



First Unitarian Church of Portland

Thursday, December 11, 2025

Sunday, December 14

Sunday Worship at 10:15 a.m.

🎄 K-1 Christmas Pageant after the service 🎄

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: Fuller Hall after the service.

LIVESTREAM SERVICE

Music and Worship Service: A Christmas Story

[Garrett Bond](#), Interim Director of Music Ministries, and [Rev. Alison Miller](#), Senior Minister



For this December, the combined music program will present a worship service celebrating the joys and wonder of the holiday season. Our program will feature some traditional holiday songs and selections that focus on the wonder and magic of the Christmas story.

This purposeful

programming is done as a way of analyzing and reflecting on the story of virgin birth and what that has meant to the world over the



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



Want to know what this church

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

us? What do we hold dear, and what do we wish to leave behind? The holiday season can be one filled with light and joy for some—but perhaps not for all. During this time, let us remember all of what (and who) we hold dear to us, and what we can continue to do—both as individual and as a community—to make our world a better place. We hope you will join us.

by clicking above to see our list of events/classes/socials!

Offerings given to this service's plate will go to our music ministry program.

[ORDER OF SERVICE](#)

Ministerial Blog

The Joys of Advent

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

We give thanks for the simple joys that find us in December. They beckon to us like the doors of an advent calendar waiting to be opened.

1. For special days that help us mark the passing of time
2. For old traditions we enjoy and anticipate
3. For new traditions that feel right
4. For a reason to reach out to friends and family
5. For memories of beloveds who are gone
6. For the gift of people's time
7. For love that softens our jagged edges
8. For love that sharpens our call to be just
9. For challenges that lead us to grow
10. For a sense of humor to defray disappointment
11. For music which helps our spirits soar
12. For the taste of chocolate gelt on the tongue
13. For Fraser fir's strong scent and branches
14. For twinkling lights that sparkle in the night
15. For warm coats and chunky sweaters
16. For a crackling fire and hot cider
17. For gifts of presence and service
18. For work that is meaningful
19. For days of rest and renewal
20. For our earth's season of dormancy
21. For what waits to bloom next
22. For prophetic stories which point us towards peace
23. For communities which orient us towards healing
24. For the child in each of us who hasn't forgotten to hope

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

Amen. May it be so. And Blessed Be.

Rev. Alison

Holiday Guide

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

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.

Christmas Pageant 2025

Join us for the regular service
at 10:15 am on December 21st
for our annual Christmas Pageant.

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

NEW! — Annual Christmas Pageant**Sunday, December 21, during the service****Location:** Main Sanctuary

All are warmly invited to our joyous Annual Christmas Pageant on **Sunday, December 21, at our regular 10:15 a.m. service!**

Originally presented in 1924, celebrating the first Christmas in our then-new church on the corner of SW 12th Ave. and Salmon, it has been a beloved annual tradition here at First Unitarian since then. Come revisit this old story of mystery, love, and connection—made anew each year by our care and attention. **Immediately following the service**, indulge your sweet tooth at our cookie potluck in Fuller Hall!

Happening This Weekend

Alliance Treasures & Cookie Sale**Sunday, December 14, after the service****Location:** Buchan Hall[The Alliance](#)

Come one, come all to the Alliance Treasures & Cookie Sale in Buchan Hall after the service.

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

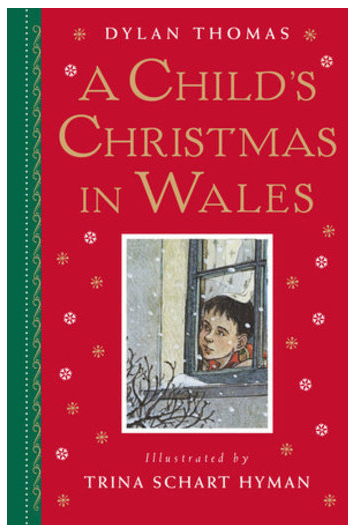
(You could even buy some cookies to freeze and save for the Christmas Cookie Potluck on December 21!)



NEW! — Find Perfect Holiday Gifts in our Beacon Bookstore!**Location:** Fuller Hall

Check out our Beacon Bookstore at the southwest corner of Fuller Hall this Sunday! We have a wide selection of books to make perfect gifts for every age. Does your family read *The Night Before Christmas* or *A Child's Christmas in Wales* on Christmas Eve? We have both, along with *The New Testament in Modern English*.

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.



Do you remember the beginning of Dylan Thomas' *A Child's Christmas*? "One Christmas was so much like another, in those years around the sea-town corner now and out of all sound except the distant speaking of the voices I sometimes hear a moment before sleep, that I can never remember whether it snowed for six days and six nights when I was twelve or whether it snowed for twelve days and twelve nights when I was six.

