

We hope your summers have been filled with wonder, rest, and ripe tomatoes! As we prepare to take the plunge into the back-to-school season, **we are looking forward to kicking off the Church School year with your children on Sunday, September 13th!** The Children's Choir will start with an "open sing" at 9:30am in the Choir Room so all choir-curious children can see what it's like. ALL children and their guardians will then meet at 10:00am in Room 204 for church school orientation, where we will sing, pray, and complete any missing registrations.

It is vital that everyone completes our registration form, which you can access by scanning the QR code. If you already have a Realm account, some of the information will be pre-filled for you. If you are new to United Parish, have never logged into your Realm account before, or have any trouble with registering, please text Pastor Amy at 617-297-8111 and she will walk you through it.



NEW Sunday Morning Schedule: We are shortening the length of Children's Choir and Church School this year. **Children in Choir** will gather at 9:25am for a 9:30am rehearsal. **Church School** will begin at 10am on the 2nd floor. The nursery hours will remain the same (9:15am - 12:30pm), and worship will start at 11am as always.

NEW Worship Activity Time: for the months of September and October, we're piloting an activity time for children preschool age and older that will be held *during* worship. Children will head upstairs with Joey Timmons (music staff) and teen volunteers after the "peace response" for music, art, and games in Room 204. Pastor Amy or a member of the Nursery staff will lead them back to worship in time for the offering. We will be looking for your feedback after we try this out a few times!

NEW Music for Toddlers and Preschoolers: Fridays at 11am in the Choir Room with Susan DeSelms. *Susan is also hoping to have music time with young children as part of the Parents of Young Children meet ups throughout the year. Please let her know if you are interested!*

Our church school uses the **Living the Word** curriculum, by Spirit and Truth Publishing that follows the **Narrative Lectionary**. We use the same curriculum to guide our regular worship services, making it easy for the whole family to continue throughout the week the conversation that was sparked on Sunday.

Children's Choir will prepare special pieces for worship throughout the year and develop their God-given musical gifts! Children can see what it's like on September 13 at our "open sing."



Multi-generational, family-friendly events are scheduled throughout the year, including: **Pumpkin Party** on Saturday, October 24th, **Advent Wreath Making** after worship on November 22nd, and a **Community Christmas Party** on December 6th after worship; On **MLK Sunday**, January 17th we'll prepare sandwiches for the unhoused in Boston before worship, and on May 2nd we'll participate in the **Walk for Hunger**.

As always, families are encouraged to come to the **Fall Fellowship Retreat, October 9-11**, at camp Aldersgate in Rhode Island. Please **subscribe to our Children/Youth Programs and Events Calendar on Realm** by scanning the **QR code on the left**.

We hope that the United Parish in Brookline will be a safe place for your child to learn and grow both spiritually and musically, and where your child knows they are loved for exactly who they are. Our mission is to support you and your children throughout your faith journey! Consistency helps build fulfilling relationships, and we hope that you and your family will make a covenant this year to earnestly engage in our children and youth programs. No matter how often you are able to come, or how comfortable you are with the Bible, United Parish will always be here to serve as a loving, spirit-filled “co-parent,” and we believe it is an honor to be part of the village that helps raise your children.

At the end of the registration form, you will have the opportunity to download the following materials, which we hope will help your family plan for the year ahead:

- **A Church School and Children’s Music Programming Calendar**, including the monthly **Special Events**, which you might want to print and hang on your refrigerator or keep in a handy spot.
- An Optional Photography **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.
- Information about our health policy and when to keep your child home from church school.
- An introduction letter to our **Narrative Lectionary Curriculum**.

Finally and foundationally, the members of the Children and Youth Deepening team and our Music staff are with you in prayer. Associate Pastor Amy Norton-Benfield is available Sunday-Thursday with a listening ear and a praying heart to talk about your hopes and worries, or (as we say in church school) your roses and thorns. You may reach Amy via her work cell (617) 297-8111 or email amy@upbrookline.org. Minister of Music Susan DeSelms can be reached via email at susan@upbrookline.org and is in the office Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. We look forward to the opportunity to serve you and your children this year.

Wishing you a wonderful and peaceful start to the school year,

Amy Norton-Benfield, *Associate Pastor*
Susan DeSelms, *Minister of Music*

David Trumble, Chelsea Hathaway, Katy Lum, and Joey Timmons,
Children and Youth Education and Music Leadership Team