



First Unitarian Church
of Portland

Thursday, June 5, 2025

🌸 **Flower Communion** 🌸
🎓 **& Bridging Ceremony** 🎓

Sunday, June 8

Sunday Worship at 10:15 a.m.

Care for **nursery through 6ish years old** is available during worship. **Older children** welcome in service. The full Learning Community (RE) program resumes in the fall.

Social Hour: Fuller Hall after the service.

LIVESTREAM SERVICE

The Blessing of Becoming

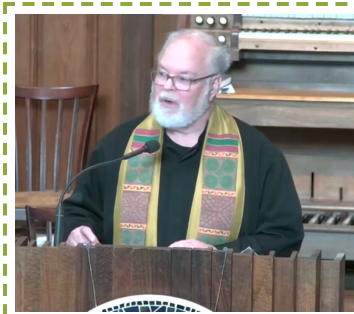
[Rev. Alison Miller](#), Senior Minister



Join us for our annual joyous Flower Communion Sunday. We will also be honoring the transitions of our children and youth in our religious education program, including our youth bridging to young adulthood. Let us celebrate this community where at every age and

stage we support the journey of becoming and belonging. Remember to bring a flower or even a small bouquet to drop in the baskets in the North Lobby before the service begins.

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.



Livestream Schedule

[Sanctuary Service](#) – 10:15 a.m.

In-Person & Livestream

[Monday Loving Kindness](#)

[Meditation](#) – 8 - 8:30 p.m.

via Zoom until June 30

[Tuesday Connect & Reflect](#) –

5:30 - 6:15 p.m. **via Zoom on**

June 17

[Friday Vespers](#) – 5 - 5:40 p.m.

via Zoom

SERVICES

This Week's Shower Project Request

Our biggest need right now:

Thursday volunteers!

[Click here](#) for the Volunteer Interest Form and more details.

Since opening our doors last year, the Shower Project has had over 1,200 guest visits,

ORDER OF SERVICE

Ministerial Blog

Growth, Fresh Air, and Other Blessings: Learning Community/Religious Education Update

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

As Portlandia’s landscape changes, it impacts our Learning Community and Religious Education program. Many can recite our statistics: Housing costs and other factors drive families with children and youth further away from downtown and the Metro area. Long accustomed to meteoric population growth, Portland proper has experienced stagnation and even shrinkage in recent years. Since pandemic lockdown, all kinds of institutional life report reduced participation, including less school attendance, volunteering, and religious community involvement for people of all ages. Traffic and safety concerns make weekday evening treks to the church building less appealing. The cultural expectation that Sunday morning is always and only for church continues to fade, meaning more scheduling conflicts...[MORE](#)

Happening This Weekend



600+ showers, and 1,050 clothing closet visits!

- Hoodies
- Blankets
- Snacks
- Coffee creamer

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



June’s Shared Plate

For the month of June, we share our plate with the [Oregon for All Coalition](#). Earlier this year, First Unitarian joined the coalition because we share the value of caring for each other and protecting our communities against people who try to divide us. Hardworking immigrants are part of our families, communities, workplaces, and places of worship and should be safe from harassment, just like any other Oregonian.



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

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

This Saturday, June 7, 2 p.m.

Location: Main Sanctuary

Come one, come all, as First Unitarian hosts Danielle Garrett's ordination this Saturday, June 7, at 2 p.m. in our church's Main Sanctuary. We'll all want to be present to celebrate the "new" Reverend Danielle Garrett!

Details and livestream link are available [here](#).

You can make a financial gift to help cover the cost of the ordination festivities at [this link](#).



DEMOCRACY IN ACTION
LIVING OUR UU VALUES

Come Learn How You Can Protect Democracy!

Every Sunday through August 31, during social hour

[Social Justice Collaboration Team](#)

Are you concerned about the nation's slide toward autocracy? Are you looking for things that you can do to protect democracy at all levels of energy and time commitment? Whether you're interested in protesting, contacting your legislators, learning more about a particular issue, or finding fellowship with like-minded congregants, we have you covered!

Please come visit the Democracy in Action Corner after the service to learn more.

Featured News

LAST CHANCE — Your Flower Donation for the Ordination

This Friday, June 6, 9 - 11 a.m.

Location: Salmon St. entrance (1226 SW Salmon Street)

How does your garden grow?

