

FOCUS



Seeking Hope, Love, and Justice—Together in Community

The monthly newsletter from Hope Unitarian Church

VOL. 25, NO. 12 | DECEMBER 2019



DECEMBER'S THEME

Expectation

THIS MONTH AT HOPE



SING NOEL!

Sunday, Dec. 8, 2019

This year's Sing Noel! will be on Sunday, Dec. 8, at 11:00. The theme is "Peace and Justice." Join us for one of our most beloved annual events, as The Hope Singers and Hope Chim-ers, along with special guests Caitlin Norton-Rinck and Allyson Eskitch, perform favorite songs, old and new.

SUNDAY MORNINGS

ADULT FORUM: 10:00

SERVICE: 11:00

Childcare & Religious Education available from 9:45 until after the service

Breakfast on the Hill

9:00 a.m. the first Sunday of **most** months

Walking Meditation

9:00 a.m. the last Sunday of every month

Newcomer Orientation

After the service the first Sunday of every month in the Minister's Study

Invitation to Membership

After the service the third Sunday of every month

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• DECEMBER 24 •

Christmas Eve

Candlelight Service

6:00 PM

HOPE UNITARIAN CHURCH
8432 S. SHERIDAN ROAD
TULSA, OK



LET CHRISTMAS COME!

By Rev. Greg Stewart

*People, look east.
The time is near of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
Trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east:
Love, the guest, is on the way.*

CONTACT US

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Building/Office Hours:

Monday through Friday, 9
a.m. to 3 p.m.

www.hopeuu.org

It's still magic for me, this season I have celebrated for sixty-one years. I don't ever tire of twinkling lights and shining stars, bells and reindeer, ribbons and bows. I look forward to holiday greetings from total strangers, and to the smiles of children who smile "just because." I'm inspired by folks' generosity toward those on the streets or on the mend, and I simply cannot wait to sing the songs that tell an old, old story. Plus, there are now eggnog lattes at coffee shops. Can eggnog ice cream be far behind?

Yes, this season does all this for me and perhaps for you too. But mostly, this season humbles me like no other. "A little child shall lead them." Not the politicians, not Wall Street or Madison Avenue, not an all-powerful god or the one, true church. A baby, perhaps the most hopeful and hope-filled expression of divine love, comes to us with a message we've yet to embrace: "Peace on earth, good will to all." Not just the saved, not only the Christians, never just the liberals, and even the heretics.

My prayer for you this Christmas is this: amidst the twinkling lights and shining stars, when you hear bells ring and reindeer dance, and the ribbons and bows have fallen to the floor, that you experience perfect peace, the gift offered by a babe in a manger so long ago. Each day a child is born comes the prospect of peace. With every child's birth comes the promise that the Holy has not given up on us. Indeed, Love, the guest, is on the way.

The joy continues,

LET'S MEET UP!

I'd like to get to know you better. Consider making an individual appointment with me. Invite me to your committee meeting. Meet offsite for breakfast, for lunch, or for a walk in the park. Stop by the church during my office hours:

**Tuesday through Thursday
10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. or 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

I'm eager to see you!

NEWCOMER ORIENTATION

Our Newcomer Orientation is on the first Sunday of each month. Visitors who are new to Hope will be invited to join him in the Minister's Study right after the service to watch a short film about Unitarian Universalism and ask questions. On the third Sunday, we'll offer an Invitation to Membership to those who wish to join the church.

BOARD NEWS

By James Donovan, President of the Board of Trustees

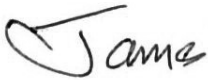
The Hope Board of Trustees greatly appreciates all of you who helped make the annual auction a success! It was a fun night. The trustees also want to formally welcome our Membership Coordinator, **Kate Hopkins**, to Hope. We hope that you'll soon have an opportunity to meet Kate and learn more about what she'll be doing in her new position at the church.

The Board of Trustees continues to work on some improvements to our building and grounds. Over the past year, our Vice-President for Finance and Planning, Rick Eagleton, has been working with a team of church members to diagnose the building's structural problems, mostly dealing with the roof and leaks. We have also been discussing making improvements to the parking lot and road.

The Board of Trustees is also working closely with our interim minister, Rev. Greg Stewart, to make this minister transition go smoothly. Rev. Greg and I meet at least once a month to discuss church issues. His experience with other churches is invaluable.

Our December Board of Trustees meeting will be held on December 17 at a location away from church and will really be a party with little or no church business conducted. After the holidays, our Board of Trustees work will intensify as we begin to work on the budget for the next church year, review church policies and procedures, evaluate the church committee structure, help with the pledge drive, and begin the minister search process. Stay tuned!

