



Thursday, December 18, 2025

Sunday, December 21

Sunday Worship at 10:15 a.m.

No RE classes or nursery care available. Please join us in the Sanctuary.

Social Hour: Fuller Hall after the service.

LIVESTREAM SERVICE

Winter Solstice: The Longest Night

[Rev. Thomas Disrud](#), Associate Minister



This Friday, December 19, at 7 p.m., you are invited to our special annual Winter Solstice service at the time of the shortest day and longest night of the year. Let us greet the arrival of winter, the season of chilly temperatures and darkness. At the same time, let us light candles to symbolize the

returning of the light in anticipation of a warmer season.

Our **Labyrinth** will be available to walk before and after the service in Buchan Hall. Following the service we will light a **Bonfire** (weather permitting) in the Buchan Courtyard and enjoy refreshments.



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



Annual Christmas Pageant

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

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



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

For over 100 years, the Pageant has been a beloved annual tradition here at First Unitarian. 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!

[ORDER OF SERVICE](#)

Christmas Eve Services

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



Merry Christmas Eve! All are welcome to our candle lighting & carols services at **5 p.m. and 8 p.m. on December 24**. Come, let us sing, let us share in story, and let us usher in the joy and meaning of the holiday together. Our 5 p.m. service will be geared more towards families, but our 8 p.m. service is open to all ages as

well.

Holiday Guide

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

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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

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

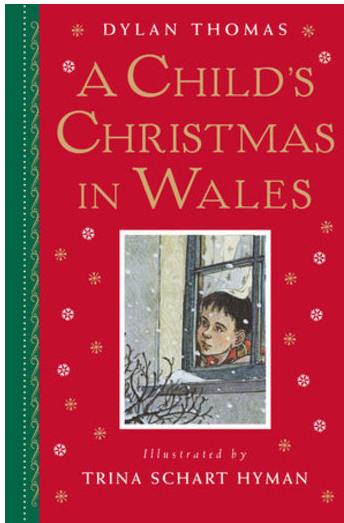
[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

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

See you for a fun-filled day!

UPDATED — 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*.

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 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).

You'll find something for each book person on your list. Thank you

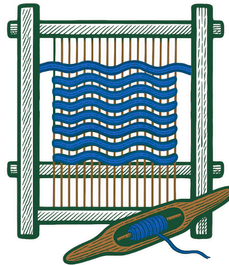
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Featured News

NEW! — We Need Your Pledge!

Deep gratitude goes to everyone who has Pledged a gift for 2026 and for everyone who participated in our special Celebration Sunday service last month.

85%



The generosity of this congregation has **helped us raise 85% of our goal!** These vital resources will be used to keep the church healthy and active for the coming year.

- 🎯 Total Goal: \$1,475,000
- 🌈 Pledges & Gifts So Far: \$1,256,535
- 👉 Number of Donors: 521

If you haven't yet Pledged, we hope you will before the New Year. This will allow us to fulfill the financial commitments our community has planned for in 2026.

Help us raise an additional \$230,000 by getting your Pledge in before the New Year!

Pledge Now

NEW! — Grief Group

Wednesdays, January 14 and 28, and February 11 and 25, 2 - 3:30 p.m.

Location: Channing Room

[Lay Ministry](#)

If you are grieving the death of a person in your life, you are invited to join a new Grief Group offered by Lay Ministry. The group will meet in person on Wednesday, January 14 and 28, February 11 and 25 in the Channing Room from 2 - 3:30 p.m.

Registration is required and can be found [here on our website](#).

Group is limited to 8.

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

NEW! — First Steps Class on January 4

Sunday, January 4, 11:45 a.m.

Location: Channing Room

Please join us for the next First Steps tour and orientation to First Unitarian Portland on January 4 at 11:45 a.m. We will meet in Channing Room A101 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.

If you need directions on location of the room, stop by the Welcome Desk or First Connections table or ask anyone wearing a rainbow lanyard. They will happily guide you.

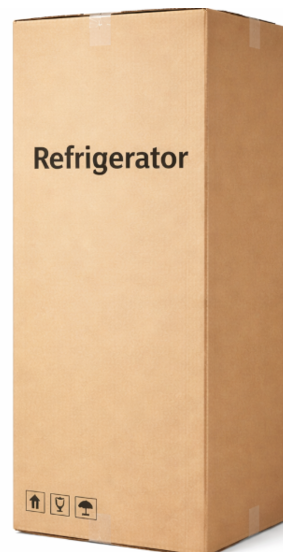
Around the Church

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!



NEW! — RE Needs Big Empty Boxes

Our K-1st grade RE class is creating a village of designed and decorated cardboard boxes big enough for children to play in. Appliance sized or similar is perfect. If you have one or more to donate, please bring to room A200 on Sunday mornings.



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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 21 & 28 Newsletter

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

Dear Learning Community,

Welcome to the last LC e-news of 2025.

Our much beloved annual Christmas Pageant is in the main sanctuary this Sunday at 10:15! If you like, bring a plate of cookies to share. Be sure to stay for a warm beverage, conversation, and a treat directly following the service.

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Any child who attends is welcome to join us on the chancel for a no-rehearse role. Just listen along and we'll tell you what to do.

If you already have a role, you should have gotten an email with a 9 am call time and other information. Let me know ASAP if you didn't get it!...[MORE](#)

Social Justice

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

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 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](#).

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

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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 sense of community.

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.

"We are the Jerusalem Youth Chorus: Palestinians and Israelis raising our voices to push back against the violence surrounding us—to reject war, occupation, and terror, and instead sing out for peace, justice, inclusion, and equality. We don't all share the same opinions—and have hard conversations about them every week—but we do share the same future, no matter what the politicians say. In JYC we have a rare chance to truly hear each other, and that's what makes the chorus a home for all of us." To listen to

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In the Community

Community Milestones, Joys, and Sorrows

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

Former member David Dierdorff died on December 5. He and wife Madeleine Lefebvre, who were both active with this congregation along with several other UU churches and fellowships throughout the PNW, were living in a retirement community in Spokane near his children and grandchildren.

Ryan Doppelmayer, DRE at our congregation in Eugene and long time leader in UU RE at the continental level, died this past week after a long journey with cancer. She left us with these words: "I'm hoping to leave the world with a little more love in it. If I know I have added a little more love, justice, joy, and learning, it will have been a good life...Life can be hard and painful and for too many it is too short, but it is also beautiful."

An update on Steve Kelley who continues his recovery from emergency heart surgery: his sister stayed with him in his apartment for the first week and he is continuing his recovery staying with family in Bellevue where he plans to remain until later this month. He says he is spending my time resting, taking short walks and recovering. He thanks the congregation for our continued thoughts and prayers.

And an update on member Theo Harper who had hip replacement surgery this week: Theo is making good progress although he reports the recovery from this second hip replacement has been a little more difficult than the first. We wish him continued progress.

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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](#).



Say it with flowers!

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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 congregation during November and December!

Artists participating or purchasing art in the congregant show need to pick up their art by Sunday, December 28. If you need to make other arrangements, contact Joanne at 503-997-7751.

Front Steps Deadline Change for Christmas

All submissions for next week's Front Steps are due by **this Monday at 1 p.m.** 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.

Got something for Front Steps? Send in your church-related submission for our weekly publication. [Submit it here](#) (preferred)

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

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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