



CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES 2009-2010

The CYM (Children and Youth Ministries) Committee is pleased to announce the details of our upcoming program for 2009 - 2010.

There are several new features to our program that we would like to call your attention to. The first is that our **Opening Ceremony**, to be held **September 13th**, will not be an entirely CYM-themed ceremony, but an adult worship service with a few special CYM features. This will be the last **10:00 am** service of the year, and we are inviting everyone to pack a lunch and share in an **all-church picnic** on the lawn after the service.

7th- 9th grade and OWL Program~ In a measure designed to save resources for the church as a whole, we are moving some of our Sunday evening classes to Sunday morning at 9:00AM. The 7th and 8th grades will be affected by the time change this year; next year it will include 9th grade as well. *The OWL program will meet from 9:00 to 11:00. Parents should drop OWL students off directly to the Barn. All other students* will start in the Sanctuary, and the children will go to their classes after the Family Homily, as they are sung out by the congregation.

Our focus for the year is going to be **Community**. But rather than lots of talk about defining and explaining what Community is, we want the kids to feel their community around them, to experience it firsthand, and to live it. With that in mind, we are arranging for them to have **Community Days once a month**, where all the programs, from **Preschool to 7th Grade**, will come together for a session of projects, fun, crafts, games, or experiences. In addition, we will be inviting members of First Parish to share their special skills and talents so that our younger church members can appreciate the wonderful community that is US. If you have a skill you would like to share, be sure to let us know. We really believe that our youth program is something pretty special, and once folks are here for their kids, well, surely they will become enamored of the rest of the church as well!

CYM Classes ~ We have a terrific line up of program leaders this year. As of this writing, our program leaders will be as follows: Mary Cronin, Ronda Sigel, Carlyn Carey, and Judy Ellis will lead the **Preschool to 1st grade class**. In our **2nd through 4th grade** program, Janet Albahari and Laura Gill will be returning. Our **5th and 6th grade** program will be headed up by Diane Pansire and Sue Trask. In **7th grade**, Lauren Elliott-Grunes, Sue Montgomery, and Pat Gubbins will be leading the group. Kevin Lowey and Audrey Miller will be teaching the **8th Grade OWL** ("Our Whole Lives" Human Sexuality program) class, and Carol Chichetto

will head up a team of program leaders working with the **Senior High Youth Group**. (There is no 9th grade COA ~Coming of Age~ group this year). If you are interested, we could use one or two more volunteers. Our program leaders will, for the first time this year, have the opportunity to take extra training classes, in addition to their regular orientation. We will be providing trainings in Cooperative Games, Classroom Management, and Conflict Resolution. These sessions are optional, but should enhance the teaching experience. If anyone who is not a program leader is interested in taking these trainings, please ask any member of the CYM Committee for more information. All are welcome.

We also have several volunteers who have agreed to work with the CYM kids teaching **yoga, pottery, puppetry, juggling, cooking**, and more activities to be announced. Makes you wish you could go to a CYM program, doesn't it? Be sure to let any families that you know, outside of First Parish, about our CYM program so that they can check it out and see if it is right for them.

The CYM Task Force worked hard this summer to arrange this program. And we owe a dept of thanks to all those who came forward to volunteer. It is heartening to see that people understood that, with CYM staffing hours cut, it is up to the membership of First Parish to fill the void. Unfortunately, staffing was not all that was cut this year. The **CYM budget** was cut as well. **Because of this, we are asking each family to pay a \$10. materials fee.** In addition, because of the high cost of training our OWL teachers, as well as fees for outside speakers to the OWL program, we are asking parents to pay an **OWL fee**, as well. Families can pay on a sliding scale, as their budgets allow: \$20.-30. per student for members of First Parish, \$50.-70. for non-members. And we are asking for help from the larger congregation as well. By the time you read this you will probably already have encountered our classroom supplies drive. If you haven't already, consider helping outfit our classrooms with an item from the supply list that can be found at the desk.

The magic ingredient making all this possible is our incredible First Parish Community~

First, we want to publicly **appreciate** both **Kathy Cronin and Carol Chichetto**, who have worked so hard for so many years to lay the groundwork for CYM, and have created a template for us to follow. We look forward to working with them again this year. Secondly, thanks so much to **Pat Policastro, Jennifer Rabold, Judy Smith-Valley, Dawn Walnut, and Diane Wilcox**, who spent time with us this summer on the CYM Task Force, in helping to make these dreams a reality. And finally, we want to thank all those who have volunteered to lead a program, share a skill, be a substitute, paint a classroom, pass on an idea, donate materials, or share of themselves with our exceptional young people. Anyone who is still interested in participating in the CYM program for this year can contact any member of the CYM Committee.

YOU can make a difference, & the children and youth love you for it.

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