

OUUC WEEKLY UPDATE

September 2nd 2025

Announcement deadline: 11:00 am Tuesday mornings

Sunday Worship September 7th

"River of Life" with Rev. Mary Gear & Rev. Sara Lewis **Water Communion & Blessing the Backpacks**

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.

**9:00 AM In-Person
Only**

**10:45 AM In-Person &
Online**

After-Service Forums will resume the following week, September 14th.

Join Online at 10:45am

Click here for Zoom

Meeting ID 873 210 124 | Passcode 2306

Click here for Youtube

Watch today's service live stream on Youtube

Dial in: +1 (253) 205-0468

Last Sunday's Service

"We Who Believe in Freedom" with Rev. Carol McKinley & Troy Fisher

Labor Day: a time to honor workers who provide the goods and services needed to keep society functioning. Many of those who were part of efforts to ensure workers' rights in the Pacific Northwest became an integral part of the larger struggle to ensure rights and freedom for all.

[Watch Last Sunday's Service Here](#)

[Find Last Week Order of Service Here](#)

Tiny Little News Show is Back!

Find out what is happening as the church year starts again.



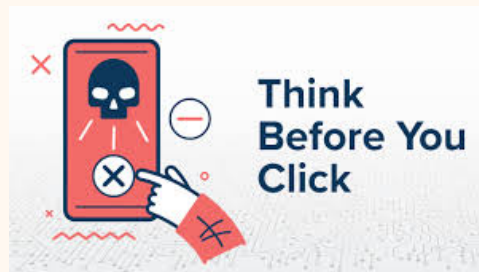
Important Community Updates



Bulbs & Battery Collection on September 7th

Welcome to September! The first Sunday of the month will be September 7th and the OUUC Environmental Action Team will be in the Commons eagerly waiting to receive your dead fluorescent light bulbs and batteries.

We will have information about our quarterly speaker, Heather Trim. Heather works with Zero Waste WA and will talk about plastics reduction and the WRAP Act on October 12th.



Beware of scams via email and text

Beware of periodic scammers via email and text. You may be contacted by scammers impersonating Rev. Mary or other church staff. Scammers also try to reach people via text. Often, they will ask for you to contact them right away, and they may ask for financial assistance/information or contact information of others at the church. Always double check and make sure the email or text was sent from a source you recognize. Scammers will create new addresses that appear like a known email address. When in doubt, check in with the person in your life who appears to be trying to contact you, using a known contact method.



Staff Away

Office Assistant Victoria Ridgway is away from the window through September 4th. She is still available by email and phone, but may take extra time to get back to your requests. In-person Office Hours remain the same



Zucchini Bread Bake Off at The Annual Picnic

Calling all bakers or bakers-at-heart! We will be doing a zucchini bread competition this year

with a special appearance by Ian Stephan Hammond in the window.

again at the annual picnic. If you would like to join in on the fun as a baker or as a judge, please reach out to Chloe at memberengagement@ouuc.org to sign up. We look forward to tasting all the yummy-ness!



B&G Shout out!

The summer work on the building and grounds is almost done! Over July and August we got our entire building and roof re-painted, new skylights installed in the Sanctuary, the water retention pond foliage cut back and cattails removed, and ground bark spread through the garden beds around the building. We hope that you appreciate the increased visibility of the sky, clouds, and rain through the clear skylights and the cleanliness and beauty (not to mention the improved weather resistance!) of the newly refreshed walls and roof. A special thanks to Brian Walsh, Jerald Dodson, Kent Canny and Joe Joy for cleaning out the upper swale that leads to the pond and Brian Walsh and Joe Joy for cleaning out two water catch basins to keep OUUC environmentally compliant for another year. If you would like to help to maintain our buildings and grounds whenever you are able, please reach out to Ian Stephan (officemanager@ouuc.org) or Don Melnick through Realm to be added to the team's email.



Peanut-free facility

One of our young ones has a severe peanut allergy and we are moving to become a peanut-free facility in response. This is one of the ways we take care of each other! Please do not bring any peanuts, peanut butter, or products that contain peanuts (including peanut oil) to OUUC. Thank you for helping keep our community safe for all.

