faith. We have talked about collecting the beautiful reflections our own youth have shared so I hope this will give me some ideas.

Weekend Off

September through July, I have four Sundays off. One of those Sundays was in February when I visited my family in Illinois. Another is this weekend. While it is a Sunday off from the Hastings and Mt. Kisco congregations, I will be working, co-leading the Coming of Age credo writing retreat at Murry Grove. This is the retreat Meagan Henry (DRE in Brooklyn) and I co-authored two years ago. I led part of this retreat for the Hastings and COA youth last year during their spring overnight, which was really well received by our youth. Murry Grove, named for Universalist John Murry, hosts a yearly credo writing retreat for UU COA classes (if you're interested, you can read about it on their [website here](#)). This year, approximately 30 youth and 9 adults from 6 congregations in NY, NJ and CT are participating. I will be at Murry Grove Friday through Sunday.