

# BLESSINGS FOR UU FAMILIES / SUMMER SUNDAYS

## The Blessing is in the Seed: Summer Sundays with Unity's Children

from Kerri Meyer, Director of Religious Education

Beginning Memorial Day weekend, the children who come to Unity on summer Sundays will work together in our Children's Garden in the greenspace. Conceived last summer and carried out by Anna Newton and Meg Arnosti, with the help of Unity's gardeners and youth, the garden bloomed with friendship and flowers, happiness and herbs. We're looking forward to our second summer in the garden.

A garden may be the very definition of the word "blessing." If a child asks us to define the word, we can take "blessing" in one of several directions. Each of these meanings comes to life in a garden:

1. blessing: (n.) divine or providential aid; good fortune

We tell our children that humans cannot summon the sun or the rain that our garden needs to grow, but these things still come without our asking. They are a blessing, as are the hands that dug the earth and carried the seed. Weeks of clouds and stretches of drought serve to bring our attention to the blessings of sun and rain and to feel deep gratitude when they return.

2. blessing: (n.) a thing one is glad of

There is a joy that even the youngest child recognizes in the springtime warmth of the soil, in the miraculous seed leaves that first reach to the sun, in the ripe sweetness of a just-picked tomato. Children are indeed glad to be out of doors at their church in the sweet summer mornings.

3. blessing: (n.) the conference of favor, protection

When we plant a seed and nourish its beginnings, our relationship to its new life is more personal, more real than our relationship to the thousand seeds that sprout without our help. When we lay hands on another living being, we become part of the love that will protect it and keep it in life's favor. In a congregation rich with children, we

have many opportunities to enter into that special relationship of nurture and care. To

garden together this summer is to lay our blessing on both a child and a patch of earth: we become connected in a new, deep way to the blessings that are at our fingertips.

4. bless: (v) to bestow prosperity, health or happiness on another

This year, the children and adults who tend our garden will share the beans, okra, chives, tomatoes, lettuce, and sunflowers with an elderly neighbor who receives services through the Summit University Living At Home Block Nurse program, whose offices are housed at Unity Church. Each week, we will send a "Garden Box" to our new friend, filled with good food, photos of the garden and notes from the children. We hope in this way to pass on the blessings of sun, rain, real work and friendship, bestowing health and happiness on another.

Join us in the garden this summer! Put your hands in the warm earth. Take a child's hand in your own. Bless and be blessed. May the sun and the rain come to meet you.



*Nourish beginnings.*

*let us nourish beginnings.*

*Not all things are blest, but  
the seeds of all things are blest.*

*The blessing is in the seed.*

*- Muriel Rukeyser*

### Summer Sundays in the Garden Begin Memorial Day Weekend!

Religious Education ends on May 10, but starting May 31 and continuing through the summer, children and adult volunteers will be in our Children's Garden with Anna Newton.

This year, we'll be planting more flowers and vegetables and we'll be sharing the fruits of our labor with a neighbor who receives services through the Summit/University Living at Home organization housed here at Unity.

Registration is not necessary, but Safe Church ratios of adult volunteers to children will limit the number of kids we can take with us into the garden.

If you'd like to volunteer to garden with the children or to help tend the garden between Sundays, contact Kerri in the Church Office.

### Chalice Camp Registration Deadline: May 17!

Families who would like to sign their first- through sixth-grader up for Chalice Camp should turn in their registration form by May 17. Chalice Camp is a week-long day camp for UU kids who want to build friendships while learning more about our history and values. This year's camp will take place Monday-Friday, August 10-14. Forms can be printed from the church website. Tuition for the week is \$200 per child; financial support is available to all families who need assistance funding their child's participation.