

# Faith Formation Annual Report 2024-2025

This annual report covers the lifespan faith formation program at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua for 2024-25. This year's program included online & in-person adult faith formation programs, in-person faith formation workshops and chapel services for children, weekly childcare during services, an election day camp, an interfaith youth event, monthly multiage social events, covenant groups, and multigenerational moments in worship.

And for this year all our Sunday morning programs took place at Rivier University who generously granted permission for us to use three classrooms for worship and faith formation programs.

**Budget:** The Faith Formation program operated with the following budget, exclusive of staffing expenses:

**Children & Youth Faith Formation:** \$ 3800    **Adult Faith Formation:** \$800    **Total Faith Formation Budget:** \$4600

## Children & Youth Faith Formation Program Notes for 2024-2025

Our congregational values & mission guide and ground our program. Especially our first end statement, "Know our authentic Unitarian Universalist faith identity, teach it to our children, share it with others, and live it in the world."

### Faith Formation Curriculum for Children and Youth & Numbers

- 49 families with 74 children participated in faith formation in one way or another this year.
- We welcomed 13 children from 6 new families who joined us regularly on Sunday mornings.
- 26 volunteers supported children & youth faith formation in one way or another this year.
- 24 Children in faith formation volunteered to light the chalice and open the wonder box throughout the year.
- Children's Worship childcare room staffed by volunteers and young adult staff. It was open every Sunday morning all year long! Between 6-12, little ones join in the room each Sunday. (we have fourteen 0-4 year olds). This year many of our 4 year olds graduated from this room to join us workshop choices, chapel and multigen worship days.
- Workshop choices are guided by the month's themes twice a month. We average 27 students each Sunday in these workshops, with 52 children (ages 4-13) participating during the year.
- We held a mixed-age children's chapel on the first Sunday of each month. Throughout the year, 35 children attend these chapels, with 15-23 kids each time. We found we need at least 4 adult volunteers to support this growing attendance on Chapel days.
- 8 students attended the Our Whole Lives for 7th & 8th graders and met on Fridays & Saturday from Oct-May.
- Padlet resource pages for families with resources for at-home faith formation are created by the Director of Faith Formation every month from Sept-June.
- 3 Kids Pizza and Movie nights w. D&D for teens (Sept, Jan & Apr.) This offers 3 hours of free and fun care for Children & youth while parents can attend a circle dinner. We welcome 21 children to these events with attendance of 12-18 per movie night.

### How does faith formation adapt to our current new normal?

Our program offers flexibility and recognizes the busy lives of our families and volunteers. We understand that families are increasingly visiting once or twice a month, similar to many adults in our community. The mix of children attending varies each Sunday, and we found success with offering a range of ways to connect and participate throughout each month. Families can join a monthly all-ages worship, attend Sundays where children engage in a learning children's chapel, or attend specific workshops. In addition we have families commit to all OWL Sundays for their children- although with the reality of everyone's schedules and illness we regularly miss one or two students each class. We also have families who connect and attend our special events, such as game nights, camping trips and Christmas eve services. We appreciate the time and involvement of our families, each connecting with UU Nashua in their unique way. We have seen

such growth and connection built within our community this year. We appreciate how our children have become more comfortable here, lighting the chalice, opening the wonder box, joining in reader's theater moments, singing, and playing their instruments in service! We are dedicated to creating opportunities for children, youth, and families to connect and find meaning within UU Nashua. We are nurturing a new generation of UUs who feel welcomed in our church community and embrace the guiding values of Unitarian Universalism.

### **Sunday Morning Workshop Choices for Pre-K- 8th Grade:**

Twice a month, children can choose UU Activities that use one of our core values to explore a common theme. Children and volunteers (teens and adults) start in the sanctuary at 10 a.m. and then depart for their workshop, which runs through 11:15. Our Pre K - 5th graders all gathered in our classroom space at Rivier where we divided the room into areas for each activity. (This was a new structure because in the past at UU Nashua each workshop choice had their own room.) We found both our volunteers and children liked being all together, we have a better sense of community among this age group as all our leaders start with an opening circle before the children choose their activities. Children also experienced more as they could travel within the room to do more than one activity each day. We plan to try to gather all together once we return to UU Nashua by offering our ValUUs activities in the Auditorium space.