Happy Holidays, Hope friends!



News from the Nominating Committee

Greetings! This year's nominating committee consists of **Jo Ann Howse**, **Michael Simpson**, **Jaclyn Wertis**, and **Cate Potter**, and is chaired by **Ken Jones**. We are currently soliciting nominations for trustee and officer positions for next year's Board of Trustees. Nominees must be voting members of Hope Unitarian Church, be willing to attend Board meetings on the fourth Tuesday of every month, be able to exercise good judgement, and be fair and impartial to all. Please email or talk to one of us if you have someone in mind.

Thank you!



Top row, L-R: Joe Monroe, Deborah Whittaker, Guy Sims

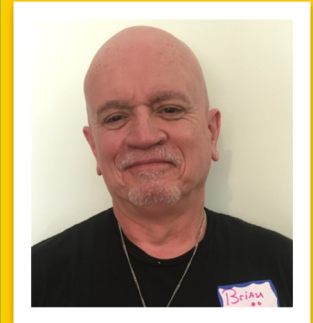
Bottom row, L-R: Carmen Kinsey, Mary Gardner, Joan Bjornsgaard

Meet the Transition Team!

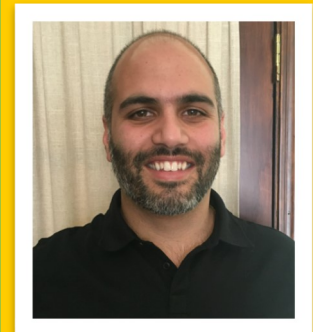
The Transition Team exists as a conduit between church members and the interim minister. The Transition Team also assists the interim minister with interim ministry projects and events. You are encouraged to go to team members with questions, concerns, and comments during this transitional time at Hope.

NEW MEMBERS

As of Sunday, Nov. 10, we have two new members. **Brian Cordova** has been visiting with us this fall, and even as a visitor has been getting the word out about Hope with his great Facebook photos.



Brian Cordova



Josef Dalaeli

Josef Dalaeli has also been a frequent visitor, and his son **Preston** is a welcome addition to CYRE.

If you see Josef or Brian at church, be sure to say hi!

DECEMBER'S GENEROSITY RECIPIENT



Hope's Generosity Recipient for December is Tulsa CARES. The mission of Tulsa CARES is to deliver social services to people affected by HIV/AIDS. Their goals include HIV treatment adherence, care coordination, reduction in HIV transmission, and a customized client care plan. Our speaker at Adult Forum on December 1 was **Kate Neary**, CEO of Tulsa CARES, as we recognized World AIDS Day, which is observed on December 1 each year.

Submitted by Lynn Walters

Are you receiving our email communications?

If you aren't receiving *Highlights, Focus*, or churchwide announcements by email, you might be missing out!

You can sign up for any of these on our website here:

<http://hopeuu.org/blog/newsletter/>

You can also call the church at **918.481.0999** or email us at hopeuu@hopeuu.org to be added to any of our email lists.

OUTREACH NEWS

By Mary Newman

Hope's Star Tree, Supporting Lindsey House

Hope's Star Tree is up in the Fellowship Hall decorated with paper stars, snowmen and other ornaments. Each ornament represents a gift on the Christmas wish list of members of the 12 families presently living at Lindsey House. Lindsey House provides long term shelter and supportive services to women caring for children, as they transition from homelessness.

Please help us fulfill all the Christmas wishes on their gift lists. This is how you can help:

- ☐ Choose an ornament from the tree
- ☐ Purchase the gift (All gift items should be new) by Sunday, December 15th
- ☐ Wrap it, attach the ornament to the gift securely, bring it back to Hope and place in the box provided.

There are three bicycles and one tricycle requested. We will be happy to accept donations of very gently used bicycles or a tricycle. Other than the bicycles all gift items should be new.

If you prefer to make a cash donation an Outreach member can shop for any stars left after Sunday, December 15th. There are envelopes on the tree for cash donations. Please write checks to Hope with "Star Tree" in the memo line.

Thank you for helping us make this a happy Christmas for the 12 moms and the 23 children presently living at Lindsey House. The children range in age from 2 months to 18 years.

DEADLINE FOR GIFTS: Sunday, December 15th.

