

Read through and then adapt for your own use this message sent to all the RE Teachers and RE Committee members in FUC, Fairfax VA

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PARTNER CHURCH POSSIBILITIES IN THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM

PURPOSE: To identify resources and techniques for teaching about Fairfax Unitarian Church's (FUC's) partner Transylvanian Unitarian church in Szentgerice (Galateni), Romania.

BACKGROUND: Did you know ...

- >FUG became a partner of the Unitarian Church in Szentgerice (Galateni) in 1990?
- >Unitarian churches in Transylvania are the oldest Unitarian churches in the world?
- >Unitarians in Transylvania are members of the often-beleaguered Hungarian minority?
- >Unitarian prince John Sigismund decreed religious operation in Transylvania in 1568?
- >Szentgerice's villagers struggle with few material comforts in a shaky economy?
- >FUC members and friends have supplied medicines for the village since 1992?

For more information read the PARTNE CHURCH BROCHURE in your packet.

INCLUDE THE PARTNER CHURCH...

- >in lessons on Unitarian history and beliefs
- >when exploring customs around the world
- >when considering issues of social responsibility

RESOURCES:

SONGS

Transylvanian hymns have powerful, haunting melodies. Here are four from the UU hymnal, *singing the Living Tradition*, listed by hymn number and title.

- #37 God Who Fills the Universe (acting on one's beliefs)
- #56 Bells in the High Tower (depicts each of the four seasons)
- #322 Thanks Be For These (a hymn of thanksgiving)
- #352 Find a Stillness (fosters a sense of quiet)

Other hymns on the topic: #159 (especially), #134, #148, #189-90, #287, #295

also: Karen Foley will help find and teach Transylvanian/Hungarian songs and dances.

READINGS

>from the hymnal: #566 *God Is One* adapted from Transylvanian Unitarian philosopher, Francis David. You can use selected sentences, such as "You need not think alike to love alike."

>*Egy Az Isten* (pronounced edge oz Eeshten) God is One. The words are displaced prominently in every church and are on the wood plaque in Building 1.

>Words describing the symbols in the "logo" of the Transylvanian Unitarians:

- >Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves (when dealing with your enemies).
- >Found yourself on this rock and earn the crown of life.

>Affirmation of Transylvania Unitarians Affirmation (Note that although this is more traditional than most of our present day North American affirmations, it is still quite Unitarian to our ears.):

I am Unitarian. I live and work in this faith.

Jesus is my guide. And God is my help.

We, humans, are all brothers and sisters.

Our law is one: love. The goal of our work is shared.

Happy are those of God's kingdom.

(-Translated by Judit Gellérd, in "Save Transylvania," 1992

>An excerpt from the "Decree of Religious Toleration" declared by King John Sigismund as the result of the Diet of Torda in 1568:

... in every place the preachers shall preach, each according to his (own) understanding, and if the congregation like it, well; if not, no one shall compel them...for faith is the gift of God.

STORIES AND PLAYS

>Beginnings--a play about the Edict of Toleration. 1994 by Hal Fuller (see Pat Fuller, above)

>An Introduction to the play, Beginnings, adapted by Rev. Arlene Lukas, from The Story of King John Sigismund, by Heather McDonald, 1980, STORIES AND PLAYS, UUA REACH packet.

>Ferenéz Dávid -- Unitarian Prophet, a story by Jay Atkinson from UUA REACH packet

>Francis David, a story from "Travel with Children to Transylvania" from UUA REACH Packet

>The Poor Lad's Goat, a Hungarian folk tale about a boy's search for happiness.

(Fairfax County Library has more folk tale collections. Call Pat or Mary for more information)

PICTURES AND ARTIFACTS

On a labeled shelf in the RE office in Building I are the following:

>5x7 color photos (smaller copies in your packet) and a poster photo of Szentgerice.

>wall maps of the world and of Romania (showing our partner's town).

>a two-volume scrapbook of the 1992 FUG Chorale trip to Transylvania.

>a slide show, with script, of Szentgerice and nearby churches where the Chorale sang.

>two 90-minute videos of the 1992 Chorale trip and concerts.

FUG members have many souvenir Transylvanian artifacts. Call Mary or Pat to track them down.

SPEAKERS, INTERVIEWS

Social Responsibility:

>invite FUC members who have helped gather medicines to describe plans for a clinic.

>invite FUC members to describe their projects and efforts that promote conflict resolution between Hungarian-Romanians and Romanian-Romanians.

Cultural Exchange:

>invite visitors to and from Szentgerice visitors to relate joys and challenges of a cross-cultural Visit.