#### **Wonder Art - Creatively led by Jess Lahens**

Our creative workshop offers art projects with a wow factor that invites children to say "Wow!" and ask, "How?"

#### **Courageous Community Games - Engagingly led by Megan Holmes & Ed Schneider**

Our workshop offers children a chance to move, play together, and work on their annual Kid's Solstice service. This year our children enjoyed lots of charades type games as well as drawing on the large chalkboard!

#### **Love in Action Legos - Encouragingly led by Adrienne George**

Our Lego table offers a chance to build creative creations based on the theme of the month. This is a big hit with a variety of ages and Lego animal builds shared as part of the Solstice service this year.

#### **Authentic Connections Teens (ACT): Thoughtfully led by Michal Lahens, Kristina Robinson & Caitlin Durgin**

This workshop offers 6th-grade youth and older a chance to connect, play games, and build a community while exploring UU values and enjoy snacks. Our youth also held a Yard Sale in Sept. Joined for a love in action service program hosted by the Mormon church in November and helped with the Bake Sale and Easter Egg hunt in April.

**We are so grateful for our faith formation substitutes this year!** Julia Firmbach and Victoria Agnew, Jess Woods, Cindy Hudson & Jessica Price helped as backup substitutes when needed.

### **Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education**

#### **OWL for 7th & 8th graders - Facilitators: Paige Beauchemin, Kenna McLeod & Andy Straussberg**

We chose a new schedule with a mix of Friday and Saturday evenings for all of the workshops for our 7th/8th grade OWL program. The program served 8 youth, two of whom came from outside the congregation. Andy offered to help one more time with OWL and we are grateful for years of dedication to this program. We will be training new leaders in the coming year including Michael Lahens and Jess Woods.

### **Children's Worship Room**

Our compassionate volunteers providing nurturing care include Sarah Leshay, Will Kahn-Greene, Cassie McCue and back up care with Cindy Hudson, Victoria Agnew & Mary Holland.

## Monthly Mixed Age Children's Chapel:

The Director of Faith Formation planned and partnered with worship associates to lead the chapels together. In addition to having a worship associate join Sadie in co-leading, having a chapel assistant ready to assist with any children who needed extra support was helpful. Katie Durgin offered this support every month. Children's Chapel included music, guided meditation, videos, sharing joys and sorrows, and wonder box moments followed by worship projects for mixed ages to work in individually. We found that this model works well for younger children through 5th grade and older children. Many older youth choose to attend in service in the sanctuary or join chapel as helpers.

## Children and Youth 2025-2026

Our hopes and plans for next year:

- UU Kids activities for Prek & up on Sundays during the summer services - Likely lego & friendship bracelets with volunteers & childcare staff.
- UU Values Choice for elementary school children will continue twice a month. We will continue to offer workshop stations in a larger room and plan to transform the Auditorium in the parish house into our new elementary space.
- Weekly children's worship room childcare and after-church childcare as needed.
- Multi-age children's chapel services once a month.
- "Embrace Race" & "Drawing Differences" a curriculum for parents and children to explore talking about race with young children. Sadie & Rev. Allison received training in fall 2024 to bring this program to UU Nashua.
- Our Whole Lives for Kindergarten/1st Graders in Fall 2025
- Our Whole Lives for 4th/5th graders in Spring 2026
- Coming of Age program for 8th & 9th graders
- UU Kids Movie Nights during circle dinners!
- Host a 7/9 - 10/12 OWL training at UU Nashua during the first weekend of October.
- Co-host Saturday youth conference in the Spring.
- **Welcome and train new volunteers!**