Hope Bakers

On December 21st when we prepare our meal for the Day Center we will provide a



bag of homemade cookies for each client served that day. Please help by baking cookies and bringing them to the church by that date or beat the rush by baking now and putting them in our freezer. Just be sure to mark them as FTH cookies so they aren't mixed up with Hope's Sunday cookies. You can also bring cookies fresh on De-

cember 21st by 2:00 p.m. Please also join us that day at 2:30 pm if you would like to help sort and put the cookies in sacks decorated by Hope children.

Thank You

Thank you to Children's Religious Education for cutting out the beautiful stars, snowmen and other ornaments for Hope's Star Tree.

FEED THE HOMELESS

In November our Feed the Homeless crew served 138 plates at the Tulsa Day Center for the Homeless.

Joe Newman did the shopping on Friday, and **Maggie Scott** did Friday prep cooking. Cooking with Maggie on Saturday were **Brandy Morgan, Eddie Humphreys, Robert Billings**, and **Coe McGinley**. **Robert** also transported everything to Tulsa Day Center.

Servers included **Ryan and William Saylor; Gail Hawk; Marge Carrison; Janet Nobles; Anita Ward; Lisa, Chris, and Siannan Dunn;** and Chris's friend **Alex**.

Thanks to all of you for your hard work and dedication!

Our Feed the Homeless program is on the third Saturday of every month. Cooks meet at Hope at 2:30 to prepare the meal; servers meet at the Tulsa Day Center for the Homeless at 5:00 to serve. You can sign up in the green notebook at the church.

ACTION NOTES

By Anita Mills

Student Loan Debt

Over 44 million people owe more than \$1.5 trillion. The impact on students, new graduates, parents, and adults returning to school is staggering. The team's meetings with OK Rep. Melissa Provenzano led to a legislative study to consider a Student Borrower's Bill of Rights. You can see the presentation to Rep. Provenzano and Rep John Waldron at: <https://www.publicradiotulsa.org/post/tulsa-lawmakers-plan-push-student-loan-borrowers-bill-rights>.

If you have a story you'd like to share about how a debt collector has harassed you or a family member because of student loan debt, please contact ACTION at iaftulsa@gmail.com.

Criminal Justice Reform

Over 20 Court Observers were trained in partnership with Still She Rises and observed bail hearings every day through November 18. Observations of other hearings will continue through December. The team is observing and collecting data on how procedures and policies work in a variety of cases. Then they will be reporting our observations to Tulsa County District Attorney Steve Kunzweiler for the basis of further discussions.

Immigration Issues

The team is collaborating with immigrant-support and criminal justice reform organizations in our community to plan a county level accountability session for candidates, to be held next May. To find out how you can be involved, contact Kris King at iaftulsa@gmail.com.

Public Education Support

The team is responding to teachers' stories of the impact the lack of children's mental health services has in their classrooms, and on the ability of many children to learn. The team is talking with adminis-



trators and experts in childhood trauma to explore ways for children to get help and for teachers to be supported in the schools. Team members are meeting with their legislators to share our agenda of issues that need to be addressed in the upcoming legislative session.

The next Education Action Team meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, December 10, 2019, at 7 p.m.** at All Souls Unitarian Church, 2952 S. Peoria.

The next Strategy Team Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 3, 2019, at 7 p.m. Criminal Justice Action Team is starting to observe court proceedings for feedback to the District Attorney as to theory vs. practice. Observers are given court procedural checklists to fill out.

If you have questions or want more information on any of this, contact **Anita Mills** (anitam48@gmail.com).

COMING UP

Sing Noel! Dec. 8

Movie Night, Dec. 10

Lunch Bunch, Dec. 18

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, Dec. 24

December Birthdays

Lisa Dunn	5
Maggie Scott	9
Cate Potter	10
Susan Swatek	13
Eric Reiman	19
Jacci Hamilton	22
Brandy Morgan	22
Anita Ward	22
Sherrill Womeldorff	22
Mary Newman	31

CARE TEAM CORNER

10 WAYS TO DEAL WITH THE HOLIDAY BLUES

1. Feel your feelings. The only way out is through.
2. Open up to others. You don't have to face this alone.
3. Meditate to quiet the thoughts that torment you.
4. Start a new holiday tradition instead of focusing on what once was.
5. Try light therapy to counter grey weather.
6. Make a gift. Creativity can be therapeutic.
7. Get moving. Exercise boosts endorphins.
8. Get outside, even if it's cold. Nature heals.
9. Treat yourself. A little self-care can go a long way.
10. Give to someone in need and get a helper's high.

