TRANSITION PROGRAMS

AND

RESOURCE MATERIALS

FOR USE WITH YOUNG ADOLESCENTS
Transition Programs and Resource Materials

This packet contains a number of programs submitted by Unitarian Universalists, dating from mid-80’s to 1996. Most programs had these elements in common:

A MENTOR, an adult from the congregation who agreed to work on a 1:1 basis with the youth;
A defined set of components;
A set of requirements for each youth to be completed, usually with a series of options from which the youth could choose, as well as a few common requirements for all to complete;
An expectation that the youth would complete in some form a statement of belief by the conclusion of the program;
A service or ceremony of recognition at completion of the program, usually in a congregational setting;
Reading, either from list of options or from a required text.

Just before the programs is an article from the Spring 1998 issue of Synapse entitled “The Four Components of Successful Coming of Age Programs” by Jen Harrison. This article is useful as a frame work for developing your own Coming of Age Program.

Summary of programs included in the packet:
Fallon Community Church
Coming of Age
Jr. High youth
Components:
   Religious Understanding
   Service to Others
   Personal Relationships (satisfied by AYS OR three other options choices)
   Our Church and Unitarian Universalist Heritage

Discussions held every other Sunday on God, Jesus and the meaning of life

University Unitarian Church, Seattle WA
Quest for Growth
ages 14-22
8 mo. Sept-June
Components:
   Perception (UU history, organization, denomination)
   Service (church committee project, 24 hrs. individual service)
   Connectedness (attendance at church/church school, weekly QFG meetings)
   Spiritual Quest (visit other churches/groups, journal, read curriculum)

Very detailed forms to fill out to complete each component
Unitarian Universalist Church, Muncie, IN

Up and Coming UUs Program
10-12 weeks, high school
Sunday morning class curriculum
Projects outside of class include reading, a service project, a belief statement, and meeting with mentors

People’s Church, Kalamazoo, MI

Challenge Program
Grades 8, 9
Meet once monthly, Nov-March

Components
Beliefs
Service (Living Our Religion)
Worship
Organization

First Unitarian Universalist Church, St. Louis, MO

Challenge -- Coming of Age Program
9th grade and older

Components
Beliefs
Worship
Church Organization
Social Concerns
History and Tradition

October-May

Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church, Charlottesville, VA

The Challenge -- Unitarian Universalism
9th grade; 9 months
Group meetings, 3X/month
Once a month, meet with mentor
Required written spiritual autobiography as well as statement of personal theology

Components
Beliefs
Worship
Education
History
Service and Social Action
Church Organization
Fellowship

2.
The First Unitarian Church of Hamilton, Ontario

Affirmation Curriculum
4 weeks, Sunday mornings, 13-14 years old

Curriculum topics:
- The Past
- The Present
- The Future
- Writing statements of personal belief

Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara, CA

Coming of Age Program
September-March
7th-8th grades

Components
- Education (8 classes on different religions; history, organization, principles of UUism)
  - Development (explore own beliefs and values -- 3 or more meetings)
  - Service (project requiring at least 10 hours)

Evaluation form included

First Parish in Concord, MA

Coming of Age Program
8th-11th grades
1X/Sept-Dec; 2X/Jan-May

Components (two projects required in each)
- Knowledge
- Service
- Relationship
- Spirituality

Vision Quest Retreat as well as other retreats

North Shore Unitarian Church

Affirmation

Components
- UU Faith and Values
- Our UU Roots
- Our NSUC Tradition
- Our Worship
- Our Commitment to Social Justice

Learning covenant developed with mentor
Meet 1X/month with minister, DRE Oct-April during RE time

A Rite of Passage Liturgy by Rosemarie Smurzynski is included in the packet.

Unitarian Universalist Pocket Guide is frequently used.
Unitarian Universalism: Some Questions Answered by W. Argow used in St. Louis
Other references include various curricula and books from R.E. resources
PLEASE NOTE:

The following materials have all been developed by Unitarian Universalists in our local congregations. We owe them a great deal of thanks!

I am passing this material along to you, not as an "official" Unitarian Universalist publication, but as a helpful aid as you program for young adolescents in your congregations.

Since we are always trying to collect resources on transition programs, I would appreciate any comments from you as to what works, what doesn't, and what is helpful.

Thank you very much!

Jen Harrison
Youth Programs Director

Unitarian Universalist Association
25 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02108

September 1999
The Four Components of Successful Coming-of-Age Programs

There are four major rites of passage in a person's life:
1. Beginnings—birth, new stages of life, new adventures
2. Initiations—coming of age, entering puberty, time of learning new skills, being tested
3. Partnering—marriage, committed relationships, business partners
4. Endings—divorce, rituals of endings, death, ending a stage of life

During the Initiation Stage there are four components that are typically part of this time of transformation:
1. Mentored Learning
2. Practical Testing
3. Enacted Ritual
4. Community Celebration

**Mentored Learning** - Mentored learning teaches the history and the skills one needs to be a part of the community. A mentor helps the youth gain a sense of pride in the community and a connection to the past which helps keep the community alive. A mentor can help the youth learn to recognize his or her role in the life of the community. Mentors work with youth in helping them learn physical skills that will bolster their self-confidence. A ropes course and physical challenges that encourage a youth to rely on their inner strength and outer confidence provide an opportunity for youth to test themselves. Mentors also provide a personal context for the youth to explore the history of the community. To learn the knowledge base of the community is to explore the principles upon which the community is founded. Many UU churches encourage youth to write a credo statement. Being able to reflect with an older and trusted member of the community makes it easier to process our newly forming values. Part of the mentor's job is to open the eyes of the youth to the social realities of the rest of the world. This means engaging in some sort of social action project. By working as a team on a project that makes a difference in the world, both the mentor and youth can put their faith into action. In the mentor relationship youth can explore their own spiritual development with a caring adult.

**Practical testing** - This is a test of knowledge and skills that the youth will need to enter the adult world. Learning how to balance a checkbook, drive and getting registered to vote are some of the skills youth in our society typically learn in this time of transition. A good Coming-of-Age program will teach youth about the history of their religious traditions and encourage them to be involved in church life so that they understand how our living tradition manifests on a daily level. Ensure there are times for reflective encounters about what they are learning. Reflection gives the youth time to deal with situational ethics. Role playing situations or a ropes course can provide time for deeper understanding of their values. Engaging youth in activities that push them beyond their
normal comfort level is an important part of practical testing. People learn more when they are asked to stretch beyond their boundaries. Boundary stretching must occur in a safe and supportive environment. Part of practical testing is providing an opportunity for the group to build community. Having the youth verbally covenant to be together during challenging activities can ensure that each individual feels supported. For example; have each youth say "my name is ...... and I choose to do this activity. Will you support me?" and the group answer "Yes, we support you."

Enacted Ritual - Ritual marks transition. After a Coming-of-Age ritual the youth engaged will be treated differently. The ritual should be developed by the group to ensure it has meaning, but drawing on ancient and modern traditions is encouraged. The ritual should be full of drama. Choose activities that you know they will remember. Make it big and fun. Ritual should also be intergenerational involving adults and younger kids from the community as participants, not spectators. The more the ritual is filled with mystery, the more it goes to the heart.

Community Celebration - The celebration with the community should honor both the individuals and the group that is coming of age. Create a community quilt to decorate the celebration. The community celebration should acknowledge that the youth are changed by their experience, visually by encouraging the youth to dress up, and interpersonally by encouraging everyone to treat the youth with enlarged respect. The celebration also should include all the generations, ensuring that a community myth gets created for the younger generation to hope for when they come of age. Most of all, the celebration should be fun, fun, fun!
Coming of Age Program
for Junior Youth

Follen Community Church
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
Coming of Age Program
for Junior High Youth

Have you ever wondered why your church doesn't have a special recognition of its young people like the Catholic Confirmation or the Jewish Bar Mitzvah??

The answer is WE DO! (As of this year). And here is YOUR chance to achieve such recognition from your church.

Like your friends in other religious groups, you will be asked to complete certain requirements to prove you are ready to become an recognized member of your church. All young people who complete the Coming of Age Program will be eligible to sign the membership book and become members of the Follen Church Society. At age 16 you will automatically become voting members.

Here's how it works!

First

You will be choosing an adult in the church who will work with you through the whole program. This person will be your mentor. You will meet together for one hour each month from January through April.

Then

With the help of your mentor and through donuts and discussions every other Sunday with Sydney Morris and John Schwabach and through the "About Your Sexuality" seminar with Bill and Meg Holland and working on your own, you will gain knowledge in these

four required areas:

- Religious Understanding
- Service to Others
- Personal Relationships
- Our Church and Unitarian Universalist Heritage

To make it all more personal and more fun for you there are suggestions in each of these areas from which you may choose, and some learning be from field trips. The following pages will help you make your choices with your mentor.
RELIGIOUS UNDERSTANDING
HELPING YOU FIND the FOUNDATIONS for YOUR OWN RELIGIOUS FAITH

CHOOSE 3 from the following list

☐ Attend 3 Sunday mornings of DONUTS AND DISCUSSION on GOD, JESUS, MEANING OF LIFE...led by Sydney Morris and her husband, John Schwabach.

☐ Help survey the congregation on their religious beliefs working with Rev. Polly, our minister.

☐ Read ONE of the following and discuss with your mentor:
(extra copies in the RE Director's office)
"JESUS, THE CARPENTER'S SON"
"MOSES"
"THE DRAMA OF ANCIENT ISRAEL"
MATTHEW (Bible)
LUKE (Bible)
MARK (Bible)

☐ Choose a RELIGIOUS READING that has meaning for and discuss with your mentor.

☐ WRITE about YOUR IMPRESSION or FEELING after visiting a DIFFERENT CHURCH or RELIGIOUS GROUP. Share with mentor.

REQUIRED BY ALL: Before completing the program WRITE or EXPRESS with DRAWING, PAINTING OR COLLAGE, a SIMPLE STATEMENT of YOUR OWN RELIGIOUS BELIEF

These statements will be used in the RECOGNITION SERVICE on April 29 in the church sanctuary.

MENTOR'S COMPLETION APPROVAL

CHOICE #1. Completed (date)__________________ (sign or initial)________

CHOICE #2. Completed________________________ (initial)________________

CHOICE #3. Completed________________________ (initial)________________

REMARKS:
SERVICE TO OTHERS
AN IMPORTANT PART OF FOLLEN CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

CHOOSE 3 FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST working with your mentor and appropriate people within the church:

☐ Help with a FIX-UP or CLEAN-UP PROJECT.
☐ Help in SETTING UP or CLEANING UP for a church event.
☐ Help with Sunday morning HOSPITALITY HOUR
☐ Help COLLATE the annual report.
☐ Be a HELPER for 4 Sundays with the 5 and 6 year olds.
☐ VISIT someone who is ill or in a NURSING HOME.
☐ PARTICIPATE in a church SERVICE (reading, music, ??)

MENTOR'S COMPLETION APPROVAL
CHOICE #1. Completed (date) ____________ (initial) ______
CHOICE #2. Completed _________________ (initial) ______
CHOICE #3. Completed _________________ (initial) ______

CHOOSE 2 FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST working with your mentor and the Social Concerns Committee

☐ ATTEND a PEACE RALLY or ANTI-WAR MEETING
☐ Help SORTING FOOD or DELIVERING it to the FOOD PANTRY
☐ VISIT RENEWAL HOUSE or LEARN of its WORK
☐ MEET with our SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE, LEARN of its WORK
☐ HELP SERVE a MEAL at ROSIE'S PLACE
☐ VISIT SHELTER for HOMELESS in Waltham, help RAISE MONEY
☐ VISIT U.U. SERVICE COMMITTEE, LEARN of their WORK

MENTOR'S COMPLETION APPROVAL
CHOICE #1. Completed _________________ (initial) ______
CHOICE #2. Completed _________________ (initial) ______
PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS
TO HELP YOU BECOME THE KIND OF PERSON YOU WANT TO BE.

CHOOSE the SEXUALITY SEMINAR (10 sessions probably early evening on Tuesdays, January 17 to March 27 with Bill and Meg Holland) PLUS ONE OTHER CHOICE
OR
3 FROM THE LIST (omitting the Sexuality seminar)

☐ SEXUALITY SEMINAR

☐ 3 one-hour CONVERSATIONS with your mentor on: FRIENDSHIP or MAKING HARD DECISIONS or HOPES FOR YOURSELF 5 YEARS FROM NOW or DESCRIBING a PERSON YOU ADMIRE or other subjects of YOUR CHOICE

☐ ATTEND the Sunday morning DONUTS and DISCUSSION with Sydney Morris and John Schwabach dealing with FEELINGS and GOOD RELATIONSHIPS.

☐ CREATE a COLLAGE to ILLUSTRATE YOUR FEELINGS about YOUR FAMILY, YOUR FRIENDS...

☐ WRITE a SHORT ESSAY or STORY about YOUR RELATIONSHIP with YOUR FRIENDS and YOUR FAMILY

☐ WRITE a SHORT ESSAY or STORY about HOW YOU RELATE to the OPPOSITE SEX.

MENTOR’S COMPLETION APPROVAL
SEXUALITY SEMINAR (check with the Hollands) _______________________________________

CHOICE #1. Completed (date) __________ (initial) __________

CHOICE #2. Completed ________________ (initial) __________

CHOICE ’3. Completed ________________ (initial) __________
OUR RELIGIOUS HERITAGE
LEARNING ABOUT OUR FOLLEN CHURCH HERITAGE

CHOOSE 3 FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST

☐ ATTEND a SUNDAY MORNING DONUTS and DISCUSSION exploring the HISTORY of FOLLEN CHURCH and the STORY of the FABULOUS FOLLENS with Sydney and John. (and possibly visit the Museum of Our National Heritage to see Follen Church communion silver)

☐ INTERVIEW 2 of the following:
  MINISTER, Polly Guild
  RELIGIOUS EDUCATION DIRECTOR, Barbara Marshman
  MUSIC DIRECTOR, Louise Curtis
  CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR, Marita Hartshorn
  CUSTODIAN, Gordon Hatfield

☐ ATTEND ONE of the FOLLOWING:
  PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
  WORSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING
  RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING

☐ INTERVIEW 3 ADULTS as to WHY THEY CHOSE FOLLEN CHURCH

MENTOR'S COMPLETION APPROVAL

CHOICE #1. Completed (date)________________________ (initial)_____

CHOICE #2. Completed _______________________________ (initial)_____

CHOICE #3. Completed _______________________________ (initial)_____
OUR RELIGIOUS HERITAGE
LEARNING ABOUT OUR UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST HERITAGE

CHOOSE 3 FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST

☐ ATTEND Sunday Morning DONUTS and DISCUSSION for QUICK HISTORY session with Sydney and John to learn our PROUD HERITAGE

☐ GO ON GROUP VISIT to Unitarian Universalist HEADQUARTERS and SERVICE COMMITTEE on Beacon Street, King's Chapel, etc. in Boston.

☐ MEET with JOHN KURTZ/SENIOR YOUTH to be introduced to YRUU (Unitarian Universalist Religious Youth) and its activities locally and continentally.

☐ MEET with JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH in Lexington, First Parish and Bedford, First Parish for fun and to PLAN for the TRIP together to ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND by CHARTERED BUS during the spring vacation.

☐ LEARN/WRITE about a UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST who has MADE A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD.

MENTOR'S COMPLETION APPROVAL

CHOICE #1. Completed (date) ___________ (initial) ______

CHOICE #2. Completed ________________ (initial) ______

CHOICE #3. Completed ________________ (initial) ______
The ROLE of the MENTOR

We are glad you have chosen the opportunity to form a warm and supportive relationship with one of our young people enrolled in the COMING OF AGE PROGRAM.

The role of the mentor is an important one and will need sincere dedication. Without you the program would not be possible.

1. Meet once a month (January, February, March and April) for one hour with your "mentee".

2. Help your young person make choices to fulfill the requirements in the 4 areas and plan dates.

3. Help him/her solve problems of transportation, time conflicts, feelings of defeat and frustration.

4. Show enthusiasm for the program, the church, and the value in what s/he is doing.

5. Be an adult friend in whom s/he can confide freely trusting s/he will not be subjected to parental judgement.

6. Check off the completed requirements with your initials and the date.

7. Help him/her with the short written or artistic expression of his religious belief to be used at the Recognition Service on April 29.

8. Be his/ her sponsor at that service.
Coming of Age Program

for Junior High Young People

Follen Community Church

Application to participate

I wish to enter the Coming of Age Program of the Follen Church with the understanding that if I fulfill the listed requirements I shall be welcomed into membership of the church.

I know it will not be easy but I am willing to accept the challenge knowing I will have adult help along the way.

Signed __________________________________________

Address __________________________________________

Telephone ___________________________ Grade in school

Parents' name ______________________________________

Address (if different) __________________________________________
Quest for Growth Program

By Sally Jo Davis
Youth Advisory Chair
Quest For Growth (QFG) is a coming-of-age program for Unitarian youth ages 14-22. The program takes approximately eight months, from September through June. The youth will learn about their own religious and spiritual beliefs and the history, program, and organizations of both their home church as well as the Unitarian Universalist Association.

To do this, each youth will be paired with an adult Guide who is a member of the church. Together they will work through the four components:

1. Perception This component is based on knowledge. Some of the requirements include reading about and verbally and in writing, answering questions dealing with UU history, organization and program. They will interview UU church members and staff about their beliefs and roles.

2. Service This component is based on action. Some requirements include forming a committee with other QFG youth and carrying out a church project. Also with QFG youth, completing a Values survey of the church. Alone, the youth will devote 24 hours to various church committee work and serve as a Lay Leader.

3. Connectedness This component is based on connecting with people to help form their personal beliefs. Some requirements include regularly attending church and/or church school, regularly attending meetings with other QFG youth and Guides and writing an editorial to UU World or Synapses.

4. Spiritual Quest This component is based on personal exploration of UU beliefs. Requirements include attending non-UU churches or synagogues, keeping a personal journal, holding exploratory conversations with Guides, youth, and church members, and reading UU material dealing with spiritual beliefs.

Once all the requirements are met, the youth will be presented to the congregation, sign the membership book and become full voting members of the church.

The Guide is a person deeply committed to Unitarian Universalism and active in the church. Providing guidance to the youth is the chief assignment. The role includes trouble shooting and directing the youth's growth. It also involves casual chats and informal gettogethers. In short, the guide is a friend as well as a teacher. The guide will be given a packet that will include QFG program requirements and other material vital to the program. The guide will be involved in group projects, planning and evaluations throughout the program.
I  How To Get QUEST FOR GROWTH Off The Ground

II  How To Keep QUEST FOR GROWTH Moving

IV  How To Wrap QUEST FOR GROWTH Up
I How To Get GFG Off The Ground

First, set a date and place for the information meeting. The meeting is for youth, parents and interested adult guides. Depending on the size of your church/fellowship, public relations can be carried out through pulpit announcements, newsletter, and/or word of mouth. The meeting can be as formal as you wish.

