

THE FIRST UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST
CONGREGATIONAL - MILFORD, CT



34 West Main St
Milford, CT 06460

www.firstchurchofmilford.org



SUNDAY SCHOOL HANDBOOK

FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST,
CONGREGATIONAL

Welcome to Faith Formation at First Church

Sunday School Mission Statement

The mission of Sunday School at First UCC of Milford is to provide a meaningful intergenerational time for faith formation, practice, and expression for each individual in a safe, supportive Christ-centered and Spirit-led community.

Our Hope

Our hope is to equip God's children for faithful living, and that they know they are welcome at God's table!

Curriculum and Lessons

Our Sunday School Lessons are based on themed units as well as the Lectionary, which is a pre-selected collection of scriptural readings from the Bible that can be used for worship and study. Typically our worship services are based on the lectionary. We hope that Sunday School is an extension of the worship experience and an opportunity for youth learn and grow in their faith!

For all levels of Sunday School, we aim to make the Bible relevant and inspirational for both our youth as well as the adults who guide them in their formation.

Sunday Mornings

Worship

Youth gather in the Sanctuary on Sunday mornings with their grownups. Sunday School is held during the 10am service most Sundays. Youth will be invited to Sunday School at a designated time in the bulletin (usually following the Children's message).

Classrooms

The classrooms for our Sunday School program include the three classrooms downstairs, the Church library, and the Church parlor. Children in grades 3 and younger are usually downstairs with our older youth in the library and parlor.

After worship, grownups are asked to meet their youth at their Sunday School classroom immediately following worship before going to coffee hour. Youth must be picked up by a grownup or high school aged sibling to be dismissed from Sunday School

Attendance

We understand there are many demands on our time, even on Sundays! You are always welcome! We hope that all of our families make a commitment to attend Sunday School as regularly as possible. We find that the Sunday School experience is one of interdependence - our teachers create lessons dependent on their particular students and the students help bring the lessons to fruition for the whole class.

Sunday Mornings

Volunteers

Each of our ministries always welcomes and needs your help! If you are interested in volunteering in the Nursery, please speak with either Jasmine Gilbert or Barbara Walker. If you want to learn more about teaching or helping with Sunday School, please speak with Kelsey DeCarlo or John Haas. If you feel called to working with Youth Fellowship (our 4th-5th grade youth group) or Junior Pilgrim Fellowship (our 6th-8th grade youth group), please speak with Kelsey DeCarlo. To help with Senior Pilgrim Fellowship (our 9th-12th grade youth group), please speak with Rev. Ashley.

Nursery Care

Jasmine Gilbert and Barbara Walker are our nursery attendants on Sunday mornings. During the program year, childcare is available from 8:45Am to 11:45AM, allowing grownups the opportunity to host coffee hour, sing in the choir, help with Sunday School, or participate in worship as a liturgist. Young children feel most comfortable and safe if they can associate a space with their caregiver, which is why we ask caregivers to volunteer in the nursery. Check with Jasmine or Barbara to see if there are any supplies needed or to schedule your volunteer time!

Sunday Mornings

Sharing Our Gifts

Throughout the year, there are many opportunities for you and your youth to share and hone your special gifts in our community. That could be playing an instrument, reading during worship, creating art, team building, mediation, greeting, ushering, and more. Please indicate on the Sunday School registration form any gifts you or your youth have that you would be willing to share through our ministries. Ideas for grownups include building, painting, organizing, chaperoning, creating a bulletin board, playing an instrument, substituting for a teacher, etc. Thank you for prayerfully considering how you might share in ministry!

Part of deepening our faith involves stewardship of our resources. On Sundays, youth participate in keeping their classrooms tidy and have the opportunity to give a monetary offering during class. Youth will also be invited to share their time and service throughout the year.

Mission and Service Projects

Throughout the year, our Sunday School youth are invited to participate in mission and service projects. If you have a project to suggest or that you would be interested in facilitating, please let us know!

Learning Goals

For all of our Sunday School classes, we aim to make the Bible relevant and inspirational for our children and youth, as well as for the adults who guide them in their formation. The Faith Formation Ministry provides curriculum to our teachers to help youth achieve their learning goals throughout the year. Children and youth are encouraged to work on these goals at home with their caregivers throughout the year as well. These goals are designed to be building blocks for a faith-filled foundation in life. Throughout the years, we hope all our youth learn that Church is fun!

Nursery	Sharing, using kind and loving words, taking care of our space
Pre-K	Nurturing a sense of belonging, praying, songs and Bible stories
Kindergarten	The Lord's Prayer, worshipping together
First Grade	Offering, Communion
Second Grade	Basic Bible skills, Doxology
Third Grade	Baptism, Psalm 23
Fourth Grade	Bible skills, the first 5 books of the Old and New Testament
Fifth Grade	Parables and miracles, the Beatitudes
Sixth Grade	Psalm 139, Holy Week, spiritual gifts
Seventh Grade	Order of Worship, Liturgical seasons

Sunday School Expectations

We strive to show youth how to work together in Christian community, supporting and respecting each other in our faith journeys.

Students are expected to...

- Be respectful of others in class, both peers and leaders
- Actively listen and take turns speaking
- Participate in class
- Keep themselves and others safe - both physically and emotionally
- Be respectful of classroom materials

Leaders and helpers are expected to...

- Be friendly and helpful
- Prepare lessons to be appropriate for the ages and stages of their students
- Model focus for the students
- Be clear and consistent about expected behavior and resolve conflicts
- Make use of covenants, rituals, activities, etc to help students fully participate in class
- Be respectful of classroom materials
- Accompany youth in grade 1 and below to the restroom, (waiting outside)
- Accompany any student dismissed from class for disciplinary reasons to their grownups or appropriate available Faith Formation Ministry representative

Sunday School Expectations

Guardians are expected to...

- Make sure youth understand what is expected of them at Church
- Encourage youth to attend consistently by example
- Pick up all youth in their classrooms at the end of worship
- Volunteer to assist with Sunday School in some way (leading or teaching, sharing special talents, organizing special events, etc)
- Check in with their youth's teacher to see if they need help

Behavior in Sunday School

Teachers and helpers will redirect youth who are having difficulty with behaving appropriately. If a student is repeatedly displaying inappropriate behavior, they may be asked to sit out of the activity. If the student is out of control, threatening the safety of others, or is unwilling to cooperate in a manner that will allow the class to learn in a positive atmosphere they may be dismissed. If a youth is dismissed, they will be escorted to their grownups by a teacher, helper, or Faith Formation Ministry representative.

Faith Formation Ministry

Minister of Faith Formation

Kelsey DeCarlo

Faith Formation Ministry Chair

John Haas

Faith Formation Ministry Members

Kristine DiNicola

Sandie DiNicola

Dana Edmondson

Erica Eliashevsky

Missy Kaminski

Ruth McCrodden

Sara Riedel

Dina Pasacreta

Sunday School Teaching Teams (and growing!)

Nursery: Jasmine Gilbert, Barbara Walker

Pre-K - 1st Grade: Kelly Miller, Joey Kaminski

& Clara Pasacreta

2nd-3rd Grade: Jen Bihary, Sara Riedel

4th-5th Grade: Nina Kienzle, Sarah Piscatelli

6th-7th Grade: Marisol Cummings, James Sykes

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