



Thursday, January 2, 2025

## Sunday, January 5

**Pancake Breakfast at 8:45 a.m.**   
**Sunday Worship at 10:15 a.m.**

**Together Time:** Children and youth begin in the Sanctuary at 10:15 a.m. **Nursery and toddler care** is always available during our worship service. Learn about our program [here](#). Current news [here](#).

**Social Hour:** Buchan Reception Hall after the service.

**LIVESTREAM SERVICE**



### Livestream Schedule

[Sanctuary Service](#) – 10:15 a.m.

**In-Person & Livestream**

[Monday Loving Kindness](#)

[Meditation](#) – 8 - 8:30 p.m.

**via Zoom**

[Friday Vespers](#) – 5 - 5:40 p.m.

**via Zoom**

**SERVICES**

## What Would Janus Say?

[Rev. Alison Miller](#), Senior Minister



Our annual spiritual theme of the 2024-2025 congregational year is “Join the Journey,” and this month we are specifically exploring “Threshold” as a way into the theme. As we arrive at 25 years into this century, it is an opportunity to reflect on where we have been and where we are headed as individuals and

as a society. In Roman mythology, Janus was the god of beginnings, doors, and transitions. If he could speak, what might he say as we move across the threshold of a new year?



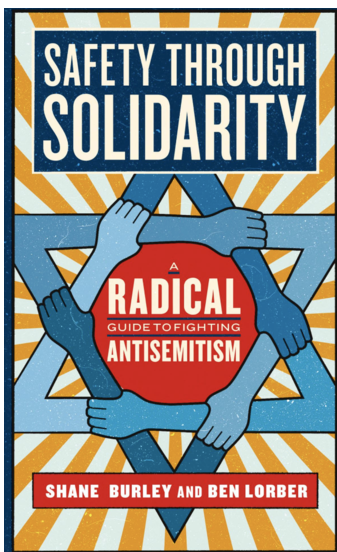
### January's Shared Plate

This church year, we share our plate offering with community organizations working for the rights and support of immigrants. For the month of January, we are pleased to share our plate with [Innovation Law Lab](#). They write "The U.S.

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## ORDER OF SERVICE

## Featured News

**Register Now: Countering Antisemitism in Our Movements****Sunday, January 12, 4 - 6 p.m.****Location:** Buchan, B102Led by [Rev. Alison Miller](#), Senior Minister, and [Dana Buhl](#), Director of Social Justice

With the rise of Christian Nationalism in the US and abroad, overt antisemitism is resurging to fuel these movements. We've seen violent attacks on Jews in recent years, including the murder of congregants worshipping at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh and right-wing marchers carrying tiki-torches and yelling anti-Jewish slogans. Antisemitism is real and it is deeply woven into our culture. It is both subtle and overt and has had traumatizing impacts on Jewish

communities for generations.

Antisemitism is also confusing, including when claims of antisemitism are used to divert and divide justice seeking movements or when progressive people perpetuate antisemitic tropes. UU efforts to address the unspeakable violence in Israel and Palestine have activated people's trauma, confusion, and frustration. We believe that in order to act effectively and accountably within our UU communities, we must understand how antisemitism is present and how we can counter it as we fight for justice and human rights.

If you'd like to learn alongside us, we invite you to join us for a two-part in-person program, taking place on January 12 and January 26. **Registration is required. Attendance at the first session is required to join the second session.** [Read more and register here.](#)

deportation machine works to grind down the spirit of the immigrant. In its wake, communities are torn apart, families separated, and refugees forced to relinquish their right to freedom, inclusion, and safety." Innovation Law Lab provides legal expertise and strategies to build permanent pathways to immigrant and refugee justice. Their programs include rapid intervention, defense of asylum, a clearinghouse for immigrant justice organizing, and immigrant defense in Oregon.

**This Week's Shower Project Requests**

Your donations make a big difference in the lives of those we serve. All donations are greatly appreciated. At this time, we are in special need of the following items:

- Men's shoes (large sizes)
- Men's pants (sizes 30-32 waist)
- Women's pants (XXS-XS)
- Leggings
- Winter coats (all sizes)
- Gloves and winter hats

[Our page](#) includes a list of our most frequently-needed items.

Please bring your items to donate to the cabinet in Fuller Hall, next to the kitchen. Thank you for your support!

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## NEW! — What a Wonderful 100th Anniversary Pageant!



Want to know what this church has to offer? **Show up for events/classes/socials and stay engaged!**

[Click here to view more images from our celebration.](#)

### Send Photos Our Way!

Were you "snapping away" at our Solstice or our 100th Anniversary Christmas Pageant service? If so, we'd love to have a few of your best pics. Just email them to the church office at [photos@firstunitarianportland.org](mailto:photos@firstunitarianportland.org).