At the meeting, at least one copy of the program should be present. A complete GFG program is inside a three-ring binder with pockets. Make copies of the program and divide it up in the binder between each component. Filler paper should be placed in back. Included in the pocket should be copies of the church/fellowship newsletter, UU World, Synapses, (the continental Youth newsletter which can be ordered from Boston free), the district newsletter, UU Pocket Guide, various UU pamphlets, a church/fellowship directory, a pen, pocket calendar, and anything else you deem necessary to help the youth complete the program. Notebooks should be given to each youth and guide who enter the program. Youth will also receive an empty journal book. The guide will receive a "Role Of The Guide" handout.

Have plenty of applications available at the meeting as well as snacks. Explain the program to them and encourage them to browse through the notebooks. Potential guides do not have to be especially learned about Unitarian Universalism. It is advisable, however, that they be church members or at least willing to join in the near future.

A commitment from both the youth and guide should be made in no more than two weeks. At that time, you need to pair them up. This is up to your discretion, however, they should be of the same sex and parent(s) should not be guides to their own offspring. Once they have been paired, a orientation meeting is in order. The youth and guide will be introduced to each other through a game and a trust walk. After treats, they will be presented with their notebooks and then left to set a date for their next meeting at which time their purpose will be to read carefully through the GFG program together and also complete the proposal form which a copy will be turned into you. It is important to emphasize the use of their pocket calendar to set up dates, i.e. the minister interview, lay leading date, etc. Your role as advisor should also be explained at this time. Ask them to check in with you either together or individually at least every other week. You may set a definite time aside or be more casual. The youth and guide should be in contact at least once a week.
II How To Keep QFO Moving

QUEST FOR GROWTH can be completed by an individual youth or a group. Requirements under each component can be adjusted according to the make up of each church/fellowship. Keep the objectives in mind, however, when making adjustments.

Perception
Help provide materials for youth to read.
Help set up dates for the interviews.
If the guide is not able to sign a requirement, sign it for them.

Service
The church/fellowship project requirement could be any number of things: set up child care for church meetings; plant a garden on church grounds; mend a fence; present an all-church/fellowship dinner; revise hymnals towards gender equality; carry out an all-youth worship service; paint a church building room; do a landscaping project on church grounds, volunteer at a social service agency; help out the church secretary. The list is endless.

Attending a board meeting is important if only to see how the board is run. It may be an alternative requirement.

The values survey can include a breakdown of age, sex, occupations of the congregation as well as topics such as past and/or present Christian beliefs, opinions on abortion, death penalty, euthanasia, street people, farmers' plights, etc.

Connectedness
Allow yourself to be interviewed when youth are exploring personal belief systems.
Give support and encouragement

Spiritual Quest
Help organize trips to outside churches.

"How Do I Know What To Believe" is long. If you do not have this curriculum, a comparable curriculum may be used such as "Build Your Own Theology". Encourage youth to begin reading immediately.

Empty journal books may be purchased at Hallmarks or in larger department stores in Stationary.

Offer yourself for exploratory conversations with youth.
III How To Wrap Up

Organize a small committee of willing church members for the youth to be presented to for questioning before graduation. Questions should include what they did during the program and what they learned during the program and questions about their personal belief system. The guide will be present for moral support.

Having the youth become members of the church/fellowship is, of course, dependent on the by-laws. They may become possible associate members. As members, they should be prepared to pledge at least a minimal amount and be invited to join various committees.

After the graduation form has been turned into you, the worship committee will be immediately notified to work the ceremony into a Sunday worship service. A notice in the church/fellowship newsletter will be placed mentioning the importance of the ceremony. Youth will be encouraged to send invitations to family and friends. A corsage/boutonniere will be worn by the graduates and guides. Family and friends will sit in reserved seats in the front row. Each guide will present the youth to the congregation, giving a brief biography and introducing them before their speeches which should be about two minutes in length. The minister or board member will welcome the graduate into the church/fellowship by inviting the graduate to sign the membership book and/or presenting them with a small gift such as UU Service Committee jewelry or an appropriate book.

A reception for the graduate will be held immediately after the service with cake, punch, cookies, picture taking, hand shaking, and anything else that will making the event significant.

One last note: always be encouraging, helpful and positive. This program is not easy, but what they gain from it will be lifelong and influence their religious values for years to come. Good luck and have fun!
Acknowledgments

The Quest for Growth Program could not have been developed without invaluable assistance from Dr. Peter Raible, Cynthia Breen, Annie Foerster, Craig Harper, and Ruth Little. Thank you.

--Sally Jo Davis, Youth Advisory Chair
Introduction

Alfred North Whitehead defined religion this way:

Religion is the vision of something which stands beyond, behind, and within the passing flux of immediate things.

Something which is real, and yet waiting to be realized;

Something which is a remote possibility, and yet the greatest present facts;

Something that gives meaning to all that passes, and yet eludes apprehension;

Something whose possession is the final good, and yet is beyond all reach;

Something which is the ultimate ideal, and the never ending quest.

In the Quest for Growth Program, you will be searching after this "something." We hope you will reflect seriously upon entering it. The effort the program involves provides a serious challenge, but great opportunity for growth. By completing it you will gain a deepened knowledge of UU beliefs, history, and organization. More important, you will engage in a venture of personal religious development. Quest for Growth graduates will have a solid base for their future spiritual growth.

--Dr. Peter Raible
Minister, University Unitarian Church
Quest for Growth

Purpose: Quest for Growth is designed for Unitarian youth between the ages of 14 and 22. Its primary aim is to assist you in exploring your own religious and spiritual beliefs and the history, program, and organizations of both the home church and the Unitarian Universalist Association. Its major outcome is your commitment to be an informed, engaged member of Unitarian Universalist church.

Objectives:

1. Prepare youth to become Unitarian Universalists.
   
   A. Present information about the organization, history, structure, and traditions of the home church and the denomination.
   
   B. Guide to an understanding of what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist.
   
   C. Urge active participation in the church.

II. Encourage personal development within the UU framework.

   A. Present tasks that require assuming responsibility, making decisions, thinking independently, and exploring values.
   
   B. Promote understanding of the relationship between yourself, your church, and the other communities to which you belong.
   
   C. Sponsor a system in which significant connections with adults are formed.
   
   D. Ensure that this program is challenging, enjoyable, and rewarding.

Requirements: Quest for Growth is divided into four components, each requiring the completion of several assignments. The completion of these assignments will be marked with a graduation ceremony that welcomes you as a member of your UU church. Many requirements will be completed with the other members of the QFG program.

These, in brief, are the components of the program:

I. Perception

   A. Read materials on UU history, organization, and denomination.
   
   B. Answer questions concerning UU history, organization, and denomination.
C. Interview church members and staff about their beliefs and roles.

II. Service

A. Carry out a group church committee project under the guidance of the Program Director.

B. Devote 24 hours to church committee work.

C. Serve as lay leader during a Sunday worship service.

D. Carry out a group values clarification research project under the guidance of the Youth Advisory Chair.

III. Connectedness

A. Accept sponsorship from a guide within the church.

B. Attend church and/or church school regularly.

C. Attend weekly meetings with other QFG members and guides.

D. Ask advice from R.E. Director or Youth Advisory Chair.

E. Write a letter to the editor of UU World.

F. Attend as a QFG group, a UU Sunday worship service and/or synopses.

IV. Spiritual Quest

A. Attend as a QFG group at least two non-UU church/synagogue worship services.

B. Keep a journal to explore personal beliefs and values.

C. Hold exploratory conversations with your guide, QFG members/guides, church members, etc.

D. Read the curriculum, "How Do I Know What To Believe?"
How to Begin

1. Attend information meeting.

2. Read this material and discuss it with your parent(s) before committing yourself.

3. After the application is processed, you will be assigned a guide. You will also be given a notebook with all necessary forms and materials and a journal, if you are not already keeping one.

4. You and your guide will work out a proposal, outlining goals and setting completion dates.

(Note: the role of guide is to solve problems, answer questions, encourage progress, and provide support. Frequent meetings between you and your guide are required as well as group meetings with other QFG members/guides for group projects and socialization.)
Quest for Growth Applications Form

Name ___________________________ Phone __________________

Address
Street ___________________________ City ___________ Zipcode ___________

Name of church ______________________

Name of parent(s) ____________________

Approximate beginning date ________________

To me Unitarian Universalism means ________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

I have attended UU churches or fellowships for ______________________

My vocational goals are ______________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Other interests I have are ______________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

I am interested in this program because ______________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

THIS CERTIFIES THAT I HAVE STUDIED THE QUEST FOR GROWTH
PROGRAM WITH MY PARENT(S) AND AM MAKING APPLICATION TO ENROLL.

Signature of youth ______________________ Date ____

Signature(s) of parent(s) ______________________

____________________
Introduction to Notebook

Overwhelming? At first glance, the program may look that way but it is workable, challenging, and enjoyable. The first step is to set up your calendar and sign up with the Worship Committee as lay leader even though you may not perform that role for several months. (The Worship Committee plans months in advance and needs early notification in order to include you in the schedule.) You do not have to work in any specific order. In fact, you should skip around (using your calendar) because requirements often overlap. Read everything before doing anything and then, with the help of your guide, write your proposal.

Quest for Growth Proposal

Name ___________________________ Date __________

Guide's name ___________________________

Make two additional copies; give one to your guide and one to Youth Advisory Chair.

Please study your notebook thoroughly with your guide before completing this proposal. Complete it with your guide and coordinate dates with other QFG members and their guides.

Projected completion date of the QFG program _____________

I. Perception

A. Proposed date of scriptural answers to UU history and function questions

B. Proposed date of Minister group interview

C. Proposed date of church financier group interview

D. Proposed date of Program Director group interview

II. Service

A. Group church project I am interested in completing
B. Twenty-four hour committee(s) work I am interested in completing

C. Proposed date of lay leader experience

D. Values clarification group research project I am interested in completing

III. Connectedness

A. Proposed dates and times of regular meetings with guide

B. Proposed date to complete letter to the editor of UU World and/or synopses.

IV. Spiritual Quest

A. Proposed date to complete reading "How Do I Know What to Believe?"

B. Churches or synagogues I am interesting in attending

Are there other projects you are interested in completing that may have an impact on your QPG program?

Youth signature

Guide signature
Perception

Knowledge Gained: Overview of UU function, history, and beliefs both on local and denominational levels.

Skills Developed: research, group interaction, art of interviewing.

I. Requirement: Answer the following questions.

A. Denomination

1. What is the Unitarian Universalist Association and what is its relationship to your UU church?

2. Who is the UUA president? How is he or she elected? What are the president's responsibilities?

3. If you were the UUA president, what would be your first priority? Why?

B. Beliefs

1. Unitarian Universalists do not have a creed? Why?

C. History

1. Make a list of people who have historically influenced Unitarian Universalist thinking. Consult the Church School Library for references.

2. Write a story or poem about someone in Unitarian Universalist history that has influenced you.

Steps To Take: Visit the Church School Library and use your bibliography to find answers. Read copies of UU World and Changes. Talk with other members of the church as well as your guide.

II. Requirement: With other QFG members, interview your UU Minister. Ask and record in notebook the following questions.

A. Why did you become a Minister?

B. Why is it important for you to be a Minister?

C. What do you like to do best as a Minister?

D. What is hard for you as a Minister?

E. What are the hours like?

F. What kind of commitment does it take?
G. What milestones in this church’s development have you shared?

H. Other questions about his/her life and beliefs as a Minister.

Steps To Take: Find out date of Minister interview. Attend QFG group meeting to come up with more questions; arrange transportation to interview.

III. Requirement: With other QFG member, interview someone involved in the financial aspect of the church. Ask and record in your notebook the following questions.

A. How are church finances organized?

B. What does pledging mean? How is pledging carried out? (Be prepared to fill out a pledge card.)

Steps To Take: See "Steps to Take" requirement III.

IV. Requirement: With other QFG member, meet with Program Director to discuss organization and history of the UU church. Record notes.

Steps To Take: See "Steps To Take" requirement III.

V. Requirement: Read UU Pocket Guide and discuss with your guide.

Steps To Take: If the Guide is not in your notebook, ask R.E. Director or Youth Advisory Chair for copy.
Perception Validation Form

I. Answers completed to denomination, beliefs, and history questions.

Date Completed

Guide's initials

II. Minister Interview

Date Completed

Minister's or Guide's Initials

III. Financier Interview

Date Completed

Treasurer's Initials

IV. Program Director Interview

Date Completed

Program Director's Initials

V. UU Pocket Guide read and discussed

Date Completed

Guide's Initials
Service

Knowledge Gained: function of committees, value of volunteerism, function of worship service, diversity of UU belief systems.

Skills Developed: problem solving, organization skills, group interaction, public speaking, polling procedures.

I. Requirement: With other QFG group members, carry out a church project under the guidance of the Program Director. Invent a committee project, propose it to the Board, and complete it by a certain date.

Steps To Take: Find out date of Program Director interview; arrange transportation; set up meetings. Find out Board meeting dates; ask Chair of the Board to be included on the meeting's agenda; seek assistance from guide.

II. Requirement: Devote 24 hours to church committee work.

Steps To Take: You may choose one or many committees. Use your church directory to contact chairs. Attending committee meetings is encouraged but is not part of the 24 hour service time. Ask the chair to validate the hours you put in on your service validation form. Some sample projects include: greeting at church, helping with church school, revising hymnals, providing and serving food at one of the many church potlucks, doing clerical work in the church office, volunteering time at the bookstore, etc. Ask your guide for assistance.

III. Requirement: Serve as a lay leader during regular Sunday worship service

Steps To Take: Notify Chair of Worship Committee; request a date; attend Worship Committee meeting; talk with Minister about subject of sermon; talk with Worship Committee about your duties; provide information for order of service; and act as lay leader for the worship service you select.

IV. Requirement: With other QFG members, construct and carry out a group values clarification research project with results to be published in the Gateway.

Steps To Take: organize a group meeting with Youth Advisory Chair; decide on values clarification question to research; have copies made and inserted in the Order of Service. Organize group meeting to compile statistics; interview various church members for in-depth answer. Contact Gateway editor for publishing procedures. Publish results. Examine your own values during this process.
Service Validation Form

I. Church Committee Group Project
   A. Name of Project
   B. How was project carried out?
   C. Date Completed

II. Church Committee Work
   A. Name of Committee(s)
      1.  
      2.  
     3.  
     4.  
   B. Work Completed
      1.  
      2.  
      3.  
      4.  
   Use other side if necessary.

III. Lay Leader Experience
    Date Completed

IV. Values Clarification Research Group Project
   A. Name of Research Project
   B. Date Completed

Program Director's Initials

Worship Committee Member's Initials

Youth Advisory Chair's Initials

11
Connectedness

Knowledge Gained: interpersonal relations, spiritual growth, group connectedness.

Skills Developed: communication, group cooperation, one-to-one interaction, adult interaction, editorializing.

I. Requirement: Develop relationship with your guide.

Steps To Take: Be open to his or her suggestions; invite guide to attend committee work with you; show guide your appreciation. Explore your personal quest for growth with guide; invite guide to attend church services with you. Invite guide to a social function and make arrangements.

II. Requirement: Regularly attend UU church and/or church school.

Steps To Take: Arrange transportation if necessary; invite friends to attend with you; attend with guide on occasion.

III. Requirement: Attend required weekly meetings with other QFG members and/or guides.

Steps To Take: Keep a calendar and write in all dates of meetings; arrange transportation; occasionally provide treats or refreshments; keep notebook handy.

IV. Requirement: Seek advice from R.E. Director and/or Youth Advisory Chair about projects, goals, frustrations, and/or concerns.

Steps To Take: Call church to set appointment; bring notebook; Director and Chair will answer questions about the QFG program and help settle any personal difficulties between you and other QFG members or guides.

V. Requirement: With other QFG members, attend a UU worship service; take notes and discuss afterwards.

Steps To Take: Organize meeting with Worship Committee member before the service to learn parts and intent of service. Take notes on the following questions: (1) where did the service achieve its goals? (2) where did it fail? (3) how would you do it differently? (4) what meant the most to you? Help organize post-service meeting to discuss notes. Invite your guide.

VI. Requirement: Write a letter to the editor of UU World and/or synopses.

Steps To Take: Read several issues of UU World; write a letter in response to article or letter in the latest issue; type letter and mail it. Seek assistance from guide.
Connectedness Validation Form

I. UU Worship Service Group Attendance
   Date Completed
   Guide's Initials

II. Letter to Editor of UU World
    Date Completed
    Guide's Initials
Spiritual Quest

Knowledge Gained: how other denominations worship, spiritual reflection, values clarified, diversity of spiritual opinions.

Skills Developed: note taking, group discussion, in-depth writing, communication.

I. Requirement: With other QFG members, attend two churches or synagogues, not affiliated with UU.

Steps To Take: Decide which church/synagogue to attend. Here is a sample.

2. Assembly of God 7. Friends Quiet Worship
3. Hebrew Synagogue 8. Church of Latter-day Saints
4. Islamic Synagogue 9. Church of Religious Science
5. B'hai 10. Zion Baptist

Take notes and answer the following questions. (1) What did you think the goals of the service were? (2) Where and how did the service achieve its goals? (3) Where did it fail? (4) How is it different from your church? (5) How is it the same? (6) What meant the most to you? Help organize a meeting to discuss notes. Invite your guide.

II. Requirement: Read the curriculum "How Do I Know What To Believe?" and discuss your impressions with your guide.

Steps To Take: Obtain copy from R.E. Director.

III. Requirement: Keep a journal and explore and record your personal beliefs and value system.

Steps To Take: If you are not already keeping a journal in church school, we will provide you with a blank journal. Write as often as possible, thoroughly searching for answers. Write impressions of your projects and meetings. Answer the following questions:

What do you as a Unitarian Universalist believe about:

a. other religions
b. God
c. worship
d. Jesus
e. death

f. good and evil

Be prepared to answer these and other questions at the graduation review. You need not share your journal with anyone unless you want to.

