

# A Guide to Faith Formation for Children and Youth at BCCUCC 2024-2025



The Barrington Congregational Church, U.C.C.  
is a Christian community that worships God,  
embraces all people, ministers to one another,  
works for justice and peace,  
and renders loving service to God's world.

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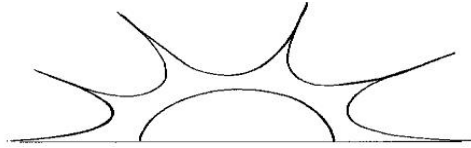
Faith Formation Ministry Teams:

Church School Team  
Nursery Team  
Confirmation Team  
O.W.L. Team  
Adult Formation Team

*If you're interested in serving on a team, we'd love to have you join us. Contact Andrea for more information.*

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This guide is also available online from the church school page of our website at [www.bccucc.org/children-youth/](http://www.bccucc.org/children-youth/). Printed copies are available from various locations at church including outside Andrea's office. If you'd like to share one with a friend, we'll be happy to give you more copies for you to pass along.



September 2024

Faith Formation of young people involves partnerships between many individuals: parents, church members, children, youth, lay leaders, ministers, and staff. While faith education happens every day at home, we also know how important it is that Sunday mornings anchor children, youth, and families in faith.

Please take some time to review this helpful guide. It includes important information about upcoming events and how you can participate in our Faith Formation Ministries and other youth opportunities.

See you at church!

With joy,

Andrea Terni Bullard  
Faith Formation Director

Racquel Ray  
Associate Minister

### **Faith Formation Ministry Statement**

The purpose of the work of Faith Formation Ministries at Barrington Congregational Church UCC is to provide a safe space for children, youth, and adults to:

- worship and wonder
- play and pray
- share and serve
- learn, lament, laugh and LOVE!

We seek to create community where children, youth, and their caregivers experience acceptance and belonging. We are dedicated to providing a place where young people can develop spiritually, intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally into all God calls them to be now and in the future.

## **Faith Formation Ministry**

### **Goals for Educating our Children and Youth**

- **Nursery:** Loving care is provided to all children ages 0-3 years. (see page 7)
- **PreK – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade:** All children will wonder about core stories from the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament), New Testament, and the origins of Christian traditions, including the sacraments of Baptism and Communion through the Godly Play program. (see page 9)
- **3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grades:** The Deep Blue Rotation Stations curriculum, which this group will be using, captures the imagination of the children by bringing the Bible to life. (see page 9)
- **6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grades:** This year's group of Seekers will learn about and celebrate the world religions – including the wide diversity within each religious traditions including Christianity. (see page 10)
- **Grade 8 and up:** Confirmation marks the beginning of a journey toward adulthood in which an individual takes responsibility for shaping his/her own values and faith. Confirmation is offered every other year alternating with OWL (see below) and is being offered this year. (see pages 10 & 11)
- **The Faith Formation Ministry has implemented Our Whole Lives Comprehensive Sexuality Education (OWL) for Grades 7 - 12.** It is offered every other year. In 2025 - 2026, youth in Grades 8 & 9 will be invited to participate in the OWL program. (see page 12)
- **1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grades:** Sing and Celebrate Choir is our children's choir that sings in worship several times a year. The choir is looking forward to welcoming any children who would like to sing with them. (see page 8)
- **Youth in Grades 5-9 are encouraged to participate in Youth Group (YG) for fellowship, service projects, social and faith development.** (see page 13)
- **Youth Grades 9-12 are encouraged to volunteer by assisting in the nursery and classrooms, with choir, with Church school events such as Advent Arts, Lenten Lalapalooza, Jubilation Sunday and by preparing for and participating in mission trips.** (see pages 14).

## OPEN DOORS SUNDAY



**SEPTEMBER 8**  
**WORSHIP AT 10 AM**

Be sure to come back home for 'Open Doors Sunday' on **September 8<sup>th</sup>**! Whether we call it Gathering, Homecoming, or any other Sunday, it's the day we welcome back our families (of all types and sizes) and kick off our new program year!

It's also a day that we especially open our doors to visitors and newcomers who are looking to start the school year off by finding a new church. So be sure to invite your neighbors and friends!



Open Doors Sunday will be a blast with a family-friendly inter-generational worship service at **10 a.m.** followed by family friendly festivities. More details coming soon.



So come home and join us for the worship service specially designed for all ages and reconnect with your church family. We're looking forward to seeing you!

### **Schedule for Open Doors Sunday - September 8<sup>th</sup>**

10:00 a.m. **ALL AGES WORSHIP SERVICE** and Dedication of the Volunteers who work with our children and youth. We're also hoping to have a guest soloist. Nursery Care is provided.