## Faith Formation Programs & Volunteers for Children & Youth by Month

	September "Creating Home"	October "Authenticity"	November "Practice"	December "Peace"	January "Seeking"
<b>Children's Worship room Childcare</b> every Sunday	Our welcoming space for children aged 4 and under is open every Sunday. It offers books, toys, simple crafts with lots of stickers, puzzles, and free play, supported by volunteers and staff.				
<b>Children's Chapel</b> 1st Sundays		"From the heart, who am I?" w/ <i>Self-portrait mandalas</i>	"Solstice Service rehearsal" The Snow Tree	"Solstice Service rehearsal" The Snow Tree	"Seeking together - what do we find?" w/ star words
<b>UU Values Workshop Choices</b> 2nd & 3rd Sundays	<b>Wonder Art:</b> Wonderbox mini homes  <b>Love in action LEGO:</b> building homes  <b>Courageous Community:</b> blanket forts home away from home  <b>Authentic Connection Teens:</b> "UU Scattergories"	<b>Wonder Art:</b> Self portrait line art  <b>Love in action LEGO:</b> LEGO self portraits  <b>Courageous Community:</b> getting to know you games  <b>Authentic Connection Teens:</b> "Just One"	<b>Wonder Art:</b> Prayer beads  <b>Love in action LEGO:</b> Mandalas  <b>Courageous Community:</b> mindfulness activities  <b>Authentic Connection Teens:</b> "Telestrations"	<b>Wonder Art:</b> Snow Tree animal masks & snowflakes  <b>Love in Action:</b> Lego Animals  <b>Courageous Community:</b> practicing the solstice story.  <b>Authentic Connection Teens:</b> Snow tree snowflakes & writing opening & closing words for the solstice service	<b>Wonder Art:</b> Respecticles!  <b>Love in action LEGO:</b> building UU Chalice  <b>Courageous Community:</b> seek & find games  <b>Authentic Connection Teens:</b> "Dixit"
<b>Special Events</b>	<b>After church Ice Cream social</b>	<b>Interfaith Crop Walk</b>  <b>Circle Dinner w/ UU Kids Pizza &amp; Movie Night</b> - "Kiki's Delivery Service" & "Bluey"	<b>Church Auction w/ Kids Movie Night</b> "Ponyo" & "Bluey"	<b>Carol Sing w/ Hot Cocoa!</b> in the Faith Formation Wing & Chapel	<b>Circle Dinner w/ UU Kids Pizza, Game &amp; Movie Night</b> - "Strange World" & "Bluey"
<b>All Ages Worship</b> 4th Sundays	<b>Water Communion &amp; Noelle's Ark</b> reader's theater	<b>From the Heart, Who am I?</b> w/reader's theater	<b>Get Proud by Practicing w/ Sticker communion</b>	<b>UU Kids Solstice Service</b> - The Snow Tree	<b>Seekers of Community</b> - I spy the letter C & small group conversations
<b>Our Whole</b>	<b>Parent</b>	Workshops 1-4	Workshops 5-8	Workshops 9-10	Workshops 12-13

Lives 7th/8th gr.	<b>orientation</b>				
<b>Faith Formation Programs &amp; Volunteers for Children &amp; Youth by Month <i>cont.</i></b>					
	<b>February “Responsibility”</b>	<b>March “Chaos”</b>	<b>April “Wisdom”</b>	<b>May “Blooming”</b>	<b>June “Blooming”</b>
<b>Children’s Worship room Childcare every Sunday</b>	Our welcoming space for children aged 4 and under is open every Sunday. It offers books, toys, simple crafts with lots of stickers, puzzles, and free play, supported by volunteers and staff.				
<b>Children’s Chapel Services 1st Sundays</b>	<i>“Serving the World through Love” our congregational mission song</i>	<i>“Percussion Circle” w/ lots of instruments!</i>	UU Kids Bake Sale & Lemonade Stand!	<i>“Blooming” flower mandalas &amp; gifts for Ericka’s baby</i>	<i>“End of Year Celebrations” w/ wonder boxes from all year!</i>
<b>Sunday Morning Workshops 2nd &amp; 3rd Sundays</b>	<b>“We are the builders” posters and conversation</b> for ZOOM workshops due to 2 snow days!	<b>Wonder Art:</b> Beautiful OOPs art  <b>Love in action LEGO:</b> Chaos Challenges  <b>Courageous Community:</b> Challenge games  <b>Authentic Connection Teens:</b> “Mysterium Park”	<b>Wonder Art:</b> Collages & Puppet  <b>Love in action LEGO:</b> Stone Soup & Wisdom challenges  <b>Courageous Community:</b> Stone Soup & UU Jeopardy  <b>Authentic Connection Teens:</b> “UU Jeopardy”	<b>Wonder Art:</b> Flower art  <b>Love in action LEGO:</b> LEGO gardens  <b>Courageous Community:</b> Pictionary  <b>Authentic Connection Teens:</b> “Whoonu”	<i>Prek-8th grade Sunday morning workshops will return in September 2025!</i>
<b>Special events</b>	<b>All Ages Pizza &amp; Game Night</b> board game room, card game room, young kids game room, & Teen RPG room	<b>Grounding and Resilience Support for families &amp; parents with childcare &amp; meal with Sadie &amp; Karen Campbell</b>	<b>Circle Dinner &amp; UU Kids Pizza &amp; Movie Night &amp; Teen Game Night- “Inside out 2” &amp; role playing games.</b>  <b>After Church Egg hunt!</b>	<b>Grounding and Resilience Support for families &amp; parents with childcare &amp; meal with Sadie &amp; Karen Campbell</b>	<b>Outdoor Summer Kickoff Party!</b>
<b>All Ages Service 4th Sundays</b>	<b>We are the Builders - w/ reader’s theater</b>	<b>Small Things Mended w/ reader’s theater</b>	<b>Easter w/ no-rehearsal easter pageant</b>	<b>Planting seeds Finding Hope w/ story &amp; art</b>	<b>Flower Communion Pride Service!</b>
<b>Our Whole Lives 7th/8th gr.</b>	Workshops 11,14,15	Workshops 16, 17, 18, 19 , 22	Workshops 20 & 21	Workshops 22-25! & Ice Cream outing!	

