

Beth Dana Appointed Youth Ministry Consultant

Greetings, Metro New York Unitarian Universalists! My name is Beth Dana, and I am the new Youth Ministry Consultant for the District.

As a lifelong UU, this community has been a significant part of my life, as I hope it is and will continue to be for all UU youth. I grew up in Albany NY where I was actively involved in my community, my congregation, and the youth group. As a youth, I held a variety of leadership positions in my congregation and the St. Lawrence District. I was (and continue to be) a Youth Leadership Development, Youth Advisor, and Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression trainer in the UUA's Chrysalis Training Program. I look forward to bringing these skills, as well as my experience with conflict mediation and facilitation gained in college, to consulting for the District.

For the past two years I've had the honor of working with UUs across the continent as a Youth Ministry Associate at the UUA in Boston. I collaborated with a task force of 15 youth, young adults, and adults to coordinate a Consultation on Ministry to and with Youth, engaging over 5,000 UUs of all ages (including many in this District!) in an evaluation of and large-scale conversation about youth ministry. The outcomes of this consultation will significantly impact the support congregations receive from the UUA in the coming years, particularly in the areas of youth spiritual development, multigenerational community, welcoming, and counter-oppressive communities, offering multiple pathways for youth involvement and preparation/education for adults doing ministry with youth. The Consultation's report is hot off the press, available on the UUA website at http://www.uua.org/documents/youthconsultation/0708_summary.pdf. The report should be more widely available in the coming months. I look forward to bringing the insights gained from the Consultation to my work with the Metro NY District. I believe that youth ministry is essential to the health and vitality of our UU community. It has the power to be truly transformative – not just for youth, but for all involved!

After taking a two-year break from college, I returned this fall for my final year at New York University, where I'm double-majoring in Metropolitan Studies and Religious Studies. I also have the joy of working with seventh grade youth at Unitarian Church of All Souls in Manhattan, where I am co-teaching the Sunday morning "Race to Justice" program.

This is an exciting year of change for the Metro NY District, with many new staff and consultants and a growing collaboration between our District and the neighboring districts of St. Lawrence, Ohio-Meadville, and Joseph Priestley. I am available to YOU – youth, adults, and congregations in the Metro NY District – for support and advice on ministry with youth. Feel free to contact me at beth.r.dana@gmail.com. I'm looking forward to getting to know you over the coming months!