



Thursday, February 20, 2025

Sunday, February 23

Sunday Worship at 10:15 a.m.

Learning Community (RE) classes are at 10:15 a.m. Nursery and toddler care is always available during our worship service. Learn about our program and read RE news [here](#).

Social Hour: Fuller Hall after the service.

LIVESTREAM SERVICE

Good Grief: Embracing Grief and the Trouble with Not Doing So

Rev. Duane H. Fickeisen, Minister Emeritus of the Unitarian Universalists of the Cumberland Valley



We experience grief after people who are dear to us die. Yet there are pressures to quickly “get over it” and “move on.” If we succumb to them, the suppressed response will likely return to bite us and may be transferred across generations. That does not serve us. We’ll look back over 100 years to find out

how and why grief became something to quickly move through. And we’ll counter that with the value and importance of grieving well. Along the way we’ll suggest ways to help a grieving friend.

The Rev. Duane Fickeisen is a retired Unitarian Universalist

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Livestream Schedule

[Sanctuary Service](#) – 10:15 a.m.

In-Person & Livestream

[Monday Loving Kindness](#)

[Meditation](#) – 8 - 8:30 p.m.

via Zoom

[Tuesday Connect & Reflect](#) –

5:30 - 6:15 p.m.

via Zoom

[Friday Vespers](#) – 5 - 5:40 p.m.

via Zoom

SERVICES



February's Shared Plate

grief at the loss of his wife, Judy Welles, over four years ago. He facilitates a support group for retired UU ministers and partners who have experienced the death of a partner and will offer a four-session class with Dr. Bill Yasnoff on grief on four Sundays in March at First Unitarian.

[ORDER OF SERVICE](#)

Minister's Blog

A Spell for Grief

[Rev. Alison Miller](#), Senior Minister, and [Danielle Garrett](#), Assistant Minister

This month, we've been reflecting together on the topic of grief: the many different types of grief, the role grief plays in our lives, and how we can hold and move through our grief together. As we continue to reflect on this topic, we share this poem from adrienne maree brown that served as our reading during this past Sunday's worship service. May it spark something in your soul and bring a measure of comfort or inspiration...[MORE](#)

First Unitarian Congregational Survey 2025

Help Your Board - Complete This Survey, Please!

[Board of Trustees](#)

Your Board of Trustees is conducting a congregational survey as part of our annual evaluation of the church and our ministry.

Please take a few minutes to [complete the survey here](#).

Responses will inform planning for the future, including preparation for a long range planning process.

This year's questionnaire is modeled on past surveys that had very high response rates, so we can track changes over time.

If you prefer a paper version, stop by the Board table during Social Hour this Sunday.

Thank you!

In response to the devastating wildfires, and the impact of other climate change disasters such as Hurricane Helene, for the month of February we share our plate with the [UUA Disaster Relief Fund](#). The Fund is part of a covenant—a covenant between the UUA and congregations, between congregations who give generously and those in need, and with community partners. Through aiding our congregations, their members, and their community partners, we embody our faith and values. The UUA shares that the Disaster Relief Fund is currently at its lowest level since it was started in 2017. Our commitment to this shared plate will help sustain this fund going forward.

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:

- Snacks of all kinds
- Protein bars
- Men's new t-shirts (M/L)
- Sweatpants (all sizes)
- Belts
- Sneakers (all sizes)
- Lysol wipes
- Coffee creamer

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

Please bring your items to donate to the cabinet in Fuller

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

Hall, next to the kitchen. Thank you for your support!

GET TICKETS NOW — The 2025 Sewell Lecture

Saturday, March 1, 3 - 5:30 p.m.

Location: Main Sanctuary (1211 SW Main St)

FIRST UNITARIAN PORTLAND'S MARILYN SEWELL SOCIAL JUSTICE LECTURE PRESENTS

**A Tale of Two States:
Abortion & Reproductive Stories
from Idaho and Oregon**

Witness monologues and be called to action by a compelling panel and the launch of Oregon's Equal Rights for All campaign.