# Adult Faith Formation in 2024-2025

Adult Faith Formation programs offered in 2024-2025 align with the core Values of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua.

## 1. Adult Faith Formation: Authentic Connection

### **Covenant groups:**

Six covenant groups led by church members convene monthly to share, listen, and delve into readings and discussions aligned with the month's worship theme. Sadie Kahn-Greene, the Director of Faith Formation, held occasional meetings with covenant leaders from August to May to review upcoming sessions based on the month's theme. Paige Beauchemin and Kevin Ross Emery were welcomed as new leaders to the group, eager to learn and prepare for leading new covenant groups.

*Here are the covenant groups we offered this year:*

- **3rd Monday Group**

Cathy Guevarra continues to lead a group that welcomes new members and meets at the church every 3rd Monday evening.

- **1st Sunday Covenant Group**

Bob Keating's group continues to meet at members' homes or outside and rotates, facilitating each gathering's good discussion, as has been their practice.

- **3rd Sunday Covenant Group**

Laurie Goodman's Women's Covenant group met in person. This group will continue to meet next year as well. Their time and location moved around to meet the needs of group members.

- **4th Tuesday Huntington Group**

Rev. Allison also leads one with elders at the Huntington in Nashua. She has a group of about 8 who attend. Tess & Tina co-lead this group once as guest leaders.

### **2nd Sunday Covenant Group**

Paige Beauchemin's covenant group continued this year. This group meets after church and includes childcare for parents in the group. This group will continue to meet next year as well.

- **3rd Sunday Covenant Group**

Kevin Ross Emery's covenant group continued this year. It meets after church on the third Sunday. This group will continue to meet next year as well.

### **Additional Groups that gather around a shared Experience:**

#### **Caregiver Support Group w/ Sadie Kahn-Greene**

The "Caregivers for Loved Ones" support group continued this year. The group started with their Tuesday evening zoom sessions in the fall, and moved to Last Sundays of the month after church from Jan - May.

#### **Online Grief Group Led By Karen Campbell**

This online drop-in program moved to every third Tuesday from 7 to 8 p.m. Karen Campbell provides new and returning

participants with an opportunity to engage, connect, and receive support during times of grief.

## **2. Adult Faith Formation: Wonder**

### **UU Biblical Literacy, w/ Rev. Allison Palm**

21 participants joined for 6 Tuesday evenings in From Jan - Mar. for this a class about the Bible. This program is part of the Faith Forward curriculum series that we purchased from First Unitarian Church in Dallas.

### **Energy Healing w/ Karen Campbell**

Karen offered this program twice this year once in November and again in May. They were evenings of guided & silent meditation & energy healing, and Reiki held in the Campbell Chapel.

**Worship Workshop.** Rev. Allison once again led this three-week class for Summer worship service leaders!

## **3. Adult Faith Formation: Courageous Community**

### **Intro to UU W/ Rev. Allison Palm & Erin Scott**

This program is offered in-person after church 5 times throughout the year.

