



Thursday, December 4, 2025

Sunday, December 7

🧑 Pancake Breakfast at 8:45 a.m. 🧑
Sunday Worship at 10:15 a.m.

Children & youth start in the Sanctuary at 10:15 a.m. then head to [RE classes](#). Nursery and toddler care available during worship.

Social Hour: Buchan Hall after the service.

LIVESTREAM SERVICE



Livestream Schedule

[Sanctuary Service](#) – 10:15 a.m.

In-Person & Livestream

[Monday Matins for Advent](#) – 9 - 9:30 a.m. through Dec. 22 **via Zoom**

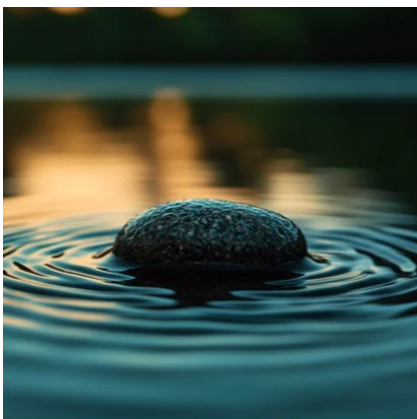
[Monday Loving Kindness Meditation](#) – 8 - 8:30 p.m. **via Zoom**

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

SERVICES

Prayers of a Skeptic

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



Prayer is a practice that has been part of Unitarian Universalist congregations since the beginning of our tradition. It is one of many spiritual practices that our members engage with in their lives. People are also free not to pray here. We could be said to be skeptics and believers side by side when it

comes to this power of prayer to make a difference. Actually, prayer is not just one practice, but many. Today, let us reflect on what we may be doing when we engage with this type of practice and open our hearts to the possibilities prayer may hold for us.



December's Shared Plate

For December, we share our plate with the [American Civil](#)

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

ORDER OF SERVICE



ACLU works to protect and advance our civil liberties and civil rights for a more just, equitable, and caring democracy in Oregon. They build political power in meaningful partnership with impacted individuals and communities to disrupt and defend against oppressive systems. They educate and dispel misinformation, advocate at all levels of government, and fight in courts to protect and advance our democracy, civil liberties and civil rights. Most recently, First Unitarian has partnered with the ACLU of Oregon to promote and collect signatures for the Equal Rights for All 2026 ballot initiative, and in educating our congregation on immigration law and policies in Oregon. We, along with the ACLU, are members of the Oregon for All Coalition, working to defend immigrant rights throughout our state.

Ministerial Blog

Photos and Gratitude about the Witness at ICE

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

Thank you for showing up for our neighbors at the Interfaith Witness at ICE yesterday. There were 175 people present at this kick-off event. (Click "MORE" to check out the photos on our website)...[MORE](#)

Holiday Guide

Click the image below to view in full, then click each event title for more details:



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.

First Unitarian PDX

★

WINTER HOLIDAY
GUIDE

SERVICES

Solstice Service - Eliot Chapel - 12/19 @ 7 p.m.
Christmas Pageant - Main Sanctuary - 12/21 @ 10:15 a.m.
Christmas Eve Family Service - Main Sanctuary - 12/24 @ 5 p.m.
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service - Main Sanctuary - 12/24 @ 8 p.m.

HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

Daily Advent by Email - 12/1 to 12/25
Weekly Advent Matins - Zoom - 12/1, 12/8, 12/15, 12/22 @ 9 a.m.
Alliance Treasures and Cookie Sale - Buchan Hall - 12/7, 12/14 after service
Christmas Cookie Potluck - Buchan Hall - 12/21 after service

ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES

Monday Loving Kindness Meditation - Zoom - 8 p.m.
Friday Night Vespers - Zoom - 5 p.m.

FOR EVENT DETAILS AND DESCRIPTIONS, SCAN HERE:

WAYS TO GIVE
 Bring beanies, warm gloves, and men's sweatpants (S & M) to our giving trees in the Sanctuary lobby and Buchan atrium for our Shower Project. Our Christmas Eve plates will go to the Congregant Care Fund.

NEED SUPPORT DURING THE HOLIDAYS?
 Our Lay Ministry Team is here to help.
 Call 503-228-6389.

Happening This Weekend

NEW! — Pancake Breakfast

Sunday, December 7, 8:45 - 10 a.m.

