



Thursday, April 10, 2025

Annual Youth Service!

Sunday, April 13

Sunday Worship at 10:15 a.m.

3rd grade and older are invited to attend the service in the Sanctuary. **Learning Community (RE) classes** are at 10:15 a.m. for 2nd grade and younger. **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

Youth Service: Leading the Way to Liberation

[Young Religious UU's \(YRUU\) High School Group](#)



Join us for this very special service where First Unitarian's Youth will lead us in worship on this month's theme of liberation. They will offer inspiring poetry, original reflections and music, and a fun story for all ages in a celebration of the gifts and wisdom of this intergenerational community!



Livestream Schedule

[Sanctuary Service](#) – 10:15 a.m.

In-Person & Livestream

[Monday Matins for Lent](#) – 8:30 - 9 a.m.

via Zoom (through April 14)

[Monday Loving Kindness Meditation](#) – 8 - 8:30 p.m.

via Zoom

[Tuesday Connect & Reflect](#) – No meeting on April 15.

[Friday Vespers](#) – 5 - 5:40 p.m.

via Zoom

SERVICES



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ORDER OF SERVICE

**April 13's
Shared Plate**

For today's special service, plate offerings will be going to our [Young Religious UU](#) (YRUU) program.



**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 pants (32 and under)
- Women's pants (size 8 and under)
- Belts
- Sweatshirts
- Men's shoes (sizes 11+)
- Dry coffee creamer
- Sugar packets

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

Minister's Blog

Pictures from Hands Off! Rally on April 5

Click the image to view more pictures from this wonderful occasion!

Last Saturday, over 80 members of our community joined with thousands of others in Portland to peacefully protest attacks on our democracy and human rights. Our UU values and commitments were on proud display, with some members of the group hanging our "Side With Love" Banner over the side of the Burnside Bridge! It was a joyful and hopeful day of resistance and community. Thanks to those of you who showed up, in Portland and at other protests around our area. For those of you who weren't able to march, know we carried you in our hearts. And for those of you who are living out your commitments to love and justice in so many ways every day, you have our gratitude. We look forward to conversations about how we can keep the momentum from Saturday going as we continue our work towards collective liberation!...[MORE](#)



NEW! — Our "Standing on the Side of Love" Banner is Missing

Our yellow "Standing on the Side of Love" banner was not returned to the church after the rally last Saturday. If it ended up in your possession, please bring it to the church on Sunday, or email

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

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NEW! — No Connect & Reflect This Tuesday, April 15

No Connect and Reflect this week given all of the holiday services happening. We will be moving to a first and third Tuesday schedule for the rest of the church year; i.e., May 6 and 20, and June 3 and 17.



Auction Donations Needed!

DEADLINE: APRIL 13 AT 11:59 P.M.

Do you have a skill, interest, or hobby that you'd be willing to auction off to share with others?



- Bird watching?
- Dance lessons?
- Dinner for 4?
- Computer help?
- Figure drawing?
- House cleaning?
- Cooking classes?
- Waterfall hike?
- Wine tasting?
- Karaoke night?
- Homemade dinner?
- Custom scarf?
- Gift basket?
- Anything you enjoy!

LAST CHANCE — Auction 2025: We Need Your Donation! 🎉

Donations deadline this Sunday, April 13, at 11:59 p.m.

Location: Online

Just a few days are left before the donation deadline so please join us in making this year's auction unforgettable by offering something up for the congregation to create connections!

We need the donations of this community to make our Auction a success. You can donate right now, right [here](#). ✨

Need some inspiration? Check out some helpful [donation ideas](#). And if you're ready to shine as a sponsor, find all the details [here](#).

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NEW! SAVE THE DATE — Easter 2025 Services

Thursday, April 17: Maundy Thursday Communion Service

Join Rev. Alison and Danielle Garrett at 5:30 p.m. in A108 for an informal, intimate communion service. Maundy comes from the Latin word for commandment, referring to Jesus's words the night of the Last Supper, "A new commandment I give unto you: That you love one another, as I have loved you." Join us in this short service that centers love and embodiment.