### **Exploring Membership W/ Rev. Allison Palm**

This program is offered in-person after church 4 times throughout the year.

### **Circle Dinners**

We continued to coordinate small group dinners hosted by congregation members at their homes or at church. Each attendee contributed a dish to share. We also continued "Kids Pizza & Movie & Game Nights," providing childcare at the church for parents and non-parents to enjoy a social evening and foster better connections. This year we started a teen from middle & high school youth to meet with advisors who led a tabletop roleplaying game for the evening.

- September: 32 adults attended 4 dinners & 13 children & youth attended kids night
- January: 35 adults attended 4 dinners & 18 children & youth attended kids night
- April: 31 adults attended 4 dinners & 12 children & youth attended kids night

### **Elderberries UU Seniors Group Led by Tess George**

Throughout the year, this community gathers for social events. An email list facilitates communication among members who wish to participate in museum visits, bowling, movies, lunch outings, and nature walks. With around 55 members, the group typically sees 5-25 individuals attending each event.

### **Young Adult Group led by Tegan Cantrell & Sadie Kahn-Greene.**

The group for those in their 20s & 30s offers a chance to connect with members at a similar life stage. The group started with monthly trivia nights out in Nashua, which while fun, proved to be too loud for conversations. This group switched it up by hosting Board Game nights at the church on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday of the month which have been going strong since January. There is a core group of 6 members who take turns bringing games to teach each time.

### **UU Hikers Group**

- Faith Formation hosted a multigenerational walk in Mine Falls on Oct. 14th

#### **4. Adult Faith Formation: Love in Action**

##### **Authentic Selves Book Discussion w/Erin Scott, Jeff Beland & Brian Ibsen-Johnson**

Members of the Welcoming Congregation team led this book discussion on Sunday afternoons in Mar & Apr and one in May using the Common Read curriculum from the UUA.

##### **1st Annual Campbell Day of Action**

We gathered for the Campbell day of action on March 16th, coordinated with the racial justice working group to provide a day of workshops for justice and advocacy work in honor of the Campbell family. This day included a short worship service followed by hour-long workshops (listed below) for everyone in the congregation. After the workshops we invited people to join us for a graveside service at the Campbell family grave site and Edgewood cemetery.

##### **Campbell Day of Action Workshops**

- Finding Your Place in UU Nashua Justice Work w/ Rev. Allison Palm, Erin Scott, Harry Purkhiser, Paul Introcaso, Brian Ibsen-Johnson & Kate Messner
- NH state Advocacy 101 w/ Paige Beauchemin
- Love in Action Sign Making w/ w/ Sadie Kahn-Greene, Jessica Lahens, Cheryl Carroll, Emma Goyette & Sam Murray
- Postcard Writing w/ Jessica Price
- Campbell Commitment Wreath Making to bring to their Gravesite David Johnson & Jodie Holway

## **Adult Faith Formation plans for 2025-2026**

**We will focus on the following ongoing and new program ideas for next year.**

- Renew Faith Forward curriculum & offer the following programs at UU Nashua or online
  - “Coming of Age for Adults” & “UU History” & “UU Biblical Literacy part 2”
  - Our new Ministerial Intern will likely lead one of these programs.
- Sustain covenant groups for small group ministry, Circle Dinners, Grief Group & Support groups & Book discussions & Interfaith partnership programs as they come up.
- Offer Embrace Race & Drawing Differences a curriculum for parents and children to explore talking about race with children. Sadie & Rev. Allison received training in fall 2024 to bring this program to UU Nashua.
- Work with Romy Valdez to bring a begin a new Buddhist meditation group to UU Nashua
- Summer Camping trip planned for Labor Day weekend at Greenfield State Park

