



Thursday, August 28, 2025

Sunday, August 31

Sunday Worship at 10:15 a.m.

No Learning Community (RE) classes this Sunday. Care for nursery & toddlers is available during worship.

Classes for children and youth start soon! [Read more and register now for our Learning Community!](#)

Social Hour: Fuller Hall after the service.

LIVESTREAM SERVICE

Are We Outgrowing the Need for Church?

Rev. Dr. Barbara Coeyman, Guest Minister



“Is church becoming obsolete?” This question was asked by Unitarian Rev. Anna Garlin Spencer in 1929. Garlin answered her own question. To avoid becoming obsolete, the church must change and grow as modern life changes. Let’s extend Garlin’s question to consider changes in ministry as the role of the church

changes. As Unitarian Universalists continue to Widen the Circle, what are the possibilities for ministry going forward, in particular congregations and in liberal faith more broadly?

In her role as a UUA Accredited Interim Minister, creative change



Livestream Schedule

[Sanctuary Service](#) – 10:15 a.m.

In-Person & Livestream

Monday Loving Kindness

Meditation – 8 - 8:30 p.m. **via**

Zoom (resumes Sept. 8)

[Wednesday Evening](#)

[Meditation](#) – 7 - 8:30 p.m. **via**

Zoom

Friday Vespers – 5 - 5:40

p.m. **via Zoom** (resumes Sept.

5)

SERVICES

This Week's Shower Project Requests

Each week we offer unhoused neighbors a secure space to shower, enjoy a meal, get clean clothing, and experience refuge from conditions on the street. We are always looking for more volunteers to make this possible. Volunteers sign up for

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

currently serves Boulder Valley UU Fellowship in Lafayette, CO. Since completing her ministerial internship here at First Unitarian nearly twenty-five years ago, Barbara has experienced much change in ministry and in her own ministerial growth. One important tool she has added to her interim toolkit is credentialing as a facilitator with the Center for Courage and Renewal, a spiritual practice inspired by Quaker author Parker Palmer. Still, since that internship, one of Barbara’s personal activities has remained constant: her friendships with Portlanders in the English Country Dance community, whose annual Labor Day dance workshop bringing her back to the Northwest this weekend.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Ministerial Blog

Grief Rising

Rev. Alison Miller, Senior Minister

As parents and grandparents, teachers and churchgoers, Portlanders and people in general, we find ourselves once again on the day after a shooting in a school in a church. This time in Minnesota. And, at this tender time of first days of kindergarten, and fifth grade, and ninth grade, and freshman year in college. How do any of us manage to let go, to close the door, and to say goodbye to our children? Yet, we do it for many reasons, including that we cannot nourish life’s flourishing by keeping our children walled off from all that is outside... love and danger... play and harm... beauty and brokenness...[MORE](#)

Happening This Weekend

LAST CHANCE! — Summer Community Choir

This Sunday, August 31, 8:45 a.m.

Location: Main Sanctuary

Our summer choir is “come one, come all!”

If you’d like to sing, show up in the Main Sanctuary at 8:45 a.m. before the service to learn this Sunday’s music.

schedule - and enjoy meeting other congregants this way. [If you're interested, please click here.](#)

Your donations make a big difference in the lives of those we serve. We are in special need of the following items:

- Men's jeans/pants/sweats (32 - 36)
- Hoodies, sweatshirts
- Boxer briefs - NEW (M, L)
- Women's underwear - NEW (S, M)
- Flashlights
- Camping gear
- Backpacks
- [Direct monetary donations](#)

Drop off your items in the marked cabinet in Fuller Hall during church hours or during Shower Project hours (Wednesdays and Thursdays between noon and 4 p.m.)

Thank you for your support!

August 31's Shared Plate

This week, our plate will go to our Chesney-Deale Intern Minister Fund.



[Subscribe](#) to our email list.



Want to know what this church has to offer? **Visit our Calendar by clicking above to see our list of events/classes/socials!**

LAST CHANCE! — Share Your Garden Bounty

This Sunday, August 31, during social hour

Location: Fuller Hall

Do you have a flourishing garden brimming with fresh vegetables, fruits, herbs, and flowers? Share your garden's bounty with our community this Sunday by bringing it to the First Share table in Fuller Hall during social hour. All are welcome to enjoy the offerings —let's celebrate the season's abundance together.