Do you have tea roses, lavender, zinnias, tulips, or peonies? We're accepting donations of these flowers to create arrangements for

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.



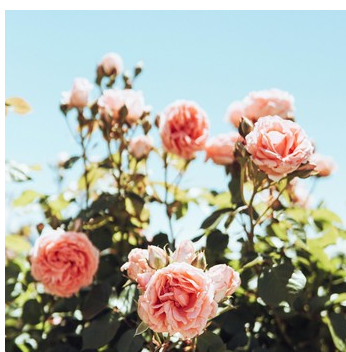
Contact [Marti Y.](#) for details and additional information.

Flowers can be dropped off at our Salmon St. entrance tomorrow/Friday, June 6, between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Flowers used in the ordination will be used on Sunday for our annual flower communion.

NEW! — Letter from the Board: June 2025

As your church Treasurer and Board member, I have three items to share with all of you.

The biggest news is that the Stewardship Committee has been re-formed. So far our congregant members are Dave Hoffman, Mabsie Walters, Dev Dion, and me. We will work closely with the Executive Team and Stewardship Manager Erin Tafuri. We have begun a 3-to-5 year plan on developing an even more generous church. More on this soon!...[MORE](#)



NEW! — The Committee on Right Relations is Being Established!

First Unitarian Portland is establishing a Committee on Right Relations to serve our community. This independent committee will provide us with education and skills, processes and procedures, and direct assistance to address conflict within our church. Next steps are to select the individuals who will serve on this committee.

To be in Right Relations is to experience a sense of wellbeing that happens when we bring our best selves to all our interactions to resolve inevitable conflicts in a constructive way. A covenant is a set of promises we make to one another in community. Thus, to covenant with one another about right relations is to engage in the spiritual and everyday practice of building and maintaining healthy connections

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

The Committee on Right Relations is chartered to:

- Tend the Church Covenant and the Covenant of Right Relations and support the congregation as it strives to live into the Covenants.
- Foster a vision of conflict as an opportunity for understanding, healing and growth.
- Model, teach, foster and support faithful communication and healthy and respectful relations.
- Assist congregants and the Church to practice creative conflict engagement and restoration of right relations.

The documents defining our approach to Right Relations will be posted on our website within the week. **Please see next week's Front Steps** for direct links to those documents.

Seeking Applications

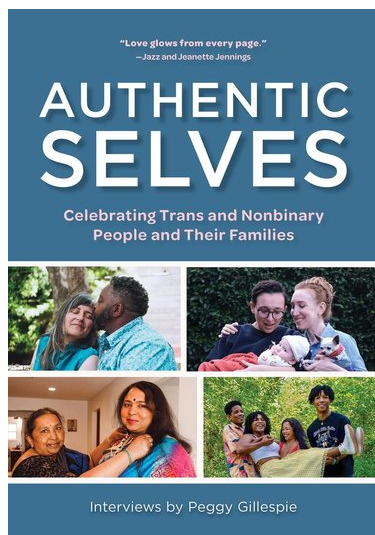
- If you are interested in applying to be a member of the Committee on Right Relations, or if you know a congregant who would be great at this work, a link to the application will be in next week's Front Steps, including criteria, selection process and desired skills and abilities.
- Applications are due by **July 15**, followed by a selection process. The intention is to have a group of names for Board approval at the September 3 Board meeting and announce the Committee on Right Relations to the Congregation later that month.

Questions? Contact RightRelations@firstunitarianportland.org

UU Common Read

Join your fellow UUs across the globe this summer in reading *Authentic Selves: Celebrating Trans and Nonbinary People and their Families* (Skinner House, 2023).

You can purchase this book now from the Beacon Bookstore in Fuller Hall during social hour. On September 7, Dr. Amy O. and Aileen M. from our congregation will lead a discussion around the book and



[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

The UUA states, "Through interviews and photo portraits, the subjects of this book invite readers into their real lives—their revelations, challenges, joys, and networks of support. This Common Read invites UU groups to explore the nature of living authentically and the ways connections among us help us thrive."