Location: Buchan Hall

[UU Men's Community](#)

Join us for free, delicious pancakes in Buchan Hall from 8:45 to 10 a.m. on the first Sunday of the month. We will have plain, blueberry, chocolate, and blueberry-chocolate pancakes fresh off the griddle. All are welcome!



[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

First Steps Class This Sunday

Sunday, December 7, 11:45 a.m.

Location: Channing Room (A101)



Please join us for the next First Steps tour and orientation to First Unitarian Portland offering on December 7 at 11:45 a.m. We will meet in the Channing Room to get to know each other, learn a little about First Unitarian Portland, and take a tour of the campus. Session will conclude by 1 p.m.

Grab a hot beverage in the atrium in Buchan Hall where social hour is being held and join us! If you need help finding your way, ask anyone wearing a rainbow lanyard/nametag or stop by First Connections table and folks will help guide you.

Alliance Treasures & Cookie Sale

Sundays, December 7 and 14, after the service

Location: Buchan Hall

[The Alliance](#)

Come one, come all to the Alliance Treasures & Cookie Sale in Buchan Hall after the services on December 7 and 14.

You'll find lots of jewelry, beautiful scarves, Christmas treasures, and unique handmade items, as well as homemade cookies galore!



(You could even buy some cookies to freeze and save for the Christmas Cookie Potluck on December 21!)

NEW! — Bookstore Table in Buchan This Sunday

Sunday, December 7, during social hour

Location: Buchan Hall

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.



Thinking about giving books for Christmas? Stop by the Bookstore Table in the Buchan Atrium this Sunday. Check out some of our holiday books and other books for children.

We received a few copies of Rev. Dr. Marilyn Sewell's new book, *Life Reimagined: Retirement as a*

Spiritual Journey, last week and have more on order to arrive soon. And remember, we are very happy to special order books for you! About 40% of the sale price goes to the church's budget. If the books you are seeking are available in our local wholesaler's warehouse, we can have them for you the Sunday after you order them.

Thank you for your great support for our little independent bookstore!



Faithful Resistance: The Power of Noncooperation

Sunday, December 7, 12:30 - 2 p.m.

Location: Daisy Bingham ([Registration required](#))

[Democracy in Action](#)

Join Dana Buhl, Director of Social Justice, and Mary Ann B. to explore how we as Unitarian Universalists can work together to resist authoritarianism, grounded in our faith and acting in community. We'll learn about the local and national movement to build people power through the nonviolent strategy of

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

This will be a 90-minute interactive workshop. Space is limited and registration is required. [Please register here.](#)

Questions? [Email Leslie C.](#)

Featured News

NEW! — Message from the Music Ministry Transition Team

During this time of year, we are grateful for many things. Friends and family, of course, and also our church family and the ministry we all share with each other and the world. Part of our shared experience is music. It lifts our spirits and unites our hearts.

We are grateful for Interim Music Director Garrett Bond and the joy he brings us each week. He has made a commitment to be with us until the end of the church year. Between now and then, your Music Ministry Transition Team will be busy finding his successor. We will be looking for someone to fill the position of Music Director who will be with us for the long term.

We are now advertising for the position on job boards, at the UUA, and at several musical organizations. We expect to evaluate resumes in January and February. The intent is to identify the successful candidate by April.

If you have knowledge of individuals or organizations where we should send our job announcement, please let us know and send them our job description [found on the website here](#). We are hoping for a large candidate pool from which to choose the best fit for First Church. [We can be reached by email here](#). Thanks.

Music Ministry Transition Team:

- Theo Harper
 - Ameena Amdahl-Mason
 - Rich Scher
 - Michael Murray
 - Holly Stern
 - Reverend Tom Disrud
 - Reverend Alison Miller
-

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.



Registration for OWL Available Now: Classes for Adults and Youth

We have a long tradition of offering Our Whole Lives (OWL) lifespan sexuality education.

OWL values:

- Self worth
- Sexual health
- Responsibility
- Justice/inclusivity

[Click here to register](#) and for more information!

[Click to register](#)

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! — In-Person Migra Watch Training

Saturday, December 13, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Location: SW Portland ([registration required](#))

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

Migra Watch is a community-based effort to monitor Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) activity. In this in person training, you will learn to identify ICE agents, document potential violations, report sightings, & provide support to affected families.

