

**Interim Director of Lifespan Religious Education
Westside Unitarian Universalist Church
Fort Worth, Texas**

Westside UU Church is looking for a 2-year, full-time Interim Director of Lifespan Religious Education. Salary will be commensurate with experience, per UUA Fair Compensation guidelines for Midsize I, Geo Index 3. Package includes generous leave, a stipend for professional expenses, employer contribution to health insurance, and employer contributions to UUA retirement plan.

In collaboration with the Religious Education Transition Team, the Interim Director of Lifespan Religious Education (Interim DLRE) supports and maintains the Religious Education program. The Interim DLRE will provide professional leadership for religious education programming for children, youth, and adults, in support of Westside UU Church's mission: to make a positive difference in the lives of our members, our families, and the world at large through supportive relationships, religious and intellectual exploration, and social action. Hours are varied and include most Sundays.

Job Duties

Supervision

- The Interim DLRE works under the direct supervision of the Minister, maintaining open communications with the Minister via regular meetings.
- The Interim DLRE works closely with and attends regular meetings of the various RE Committees. The Interim DLRE also attends Board of Directors meetings. However, unless otherwise specified in the contract, supervision of the Interim DLRE is solely responsibility of the Minister.

Principles

The following principles will guide the work of the Interim DLRE:

1. Work with the congregation to fulfill an agreed upon interim process as well as a healthy religious education program. The interim religious educator, minister, board and/or Transition Team will design this agreed-upon interim process during the first 6 months of the interim period.
2. Help the congregation with core interim tasks, including (but not limited to):
 - a. **Heritage:** Come to Terms with Congregation's Religious Education Program History
 - b. **Mission:** Evolve a Unique Religious Education Program Identity
 - c. **Leadership:** Address Leadership Changes During the Interim Period
 - d. **Connection:** Renew Associational and Community Linkages
 - e. **Future:** Commit to the Future of the Religious Education Program's Vitality
3. Ensure that a healthy religious education program continues during the interim time. (See Duties below.)

4. Serve as a resource for the settled religious education search committee when the congregation enters search.
5. The interim religious educator will not apply for the settled position.

Key responsibilities of maintaining the RE program include:

Administration

- Direct the enrollment of children in the RE program.
- Maintain and properly secure records and files of enrolled children and teachers.
- Direct the procurement of materials required by the RE program within budgetary bounds.
- Solicit and recruit volunteers, with the assistance of the various RE Committees, as required for the proper function of all RE programs and events.
- Train and support teachers, facilitators and leaders for RE programs.
- With the various RE Committees, develop a detailed yearly budget, to be submitted to the Finance Committee in a timely manner.
- Establish, maintain and/or update program mission, vision and policies as needed, with participation of relevant parties (e.g., RE committees, Minister, Board of Directors and Safe Congregations Committee).
- Ensure current policies and procedures pertaining to RE are followed.

Programming

- Establish goals, identify resources, and map curricula and offerings for children's and adult religious education.
- Maintain an ongoing 12 month calendar of RE classes and events.
- Work with Minister and appropriate committees in developing a varied program of offerings for adults to deepen their spiritual and intellectual experience at Westside.
- Communicate with the congregation to determine program needs and interests.

Sunday Program, RE Events and Congregational Interaction

- Develop and direct a plan for Sunday RE procedures to ensure: children's safety and participation; a welcome for visitors commensurate with the culture of Westside UU Church; ensuring proper record keeping, including an accurate attendance record for children's RE.
- Support the effectiveness of worship for all generations, such as through: coordination of Time for All Ages presenters and occasional presenting; participating in rites of passage for children, youth and families; leading or collaborating in the development of multi-generational worship services; and facilitating the development of occasional worship services led by young people.
- Maintain open communications with the congregation and be a regular presence in the building on Sundays.
- Offer a stable, caring presence to young people and their families; be available to them for support in times of transition or crisis; and liaise with the Minister, Pastoral Care Team and other groups within the church to provide support, as appropriate.

Professional Development

- Devise and pursue a program leading to self-improvement and professional growth.

- Join and participate in professional religious educational organizations such as North Texas UU Religious Educators (NATUURES) and Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA).
- Attend and participate in conferences or other programs as approved by the Minister of Westside UU Church.
- Keep abreast of current curriculum materials, learning theories, teaching techniques, and group process skills, as well as concepts and trends in liberal religious education.

