



Thursday, September 11, 2025

Sunday, September 14

Sunday Worship at 10:15 a.m.

Children & youth start in the Sanctuary at 10:15 a.m. then head to Learning Community (RE) classes. **Care for nursery & toddlers** is available during worship. [Read more and register now for our Learning Community!](#)

Social Hour: Fuller Hall after the service.

LIVESTREAM SERVICE

A Community of Resilience

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



Our theme of the year is “Weaving Community,” and we aim to do so in a time that might be described as the Great Unraveling. We are experiencing multiple crises connected to the climate, our democracy, and more. Let us reflect together on how we can cultivate community that is resilient and generative

even as we encounter destructive forces or despair.

ORDER OF SERVICE



Livestream Schedule

[Sanctuary Service](#) – 10:15 a.m.

In-Person & Livestream

[Monday Loving Kindness](#)

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

[Wednesday Evening](#)

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

[Friday Vespers](#) – 5 - 5:40 p.m. **via Zoom**

SERVICES



September's

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

Ministerial Blog

Weaving Community: Hospitality with Hearts and Hands

[Jen Thomas](#), Director of Congregational Life

At First Unitarian Portland, our vibrant and caring community is shaped by the dedication of volunteers who give their time, energy, and talents—helping to weave the fabric that holds us all together. From welcoming faces at worship, to the warmth of Souper Sunday, from Sunday social hours to the teams who greet and usher and keep us safe, volunteers are at the heart of every connection and celebration...

This fall, we are excited to launch the new Hospitality Team. The team has decided to call themselves the Hospitality with Heart and Hands team to spread the joy and responsibility of welcoming, feeding, and caring for our congregation. Hospitality Team members will help with events like Souper Sunday, Sunday social hour, neighborhood outreach and, equally important, assist with the clean-up and tidying up so that no one is left carrying the full weight alone...[MORE](#)

For the month of September, our plate will go to our [13 Salmon Shower Project](#). In this new church year, we dedicate our shared plates to community organizations with which First Unitarian has partnerships for justice and service.

Launched in January 2023, the Shower Project has grown to serve over 1,300 unhoused guests, averaging 22 per day, with showers, hygiene supplies, overdose prevention kits, clean clothes, a warm meal, and a kind welcome from our volunteers. The Shower Project puts Love at the center, making a difference in each guest's and each volunteer's life. One guest shared, "Thank you for not treating me like an outcast. Thank you for not treating me mean or abrasive. Thank you for being the only positive encounter I've had in months."

Happening This Sunday



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](#).



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

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

September 14th

RE POTLUCK & PARENTING CIRCLE

- Drop off food in Buchan
- Crock pot plug ins available (no refrigeration)
- Food & fellowship after service
- Childcare for Parenting Circle

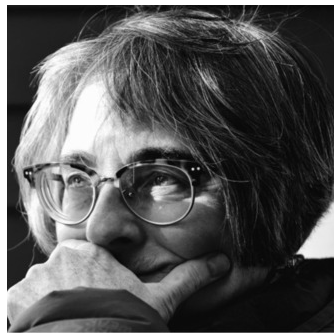
NO NEED TO RSVP

NEW! — First Unitarian’s Bookstore Invites You to a Special Event

Sunday, September 14, 2:30 - 4 p.m.

Location: Buchan Reception Hall

Former Portland resident and longtime author Therese DesCamp will read from her newly published book, *Hands Like Roots: Notes on an Entangled Contemplative Path* (Santos Books, 2025) this Sunday, September 14, at 2:30 p.m.



DesCamp’s essays explore life as a contemplative firmly planted in and entwined with community. She weaves seemingly disparate topics —hydrology, cognitive linguistics, political chaos, the nature of causality, climate instability and embodiment—with the inner world

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

reviewers have called *Hands Like Roots* “foundational and funny, poetic and practical,” “an extraordinary work of hope in a moment that often feels completely bereft of hope,” and “essential spiritual nourishment for weary hearts.”

Sponsored by your Beacon Bookstore, the reading will take place at First Unitarian’s Buchan Reception Hall from 2:30 - 4 p.m. this Sunday, September 14. Free parking is available in the church lot on 12th between Salmon and Main; entrance to the Buchan Reception Hall is on Salmon Street, between 12th and 13th.

“From its title to author DesCamp's stories, I found her book *Hands like Roots* a treasure. She blends her Buddhist practices with Christian prayer seamlessly into a life streaming through transitions. She draws on other Unitarian Universalist sources that broadens her own story of heart issues to universal issues of nurturing and loving the whole Earth. With whole-hearted tenderness she suffers "the bass notes of despair" in the world which leads her to a plea for joy. I thoroughly enjoyed DesCamp's writing, sounding the challenges and love of living a life while deeply paying attention. So looking forward to hearing her in person!” - *First Unitarian member Katie R.*

Featured News

NEW! — Fall 2025 Adult Programs

Writing Your Life Stories - Registration Required

We all have stories to tell perhaps big and important events and accomplishments, or small and quiet everyday happenings that give life meaning.

