

CON Reflections

By Katie Campbell

My name is **Katie Campbell**. I am a member of the 2013-14 Senior High Youth Group. I'm excited to tell you about our upcoming Spring Youth Conference (CON), which will be held right here at Eliot Chapel.

So what is CON? It's a weekend conference of 100+ Unitarian Universalist teenagers from around the Midwest, which seeks to create an "intentionally safe faith community for youth that provides opportunities for worship, social justice, education, leadership development and community building." During CON, we participate in workshops, worship, eat, make friends, dance, teach, talk, and much more. CON surrounds us with unconditional love, acceptance, connects us with UU teenagers in a community of like-minded youth, and increases our appreciation for our church and UU values.

What CON and youth group means to each individual is unique. **For me, my UU friends from youth group and CON are some of my best friends.** Eliot has given me a home away from home, a shoulder to cry on, as many hugs as I need, time to be silly, and abundant reassurance. Most importantly, my UU friends love and accept me for who I am, and teach me to do the same for others.

Hosting or participating in CON is a rewarding and awe-inspiring experience and takes the efforts of many youth and adults. A major component of CON is

workshops, which range from serious discussions (LGBTQ topics, philosophical questions), to silly (like interpretive dance, cupcake decorating), to relaxing (meditation and yoga). One major way congregation members at hosting churches can get involved in CON is leading a 1.5 to 2 hour workshop for youth, stemming from a special skill or passion, which can inspire youth to pursue their own interests and passions.

The Senior High Youth Group was honored to lead worship for the Eliot community during our recent youth-led service, and we're really excited to be hosting CON later this spring. We know it will be a success and a reflection of the abundant energy and excitement found here at Eliot and in UU youth groups from around the MidAmerica Region. Thanks for your support.

Katie Campbell & the Senior High Youth Group

CONsciousness: Spring 2014

Hosted by Eliot Unitarian Chapel