This Week's Gatherings

Water Communion and Ingathering

Sun Sept 7, 9 am & 10:45 am
OUUC

We'll gather on September 7 to begin another congregational program year together! School begins, the rain begins, the church year begins.

Our spiritual theme for September is "Building Belonging." As we welcome a new year, we welcome each other and open our doors wide for everyone. As has been the tradition at OUUC and

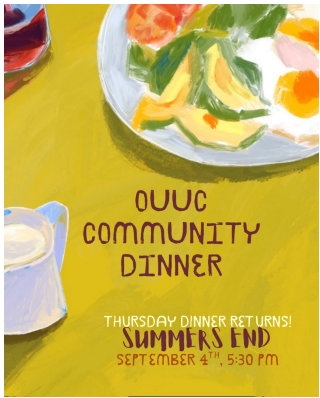


many UU congregations, we mark our ingathering with a water communion; we mingle water from our summer activities, and we build community once more. If you plan to attend in person, remember to bring water from someplace meaningful for you, which might be your home or backyard. We'll also have water available to symbolize your water.

If you plan to attend on-line or are unable to attend at all, you can drop a sample of your water off at OUUC. I've placed a box outside the front door for that purpose. We'll collect it and add it to the communal bowl on Sunday.

If you attend online, you can also have some water available that you can pour as you share its significance in the chat. Services are onsite only at 9 am and onsite or online at 10:45 am. We hope to see you on September 7!

Rev. Mary



Community Dinner: End of Summer

*Thu Sept 4, 5:30 pm
OUUC*

All are welcome for food and fellowship at 5:30pm at our weekly community dinner on Thursdays. This week's menu theme is "End of Summer". If you can volunteer to help cook starting at 3:30pm or set up tables at 4:30pm, or to clean up after at 7:30pm, please email Rev Sara at dcfd@ouuc.org



Blessing of the Backpacks

*Sun Sept 7, 9 am & 10:45 am
OUUC*

In the worship service on September 7th, we will have our annual Blessing of the Backpacks. If you are a student of any kind, please bring your backpack, briefcase, or bookbag to be blessed.



Parent Group

*Thu Sept 4, 6:30 pm
OUUC*

All who are parenting (in any way) are welcome to join the OUUC Parent Group on the 1st Thursday of each month at 6:30pm. We meet in person and on zoom. Email Rev. Sara at dcfd@ouuc.org to get the zoom link.



Quick Faith in Actions for the week of September 1st

Put your faith into action! Check out these quick impactful actions you can take from home to make change in our community, updated every week.

[Click here to get started!](#)

Upcoming Events



Soul Matters registration open now



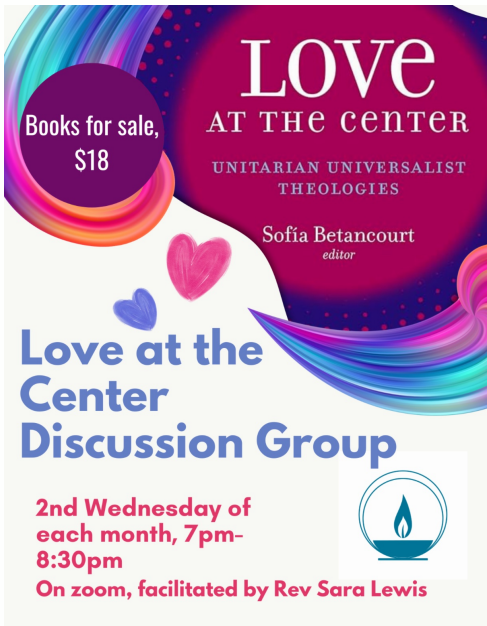
Nia Dance Tue Sept 9, 9:00am OUUC

Sense. Notice. Mindful.
Movement. Power. Barefoot.
Just a handful of words to describe the dance that is Nia. We're bringing Nia to the Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation this fall. OUUC is sponsoring the class and I'll be teaching. Join us! Every Tuesday from 9-10 a.m. starting September 9th. Cost: Donation
Bring a yoga mat, water bottle, wear comfortable workout clothing and be prepared to take off your shoes.
Get in. Be moved. Be you.