Join the Shower Project

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



In case you missed Rev. Alison's blog last week, read her inspiring words below:

"If we desire to create holistic and positive change around an issue of social justice, this will inevitably include education, service, advocacy, public witness, community organizing, and

fundraising. Our Shower Project is one opportunity we offer in our building to engage in direct service to ensure more of our houseless neighbors have access to better hygiene and greater wellbeing and health. This is an essential service in a society where access to clean water has become increasingly privatized or accessible only within home spaces" [...MORE](#)

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](#)

Find Peace at the Beacon Bookstore

Location: Fuller Hall

Are you ready for some peaceful reading? Maybe a dose of mindfulness? A daily thoughtful thought from a poet or the Dalai Lama?

Maybe your time for a quiet reading is as you're putting a child to bed? Maybe you've only a few minutes to anchor a quote in your mind before you begin a busy day? Your Beacon Bookstore can

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

We have many books of poetry, short essays, daily thoughts – and many wonderful picture books to provide adults with the spoonful of peace needed just now. Remember how you could listen to the same children’s story over and over when you were small—and you did not tire of it? It brought you comfort to hear big thoughts in small stories. It still will. Stressed adults: take a look at our lovely collection of children’s books. Be prepared to find just the right one to read over and over to your little ones – or to read over and over to yourself. Books invite us in.



NEW! — Family Fun at UU Summer Camp

Location: Seabeck Conference Center, Seabeck, Washington

Did you know that over 30 First Unitarian Portland families and members regularly attend the Eliot Institute UU summer camps? Some have been attending for generations! It is held at the Seabeck Conference Center on Washington’s Hood Canal, only a 3 1/2 hour drive from Portland. It’s magical and fantastic for all ages.

Summer camps are **July 12 to 19** or **August 2 to 9**. Creative Arts Eliot is **August 9 to 13**.

Learn more at these links:

- [Eliot Institute website](#)
- [Camp brochures](#)
- [Introduction video](#)

Learning Community

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

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

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.



CHECK MONTHLY — June Newsletter

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

This e-news is monthly in June, July, and August.

Dear Learning Community,

Two Important Notes about June 8th:

1. We're expanding Bridging (a ritual to honor young people as they transition to the next phase of growing up) to include any child or youth who is starting elementary school, promoting out of middle school, or graduating high school.
2. Bring a flower to contribute to our flower communion--and consider coming a few minutes early to get a (temporary) flower tattoo in the lobby before the service.

Lastly, did you or your family participate in, help with, or attend Learning Community events or the Religious Education program? If so, we'd like to [hear from you](#). Thank you for honoring us with your feedback about what worked and what could work better...[MORE](#)

Social Justice Program

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



NEW! — All-Church Action: No Kings Day Rally & March
Saturday, June 14, 10:30 a.m. sign making and 11:30 a.m. departure

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

Join us on June 14 as we unite with communities all across the country to speak out against rising authoritarianism. The Portland rally & march will be 12 - 4 p.m. at Tom McCall Waterfront Park. For other No Kings Day events around the Portland Metro area, visit [the No Kings website](#).

When and where? We'll meet at the church at 10:30 a.m. to make signs, and then we'll walk and roll to the rally together at 11:30 a.m. For details about the event, what to bring, and how to stay safe, [visit this website](#).

NEW! — Final CARD Meeting for the Church Year

This Sunday, June 8, 11:30 a.m.

Location: Blue Sky Library in our Eliot Center Building

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

All are welcome to our final CARD meeting for the 2024-25 church year in the Blue Sky Library room, next to the room we usually meet in (Fireside). Snacks will be provided.



We will be celebrating this year's accomplishments and planning for next year. We will review the signature gathering guidelines for the Equal Rights for All proposed Oregon constitutional amendment and mark our calendars for summer signature gathering. You can also help decide on a date for an early August potluck at Holly B.'s house. **BRING YOUR CALENDARS!**

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

Join Our Food Drive

Location: Fuller Hall

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

Thank you for helping to make a difference in the health and well-being of the many who are food-insecure by responding to our request for food donations.

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.



We delivered them to [Lift UP](#), a local non-profit that distributes food to individuals and families in the pantry they operate (Preston's Pantry) and in 50 affordable housing buildings in Northwest and Downtown Portland.

Sadly, the need continues. So, please remember that fact the next time you go food shopping. And purchase whole grain pasta; brown rice; low-sodium broths, veggies and sauces; canned tuna, salmon or meat; nut butters, and/or shelf-stable milks. Then drop off the items in the COHHO bins located in Fuller Hall by the kitchen. Every two weeks we will gather your donations and deliver them to Lift UP's warehouse. Or, you can make a financial donation directly to Lift UP.

