

FOCUS

The monthly newsletter from Hope Unitarian Church



Seeking Hope, Love, and Justice—Together in Community

VOL. 27, NO. 1 | JANUARY 2021

JANUARY'S THEME

RACE MATTERS

This Month at Hope

In January, our theme is **Race Matters**. In Sunday services we'll explore race through the stories of some specific historical and contemporary figures, and we'll take a critical look at race matters in Unitarian Universalism. You'll find descriptions of the services on [p. 7](#). The Black Writers Reading Group will be reading *"Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?" and Other Conversations About Race*. If you'd like to join in for just this book or for monthly discussions, contact Molly (molly@hopeuu.org).

Also in January, Women of Hope will feature a presentation by Deborah Whittaker about the Oklahoma House of Representatives redistricting process, and we'll kick off our auction, with online registration opening up on the 4th. The Auction Committee has been working hard to deliver a new and fun experience for us, and they're excited to tell us about it in Adult Forum on the 24th! See [p. 6](#) for all the details.

Happy New Year to everyone in our Hope family!

SUNDAY MORNINGS ON ZOOM

SOCIAL HOUR: 8:45

ADULT FORUM: 10:00

SERVICE: 11:00

See [p. 7](#) for Zoom links, Meeting IDs, and Passcodes

Services are also streamed live to our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/HopeUnitarianChurch

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Calendar: Back (PDF version); Center (print version)

All in-person services and programs are cancelled until further notice.

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**.

PLEASE NOTE: Hope's building remains closed and staff continue to work from home. Groups of fewer than 10 people may reserve the back patio to meet, but must observe social distancing. **They may not enter the church building.**



A NEW YEAR OF INTERIM MINISTRY

Finally, it's the year 2021! I don't think I've ever looked forward to a new year like this one before. Oh, I'm not naïve. A simple change in date does not automatically eliminate the problems of the year previous. But I do think it renews our "can-do" spirit and energizes our will to never give up. It will surely be a year of change, no matter what! Remember, the only constant in life is change.

The Hope congregation knows this. We have compiled tons of data from the congregation: what qualities you are looking for your next settled minister, which traditions you hope to continue in the future,

which programs and events have outlived their shelf life, who Hope is now and who Hope wants to be in the future. We've determined Hope's sacred cows, Hope's golden moments, what members think of current lifespan religious education, social justice, worship, and music programs. All of this observation and analysis is available in writing; please contact me if you'd like copies of these documents.

What's the biggest thing we need to work on in the coming year? Acceptance of change. You're going to experience changes in the remainder of this church year (January 1–June 30) simply because many more will come with the arrival of your settled minister. It's also good to enliven the way we always done things by doing them differently. We need to trend younger in terms of Hope's membership to attract generations that are currently missing at Hope as well as to tend to the members who are already here and who contribute so much. Some of what Hope loves simply can't be sustained without an influx of new volunteers.

In other words, I'd rather be honoring our elders than to be asking them for yet one more favor. Talk about change!

I hope the new year changes you personally. We've learned a lot about what it means to be human as we make our ways through the pandemic. I hope your priorities have changed somewhat during this time of social isolation. I hope your circle of friends has expanded because we can no longer be in the same room. I hope spending more time with your children does not become only a temporary fix. I hope you'll value every breath, every touch, every kind word, and every smile. I hope you believe there is Hope in Tulsa!

The joy continues,

Interact with the Interim Minister

Rev. Greg is Here for You!

Office Hours (virtual or by appointment): Tuesday through Saturday, 8:30 a.m–4:30 p.m

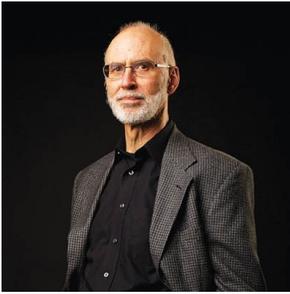
Sacred Day Off: Monday

On Call: For pastoral emergencies, 24/7

Appointments: Call Rev. Greg at (918)800-4803 to schedule

Social Times (on Zoom):
Thursday Cocktail Hour, 4:00–5:00 p.m.