Migra Watch trainings are organized by [Portland Immigrant Rights](#)

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

rights through direct assistance, education, legal support, and advocacy. Location is SW Portland, details to be sent out to those who register. Space is limited so please register soon! [Register here.](#)



First Unitarian is proud to support the great work that PIRC is doing by providing funds to expand their Zoom capacity. To date, PIRC has trained over 4,000 Oregonians for MigraWatch. It is one way that our congregation is in solidarity with the movement for human rights and immigrant justice.

NEW! — Cookie Potluck!

Sunday, December 21, after the service

Location: Fuller Hall

Join us after the Christmas Pageant on December 21 for a festive cookie potluck! Home-baked or store-bought, all cookies (and all people!) are welcome. Bring a plate (ONLY ONE DOZEN, PLEASE) of your favorite cookies to share if you'd like—or just bring yourself and enjoy.



Bring your offerings to Fuller Hall before service where folks will be available to help you place your cookies. We are also asking folks to not leave your containers.

During the social hour, we will also be celebrating the retirement of Kamal, one of our long-serving sextons. The Soske family is bringing special beverages to enjoy in celebration of Kamal and all he has done for our community.

If you have any questions, you can [email Jen Thomas](#).

See you for a fun-filled day!

NEW! — Eliot Institute Winter Camp

December 28 - January 1

Location: Hood Canal

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

Did you know that Eliot Institute has a winter camp? It's a great way to welcome in the new year.

Over 30 First U-ers regularly attend the intergenerational UU summer camps. They are held at the Seabeck Conference Center on Washington's Hood Canal, only a 3-1/2 hour drive from Portland. It's magical. Fantastic for all ages.

Learn more:

- [Website & Registration](#)
- [Brochures](#)
- [Video](#)

Come see us at our table after the service to learn more.

Learning Community

Learn more about our [Learning Community program](#).
Register your child for the 2025-26 program year [here](#).



CHECK WEEKLY — December 7 Newsletter

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

Dear Learning Community,

This year, pageant rehearsal is happening during the RE hour on 12/7 and 12/14 for 2nd-12th graders. Preschool-1st graders will have their usual RE classes but there will be walk on/no rehearse roles for them during the actual pageant at 10:15 am on December 21st. **If you have an older child/youth who would like a speaking role or to play part of a camel, please email me right away!**

Families are especially encouraged to swing by social hour this Sunday in Buchan to visit our table display about [Eliot Institute](#) and chat with some of our members who attend. Eliot is a UU retreat space with year-round options for family events, summer camp

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

the many First Unitarian families and individuals of all ages who are part of the Eliot community...[MORE](#)

Social Justice

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

NEW! — Potluck and Learning Opportunity

Saturday, December 13, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Location: SW Portland

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

Join us for an informative potluck on Saturday, December 13, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Sue H.'s house in SW Portland. We'll enjoy a cozy, social gathering and hear first-hand accounts from volunteers for [Northwest Abortion Access Fund](#) (NWAAF). Our in-home potlucks are replacing the after church meetings.



Make sure to visit our CARD table during the social hour on Sunday, December 21, to learn more about our social justice group. Pitch in and help us write more thank you cards to abortion providers.

If planning to attend the potluck, please [RSVP by emailing Sue H.](#) For more details about the meeting, the CARD group, or admission into our CARD Google group, [email Marni T.](#)

Holiday Giving



As we reflect on two years of the 13 Salmon Shower Project, we are overwhelmed with gratitude for the compassion of this congregation. Together, we've provided a safe space for showers, clean clothes, and connection for more than 2,000 of our unhoused neighbors.

Winter is here, bringing a harsh reality for those without housing. These three essentials can help

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

- Beanies / knitted hats (black or gray preferred)
- Warm gloves
- Men's sweatpants (small & med)

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. at 13th and Salmon). Thank you for your support! Starting on Sunday, November 30, these gifts can be delivered to the Giving Trees located in the Sanctuary lobby and Buchan atrium.

If you'd like to offer a financial contribution directly to the Shower Project, [please donate here](#).

Join Our Holiday Gift Drive for Avalon Village
Sundays, December 14 and 21, during social hour
Location: COHHO table

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

As we did last year, COHHO is again coordinating a holiday gift drive for WeShine's [Avalon Village](#) residents. Located in Inner Southeast Portland, Avalon Village serves women and female-identified adults and prioritizes those who are Black, Indigenous, or People of Color, older adults, people with chronic health conditions or disabilities, and individuals who have been camping nearby.