We'd like to showcase a few of these in our next Front Steps and our pre-service slides, and hold on to them to feature next year during the holidays.

## Happening This Sunday

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### **NEW! — Pancake Breakfast**

**This Sunday, January 5, 8:45 - 10 a.m.**

**Location:** Buchan Reception Hall

[1st UU Men's Community](#)

Join us for free, delicious pancakes in Buchan Reception Hall from 8:45 to 10 a.m. this Sunday. We will have plain, blueberry, chocolate, and blueberry-chocolate pancakes fresh off the griddle. All are welcome!

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### **First Steps Class This Sunday**

**This Sunday, January 5, after the service**

**Location:** Channing (A101)

[Jen Thomas](#), Member Engagement Coordinator, and [Danielle Garrett](#), Assistant Minister

Our next First Steps Class and Campus Tour will take place this Sunday. This first offering of the year is sure to be a full class!

**Class is limited to 15 folks, so... [Please RSVP to Jen.](#)**

Join Danielle Garrett, Jen Thomas, and church member Bill after the service in Channing Room A-101 to learn more about First Unitarian Portland and our programs, and to meet some leaders in the church and take a tour. This is also an opportunity to ask about membership for those interested in making a deeper commitment to First U.

First Steps classes are offered on most first Sundays of the month throughout the year.

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## Join the Journey on the Labyrinth + Family Open House!

**This Sunday, January 5, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.**

**Location:** Fuller Hall



This year, as we explore the church theme “Join the Journey,” we offer monthly opportunities to deepen our spiritual practices and focus on our inner journeys through the Labyrinth. The Labyrinth will be set up in Fuller Hall on the first Sunday of most months from 9:30 a.m. to noon.

This Sunday, join us for a family labyrinth open house from 9 - 10

a.m. [Read more about that here!](#)

The labyrinth will remain available until noon.

We’re always looking for more volunteers to help us set up our sacred space and plan other labyrinth related activities throughout the year. If you’d like to volunteer, reach out to [Teri](#).

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## Around the Church

Enjoyed coming to gatherings at First Unitarian Portland? Consider contributing to sustaining our community. Your support goes a long way in fostering meaningful connections. Thank you!

[DONATE](#)

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## The Contemplative Practices Group Returns!

**Every 1st and 3rd Thursday, 1 - 2:30 p.m.**

**Location:**

1st Thursdays in Channing, A101

3rd Thursdays in Buchan Reception, B101

The Contemplative Practices Group is returning to First Unitarian! Join with us on the first and third Thursdays of the month from 1 to 2:30 p.m. to sit in meditation together. Connect to your inner self as well as something bigger than yourself. Bring more peace and joy into your life, increase mindfulness and develop more perspective.

*“Contemplative spirituality is about slowing down and relaxing our*

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*the Reality in which we are already immersed, we must slow down and gently transition 'from doing to being.' "* - Keith Kristich

This is a drop-in group. Any silent sitting practice is welcomed and no prior meditation experience is needed. If you would like to learn a contemplative practice for use during the group, let the facilitators know and they will meet with you half an hour before the group sit begins.

Each group meeting consists of a 20-minute meditation, a check-in on a spiritually oriented topic, and deep discussion of a poem or short reading. Facilitators are [Patty](#) and [Ron](#). To learn more about the facilitators, [visit the event page here](#). They look forward to being with you!

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**NEXT WEEK — The Alliance Presents "Homelessness in Portland: Upstream Causes, Downstream Effects, and Finding the Pathways Home"**

**Wednesday, January 8, 10:30 a.m.**

**Location:** Eliot Chapel or [online](#)

[The Alliance](#)



On any given night in the United States, more than 650,000 people experience homelessness. West Coast states, including Oregon, are among the most significantly affected. Why? And what are we doing locally to help more of our neighbors find pathways home?

**Speaker:** Ryan Deibert, Interim Director of Multnomah County's Homelessness Response System.

If joining online, please [use this link](#).

To join us for the brown bag and dessert (\$5) after the program, please email [alliancervp@firstunitarianportland.org](mailto:alliancervp@firstunitarianportland.org).

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**Aging in OUR Church Community - Senior Forum**

**Sunday, January 12, noon**

**Location:** Buchan Rooms B102 and B103, or [online](#)

[Ian Thomas](#), Member Engagement Coordinator

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Aging in OUR Church Community - Senior Forum is a special event dedicated to understanding and supporting our senior members. This forum is organized by a newly formed committee co-chaired by church members Ruth and Mark. This group formed to support our senior community so that they do not feel disconnected or forgotten.