Friday, April 18: Good Friday

Join Rev. Alison and Danielle Garrett at 7 p.m. in Eliot Chapel or [by livestream](#) for our Good Friday service. This contemplative service is an opportunity to reflect on the pain and suffering of Jesus and remember the difficult price that is often paid in the work towards liberation and resurrection.

Sunday, April 20: Easter Sunday

Join us at 10:15 a.m. in the Sanctuary or [by livestream](#) for a multi-generational Sunday worship service celebrating liberation and resurrection! An egg hunt for our children and youth will follow the service.

NEW! — First Steps Class on May 4

Sunday, May 4, after the service

Location: Channing Room (A101)

Last Sunday we celebrated membership in an inspiring and electric service! It was great to hear testimonials and reflections and welcome folks to the community as members.

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[email Jen Thomas](#) with questions or to receive a membership packet.

If you are new to the community, a great place to start exploring First U PDX is to come to the next First Steps Class on May 4. Childcare will be available.

[Click here to RSVP!](#)

Hope to see you Sunday, May 4.

Happening This Sunday

NEW! — Special Social Hour

This Sunday, April 13, during social hour

Location: Fuller Hall



Join us in Fuller Hall for cake and celebration this Sunday in honor of our teens in YRUU and their leadership.

Momos have been rescheduled. We plan to offer them again in the future, so keep an eye out in future Front Steps!

An Invitation from our Music Ministry Transition Team

This Sunday, April 13, after the service

Location: Daisy Bingham

Dear Ones,

We are certainly living in interesting times, at church and beyond. We hope that you are finding your way through to joy during this period.

Since its inception last summer, the MMTT has been actively engaged in helping church leadership and the Interim Director of Music Ministries move our music program forward in support of the worship and communal life of our church. We've come to a point where we need to hear from congregants. We are scheduling three listening meetings, with more to come. Our objective is to hear your thoughts about how the music program has been

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On Sunday, March 23, we met with members of our choral and handbell choirs. Our second meeting was with interested congregants on March 30. Our next meeting, this time with parents from the Learning Community, will be held **this Sunday, April 13**, in the Daisy Bingham room. There will also be a survey for people to fill out online.

The MMTT looks forward to hearing about your feelings, ideas and suggestions, which will play a vital role in planning for the future of the music program here at First U.

NEW! — Does Your Beacon Bookstore Have Banned Books? You Betcha!

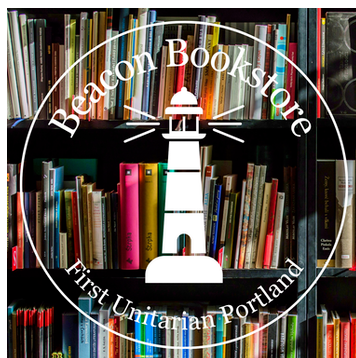
Location: Fuller Hall

You and your children are warmly invited to visit our Bookstore off Fuller Hall during Coffee Hour. **It's a great place to find gifts!**

For decades, we've carried books banned in a wide variety of school districts around the country.

What got them banned? Climate change and environmental issues such as Dr. Seuss' *The Lorax*; LGBTQ+ content including such classics as *And Tango Makes Three* and *I Am Jazz*; sexuality and gender identity – *Heartstopper*; racial content – some books that address racial injustice or simply have diverse characters; or even different religious viewpoints.

Our selection for children contains quite a few award-winning titles with wonderful illustrations. (We carry banned books for adults, too!) **About 40% of the sale price goes right to the Church.**



Featured News

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NEW! — Help Us Plan OWL

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

First Unitarian has a long tradition of offering [Our Whole Lives](#) (OWL), the UU lifespan sexuality education program for kindergarten through adulthood. We're planning to do this program a little differently next year, including launching a class for adults, and we want your feedback!