All the Christmases roll down toward the two-tongued sea, like a cold and headlong moon bundling down the sky that was our street; and they stop at the rim of the ice-edged fish-freezing waves, and I plunge my hands in the snow and bring out whatever I can find. In goes my hand into that wool-white bell-tongued ball of holidays resting at the rim of the carol-singing sea, and out come Mrs. Prothero and the firemen." For me, the long poem always brings back children fading toward bed after listening to Grandpa read and watching Christmas lights on the tree.

Maybe your sister would enjoy a book of Rainer Maria Rilke's poems, or a meditative essays, or a Unitarian hymnal? Perhaps it's a stocking stuffer mug with a "Love" chalice on the front? We have a number of Thich Nhat Hanh books arriving this week, and a number of other thoughtful books that might be perfect for friends. The 15- or 16-year-olds on your list might enjoy the *Heartstopper* graphic novels (multi-award-winning British series on Netflix).

We are still able to order many things to arrive before Sunday, December 21, so you can pick them up before Christmas. It doesn't need to be a title we would normally carry – maybe a special cookbook or novel or the new book out about the history of the Girl Scouts (*Intrepid Girls*) – we can probably get it for you. Remember that we are one of your little local independent bookstores!

Thank you for being our loyal customers!

Featured News

Message from the Music Ministry Transition Team

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

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

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](#)

THIS WEEKEND — 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

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

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 Coalition](#)

(PIRC), a statewide organization that supports immigrant 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.

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!

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

Eliot Institute Winter Camp

December 28 - January 1

Location: Hood Canal

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 14 Newsletter

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

Dear Learning Community,

Everyone is invited to attend the K-1 pageant directly after the service in Eliot Chapel. Please join us for this fun tradition.

For our 2nd-12th graders, rehearsals will continue for the all-church Christmas Pageant on December 21 under the able leadership of director Rhionne Morris. Preschool-1st grade children will be included too during the actual pageant! Families should attend the pageant and listen during the service for some

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

P.S. No Parenting Circle this month; save the date for January 11th!...[MORE](#)

Social Justice

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

NEW! — Don't Attack Venezuela

This Sunday, December 14, during social hour

Location: Fuller Hall

[Peace Action Group](#)



As the US moves closer and closer to taking military action against Venezuela, we need to voice opposition to such military action. Visit the Peace Action Group table during Social Hour and pick up a Peace button with the word Venezuela on it. Remember "Don't Attack Venezuela."

Potluck and Learning Opportunity

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

Location: SW Portland

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

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

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.](#)

UPDATED — Last Chance to Donate to Avalon Village
Sundays, December 14 and 21, during social hour
Location: COHHO table

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

We thank those of you who have already signed up to participate in our holiday gift drive for WeShine's [Avalon Village](#) residents.



There are still requested items for several villagers and the village community itself that need to be purchased. If you would like to help fulfill their wishes, please [email Cynthia S.](#) by **December 13.**

COHHO elves will collect the gifts after the services on December 14 and 21. Please join us in helping to make this holiday season special for the residents at Avalon Village!

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,

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.



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 protect our guests from the cold:

- 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](#).

UPDATED — Food Insecurity During the Holidays

Location: COHHO bins in Fuller Hall

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



Even before the recent government shutdown, our systems were straining. When SNAP payments halted, thousands of neighbors suddenly lost the support they were told they could rely on. It was a stark reminder: federal

systems can falter, but our community continues to care for one another. Each month brings new challenges for neighbors simply trying to keep food on the table.

At this year-end giving season, we invite you to consider the following... your generosity keeps food at the center for food-insecure neighbors. When you give, you're doing much more than filling a pantry shelf. You're helping to strengthen someone's health, to stabilize someone's housing, and to build someone's

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

What and how can you give? 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 this especially challenging holiday season, 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

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.

Kings Return is a four-piece a cappella group known for their diverse sound, blending R&B, jazz, gospel, and pop. They aim to give back to their communities. To listen to their performance of Sam Cooke's "A Change is Gonna Come," 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 is hoping to move to a rehab facility after

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

hold Julie as she takes this next step on her healing journey.

We hold member Theo Harper who had a hip replacement surgery scheduled today.

Member Lynne Bacon is making good recovery after knee replacement surgery last week.

Member Don Liedel is recovering from successful hip replacement surgery and is currently in a rehab facility. Don's spirits are good.

Pastoral Care Resources

- **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](#).
-

[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.



**November & December Art Wall Exhibition
Biennial Congregant Art Show**

Come down to Fuller Hall to see the talented artists we have in the

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

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

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.