

FOCUS



Seeking Hope, Love, and Justice—Together in Community

The monthly newsletter from Hope Unitarian Church

VOL. 26, NO. 4/5 | APRIL/MAY 2020



Dear Hope Family,

Given that Oklahoma's governor has started the opening of the state, I thought it was time to share my own thoughts on Hope's re-opening. Of course, we all want to meet together again. Of course, we're all a little stir-crazy. Others are out and about, convinced the coronavirus is no long-

er a threat. This is untrue; this could be deadly. Other states to open today are Alaska and Georgia. Is this the right move?

All the experts and a preponderance of scientific evidence says that moving too quickly will spread the virus widely, making control of the virus impossible. We learn more about coronavirus every day, with new and unusual symptoms popping up worldwide. With no vaccine, we make conscious choices about our lives every time we leave the house. This is real.

What about Hope Church? When can we return to the Hill?

Although we have not determined when in-person worship will again occur, I do know this: We take the health and lives of our staff and the membership seriously. We seek to do nothing that would jeopardize the health and well-being of our members, visitors, and friends. We'll reopen only when the scientists tell us we can, only when national, state, and local governments have common answers to the re-opening schedule. Only then will we begin the discernment process about reopening.

I am so grateful for every one of you. Please know this. Need help? Please [contact me](#). Don't forget about the Care Team (who could?). They are at the ready to minister to Hope's members, friends, and staff. Others in your church affinity groups may also be a good choice. Please reach out to the Hope family and remember that with this family, you need never to be alone.

The joy continues,

Missing Rev. Greg's sermons? You can see them every week on our Online Services page: <http://hopeuu.org/video-sermons/>

SUNDAY MORNINGS

SOCIAL HOUR: 9:00 on Zoom

ADULT FORUM: 10:00 on Zoom

SERVICE: 11:00 on hopeuu.org (<http://hopeuu.org/video-sermons/>)

CYRE: 11:00 on Facebook or Zoom

at your home

Breakfast ~~on the Hill~~
Whenever you make it

Walking Meditation
Also on your own (but see the [Care Team Corner](#) for resources)

IN THIS ISSUE

Letter from the Interim Minister [p. 1](#)

Music News [p. 3](#)

Board News [p. 3](#)

Outreach [p. 4](#)

CYRE [p. 5](#)

Birthdays [p. 5](#)

Programs [p. 5-6](#)

Care Team Corner [p. 7](#)

Sundays [p. 7](#)

CONTACT US

Pastoral Care

Rev. Greg: greg@hopeuu.org

Care Team:

careteam@hopeuu.org

Religious Education

Tennille Wilson:

tennille@hopeuu.org

Paige Clark:

youth@hopeuu.org

Childcare:

childcare@hopeuu.org

Music

Dr. Joseph Rivers:

joseph_rivers@hopeuu.org

Outreach

outreach@hopeuu.org

Board

boardpresident@hopeuu.org

Church Administration/ Office

hopeuu@hopeuu.org

918-481-0999

Building/Office Hours:

The building is currently CLOSED. If you have a church-related reason to get into the building, please contact the church office.

www.hopeuu.org

Letter from the VP of Finance

Friends, much has changed since I addressed you as VP Finance and as your friend in my letter to the membership of March 25, 2020, describing some of the actions the Church was taking to respond to the emerging effects of the still ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, for the last month, we all have been learning to adjust to our imposed isolation, learning how to connect with loved ones and friends, and, for some of us, having something I'd never heard of, a thing called a "Zoom Meeting." If you haven't had one yet, a computer service provides the technology for a group of folks to see and talk with each other pretty effectively, without ever leaving home. It's surprisingly easy.

Four centuries ago, René Descartes articulated a rule that goes something like this: "Each problem solved creates a rule, which serves afterwards to solve other problems." Following Descartes' rule, someone sitting in on a Zoom Meeting got the clever idea to start having "Zoom Happy Hours." If you haven't been in on one, I recommend them. These computer social hours fill a void, and we should all give thanks to Monsieur Descartes. I hope you are finding new ways to connect with your family and dear friends, if only to talk and share laughs. Surely, we need to talk and laugh more than ever.