IV. Requirement: Engage in exploratory conversations with guide, QFG members, and UU church members.

Spiritual Quest Validation Form

I. Non-UU church attendance (at least two)
   A. Church/synagogues attended

   B. Dates attended
       Guide's Initials

II. Read "How Do I Know What To Believe?"
    Date Discussed with Guide
    Guide's Initials
Graduation

One month before your projected completion date, you should begin preparations for graduation. Complete the following:

1. Fill out the graduation form with the help of your guide and return it to the Youth Advisory Chair.

2. The Youth Advisory Committee* will contact you for a review of your requirements and ask you questions about your Unitarian Universalist beliefs, UU heritage, and church organization. Your guide will be present at the review.

3. A date will be announced shortly thereafter for a graduation ceremony which will occur during a Sunday service.

4. Between your review and the graduation ceremony, you will prepare a two minute speech to be read during the Sunday service. Ask your guide for assistance.

Optional Topics

a. What the QFG program has meant to me.

b. What being a Unitarian Universalist means to me.

c. Why I want to be a member of this church.

d. What it means to live a spiritual life.

e. The importance of growth within the UU church.

f. What are my religious beliefs?

g. What it means to be an adult.

h. How my QFG projects influenced my thinking.

i. What I will take from the QFG program and continue to use.

* The Youth Advisory Committee will be comprised of church members, QFG members, and church staff.
Graduation Submission Form

Name of candidate

Projected completion date

Requirements completed (with guide's initials)

Application Form
Proposal Form
Perception Validation Form
Service Validation Form
Connectedness Validation Form
Spiritual Growth Validation Form

Guide's comments:

Youth's comments:

Signature of guide

Signature of graduation candidate

Date

Candidate will be notified within two weeks for date of graduation review.
The Role of the Guide

A guide is a person deeply committed to Unitarian Universalism and active in the church. Providing guidance to the youth assigned is your chief assignment. The role includes trouble shooting and directing the youth's growth. It also involves casual chats and informal get togethers. In short, you are to be a friend as well as a teacher. You will also be involved in some group projects.

To help you meet this commitment, you will be given a packet that includes QFG program requirements, all necessary forms and other material vital to the program. You are urged to keep in contact with the R.E. Director and/or the Youth Advisory Chair. You will also participate in planning and evaluation meetings throughout the program.

Responsibilities

1. Answer all youth's questions and/or steer him or her towards the answers.

2. Help youth fill out the proposal.

3. Give aid to "housekeeping" problems such as transportation, time conflicts, providing phone numbers, addresses, coordinating with church office for meeting space.

4. Give support to offset fears and/or procrastination. Iron out unforseen problems.

5. Encourage youth to make full use of the calendar.

6. Show a genuine concern and interest in the youth's progress and be positive about Unitarian Universalism and the importance of this program.

7. Discuss options for QFG projects. Help update the forms. Work with youth on some or all of the chosen projects.

8. Ask youth about his or her impressions and knowledge gained from the Minister, church financier, and Program Director interviews.

9. Collaborate with the Worship Committee on the youth's lay leader experience. Give special guidance with this requirement. It demands courage.

10. Read the curriculum: "How Do I Know What To Believe?" available through the R.E. Director.

11. Encourage in-depth study of the journal questions, prodding youth to look deeply into him or herself for the answers. Help youth review questions for the graduation review.

13. Ask youth to read to you the original story or poem about a *UU* historical personality.

14. Attend at least one of the two non-Unitarian church services with youth and ask for impressions of the experience.

15. Read *UU Pocket Guide*.

16. Do not read youth's journal without permission, but encourage him or her to write.

17. Make sure all forms are up-to-date and necessary hours and signatures recorded.

18. Help youth fill out the graduation form.

19. With youth, attend the graduation review.

20. Help youth prepare graduation speech by proofreading the speech and listening to a trial delivery.

21. Collaborate with the Worship Committee in planning the graduation ceremony which will be held during a Sunday worship service.

22. Write a short biography of youth which will be inserted in the *Order of Worship* the day of the graduation ceremony.

23. Purchase a corsage/boutonniere with money provided by the Children's Program Committee to be worn by the youth at the graduation ceremony.

24. Prepare and read a short statement at the graduation ceremony introducing youth to the congregation.

25. With help from the R.E. Director and the Youth Advisory Chair, plan and carry out the reception following the worship service.

26. Participate in an optional before-church breakfast, planned by the Youth Advisory Committee, which includes youth, family, friends, and interested others.

Your role is pivotal in the QFG program. It is vital that you provide emotional and social support as well as assistance in carrying out requirements. Some suggestions to help you are:

1. Invite youth out for coffee, coke, dessert, or meal.

2. Take youth to a movie, a gallery, aquarium, etc.
3. Go on a hike or bike ride.

4. Provide hard-to-find books not available in the Church School Library.

5. Include youth in your church committee work.

6. Attend church potlucks with youth, providing food together.

7. Attend church worship services together.

8. Attend a school assembly or music concert, in which the youth is a participant.

9. Phone youth occasionally "just to talk."

Remember the youth appreciates your efforts even though he or she may not be able to participate in all of your planned activities. The social aspect of your role lets the youth experience your personal concern and care. You might want to plan some social events with other guides/youths. For your own spiritual growth and support, call other guides for advice or talk to Youth Advisory Chair or the R.E. Director. It is important that you, too, enjoy the QPG program.
Bibliography


Up and Coming UUs Program

Unitarian Universalist Church - Muncie, Indiana
April 21, 1986

Rev. Ellen Brandenburg
Youth Office
25 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02108

Dear Rev. Brandenburg:

We are very much looking forward to the publication of the Coming of Age Handbook. Enclosed are some materials the Unitarian Universalist Church of Muncie is using in our Up and Coming UUs' program.

Our program is a synthesis of ideas borrowed from other programs blended with our own thoughts and needs. We sought to develop a program that would encompass the following: ten to twelve weeks in length; clear as possible in defining goals, activities, and projects; reasonable in requirements, and include the participation of adults in the congregation as well as the minister and D.R.E. The program would culminate with a written statement of belief composed by each participant presented in a special ceremony.

The group meets as a class during service. However, special activities such as church visitations, a pizza party, meetings with the minister and mentors are scheduled outside of class time. To encourage closeness within the group, the class was closed to new members after the second meeting. We use pamphlets published by the UUA; the UU Pocket Guide, and, due to great interest, the Humanist Manifesto I & II as our resource materials.

At this writing, the program is still in progress. We will evaluate at its conclusion to refine and revise the format. I am anticipating that the upcoming Handbook will provide great ideas.

Sincerely,

Melissa Durr
Director of Religious Education

MD/kw
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Initials</th>
<th>CS &amp; M</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(R) 1. Attend group meeting (or interview chair-person) to find out about our church's Social Concerns Committee.</td>
<td>( ) ( )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R) 2. Find out which resolutions are proposed for at the annual UUA General Assembly (GA).</td>
<td>( ) ( )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R) 3. Pick a current social concern of your choice, gather clippings or related materials, and report your position to the group.</td>
<td>( ) ( )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) 4. Find out about the UUA Social Concerns.</td>
<td>( ) ( )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) 5. Participate in a walk/run/bike-a-thon (or other activity) for your favorite cause.</td>
<td>( ) ( )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) 6. Write a letter to the President, a Senator, Congressman, or any elected official, or a letter to the editor of a paper about your views on an issue. (Bring copy to group.)</td>
<td>( ) ( )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) 7. Plan to do a money-making project about some cause/org. which you believe needs $.</td>
<td>( ) ( )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) 8. Talk to the Chairman of the Denominational Affairs Committee to find out which issues our church members think are important.</td>
<td>( ) ( )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) 9. Help the Social Concerns Committee with its Hunger Luncheon or any one of its projects.</td>
<td>( ) ( )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( ) 10. Substitute or bonus items at (1) or (2) points each as approved.</td>
<td>( ) ( )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( ) Total Points</td>
<td>( ) ( )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SEVEN (7) POINTS REQUIRED (All items completed)
THE CHALLENGE

UNITARIAN/UNIVERSALISM

INSTRUCTOR(S) COPY

9th Grade
Written and Developed By:

LINDA and STEVE POHL

The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church

Charlottesville, Virginia

1986

The soul of art is beauty,
The heart of love is youth;
The soul of courage, duty;
The heart of science, truth;
And so man struggles upward,
To find beyond the sod
The heart and soul of the universe,
The Infinite, his God.
THE TJMC CHALLENGE: UNITARIAN/UNIVERSALISM

COURSE DESCRIPTION

THE CHALLENGE is a 9 month coming-of-age program for 9th graders. Older youth interested in church membership can easily be included in the program and, in fact, should be encouraged to participate. Completion of the requirements of this course will also fulfill the requirements for the Scouting religious emblem, Religion In Life.

The course is designed to bring teenagers into fuller church participation and to create personal awareness of what it means to be a church member and an adult Unitarian/Universalist. Participants will learn primarily through active participation in a variety of church activities. It will involve the time, interest, and assistance of many adult members of the congregation. The program includes an end-of-the-year recognition ceremony and a heritage trip to Boston for those participants who fulfill the course requirements. Key to the success of this program is the development and use of a Mentor system.

Course requirements involve the completion of some required activities in several categories of church life as well as completion of personally selected activities. Participants structure their own time and choose among the activities offered in such a way that they earn the required number of points by a deadline date. Activities as they are completed will be signed and dated by the adult in the congregation most responsible for that activity. Many activities can be completed on Sunday mornings. Participants must earn 28 points for successful completion of the course in order to receive a Certificate of Recognition and to go on the heritage trip to Boston. Those participants who are eligible, according to the church Bylaws, will be given the opportunity to become church members.

Most regular meetings of the group will occur on Sunday mornings from 11:00-12:15 in U-House parlor. Following the Orientation Session, each participant will be asked to select a Mentor from a list of eligible candidates. Participants will also be asked to make a commitment to attend the Sunday morning group meetings on a regular basis---there is much to be done! The Challenge is 28 points by May 31st in addition to the planning and fund-raising for the Boston trip!!
THE TJMC CHALLENGE: UNITARIAN/UNIVERSALISM

GOALS:

1. TO PREPARE PARTICIPANTS FOR CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

2. To assist participants in clarifying their own religious beliefs.

3. To provide opportunities for youth to interact with adults so that meaningful relationships can be developed, and to show our youth that adult members care about their thoughts and feelings.

4. To help our youth understand what it means to be a UU—how the UU religion is unique from other religions and what its valuable contribution is to humankind.

5. To provide opportunities for independent thinking, assuming responsibility, decision making and exploration of values.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Participants complete activities in seven categories of church life: Beliefs, Worship, Education, History, Service & Social Action, Church Organization, and Fellowship.

2. Each participant will select and establish a relationship with a Mentor who will assist the participant in the successful completion of all aspects of the curriculum.

3. Participants will plan and participate in an end-of-the-year recognition ceremony.

4. Each participant will prepare a written spiritual autobiography as well as a statement of personal theology.

5. Participants who complete the course requirements will make the heritage trip to Boston. Participants will plan the itinerary, formulate a budget, and raise the funds for the trip.

MATERIALS NEEDED: (for each youth & mentor)

- notebook
- curriculum
- church directory leadership roster
- The UU Pocket Guide
- (for youth) Stamp Booklet of "Famous Unitarians/Universalists"
THE TJMC CHALLENGE: UNITARIAN/UNIVERSALISM

ROLE OF THE MENTOR

The Mentor is key to the success of this program. In fact, without the Mentor system this program would not be possible. The role requires knowledge, commitment, and sincere dedication. It should be considered an honor to be asked by a participant to be his/her Mentor—an honor which must not be refused!

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

1. The Mentor should have at least ten years experience as an active Unitarian/Universalist.

2. The Mentor should be at least 45 years old with no children at home.

3. The Mentor must be an active member of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. The Mentor and the youth are equally responsible for insuring that the requirements of this course are completed by the designated deadline.

2. The Mentor will assist the youth in making activity choices in the 7 categories of church life and plan dates for their completion.

3. The Mentor and youth will meet together once a month for approximately one hour to review progress and to work on selected activities as needed.

4. The Mentor will sign and date designated activities as they are completed.

5. The Mentor will function as a resource person for the youth throughout the church year, assisting him/her with problem-solving as needed (eg. transportation, time conflicts, scheduling, feelings of defeat and/or frustration, other obstacles).

6. The Mentor will be an adult friend to the youth in whom he/she can confide freely, trusting that he/she will not be subjected to parental judgement. Mentors are encouraged to find ways of having social times with the youth.
7. The Mentor will be willing to share with the youth personal beliefs and experiences as they relate to course activities and to answer any questions he/she might have relevant to the program.

8. The Mentor will attend the CREDO Workshop, share with the youth his/her own spiritual autobiography and statement of personal theology, and will assist the youth as needed in writing his/hers.

9. The Mentor will participate in the monthly Chapter Discussions and serve as the discussion leader for at least one of the group sessions.

9. The Mentor will sign the Certificate of Recognition signifying successful completion of the course and will participate in the end-of-the-year Recognition Ceremony.

10. The Mentor and the youth will together evaluate the program at the end of the year and submit their written comments to the course instructor(s).
THE TJMC CHALLENGE: UNITARIAN/UNIVERSALISM

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

The Challenge Program consists of three, separate areas of participation as follows:

1. Group meetings  
   a) Workshops  
   b) Planning & Scheduling  
   c) Chapter Discussions  
   d) Fun for Everyone

2. Individual activities  
   a) Personal Time  
   b) Mentor meetings

3. The Boston heritage trip  
   a) Planning & Preparing  
   b) Group fund raising activities

GROUP MEETINGS:

Group meetings will be held most Sunday mornings in U-House Parlor from 11:00-12:15. The CALENDER OF EVENTS describes the content for each of those meetings. In general, each month there will be: a) a Workshop which will address one of the required curriculum activities in each of the 7 categories; b) a Planning & Scheduling time to work on preparations for the Boston trip and to plan for other activities as needed; c) Chapter Discussion on one of the chapters in the UU Pocket Guide led by one of the Mentors; d) a Fun for Everyone Time for the group to enjoy some sort of planned recreational activity. The course instructor(s) are responsible for and should attend all of the group meetings.

PERSONAL TIME

One Sunday morning each month will be free for each youth to work on individual curriculum activities or to meet with his/her mentor.
MENTOR MEETINGS

THE Mentor and youth will meet together for approximately 1 hour each month (at a time and place of their choosing) to review accomplishments, work on curriculum activities, assess progress, and discuss any problems.

INDIVIDUAL CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES:

The curriculum of individual activity requirements is divided into 7 categories of church life. This is the "core" of the curriculum and the area which most involves the Mentor. Under each category is a list of activities. Some are required activities which everyone must do and are preceeded by an asterik (*). The others are optional activities from which the youth must select two in each of the 7 categories. Note: any youth working on the scouting religious emblem must select those activities preceeded by an (s). The youth and mentor will together identify all of the activities the youth wishes to work on and project times & dates for their accomplishment. Where appointments need to be made, the person whose signature is required is the person who needs to be contacted for that particular activity. Signatures indicate that the activity has been completed. Each activity is worth one point and a total of 28 points must be earned in order to participate in the end of the year Recognition Ceremony and be eligible to go on the heritage trip to Boston.

THE BOSTON TRIP:

The youth, their parents, and the course instructors will be responsible for the planning, preparation, and fund-raising for the Boston heritage trip in June. The course instructors will accompany the youth on this trip.

All of the youth are expected to participate in all of the fund raising activities. (Course instructors should keep track of each youth's contribution of fund-raising time.

It is recommended that the fund raising activities be group oriented rather than individually oriented. Each parent should be responsible for the organization and implementation of a fund raising activity.

THERE IS MUCH TO DO! READY, SET,—GO!
THE TJMC CHALLENGE: UNITARIAN/UNIVERSALISM

VALUES AND BELIEFS
(choose two activities in addition to those required *)

* 1. Read the Forward and first chapter entitled, "Our Beliefs", in the UU Pocket Guide. Discuss the chapter with your Mentor. (Refer to calender for discussion date)

(Mentor's Signature & Date)

* 2. Using the guidelines on the following page, write your own statement of personal theology. Share what you have written with your Mentor and ask your Mentor to share his/her statement with you. (The CREDO Workshop is intended to assist you with this activity - see Calendar).

(Mentor's Signature & Date)

S-3. Read about the beliefs of one other religion: Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Mormon, Quaker, Mennonite, Hindu, Buddhist, Islam, or other. Write a short essay about the religion including: major beliefs, values, religious practices, and celebrations. Discuss your findings with your Mentor. What aspects of this religion did you like and dislike?

(Mentor's Signature & Date)

4. Read about and be able to explain to your Mentor: the Ten Commandments, the Sermon On the Mount, Buddha's Eightfold Path, the Hindu Caste System. What are the differences and similarities? What characteristics are common to all? Discuss your findings with your Mentor and write your own rules for living.

(Mentor’s Signature & Date)

5. Compare the Bible story of creation with the scientific story. What are the differences? How do you account for the differences? How do both versions contribute to our understanding of life? Discuss with your Mentor.

(Mentor’s Signature & Date)
6. Interview 6 adult members of the congregation on their view of the Bible and their concept of Jesus. Summarize your findings and report to the class. Be prepared to share your thoughts on those subjects as well.

(Course Instr. Signature & Date)

S-7. A) Because Unitarian/Universalism is a relatively small denomination compared to others and often difficult to explain, many people do not understand our principles and practices. Have you ever felt ridiculed or discriminated against because of your affiliation with Unitarian/Universalism? Give examples. How did you feel? How did you react? Discuss those experiences with your Mentor and ask your Mentor to share his/her experiences and reactions with you.

B) How do you deal with situations in which religious activities are involved, but where your religious point of view is not considered? Think of examples and discuss them with your Mentor.

C) Discuss with your Mentor the decisions you think you would make if you were involved in the following hypothetical situations:

1) You have several friends at school who have become members of the youth group of a large Christian church in your neighborhood. They have great parties, trips, and programs which you know you would enjoy. They also have a worship service, prayer, and Bible study at each meeting. Your friends keep encouraging you to come. What would you do and why?

2) You find yourself happily involved in a supposedly secular (non-religious) organization which in fact imposes certain religious practices and beliefs (ex. school, Scouting, camp, sporting events, businesses, government, etc.). These religious practices and beliefs are contradictory to your own religious beliefs and possibly to those of others. What would you do and why?

(Mentor's Signature & Date)
THE CHALLENGE: UNITARIAN/UNIVERSALISM

GUIDELINES FOR STATEMENT OF PERSONAL THEOLOGY

Complete the following sentences about major areas of religious belief in your own words, according to your own ideas about them right now. There is no such thing as a "wrong answer".