After Worship: **REGISTRATION FOR CHURCH SCHOOL, YOUTH GROUP AND CONFIRMATION** will take place in Fellowship Hall.

After Worship: **FELLOWSHIP, FOOD AND FUN** over in Fellowship Hall the Terrace and Playground.

## Sunday Mornings at BCCUCC GENERAL INFORMATION

### Church School Registration

We require that a registration form be completed for EACH CHILD who participates in our programs.



To register a child, please obtain a registration form from the church office, download one from the website at <https://bccucc.org/children-youth/> or pick one up from the registration table in Fellowship Hall on **September 8<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup>**.

If you registered your child last year all you have to do is update last year's form at registration.

Information you provide helps us provide safe and welcoming programs for children and youth. Thank you!

***Regular Church School classes begin on  
Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024.***

### Is there a registration fee for Church School?

Everyone is welcome to participate in church school programs regardless of economic status, ability to contribute, or amount of pledge. We do not charge a registration fee. However, in addition to countless volunteer hours, church members and friends prayerfully discern an amount to contribute to the church in the form of a pledge to the annual budget (the budget includes building expenses, church staff, outreach, and education programs). Please call the church office if you'd like to begin making a pledge or would like to give an additional donation directly to Faith Formation programs.

While we do not charge a monetary fee, we expect parents to participate in the classrooms in various volunteer capacities. **Every week it takes at least 8 volunteers to conduct church school.** If every family were to fill several of these slots throughout the year, we would be blessed. For volunteer training information, please see *Volunteering at BCCUCC* on page 14 of this handbook.

## How Church School Happens

- Come on Sunday morning for 10 a.m. worship;
- Bring children age 4 or older to worship for the first part of the service which includes a 'Children's Message'. Parents may bring younger children directly to the Nursery, located in the education building, prior to 10 a.m.
- After the 'Children's Message', **the children will meet their teachers or assistants in the vestry downstairs and be escorted to the Education Building;**
- Church school rooms are divided by age groups. Lessons finish at approximately 11:10 a.m. to allow time for parents to transition from worship. **Parents are asked to pick-up children directly from classrooms** at 11:10 when the lesson has concluded. Children will not be released to roam the halls without parent pick-up. Please be mindful about not disturbing the class until the lesson has ended. Thank you for your cooperation and support!

## All Ages Worship Services

On select Sundays throughout the year (Sep. 8<sup>th</sup>, Oct. 13<sup>th</sup>, Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Jan. 19<sup>th</sup>, Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>, & May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025), we will be having our All Ages Worship Services. These services will be specially designed to be multigenerational and child-friendly opportunities to spend the entire worship time together. Church school will not be offered, but there will be special opportunities for the children to participate in or even help lead worship. Nursery care will be available for the littlest ones. We really encourage you to attend these services as they are wonderful chances to praise God together in a family friendly way!



## Nursery Care ~ Birth to Three Years Old



Christian nurture is provided every Sunday morning in our nursery for the youngest among us. Please note that nursery volunteers will find parents if a diaper needs to be changed or for any other reason deemed necessary.

## Communion Sundays

On the first Sunday of every month, we share communion together in the sanctuary. All children and adults are welcome to participate and receive communion.



## Baptism

Please contact the church office or speak with the ministers if you are interested in having your infant or child baptized.

## Offering

We believe it is important that children learn the importance of stewardship of church & community. Offerings from the children are received in your child's classroom in a special offering box, or can be put in the offering plate in worship on Sundays when there isn't Church School. Children's offering envelopes will be given out when parents register their child(ren) for church school or by request from Andrea. Each year, the proceeds help to support a charity selected by the Faith Formation Ministry.



## SING & CELEBRATE CHOIR



The Sing and Celebrate choir is BCCUCC's children's choir for children in grades 1-5. This is a wonderful way for young people to learn to sing in a group and to actively participate in the worship service.

If your child is interested in joining this growing group of children who like to sing, please contact Andrea, Rev. Racquel, or the church office. Rehearsals are held after the worship service in Room 6 (dates tba).

More information about the children's choir can be obtained by contacting our Music Director, Matthew Marion or Kate Colby.



## PRE K – 2<sup>ND</sup> GRADE



**Godly Play** teaches children the art of using Christian language - parable, sacred story, silence & liturgical action - helping them become more fully aware of the mystery of God's presence in their lives.

Godly Play...