This is undoubtedly the greatest health challenge our nation and the world have faced since the Spanish Flu of 1917-18, even with all the advances in medicine the last century has brought. The phrase "global community" has new meaning for us all. Over the last month, the nations of the earth have almost without exception issued orders to limit social engagement; citizens of the world have been told to stay at home, in hopes that new practice may limit the spread of this horrible disease. The world has changed in one month. We all know "from what"; we can't foretell "what to."

Our Church has changed, exploring ways to connect with members and fulfill our mission without being in proximity to each other. As we all have stayed at home, Leadership and Rev. Greg and staff have been coming up with creative ways to deliver video sermons, programming for our children and adults, beautiful music for our soul, and caregiving for our vulnerable, not to mention outreach for our community's most at-risk citizens.

Maybe in the future, this will all be normal; until March, 2020, it was not for us. We may all take pride in doing our part, being responsible citizens, and yet, no one really knows where this goes or who among us or our loved ones may be afflicted. This is a nervous, disorienting time, one when we need most the comfort and support of our Church community.

So let us remember that in a crisis, and this is a doozy, everyone grabs on to what is most dear, most comforting. And more and more, we are reminded that is Hope Unitarian Church, for so many of us. Hope Unitarian Church, as its name implies, gives hope to us. May we receive, with open arms, this gift, and may we together be reminded: We are going to get through this. Pinkie-promise, friends, we are going to get through this!

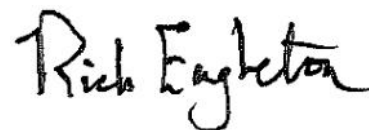
Because my term on the Board of Trustees expires soon, I should imagine this may be my last submission to the *Focus* for a while. In reflecting on how I might conclude these thoughts to you, I've considered the writings of some of the great Unitarian Universalists for some sentiment as would seem fitted to the moment, one when we stay at home, seeking strength and pondering the meaning of our lives. Faced with the magnitude of all this, I decided the moment justified reaching beyond the teachings of our tiny branch of the Protestant Tree to others—scholars, philosophers, or spiritual guides in history who spoke words of comfort to those in their time, words which might be useful to us now. Even with that, nothing seemed quite right, UNTIL

..... like a magnet, I was drawn for inspiration to a source, who first was not obvious but does seem to capture our moment in time, perfectly:

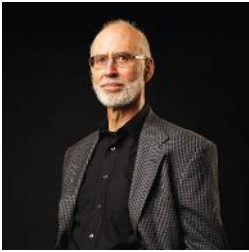
*Drive fast on empty streets,
with nothing in mind,
except falling in love
and not getting arrested.*

— Hunter S. Thompson, founder, *Gonzo Journalism*, 1988

May peace be with you and that you may receive the grace to find love and the fortune not to be arrested.



Rick Eagleton, VP Finance and Planning



Music News

By Dr. Joseph Rivers, Music Director

We have all been adjusting to a new reality of social (better, "physical") distancing that has resulted in the cancellation of Hope's services and programs for the immediate future. Hope Church, however, continues to offer sermons and readings online every Sunday morning. The cancellations, of course, also included choir rehearsals and performances. However, our newly refurbished concert grand Baldwin piano is back, and is waiting patiently for us for when we return. Meanwhile, Chris and I have been providing service music and special music as part of the online sermons and readings and as recorded worship offerings for our community to enjoy.

Of course, if we all lived closer, we could sing together from our windows as they have done courageously in Italy, and Chris could accompany us from another window!

Although we are facing uncertain and unsettling times, let us all stay safe, calm, and connected with one another in ways that we are able. In the meantime, we can especially take heart in the words written by UU musician David Glasgow that we sing every Sunday: "Give us strength to go down the winding road/Until we meet again. And our hope for you is a dream that's true/Until we meet again." We will yet sing these words again when we all next meet together on the summit of Hope Hill.