1. People are

2. When I die I

3. War is

4. Prayer is

5. Tragedy is usually the result of

6. God is

7. Jesus is

8. The religions of the world are

9. Love is
THE TJMC CHALLENGE: UNITARIAN/UNIVERSALISM

FELLOWSHIP

(choose two activities in addition to those required *)

* 1. Read the second chapter of the UU Pocket Guide entitled, "Our Caring Communities". Discuss the chapter with your Mentor. (Refer to calendar for discussion date)

........................................................................
(Mentor's Signature & Date)

* 2. Attend at least one LRY meeting.

........................................................................
(LRY Advisor's Signature & Date)

3. Invite your Mentor to attend a school or extracurricular activity in which you are involved.

........................................................................
(Mentor's Signature & Date)

4. Attend at least one all church fellowship activity and share your experience with the class.

........................................................................
(Course Instr. Signature & Date)

5. Attend one of the following conferences and report to the class: the Virginia UU Conference, our District Conference, the LRY Conference.

........................................................................
(Course Instr. Signature & Date)

6. Attend the Canvass "Kick-Off" Dinner with your parents.

........................................................................
(Parent Signature & Date)
THE TJMC CHALLENGE: UNITARIAN/UNIVERSALISM

HISTORY AND TRADITION
(choose one activity in addition to those required *)

* 1. Read the third chapter of the UU Pocket Guide entitled, "Our Roots". Refer also to pages 84–91 for important historical dates. Discuss with your Mentor. (Refer to calendar for discussion date)

(Mentor's Signature & Date)

* 2. View the Univision video tapes "The History of Unitarian/Universalism in North America" Parts I and II. (See calender for workshop date).

(Course Instr. Signature & Date)

* 3. Learn about our local church history, the significance of the Jefferson Room, and our relationship with Thomas Jefferson. Examine our church albums and other items of historic interest in our church building. (See calender for workshop date).

(History Committee Sig. & Date)

4. Attend one of the Minister's "newcomer" orientation sessions on Unitarian/Universalism.

(Minister's Signature & Date)

5. Research and discuss the following subjects with your Mentor:
   (a) the historical-religious meaning of the names Unitarian and Universalism. What were the differences between the two groups? What was the basis for the eventual merger of the two groups into one denomination? How and when did this merger occur?

   (b) What are some of the historic and symbolic meanings of the "flaming chalice"? How and why has it become the symbol of Unitarian/Universalism?

(Mentor's Signature & Date)
S-6. Select a famous Unitarian or Universalist from your stamp booklet of Famous UU's to read about in depth (check the RE Library for reference books). Write down your answers to the following questions: Which of the first four purposes of the UUA listed on p. 92 of the Pocket Guide does this person's life exemplify? What were the major turning points experienced by this person which gave a direction to his/her life's work? What kind of lasting contribution did this person make to humanity? What institution carries on his/her work today? Tell this person's life story to the church school children during a children's worship service.

_________________________
(DRE'S Signature & Date)
THE TJMC CHALLENGE: UNITARIAN/UNIVERSALISM

WORSHIP

(choose one activity in addition to those required *)

* 1. Read the fourth chapter of the UU Pocket Guide entitled, "Our Ways of Worship". Discuss with your Mentor. (Refer to calendar for discussion date)

-----------------------------------------------
(Mentor's Signature & Date)

* 2. Attend at least two regular adult or all-family worship services and make notes answering the questions below. Make an appointment with the Minister to talk about the services after you have attended both:

(a) Which parts of the service did you react the most strongly to? Which part appealed to your emotions, and which part appealed to your thinking? What did the service tell you about UU beliefs and the UU Church community?

(b) Why was each service put together the way it was? Why do you think particular parts of the service happen the way they do, when they do?

-----------------------------------------------
(Minister's Signature & Date)

* 3. Participate in planning the end-of-the-year Recognition Service. (See calendar for workshop date).

-----------------------------------------------
(Course Instr. Signature & Date)

4. Attend choir rehearsal and sing in the choir for at least one worship service.

-----------------------------------------------
(Choir Director's Signature & Date)

5. Assist with a Sunday morning service by: serving as an usher, passing the collection plate, and serving coffee in the parlor following the service.

-----------------------------------------------
(Sun. Services Committee Sig.& Date)
6. Participate in a Sunday Worship Service as the "Lay Leader". Contact both the Sun. Serv. Chair and the Minister to arrange.

(Minister’s Signature Sig.& Date)

7. Read and discuss with your Mentor: The 23rd Psalm (found in the Book of Psalms in the Old Testament) and The Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:9-15 in the New Testament). These are the two most famous and most widely known prayer/poems in the entire Bible. What are their differences and similarities? Why do you suppose they are so famous and so widely used? Why are they considered expressions of worship? Read some of the readings at the back of our hymnal which we also consider expressions of worship. Select one which especially appeals to you and discuss your reasons with your Mentor.

(Mentor’s Sig.& Date)
THE TJMC CHALLENGE: UNITARIAN/UNIVERSALISM

SERVICE AND SOCIAL CONCERN
(choose two activities in addition to those required *)

* 1. Read the fifth chapter in the UU Pocket Guide entitled, "Our Concern for Social Justice". Discuss with your Mentor. (Refer to calendar for discussion date)

(Mentor's Signature & Date)

* 2. Learn about the duties and responsibilities of our Social Responsibility Committee. Learn about the social issues they are involved with and the projects they are doing. Find out how priority concerns are established by our congregation. Why is social responsibility so important to Unitarian/Universalists? How has our church and individual members contributed to social issues and projects within the community over the years? (See calendar for discussion date).

(Social Resp. Committee Sig. & Date)

S-3. (This activity is worth 2 points) Plan and undertake a service project either within or outside of the church. It must be work which either contributes to the health of your church or that furthers a social cause that is important to you because of your UU values and beliefs. It must be AT LEAST 10 hours worth of volunteer work. Keep a written log of what you did, when, and the amount of time spent.

(Course Instr. Signature & Date)

4. Assist with Sunday morning child care in the nursery or with some other RE activity as requested by the DRE.

(DRE Signature & Date)

5. Participate in a Building & Grounds Committee work party.

(Bldg.& Ords. Committee Sig. & Date)
6. Assist with the Bulletin production one Saturday morning.

(Bulletin Committee Sig. & Date)

7. Participate in a social action activity or project sponsored by our Social Responsibility Committee.

(Soc. Resp. Chair Signature & Date)
THE TJMC CHALLENGE: UNITARIAN/UNIVERSALISM

CHURCH ORGANIZATION
(choose two activities in addition to those required *)

* 1. Make an appointment to talk with our church President about the organization and operation of our church: (see calendar for workshop date)

a) Officers - Who are the Officers of the church? How are they chosen and for how long? What are their duties and responsibilities?

b) What is the governing body of the church? Where and how does it get its authority? How does this differ from other religious organizations?

c) How does the Board of Trustees differ from the Program Council? Give examples of the kinds of issues that come before the Board and the Program Council.

d) Staff - Who are the church Staff? How are they hired? What are their duties? What is "special" about the Minister as a Staff member?

e) Examine a copy of the Bylaws. Why are they so important? How were they developed? How can they be changed?

f) Examine a copy of the church budget. Where does the money come from? Where does the money go? How much does it cost to run our church per day?

g) What is it like to be President of the church? Why do you do it? What do you like and dislike about the job?

(President’s Signature & Date)

* 2. Read pages 92-96 of the UU Pocket Guide and discuss the following with our Denominational Affairs Representative (refer to calendar for discussion date):

a) What are the differences between a Fellowship, a Society, and a Church?

b) What is the name of our District? What area does it cover? Which churches and fellowships are located in our District? How does the District serve us and vice versa?
c. What is the General Assembly? What function does it serve? Who attends the General Assembly and how are these people selected? Describe what happened at the last meeting you attended.

d. What is the UUA? What is our relationship to the UUA? How does it serve us and vice versa?

e. What is the Church of the Larger Fellowship, its purpose and functions?

f. Tell us about the YRUU (Young Religious Youth Organization), its history and development, its purpose, functions, and present status.

g. Tell us of your personal experiences as our Representative of Denominational Affairs.

(Bern. Rep. Signature & Date)

3. Make an appointment to interview either the Minister or the DRE (Director of Religious Education) about his/her job. Ask the following questions: What is it like to be either a UU Minister or a DRE? Why and how did you become one? What is your educational background and training? How and why did you come to UUC? What are your duties and responsibilities? What do you like and dislike about your job? What are your career goals?

(Minister or DRE Signature & Date)

4. Attend a meeting of one of the following: Board of Trustees, Program Council, or Congregation. Take notes and report to the class what happened.

(President or Vice Pres. Signature & Date)

5. Attend a meeting of one of the following committees: Building & Grounds, Finance, Membership, Religious Education, Social Responsibility, Special Programs, or Sunday Services. Take notes and report to the class what happened.

(Committee Chair Signature & Date)
THE TJMC CHALLENGE: UNITARIAN/UNIVERSALISM

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
(choose two activities in addition to those required *)

* 1. Read the sixth chapter of the UU Pocket Guide entitled, "Our Ways of Education." Discuss with your Mentor. (Refer to calendar for discussion date)

(Mentor's Signature & Date)

* 2. Using the guidelines on the following page, write your spiritual autobiography. Share your autobiography with your Mentor and ask your Mentor to share his/hers with you. (See calendar for date of CREDO workshop).

(Mentor's Signature & Date)

3. Attend an Easter, Christmas, or other religious "holy day" service or celebration at our church. Describe to the DRE what happened and what it meant to you. Discuss with the DRE why UU's observe or celebrate many religious "holy days" even though we do not necessarily share the traditional religious beliefs associated with them.

(DRE Signature & Date)

4. Assist the DRE one Sunday morning with: the children's worship service, preparation and delivery of snack trays, collecting attendance sheets, and assisting with playground supervision.

(DRE Signature & Date)

5. Serve as a teacher assistant one Sunday morning in one of the RE classes. Be responsible for a portion of the lesson plan. (Arrange with DRE)

(Teacher's Signature & Date)

6. Plan and prepare an outline for a Religious Education curriculum. What theme would you choose? What age group would you write it for? What activities and resources would you use? What topics would you cover? What books would you use from our RE library as references? Discuss with the DRE.

(DRE Signature & Date)
THE CHALLENGE: UNITARIAN/UNIVERSALISM

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING YOUR SPIRITUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

1. Time line: draw a horizontal line on a piece of paper. At the left margin make a dot and write the date of your birth; at the right margin make another dot and write the date you expect to die (life expectancy is presently 80); along the line make a third dot and write the current date. How do you feel about what you see?

2. Life functions in space. What are the places in which significant things have happened to you?

3. All life is meeting others. Who are the three or four people who have had greatest impact on your life? Why?

4. Experiences shape our religious faith. What are the two or three formative experiences of your life and why are they important to you?

5. We live in communities. Which communities, religious or not have had lasting influence on your development?

6. We are choosing creatures. Think of the important decisions in your life and discuss what they meant to you, how they were made and the result.

7. Some of our experiences we choose to call religious. Think of two or three such experiences that were turning points for you.

8. Life is made of joy and sorrow. List a few of the happiest and saddest experiences of your life.

9. Can you reflect upon your odyssey and discern any theological values that have informed you?
THE CHALLENGE: UNITARIAN/UNIVERSALISM

SCHEDULED CALENDAR DATES FOR REQUIRED (*) ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>WORKSHOPS &amp; CHAPTER DISCUSSIONS</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/19</td>
<td>Chapter Discussion - &quot;Our Roots&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/26</td>
<td>Workshop - Univision tapes &quot;History of UU in North America&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/2</td>
<td>Workshop - Local History</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/9</td>
<td>Chapter Discussion - &quot;Our Ways of Education&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/7</td>
<td>Chapter Discussion - &quot;Our Ways of Worship&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4</td>
<td>Chapter Discussion - &quot;Our Beliefs&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/31</td>
<td>CREDO Workshop (2 hrs) - includes spiritual autobiography &amp; personal theology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/8</td>
<td>Chapter Discussion - &quot;Our Concern for Social Justice&quot; - includes presentation by chair of Social Resp. Committee</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/1</td>
<td>Chapter Discussion - &quot;Our Caring Communities&quot; - includes presentation by Denom. Affairs Rep.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/8</td>
<td>Workshop - LRY Visit</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/29</td>
<td>Workshop - Church Organization</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/26</td>
<td>Workshop - Planning the Recognition Ceremony</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total Points = 15</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* If you are unable to attend a scheduled Chapter Discussion, you will need to arrange a time to discuss that chapter with your Mentor.

* If you are unable to attend a scheduled workshop, you will need to contact the person who gave the workshop and make an appointment to review the material with him/her.
June 22, 1987

Rev. Ellen Brandenburg
Youth Programs Director
UUA
25 Beacon St.
Boston, MA 02108
USA

Dear Ellen,

With church school over, I have a few weeks to try to catch up on things I've been postponing all year. One item on my list is to write back to you to explain how we did deal with our graduating class this year. I am sending you the outline of the four classes the group had as preparation for affirmation - all the time we could give the topic due to several other circumstances. I will also include the R.E. Recognition service where this group had a chance to make their affirmation statements, the order of service, a picture of the group that day, a sample of the certificate each person received and a sample of another affirmation service we had used previously.

Hopefully these will be of interest to you - a sample of how a small to middle-sized church deals with affirmation-graduation. Make use of them in any way you wish.

By the way, since this group has graduated from formal church school this spring, we will not be using either of the curricula about which I wrote to you. In the fall, they will be joining what is left of our existing youth group and on Sunday mornings volunteers of the congregation will deal with topics of their choice with the group on a monthly basis. During the annual R.E. Promotion several people expressed an interest in working with this group dealing with topics such as Feminism, the poor in Hamilton, refugees, the handicapped, etc. We will be able to assess the success of this approach as the year progresses. If there continues to be a viable number showing up on Sundays (we have a possibility of 21) we are looking at beginning HOW CAN I KNOW WHAT TO BELIEVE? in the spring.

Thanks again for your help.

Sincerely,

Barbara Wallace
D.R.E.

Encl.(6)
AFFIRMATION CURRICULUM

ORANGE STREAM APRIL '87

WRITTEN AND TAUGHT BY PAT WEBBER

This group of 8 aged 13 - 14 had spent the year doing A.Y.S. (5-6 months) and Comparative Religion (4 - 5 weeks). Although I had planned another year to bridge them into an unstructured almost inactive youth group (especially on Sundays), the class themselves pushed to "graduate" from church school this year. Most of them would be graduating from public school this spring and many parents were concerned we would lose them if we waited for even another 6 months. I discussed the situation with R.E.Consultant and former D.R.E. Pat Webber. She had known this group for several years when she was D.R.E. before me and she volunteered to plan and teach an affirmation class in the 4 weeks of April that she had available. This compromise was well received by everyone. What follows is the subject matter for these four weeks. Each member of the class was encouraged to spend some time writing every week. Since each week they were given a different coloured paper and Pat kept these, when it came time for them to write their statements, they had a lot of information from which to work.

WEEK 1 - The Past

This lesson focused on memories and knowledge gained by this group over their church school life. Old curricula were brought out for review along with old photo albums and other mementos made by these children over the years. Pat led them in a discussion of "Used to Thinks" ex. I used to think that God was an old man who sat on a cloud. Now I think that God dwells within each of us. They used this technique to talk about religion and the teenage years. Through this, they emphasized how much they had changed over the years.

WEEK 2 - The Present

This week focused on the discussion of several questions:

1. What does the church mean to me now?
2. What does U.U.ism mean to me?
3. Why am I here?
4. What will I do with my life?

They looked at the U.U. Purposes and Principles and brainstormed about what is important in their lives. Pat
led them in a Guided Mediation about what is important. She read them the story of Miss Rumfius and related this to how your values can influence your life.

WEEK 3 - The Future

This class dealt with how the individuals saw their involvement with the church in the future - what they could expect from the church and what they would give the church. This was done with writing, sharing in small groups and discussing with the entire group. Pat read them Ferdinand.

WEEK 4 - Writing Statements

During this week, Pat returned all the writings that had accumulated over the past weeks and asked each person to write a personal statement of his/her beliefs at this point in time. After the first draft time was spent with each to emphasize positive phrasing and inclusive language. When everyone was satisfied with their statement each was typed and a copy kept at the church in case of loss.

The group had a sleepover at the church one night during this time and they also had time to practise the logistics of the service.

We have a Affirmation book at our church and after the service each person had his/her picture taken signing this book. The parents of the group provided punch and cookies for everyone.

Barbara Wallace
R.E.RECOGNITION SUNDAY SERVICE
MAY 31, 1987

PRELUDE: Earthrise/Return from Fresh Aire V by Mannheim
Steamroller and London Symphony

OPENING WORDS: Welcome to the Religious Education
recognition service. This is the time we all
have an opportunity to celebrate our church's
children. All of the children are joining us this
morning - but their attention is sometimes short-
shorter than this service may be. If that is so,
parents please free to take any of them downstairs
where Sara Keaney will be glad to watch them as
they play in the nursery room. However, we do
have interesting things happening here that I hope
will catch the interest of most of us. We will
celebrate 2 Rites of Passage, see a play with a
message, sing and hear some songs. Let us begin
with some famous words WRITTEN BY: Kahlil Gibran

A
nd a woman who held a babe against
her bosom said, Speak to us of Children.
And he said:
Your children are not your children.
They are the sons and daughters of Life's
longing for itself.
They come through you but not from
you,
And though they are with you yet they
belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not
your thoughts,
For they have their own thoughts.
You may house their bodies but not
their souls,
For their souls dwell in the house of to-
morrow, which you cannot visit, not even
in your dreams.
You may strive to be like them, but seek
not to make them like you.
For life goes not backward nor tarries
with yesterday.

You are the bows from which your chil-
dren as living arrows are sent forth.
The archer sees the mark upon the path
of the infinite, and He bends you with His
might that His arrows may go swift and far.
Let your bending in the archer's hand
be for gladness;
For even as He loves the arrow that flies,
so He loves also the bow that is stable.
CANDLE LIGHTING: Tristen Lyons
Life is a gift for which we are grateful
We gather in community to celebrate the glory and
mystery of that great gift. -Anne Fields

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

COLLECTION: New Waltz by Malcolm Dalglish

HYMN: I've tried to pick some songs that appeal to the
various age levels of our church school. THIS
LITTLE LIBERAL LIGHT OF MINE I've picked for our
youngest.

RESPONSIVE READING: by Sophia Lyon Fahs

IT MATTERS WHAT WE BELIEVE

Some beliefs are like walled gardens.
They encourage exclusiveness, and the
feeling of being especially privileged.