Lori Deschene

DECEMBER EVENTS

Brown Bag Lunch meets every Thursday at 11:30
Join us for conversation and fellowship!

Thursday, Dec. 5

Women of Hope, 6 p.m. (Social Time); 6:30 p.m. (Dinner)
7:00 p.m. (Remembrances)

Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells... It's time for our annual Holiday Party! We'll begin the evening at 6:00pm. We'll dine at 6:30pm and continue the fun throughout the evening. We generally bring a gift for donation to a local Toy Fund. This year we ask you to select an additional ornament from our Outreach Holiday Tree in Fellowship Hall. We look forward to your company and your potluck contribution.

Bring a couple of dollars to share wine and some feminine hygiene products for the Tulsa Day Center.

—Deborah Whittaker, Anita Ward, Ada Galli

Sunday, Dec. 8

Sing Noel! 11 a.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 10

Threads of Hope, 11:30 a.m. in the Log Cabin



Happy Fall, Ya'll!!

Lion Brands Yarn started the [#HatNotHate anti-bullying campaign](#) last year by crocheting/knitting blue hats for school kids. This year we are going to make some for our children in RE. We hope you'll be able to join in! If you're unable to make it to our sessions, we will have a drop-off spot at the church where you can leave a hat.

No pattern? No problem! Lion Brand has plenty you can download free: <http://www.lionbrand.com/sale/hat-not-hate-patterns>

Movie Night, 7 p.m.

Our December movie is *A Christmas Story*. This 1983 movie has become an American classic. It follows the wintry exploits of a young Ralphie Parker, who spends most of his time dodging a bully and dreaming of his ideal Christmas gift, a Red Ryder BB gun. Ralphie is often at odds with his cranky dad, played by Darren McGavin, but is comforted by his mother, played by Melinda Dillon. Ralphie struggles to make it to Christmas Day with his glasses and his hopes intact. This is also the movie that gave us the famous/infamous leg lamp.



Come join us for an entertaining movie. We normally start a little after 7:00, and as always free soft drinks and pop corn are provided.

Wednesday, Dec. 18

Lunch Bunch, 11:30 a.m.

In December, the Hope Lunch Bunch will meet at the Philbrook Art Museum La Villa restaurant for a special Holiday lunch on Wednesday, December 18, at 11:30. Because reservations must be made early with space for only 8 of us, be sure to contact **Lynn Walters** as soon as possible.

Saturday, Dec. 21

Feed the Homeless, 2:30 p.m. (cooking) 5:00 p.m. (serving)

Tuesday, Dec. 24

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 1

New Year's Day Hike

Join some of your Hope friends and others at the Annual New Year's Day Hike at the Turkey Mountain Urban Wilderness Area at 6850 S. Elwood Ave. We will meet at the Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep statue near the parking lot at 10 a.m. on January 1. The hike should take about an hour and a half. You can choose to take a difficult, intermediate, or easy hike.

For more information, contact **James Donovan** at board-president@hopeuu.org.



New T-shirts!

Attention all Hope T-shirt lovers! The Membership Committee is selling long-sleeved Hope t-shirts in new colors for the season, like heather red and green, in a variety of sizes from small to XXXL. A new supply of tie-dyed t-shirts will be on sale as well!

SUNDAYS THIS MONTH AT HOPE

SUNDAY, DEC. 1

9:00 Breakfast on the Hill
10:00 Adult Forum: Generosity Recipient—
Tulsa CARES

11:00 Sermon: Beyond Belief (Rev. Greg Stewart)
Perhaps some of your family, friends, and neighbors think Unitarian Universalism is simply beyond belief. They are correct. Imagine a religious faith that puts its faith in you, a faith where your questions will be answered and your answers will be questioned. There'd only one that I know of, and it is ours. During this season of expectation, come and find out why this is so. It's truly beyond belief!

12:15 Newcomer Orientation

SUNDAY, DEC. 8

Cereal Sunday

11:00 Sing Noel!

SUNDAY, DEC. 15

10:00 Intergenerational Program: Circle of Trees

11:00 Sermon: Love and Death (Rev. Greg Stewart)

"The one thing that can't be taken from us, even by death, is the love we give away before we go." So says the late Rev. Forrest Church, senior minister of the Church of All Souls (Unitarian Universalist) in New York City for 28 years. Based on Church's work by the same name, this sermon considers death as a beginning and love as a way of life. When it comes to love and death, what are you expecting?

