

Newsletter - April 2010

Massachusetts Bay District of Unitarian Universalist Congregations



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MBD Launches New Website

If you have not already seen the District's new website, we invite you to do so by clicking [here](#).

Using the open source technology of Drupal, the site offers MBD staff greater flexibility and control

Multigenerational Ministry



by **Deborah Levering**
Program Consultant
Clara Barton District

"The faith formation of children is too hard for most of us as parents to do alone. The individual family is too small a unit. A larger We is necessary

- families coming together in community."(Dr. William J. Doherty, Unitarian Universalist, Marriage and Family Psychologist)

Unitarian Universalism is at a cultural crossroad. Are we, as a faith institution, relevant? Is our commitment to theological diversity, personal freedom, and justice making enough? It may be for those of us sitting in the pews on Sunday mornings. But, ironically, it may not be for our children and parents working hard in our religious education programs.

American families today live in a world encumbered by too much information, too many choices, and too little time together. Both the families in our midst, and potential seekers - those searching for a religious home - hope for support and affirmation for the push-me, pull-me, do, do, do craziness of their daily living.

[READ MORE](#)

Resources for Multigenerational Ministry

Putting Religious Education in Its Place

[website and blog](#)

about religious education across the generations by Tandi Koerger, Program Specialist for the Pacific Northwest District



over the site's content and navigation. We also think it's easier for users to find what they are looking for.

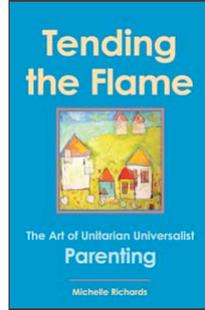
There's a page for each congregation to share a description, basic information and a photo. [Click here](#) to see how First Parish Arlington has used their page.

If your congregation's page is still empty, please send copy and JPEG to mgroot@mbduua.org.

We'd also love to feature your congregation sometime soon. Let us know what's happening that you'd like to share with other congregations.

Events @ Congregations

To see what's coming up at congregations, check out the congregation calendar on the MBD website [here](#).



Tending the Flame: The Art of Unitarian Universalist Parenting

by Michelle Richards

A mother and experienced religious educator, this author encourages a practical and proactive approach to raising Unitarian Universalist children. The book includes information about

developmental stages, suggestions for incorporating spiritual practices into family life, teaching the Principles in age-appropriate ways, answering difficult questions on religious matters and dealing with religious disagreements. [Available through the UUA Bookstore [here](#).]

Articles:

- [Creating a Multigenerational Culture](#) by Michelle Richards, credentialed Religious Educator
- [Home Grown Unitarian Universalism](#) by William J. Doherty
- [Lifespan Learning Community](#) from the Canadian Unitarian Council

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March with MBD @ Boston's 40th Annual Gay Pride Parade

If your congregation has not already signed up to march behind its own banner on June 12, consider walking with us! The theme for Boston's 40th Annual Gay Pride Parade: "**Riots to Rights - Celebrating 40 Years of Progress.**"



[Click here](#) to check out this video of MBD participation at last year's Pride Parade.

To register your congregation, please be in touch with [Meck Groot](#), MBD Program Coordinator.

Hope you can join us!!

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Multigenerational Ministry - continued from top

While it is one of our great aspirations as Unitarian Universalists to give hope and comfort to struggling people, the reality is that we dismiss the children and youth from

our midst regularly, and soon after, ask parents to join their children as volunteers in RE.

We do this from a place of best intentions. We want our children and youth to be religiously educated, well equipped to engage in spiritual discovery and discernment, to articulate their values, to understand and integrate the richness of diversity, to work for fairness and justice in the world, and to be just and peaceful people. The opportunity to do this has been realized, for the most part, through children and youth religious education programs. And these programs need volunteer staff to make them a reality, thus our plea for parent help.

Here's the rub: there is a deep longing on the part of parents (and others) for their own faith formation, as well as support for their role as chief religious educators to their children. Families long for deep connections with other Unitarian Universalists both for themselves and their children.

A commitment to multigenerational wholeness may be an answer. Congregations with a commitment to multigenerational ministry are intentionally working to connect our people to the wisdom of other age groups and to help bridge the phases of our lives to the generations before and after us. We cannot easily access what the people who have gone before us have learned. We are losing that wisdom across all generations. Imagine parents sitting with others and talking about spirit, struggle, appreciation, love, and loss. Imagine an old-timer congregant, advanced in age, partnered with a young family or a young adult, just talking about life, just connecting through sharing stories of faith.

Faith communities may be the only places left in our society where multigenerational intention is still acceptable. Other than within our own families, where else can we find multi-generations sharing their stories, wisdom, perspective? It's counter cultural. Multigenerational community is essential congregational witness in a cultural storm.

I look forward to working with the good people of the Massachusetts Bay District starting July 1. I am hungry for your ideas and concern about how our faith communities can be relevant and vital for all UU, current and potential.

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