Soul Matters Groups meet monthly to explore our spiritual theme of the month through deep discussion and listening. We have one drop in group that is open to anyone, and closed groups with the same people meeting together each month. Register now for the closed group facilitated by Claudia McNeill on 3rd Wednesday of each month, 1-2:30pm [Register here](#)

OUUC Picnic Sat Sept 13, 12 pm Squaxin Park, Rose Garden

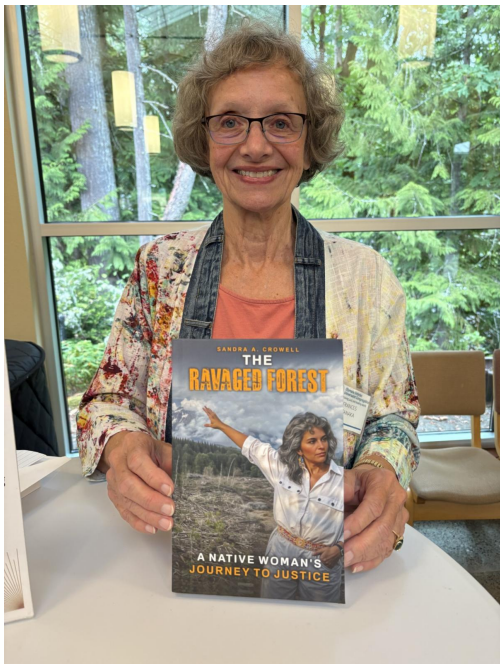
Join us for the OUUC Picnic at the Rose Garden shelter at Squaxin Park. It's a potluck (no peanuts please) and the 2nd Annual Zucchini Bread competition will return! Bring your best bread treat made with those late summer squashes for a chance to win a prize. Parking is limited, so carpooling is encouraged. What else to bring: reusable plates and cups, maybe a table cloth, lawn chairs, serving utensils, a card with the ingredients of your dish. Questions? Contact Rev Sara



Love at the Center Discussion Group Wed Sept 10, 7:00pm Online

All are welcome to join us for a discussion group around the book "Love at the Center"

UUs regularly re-examine our covenant and values, we do this work to live into the Unitarian Universalism of the future. Following Article II's adoption, it is clear that the value most describe as central to their faith, to their living, and to the mission of their congregations is love itself. Our pressing task now is to ask how this



OUUC Book Group Thu Sept 11, 6:30pm OUUC

The group will be meeting on the 2nd Thursday at OUUC at 6:30 (following the community dinner) beginning in September (skipping December). The meeting will also be multiplatform on zoom.

Our first book will be The Ravaged Forest by Sandra Crowell which tells the story of Helen Mitchell Sanders of the Chehalis tribe and her fight for justice for Native Americans who had been cheated out of receiving the full

understanding calls us forward, individually and collectively.

In these pages, you'll find personal testimony to love's power, reminders of the centrality of love throughout the long histories of Universalism and Unitarianism, and theologies of love drawn from many different expressions of Unitarian Universalism—from the natural world to the justice rally, to a loved one's deathbed, to the quiet moment before a worship service begins.

Monthly meetings will discuss 3 essays each session.

[Click Here to Register](#)

TRANSITIONS:

Finding Meaning and Spirit in Aging



Transitions: Finding Meaning & Spirit in Aging
Wed Sept 24, 3:00pm
Online

Where do we find meaning as we age? How does what matters to us change, and how does it remain the same? What is the spirit, the life-force that keeps us active and dynamic, that sustains and renews us?

This class will focus on these questions we face as we age. Each of us approaches aging as individual beings and may feel alone; yet we share the condition with everyone – our peers, those who came before us and those yet to come. In this way, we are profoundly connected.

The class format is based on that suggested by Bruce Marshall in his book, *In Later Years: Finding Meaning and Spirit in Aging*.

Led by Rev. Carol McKinley, Affiliated Community Minister
Via Zoom on Rev. Carol's account.

Wednesday Sep 24 – Friday Dec 12, 2025, 3-4:30pm [Register Here](#)

value of their forest land from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The author will be meeting with us in September to answer any questions you have.

Please share any book recommendations you have for October or November with Frances Tanaka.

Copies of *The Ravaged Forest* will be available to borrow or for purchase for \$20, contact Frances to get a copy.

