

I am so excited to begin the 2018-2019 year as Buuf's new Director of Religious Education, thank you for welcoming to this position! I look forward to continuing some of the wonderful programs that Dave Sarra ran, programs like *Creative Conversations*, *Buuf Brunch* and *Sunday Children's RE*. But I also look forward to building on these programs with new innovative ideas.

I would like to continue *Children's RE* throughout the summer and depending on our volunteer teacher's availability we could do this in a more relaxed way, spending time outdoors, learning about environmental justice. In the fall, we will pick out a new curriculum and I plan to start a mindfulness training at the beginning of each RE. Research shows that mindfulness training in children and adults include improvements in working memory, attention, academic skills, social skills, emotional regulation, and self-esteem, as well as self-reported improvements in mood and decreases in anxiety, stress, and fatigue. Mindfulness Training is simple guided breathing exercises, it teaches the child through repetition to perform the breathing exercises on their own after a time.

Towards the end of the year, if some of the older kids are interested, we could start a youth group. I envision this as a fun group, where they do some curriculum from UUA and also get out in the community for field trips and volunteering opportunities.

As for the adult RE programs, I hope to shake up *Creative Conversations* and *Buuf Brunch* a little by incorporating presentations I make showcasing specific artists, musicians, filmmakers or craftivists who focus on activism and social or environmental justice.

In addition, I would like to introduce a new program I'm calling *Art & Spirit*. This would be a hands-on workshop once a month where we would begin with a mindfulness practice and then try to access our spirit and/or religious feelings by making art, poetry, dance, and/or through music. I hope that this kind of program has appeal to our members of our community as well as Buufer's.

With that in mind, these are only ideas and can be remodeled as needed or wanted. I look forward to hearing your ideas and any knowledge of past RE's are welcome. I am listening! Please feel free to contact me.

With Best Wishes for a new, exciting year at Buuf,

Katharine Lion

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