Please help us by completing the short survey below.

[Click here for survey](#)



NEW! — Thank You from PGMC

[Portland Gay Men's Chorus](#) (PGMC)

On behalf of everyone here at the Portland Gay Men's Chorus

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generous welcome. Several choir members were present and helpful, assisting our members around the building, also in providing breakfast to the singers for giving their time so willingly to the church. This moment was a precious reminder of our mission to connect with our community and to show gratitude towards organizations that have so long supported us and our journeys. Thank you to everyone in the congregation, the ministers, and the staff of First Unitarian for inspiring us and hearing our voices in song. We hope to see you again in the future! For more information, please visit [our website](#).

Dr. Braeden Ayres, Artistic Director

Garrett M. Bond, Associate Artistic Director

Meet Our New Members!

[Jen Thomas](#), Member Engagement Coordinator

Want to learn a little about our newest members? Check out their bios on the [new page](#) on our website.

Under the **Get Connected** tab > **Becoming A Member** page, you will be able to find mini bios of the new folks that have joined in membership. We will keep the bios up for a few months after their joining date. You can also [click here to see the bios](#).

We hope you will take this chance to connect more deeply.



FINAL SESSION — Matins for Lent 2025

Monday, April 14, 8:30 - 9 a.m.

Location: Zoom

Lent is a season for self-reflection and renewal. We invite you to **Matins for Lent**, the final quiet Matins service to inspire you with a uniquely Unitarian perspective on the season.

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Through music, poetry, reflection and prayer, we will explore the metaphors of the scriptural stories as they speak to our own inner lives. [Join on Zoom here.](#)

For more information, contact [Karen S.](#)

First Unitarian Congregational Survey 2025

LAST CHANCE! — 2025 Congregational Survey

[Board of Trustees](#)

This week is your last chance to take the 2025 survey and have your responses analyzed for inclusion in our 2025 Report on the Church Ministries!

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](#). We want to hear from everyone in attendance, regardless of membership.

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!

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

The Art Wall Committee is Looking for New Members

[The Art Wall Committee](#)

You don't have to be an artist to join, just be interested in art. Members commit about one day a month to attending a meeting or

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month. Committee members recommend artists who might be a good fit for Fuller Hall and the committee juries the artists. If you are interested, [contact Connie C.](#)

Learning Community

Learn more about the [Learning Community programs](#). Register your child for the 2024-25 program year [here](#).



CHECK WEEKLY — April 13 Newsletter

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

Dear Ones,

This Sunday, following the annual YRUU worship service, you're warmly invited to attend a special social hour in Fuller Hall in honor of our wonderful high school youth group. There will be light eats and a fun treat. Come by to celebrate our teens and their leadership! No parenting circle this month...[MORE](#)

Social Justice Program

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

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UPDATE — April is Earth Month!

Earth Month Action Team of Community for Earth ([CFE](#))

During April, the Earth Month team will share actions and practices to consider all month (and all the time) in support of April 22, Earth Day.

This week we bring you PLACES TO GO - THINGS TO DO. Here are a few of many of events to consider for your calendar, starting with the virtual event brought to us by our UU Ministry for Earth:

- April 22 at 5 p.m. PT: [UU Ministry for Earth - 2025 Earth Day Worship](#)

And some in-person events:

- April 19 from 12 - 3 p.m.: [City of Portland presents: Earth Day - Together as One](#)
- April 26 from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.: [Family activities, tabling, and garden activities at the Learning Gardens Lab](#)
- April 26 from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.: [Scappoose Earth Day Festival at Heritage Park](#) (Sponsored by Scappoose Parks&Rec and Columbia SWCD)
- And [many more](#) from PDX Parent!



Sign the Petition Calling for an End to U.S. Military Support for Israel

Sundays through April 20, during social hour

UUs for Justice in the Middle East ([UUJME](#))

The killing of Palestinians by Israel is done with U.S. bombs dropped from U.S. planes. Most UUs agree that U.S. complicity must stop. The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)

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respects the human rights of Palestinians, and 75% of the delegates to last Summer's UUA General Assembly voted for an Action of Immediate Witness calling for an end to U.S. military support for Israel.