Join fellow congregants to begin or continue writing the narratives of our lives. We will write together, share if desired, and create connections with one another through our stories. All levels of writing experience and those with works in progress are welcome.

[Learn more and register here.](#)

How to Write an Ethical Will - Registration Required

How can you pass on the values and experiences that have given your life its deepest meaning? An Ethical Will can complement a traditional will, and can be written as a letter or in several other formats. Through facilitator presentations, class

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

and sharing writing (if desired), participants will leave the last class with at least a draft of an Ethical Will.

[Learn more and register here.](#)

Community Circles - Participation/Interest Required

Community Circles at First U bring small groups of about ten neighbors together each month to build meaningful relationships and deepen spiritual connection. Guided by the congregation's monthly theme, these gatherings provide space for reflection, conversation, and shared support, helping members strengthen bonds within the wider First U community.

[Learn more and express interest here.](#)

NEW! — Friend to Friend Program

First Unitarian is excited to announce the creation of a new outreach program to seniors and individuals who may be homebound and unable to attend church regularly. It will be called "Friend to Friend" and offer members up to four in-person visits per year from a lay minister. The goals are to increase connection with the church, offer support, and provide assistance with personal needs when applicable. If you are curious and/or know someone else who is, or have questions, please [email lay minister Steve K.](#)

NEW! — Hospitality with Heart & Hands

We're proud to launch Hospitality with Heart & Hands at First Unitarian Portland, a team devoted to weaving community by serving with love and care. [Learn more here in this week's Ministerial Blog.](#) Supporting events, welcoming guests, assisting with outreach, and sharing cleanup duties, this team helps weave a welcoming and loving fabric where everyone feels at home. Join Heart & Hands Hospitality and become a vital thread in our congregation's tapestry. [Sign up here.](#)

NEW! — General Assembly Delegate Reports

In the July 13 Front Steps, we gave a summary of the reports of our delegates to the UUA General Assembly (annual meeting). We held the full reports until people had returned from the summer

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

holidays. We now give you their complete reports which you can [read here](#).

For questions, [email Art U](#).

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](#)

NEW! NEXT WEEK — Swing Dance Party!

Tuesday, September 16, 6:40 - 8 p.m.

Location: Buchan Reception Hall

Come swing and sway to the music of the Big Band Era with the Carroll Raaum Swing Orchestra. Dance the night away, or just tap your feet and enjoy sweet treats!

Presented by the Committee on Hunger and Homelessness to support the “Welcome In!” Auction 2025. If you missed your chance to buy a ticket at the auction, you can still come dance for a \$20 donation at the door.

Sign Up Now for Yoga on September 21

Sunday, September 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 a class on September 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.

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

NEW! — Lots of New Books to Read - Whether You're Little or Big!



Your Beacon Bookstore has just received dozens of new books! There are books for classes and discussion groups being offered this fall, books to support your personal spiritual path, books cited in Rev. Alison's sermons, justice topics, poetry, meditation, and more. You'll find books about Unitarian Universalism, our own First Unitarian, and other faith practices. Looking for a bit of self-help? We have that too. Youth are especially invited to bring your coffee or tea cup with you and just browse! The Bookstore has a terrific collection of high quality children's books – just right for your own or visiting little ones.

Beacon Bookstore – in the SW corner of Fuller Hall – is a welcoming and relatively quiet space to learn more about who we are, be out of the mix of conversation in the main part of the hall, and enjoy finding some new authors and books. About 40% of our sale price goes directly to the Church's bottom line. Your coffee cup is welcome.

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 2-hour shifts that work for their 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

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

- 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!

Antiracism Learning Circles

FALL 2025

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.
- *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.

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

- *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

Learning Community

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

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



CHECK WEEKLY — September 14 Newsletter

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

Dear Learning Community,

RE starts this Sunday! It's going to be a fun, full Sunday. Friends and visitors especially welcome.

On a personal note, I can't wait for our after-service Parenting Circle. Swing by if you could benefit from a casual, no-RSVP opportunity to commiserate and connect with other parents.

Each time I attend, I find myself cracking up about how wild family life can be, touched by how honest we are about the hard parts, surprised that I can identify so much with parenting journeys different than mine, comforted by the support offered, and buoyed up by the companionship of sharing it all. See the link for more info...[MORE](#)

Social Justice

Learn more about our [Social Justice program](#).

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

NEW! — Sun Day: All-Church Event!**Sunday, September 21, 11:45 a.m.****Location:** Eliot Chapel steps[Community for Earth](#) (CFE)

Join First Unitarian congregants with the Community for Earth (CFE) in a nationwide day of action celebrating solar and wind power! Much like the first gigantic Earth Day in 1970, hundreds of festive events are planned across the country to celebrate that solar energy is now the cheapest and most democratic source of power on

the planet. In Portland, 40+ community partners are taking part including First Unitarian!

To support the Sun Power Revolution, we will come together around our shared value of protecting our world.

Join with fellow congregants at the front steps of the Eliot Chapel at 11:45 a.m. to walk and roll together at noon with Rev. Alison to the Waterfront park near the Battleship Memorial.