[Click Here to Register](#)



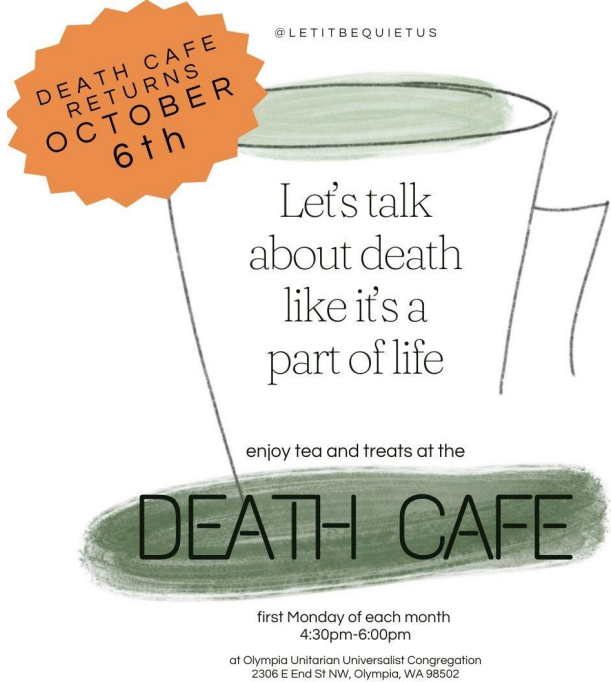
Worthy Now: A Harm Reduction program for UU Youth
Sun Sept 28, 1:30 pm
OUUC

Youth will explore the concept of harm reduction as it relates to a variety of possible harms (substance use, mental health needs, violence prevention, and more) and increase their skills around harm reduction and decision making. [Register here](#)



In this 8 week class children will explore the important subject of death. Learning will explore how change and loss are a part of life, that death is bodies stopping working, that grief and hurt are normal and OK, how important it is to find ways to say goodbye well and to remember the lost, and what sources of resiliency and healing are. This class tackles a big tough topic in an age appropriate way, and is appropriate for children who have experienced loss and for those who have not done so yet.

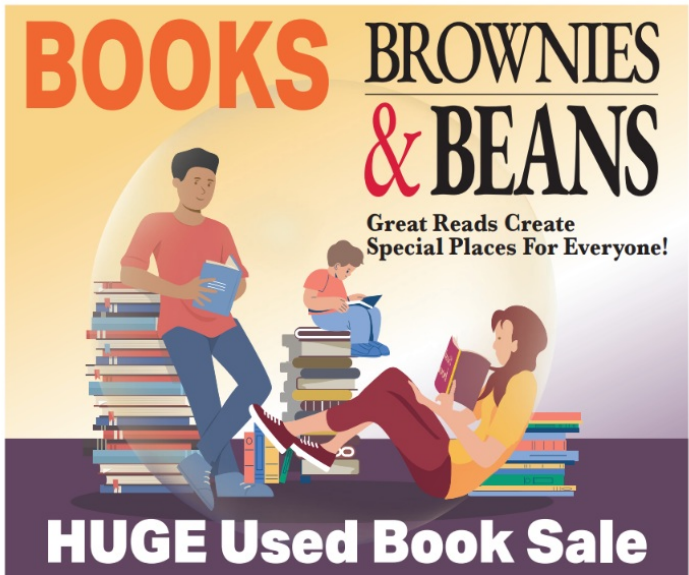
Suggested Donation of \$50-\$100.
Register here



Death Cafe

Mon Oct 6, 4:30 pm
OUUC

A group-led, open conversation about all things death and dying in a safe, confidential, and judgment-free space. Come share your thoughts, feelings, and experiences around death. All are welcome. Death Cafes are intended to be discussion groups rather than grief support/counseling. For more information contact Jenée Wolfram



22nd annual Books, Brownies & Beans Used Book Sale

Friday and Saturday, October 24th and 25th 9:00 am to 4:00 pm
OUUC

The Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation is preparing for its 22nd annual Books & Brownies & Beans (BBB) used book sale. Several thousand books are being collected and sorted.

The book sale will be both Friday and Saturday, October 24th and 25th. Friday is books only while Saturday will feature the book sale, brownies and beverages and musical entertainment.