Qualifications

The successful candidate will have:

- University degree or demonstrated equivalent work experience
- Working understanding of the Unitarian Universalist faith and tradition
- Familiarity with Our Whole Lives, Coming of Age, and Spirit Play programs
- Demonstrated skill in working with volunteers and navigating family systems dynamics
- Ability to build relationships with children, youth and adults and integrate them into the church community and RE programs
- Conversance with email, text, social media, file-sharing programs, and Microsoft Office suite
- Passion for family ministry, including parent support and intergenerational worship
- Training in interim work for religious professionals -- a candidate meeting all other qualifications may be sent by the church to receive this training
- Religious Education credentials a plus

How to Apply

Please send a resume and cover letter, sharing how you meet the role of this position, to interimdlre@westsideuu.org. The position will remain open until filled. Candidate reviews will begin on May 2.

We will do our best to respond in a timely manner to each applicant. All applicants will be informed of their status as we move through the process.

Please note the selected candidate will be required to submit to a criminal background check and verify all trainings, credentials held, and work history. Finalists may be asked for references.

About the Church

Westside UU Church is a vibrant congregation, and a relatively young one, looking ahead to its 25th anniversary next year. Located on the near southside of Fort Worth, a city rich in diversity and cultural amenities, the church's membership of about 200 people reaches to every corner of Tarrant County and beyond. Our settled minister is completing her third year with Westside. The church has a friendly personality and in recent years has become increasingly active in social justice work, alongside long-standing service work. A beacon of liberal religion in a conservative area, Westside enjoys a theologically diverse membership, including a strong Humanist-identified group as well as a Buddhist meditation group, folks exploring strands of the Biblical tradition, and many eclectic seekers. A healthy mix of established lay leaders and newer members help to carry out the work of the church.

Our is a multi-generational congregation with plenty of families with young children, as well as a young adult program, and active members in the mid-life and elder years too. Westside has engaged with anti-racism, anti-oppression and multiculturalism (AR/AO/MC) within the church. We are working faithfully to make the shift from pastoral-style to program-style functioning, in support of our vision, to “continue to grow and continue to become a more influential liberal religious presence through active service to our community and the world at large.” The most visible manifestation of this work is a building newly-renovated after an intentional parting of ways with a long-time tenant. Our facility has been transformed this past year and is filling up with programs and people, now that it is fully dedicated to our mission.

Religious education has long been a strength of this church, with active programs for children, youth, and adults. In the 2018-2019 year, inspired by Kim Sweeney’s work and driven by several passionate parents, we made the leap to family worship. Children are welcome to stay with their families throughout the entire worship service at either service. CRE classes are held in the slot between the two worship services. RE programs for children include Spirit Play, older elementary, middle and high school groups, Coming of Age in alternate years, and Our Whole Lives rotating through age groups. Beyond family worship, we are interested in ways we can support parents and families in their shared spiritual life, community, and UU faith formation.

The religious educator position became a lifespan position when Westside took it to full-time. In the past, the DLRE has lent support to the Adult Religious Education Com. and given particular attention to programs that further our AR/AO/MC work. This year we also held several religious education summits that drew from different constituencies in the church – CRE, ARE, membership and leadership development. We hope to continue convening this “brain trust” to identify core stories all Westsiders should know and create a cohesive program across all ages. Relatedly, this spring we completed our first pilot of the Faith Forward Inquirers program – geared to visitors and newer members – and look to roll out other curricula in the series over time. That will support intentional faith development for all our adults, along the way creating a pipeline of leaders with strong faith roots. We also launched a new covenant group program this year, tapping into Soul Matters resources.

Westside is a visionary, can-do congregation that is poised to grow, serve more families, and help our liberal religious values ripple out into the community beyond our walls. We are excited to work with an interim religious educator at this juncture. The church has grown and changed fairly quickly, and we believe we will benefit from an interim’s perspective and skills as we move forward with faith formation, which is at the heart of our mission: to make “a positive difference in the lives of our members, our families, and the world at large through supportive relationships, religious and intellectual exploration, and social action.”

To learn more, visit www.westsideuu.org.