Members of First Unitarian Portland now have the chance to tell their Congressional Senators and Representatives the same thing by signing a petition that will be at the UJME table during coffee hour through April 20. The petition with all the signatures will then be taken to the U.S. Senators and Representatives in the Portland area.



NEW! SAVE THE DATE — Interfaith Advocacy Day

Tuesday, April 29, starting at 9 a.m.

Location: St. Mark Lutheran Church in Salem, OR

[Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon](#)

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon invites us all to their Oregon Interfaith Advocacy Day in Salem. [Visit their website](#) or read below for more details:

Now is the time for people of faith to rise up in hope and to call for justice and compassion in our legislative system. Together we can be the prophetic voice at the Oregon Capitol, standing with the marginalized in our communities and upholding the moral imperative for a state budget that supports the common good. Our goal is to create a mass mobilization of informed and influential citizen-lobbyists!

The morning session at St. Mark Lutheran Church will feature a keynote address, training on effective advocacy and issue briefings. In the afternoon, participants will march to the Oregon

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legislators. Talking points and legislative appointments will be provided.

ISSUE AREAS

May include the following: Immigration & Refugees, Housing & Homelessness, Climate & Environment, Healthcare, Hunger, Criminal Justice Reform

SCHEDULE

Morning session: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

A sack lunch will be provided for participants.

Afternoon meetings with state legislators: times will vary

REGISTRATION

\$20; scholarships available. [Register now.](#)

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.

Amanda Gorman is an American poet, activist, and model. Her work focuses on issues of oppression, feminism, race and marginalization, as well as the African diaspora. Gorman was the first person to be named National Youth Poet Laureate. To watch Mass Poets' reading of her poem "In this Place (An American Lyric)," 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.](#)

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Member Norma Eckelman died on March 15. Norma attended our church for many years, until health issues made it no longer possible. Her daughter, Jan Marie Fortier, is a member here at First Unitarian, and her granddaughter, Rev. Heather Rion Starr, is the minister at the Unitarian Universalists of Southern Delaware congregation in Lewes, DE.



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.](#)

March/April Art Wall Exhibition

Artwork by volunteers, originally created by Leslie Lee

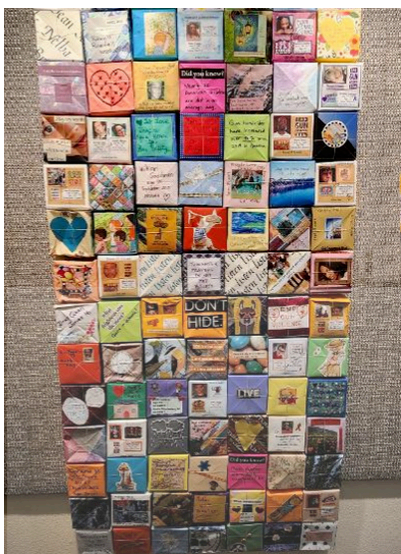
From [The Art Wall Committee](#)

During the months of March and April 2025, the Art Wall will feature a series of six panels known as The Soul Box Project.

Originally created by Portland artist Leslie Lee in 2018, it is an artistic representation of the impact of gun violence in the United States.

On average, every year, 600 people in Oregon are killed by a gun. The six panels that are a part of the display are a visual account of

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Recurring Workshops, Classes & Gatherings

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

— Visit a more comprehensive list of our [Community Groups & Activities](#). —

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 on the 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of most months through June 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.

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

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Contemplative Practices: First Thursdays and third Thursdays from 1 - 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 W.](#) 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: Most 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.

"T" Time: A Trans, Nonbinary, and Gender-Expansive,

Exclusive Gathering: A group for anyone who identifies along the transgender spectrum. There are no requirements for medical 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.](#)

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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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