Time to say "Goodbye, ta-ta"
To tomatoes, cukes, and dahlias,
Next week will be our last hurrah,
To stuff so good we'd eat it raw.

So bring your best
Let's make it a fest!
Next Sunday, lest
We miss the quest
And fail the test
Of sharing with zest
Then we'll give it a rest.

Until next year,
Pam and Christine

This Week's Shower Project Requests

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from conditions on the street. We are always looking for more volunteers to make this possible. Volunteers sign up for 2-hour shifts that work for their schedule - and enjoy meeting other congregants this way. [If you're interested, please click here.](#)



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Featured News

NEW! — Baked Goods Potluck for Homecoming Sunday



Have a favorite cookie recipe? A delicious banana bread you like to make? Come share it with fellow congregants on Homecoming Sunday, September 7, during social hour in Buchan Reception Hall.

Your baked goods can be left there before the service. Thank you for your contribution to help make this a

festive event!

NEW! — New Here? Let's Connect on Homecoming Sunday!

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

On Homecoming Sunday (September 7), join us after the service during social hour in Buchan Reception Hall for a joyful time of mingling! Whether you're visiting for the first time or are still getting to know First Unitarian, this is the perfect moment to connect.

Look for the First Connections Table—a space designed especially for new folks and visitors. Stop by to meet friendly faces, ask your questions, and discover ways to get involved. We'd love to help you find your place in this community.

Come socialize, share in the spirit of Homecoming, and take your first step into connection.

NEW! — Join the Usher Team!

Curious about being an Usher but not sure it's for you? Come shadow with an Usher some Sunday and see what the role is all about! As an usher, you can play a crucial part in creating a warm and welcoming environment for all who enter our sanctuary.

Whether you can commit to service once a month or just occasionally, your involvement matters.

Interested? Email [Reed D.](#), Usher Coordinator, or [Jen Thomas](#), Director of Congregational Life. Reed will be at the First Connections table after the service and available to answer any questions you may have.

NEW! — Announcing Autumn Yoga Sessions

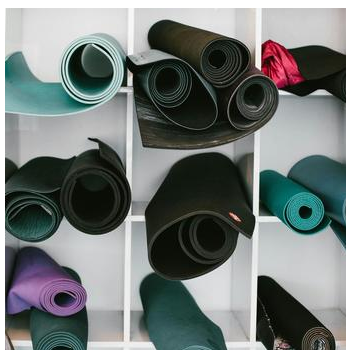
Sundays, September 7 and 21, 9 - 10 a.m.

Location: Room A108

We are pleased to announce that Ginny K. has graciously offered to continue leading yoga classes in the fall! Thank you!

We will have classes on September 7 and 21 at 9 a.m. in room A108.

We have limited space so please [reserve your spot through this link](#).



Please bring your own yoga mat and water bottle. Wear clothing appropriate for yoga and then join the congregation for Sunday service at 10:15 a.m.

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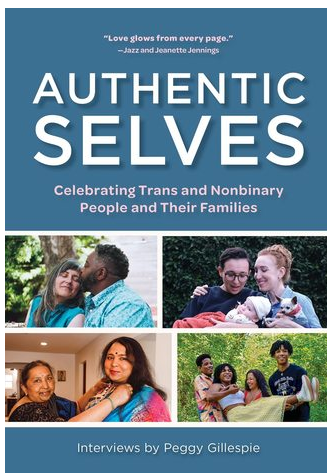
NEW! — Volunteer at Sunday Parkways

Sunday, September 14, shifts between 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Location: Downtown Portland

Exciting news! We have a chance to be a welcoming presence on September 14 at the Portland Sunday Parkways event. If you can help staff a table for activities and meet and mingle with the downtown community, [please sign up at this link](#).

Join Our Summer Read!



There is still time to take part in our Summer Read: *Authentic Selves: Celebrating Trans and Nonbinary People and their Families*. Pick up a copy in our Bookstore located in Fuller Hall during social hour.

Join us for a discussion about the book on **Sunday, September 7**, following the service. The discussion will be led by Dr. Amy O. and Aileen M. from our congregation.



DEMOCRACY IN ACTION
LIVING OUR UU VALUES

THIS MONDAY — Join Us in Solidarity: Workers Over

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

Monday, September 1, noon - 4 p.m.