- ...is a creative and imaginative approach to Christian nurture.
- ...is based on long established, tried, and tested approaches.
- ...encourages participants to make meaning for themselves by inviting them into stories and providing the opportunity for them to connect the stories with their personal experience.
- ...is a non-coercive way to encourage people to move into larger dimensions of belief and faith through wondering questions and open-ended response time.
- ...values process, openness and discovery.
- ...respects the innate spirituality of children and encourages curiosity and imagination in experiencing the mystery and joy of God.

Visit [www.godlyplayfoundation.org](http://www.godlyplayfoundation.org) to learn more.

## 3<sup>RD</sup> – 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADES

The 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade group will be immersed in the Bible stories by using the **Deep Blue Rotation Stations** Curriculum. By using a rotation format where the children alternate between learning stations each week, they are engaged in Bible stories and characters through art, cooking, games, missions, storytelling/drama, and spiritual practices. Each story will remain the same for three Sundays, but the children will encounter it in three different ways through the different stations. Repetition is an important part of Deep Blue.



# 6<sup>TH</sup> – 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADES

## SEEKERS

A program focusing on faith exploration

This year the Seekers will learn about and celebrate the world religions - including the wide diversity



within each religious tradition including Christianity. The religious landscape of the U.S. and globe continues to change rapidly and its diversity is immense. With an ecumenical and interfaith focus, this program is intended to grow curious, respectful, and inclusive seekers and believers. We'll learn about beliefs, rituals, prayers, worship, and people of various traditions worldwide.

## CONFIRMATION PROGRAM

Grades 8 and 9



Confirmation marks a step in the spiritual journey when a young person takes responsibility for shaping their own values and faith, with support from a community of faith.

Confirmation is being offered by Rev. Racquel Ray in the 2024-2025 program year with support from parents and church members. We are very excited to be with the 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> graders on their journey! Older youth who wish to be confirmed are also welcome to join the program.

There will be an **Orientation to Confirmation Classes** for parents and the confirmands on **Sunday Morning September 22<sup>nd</sup>** from 11:30 am – 1 pm in the church library. During the meeting Rev. Racquel will give a quick overview of the curriculum, provide coffee& donuts, and answer any questions people might have. In order to have an idea of how many to expect, Rev. Racquel asks that you **RSVP if you plan to attend the meeting** at 401 246-0111 x 104 or [racquel@bccucc.org](mailto:racquel@bccucc.org).

**\*\* The *deadline to register* for confirmation is *Friday, October 11<sup>th</sup>*. Contact Racquel to register. \*\***

The Confirmation program is offered every other year, alternating with the OWL program.

**Confirmation class** will meet once a month on **Sundays** from **11:30 am – 1 pm** in **Room 9** during the school year, plus for some other special worship services and events. The schedule of dates to save is:

- Orientation with Parents and Confirmands  
Sunday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 11:30 am – 1 pm, Library
- October 20<sup>th</sup>
- November 17<sup>th</sup>
- December 15<sup>th</sup>
- Christmas Eve Service
- January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025
- February 9<sup>th</sup>
- Ash Wednesday Service, March 5<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm
- March 9<sup>th</sup>
- Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service, April 17<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm
- April 27<sup>th</sup>
- May 25<sup>th</sup>
- Racial Justice Training TBD
- Service Projects TBD
- Confirmation Retreat TBD

**Confirmation Sunday** will be June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025

We are looking forward to a busy year!

## OUR WHOLE LIVES — SEXUALITY & OUR FAITH

To be offered again in the 2025-2026 program year \*  
for Grades 8 & 9

Our Whole Lives (OWL) is a series of comprehensive sexuality education resources written by human sexuality educators appropriate for use in a variety of congregational, school, and community settings. Core values of OWL include self-worth, sexual health, responsibility, justice and inclusivity.



The OWL trained facilitators are all church members and are certified.

The Faith Formation ministry has implemented OWL for youth in Grades 7 – 12, with classes offered every other year. OWL is not offered this program year but in 2025-2026 youth in grades 8 & 9 will be invited to participate.

For more information or to sign up, contact Andrea Terni Bullard at [andrea@bccucc.org](mailto:andrea@bccucc.org) or at 401 246-0111 x 107.

### **OWL Parent Orientation:**

Sunday September 2025, (date TBD) in the library

### **OWL Sessions:**

Will be held one Sunday per month  
September 2025 – June 2026.

\* The OWL program is offered every other year, alternating with the Confirmation program. This year youth in Grades 8 & 9 can participate in the Confirmation program (see pages 10 & 11).

# YOUTH GROUP

Grades 5 - 9

The Youth Group will gather most weeks throughout the school year on **Mondays** from **6 - 7pm**.