Avalon villagers now have a warm, safe and welcoming place to live. However, they still have no or limited financial means to purchase essential items for their personal welfare. Avalon staff asked the villagers what they would like for the holidays that would make a difference in their lives at this time. COHHO has their list and another one for the village itself (e.g., pantry food items). Now it's time to fulfill their wish list!

If you would like to contribute to our gift drive, please [email Cynthia S.](#) and she will share the list with you. COHHO elves will collect the gifts after the services on December 14 and 21. Please join us in making our second holiday gift drive for Avalon Village a great success. Happy Thanksgiving!

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

Location: COHHO bins in Fuller Hall

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



Food is a human right and access to it should never be in question. Yet it has been, especially with the significant changes to SNAP eligibility and the federal government's unprecedented funding cuts.

And let's not forget November's SNAP interruption! Besides causing fear, anxiety and stress for the Portland area's most vulnerable, these changes have strained the capabilities of food pantries like Lift UP, which is reporting a steady and heavy increase in food assistance requests.

How can you help? First things first - go gleaning in your kitchen cupboards! You might have some shelf-stable jars, cartons or boxes that you forgot you had or don't intend to consume. Donate them to Lift UP. Just put them in the COHHO cabinets under the clock in Fuller Hall; we'll deliver them to Lift UP.

Secondly, when you shop for groceries, buy extra pasta, nut butter, almond milk, or soup cartons to put in those COHHO cabinets.

Lastly, consider making a [financial donation](#) to Lift UP (or the Oregon Food Bank). They can purchase in bulk and make your money go farther than you can.

However you can contribute during these especially challenging times, we thank you. Every small act strengthens the foundation beneath us all.

CHECK WEEKLY — Art for Social Justice

Curated by Ethel G., Speaking of Justice Editorial Team

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

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.

Melanie DeMore (she/he/they) is a Vocal Activist whose thirty-year career has been dedicated to teaching, lecturing, mentoring, conducting, directing, and inspiring children and adults about the power of song as social and political change. She will be the Program Presenter at this year's Winter 2025 Eliot Camp. . To watch her direct a performance of "Wanting Memories," click the video:



In the Community

Community Milestones, Joys, and Sorrows

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

Member Julie Grice's father, Ted Grice, died on November 28 at the age of 88. All this as Julie is still in the hospital to treat infection. Julie appreciates our visits, calls, and cards.

Member Steve Kelley had emergency heart surgery on November 25 and is now at home recovering. He appreciates our cards and prayers.

Member Don Liedel took a fall recently and broke his hip. Earlier this week, he had successful surgery and is now recovering.

Member Lynne Bacon had successful knee replacement surgery on December 1. She is not up to visits yet so she can focus on physical therapy, but she would appreciate cards.

Pastoral Care Resources

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

- **Contact a Minister:** Our ministers are available for pastoral support to congregants in need and to officiate at rites of passages including memorial services and weddings. Call the church office at 503-228-6389, or [send an email](#).
- **Contact a Lay Minister:** Lay Ministers support the pastoral work of the ministerial staff. They are church members who offer one-to-one caring and support for folks in times of need. Call the church office at 503-228-6389, or [send an email](#). You can [learn more here](#).
- **Friend to Friend Outreach Program:** This program provides connection to seniors and individuals who may be homebound and unable to attend church regularly. It offers members up to four in-person visits per year from a Lay Minister. [Send an email to Lay Minister Steve K.](#)
- **Lotsa Helping Hands Support Network:** This care calendar enables volunteers to provide meals or visits for congregants going through challenging times. For support or questions, [email coordinator Leslie C.](#) To volunteer, [send a request here](#).
- **Join an Affinity or Support Group:** Build community through our identity-based affinity groups and experience-specific support groups. [Learn about them here](#).



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

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

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



November & December Art Wall Exhibition

Biennial Congregant Art Show

Come down to Fuller Hall to see the talented artists we have in the congregation during November and December!

Got something for Front Steps? Send in your church-related submission for our weekly publication. [Submit it here](#) (preferred) or [email us here](#) with "Front Steps" as the subject line.

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.



[Subscribe](#) to our email list.