EQUAL

RIGHTS FOR ALL

Saturday, March 1, 2025 at 3 pm

Tickets \$10:

tinyurl.com/2025AbortionStories



First Unitarian Portland

First Unitarian Portland
1211 SW Main St.
Portland, OR 97205
parking available across the street



GET TICKETS HERE



Learn More & Give

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

Happening This Sunday

NEW! — Care and Action for Reproductive Dignity (CARD) Meeting

Sunday, February 23, 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Location: Fireside Room (at top of stairs next to Eliot Chapel)

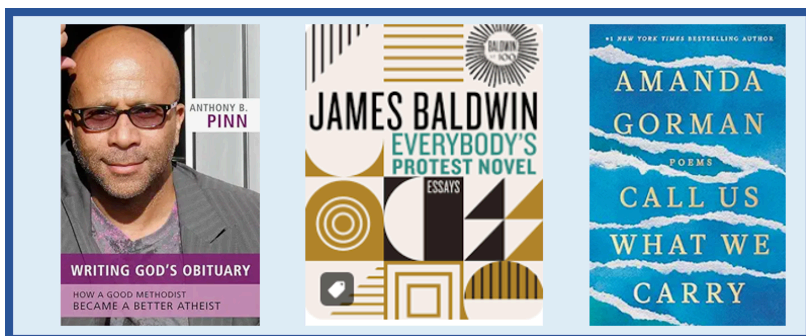
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[Care and Action for Reproductive Dignity \(CARD\)](#)



You are invited to come to our monthly CARD meeting this Sunday, February 23. Get the latest news about the Annual Sewell Lecture featuring Reproductive Healthcare, hear a thought-provoking book review of *The Fall of Roe* by Elizabeth Dias and Lisa Lerer and learn about new opportunities for electoral activism for the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

Please contact [Marni T.](#) if you anticipate attending virtually. This helps us be prepared.



Your Beacon Bookstore Has Some Great New Books!

Visit us every Sunday during Social Hour

Location: Fuller Hall

Following Rev. Alison's sermon on Humanism two weeks ago, we ordered books by Anthony Pinn, PhD, Professor of Religion at Rice University: *The Black Practice of Disbelief*, *Master Class on Being Human: A Black Christian and a Black Secular Humanist on Religion, Race, and Justice*, and *Writing God's Obituary: How a Good Methodist Became a Better Atheist*. We have copies of the *Humanist Manifesto III* (2003); a free monograph, in stock. May arrive by this Sunday: *Humanist Manifesto 2000* by Paul Kurtz, *Everybody's Protest Novel* (essays) by James Baldwin. *Call Us What We Carry* by Amanda Gorman, and three new books for children: *Jimmy's Rhythm and Blues: The Extraordinary Life of James Baldwin* by Michelle Meadows, *My People* by Langston Hughes and Amanda Gorman's *Girls on the Rise* are in stock.

A number of the books we've always sought out and carried have been listed as "banned books" around the country. Our own

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publishers of books that make someone's banned books list.
Makes us proud!

Your Beacon Bookstore is very happy to order books for you (or your book club), with 35% of the profit going right to the Church's general fund! We purchase from a wholesaler for independent bookstores and can access just about anything currently in print from cookbooks to motorcycle repair, from board books for babies to books banned in K-12 schools, from biography to Gothic romance novels.

Ask at the Bookstore table on Sunday during Social Hour. Our Bookstore volunteers include a bunch of former librarians and teachers and other subversives!

Featured News

STARTING NEXT WEEK — Journey to Articulating Your Faith: A Spiritual Development Opportunity for People in Their 20s and 30s

Second and fourth Thursdays beginning February 27, 7 - 9 p.m.

Location: First Unitarian Portland (in person)

[Rev. Alison Miller](#), Senior Minister, and [Danielle Garrett](#), Assistant Minister

Join Rev. Alison and Danielle Garrett for an 8-session course of theological exploration and discovery for young adults.

Together, we will trace our spiritual paths, explore our understandings of the sacred, human nature, and religious practice, and develop our personal credos: an expression

of our most sacred beliefs and fundamental values that guide our lives. We will also get a chance to learn a little more about Unitarian Universalist history and build community with one another!

Dates: February 27, March 13, March 27, April 10, April 24, May 8, May 22, June 12.