To hear music from Joseph and Chris, visit our **Music for Services** page: <http://hopeuu.org/music-for-services> Use the password **HopeFolks!** (case-sensitive, with the exclamation point).

Board News

By James Donovan, President of the Hope Board of Trustees

Letter from the President

Unfortunately, Covid-19 is still preventing us from being with each other in-person. However, we can continue to use Zoom and other technology to connect. Our Zoom Adult Forums have had 25 to 35 attendees and it has been a great way for us to all stay in touch!

The Board of Trustees continues to meet on Zoom. We have set the annual meeting of the congregation for **12:15 p.m. on Sunday, May 31, on Zoom**. If you are unable to use Zoom, you may call in. At the meeting, we will elect new officers and a trustee, approve our budget, and vote on a bylaws change that would reduce the number of our trustees from 11 to 9.

I want to give special thanks to our VP-Finance, **Rick Eagleton**, and our accountant, **Rebecca Jones**, for helping create a budget and keeping the church running. I also want to thank our VP-Programs, **Christy Levine**, for being a good friend and advisor and for doing so many things to support us all and keep us connected during this difficult time. Our church administrator, **Molly Brower**, also deserves our thanks for doing all that she does to keep the church in business! She has put in more hours and done more work than is expected of her! Brava, Molly!

Please contact me at boardpresident@hopeuu.org if you have any questions, comments, and/or suggestions.

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.

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/>



OFFICIAL NOTICE:

The Annual Meeting of the Hope Congregation will be held at 12:15pm on Sunday, May 31, 2020. Details will be shared later. Watch your *Highlights* newsletter and other church communications.

MAY'S GENEROSITY RECIPIENT

Our Generosity Recipient for May is Meals on Wheels (MOWS). MOWS delivers nutritious meals, does wellness checks and provides caring contact to elderly, disabled and homebound individuals in Tulsa and surrounding areas.

Many more seniors and other groups are now in need of emergency meals due to the COVID-19 crisis. According to the Tulsa World MOWS has tripled its clientele since Tulsa County confirmed its first coronavirus case.

MOWS is helping many more seniors sheltering in place, as well as families and individuals quarantined by positive coronavirus tests, first responders adversely affected by the disease and immigrants. Immigrant families are also being hit hard by this crisis. MOWS recently began dropping off bulk deliveries to churches in east Tulsa to aid Tulsa's Hispanic community. Their hope is to expand the deliveries to more churches on a weekly basis.

MOWS is using paid drivers to deliver a week's worth of frozen or shelf stable meals. Their volunteers now perform wellness checks and offer conversation over the phone, rather than making the deliveries and doing wellness checks in person.

MOWS will have a Zoom presentation at our virtual 10:00 am Adult Forum on Sunday, May 3rd.

Outreach News

by Mary Newman

March Generosity Recipient

Our March plate recipient was **Fransein House**, a new shelter and crisis stabilization unit for sexually trafficked girls and women. The March plate collection raised \$896.00 and with \$104.00 from the Fair Trade cart surplus a \$1000.00 check was sent to Tulsa Metropolitan Ministry towards the building of this facility.

Monthly Meal for the Day Center

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped with our monthly meal for the Day Center under difficult and unusual circumstances.



Mary Baird sewed face masks for the entire FTH team.

Anita Ward shopped for the food and supplies and also delivered the prepared meal.

Maggie Scott did the Friday pre-cooking.

Linda, Dave, and Ryan Tracy and **Taner McKee and Jordan Thomas** did the Saturday preparations and cooking.

Transition Team News *By Joan Bjornsgaard*



Hope's Transition Team wants to let everyone know we are here to help if you have a concern or are just needing support or to connect with our church community. The team is co-chaired by **Mary Gardner** and **Joan Bjornsgaard**, and members **Deborah Whittaker**, **Guy Sims** and **Carmen Kinsey**.