Location: Eliot Chapel steps (12th & Main)

Join fellow congregants on Labor Day as we unite with communities all across the country to speak out against rising authoritarianism and the billionaire takeover. The Portland rally and march will be noon - 4 p.m. at Tom McCall Waterfront Park. For other Labor Day events around the Portland Metro area, visit maydaystrong.org.

When and where? We'll meet at the church at noon and then we'll walk and roll to the rally together to Waterfront Park. For details about the event, what to bring, and how to stay safe, [see this guide](#).

And... visit the Democracy in Action Corner during Social Hour for information on other All-Church activities and simple actions you can take in support of our democracy. For details, [see our flyer](#).

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 Alliance Presents "Weaving Together Through Storytelling"

Wednesday, September 3, 10:30 a.m.

Location: Eliot Chapel

[The Alliance](#)

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

Kelly Clendenon will show and discuss "Helpers," a new documentary that weaves his story of recovering from addiction and incarceration with the inspiring work of the 13 Salmon Shower Project. His film addresses the twin crises of fentanyl addiction and homelessness.



Told through the lens of Kelly's personal journey and people working on the front lines in Portland.

Bring your lunch for after the program. Email

AllianceRSVP@firstunitarianportland.org to join for the dessert (\$5).

Antiracism Learning Circles

FALL 2025

NEW! — Antiracism Learning Circles Start Soon!

First Circle starts September 22

Location: Zoom

You are invited to join an Antiracism Learning Circle this fall. It's on Zoom, so you can join from anywhere. Invite your friends, too. Circles start the week of September 22.

[View the full descriptions, schedules, & registration information here.](#)

[A printable flyer is here.](#)

This Fall 2025 we are offering:

- *Seeing White* - Start your journey here! The real history of the US, the one none of us were taught in school. Documentary podcast series from Scene on Radio.
- *The Land That Has Never Been Yet* - an examination of whether we have ever had a real democracy. Documentary podcast series from Scene on Radio. Seeing White is a prerequisite.
- *Capitalism* - with our economic system on trial, how did it develop and how does it reflect our values? Documentary podcast series from Scene on Radio.

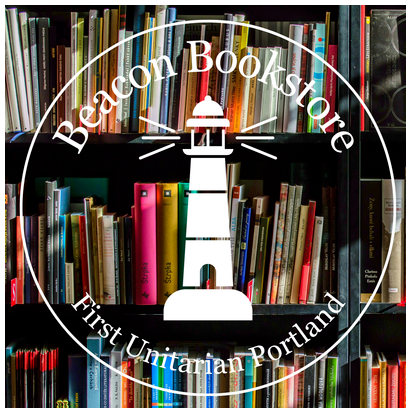
[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

- *Abundance* (book) - what are the barriers to progress and a politics of abundance?
- *How Democracies Die* (book) - with our democracy in danger, how can ours be saved?
- *Doughnut Economics* (book) - seven ways to think like a 21st century economist to thrive, not just grow
- *This Chair Rocks* (book) - a manifesto against ageism
- *Tribal Histories of the Willamette Valley* (book) - a fuller history of the land we live on and what local tribes have experienced
- *Subtle Acts of Exclusion* (book) - how to understand, identify, and stop microaggressions
- *Poetry & Immigration* (compilation) - using the power of poetry to understand the immigrant and refugee experience

UPDATED — In the Bookstore

Location: Fuller Hall

Authentic Selves: Celebrating Trans and Nonbinary People and Their Families is the UUA "Everybody Reads" book for 2025. Peggy Gillespie's interviews with 35 families are based on an exhibit of photos and stories originally created for Family Diversity Project. Published in 2023 by the UUA's own Skinner House



Press, it was created in collaboration with PFLAG National, The Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund, and Family Diversity Project. Our Beacon Bookstore has sold this book throughout the summer and still has a number of copies. It will be used as the basis for an upcoming First U PDX program. In these very difficult times for our trans children and siblings, we owe it to them and to ourselves to be as educated as possible. The Bookstore sold out last Sunday, but is restocking for Sunday, August 31. Find this and a number of LGBTQIA+ focused books – for children, youth, and adults.