[Click here to register](#) or email [Danielle](#) with any questions.



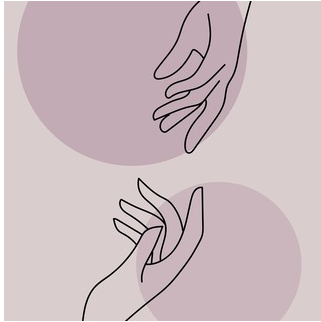
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Connect & Reflect!

Every Tuesday from 5:30 - 6:15 p.m.

Location: [Zoom](#)

[Rev. Alison Miller](#), Senior Minister, and [Jen Thomas](#), Member Engagement Coordinator



Every Tuesday, come share in conversation centered on the topic of the most recent sermon. Look for the discussion question on our Sunday morning preservice slides and Order of Service.

[Join here](#). Save the Zoom link—it'll work every week!



Online Greeters Wanted

Attention: tech-savvy people wanted! We are looking for a small team of folks that would like to be online greeters. The purpose would be to engage with folks during the service that are attending online. Interested? [Contact Jen Thomas](#) for more information.

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](#)

Join the Journey in Membership

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

Sunday, March 2, following the service**Location:** Channing A101

[Rev. Alison Miller](#), Senior Minister, and [Jen Thomas](#), Member Engagement Coordinator

Are you ready to deepen your connection with our faith community? Are you interested in making a deeper commitment to First Unitarian Church? Then please join Rev. Alison Miller and Jen Thomas, Member Engagement Coordinator, at our upcoming "Considering Membership" class on March 2! This class is designed for anyone considering taking the next step towards membership. It's a wonderful opportunity to:

- Ask questions about membership and stewardship
- Receive necessary paperwork
- Learn more about the membership process and if ready, you can sign the membership record book!

The decision to become a member is a very individual one, and we want to provide you with all the information you need to make an informed choice.

We would love to have you join our journey in membership! For more information, please contact [Jen Thomas](#).



NEXT WEEK — Learn about Activism for Peace in the Middle East

Tuesday, February 25, 6:30 - 8 p.m.

Location: Buchan Reception

[Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East](#) (UJME)

Are you disturbed by the ongoing Israeli bombardment of Gaza with over 50,000 Palestinians killed and rampant human rights violations? Are you upset about the billions of United States dollars

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President Trump's call for ethnic cleansing of Palestinians from Gaza? Are you ready to learn what UUs can do to work for peace and human rights in Palestine/Israel?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, we hope you will join us on Tuesday, February 25th to learn about Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East (UUJME) and how we can take action together. UUJME was founded in 1971 to educate and mobilize UUs to greater understanding and action for a just peace in Palestine/Israel. There are over 12 UUJME chapters with over 2,000 members.

In June of 2024, the UUA General Assembly adopted an Action of Immediate Witness (AIW) called [Solidarity with Palestinians](#). Our work is made more urgent by the calls for ethnic cleansing in Gaza and the increase in violence and forced removal of Palestinians in the West Bank. We hope that you will join our efforts in alignment with this denominational call to action.

Join us on February 25th to learn more about UUJME and to get to know other congregants who are seeking community as we work for peace and human rights. Let us know if you are coming, or if you can't come but want to stay informed, by filling out this [RSVP](#).

REGISTER NOW — Part Two: How Do We Protect Immigrants in Our Community?

Tuesday, March 4, 7 - 8:30 p.m. Registration closes at 5 p.m. on March 4.

Location: [Zoom](#)

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

This second session in our three-part series will focus on legislative advocacy. We want to be informed, prepared, and ready for action, as the Oregon legislative session progresses. Through an anti-racist lens, we will explore strategic ways we can act in solidarity to promote and defend the rights and human dignity of immigrants and other marginalized communities in our state.

We are excited to host these outstanding panelists: Ricki Ruiz, District 50 Oregon State Representative; Ira Cuello-Martinez, Policy and Advocacy Director of [Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste](#) (PCUN); and Jessica Maravilla, Policy Director of the [ACLU of Oregon](#).

