



The United Parish in Brookline

American Baptist • United Church of Christ • United Methodist
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August 20, 2019

Dear Church School Families,

What a wonderful year we had together last year! We made Advent wreaths, joined in drum circles, went on pilgrimage, created a worship service about equality from scratch, made new friends, and much much more!

Over the spring and summer, our Children & Youth Deepening Ministry Team has been hard at work evaluating curricula, with input from both parents and teachers, and we are excited to announce that this year, we will be using the SHINE curriculum from PreK through Elementary School, and the Re:Form curriculum for 7th-12th grades. Combining these two curricula allows us to follow a progression through the years that we think works well for children and for faith formation. It begins with focusing on central Bible stories, then digs deeper into the stories from the perspective of the characters and people of our faith, and later delves into some of the deep, persistent, BIG questions about faith and Christianity.

Throughout the years, these curricula help to model spiritual practices and ways of "being church" together. We will be working on an overarching plan which will help us to outline and share which stories, characters, and spiritual practices are taught when.

We are also excited to announce that starting this year, Confirmation class will be held *every* Fall, with the rite of Confirmation happening *every* January. Our pastors and Confirmation teachers have created our very own United Parish Confirmation curriculum that we can use (and update as needed) for years to come! This year, 10th and 11th grade students will go through the confirmation process, and then from next year onward, confirmation will be solely for 10th graders.

We will be continuing our budding 'Epiphany Term' tradition, a special church school unit that runs from January 5th through February 9th. This year's theme is "The Beatitudes", and will culminate with a Children & Youth-led worship service on February 9th.

To that end, our Church School retreat will be a day-long retreat held at United Parish this year, on Saturday January 25th. This retreat will be dedicated to diving further into the lessons of the Beatitudes, and children will have a chance to work on musical, spoken, visual, behind-the-scenes, and thematic aspects of the 2/9 worship service.

In this packet, we have also enclosed some materials we hope will help you and your child(ren) ease into the church year:

- A letter from Susan DeSelms and Josaphat Contreras, our Minister of Music and Associate Minister of Music, regarding choir opportunities for children and youth.
- A Registration and Field Trip Permission Form for each child or youth in your household. It is imperative for reasons of safety as well as communication that you fill out a new registration form

for each child or youth. (Please note: children and youth may proceed to Church School class AFTER these forms are completed and submitted.)

- An Optional Opt-Out form for anyone wishing to make sure pictures of anyone in their family do not get used in United Parish publications or publicity materials.
- A Music Ministry and Church School Calendar that you might want to hang on your refrigerator or keep in a handy spot.
- An Acolyte flyer for all children entering 5th grade and higher.
- Information on what will happen Sunday, September 8, our first day of children and youth programming for this school year.

I look forward to all that this upcoming school year has in store for us all, as we deepen our faith and our community together.

Peace,

Amy Norton
Associate Pastor

Kent French
Senior Pastor

Amy Norton
Associate Pastor

Susan DeSelms
Minister of Music

Josaphat Contreras
Associate Minister of Music

Schedule for First Day, September 9th:

9:00-9:45

Carolers, Youth & Bell Choirs registration and orientation. All students interested in joining these groups must attend the orientation in the church parlor.

9:45-10:45

All children, parents, and teachers will meet in the Sanctuary to begin the Church School year with singing, prayer and a brief orientation. Children whose Church School Registration Forms and Field Trip Permission Slips have been completed and turned in will be dismissed to their classes. We will ask any child whose Registration and Field Trip Permission Form still needs to be completed to remain in the sanctuary while parents complete the registration forms.

11:00-12:00

Worship service in the sanctuary and blessing of the backpacks

12:00

All church potluck cookout!

12:30

Confirmation opening retreat (Parlor)

Kent French
Senior Pastor

Amy Norton
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