12:15 Invitation to Membership

SUNDAY, DEC. 22

10:00 Adult Forum: Green Burial

11:00 Sermon: Christmas for Skeptics (Rev. Greg Stewart)

I'll admit it: my skepticism really kicks in at Christmas. So much of the Christmas saga is simply beyond belief, with unreasonable expectations. What if I told you that Christmas is truly a holiday for skeptics, created by ancients who sought to question rather than to answer the reason for the season? That's exactly what I'll explain.

SUNDAY, DEC. 29

9:00 Walking Meditation

10:00 UU Common Read

Sermon: A Family Thanksgiving Celebration, led by Hope's Youth. Our Youth will conduct the entire service (with some help from the choir). Please join us!

11:00 Goodbye 2019: An End-of-the-Year Burning Bowl Ceremony



A note about weather

As winter approaches, snow and ice may prevent traveling to church. In the event of inclement weather, we will send an all-church email if church services or events are cancelled. Be sure we have your correct email address! You can also check the Hope website, Facebook page, or voicemail message (918.481.0999), as well as local TV stations, if you think there's a chance we might cancel services or events. We want everyone to be safe!

FOCUS SUBMISSIONS

Send all submissions to hopeuu@hopeuu.org with "Focus" in the subject line. For the January *Focus*, the deadline is **December 20**.

Submissions may be made in the body of an email, or in Word or a similar text format. No PDFs, please. Please remember to keep the content short enough to fit on half a page or less within a newsletter. All content is subject to revision and formatting.

This month's contributors were **Larry Vandiver, Rev. Greg Stewart, James Donovan, Lynn Walters, Mary Newman, Deborah Whittaker, Cate Potter, Anita Ward, Guy Sims, Barb Witt, and Anita Mills**. Thanks to all of our terrific *Focus* contributors! It wouldn't exist without you.

KEY PERSON SCHEDULE

Dec. 2-8: David Lynn

Dec. 9-15: Sherrill W.

Dec. 16-22: Joe Monroe

Dec. 23-29: James Donovan

Please call the church to find out who is on key duty for your event.

Policy for function organizers

- First determine if someone attending your function can open the building.
- Find out if the church will be open/closed for another event at the same time as yours.
- If no one is available and you need entry, contact a Key Person or the church a few days in advance of the event.

Are you following us on Facebook?

We post events and other church news there, as well as photos and even an occasional video! We'd love to connect with you.

<https://www.facebook.com/HopeUnitarianChurch/>



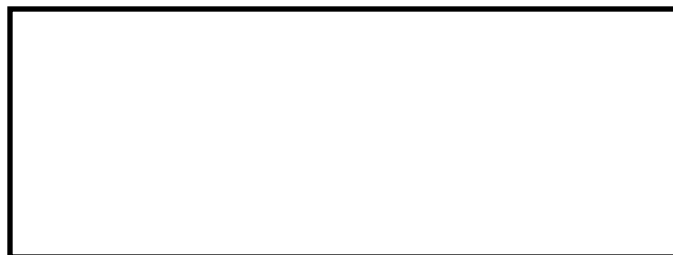


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Seeking Hope, Love, and Justice—Together in Community

FOCUS v. 25, no. 12, December 2019 by Hope Unitarian Church
8432 S. Sheridan Road, Tulsa OK 74133-4137

TO:



Hope Unitarian Church is an inclusive, affirming congregation.

2019–2020 BOARD MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES

James Donovan, President
Lee Ann Cole, President-Elect
Rick Eagleton, VP of Finance and Planning
Christy Levine, VP of Programs
Anita Wood, Treasurer
Joan Scheulen, Secretary
Cate Potter, Past President
Trustees: **Rick Paschal**, **Annie Simpson**,
Barbara Witt, **Brian Tolle**

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Susan Michael, **Michelle Steyve**, **Nora Potter**,
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HOPE UNITARIAN CHURCH

8432 S. Sheridan Road
Tulsa, OK 74133
(918) 481-0999
hopeuu@hopeuu.org
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December 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 7pm CYRE Com- mittee	3 7pm Programs Council	4 7pm Choir Re- hearsal	5 11:30am Brown Bag Lunch 6:00pm Women of Hope	6	7
8 11am SING NOEL!	9	10 11:30am Threads of Hope 7pm Movie Night	11	12 11:30am Brown Bag Lunch	13	14
15	16	17	18 Focus Deadline 11:30am Lunch Bunch	19 11:30am Brown Bag Lunch	20	21 Feed the Homeless
22	23	24 6pm Christmas Eve Service	25	26 11:30am Brown Bag Lunch	27	28
29	30	31				