

Religious Education Committee Annual Report for 2018

Main Ways in Which We Spent Our Time in 2018:

The Religious Education (RE) Committee plans, coordinates, supports, and provides oversight for First Day School, Nursery Child Care, and Summer Activities. In 2017-2018, First Day School programs and activities were provided from the third Sunday in September through the first Sunday in June. Nursery Child Care was provided every First Day of the year as well as for special occasions. Summer activities were provided for school aged children during Meeting for Worship from the second First Day in June through the second First Day in September.

Highlights in 2018:

- Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Family Program coordinated by Rory Kennison (January)
- Mindfulness Workshop, including Tibetan Singing Bowls, facilitated by Cathy Hanson and Bess Keller (January).
- BYM Camp Day with Chris Rutkowski and John Beck which proved to be instrumental in helping at least one youngster to apply and go to camp. (January)
- Easter Day Program including pansies and Easter Egg Hunt coordinated by Megan Shook. (April)
- Trip to Adelphi Friends Meeting coordinated by Megan and Giovanna (April)
- Family Camping Weekend at Catoctin (April)
- End of School Year Program – a puppet show and play with notable Quaker persons from history interacting with one another. (June)
- Opening Day for First Day School. Coordinated by Rory and Susie. Sweet Potato Biscuits by Susie. YUM! (September)
- Five community service days by the children. Lunches for those in need, trash and recycling pick up in Wyman Dell, and toiletry kits for the homeless were activities. (February, March, May, October, and November)
- The Nativity of Jesus play, directed by Rory (December).

Spiritual State of the Committee:

The RE Committee members are very committed to and engaged with the children of the Meeting and to providing support and oversight to the paid staff of three people who work in Nursery Child Care and First Day School programs – Rory Kennison, Henry Kennison, and Chris Stadler. We meet as regularly as we can, although we have had to be flexible and adaptable with our committee meeting times. Although we were not able in 2018 to establish a consistent meeting time, our meetings consistently began and ended with worship, and were characterized by cheerfulness and optimism that religious education is making a positive difference in the lives of the children and in support of their families.

The RE Committee grew from three to four people in 2018 with Kendall Kennison joining Susie, Megan, and John. Still the program takes a lot of work and sometimes members have felt the burden of that commitment. But we are grateful for the contributions of Chris Stadler, the child care specialist, Giovanna Selvaggio, our First Day School Instructor, from September 2015 to June 2018, Rory Kennison, who assumed duties as our First Day School Instructor in September 2018, and Henry Kennison, who is in his second year as a child care assistant. We are also grateful for the contributions of Chris Rutkowski, who stepped in to teach art on several fourth Sundays of the month and for assistance from about six other adults who served as assistants in First Day School during the year.

Challenges Faced by Committee:

- We have a small group of children who are regular attenders. We would love to have more children and more regulars.
- First Day School is really a “one room schoolhouse” which is both a challenge for the teachers and a point of strength for the group. Older kids usually help as models for the younger kids.
- Committee had just four members and could really benefit from additional members.
- Recruiting Summer Program Leaders.

Strengths of the Committee:

- Adaptability and versatility. Committee members played multiple roles.
- Commitment to the children and to the Meeting.
- Experience and common sense from being parents.
- Support from the Homewood community – encouragement, announcements, volunteers, and financial.
- Compliance with the Youth Safety Policy.

Our Hopes for the Future:

- More children in the programs, in particular, the Nursery
- More committee members.
- A successful family camping trip to Catoctin in late April.
- To reschedule “Go Ga Ga for the Goats” a program that was cancelled due to rain in September 2018.
- To recruit at least one new First Day School teacher to replace Rory.
- Update the background checks for volunteers who have served for four or more years.
- A revamped summer program, if there is a need.

Committee Members as of 12/31/18: Susie Higgins, Kendall Kennison, John McKusick, and Megan Shook.