Thank you so much!

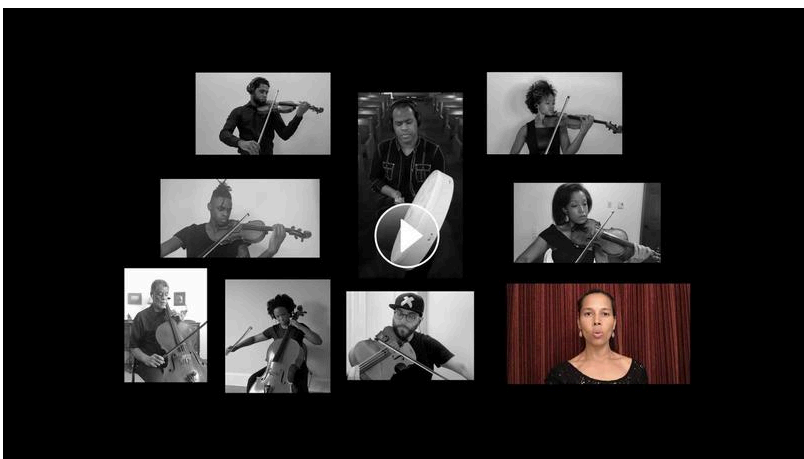
CHECK WEEKLY — Art for Social Justice

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.

Written by Rhiannon Giddons, the performance of this piece, features Rhiannon Giddons, members of The Metropolitan Opera Chorus, instrumentalists, and a solo dancer in a moving rendition of a powerful piece. She had this to say about it in 2015: "The massacre at the Emanuel AME church in Charleston, South Carolina, in June is just the latest in a string of racially charged events that have broken my heart. There are a lot of things to fix in this world, but history says if we don't address this canker, centuries in the making, these things will continue to happen. No matter what level privilege you have, when the system is broken everybody loses. We all have to speak up when injustice happens. No matter what. And music is one of the best ways I know to do so." To watch her performance of "Cry No More," click the video below:

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.



In the Community

Community Milestones, Joys, and Sorrows

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

Longtime member Carol Santesson died on May 17 at the age of 86. Carol was the daughter of longtime member Margaret Denison and mother of member Heather Santesson. A memorial is planned for October 19 at 2 p.m. in the Eliot Chapel. We hold her family at this time.

Member Pete Guest died peacefully on May 27 in the skilled nursing facility at Holladay Park Plaza, his retirement community. He was surrounded by his wife, Kristin, and son Andrew. Pete had declined over several years and was hospitalized in early April before moving to hospice at Holladay Park for 6 weeks. Pete was a UU since college, active in several UU congregations in other cities before joining First Unitarian Church right after moving to Portland in 2013. Pete was 84 years old. A memorial service is planned for Pete on June 21 at 1 p.m. in the Eliot Chapel. We hold his family at this time.

Member Joel Reitz had major surgery on May 23 to remove a cancerous growth on the Duodenum. He had what is called a Whipple procedure. Joel has been back at home for several days with ups and downs. We hold him and his family in our prayers as he continues on his path to recovery.

Member Martha Jones retired this week from her career as a librarian, where she spent the past many years at our downtown branch. She enjoyed her work and is also looking forward to this new life phase.

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.



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.](#)

May/June Art Wall Exhibition

Artwork by Julian Hunter

From [The Art Wall Committee](#)



Julian Hunter has been painting for the past sixty years. He has developed a painting method that harnesses the latest color pencil & acrylic layering, a technique to empower the painter with a high degree of artistic control that has never been possible before.

As an artist, he has come to believe that beauty is not out there waiting to be discovered. Rather, beauty is created by the human act of noticing and appreciating natural wonders. He feels that his primary task as an artist is to notice and to appreciate the *hidden secrets* of natural beauty in nature's purest form, and only then to share his experiences with others through his interpretation.

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

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 details.

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

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

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.](#)

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 [email us 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](#) | [Community Groups](#) | [Update Records](#)

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.



[First Unitarian Portland](#) | Mail to: 1034 SW 13th Avenue, Portland, OR 97205

Share this email:



[Manage](#) your preferences | [Opt out](#) using TrueRemove™

Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.

View this email [online](#).

1034 SW 13th Avenue
Portland, OR | 97205 United States

This email was sent to .

To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.



[Subscribe](#) to our email list.