Our goal is to raise funds for our three partner recipients - Community Youth Services, The Pink Haven Coalition and The Washington Coalition for Police Accountability - as well as to share our love for reading and learning, and to create an opportunity to make community connections.

Book donations can be dropped off at OUUC, 2306 East End Street or in the boxes located in various places around town. If you have books to donate but cannot get them to the church, please email Pam Davidson to arrange a pickup. Book donations will be accepted through mid-October.

If you do bring book donations to the church, please take them to classroom 4 and put them in

the rectangle on the floor marked with tape (please don't leave them in the Commons, hallway or in staff offices). Thank you!

Please help spread the word about the sale and join us! Every Sunday morning there will be one or two people in The Commons between services to sign up volunteers and answer questions about the book sale.

Please mark your calendars: October 24 and 25, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Ways To Get Involved



Help Wanted for Gregory Robinson's Celebration of Life

Fri Sept 26, 6:00 pm
OUUC

On Friday, Sept 26th, from 7-9 pm, we will celebrate the life of Gregory Robinson with stories, wine, and music. We are expecting about 100 people to fill The Commons, so lots of volunteers are needed. Set-up will start at 6 pm. Food should be delivered to the kitchen by 6:30 pm. Karmel has requested gluten-free cookies using recipes from <http://www.glutenfreepalate.com>. Gregory's favorite cookies were snickerdoodles, chocolate chunk, and ginger. Clean-up will start at approximately 9 pm. See below for the link to sign up to help. [Contact Melanie Ransom](#) with questions.

[Sign up here to volunteer](#)



*A Neighbor's
Independence
Depends On You*

September Faith in Action Digest

Here are collected opportunities for engaging with Faith in Action in September

**Faith In Action Digest
September 2025**



September Volunteer Newsletter

This year we will be creating a monthly newsletter for all volunteers at OUUC

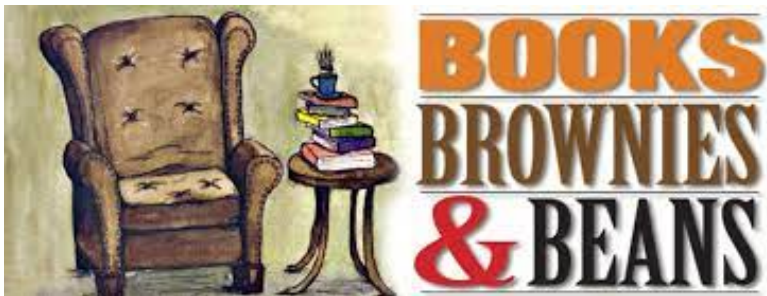
Check out the September edition by clicking here!



Coffee Hour Volunteers Needed

Our coffee hours are only possible through the help of volunteers who make the coffee, set everything up, and wash the dishes after.

[Sign Up Here To Help](#)

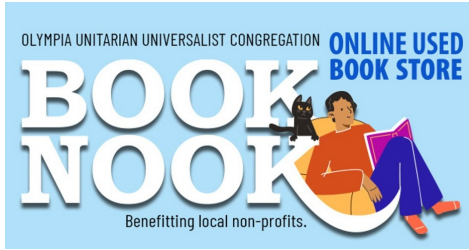


Books, Brownies & Beans Entertainment

Do you have a talent that you would like to show off in a low-key non-threatening environment? Do you sing, play a musical instrument, write poetry, tell funny jokes? We are looking for OUUC members and friends who would like to perform at the Books, Brownies & Beans sale on Saturday October 25 between 10 AM and 4 PM. Soloists and small combos are encouraged. Lots of time to prepare something if you want to. We anticipate having time slots

ranging from ten to thirty minutes, depending on what you want to do and how much time you need to do it. We are just starting to put together a roster of interested participants and will try to accommodate everyone who is interested. Will be finalizing a roster and schedule around the end of September or beginning of October.

If you are interested, please **email Karl Johnson**. Let them know what you plan to do, how much time you want, your preferred time of day, and how to reach you.



OUUC Book Nook

Book Nook, OUUC's new online used book store for all Olympia-area shoppers is now open 24/7 365 days a year! Shop/pay online and pick up in Olympia! All proceeds will be lovingly passed on to the Thurston County Food Bank, where our support is needed to keep the shelves stocked and the lights on! New items are added to Book Nook frequently, as community book donations are received. Visit Book Nook often for great reading, viewing, gift ideas, AND help feed families!