Join with others on January 12 to hear speakers from Alliance, Lay Ministry, and Sojourners and to engage in meaningful discussions about how we can better serve and connect with our senior community. Folks can arrive any time after 11:30 a.m. and the program will start at noon. This is an opportunity for everyone to share ideas, learn from each other, and strengthen the bonds within our church family.

It is also a Souper Sunday! You are invited to bring your soup to the gathering.

The forum will be livestreamed. To join online, click "Watch Live" on our website or [use this link](#).

We look forward to seeing you there and working together to create a vibrant, inclusive environment for all ages.



**NEW! — Star Ornaments Available at the Bookstore**  
[The Alliance](#)

Star ornaments, commemoratives of our 100th Christmas Pageant celebration, are now available at our bookstore in Fuller Hall! The \$5 price per ornament will go towards much-needed refurbishing

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## Transportation Organizing for Sundays

[Jen Thomas](#), Member Engagement Coordinator

Are you looking for rides to church? Are you able to bring folks to and from church on Sunday morning?

[Please take a minute and complete this quick survey.](#)

A group of thoughtful folks are putting heads together to consider ways to bring folks together to share in worship and activities on Sunday.

Thank you! For questions, [contact Jen Thomas](#).

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## Learning Community

Learn more about the [Learning Community programs](#).

Register your child for the 2024-25 program year [here](#).

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## CHECK WEEKLY — January 5 Newsletter

[Rev. Leah Ongiri](#), Director of Lifespan Faith Formation and Family Ministries

### A note from Assistant Minister Danielle Garrett:

For centuries, people around the world have used the labyrinth as a form of prayer, meditation, and discovery. It has many twists and turns, but unlike a maze, you can't get lost and there is no wrong way to go!

On most first Sundays of the month, First Unitarian sets up a

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labyrinth can be a fun and meaningful activity for all ages and it's a great way to introduce a spiritual practice to energetic little ones who like to move their bodies.

We hope you'll join us in Fuller Hall on January 5 from 9 to 10 a.m. for a family labyrinth open house. We'll have labyrinth volunteers on hand to explain the practice in a kid-friendly way and will have some finger labyrinths, traceable labyrinths and labyrinth-related crafts set up in Daisy Bingham so that the experience is accessible to all our community members...[MORE](#)

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## Social Justice Program

Learn more about the [Social Justice Action Groups \(SJAG\)](#).

SJAGs: [Contact us to schedule meetings and events.](#)

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### SAVE THE DATE! — Forum: How Will We Defend Attacks on Immigrants?

Tuesday, January 28, 7 - 8:30 p.m.

Location: Zoom

[Advancing Racial Justice Action Group](#) (ARJAG) and [Immigrant Justice Action Group](#) (IJAG)

With the incoming administration, we know that big changes are coming that will impact immigrant communities. We want to be informed, prepared, and ready for action.

ARJAG and IJAG will co-host a three-part series of events addressing immigrant justice. Through an anti-racist lens, we will explore immigration status issues, the lived experience of immigrants in Oregon, and strategic ways we can act in solidarity to promote and defend the human dignity of Oregon immigrants.

Please mark Tuesday, January 28, 7 - 8:30 p.m. (via Zoom) on your calendar for our first forum/workshop. Tentative dates for the subsequent events are Tuesday, March 4, and Tuesday, May 6.

Watch for additional information in upcoming Front Steps!

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### CHECK WEEKLY — Art for Social Justice

Curated by Ethel, Speaking of Justice Editorial Team

The Speaking of Justice Editorial Team offers weekly art to deepen our connection to the work for social justice and to build the

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“Are we ready? Ready to lift our vision above our fear. Ready to reject the possibility that “normal” is as good as it gets? Ready to embrace the possibility that this world just might be rebuilt to different standards that we would not be ashamed to name.”

This week's offering is “We Rise” from *Step By Step: The Ruby Bridges Suite* with text from “The Rebirth of Wonder” by Reverend William Sinkford. Watch the video below:



## In the Community

Community Milestones, Joys, and Sorrows

*[Please email us here if you have any joys or concerns to share.](#)*

A memorial will be held for member Ted Okrasinski this Saturday, January 4, at 2 p.m. in the Eliot Chapel. Ted died on September 10 at the age of 84. He contracted COVID in early August and struggled since. Ted was a kind and thoughtful man and he and his wife Lois joined the church in 1998. We hold Lois and their family. Chancel flowers this Sunday are offered in loving memory of Ted.