The role of the transition team is to first be a conduit between the minister and the congregation. Rev. Greg is available to contact directly if you prefer. All matters will be held in the strictest confidence.

Our task is also to support our interim minister and the ministry as we go through the transition to a settled minister. His role is to help us discover as a congregation, who we are, our strengths and weaknesses and the challenges we face to be a strong, healthy, vibrant and loving community.

Rev. Greg reminds us all that during this troubling, confusing and scary time, we may find ourselves being kind of "touchy" as we go through the ups and downs of this unique experience. He sees his role as interim minister to comfort us and make sure we have hope.

We need to remember our church is not the building but the people. We are all taking some great efforts to reach out and comfort members and friends. You have probably already received calls from the Care Team or Membership Committees trying to ensure we feel connected to our community. Rev. Greg is hand-writing letters to each of us.

He is also exploring different ways to make his connection with the community more intimate and immediate using zoom and other formats. He suggested a coffee hour and a happy hour with the minister, just to name a few. He is hopeful you are finding his informal fireside sermons to be relaxing and helpful to keep things relevant.

Children and Youth

By Paige Clark



Four of our youth, **Chris and Siannan Dunn and Eden and Kiri Simpson**, have completed their Coming of Age Rite of Passage! They put so much time, effort, and thought into writing their very own personal

statements of belief (known as a 'Credo', which translates to 'I believe' in Latin), and did an amazing job delivering them to our congregation themselves in our April 19th service. If you missed it or want to see it again, visit <http://hopeuu.org/sunday-april-19-coming-of-age-sunday/>. If you are prompted for a password, use **HopeFolks!** (case-sensitive, with the exclamation point). Please feel free to share your congratulations or a bit that inspired you with our Youth Director, **Paige Clark**, at youth@hopeuu.org and she'll be sure to pass them along to the youth!

The Oklahoma Center for Community and Justice's Annual Youth Interfaith Tour was supposed to take place on May 3rd but has been canceled due to COVID-19. Please stay tuned to hear whether it will be rescheduled or if Hope's Youth will do their own informal tour once it's safe to meet in person again. (UPDATE: OCCJ is going to do a virtual interfaith tour!) In the meantime, please enjoy [this article and lecture](#) (located at the bottom of the webpage) from the Interfaith Youth Corps and its founder, Eboo Patel. Or take some virtual tours to some of the world's most famous holy places like Hagia Sophia and St. Peter's Basilica [here!](#)

Movie Night (or Morning... or Afternoon...)

We can't meet together as we usually do to enjoy popcorn and movies together, but our wise movie guides, Larry Vandiver and Larry Sharp, have put together lists of their recommendations for movies to watch while you're staying in. Many of these are available on popular streaming services such as [Netflix](#), [Prime Video](#), or the TCM app (available on your smart TV if your cable subscription includes [Turner Classic Movies](#)).

From Larry Vandiver:

- The Shawshank Redemption*
- One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*
- Lawrence of Arabia*
- Rear Window*
- Forrest Gump*
- West Side Story*
- The Bridge Over the River Kwai*
- Dr. Strangelove*
- Saving Private Ryan*
- Rain Man*

From Larry Sharp:

- Casablanca*
- Pride and Prejudice* (Colin Firth)
- Lost Horizon*
- The Philadelphia Story*
- Indiscreet*
- The Thomas Crown Affair*
- The Manchurian Candidate*
- The Sting*
- Roman Holiday*
- Notting Hill*

April/May Birthdays

| | |
|-------------------|----------|
| Gary Fincher | April 1 |
| Eddie Humphreys | April 1 |
| Coe McGinley | April 2 |
| Carmen Kinsey | April 3 |
| Elizabeth Mosier | April 4 |
| Deborah Whittaker | April 6 |
| Lizzie Savage | April 13 |
| Daryl Mosier | April 16 |
| Helen Bordelon | April 24 |
| Ella Reiman | April 26 |
| Rick Paschal | May 9 |
| Lynn Walters | May 9 |
| Jarrett Dunn | May 11 |
| Gerald Carter | May 13 |
| Gail Hawk | May 14 |
| Ken Blenkarn | May 17 |
| Clint Haight | May 24 |
| Graham Carlile | May 27 |



An excellent movie to watch when you can't leave the house.