Other beliefs are expansive and lead
the way into wider and deeper
sympathies.

Some beliefs are like shadows, darkening
children's days with fears of unknown
calamities.

Other beliefs are like sunshine,
blessing children with the warmth
of happiness.

Some beliefs are divisive, separating
the saved from the unsaved, friends from
enemies.

Other beliefs are bonds in a universal
brotherhood, where sincere differences
beautify the pattern.

Some beliefs are like blinders, shutting
off the power to choose one's own direction.

Other beliefs are like gateways
opening wide vistas for exploration.

Some beliefs weaken a person's selfhood.
They blight the growth of resourcefulness.

Other beliefs nurture selfconfidence
and enrich the feeling of personal
worth.

Some beliefs are rigid, like the body of
death, impotent in a changing world.

Other beliefs are pliable, like the
young sapling, ever growing with the
upward thrust of life.
DEDICATION CEREMONY: Each year at this service there is an opportunity for people to introduce their child(ren) who are new to the church to the rest of the congregation in a simple ceremony we call dedication. Although this is a rite of passage for Unitarians, it is not the same as baptism in the Christian churches with which most of us are familiar. Our dedication is a solemn yet festive occasion in which the parents enlarge their child(ren)'s family by introducing them to a larger social group with similar values - Our Church. On behalf of this church, all of us here promise to help the parents guide these children in their own spiritual development.

Joanne Waters, one of our chaplains will lead us in the ceremony of dedication. Will the children being dedicated and their parents please come up to the front.

SOLO: Turn Around sung by Penny Boyce. It was written by Malvina Reynolds, Alan Greene and Harry Belafonte with additional words by Farrell Boyce.

AFFIRMATION: We are also able today be witness to another Rite of Passage of our church - The Affirmation Ceremony in which the children who have completed the formal church school program have an opportunity to make a statement of their religious beliefs at this point in time. Much of this class has had 10 years of curriculum offered to them by the church. In April they worked with Pat Webber for 4 weeks reflecting these courses and memories they had during their years in church school. They then spent time reflecting on their beliefs and summing them up in a statement which we are about to hear. They, just as we, are not finished their religious journey. Next year, as part of Youth they will continue to explore Unitarian concepts on a more informal basis. Joanne Waters who has worked very closely with this class co-leading the A.Y.S. course and has formed a firm bond with this group, is going to lead us in this ceremony. Brian Reid has generously donated ceramic pendants of the CUC symbol handcrafted by Ann McNamara to each member of this group. Joanne & Jack Waters have given each of them a boutinere.
PLAY: Purple Stream under the direction of Elizabeth Beckett and Farrell Boyce

HYMN: The Purple Stream this year studied about Malvina Reynolds the writer of this lovely song. Let's stand and sing it together.

THE MAGIC PENNY

THE CONGREGATION AND R.E.: This is my opportunity to thank so much of our congregation who have spent hours preparing for and instructing the various classes. Let's face it - some days the classes are great and rewarding and some days they aren't. Some days the teachers and the children get so involved with their topic neither notices that coffee hour is over - some days both would like to call it quits at 10:35. But they hang in there trying a different tact or jumping on to a new activity if things start to lag - sometimes even scrapping the whole lesson if something more immediate needs discussing. These teachers few of whom have any formal teacher training hang in because they feel there is something of value that they as Unitarian adults can impart to our Unitarian children. They sense in this sometimes hard to pin down religion of ours the need to be a role model for our children - so our children can say She's a Unitarian but so is he and he and she and thus grasp an understanding of the wide scope of our religion.

Today is the day to acknowledge these dedicated people and thank them for their efforts during the year. As a small token of appreciation the R.E. committee has a flower for each of them. Please come forward and receive it when I call your name and remain here until I've called everyone.

I'll called 40 names and I hope I've remembered everyone. Let's thank them all.

While I'm still on the topic of thanking people, I'd also like to thank those 3 people who work every Sunday morning with our youngest children. Sara Keaney, our babysitter, Lian Shoveller, our Red Stream teacher and Jennifer McKenna, our Blue Stream teacher. These 3 impart the most basic of Unitarian values - that sense of security and community we wish to impart to our children. Would they please come forward to receive this token of our appreciation.
DEDICATION OF R.E. BOOKS: In honour of these volunteers the R.E. Committee and I would like to dedicate the latest addition to the R.E. Parents' Library - U.U.ISM IN THE HOME. This book is, just as it says, an opportunity for Unitarians new and old to look at ways of bringing our religion into your everyday life - statements of our common beliefs, famous U.U.s, a discussion concerning the use of prayer, etc.

Also at this time, I would like to acknowledge the gift of this beautiful book, BEING BORN by Sheila Kitzinger that has been given to our library by the Becketts honouring their children's (Kate and Julianna) birthdays. Thank you very much.

In honour of these 2 books I'd like to read the poem - The Generations by Antoine de St. Exupery

In a house which becomes a home,
ones hands down and another takes up
the heritage of mind and hand,
laughter and tears, musings and deeds.

Love, like a carefully loaded ship,
crosses the gulf between generations.

Thus, have ceremonies of passage:

when you wed,
when you are delivered of a child,
and when you die;
when you depart and when you return;
when you plant and when you harvest.

Bring up your children.
It is not the function of some official
to hand them their inheritance.
If others impart to your children
your knowledge and your ideas,
they will lose all of you
that is wordless and full of wonder.

Build memories in your children,
lest they drag out their lives joylessly
in a land which seems an empty camping place;
lest they allow treasures to rot away
because they have not been given the keys.

We live not by things,
but by the meaning of things.
It is needful to transmit the passwords
from generation to generation.
CLOSING: Butterflies made by the Red and Blue stream have been around us today - butterflies beautiful and free - our children. I searched for a closing that would connect these two. I didn't find one but I did find a response to the opening words I read that does reflect I idea I would to convey. It is a poem by Norma Bumgame. I'd like to read it to you and then there will be a procession of the Affirmation class to ANCIENT DREAMS BY PATRICK O'HEARN. When they have finished, please join them downstairs for celebrations provided by the parents of the Affirmation Class and the R.E. Committee. Afterwards at about 11:45 would the people involved in the Affirmation Ceremony come back upstairs to sign the book and get pictures taken.

Tomorrow's out there, child,
   I sense its pull
Upon your growing wonder
   You feel strong
And eager, ready for a life that's full
   Of grand adventure, triumph, joy and song,
Already, child, I tremble when you fly
And though I hope you'll smell the rose,
Still curled beneath I see the thorns,
My heart would try
To make my loving arms enclose your world.
I love you, though, enough to let you go--
   To watch you make your way,
Still, don't forget
That I am here to help you while you grow
And cheer each new day's steps,
   Your biggest yet.
I'll heed the Prophet's song as best I'm able,
And be for you, my child, a bow that's stable.
A Rite of Passage Liturgy
with Rationale

by

Rosemarie Smurzynski

Parents and youth are asked to come forward.

Opening Words

We are here today to recognize the completion of your program of study for this Coming of Age ceremony and to celebrate with you the faith you have come to accept through this year of questioning and investigating.

Some of you were brought to a Unitarian Universalist church to be Dedicated and Named. At that ceremony we gave thanks for the miracle of your new life, your parents affirmed their sacred responsibility to you, we rejoiced in the promise and hope of every child and the congregation pledged to promote your welfare and "the welfare of all our children to the end that they might grow in beauty, truth and love."

To that ceremony, this morning, we add this Rite of Passage. We set apart these moments to recognize the important changes in you and to celebrate a new stage in your life, one with diverse meaning.

Responsive Reading by Parents and Youth *

Parents: Once you were infants dependent upon our love and the wisdom of others.
Youth: Now we are young persons entering an adult world with increasing responsibilities for our own decision making.

Parents: Once you belonged to an environment of faith and values, outside your ability to alter or reject.
Youth: Now our world has many systems and values for us to take into account.

Parents: Once you had few choices.
Youth: Now our choices are many, sometimes frightening and always with long range consequences.

Parents: Now, as much as ever, we give you our affection and concern.

Pledge by Parents:
We stood by you in the past and we stand with you now. We offer you our continuing love.
Parents sit down and the Mentors come up.
Remarks by a mentor signifying participants study and understanding of our faith, and readiness to be affirmed.

Minister:

We celebrate with you your conscious choice to share fully in the ongoing life of our faith. Your study with your mentors has helped you grow as a person. By that study you have gained an informed understanding of our faith and have more clearly focused on your identity as a Unitarian Universalist. Now I ask you:
Do you wish to be affirmed in the Unitarian Universalist Faith?

Participant: I do.

Do you promise, as our faith instructs, to seek the truth in freedom, to show love and justice, to grow in your faith and to witness to the needed work of the world.

Participant: I do.

Do you accept participation in the life of our congregation.

Participant: I do.

May you find strength for years to come in your resolve.

Let us join together in an Affirmation of Faith:

Love is the doctrine of this church, the quest of truth is its sacrament, and service is its prayer.

To dwell together in peace, to seek knowledge in freedom, to serve humanity in fellowship, to the end that all souls shall grow into harmony with the Divine.

Thus do we covenant with each other and with God.

Now, will you share with us your statements of faith, of what you believe and what that implies for the years ahead.

Presentations:

Participants make faith statements.

President of the Congregation:

As a symbol of your commitment to our faith, we present you with the Flaming Chalice. (A symbol of our Faith) The chalice is of ancient religious significance: in it a flame signifying hope and spreading warmth and light, around it a ring signifying that all people regardless of race or creed are one. We hope you will wear it with pride.

Minister:

Will the members of the congregation please rise and express your words of commitment to these young men and women.

Congregation:

We believe in you. We promise you our continuing friendship and share with you the hopes and labors of making this a better world. May we continue to grow together and be witnesses to our confirmed faith.

Prayer:

God of our hearts, that which enlightens and ennobles us, we come together in a unity of spirit to celebrate a personal commitment of these young men and women.

We join in thanksgiving. Here we are grateful for all who have contributed to our Unitarian and Universalist faith and have brought us to today.
We join together in remembrance. Here we are reminded of all who came before us and left this church as their heritage.

We join together in promise. Here we commit ourselves to the new day dawning even as we would long for the security of the old.

In this quiet moment, blessed by remembrance and hope we pause in prayer:
Help us, O God, that we may love and serve one another.
Give us courage and strength.
Grant that we be searchers after justice and mercy.
Remind us to laugh together to lighten our burdens and
Encourage us to give back to our heritage that which will endure from generation to generation.

Amen.

Extension of Right Hand in Fellowship:
Minister, President and Mentors extend to the participants their right hand in fellowship.

Closing Words: By the youth.

We are never complete. We are never finished. We are always yet to be. May we always allow others to be, and to help and enable each other to grow toward all that we are capable of becoming. Amen

Benediction: By the minister

Now, go forth into the world in peace. Be of good courage.
Prove all things and hold fast that which is good. Amen

Rationale for the Liturgy

Walking forward together signifies a connection. The parents are presenting their children. In presenting their children to the wider community, they are indicating that their family is open, the boundaries are flexible and permeable to let others in and let people out.

Opening words express a continuity. This church is the place where you were Dedicated and Named we tell the youth: or a Unitarian Universalist Church is where you were recognized as a new being. These words also imply that the first purpose of a family is the continuance of the human species. Your parents, these words indicate, pledged to nourish you; the congregation promised it would support you. Then we add, but "a new thing" is about to happen. We are here to celebrate a new stage in your life, one with "diverse meanings." We are about another task today, the task of self-definition and of claiming one's unique personhood.

The Responsive Reading between the parents and youth makes clear that self-definition. The youth declare they are separate and distinct people with new responsibilities for being in the world. There is the recognition of change with the repeated phrases, "once you were"; "now we are." Implicit in these refrains is the grief over the "letting go" but also a recognition that we must let go for the new thing to happen.

* The Responsive Reading is adapted from Opening Words from "A Selection of Services for Special Occasions" by Silliman et al.
I have asked the parents to leave at this point, signifying their trust that their children can stand alone. I have asked the mentors to come up to signify that as we grow there are other human beings that enter our lives and give us support in our pilgrimages.

The mentor's part here is informational. They will tell us in their own words (hopefully 2-3 minutes) of the rigorous study of the participants which has occurred over the year, and the readiness of the participants to be affirmed.

The minister's response is an affirmation of that readiness, then moves to ask the youth if they are ready to make an adult commitment to their faith and to assume a responsibility to that faith in which they have been nurtured. They say "I do." The next question is a reminder of what that faith requires of them. Their assent is asked for. The third question asks for a commitment to our faith community. The minister then states that she hopes this affirmation will strengthen them in the years to come. I put this whole part in, in a vow format, so that the participants are aware of their assent and what that assent means to their religious being. I think this part furthers the process of differentiation by asking for a conscious commitment by the youth of a faith that up until now they were part of because of familial affiliation.

I put in an Affirmation of Faith here, for both the congregation and the youth to reaffirm why we are all here in the first place: "to dwell together... to seek knowledge... to serve humanity... to the end that all souls shall grow in harmony with the Divine." Then the youth make their own faith statements. This is "what I believe." Here they state their own autonomy, here they are free to differ, here they claim the validity of their own thoughts and beliefs. They here take responsibility for their own religious being by stating the content of their faith.

The gift by the president of the congregation is an embodiment of that commitment. The gift is an historic symbol of our faith, the flaming chalice.

The congregational response in affirmation of the youth is crucial. The congregation promises to walk with the youth in their pilgrimage, sharing "hopes and labors." This is done in friendship and in witness to the world's calling. Here is played out the dynamic balance between leaving and joining, between separation and coming together. The youth after declaring their separateness are now brought into community. This congregational response captures the meaning of Tillich's statement: "Persons can grow only in the communion of personal encounter. Individualization and participation are interdependent on all levels of being."

The prayer is a prayer of promise and hope naming our reason for gathering, recalling all who have come before us, reminding us of our tasks to the generations that follow and petitioning whatever is the noblest within us to give us strength and resolve. It is in here as a summary statement in prayer form of what unites us.
The Right Hand in Fellowship continues the theme of connection of separate selves in community.

The Closing Words said by one of the youth stresses what developmental theories, both theological and psychological, point to: "the perfection is in the becoming."

The Benediction is the good word from which we go forward. It is yet another statement of things we hold true.

The party is a wonderful celebration for all!

This is an important ceremony for our youth and for our church. Exupery says, "Do not neglect the ceremonies of our passage." He is right, and this passage in our tradition has been neglected long enough.

This ceremony as planned, in addition to being supportive of youth in transition, has a threefold effect on the adults: 1) to help parents recognize and grieve the ending and the beginning in this natural yet difficult developmental passage for both themselves and their children; 2) to help us adults to see our youth in new and more responsible ways; and 3) to help the congregation reaffirm its own faith commitment and understanding of why they are in the church rather than not.
THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF SANTA BARBARA
COMING OF AGE PROGRAM

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

We acknowledge the passage from childhood of the youth in our society by exposing them to the history and values of Unitarian Universalism and of other members of this society, by helping them explore the values of their families, by assisting them in the development of their own values, by providing the means of putting these values into practice and by a ceremonial acknowledgement of these achievements.

GOALS OF THE PROGRAM

- To provide each youth with an adult mentor from the congregation who will help the youth in the clarification of values and the practical application of these values.

- To provide adults in our society with the opportunity to explore their own values and to put them into practice by playing an important part in the development of the youth in our society.

- To provide parents with support and opportunity to help in their children's religious development.

- To provide gatherings for youth, mentors, ministers and other society members to provide information, discuss issues and develop values.

- To provide the youth with the opportunity to be of service to this society and the larger community through individual and group projects.

- To provide, in a special Sunday service, the opportunity for the congregation and parents to acknowledge and participate in this important rite of passage of our youth.

THE PROGRAM

The Coming of Age program is for young people in the seventh and eighth grades. The health of our Society depends largely on encouraging our youth to make informed decisions to continue to be Unitarian Universalists. This need is met in other religions by such ceremonies as Catholic conformation and Jewish bar and bat mitzvahs. The program is divided into three parts: education, development and service. The educational part consists of approximately eight classes, covering different religions and including the history, organization and principles of Unitarian Universalism. The classes will be presented in dramatic and interesting ways. Some may include visits to other places of worship. The development part of the program will be concerned with helping the youth explore their own beliefs and values through discussions with their families, mentors, ministers and each other. At least three meetings will be devoted to this process, one of which may be a weekend retreat with the mentors. The service part of the program provides the youth with an opportunity to put their values into practice. With the help of their mentors, they will select a project to work on that will help the Unitarian Society, a particular charity or the community in general. The program will start in September and will culminate in a special Sunday service in March. This ceremony will allow the youth to present to the congregation their expression of what they have experienced and will give the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara the opportunity to acknowledge and welcome these young people as a part of our community.
YOUTH

The youth who participate in the Coming of Age program will be expected to make a major commitment of time and effort. There will be weekly classes on UU heritage and how it relates to other religions. Other meetings will be devoted to values clarification. The youth will discuss their beliefs and values with their families, their mentors and each other. In addition, each youth will (with the support and encouragement of a mentor) be expected to select a service project that reflects his or her interests, values and talents. At least 10 hours of actual work should be spent on this project. At the end of the program the youth will participate in a Sunday service that will honor their Coming of Age.

MENTORS

Mentors are adult members of the congregation, not related to any youth in the program, who develop personal, one-to-one relationships with the young people. Mentors help the youth discover who they are and what they believe. Mentors are expected to attend some of the meetings—especially those on values development. Mentors help their partners select and work on service projects. This may include making contacts, providing transportation and, if desired, working along with the youth. Mentors will help their youth prepare presentations to be given at the Coming of Age ceremony. Mentors should be aware of the parents’ needs but be able to keep the youth’s confidences. Being a Mentor requires dedication and time commitment—the reward, in terms of applying personal values and truly making a difference in a young person’s life, is significant.

PARENTS

The Coming of Age program provides parents with a format for dealing with the moral and spiritual growth of their youth. Parents will be asked to discuss their values and beliefs with their families. There will be opportunities to meet with other parents for support and sharing of feelings. Respect for the confidentiality of the youth/mentor relationship can help parents in their own process of learning to let go. Parents can be of help in encouraging their youth’s commitment to the program and to their service projects. The parents, as a group, will plan a party or luncheon after the Coming of Age service. Parents are encouraged to share any difficulties or questions as soon as they arise with the Youth Adult Committee or the MRE.

MINISTERS

Both the Minister of Religious Education and the Parish Minister participate in the Coming of Age program. They will be a part of at least one values development meeting and will lead at least one class on UU history, organization and principles. They represent the congregation at the Coming of Age ceremony.

