



The Joseph Priestley District of the Unitarian Universalist Association
100 W. 10th Street, Suite 1008, Wilmington, DE 19801
302-778-4564 ❖ 800-351-6637 ❖ 302-778-4590 (fax) ❖ www.jpduua.org
Meredith Higgins, Director for Adjunct Staff Program
11482 Oak Leaf Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20901
301-537-0654 (cell) ❖ meredith@jpduua.org ❖ higginsrpf@aol.com

Dedications in Our Faithful Community

"May we build a community in which [the children we dedicate] grow old surrounded by beauty, embraced by love, and cradled in the arms of peace." by Rob Eller-Isaacs

Do you ever participate in speaking aloud Responsive Reading #714 "Congregational Blessing for Child Dedication" in *Singing the Living Tradition*? Are like me, asking yourself if you are keeping this message alive in your thoughts and actions as a member of the congregation? Am I helping to build the community mentioned above? And, am I dedicating my mind and heart to the congregation's children, as mentioned earlier in the reading? Reading #714 always causes me to reflect.

There are people who are clearly doing all they can to nurture and inspire the children. Think of the parents, many of whom teach Sunday School; the Lifespan Educator who offers her/his skills and enthusiasm day in and day out; and the ministers who support the program in many affirming ways. But building the community we dream about also takes the rest of us – those whose children are grown as well as those who do not have children. For example, consider the following:

Serve on the RE/Lifespan Education Committee - bring your talents of organization, leadership, enthusiasm to the work of the committee. Find out what the committee is working on and offer to help.

Participate in a Start Up event – if your congregation is planning for a new Lifespan Educator or Director of Religious Education, attend the facilitated Start Up session where she/he is welcomed and everyone learns about the new person, the new roles (if they

have changed) and what to expect of each other for the good of the program.

Volunteer to teach Let's be frank, some people don't volunteer to teach because they feel the need to restore themselves on Sunday morning by participating in worship. Most programs offer ways that you can participate in worship some of the time, you are not promising to give up every Sunday for a whole year. Besides, you might be thrilled at the wonderful things you have gained in working with the other teachers and the students.

Support the program financially At budget hearings, and the annual meeting, pay attention to the amount budgeted for RE. Make suggestions, or provide leadership to increase the budget.

The JPD Adjunct Staff program includes a number of skilled, facilitators with Lifespan Education background. They work with congregations and committees at planning and Start Up retreats. Please give me a call if you would like to know more about the services available. 301 537 0654

I wish you a season of happy holidays.

Meredith