[Register here by March 4 at 5 p.m. to receive the Zoom link on](#)

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

It's not too late to see Part 1! On January 28, more than 150 people participated in the first session, which featured informational presentations by VOZ Workers' Rights Education Project, Innovation Law Lab, and Oregon for All Coalition. [The recording of that session is available here on YouTube.](#)

NEW! — The Alliance Presents "Breaking a Bad Law: The Relevance of Abortion History in the U.S."

Wednesday, March 5, 10:30 a.m.

Location: Eliot Chapel

[The Alliance](#)



Judith Arcana is a Jane, a member of the Chicago abortion underground before Roe v. Wade in 1973.

To join us for a brown bag lunch & dessert (\$5) following the program, email AllianceRSVP@firstunitarianportland.org.



Auction 2025 is Coming Up!

Donations start March 23, bidding starts April 20

Location: Online

A special thanks to all donors and participants of Auction 2024, Zap the Gap, Too. Last year's auction raised over \$60,000, our best year ever! It was because of your generosity and we're so grateful.

Now... mark your calendar for the latest edition of Creating Connections: Auction 2025! Donations start March 23 so start thinking of how you want to contribute. Online bidding starts April 20 and continues through May 4. Join us! Look for more

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

For questions, [contact the Auction committee](#).

NEW! REGISTER NOW — Good Grief: Navigating Personal Loss

Sundays, March 9, 16, 23, and 30, 11:45 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.

Location: First Unitarian Portland (in person)

The Rev. Duane Fickeisen and Dr. Bill Yasnoff

This four-session group is for folks who have experienced bereavement due to loss of a partner or close family member. We will offer a safe space for your emotions and stories. Each participant will be invited to share their grief story. We'll discuss how grief is a sign of your love for the person who has died, provide resources, and offer a ritual of remembrance. Our approach is that grief is not something neat and tidy to 'get over,' but a feral thing and likely a life-long condition. Still, we've found that our lives have expanded to include our grief in a healthy way.

Preregistration required. [Register here](#). Minimum enrollment six, maximum ten.

The Rev. Duane Fickeisen is a retired UU minister and grieves the loss of his wife. He facilitates a support group for retired UU clergy and partners who are grieving. Dr. Bill Yasnoff is a retired physician and grieves the loss of his first wife. He has also facilitated bereavement support groups. Both are members of First Unitarian Church.

Workshop: Successful Transitions in Aging

Saturday, March 8, 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Location: Buchan Reception

[UU Men's Community](#)

A Process of Personal Introspection and Practical Planning

Aging is inevitably a time of slowing down and presents us with unique challenges. Yet aging is also a time ripe with possibilities for change and growth. Folks of any age are invited to join the UU Men's Community for a half-day workshop which will be presented in two parts: First, we will connect with one another, exploring our hopes, fears and strategies for making the most of the years still ahead of us. Second, we will look at the nuts and bolts of estate planning and end-of-life health decisions. Cathy Hall, member of

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us to describe the services OMA provides. She will include an overview of OMA's comprehensive end-of-life planning workshop, [All's Well That Ends Well](#), which is offered monthly.

Please RSVP to [Richard T.](#) There is no registration fee for this class, but [donations are always welcome](#).



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
BALTIMORE • JUNE 18 - 22, 2025

NEW! — Be a Delegate for the 2025 UUA General Assembly

Wednesday, June 18, through Sunday, June 22

Location: Baltimore, MD

First Unitarian is allowed 16 delegates to the GA, in addition to the ministers. We would love to have a full complement. Delegates can attend remotely or in person. They may attend only the business sessions online for no charge, or register for the full program which includes lectures, workshops and other events for \$410 until May 31. Learn more about the General Assembly [here](#).

Delegates can vote representing the congregation. They prepare for voting by participating in pre-GA online discussions. Last year there were 12 hours of business. The agenda which includes the times for the business sessions will be available later.

Delegates are expected to report to the congregation, usually in a brief written statement about their experiences. Some funds are available for scholarship.

Interested in learning more? In becoming a delegate? [Email our church office](#).

Learning Community

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

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

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.