YAC

The Youth Adult Committee is responsible for designing and implementing the Coming of Age program. It consists of parents, the R.E. minister and other members of our congregation who are concerned about fulfilling the religious needs of those who are at an important decision-making time in their lives. The committee is open to anyone who feels that the future of our Society lies, in part, with encouraging the commitment of our youth to the principles and practices of Unitarian Universalism.
COMMITTEE

The Coming of Age committee should consist of:

One coordinator
One person for mentor program
One person for values development
One person for service projects
One person for RE program
One person for ceremony planning
One minister (probably MRE)

It should meet at least once a month (or more during heavy planning periods). Commitment is for a year (March to March). Neither the coordinator nor the minister should take on more than one of the other jobs.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Coordinator

Oversees the whole program; usually chairs committee meetings; recruits people for committee; heads calendar planning to avoid conflicts (internal and with RE and Society); connects with ministers and RE committee; reserves spaces; communicates (letters, phone calls) with parents, youth, and mentors; handles publicity (or finds someone to); arranges informational meetings; **should not take on more than one other job in the program, if that.**

Mentor Program

Accumulates list of potential mentors. Guides committee in selecting mentors and matching to youth. Invites mentors. With help from coordinator leads a mentor orientation meeting. Communicates with mentors, youth and parents on a continual basis to see how things are going (may share this with service project person).

RE Program

Sets up Sunday morning (or other times as needed) classes in the beliefs, history and organization of UU and other religions. Arranges for speakers and field trips (including transportation). Coordinates activities with values person.

Values Development Program

Sets up a series of meetings between youth and mentors to discuss religion and morals. Arranges for qualified person(s) to facilitate meetings. Arranges food/space/overnight needs. Coordinates activities with RE person.

Service Projects Program

Gets information on possible projects. Helps youth/mentor pairs get started on project. Monitors each pair's progress (may share this with mentor person).

Coming of Age Ceremony

Meets with youth and mentors to plan and rehearse the ceremony. Helps people to select tasks, monitor progress. Connects with other people involved: ministers, music people, Pat Kruger
(order of service, announcements, scheduling), Anton Johansen (physical and PA set-up), Kaleidoscope, etc. Sets up rehearsal times.

Minister

Advises committee; suggests mentors; may help arrange RE visitors/field trips; may do one class on UUism; should facilitate at least one values session; may have suggestions for service; connects with staff/congregation; helps avoid calendar conflicts; helps plan and participates in Ceremony; should not assume complete responsibility for any other job in the program.

CALENDAR

Having classes in groups of three or four with values meetings in between worked well. It would probably be good to have at least one values meeting a month. The decision to do the service projects separately from the RE and values part of the program did not work well. The mentors were more eager than expected to begin working with the youth. Suggest doing everything at once except ceremony planning. It takes a minimum of three planning sessions and two rehearsals to do the ceremony.

GENERd PLANNING CALENDAR

March:
Get planning committee together.

Set date for ceremony (consult society calendar, school holidays, minister availability, choir schedule, etc.)

Set other important dates.

Produce pamphlet/handout describing program.

Decisions to make: Group or individual service projects? How many / how often values meetings, RE classes, field trips, guest speakers? Advertise for mentors?

Get list of youth who will participate.

Get list of potential mentors; start contacting.

April:
Announce program to parents and youth. Set up informational meeting. Ask for major commitment.

Informational meeting for mentors. Should have complete list committed by end of month.

May:
Match youth to mentors.

Send notification letter.

(Group meeting?)

Semi-finalize calendar.
June-August:
Set up kick-off party.
Send out announcements.
Set up values meetings, get facilitator(s).
Set up RE schedule of classes, visitors, field trips.
Get information about service projects ready.
Finalize calendar.

Sept.-Nov.:
Have kick-off party the day of RE registration or the week after (check for room/time conflicts with RE committee).
Intersperse RE classes with values meetings. Encourage start of service projects.
Set aside one Sunday morning in November to plan holiday party.

Thanksgiving to New Year's Day:
No classes or values meetings.
Emphasize work on service projects.
Encourage participation in Society events.
Have youth/mentor holiday party (they plan it themselves).

January:
Finish RE classes and values meetings. Have a final discussion of what was learned.
Finish service projects and give final report on what happened.

February:
Plan and rehearse Coming of Age ceremony.
Get parents to plan party.

March:
Final rehearsal and ceremony.
Party.
Evaluations.
Everybody collapse.
SETTING UP THE PROGRAM

- Announcements and invitations
- Meetings
- Mentor/youth pairing
- Roster
- Mentor form
- Youth form
- Parent form

SAMPLE OF A YOUTH PROGRAM INFORMATION MEETING INVITATION

To the families of the 1991-92 Unitarian Society Junior High class:

The Youth Adult Committee (YAC) has spent this year redeveloping the Coming of Age program for this age group. A description of this program is enclosed. It is the intention of the YAC, with the support of the Religious Education Council and the Minister of Religious Education, that this program be the curriculum for the Junior High class for next fall and winter. As you can see, this is a very intensive program that requires a major commitment from the youth. Of major importance to the youth benefiting from the program is their one-to-one connection with adult mentors from the congregation.

There will be a lunch meeting on Sunday, April 21 for the youth who will be in this program and their parents (siblings welcome) to present the program in more detail and discuss suitable mentors for each youth. Please read the enclosed program guide (especially the sections on youth responsibilities and mentors). Mentors will hopefully be members of the adult congregation who are not currently involved in the religious education program. Suggestions for a mentor match with your youth will be welcome at this meeting. The YAC will also have a list of potential mentors.

This meeting is very important to your understanding of the program and to assure a good adult match with your youth in time for the Sept. 22 start of the program. PLEASE COME IF AT ALL POSSIBLE. Also, please bring a finger food to share.

Thank you,

Chair, Youth-Adult Committee
COMING OF AGE - PARENT INFORMATION

NAME: ________________________________________________

YOUTH'S NAME: ________________________________________

ADDRESS: ____________________________________________

PHONE: ______________________________________________

ABOUT MY DAUGHTER/SON:

ABOUT OUR FAMILY (how we are structured, things we do)

MY HOPES FOR THIS PROGRAM

KIND OF PERSON I WOULD LIKE TO SEE AS MY YOUTH'S MENTOR

ANY PROBLEMS I FORESEE WITH MY YOUTH'S COMMITMENT TO THIS PROGRAM
Dear

Thank you for volunteering to be a mentor in our Junior High Coming of Age program for next year. The response we have had from the congregation has been wonderful.

Enclosed you will find a more complete description of our program, a probable calendar and an information sheet we would like you to fill out. This information will be compared to similar forms from the youth and their parents to facilitate a compatible match between mentor and youth.

You are invited to bring your information form to the meeting for mentors on May ____ at 12:30 (or whenever the congregational meeting is over) in _________ Hall. Lunch will be provided.

Once again, thank you for your interest. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at 964-4565.

Chair, Youth-Adult Committee
COMING OF AGE - MENTOR INFORMATION

NAME: __________________________________________________________

ADDRESS: ______________________________________________________

PHONE: ________________________________________________________

ABOUT MY FAMILY

WHAT I DO (WORK/ACTIVITIES)

MY RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

SOCIAL CONCERNS I CARE MOST ABOUT

REFERENCES (TWO MEMBERS OF THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY)

TIMES THAT WOULD BE BEST FOR ME FOR VALUES DISCUSSIONS

[ ] Friday evening
[ ] Saturday evening
[ ] Sunday morning
[ ] Sunday evening
[ ] Other ______________________________________________________
COMING OF AGE

Dear Friends:

Hope you all had a great summer and are ready to start off our program well rested and refreshed. Our grand kick-off party will be this Sunday, Sept. _____ at 12:30 in _________ Hall (immediately following the RE registration and orientation activities). It will be a potluck lunch and will probably last until about 2:00. We urge all the youth, parents, mentors, and other participants in the program to be there as this is our big getting-acquainted meeting.

Parents and youth will need to go through the usual RE registration process and we will have the youth meet in the Junior High classroom (upstairs behind Blake Lounge) during the regular RE class time 11:00 - 12:15.

Enclosed is a list of the youth and their matched mentors. If there are any questions, please call me. We encourage the youth and mentors to get to know each other and do things together outside of the program’s planned activities. It is not too early to start thinking about what you want to do for a community service project.

We have not finalized the schedule for the first part of the year but the next planned activity for our group will be a Youth/Mentor Values Discussion (former groups have called them Firesides) on Saturday evening, Sept. ___, tentatively scheduled for 5:00 - 10:00 p.m. in _________ Hall.
RE CLASSES

The educational part of the program has been one of the weak areas and needs a lot of work.

Other Religions

We had several field trips to other places which was good but needs to include a more traditional Christian church, an actual Jewish ceremony (although the visit to the bar/bat mitzvah class was very interesting). As much as possible needs to be done on Sunday morning even if it means longer sessions. Possibly a field trip could be taken early and discussion after at the regular RE time. There needs to be more discussion about the places we go (see workbook).

UU Religion

Need to expand this part of the program. Youth need to attend one whole UU service (perhaps at Live Oak). It would be nice to develop a regular ceremony at each class meeting. The talk by Peter Haslund about the UUA worked very well because he presented the group with an actual, very controversial, problem that the UUA board had voted on and asked the youth to discuss and vote on it before telling them what really happened. UU Purposes and Principles need to be discussed on an adult level.

Workbook

The attempt to get the youth to write about their religious development in a workbook was not very successful—probably because it was too vague, too much an individual effort, and too much like homework. It would perhaps work better if it had specific questions that could be answered in a discussion after each experience with another religion (and UU). The section on talking to parents and mentors about their religious development could be done at a values meeting.

COMING OF AGE PROGRAM WORKBOOK

This workbook is to be used to help you explore and develop your religious values. Please take the time to think about the questions carefully and consult with the appropriate adults. Part of being accepted into the adult community within our Unitarian Society is to be able to express your ideas and beliefs. We hope that this workbook will help you to clarify these thoughts and also help to start the planning for the Coming of Age service that you will be presenting on March 8.

Please write at least a page for each set of questions.

I. What were your parent's religious beliefs when they were your age? What are they now? How and why have their ideas about religion and morality changed? What is the most important value they would like to pass on to you?

II. What were your mentor's religious beliefs when she or he was your age? What are they now? How and why have their ideas about religion and morality changed? What is the most important value they would like to pass on to you?

III. Write a statement about your religious and moral beliefs.

IV. What is your idea of the perfect religious worship service? Include time, place, number of people, theme, readings, music, decor, etc. Be imaginative.
VALUES DEVELOPMENT

This part of the program worked very well when there was good facilitation—nanci self was particularly well liked. There should be at least one a month. One with youth and parents (may or may not include mentors) should have more of interest to the youth.

COMING OF AGE PROGRAM
NOV. XX YOUTH/MENTOR MEETING AGENDA

6:00 - 7:00  Role playing of values judgement situations: divide up into groups of four to six people and work out a skit based on the situation you will be given on a piece of paper.

7:00 - 8:00  Watch video on how values are developed—eat munchies.

8:00 - 8:10  Brainstorm what our religious values are. These will be written on a large piece of paper.

8:10 - 8:20  Brainstorm: where do our values come from? Again put these on a big piece of paper.

8:20 - 8:55  Divide into small groups again to discuss the question: What is the biggest problem youth have today and how can the values we brainstormed help us solve that problem?

8:55 - 9:00  Gather in a big circle. Have each person rate how good they thought this session was on a scale of 1 (great) to 5 (terrible). Just go around the circle and have every person say a number (no explanation necessary).

SERVICE PROJECTS

This part of the program had mixed success. There was not enough information on what projects were available and how to start them. Those for whom it really worked were the ones whose mentors helped find good project and actively worked with them and encouraged them. One person needs to take charge and find good projects and monitor work progress. Mentor responsibility needs to be clarified. Perhaps a semi-yearlong project for the whole group should be considered.

POTENTIAL SERVICE PROJECTS

Santa Barbara Therapeutic Riding Academy: 563-1222

PAWS - Provide Animals With Shelter:  Leni Gillis 682-5091
                                        Krissi Kriewaldi 968-3298
                                        Renee Foley 965-8533

AIDS Counseling and Assistance Program: nanci self 963-3636

Direct Relief International:  965-4771

Transition House:  682-3328
Mentors should work with youth to call these places and work out a schedule with them. A minimum of 10 hours of hands-on work is required for this program, but we encourage you to do more. If you need help or if you have other ideas for a service project, please call me.

Ginny Harper
964-4565

COMING OF AGE CEREMONY

By far the highlight of the program. Needs careful and extensive planning. Date should be set a year ahead of time with ministers, staff, worship committee, etc. to avoid conflict with Society calendar. Everyone needs to agree that a whole service (just one) will be devoted to Coming of Age. Be sure to also reserve sanctuary for two rehearsals.

There should be three or four planning sessions (usually Sunday mornings) with as many mentors as possible before the rehearsals. There should be one evening meeting with the ministers to find out what kind of official ritual they want to include and how much time they need. Parents can meet at the same time and plan the final party. The youth need to take major responsibility for the program. The person leading the planning needs to be able to keep the youth on track while letting them do most of the work. Starting with a typical order of service and having them fill in or change it works very well. It helps to have a theme that ties together all the readings, talks and music.

Every youth should have something noticeable to do in the ceremony--something big as giving a talk or reading or several small things like ushering and candle lighting--whatever the individual wants to do. Youth may need to be reminded that the congregation is a part of this event and can be turned off by too radical of a service (i.e., bonfires in the sanctuary, too heavy rock music).

Things to consider:
Readings by youth
Original talks by youth (about their service project, religious development, etc.)
Music:  Organ (consult Mahlon)
        Choir (if available)
        Congregational singing
        Youth singing (individual or group)
        Youth instrumental
Ushering/collection/announcements (consult Duncan Douglas, Pat Kruger)
Decor
Ritual with mentors
Ministers/congregation ritual
Parent talk
Mentor talk
Order of service
Kaleidoscope, pulpit announcements
Publicity

First Meeting: Decide theme; brainstorm music, readings, talks, rituals; look at order of service; find out what each person wants to do; ask people to bring resources to next meeting.

Second Meeting: We found it time-efficient to divide the youth into three task groups: music, readings and talks; and ritual with mentors. Rough out order of service. Assign miscellaneous tasks.
Third Meeting: (Evening with ministers) each task group reports their decisions; ministerial input incorporated; finalize order of service; time everything possible; set rehearsal schedule.

Fourth Meeting (if possible): To catch up; redefine program; practice talks, singing, readings; time everything possible; make sure everything has been taken care of.

First Rehearsal: One week before
Final Rehearsal: Friday or Saturday night before.
WRAP UP

Evaluations
Were done at party; pretty good response; need to include return envelope.

Thank Yous
Both public and private, especially to outside people; speakers, staff, choir, Mahlon, Anton, ministers, etc.

Final Committee Meeting
To evaluate and congratulate yourselves; suggestions for next time.

Collapse!
Please rate how well each part of the program worked for you. If a particular section doesn’t apply to you put NA. Comments are welcome. Don’t sign this.

I am a _____ Youth _____ Mentor _____ Parent.

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>OK</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trips to other places of worship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visits to us by others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Peter Haslund, Carol, Sarah)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What did you like most? ______________________________________________________

What did you like least? ____________________________________________________

How would you change this part of the program? ______________________________

**VALUES DEVELOPMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>OK</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family values meeting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth/Mentor values meeting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workbook</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What did you like most? ______________________________________________________

What did you like least? ____________________________________________________

How would you change this part of the program? ______________________________
How did the actual work go? ..............................................
Did you get something meaningful out of it? ..............................
Do you feel you had enough support/assistance? ..............................

What did you like most?  ......................................................
.........................................................................................
.........................................................................................

What did you like least?  ......................................................
.........................................................................................
.........................................................................................

How would you change this part of the program? .........................
.........................................................................................
.........................................................................................

MENTOR/YOUTH RELATIONSHIP

Very Good OK Needs Improvement

Was this a good match? ......................................................
Did you communicate well with each other? .........................
Did you connect at the values meetings? .............................
Did you work together on the service program? .................
Would you have preferred more activities that would have developed your relationship? .................................

What did you like most?  ......................................................
.........................................................................................
.........................................................................................

What did you like least?  ......................................................
.........................................................................................
.........................................................................................

How would you change this part of the program? .........................
.........................................................................................
.........................................................................................
Was this successful for you? ..................................................  
Did you get to have enough input on the planning? ..................................................  
Did you get to participate as much as you wanted? ..................................................  
Was this meaningful for you? ..................................................

What did you like most?....................................................................

What did you like least?....................................................................

How would you change this part of the program?  

OTHER THINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>OK</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth/Parent Orientation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor Orientation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kick Off Party</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday Party</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After-Ceremony Party</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Communications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:  

OVERALL PROGRAM

Did you get what you wanted/needed out of this program?  

Were you kept well enough informed about the program?  

Other comments:  

May 1993

"The Coming of Age program has helped me in many ways. Through it I learned that other people my age have many of the same thoughts and feelings I do. I learned I wasn’t alone." Jessica

"In the past nine months, I have gone through a lot of changes. Coming of Age has helped me with these, and also prepared me for more changes in my future. The retreats and other sessions showed me the useful tools inside of me. Vision Quest showed me how I can use those tools to know myself better." Kristelle

"The transition from childhood to adulthood is perhaps the most significant transition a person can make. Many religions around the world have ceremonies and celebrations to prepare for and make this change. With the Coming of Age program, I am glad to say that Unitarian Universalism is finally among those religions!" David

Dear 8th - 11th graders:

The above quotes have been taken from past participants of Coming of Age (COA), a unique and exciting program which has been really rewarding for 9th to 12th grade Unitarians throughout the United States. Next year, First Parish will be embarking on its own COA program, and we invite you to consider being part of this adventure.

Coming of Age is a term used by many UU churches to describe the transition which teenagers make as they move from childhood to adulthood. It is interesting to note that in some cultures 13-year-olds are married and have children, while in our culture "adolescence" is now described by psychologists as lasting until age 25 to 30!

So, relax and take heart! COA doesn't make an attempt to create "grown-ups." What it does provide is a community of friends and stimulating structured experiences which will enable each of you to make choices about ways in which you want to grow up. It is a chance for you to find out a lot about yourself; to explore your beliefs and values, your gifts, your strengths, and your weaknesses. By focusing on four areas (knowledge, service, relationship, and spirituality), you will also have the opportunity to develop your sense of self as a Unitarian Universalist within the context of the larger world.