Leaders including Senator Jeff Merkley will kick off Sun Day, followed by a 1 p.m. march across the Hawthorne Bridge, and an after-party Sun Ball from 3 - 6 p.m. with DJs, divas, art, and costumes. Come for any part or all of the events! [Click here for more information.](#) You can find CFE folks staffing the Sun Day Volunteer Booth all day.

NEW! — Supportive Housing Services (SHS) Conversation**Sunday, September 28, 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.****Location:** Eliot Chapel[Committee on Hunger and Homelessness](#) (COHHO)

Join us for an honest, values-based conversation about what's working—and what still needs to change—in our region's response to homelessness.

Across Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas counties, people are working hard to make progress on homelessness—but that progress isn't always visible. These small-group conversations are designed to help bridge the gap between what the public sees and

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

the real impact of the Supportive Housing Services (SHS) program.

This conversation will offer a chance to:

- Learn how the SHS program is helping connect people to housing and supportive services
- Hear real stories of progress and challenge from trusted local voices
- Ask questions and share your perspective in an honest, respectful space
- Leave with a clearer understanding of the path forward

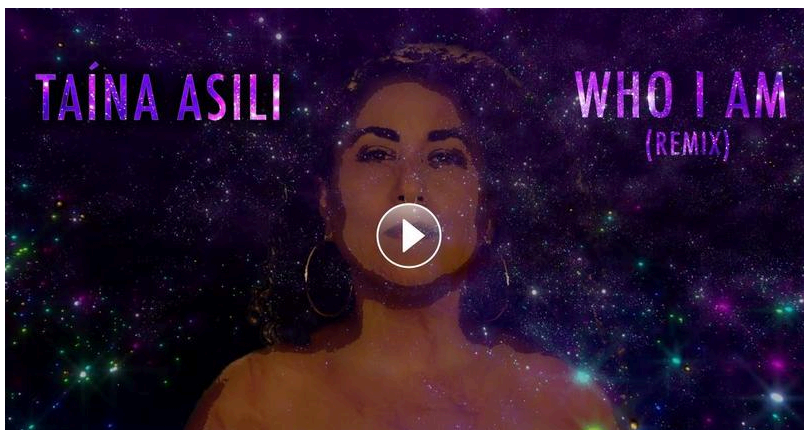
Whether you're concerned, curious, frustrated, hopeful, or all of the above, you're welcome to join the conversation. Event sponsored by COHHO (Committee on Hunger and Homelessness) and [HereTogether Oregon](#).

CHECK WEEKLY — Art for Social Justice

Curated by Ethel G., Speaking of Justice Editorial Team

We're back! 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.

“Who I Am (Remix)” is the new queer liberation anthem by Taína Asili. This remix transforms the song into a pulsing celebration of queer self-determination and resistance—especially vital during a time of ongoing attacks on queer and trans communities. This track is from Taína Asili’s album, Remezcla: An Audio Activist Toolkit, dropping July 2025. 100% of Bandcamp sales from this song will be donated to the Trans Asylum Seeker Support Network, a mutual aid collective supporting trans and queer asylum seekers. To listen, 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.](#)

Long-time member Toni Paget died on the morning of September 4 at the age of 85 after living with cancer in her last year. Toni was a retired school teacher and here at the church she was a part of our Quilts of Love group as well as the Alliance. She was a faithful attender of the Eliot Institute retreats for many years. One friend said no matter the setting, she was always ready to take on some creative project. Toni's husband, John, her daughters and their extended family appreciate the support of First Unitarian during her final weeks. They will be planning a memorial service in the weeks to come.

We hold member Sarah Shideler. Her father, George Howard Cross III, died on September 4 in Michigan. Sarah says he died peacefully after a difficult living with twisted bowels and multiple surgeries. She says he was a good father and he was known as Grumps by his grandchildren. Sarah and her husband, Bill, are on an extended international trip and they return to Portland periodically.

The flowers last Sunday were in honor of member Mike Couch, whose Celebration of Life was on September 6.

Long-time member Brent Schauer suffered a head injury on September 5 and is currently in the ICU at OHSU and doing well. He is not ready for visitors at this time, but wife Diane and their daughters welcome our healing thoughts and prayers.

Last weekend, two of our recent YRUU grads headed up to Bellingham to begin their studies at Western Washington University. The La Rosa-Peters family dropped off son Maxson and the Dearborns dropped off daughter Sadie.

[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.

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



NEW! — September Art Wall Exhibition **Paintings by Aurora Oliva**

In this show you can see how Aurora plays with images and lets them interact to create new patterns and feelings. She says, "My paintings are the result of quiet conversations between me and the canvas. Colors, textures and shapes are the mediums with which we communicate. I view the creative process as prayer and

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

devoid of judgment. My work is the snapshot of that intimate conversation and gives the audience a glimpse of my strength and vulnerability."

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 paused. Be sure to check with your group coordinator listed on the [Community Groups & Activities](#) page to find out what the new year's schedule is.

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](#)



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

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

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.

emma®

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.