**Adult Faith Formation Programs schedule from Sept 2024 -June 2025**

<b>September “Creating Home”</b>	<b>October “Authenticity”</b>	<b>November “Practice”</b>	<b>December “Peace”</b>	<b>January “Seeking”</b>
Grief Group  Caregiver Support Group  5 Covenant Groups  Safe Congregation Training  Young Adult Trivia Night  Climate Revival after church workshop	Grief Group  Coffee conversations  Caregiver Support Group  5 Covenant Groups  Intro to UU  Circle Dinners  Huntington Group  Elderberry meet up  All Ages hike at Mine Falls	Grief Group  Caregiver Support Group  5 Covenant Groups  Energy Healing  Exploring Membership  4 Covenant Groups  Huntington Group	Intro to UU  Grief Group  Caregiver Support Group  5 Covenant Groups  Carol Sing  Young Adult Game Nights  Huntington Group	Intro to UU  Grief Group  Coffee conversations  Caregiver Support Group  5 Covenant Groups  Circle Dinners  2 Young Adult Game Nights  UU Biblical Literacy  Exploring Membership  Huntington Group
<b>February “Responsibility”</b>	<b>March “Chaos”</b>	<b>April “Wisdom”</b>	<b>May “Blooming”</b>	<b>June “Blooming”</b>
Intro to UU  Grief Group  Caregiver Support Group  5 Covenant Groups  2 Young Adult Game Nights  Article 2 Reflection Group  Elderberry meetup  Huntington Group	Grief Group  Caregiver Support Group  5 Covenant Groups  Article II - Switch it Up Sunday  7 Covenant Groups  2 Young Adult Game Nights  Exploring Membership  UU Common Read Book Discussion  Elderberry lunch  Huntington Group	Grief Group  Caregiver Support Group  5 Covenant Groups  2 Young Adult Game Nights  Intro to UU Nashua  UU Common Read Book Discussion  Interfaith sacred poetry event  Elderberry meet up  Circle Dinners  Huntington Group	Intro to UU  Grief Group  Caregiver Support Group  3 Parent of Teens & Tweens Support group  5 Covenant Groups  2 Young Adult Game Nights  UU Common Read Book Discussion  Summer worship leader workshop  Elderberry lunch  Huntington Group	Grief Group  2 Parent of Teens & Tweens Support Group  End of church Party at Fields Grove Park

# Faith Formation Staff

**Sadie Kahn-Greene, Credentialed Religious Educator, Director of Faith Formation** (Aug 2017-Present)

## **Sadie's Professional development/denominational activities**

- I attended Religious Education Week at Ferry Beach in July 2024
- Good Offices Volunteer Work - *Sadie is now a Good Officer for LREDA, advocating for religious educators in need of support.*
- LREDA Fall Conference "Cultivating Cozy Community Care" in Northampton, MA, Nov. 6th-10th, 2024
- Monthly "Collegial Conversations" on Zoom facilitated by CB Beal
- Seasonal gatherings for local religious educators
- Attending Embrace Race training with Rev. Allison together we attend 6 sessions to preview and experience this new curriculum that we plan to co-lead in 2025-2026.
- Will be attending Professional Days and General Assembly in Baltimore on June 17-22, 2025
- Ongoing reading of current materials, resources, articles, and books relating to faith formation for all ages

## **Childcare & Faith Formation Assistant Staff**

**Sam Murray, Faith Formation Assistant and Childcare Caregiver** (Sept 2023- present)

**Emma Goyette, Faith Formation Assistant and Childcare Caregiver** (Sept 2023- present)

Sam and Emma just finished their 2nd year with us as faith formation assistants.

They work in collaboration with faith formation volunteers to provide caring and supportive childcare for our youngest children on Sunday mornings. Their role included setting up the room, childproofing for safety and unpacking and packing up all our toys while at Rivier. Sam and Emma also provide after church childcare when needed and care for special events such as our kids movie night and church auction.

We were grateful to have the budget to hire both of them each week which is an increase from last year when we only hired one assistant each Sunday and they would alternate weeks.

During last Summer at Temple Beth Abraham they worked for 1.5 hours offering care before and after as well as setting up the space and packing up materials from a few storage tubs that we were able to leave at the temple. From Sept through Mid June they both worked from 9:30-12:30 most Sunday for before care, and stayed longer for after care as needed.

We plan for their faith formation assistant role to continue with 1.5 hours supporting childcare and setup/clean up during Sundays during the summer & 3-3.5 hours on Sundays during the year with additional care at special events as needed.

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Once again I am incredibly grateful and proud to be working for such a wonder-filled, supportive and loving congregation.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sadie Kahn-Greene, Director of Faith Formation