[Shop Now Here](#)
[Learn More Here](#)



OUUC Side with Love Shirt

Get ready to represent OUUC and Side with Love at gatherings and justice events by ordering your yellow T-Shirt ahead of time!

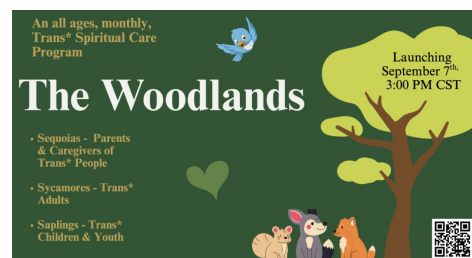
[Click Here to order your shirt](#)

Community Connections



Fellowship of Reconciliation Vigil for Peace
Fri Sept 5, 4:30
4th & Water Street, downtown Olympia

The Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice invites you to show your support for Palestine at the Fellowship of Reconciliation Vigil for Peace every Friday from 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm at Percival Landing 4th & Water Street, Downtown Olympia



The Woodlands: A Virtual Pastoral Care Program For Trans People Of All Ages
Sun Sept 7
Online

The Woodlands is a new monthly virtual pastoral care program for trans people and their families, launching September 7, 2025. Open to all ages, each gathering includes a shared grounding ritual, identity-affirming breakout rooms, and a closing reflection. With spaces for trans adults, youth, and caregivers, The Woodlands offers a sacred, supportive environment to process grief, share joy, and build resilient community. Sessions are chaplain-led and will take place on the first Sunday of each month through May 2026. [Learn more here](#)



UU Ministry for Earth Common
Read
Thurs Sept 11
Online

The UU Ministry for Earth 2025-26 Common Read begins in September! We will be reading "What if We Get it Right?" by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson. We can't wait to look toward an imaginative future for climate justice with you! We will be sending general reminders in our monthly newsletter and opportunities to connect with each other as we read along. **Sign up here to join the Common Read group email list.**

Fort Worden Camping Trip
Sep 22 - 25
Fort Worden Historical State Park

Let's go camping! Make connections in the congregation by sharing our love of nature, engaging in meaningful conversations, walking the trails and sitting around the campfire. Bring your tent, car, or RV- all are welcome! Sometimes we even rent cabins or yurts. Hike, bike, play board games, roast marshmallows, engage in other outdoor activities, or just hang-out. Join us on our next trip to Fort Worden on September 22nd. Sites are limited, so make your reservations soon! Contact Rich Kalman for more information,

Contact & Hours

Sunday Worship:
9:00 am (in-person only)
10:45 am (in-person and online)

Office Hours:
Tuesdays 10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Thursdays 10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Sundays 8:00 am - 2:00 pm

Phone: (360) 634-2005

Address:
2306 East End St NW
Olympia, WA 98502

Find us on the web:

Website: OUUC.org

Facebook: [@OlyUUC](https://www.facebook.com/OlyUUC)

Instagram: [@OlyUUC](https://www.instagram.com/OlyUUC)

YouTube: [@OlyUUC](https://www.youtube.com/OlyUUC)

Our Staff Team

Rev. Mary Gear,
Minister
minister@ouuc.org | ext. 101

Rev. Sara Lewis,
Director of Community
and Faith Development
DCFD@ouuc.org | ext. 102

Troy Fisher,
Music Director
musicdirector@ouuc.org

Isaac Ezra Jennings,
Finance Manager
FinanceManager@ouuc.org

Ian Stephan,
Office and Facilities Manager
OfficeManager@ouuc.org | ext. 103

Chloe Meyer,
Member Engagement Specialist
MemberEngagement@ouuc.org | ext. 104

Marie Arensmeyer,
Sexton
Sexton@ouuc.org | ext. 105

Victoria Ridgway,
Office Assistant
Office@ouuc.org | ext. 100

Anissa Bentlemsani,
Religious Education Assistant
REassistant@ouuc.org

Teresa Madsen,
Tech Coordinator
TechCoordinator@ouuc.org | ext. 106

Carbon Marshall,
Tech Specialist
TechSpecialist@ouuc.org



Try email & social marketing for free!