What COA can offer you - A chance to:

* Learn about yourself in a "hands-on" way.
* Stretch your concept of who you are and what you can do.
* Learn to work in a team to accomplish things outside the range of one individual.
* Take responsibility for yourself and accept the consequences of your decisions and actions.
* Increase self-confidence and self-esteem.
* Form deeper relationships with other UU peers who are experiencing many of the same trials and tribulations.

* Enhance your ability to communicate effectively.

* Have a say in designing your own future.

* Do fun stuff with your friends and with adults other than your parents.

**The COA Program**

*Coming of Age* is not a sit-around-on-your-hands-listening-to-someone-else-lecture kind of program! You will EXPERIENCE everything you do in COA because this program is about YOU. From September 1993 to May 1994, COA participants will come together for retreats, short sessions, outdoor adventures and social service projects (see enclosed schedule for details). The activities are monthly from September to December and twice per month from January to May. Each program component is designed to be challenging, stimulating and fun, and to contribute to your personal growth and your understanding of yourself (no easy feat!). These components range from the ropes course to a Native American Vision Quest retreat to learning meditation to dramatic improvisations, creative writing and visual arts. By the way, we are very open to hearing your ideas about what you'd like included in this program! Let us know. In case you were wondering, the COA schedule has been designed so that you can participate in the musical production directed by the Becks in the Fall. Again, see schedule for more details.

COA will culminate in a RECOGNITION SERVICE of your creation in the Sanctuary on Sunday, May 22. During this ceremony, each participant will present a personal statement or credo of his/her spiritual beliefs which will later be printed along with other COA projects, art work, etc. in a program or "yearbook." Upon completion of COA, participants are invited to sign the official church membership book and will receive the same rights as other members of our parish.

Each COA participant will have a MENTOR, an adult member of our parish, who will serve as an important companion throughout the year. This mentor will join you in an open and supportive (but confidential) relationship in which good fellowship, honesty and fun are central. The mentor will serve as resource and advisor by sharing thoughts and feelings on matters of the head (knowledge), hands (service), heart (relationships), and spirit (reverence and wonder). Mentors will attend many of the retreats, workshops and sessions, and will take part in the COA recognition service.

On your registration sheet, you may suggest two individuals as your mentor. We will try our best to bring one of them on board.

The cost of the COA program will be approximately $150 per participant. This fee will cover all trips, retreats and sessions (excluding the trip to Virginia). An exact amount will be available when we know how many people will be part of the program.

**What is Expected of Participants**

COA is completely voluntary! It is not an extension of the First Parish Sunday School. The decision to participate must be yours, not that of your parents or minister. During the course of the program, you are expected to:

* Take personal responsibility for attending each retreat.

* Participate fully in all activities and events.
* Contribute to support others in the program; be respectful of self, others and property, and consider oneself part of a larger team.

* Complete two projects in each of the four subject areas (knowledge, service, relationship, and spirituality) and share these projects with your mentor and/or the group. See enclosed list of suggested projects although you can devise your own projects, too. This is not useless "homework." Consider how much preparation goes into a Bar Mitzvah or a Catholic confirmation. By the way, many parishes require four to six projects in each subject area!

* Maintain a relationship with your mentor.

* Participate in the planning and presentation of the COA recognition service. Prepare a credo of your personal beliefs and present it as part of the service.

* Enjoy yourself and have an unforgettable year!

**Who is in Charge?**

Coming of Age will be under the ministerial guidance of Beth Graham. The program will be run by a committee made up of energetic, fun-loving, and thoughtful First Parish adults (parents and non-parents) and chaired by Nancy Kerr. The director of the program will be Robin Zucker who worked for many years as a journalist and television producer, and currently works part-time with Jan Devor in the Religious Education Department at our church. Other parishioners will help out when their particular expertise is required.

**Feedback**

We realize that there is a lot of information enclosed with this letter, but we really want you to know up front what COA is all about. Please take some time to read through the material and discuss it with your parents, friends or with someone whose opinion you trust. Beth, Robin and Nancy are also available to answer any and all questions or concerns you have about the program.

Because COA will require quite a bit of pre-planning (including matching mentors to participants), we'd like to hear from you by Friday, June 18. If you plan to participate, please fill out the enclosed registration form and information sheet and return them to Robin Zucker, Coming of Age Program, at our church address.

T.S. Eliot wrote: *"We shall not cease from exploration and the end of all exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time."

We hope you will embark on the Coming of Age adventure this September and begin an extraordinary exploration of your own mind, body and spirit.

Best,

Robin Zucker
"Whatever you can do or dream you can do, begin it! Boldness has genius, power and magic to it." - Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

**Coming of Age Schedule - OVERVIEW**

NOTE: This schedule is still tentative. Because we are hoping to tailor the COA program to OUR parish, we truly want YOUR input. Let us know what you think about the content and scheduling of the program components when you register and we will fine-tune the agenda before September!

**September to December 1993:** Candidates will participate in monthly activities / retreats / sessions which will not interfere with participation in the musical production directed by the Becks. Candidates will also start and keep a journal of the COA year, take part in a group social action project, begin their COA requirements (if desired), and attend one of the Christmas Eve services.

**Friday eve, September 10 and Saturday, September 11:** KICK OFF ORIENTATION RETREAT--THE JOURNEY BEGINS

**Sunday, October 3:** THE ROPES COURSE

**November 1993 (date TBA):** GROUP SOCIAL ACTION PROJECT

**Sunday, December 5:** ON THE PATH: THE JOURNEY CONTINUES (half-day retreat)

**January to May 1994:** COA candidates will meet more regularly, culminating in weekly sessions in May to plan the COA recognition service. Sunday sessions will either be held from 10:00 A.M. to 12 noon OR 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. **MAKE SURE TO MARK YOUR PREFERENCE ON YOUR REGISTRATION SHEET!** Journal will be continued; COA requirements will be undertaken and completed by May 15.

**Friday eve, January 14 and Saturday, January 15:** THE WIZARD OF OZ RETREAT (with overnight at church)

**Sunday, January 30:** BIRTH--THE FIRST RITE OF PASSAGE

**Sunday, February 13:** COMING OF AGE RITUALS

**Sunday, March 6:** COA GROUP SKI TRIP

**Sunday, March 13:** CREDO WRITING WORKSHOP

**March or April 1993 (date TBA):** GROUP SOCIAL ACTION PROJECT

**Sunday, April 10:** VISION QUEST PREP / LIVING A LIFE OF NO REGRETS

**April 19 to 24:** Youth trip to Virginia / Washington, D.C. with Beth Graham. This is not a COA component although we encourage you to participate.

**Sunday, May 1:** RECOGNITION SERVICE PLANNING

**Friday eve, May 6 through Sunday, May 8:** VISION QUEST RETREAT (out of town)

**Sunday, May 15 and 21:** SERVICE PLANNING AND REHEARSAL

**Sunday, May 22:** RECOGNITION SERVICE IN SANCTUARY
**Coming of Age - DETAILED SCHEDULE**

**September 1993:** Friday evening, September 10 and throughout the day on Saturday, September 11. KICK OFF ORIENTATION RETREAT--THE JOURNEY BEGINS, with mentors, at First Parish. Getting to know one another, our mentors, and COA program leaders. Learning more about ourselves, rites of passage and the year ahead. Activities will include: beginning to develop group rituals; spiritual autobiography / journal keeping with Beth Graham; ideas about meditation or "looking within," the Myers-Briggs personality indicator test and what each candidate's results mean; the Mad Hatter and other revealing and fun "icebreakers;" discussions on various topics including "what do you hope to get out of the COA experience;" and lots of good food, stimulation and laughter.

**October 1993:** Sunday, October 3 (date tentative). ROPES COURSE with mentors (local facility). An exciting and challenging outdoor adventure which fosters trust, confidence and community.

**November 1993:** (date TBA). GROUP SOCIAL ACTION PROJECT with mentors. COA candidates and mentors will decide on and facilitate a project of their choice (whether it be planting gardens in Boston, marching in a demonstration, sorting clothes for Renewal House or an idea of your own creation). This activity, in conjunction with the Spring project, does count as one requirement in the "Service" category of COA "projects."

**December 1993:** Sunday, December 5. ON THE PATH: THE JOURNEY CONTINUES. HALF-DAY RETREAT with mentors at First Parish or other location. Includes lunch. Topics include: What are values? What are my values? (the provocative "Lifeboat" improvisation); the second session on spiritual autobiography with Beth Graham; "Project Listening"--listening to and accepting our peers; possibly another demonstration of / lesson in a form of meditation such as Tai Chi, or creating a personal sacred object such as a mandala, a protective amulet (necklace) or a Native American medallion. Again, lots of laughter, stimulation, creativity, and good food.

**Also in December 1993:** Attend one of the Christmas Eve services (as a group, if desired). Choose projects from list and discuss a January through May timetable for completion with your mentor.

**January 1994:** Friday evening, January 14 and all day Saturday, January 15 (includes dinner both nights and overnight at the church on Friday evening). THE WIZARD OF OZ RETREAT with mentors. This retreat focuses on making the transition from adolescence (Kansas) to adulthood (Oz). How do we get out of Kansas (childhood)?; find allies from both within and without (like the scarecrow / brains and the tin man / heart)?; escape the poppy fields (allurements that take us off our path)?; survive dangers (like the wicked witch)?; unmask false gods (like the wizard which prevent us from claiming our own truths)?; and return home (do we come home the same as when we left!?). An unforgettable experience using games, teamwork, drama, intrigue, songs, videos, intellect and spirit to navigate the journey!

**Sunday, January 30:** (Two-hour session, time TBA). BIRTH--THE FIRST RITE OF PASSAGE with parents. Parents share experiences related to the birth of candidates. This session will possibly include some focused writing or drama or art work related to the theme. Also addressed: as we grow into adults, are we giving birth to ourselves? If so, how?

**Sunday, February 13:** (Two-hour session, time TBA). COMING OF AGE RITUALS with mentors. How do different cultures and religions mark the passage of adulthood? From Bar Mitzvah to the "first hunt," we'll share our reactions to these rites. Mentors will also share their coming-of-age experiences and the rituals which marked those passages.
Sunday, March 6: COA SKI TRIP with mentors and program leaders. An all-day ski trip to a New England ski resort (TBA). Will be rescheduled if weather is unsuitable.

Sunday, March 13: (Two-hour session, time TBA). CREDO WRITING WORKSHOP with Beth Graham. First planning meeting for COA service.

March or April 1994: Date TBA. GROUP SOCIAL ACTION PROJECT with mentors. (See November for details.)

Sunday, April 3: EASTER. Attend Sanctuary Service.

Sunday, April 10: (Two-hour session, time TBA). VISION QUEST PREP. Orientation for Vision Quest weekend to be held in May. Also: Living a "Life of No Regrets," what are your dreams and aspirations?

April 19 to April 24: TRIP TO VIRGINIA AND WASHINGTON, D.C. with Beth Graham (youth will be hosted by Arlington, VA parish with which we have a reciprocal relationship). This trip is not a COA requirement although we encourage you to participate. Cost not included in COA fee.

Sunday, May 1: (Two-hour session, time TBA). COA SERVICING PLANNING and credo work.

Friday evening, May 6 through Sunday, May 8: VISION QUEST RETREAT with mentors. Location TBA although retreat will be held in a camp-like outdoor setting. Vision Quest is an extraordinary and moving experience. On a mythical level, it is the story of a hero/heroine leaving everything behind and going off alone to seek meaning, insight, and vision for his or her life. During this retreat, you are given a unique opportunity to spend time in nature alone, without the distractions of other people or material things. You will draw on what is strong and beautiful about yourself; you will confront fears and challenges; ask big questions about your life and be in an environment which allows you to be receptive to what answers or inspirations you receive from within or from nature. You will consider the following: who am I? what vision do I have for my life? what brings joy into my life? what do I have to share with others? and what kind of world do I want to live in and how can I help create it?

Vision Quest is a three-fold journey. First is severance (reviewing your life); second is threshold (entering the vision quest of the future); and third is the return (you step back across the threshold of adulthood but you are no longer the child you formerly were). Vision Quest has many Native American overtones with prayers, chants and other magical rituals you will never forget.

Sunday, May 15: Time TBA. COA SERVICE PLANNING with mentors. All requirements due.

Sunday, May 21: SERVICE REHEARSAL / FINE TUNING.

Sunday, May 22: COA RECOGNITION SERVICE IN THE SANCTUARY!!

NOTE: A celebratory event such as a dinner or party will also be planned around the time of the recognition service. You will certainly deserve it after your year of commitment to this challenging program.
"I think I have told you, but if I have not, you must have understood, that a person who has a vision is not able to use the power of it until after he or she has performed the vision on earth for the people to see." Black Elk

**COMING OF AGE PROJECTS**

All COA participants are required to complete two projects in each of the following four categories (knowledge, service, relationships and spirituality) by May 15, 1994. Participants can suggest their own projects for consideration by COA program directors.

**KNOWLEDGE**

"Knowing others is wisdom; knowing the self is enlightenment."
Tao Te Ching

1. Make a poster for the church of a UU belief and what it means to you. Display in church hallway. _____

2. Design and display a mural that depicts five significant events which take place at our church. _____

3. Attend the Concord Town Meeting, perhaps with your mentor. _____

4. Study from the Bible one passage from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament and discuss them with your mentor. _____

5. Find and interview someone of another religion. Write up interview and discuss with your mentor. _____

6. Explore the work of one of the following organizations, Mass. Bay District of UU Churches, UUA, YRUU, UU Service Committee, or International Association for Religious Freedom, by attending a meeting, visiting its headquarters or interviewing a staff member. Write up or tape your explorations. _____

7. Explore the history of First Parish and write or tape one interesting piece of information you discovered. _____

8. Write a page on one way you might change First Parish or why you would not change it. Share with mentor and with ministers. _____

9. Read one of the books from the COA-themed list and write up or tape how it relates to your life and your COA experience.

10. View a COA-themed film from the list and write up or tape how it relates to your life and your COA experience. _____

11. Learn a passage or a story from the writings of a major religion and briefly write or tape a description of how it applies to your life. _____

12. Discuss with your mentor the life and work of a famous UU whom you identify with. _____
13. Begin a new hobby and share it with your mentor. 

14. "Knowledge"-related art or music project (must be approved in advance). 

**SERVICE**

"Small service is true service... The daisy, by the shadow that it casts, Protects the lingering dewdrops from the sun." William Wadsworth

1. Group Social Action Projects of your choice in November and March/April. THIS IS A REQUIREMENT FOR ALL COA PARTICIPANTS. X

2. Participate in the Crop Walk, the Walk for Hunger or other walkathon. 

3. Discuss with your mentor the environmental problem which concerns you most. Devise a plan of action and carry it out. 

4. Volunteer to work at Open Table. 

5. Attend a Social Concerns Committee meeting and volunteer to help with one project. 

6. Briefly describe two projects our church has done over the past year to help build a more just world. Write up your report for possible inclusion in the church newsletter. 

7. Participate in a First Parish worship service, e.g., ushering, greeting, etc. 

8. Write and send a letter to the President or a member of Congress about an issue which concerns you. Share it with your mentor. To go one step further, organize a letter writing campaign at church during Coffee Hour. 

9. Assist the AIDS Action Committee on a project. 

10. Volunteer to work at the Dignity Dinner at Arlington Street Church. 

11. Do a good neighbor project for someone in need. Write up how your kindness affected this individual. 

12. "Service"-related art or music project (must be approved in advance). 

**RELATIONSHIPS**

"All of us are interdependent. Whether we realize it or not, each of us lives eternally in the red." Martin Luther King, Jr.

1. Visit an elderly Concord resident with your mentor. 

2. Visit a Parish member who is hospitalized. 

3. Volunteer for one stint as a baby sitter through the Caring Council. 

4. Chair a family meeting covering an agenda of things you think are important aspects of family life. Write up the topics discussed and the outcome. 

8
5. Interview a grandparent or parent about their relationship with their parents during their adolescence and teen years.

6. Female candidates locate a Women's Group and male candidates locate a Men's Group within the church, and interview a member of that group about its purpose and importance. Write up the interview.

7. Draw a spiritual family tree.

8. Discuss with a good friend of another religion how your different beliefs affect your relationship. What are your similarities and differences? Write or tape your feelings.

9. Write a letter to a sibling (or another family member) expressing why that person is important or special to you. Share with your mentor.

10. Interview our ministers about their working relationship. Write up interview.

11. Interview a member of the church staff about how our church works. What are the relationships between committees and departments?

12. "Relationship"-related art or music project (must be approved in advance).

**SPIRITUALITY**

"The most beautiful emotion we can experience is the mystical. It is the sower of all true art and science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger is as good as dead." Albert Einstein

1. Interview your mentor about his/her spiritual beliefs. Write or tape summary.

2. Visit another house of worship with your mentor.

3. Write or tape your ideas about God and how they have changed since you were little.

4. Name four UU principles and define each in your own words with an example of how you live, or would like to live, each of those principles. Share with your mentor.

5. Design a record album cover or poster, write a song, or create a dance which makes a statement about your spirituality.

6. Learn about a spiritual practice such as Tai Chi, Yoga or martial arts. (Resource persons are available at our church). Learn several exercises and share them with your mentor.

7. Read materials about Native American spirituality (available through COA) and create your own Medicine Wheel.

8. Create a spiritual family tree.

9. Spend time in nature and write about how the natural world relates to your spirituality.

10. Interview one of our ministers about his or her spiritual path. Write or tape summary.

"I believe that each new generation arrives bearing a message that it must deliver; our role is to help that delivery." Andre Gide
Coming of Age Program - LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD MENTORS

In September 1993, First Parish will embark on the pilot year of our own COA Program. Geared towards our 9th to 12 grade youth, COA is a rite-of-passage experience during which participants explore who they are and what they believe in. The program includes retreats, ranging from half-day to weekend length, such as "The Wizard of Oz" (getting out of adolescence and into adulthood) and the Native American Vision Quest; shorter sessions and workshops at the church on such topics as values, peer leadership, and meditation; and outdoor challenges such as the ropes course. Participants also keep a journal and complete projects in the four focus areas of the program: knowledge, service, relationships and spirituality. COA culminates in a recognition service in May 1994, during which participants share their individual credos.

Each COA participant will have a MENTOR, an adult member of our parish, who will serve as an important companion throughout the year. This mentor will join a youth in an open and supportive (but confidential) relationship in which good fellowship, honesty and fun are central. The mentor will serve as resource and advisor by sharing thoughts and feelings on matters of the head (knowledge), hands (service), heart (relationships), and spirit (reverence and wonder). Mentors will attend many of the retreats, workshops and sessions, and will take part in the COA recognition service.