CHECK WEEKLY — February 23 Newsletter

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

Along with RE Committee co-chairs Janice L. and Martha J. and members Lee S., Maggie Q., Anne D., and Susan B., I'm pleased to share our 2025 Learning Community Mission Statement, which was updated with input from many of you...[MORE](#)

Social Justice Program

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

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



Ongoing Need for Food Donations to Lift UP

[Committee on Hunger and Homelessness](#) (COHHO)

Last week we delivered 46 pounds of food that you donated to Lift UP. Thank you so much! As the need is ongoing, please continue thinking of this organization that does such outstanding work when you shop for groceries. High protein foods like nut butter, beans, salmon or tuna would be greatly appreciated (check the expiration

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

Drop off your donations to the COHHO cabinet in Fuller Hall (by the kitchen) and we will deliver them to Lift UP. Every action we all take—big or small—is one step closer to a Portland where no one is hungry. You can also donate directly to them on [their website](#). Thank you!

CHECK WEEKLY — Art for Social Justice

Curated by Ethel G., 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 Beloved Community.

This performance of "Hold Fast to Dreams" was featured on the Resonance Ensemble's recent concert "AMENDMENT: RIGHTING OUR WRONGS" - a program exploring human rights, featuring music by Melissa Dunphy, Joel Thompson, Rosephanye Powell, and more. To watch, click the video below:



In the Community

Community Milestones, Joys, and Sorrows

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

Member Julie Wheeler died on February 12 after recently entering hospice care in her residence at Willamette View. Julie and her husband Andrew, who passed away last year, were very active long-time members of the church. Julie served as an office volunteer at the church and is remembered warmly by staff and fellow congregants. We hold her children Anne, Molly, and John, and their extended family in our hearts.

Member Frank Filz's mother Retsv Filz died late Saturday night

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The family got to see her in October when she came for a visit to Portland from New England. They are thankful for the time they got to spend together. She is the reason that Frank is a lifelong UU. Frank is our youth advisor.

A celebration of life for long-time member Martha Westgate will be held on February 24, which would have been her 90th birthday. Martha died on May 31, 2024. She was one of the founding members of our church's 7th Principle Group, now called Community for Earth. Martha and her husband John were active members of our church for many decades. The service will be held online at 4 p.m. so relatives in West Virginia and California can attend. [Sign up here to receive a link for the service.](#)



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.](#)

January/February Art Wall Exhibitions

Artwork by Paula Bullwinkel

From [The Art Wall Committee](#)

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Paula Bullwinkel is a narrative and figurative painter. Her female characters and beast-familars 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 woods with imaginary characters. After earning a bachelor's 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.

Recurring Workshops, Classes & Gatherings

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

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

The Alliance: The Alliance provides regular opportunities for fellowship, life-long learning, and spiritual growth for its members as well as service to the church and larger fellowship. Learn more about our program and monthly presentations [here](#).

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 T.](#)

Connect & Reflect: Join Rev. Alison Miller and Jen Thomas every Tuesday from 5:30 - 6:15 p.m. [on Zoom](#). Come share in conversation centered on the topic of the most recent sermon. Look for the discussion question during Sunday morning preservice slides and our weekly Order of Service.

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

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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 C](#) 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 L.](#)

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 C](#) or [Susan P.](#)

Loving Kindness Meditation: Meets every Monday [from 8 - 8:30 p.m. via Zoom](#). Spiritual reading, meditation, and follow up sharing. Open to all. [Contact Katie R](#) for more information.

Mental Health Caregivers Group: Second Wednesday every month via Zoom 7 - 8:30 p.m. [Email Ellen Z](#) 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 G](#) with questions.

Souper Sunday Committee: Once a month, we offer two different soups as part of our Social Hour. It takes a lot of folks to put on Souper Sunday every month: organizers, cooks, servers, shoppers and clean up team to name a few. We are appreciative of all that volunteer. If you are interested in helping out, please contact [Barbara M.](#)

"T" Time: A Trans, Nonbinary, and Gender-Expansive, Exclusive Gathering: A group for anyone that identifies along the

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transition status or gender presentation to attend. People who are questioning their gender and parents of trans kids (and their kids, too!) are welcome. We meet on the second and fourth Sundays in Channing Room, shortly after the service until around 1:00 PM. Questions? [Email Aileen](#).

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 S](#).

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

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

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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