Garden and Grounds *By Julia Harris*

With a great planting day we have achieved a point to step back, put hands on hips, and say "mighty fine." I am so grateful for gardeners with skill who are willing to pitch in with their expertise and for volunteers who are willing to do whatever needs being done.

Many thanks to **Coe McGinley, Carmen Kinsey, Gail Hawk, Mary Newman, Lynn Walters, and Cathy Sleezer**, who dove into work around the church gardens Monday morning while **Nancy Hammill** worked along the drive wrestling honeysuckle. **Jim Sleezer** makes the scrub brush and vine piles mysteriously disappear to the green waste dump. **David Lynn's** earlier cutting of over 20 Bradford Pears and an enormous amount of work from **Anita and Jim Wood** with power tools and determination have made a terrific difference on the hill.

Here is a partial list of what has been accomplished this spring:

5 Virginia Sweetspire and 2 Spirea planted (donated by **Mary Newman**)

Two beds of beautiful tropical milkweed grown by Mary are now waiting for Monarchs

Lantana from **Mary** and Celosia from **Cathy Sleezer** are in to add color in front and back

Priscilla from **Cathy** was added to spots in the perennial garden that had been cleaned by **Coe and Gail**... and others.

A number of redbud, black cherry, and other small native trees have been liberated from honeysuckle, greenbriar, and poison ivy along the drive. There is much more fun to

be had there.

A major project in the Memorial Garden is under way with **Coe and Gail** cleaning out a bed of river rock, putting in new mulch, planting vinca, and adding Hellebores and Columbine to the bed. **Anita Ward, Paula Haight, and Meredith Miller** came along later and helped finish it up.

The front entrance is undergoing a facelift. The dreaded Monkey Grass is gone...over several stages...and the big flat rocks have been realigned more attractively. Hosta (divided from the back bed), Hellebores, and wild ginger have been added along the walk across from the pond, and Hosta and Japanese Fern have been added by the pond. More to come.

Janet and Gil came up to enjoy the Hill, Janet with trimmer in hand and Gil willing to dive into mowing. Many thanks.

The cement birdbath has been given a new home, and the tree stump it was hiding had rotted enough for Janet and Gil to clear it away.

We actually hired help for late winter cleanup which has freed us to do the more fun things.

We will need watering crews when the spring rains end. I am hoping that any one person would only need to come once a week and we can keep the areas small enough it will be fun.

I anticipate another focused day of work close to the time the church opens, adding summer color to replace pansies and making sure all is tidy for our grand opening. Everything that has been planted has been added with the thought of "who is going to take care of this?" I'm hoping for less maintenance work than in the past.

Women of Hope

May 7, 2020 6:30 p.m.

Please join the Women of Hope for fun and fellowship on Zoom!

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://tinyurl.com/y7zdr6wp>

Meeting ID: 956 0816 4604

Password: **2gether**

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,95608164604#,,1#,851224# US (San Jose)

+12532158782,,95608164604#,,1#,851224# US (Tacoma)

Dial by your location

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 956 0816 4604

Password: 851224

Face Masks

Many members of the Hope community have been sewing face masks for friends and family, and also to donate to those in need. We are collecting face masks to take along to the Day Center when we take our monthly meal (May 16). Look for the plastic box right outside the front door of the church. If you leave masks, please put them inside the plastic bag that's inside the box. Thank you to everyone for your contributions!

If you need instructions for mask-making, **Liz Mosier** recommends these:

<https://freesewing.org/blog/facemask-frenzy/>

<https://buttoncounter.com/2018/01/14/facemask-a-picture-tutorial/>

And **Janet Williamson** recommends this one:

<https://www.courierpress.com/story/news/2020/03/18/coronavirus-deaconess-ask-public-provide-medical-face-masks/2865273001/>

Sundays This Month at Hope



Online Services

See the **Online Services page** on our website (<http://hopeuu.org/video-sermons/>) for each Sunday's sermon, readings, and other elements of the service.