Member Phil Scott's younger brother Dick Scott died on November 29 after several years of living with Parkinson's Disease.

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### Say it with flowers!

**Do you have a birth in the family, a graduation, an anniversary, a memorial, or other milestones to share?**

You can acknowledge it to the entire congregation by sponsoring a floral bouquet. As we connect with friends, say it with flowers on the Chancel.

**Questions?** [Contact Marsha.](#)

### **NEW!** — January/February Art Wall Exhibitions

**Artwork by Paula Bullwinkel**

From [The Art Wall Committee](#)



Paula Bullwinkel is a narrative and figurative painter. Her female characters and beast-familiars are often in a doppelgänger tableau, suggesting an unsettling and boisterous multiverse.

She has exhibited

widely, including Brooklyn, Los Angeles, Oakland, Switzerland, and Portland. Born in Northern California, she spent her childhood making miniature clay animals and figures in her mom's ceramic studio, reading classic fairytales, and playing for hours in the

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degree in literature from UC Berkeley (and later a master's in art education), Bullwinkel spent years in New York and London as an editorial fashion photographer. Now she paints and lives in Portland.

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## Recurring Workshops, Classes & Gatherings

*[Check out our church calendar for more info!](#)*

— Visit a more comprehensive list of our [Ongoing Groups](#). —

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**Caregivers Support Group:** Open to Newcomers. Fourth Sunday of each month at 9 a.m. [via Zoom](#).

**Care and Action for Reproductive Dignity (CARD):** We meet on the fourth Sunday of each month from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in Fireside and [via Zoom](#). [Contact Marni](#).

**Committee on Hunger and Homelessness (COHHO):** We meet on the 3rd Sunday of the month after services. [Contact Cynthia](#) for details or to be added to our email list.

**Community for Earth (CFE):** We meet on the 2nd Sunday of the month before worship services (hybrid) and on the 4th week of the month at rotating times. [Contact our group](#) or [visit our calendar](#) for details.

**Contemplative Practices:** First Thursdays (in Channing, A101) and third Thursdays (in Buchan Reception, B101) from 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. This is a drop-in group. Any silent sitting practice is welcomed and no prior meditation experience is needed. Contact [Patty](#) and [Ron](#) or [visit the event page](#) for more information.

**Friday Vesper Services:** Every week [from 5 - 5:40 p.m. via Zoom](#). Quiet prayer, reflection, meditation, and music.

**Immigrant Justice Action Group (IJAG):** [Check the IJAG page](#) on the church website for ways to get involved and groups that need our energy and gifts. For meeting info, [contact Laurie](#).

**Labyrinth:** First Sundays of the month in Fuller Hall. [Check the Church Calendar](#).

**Lotsa Helping Hands:** A care calendar that enables volunteers to provide meals or visits for congregants going through challenging times. To join, [send a request here](#). For questions or to receive support, contact [Leslie](#) or [Susan](#).

**Loving Kindness Meditation:** Meets every Monday [from 8 - 8:30](#)

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Open to all. [Contact Katie](#) for more information.

**Mental Health Caregivers Group:** Second Wednesday every month via Zoom 7 - 8:30 p.m. [Email Ellen](#) for more information.

**Sojourners: Lollygagging Our Way To The Inevitable:**

Sojourners and Sojourners 2 are two groups that meet for two hours at First Unitarian. Members support each other through aging with facilitated discussions, activities, personal stories, and social events, fostering growth and friendship. **All are welcome, but both groups are limited in size; no drop-ins, please.** [Email Lucy](#) with questions.

**"T" Time: A Trans, Nonbinary, and Gender-Expansive, Exclusive Gathering:** Meet on the second and fourth Sundays in Channing Room at 12 - 1 p.m.

**Wednesday Night Meditation:** Every week from 7 - 8:30 p.m. All mindfulness and Buddhist-based meditations. Beginners welcome. A thirty-five-minute meditation followed by a member-led discussion to increase understanding and integration of Buddhist principles into our daily lives. For the link, [contact Robert](#).

**Women's Circle II:** Meets most second and fourth Mondays of the month. [Email Kim](#).

**Women's Circle IV:** Meets first and third Wednesdays of the month. [Email Anne](#).

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**Got something for Front Steps?** Send in your church-related submission for our weekly publication. Use "Front Steps" as the subject line and [submit here](#).

**Deadline:** Tuesdays at 5 p.m.

If your submission is urgent and couldn't be sent before the deadline, please include "URGENT" in the subject line.

[Events Calendar](#) | [Ongoing Groups](#) | [Update Records](#)



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