The COA program is now looking for a few good mentors to serve in this rewarding and stimulating capacity for our youth. You need not be a parent to be considered. In fact, we encourage adults with no children or grown children to strongly consider being a mentor.

If you are interested in finding out more about COA and the mentor role, please fill out the enclosed form as soon as possible and return it to the First Parish office. You will receive a detailed package of materials to review, including a schedule. If you wish to discuss the program, please contact Beth Graham or Robin Zucker.

"If a child is to keep his or her inborn sense of wonder, she or he needs the companionship of at least one adult who shares it, rediscovering the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in." Rachel Carson
MENTOR: 1. a friend of Odysseus who entrusted him with the education of his son, Telemachus. 2. a trusted and wise counselor and advisor. 3. a loyal advisor, tutor or coach.

____ I am interested in finding out more about being a mentor.

Please send me a COA information packet.

NAME: ___________________________ AGE: _____ SEX: ______

ADDRESS: ____________________________________________________________________________

HOME PHONE: _______________ WORK PHONE: _______________

Why are you considering becoming a mentor?

Are you a parent? If yes, how old are your children?

What do you do for fun? Hobbies / interests?

Would you describe yourself as introspective? Do you like to discuss thoughts, feelings and beliefs?

How would you describe your personal relationship with Unitarian Universalism?
REGISTRATION FOR COMING OF AGE PROGRAM 1993/94

NAME _______________________________ D.O.B. ______

ADDRESS ______________________________ ZIP ______

PHONE ____________________ GRADE AS OF SEPT 93 ______

SCHOOL ATTENDING ______________________________

FATHER'S NAME ______________________________

ADDRESS IF DIFFERENT ______________________________

PHONE IF DIFFERENT ______________________________

MOTHER'S NAME ______________________________

ADDRESS IF DIFFERENT ______________________________

PHONE IF DIFFERENT ______________________________

SIBLINGS and ages ______________________________

SUNDAY SCHEDULE PREFERENCE (check one): 10 a.m. to noon ______ 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. ______

MENTOR PREFERENCE: 1st choice ______________________________

2nd choice ______________________________

SPECIAL NEEDS OR CONSIDERATIONS: ______________________________

______________________________

$50 DEPOSIT ENCLOSED ______

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT ______________________________

PLEASE WRITE ANY IDEAS, COMMENTS, OR SUGGESTIONS ON THE BACK OF THIS SHEET.
COMING OF AGE - INFORMATION SHEET

NAME: ____________________________________________

WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT YOU THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE? INTERESTS? HOBBIES? SCHOOL?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE BOOK/KIND OF BOOK? FAVORITE MOVIE/KIND OF MOVIE? FAVORITE MUSIC/KIND OF MUSIC?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

WHO ARE YOUR HEROES?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR IN A FRIEND?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

WHAT ARE YOUR CURRENT BELIEFS ABOUT "GOD"?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

WHAT DO YOU WISH TO GET OUT OF THE COMING OF AGE PROGRAM?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
AFFIRMATION 1996

GOALS & METHODS
(PART I - GOALS)

Welcome to Affirmation 1996. This is your year, the year in which North Shore Unitarian Church invites you to receive special recognition and to prepare, if you so choose, for membership in our church.

There is the saying that a journey of 1000 miles starts with the first step. We hope your religious growth will be a lifelong journey. And you are now mature enough, we feel, to take the first independent step.

Nothing worthwhile, of course, is accomplished without some effort. Like your friends preparing for their Confirmations or Bar Mitzvahs, you will be asked to complete certain requirements to show the progress of your knowledge and your spiritual development. Young people at age 14 who have completed the Affirmation Program are eligible to sign the membership book and become voting members of North Shore Unitarian Church, should they desire to do so.

GOALS

1. To help our youth understand what it means to be a UU -- how the Unitarian Universalist religion is unique from other religions, and what its valuable contribution is to humankind.

2. To assist participants in clarifying their own religious beliefs.

3. To provide opportunities for youth to interact with adults so that meaningful relationships can be developed, and to show our youth that adult members care about their thoughts and feelings.

4. To provide opportunities for independent thinking, assuming responsibility, decision making, and exploration of values.

5. To prepare participants for church membership.

OBJECTIVES

1. Each Affirmand will establish a relationship with a Mentor who will assist the participant in the successful completion of all aspects of the curriculum.

2. Affirmants will complete activities in the following five categories: UU Faith and Values, Our UU Roots, Our NSUC Tradition, Our Worship, Our Commitment to Social Justice

3. Affirmants will be able to share with their mentors and the other affirmants a statement of what is important to their faith right now.

4. Affirmants will share some aspect of one of the activities with the congregation at the Affirmation Service. They might make a statement of faith, report on a social action project they did, read a poem that reflects their beliefs, etc.
AFFIRMATION 1996

GOALS & METHODS
(PART II - METHODS)

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS!

We will be pairing you with an adult in the church who will work with you through the whole program. This person will be your MENTOR. You will meet together for at least one hour each month at mutually convenient times.

Then, with the help of your Mentor, and through working on your own, you will gain knowledge in these FIVE REQUIRED AREAS:

* UU Faith and Values
* Our UU Roots
* Our NSUC Tradition
* Our Worship
* Our Commitment to Social Justice

To make it more personal and enjoyable for you, there are suggestions in most of these areas from which you may choose. The following pages will help you make your choices with your mentor.

When you have chosen how to fulfill requirements in the five areas, you and your mentor will draft a Learning Covenant together, and project a timeline for the completion of your learning activities. This Covenant can be reviewed by the DRE, and should be brought to the December meeting.

Approximately each month you will read a brief (promise!) chapter of The UU Pocket Guide. Then you and your Mentor will meet together for approximately 1 hour (at a time and place of your mutual choosing) to discuss the chapter, review accomplishments, work on curriculum activities, assess progress, and discuss any problems. Some of the chapters are assigned to certain months, to coincide with what Gary will be sharing that month. However, starred (*) activities, while best done in the month they are listed under, can be done in which ever order you would like. Just make sure you start doing them soon enough that they don't pile up.

You will be meeting with the Minister and DRE during your regular R.E. time on the following Sundays: October 1, November 5, December 3, January 28, March 10, and April 14. These meetings will be another opportunity for you to check on your progress, to share with other members of the Affirmation Class, and to discuss various topics with Gary and Gaia.

Towards the end of April, Affirmants, Mentors, the Minister and the DRE will be planning for the Affirmation Service on May 5.

The weekend of May 4-5 will be a very special one. Affirmants will participate in rituals conducted by either the men or women of NSUC, they will have a dinner with their parents and mentors, and then participate in the Sunday service.
AFFIRMATION 1996

ACTIVITIES -- OCTOBER

UU ROOTS

A. Gary will be talking about UU History in your class on October 1. If you cannot be at that class, you must attend one of the monthly Visitor Orientations, at which he gives a similar talk.

B. Read the chapter "Our Roots" in the Unitarian Universalist Pocket Guide and discuss it with your mentor.
   Sample Questions:
   - What was the original Universalist "heresy?"
   - What was the original Unitarian "heresy?"
   - Who were some of the people who brought Universalism to the US?
   - What is congregational polity?
   - Who is William Ellery Channing?

*C. Choose one area to study from those listed below. The names in italics are just suggestions of specific topics you might want to study. After you've made your selections, talk with Gaia or Gary about appropriate reading material for the subjects.

   History
   Breaking Away from Roman Catholicism: Earliest UU Roots (14th - 16th Century)
   Religion and the Challenge of Science (Servetus, Copernicus, Priestly)
   Women on the Cutting Edge (Olympia Brown, Susan B. Anthony)
   Abolitionism & the Struggle to End Slavery
   Liberal Religion and the American Struggle for Independence (Adams, Jefferson)

You may also choose to read a biography or see a movie about a Unitarian or Universalist and discuss with your Mentor how that person's life exemplified at least two of our Seven Principles. If you look in the juvenile biography section at a library or bookstore, you will see we are well represented! The movies Glory and Little Women are about Unitarians. You might find other examples.
UU FAITH AND VALUES

A. You will be given a questionnaire to ask your parent(s) about the religion they were raised in and why they become UU's or why they decided to remain UU's. You will share this at our November 5 meeting.

B. Read and discuss "Our Faith" in The Unitarian Universalist Pocket Guide and discuss it with your mentor.
   Sample Questions:
   1. Discuss the quote "We respect the answers offered by Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, and the world's other great faith traditions . . . but we respect the mystery more."
   2. What are some beliefs which would not be acceptable to UU's?

C. Affirmant and mentor should take the following survey together and compare results. Then compare those results with the larger survey done by denominational survey. Use this survey when creating your statement of personal beliefs.

Start by discussing the meaning of these values with each other. Then rank the following qualities in order of priority to you and your life (1 is highest):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEANS (INSTRUMENTAL VALUES- how I want to conduct my life)</th>
<th>ENDS (TERMINAL VALUES- what I want out of life)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ambitious</td>
<td>a comfortable life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>broadminded</td>
<td>a sense of accomplishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>capable</td>
<td>a world at peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cheerful</td>
<td>a world of beauty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clean</td>
<td>an exciting life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>courageous</td>
<td>equality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forgiving</td>
<td>family security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>helpful</td>
<td>freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>honest</td>
<td>happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imaginative</td>
<td>inner harmony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>independent</td>
<td>mature love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intellectual</td>
<td>national security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>logical</td>
<td>pleasure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loving</td>
<td>salvation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obedient</td>
<td>self-respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>polite</td>
<td>social recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>responsible</td>
<td>true friendship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-controlled</td>
<td>wisdom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AFFIRMATION PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Due November 5 -- please bring to class

To affirmants and parents: This questionnaire is designed to help affirmants learn what their parents' religious beliefs are . . . and perhaps the parents will learn something as well. We will ask the affirmants to share these questionnaires in class on November 5.

We hope the parents will be willing to share their deepest feelings and beliefs with their children. At the same time, we understand parents might not want some of their innermost thoughts shared with the class. In those cases, please have the private discussion, but leave the question blank on the questionnaire, or put down a more cursory answer.

Thank you, parents, for helping us as we try to encourage your children to explore their own spiritual depths.

Gary & Gaia

WHAT RELIGION WERE YOU RAISED IN?

WHAT RELIGION(S) WAS (WERE) YOUR PARENTS RAISED IN?

WHAT WAS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF GOD AS A CHILD?

WHAT IS IT TODAY?

WHAT DID YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT THE RELIGION YOU GREW UP IN?

WHAT DID YOU LIKE THE LEAST?

WHEN AND WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO BECOME A UU; OR IF YOU WERE RAISED UU, WHEN DID YOU MAKE A CONSCIOUS DECISION TO REMAIN SO?

DESCRIBE A SITUATION IN WHICH YOUR RELIGIOUS FAITH WAS A SOURCE OF SUPPORT AND/OR INSPIRATION.

HOW HAS YOUR RELIGIOUS FAITH SERVED YOU IN TIMES OF SUFFERING OR GRIEF?

WHEN AND HOW HAS YOUR RELIGIOUS FAITH CHALLENGED YOU TO TAKE A STAND OR change your life in some way?
NSUC TRADITIONS

A. Together the class will have a tour of NSUC (including its fused glass windows and memorials).

B. Read and discuss with your mentor "Our Ministry" in *The Unitarian Universalist Pocket Guide*.

*C. Choose one of the following options:

1. Select a long-time member of NSUC and interview that person about his or her involvement at the church and about his or her commitments, interests, goals, etc. (in other words, that person's ministry to NSUC, and also what the person feels he or she gets in return from NSUC). This person may not be your mentor, but your mentor can help you find someone.

2. Learn about our Lay Ministry Program, in which trained members of the congregation help others in time of crisis or emotional need. Interview one of our six lay ministers.

3. Attend a Board or Council meeting to find out how NSUC conducts its business.
JOUR WORSHIP

A. Read and discuss with your mentor "Our Worship" from The Unitarian Universalist Pocket Guide.
   Sample questions:
   1. What rites of passage do we celebrate at NSUC?
   2. What rituals do we observe at NSUC?
   3. Compare a Sunday morning order of service with the service as described in the book.

*B. Choose from one of the following options:

1. In addition to public worship, UU's feel finding ways to let your own soul/inner voice communicate with your conscious mind is an important piece of having a religious life. You may already be doing something which encourages this inner voice to be heard and integrated into your outer life, such as daydreaming, keeping a journal, doing artwork, having deep conversations with friends. Traditional ways of feeding the soul have included prayer, meditation, service to others, reading spiritual texts, being with nature, chanting, singing, or yoga.
   Choose a spiritual discipline that appeals or intrigues you. Speak with your Mentor, and with Gary or Gaia if you want, and plan a path of caring for and feeding your soul. Keep track of your thoughts and feelings and anything you might want to create from it. If you like, you can share some of this process at the affirmation Service.

2. Attend a service at a temple or church other than NSUC (preferably at a time so you don't have to miss being at NSUC!) Discuss with your mentor: What was the form of worship? What rituals did you observe? How did you feel personally during the service--did any parts of it speak to you? How? How did the service compare to worship at NSUC?
AFFIRMATION 1996

ACTIVITIES--UN SCHEDULED

OUR COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL JUSTICE

A. Read and discuss with your mentor "Our Action for Social Justice" and "Our commitment to Racial and Cultural Diversity" in The Unitarian Universalist Pocket Guide.

B. You will have the opportunity to work with our "People Helping People" program, where NSUC members help to feed the homeless on the third Sunday of each month.

*C. Choose from one of these activities:

1. Volunteer to serve in some capacity with one of the following committees. Ask the group to assign you a Liaison whom you can work with, ask questions of, report to, etc. (Your Mentor can help you make the contact.)

   Food Bank (see Margie Sillery or Bob Kollman)
   Rummage Sale (see Marcia Bernstein or Janice Moffat) (WARNING! THIS IS IN OCTOBER!)
   Social Action (see Cathy Pernu)
   Eco Group

2. Is there some issue on which you feel you should speak out? Write a letter to your Congressperson or Senators and share it with your mentor and affirmation class.

3. If it's not enough for you to write to Congress, organize a letter writing campaign at a coffee hour, and get lots of people involved. Joy Hodgen, who has done this often, can give you helpful hints on how to do it.

4. If you have some other social action or social justice activity you would like to do, speak with your mentor or Gaia.
I will do the following projects in the five required areas:

- UU Faith and Values
- Our UU Roots
- Our NSUC Traditions
- Our Worship
- Our Commitment to Social Justice

I will read *The UU Pocket Guide* and discuss it with my mentor.

I will write a statement of my personal religious beliefs, to be shared with my mentor and with the rest of the Affirmation Class.

I will create a statement, in a written or other form, of some aspect of my affirmation process to share at the Affirmation Service. (You may, instead, share your personal belief statement at the service.)

I will prepare, as asked, for the meetings with the Minister and DRE.

I will complete my Affirmation by the following date: ________________.

Affirmant

Mentor
ROLE OF THE MENTOR

We are glad you have chosen the opportunity to form a warm and supportive relationship with one of the young people enrolled in the Affirmation 1995 Program. As a mentor you will be helping your affirmitant build the bridge over which she or he will travel to a more mature understanding of and participation in the religious traditions of NSUC and Unitarian Universalism.

The building materials for this bridge include your own knowledge of Unitarian Universalism. If you feel you are a novice when it comes to UUism, than this can be an informative year for you, too!

The following list of responsibilities will help you define and carry out your role as mentor.

1. Affirmant and Mentor together create a Learning Covenant and pledge to work with one another through its successful completion. (The Covenant form is on the back page of the packet, which you should pick up from the R.E. office as soon as possible.) The "work" part of the Covenant is to decide which activity the Affirmant will do for each of the four topics in which there is a choice.

2. Meet at least monthly with your Affirmant, for approximately one hour. In preparation for these meetings, you will read a chapter (6 - 10 pages long) of The Unitarian Universalist Pocket Guide. (I have copies of the Guide.) You then will discuss the topic of that chapter with your Affirmant. Sample discussion questions are included in the packet.

3. Help your young person make choices to fulfill requirements in the 5 required areas (explained in the packet). It is best that the Affirmant do the project for each topic in the same month when you have had the discussion, but time or other scheduling problems might preclude this.

4. Encourage the young person to maintain quality in what he or she does—and be the person to "sign off" on some of these requirements, indicating they have been done satisfactorily.

5. Help the Affirmant solve problems of transportation, time conflicts, feelings of frustration, etc.

6. Show enthusiasm for the program, the church, and the value of what the Affirmant is doing.

7. Be an adult friend in whom the young person can confide freely, without fear of being subjected to parental judgment.

8. Attend several meetings to explore and enhance your role as a mentor (probably held at 10:30 on perhaps three Sundays.)

9. Be our guest at the Affirmation Dinner on Saturday, 5/4.

10. Attend the men's or women's ritual for your affirmitant (for the women, Saturday morning, May 4; for the men, possibly Friday night, May 3).

11. Participate in the Affirmation Service Sunday, 5/5.

12. Evaluations from two years ago indicate that in addition to the activities of Affirmation weekend, you should plan on spending about 15 hours on Affirmation between now and May.
AFFIRMATION 1996

ROLE OF THE PARENT

You have indicated your desire to have your child participate in the Affirmation Program at NSUC. Your child will journey through this program with a mentor. Nevertheless, you have several responsibilities.

1. Help your child be regular in attendance at Sunday morning R.E. classes.

2. Make the Affirmation meetings with the minister and the DRE your child’s first priority. Dates: October 1, November 5, December 3, January 28, March 10, April 14— at 11:15.

3. Make the Affirmation activities your family’s first priority the weekend of May 3-5.
   The women’s ritual will be Saturday morning.
   The Affirmation dinner will be Saturday evening. (At that time, the young people will also do their rehearsal for the Affirmation service.) Parents are to be responsible for the set up, food, decorating, and clean up.
   The men’s ritual has not yet been scheduled.
   The Affirmation service will be at 11:15 Young people should be at NSUC by 10:45.

4. Make sure your child returns phone calls from the mentor.

5. Speak with Gaia if you sense things are not going along swimmingly.

6. Know enough about UUism that you can appreciate what your child is accomplishing. Your child will have a copy of The Unitarian Universalist Pocket Guide. If you aren’t very familiar with UUism, you should borrow that from your child and read it.

7. Parents are responsible for facilitating the fundraising for the trip to Boston. Last year the young people earned enough to cover the costs for their three chaperons. Parents are also responsible for financing their child’s trip to Boston. You might want to make an agreement with your child as to how much he or she is to personally contribute to the trip cost.