Youth Group is an opportunity for our students to build community outside of school. Meetings will consist of fun and fellowship, simple dinner (please bring a refillable water bottle from home for the drink), and a closing prayer service. When the weather permits, we will meet on the terrace, labyrinth, and playground. We do not meet if Barrington Public Schools have a day off and on some other dates.

Dates to save for Youth Group are:

- Registration after Worship on Open Doors Sunday, September 8<sup>th</sup> and September 15<sup>th</sup>
- September 23<sup>rd</sup> Youth Group Kick-Off
- September 30<sup>th</sup>
- October 7<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>
- November 4<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>
- December 2<sup>nd</sup> – possible trip to La Salette
- December 16<sup>th</sup> Youth Group Silent Retreat in Church 6-7pm
- January 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025
- February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup>
- March 3<sup>rd</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>
- April 7<sup>th</sup>
- May 5<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>
- May 19<sup>th</sup> End of Year Celebration & Cookout

Please contact Rev. Racquel Ray with any questions you may have. [racquel@bccucc.org](mailto:racquel@bccucc.org) or 246-0111 x 104.

## VOLUNTEERING FOR FAITH FORMATION MINISTRIES

It really does 'take a village' to nurture Christian faith in children and young people. We hope and expect that parents, caregivers, and other interested adults in the church community will offer their time and talents throughout the program year. We help provide you with the information and resources that you'll need to enjoy the experience and grow in faith.

If you're interested in volunteering in Church School, or have questions, please contact our Faith Formation Director, Andrea Terni Bullard, at [andrea@bccucc.org](mailto:andrea@bccucc.org) or 246-0111 x 107.

For volunteering with Youth Group, please contact Rev. Racquel Ray at [racquel@bccucc.org](mailto:racquel@bccucc.org) or 246-0111 x 104.

**Every volunteer that works with children & youth is asked to fill out a Volunteer Application Form.** You can download the form from our website at <https://bccucc.org/children-youth/> or pick one up from outside Andrea's office.

For more information please contact Andrea Terni Bullard at [andrea@bccucc.org](mailto:andrea@bccucc.org) or 246-0111 ext 107.



## MISSION TRIP

For years BCCUCC held an annual mission trip for our youth. These trips alternated between more regional trips around New England and trips farther away around the country. In recent years, they became more intergenerational than just youth focused. What a great way for our youth and adults to learn from each other! Although we currently do not have a trip scheduled for 2024 – 2025, there is a team looking into a few options.

The focus of these trips is not only to help others in need, but also to grow and learn through experiencing communities different from our own.



If you are interested in helping organize or participate in a trip, please reach out to Rev. Dale [dale@bccucc.org](mailto:dale@bccucc.org) 246-0111 x 103, or the church office [office@bccucc.org](mailto:office@bccucc.org).

## LOCAL MISSION

BCCUCC has a wide range of outreach opportunities to serve the local community and beyond and our children and youth are invited to participate fully in nearly all of them. Programs such as Loaves and Fishes Rhode Island, collections for Tap-In, creating buckets for Church World Service, or baskets for Crossroads are great ways of getting involved and making a difference in our world. A list of many of these ministries and how to get involved can be found on the church website <https://bccucc.org/outreach/>. The eBridge newsletter and Sunday morning announcements in the bulletin are also a great resource and contain the most up-to-date information. These events come and go throughout the year and there is almost always one of them happening or just beyond the horizon.

# SAFETY AT BCCUCC

## Fire Drill Procedure

- Feel the door for heat. If cool, open slightly and observe corridor conditions.
- Take a head count and have children line up.
- Take the attendance book with you and proceed to the nearest exit as outlined in the fire escape plan in the classroom.
- If there is smoke, stay as close to the floor as possible.
- Make sure that everyone stays together.
- Exit the building and proceed to the parking lot.
- Do a follow-up head count.
- Hold all children until the parents have come to pick them up.

## Safe Space Policies

- Two Adult Rule: No teacher or assistant should place themselves be alone with a child or children. At least one teacher and one assistant must be present in the classroom every Sunday and at every youth event. Adults must be unrelated.
- All volunteers working with children and youth at BCCUCC are required to attend Safe Space Training and participate in background checks. See Andrea for this process.
- No teacher or assistant shall be alone with a child in a bathroom with the door closed. If a teacher or assistant accompanies a child to the bathroom, they should remain outside the bathroom while the child is inside. The bathroom door must remain open at all times.
- If a child needs to leave the classroom for any reason, they must pair up with another child of the same gender. No child is permitted to walk in the halls alone.

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*Stay tuned throughout the year for more information about children and youth programs at BCCUCC via email, the eBridge newsletter, and the worship bulletin Announcements.*