



Our spiritual practice for September is **Building Belonging**.

*“One of the most important things you can do on this earth
is to let people know they are not alone.”*

~ Shannon L. Alder

Sunday, September 7, 2025

“River of Life”

with Rev. Mary Gear and Rev. Sara Lewis

We gather to begin another congregational year with our traditional water communion service. Bring water from a place of importance to you, which could be close or far. We'll have water for everyone. We also recognize the beginning of a new school year for students of all ages. If you are a student, bring your backpack or briefcase or whatever you have to carry a token of our love for you.

At OUUC, masks are welcome and optional. Please join us online if you don't feel well.

Kindly put your cell phones into Airplane Mode to help us ensure a meaningful experience for all in attendance, onsite and online.

Hearing assistance devices are available in the sanctuary at the tech desk.

Prelude

Troy Fisher (he/him)

Morning Song

*Congregation &
OUUC Choir*

“I Believe in Someday”

Music: Joseph M. Martin,
incorporating: Peace Like a River

Welcome

Liz Clement

Chalice Lighting

Liz Clement

“The Spirit of Water” by Katie Sivani Gelfand

Opening Words

Rev. Mary Gear (she/her)

“Spirit of All Ages” by Rev. Amy Freedman

Opening Hymn

Congregation

“Swimming to the Other Side”

Words & Music: Pat Humphries

Ritual of Transition:

Rev. Sara Lewis (she/her)

Blessing of the Backpacks

& Rev. Mary Gear

Musical Interlude

Troy Fisher

Share the Plate Offering

Liz Clement

Offertory

OUUC Choir

“Sing It Again” (Song for Pete)

Words & Music: Joiah Longo

Ritual of Sharing from the Heart

Rev. Mary Gear

Prayerful Practice

Rev. Mary Gear

Musical Response

OUUC Choir

“Like a River In My Soul”

Traditional Spiritual / Arranged by Tim Osiek

Reading

Liz Clement

History of Water Communion

Homily: River of Life

Rev. Mary Gear

Musical Interlude

Troy Fisher

Water Communion Ritual

Rev. Mary Gear &

Rev. Sara Lewis

Closing Hymn

Congregation

“Coming Home”

Words & Music: Shari Woodbury,

arr. Yuki Kumamoto

Closing Words & Extinguishing the Chalice

Rev. Mary Gear

"All Rivers Run to the Sea" by Kayle Rice

Postlude

Troy Fisher

Reflection Questions:

- What does your water symbolize today?
- Are there bodies of water that are special to you or that inspire you?
- When have you felt parched? When has your thirst been quenched?

Next Sunday, Sept. 14, 2025, at 9 am (onsite only) & 10:45 am (online & onsite)

"Reconnection and Meaning" with Rev. Mary Gear

At this time in history, how do we reconnect to our values and what is important to us? How do we make meaning from what is happening to us, to others, and to the world? We explore these themes, and send the Transylvania pilgrims on their way with our blessing.

After-Service Forum on Sept. 14th, at 12:15 pm (onsite & online):

"Hope and Grief"

Join Rev. Mary & Rev. Sara for an overview of OUUC offerings this year to help us be together in challenging times.

All are invited to our Annual OUUC Picnic. It's next Saturday, September 13th at noon, at the Rose Garden shelter at Squaxin park. The picnic is a potluck, and there will be a zucchini bread competition. If you want to enter your best loaf of zucchini bread, please let Chloe know (MemberEngagement@ouuc.org). Carpooling to the picnic is encouraged. For any general picnic questions, contact Rev. Sara (DCFD@ouuc.org).

After-service forums start again next Sunday. Plan to join Rev. Mary and Rev. Sara after the 2nd service for a preview of what's planned for the new congregational year.

Find more details on these and other announcements in the Weekly Update:

<https://www.ouuc.org/weekly-update/>

Share the Plate Offering: Our Share the Plate organization for September and October is South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity:

South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity envisions a world where everyone has a decent place to live. Through community collaboration and a variety of programs and classes, they work to bring sustainable, affordable homeownership to those who need it. Seeking to put God's love into action, they bring people together to build homes, communities, and hope.

If you write a check, please note "PLEDGE" if it is a pledge payment. All other donations in the basket will benefit the Share the Plate program.

- Checks can be mailed to: 2306 East End St NW, Olympia, WA 98502
 - Donate online at: <https://onrealm.org/OUUC/give/offering>
 - Donate by text: Text "OUUC offering" to 73256 to give using your mobile device. Messages and data rates may apply. Message frequency varies. Text HELP to 73256 for help. Text STOP to 73256 to cancel.
-