Music

See our **Music for Services page** (<http://hopeuu.org/music-for-services>) on Sunday morning for this week's music. The password for this page is **HopeFolks!** (case-sensitive, with the exclamation point at the end).

CYRE

Our children and youth are having their own virtual activities on Zoom. If your child or youth would like to participate (and isn't already), please contact our CYRE Direc-

tor, **Tennille Wilson** (tennille@hopeuu.org) or our Youth Director, **Paige Clark** (paige@hopeuu.org).

Social Hour/Adult Forum (Zoom)

Social Hour is at 9 a.m. every Sunday. Adult Forum starts at 10. The topic for Adult Forum will be in the weekly *Highlights* newsletter on Thursday and the Virtual Order of Service on Saturday.

Join the Zoom meeting here: <https://tinyurl.com/ya6t98t5> (we've shortened the link)

You can also log in to your Zoom account and use the Meeting ID: 957-662-501 with the password **Welcome!** (or **830230** if you are dialing in)

One tap mobile

+13462487799,,329968624# US (Houston)
+16699009128,,329968624# US (San Jose)

Dial by your location

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)
+1 253 215 8782 US
+1 301 715 8592 US
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/>

All in-person services and programs are cancelled until at least May 31, subject to extension.

While we are closed, we're having virtual programming online! Our offerings include inspiring music from **Joseph and Chris**; thoughtful sermons from **Rev. Greg**; lively Zoom-based Adult Forum programs; and CYRE activities from **Tennille and Paige**. Here's all the information you need to get to **Hope at Home** programming.

FOCUS SUBMISSIONS

Send all submissions to hopeuu@hopeuu.org with "Focus" in the subject line. Right now *Focus* publication is a little erratic, so just send what you can and we'll try to fit it in. Some items might fit better in our weekly newsletter, *Highlights*.

Submissions may be made in the body of an email, or in Word or a similar text format. 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 **Deborah Whittaker, Larry Vandiver, Larry Sharp, Julia Harris, Mary Newman, James Donovan, Dr. Joseph Rivers, and Rev. Greg Stewart**. Thanks to all of our terrific *Focus* contributors! It wouldn't exist without you.



Care Team Corner *By Deborah Whittaker*

Dear Church Family,

As we maintain our social distancing, the stress can wear on us. Being able to spend sometime outdoors is a pleasure. Walking meditation is a form of Mindfulness. It is simply being aware of the moment. No thoughts of the past or future, just the present, the now. The links below (courtesy of **Guy Sims**) will assist you in this practice. Each has a brief introduction. We hope this will bring you and your loved ones peace and relaxation.

Walking Meditation: Jack Kornfield
<https://jackkornfield.com/walking-meditation-2/>

Walking Meditation: Mindful.org
<https://www.mindful.org/walking-meditation/>



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

Seeking Hope, Love, and Justice—Together in Community

FOCUS v. 26, no. 4–5, April/May 2020 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
Joan Scheulen, Secretary
Cate Potter, Past President
 Trustees: **Rick Paschal**, **Annie Simpson**,
Barbara Witt, **Brian Tolle**



OUR STAFF

The Rev. Gregory Stewart, Interim Minister,
greg@hopeuu.org
Tennille Wilson, Director of Religious Education,
tennille@hopeuu.org
Dr. Joseph Rivers, Director of Music,
joseph.rivers@hopeuu.org
Molly Ives Brower, Church Administrator,
molly@hopeuu.org
Chris Powell, Pianist
Susan Michael, **Michelle Steyve**, **Nora Potter**,
 Childcare
Rebecca Jones, Accountant (off-site),
rebecca@hopeuu.org



HOPE UNITARIAN CHURCH

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