Are you ready for a few new bedtime picture books to read to your little one? While they may want the same story over and over and over to the point where they (and you) have it memorized, it's a nice time to find something fresh. We have dozens of great picture books. A new one in our store is *Blue Feet Home*, based on one of

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

Banned Books display in the store – for reasons that may (or may not) surprise you. A Note: *I Am Jazz* is one of the banned children’s books in our display. It’s about a real little girl who grows up to be one of the adults in *Authentic Selves*.

A number of books we’ve had on backorder are coming in this week, and we’ll have some of the books for the Antiracism Learning Circles scheduled this fall. The books Rev. Alison mentioned in her Q&A sermon have been ordered – and we already had some of them (bell hooks, Rainer Maria Rilke, James Luther Adams). Work by other favorite authors (Parker Palmer, Wendell Berry, Thich Nhat Hanh, Pema Chodron, and William Stafford) should arrive this week.

Learning Community

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

Register your child for the 2025-26 program year [here](#).



MONTHLY UPDATES — August Newsletter

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

Our Learning Community Newsletter is published monthly in June, July, and August.

Dear Learning Community,

Forgive me for rudely busting into your summer but did you know it will soon be fall?!

Don’t let me rush you but please mosey on over to our website and check out our newly available program year information, including a [general welcome](#), [program descriptions](#), and [registration](#). We kick everything off on September 7, so be sure to save that date.

Come September, this email will be weekly...[MORE](#)

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

Social Justice Program

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

THIS MONDAY — Labor Day Caravan to NW Detention Center in Tacoma

Monday, September 1

[Immigrant Justice Action Group](#) (IJAG)



IJAG (Immigrant Justice Action Group) will coordinate with other organizations to caravan to the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, WA, to protest the policies of abduction and detention. We will need to carpool. If you are interested, [email us to join the IJAG mailing list](#) and receive more

information. The Caravan is at the conclusion of the International Migrants Alliance Political Conference, for which registration is [open here](#).

Hunger Isn't On Vacation... Join Our Summer Food Drive!

Location: Fuller Hall

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

The cost of housing, food, and other living expenses continues to rise in the Portland area. Some people are forced to choose between paying rent and buying food. So they skimp on meals and go hungry, but at least have a place to live.



How can we help? By continuing to shop for them as well as for ourselves when we're at the grocery store. Please 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](#). Your thoughtfulness is much

[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.](#)

Member Barbara Fields died unexpectedly on July 23 at the age of 77. Barbara joined our church in 2020, was on the Nominating Committee, and was also active in the antiracist book groups. One friend described Barbara as a beautiful soul. We will miss her warm, caring personality.

Member Aileen Miller had successful surgery this week, and we hold Aileen as she continues her recovery.



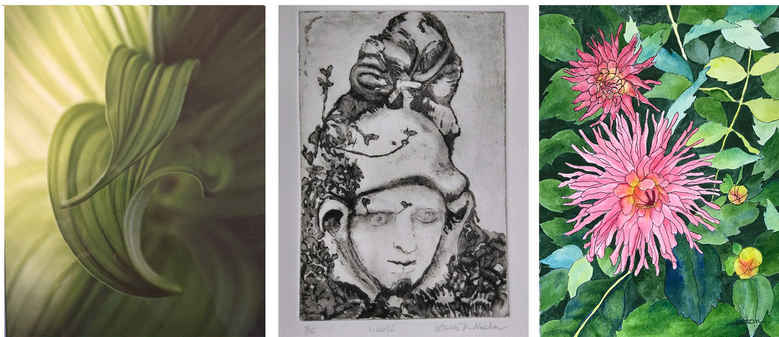
Say it with flowers!

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.

[Email Marsha W.](#) to make arrangements.

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.



July/August Church Member Art Wall Exhibition

Artwork by [the Art Wall Committee](#)

Leslie P.K. is showing etchings, Sam M. is showing photographs, and Connie C. is showing watercolors this month. Come down to Fuller Hall and see what the committee members have been working on this year.

Recurring Workshops, Classes & Gatherings

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

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

During the summer, some groups and activities have paused, returning when the new church program year begins in September.

Check out our [Summer Program Guide](#) on our website to learn more.

For information about which groups are meeting over the summer, please visit our [Community Groups & Activities](#) page and contact the specific group in which you are interested.

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](#)

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