Class Offered: Black Writers Book Group, second Tuesdays, 5:30 p.m. on Zoom



Music News

By Dr. Joseph Rivers, Music Director

In the New Year 2021, we say farewell to a very challenging year for all of us, but we also welcome a new year full of hope, opportunity, and possibility. While we will maintain our health protocols through this winter, there is yet light ahead as we continue to hold on to the values and

hope and express the music flowing from within us. We plan to continue the live-streamed services with piano music provided by **Chris Powell** and me, and with hymns and service music led by our generous volunteer singer, **Carol Young**. We are grateful for Carol's beautiful singing and hymn leading that have brightened our services and drawn us together in celebratory worship. The choir made its debut in virtual singing and recording for Sing Noel and Christmas Eve, and we will plan some additional singing/recording projects to share with the community during the next few months. We also expect to feature some guest musicians to add further diversity to our worship music.

Thus we will patiently keep doing "that one thing" that we can do, to make music for our community in safe and edifying ways. We can take heart that in the not too distant future, likely later in the year, we will all be able once more to make music together on Hope Hill.

Programs News

Programs Council Meeting

The Programs Council will have its quarterly meeting on Zoom on **Tuesday, Jan. 5**, at 7 p.m. Come find out what's going on with our programs and committees!

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94099890819?pwd=eHV6WDdDV1Z6VlJzZDRNTU5zWGRWQT09>

Meeting ID: 940 9989 0819

Passcode: 364816

Barb Witt

VP Programs

Welcoming Committee *By Joan Bjornsgaard*

The Welcoming Committee will be meeting **Sunday, Jan. 10** at 2 p.m. This committee plans events recognizing and uplifting the LGBTQIA community at Hope and the Tulsa area. We will be discussing plans for the April Day of Silence Adult Forum, which has been an active program in the schools through various Gay Straight Alliances. We have two former GSA sponsors who are Hope members. This committee is open to all. We are a diverse and colorful group. Come join the fun!!

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/98272294095?pwd=MU9oVkdqcUtwcG5tUC8zNnBvdGV4UT09>

Meeting ID: 982 7229 4095; Passcode: 388366



Eve Bjornsgaard, Welcoming Committee member and Hope's Technology Assistant

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

Technology Assistance

eve@hopeuu.org

(918)361-8444

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

January's Generosity Recipient

by Rich Jackson

Still She Rises

Our January Generosity recipient is [Still She Rises](#).

Still She Rises offers a holistic defense to indigent mothers by providing legal representation in criminal, family, and civil courts. The goal of the organization is to break the cycle of poverty and insecurity that so often correlates with legal problems.

Their work is broadened by having access to social workers, legal advocates, and investigators to ensure that clients have social support as well.

The moratorium on evictions will end January 1, 2021. Requests for help will rise significantly in the coming year.

To donate online to our Generosity recipient, go to www.hopeuu.org/Generosity

You can also mail a check to

**Hope Unitarian Church
PO Box 35284
Tulsa, OK 74153**

Please write "Generosity" in the memo line.

Outreach News

Monthly Meal for the Day Center

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped with our monthly meals for the Day Center in December!

Mary Baird and Anita Ward did the shopping, and **Maggie Scott** did the pre-cooking. **The Tracy family** did the cooking on Saturday, and **Mary** delivered the food to the Day Center.

Thanks to all those who brought cereal and donations, and to all our Feed the Homeless volunteers!

Cereal Days

This month's CEREAL DAYS will be **Friday, Jan. 15** from **10 a.m. to noon** and **Saturday, Jan. 16** from **2 to 4**. If you have cereal (no Cheerios, please) or other donations for the Tulsa Day Center for the Homeless, please bring them by at those times.

Our Cereal Days have been a huge success so far! Thank you for your generosity!

NEW!

You can now donate to Hope by texting *give* to **833-698-1348**. When you send your text, you'll receive a reply with a link to donate. You can specify the fund you want to use ("Generosity," "Operating Fund," etc.) using the drop-down menu next to the amount.



Hope's Virtual Star Tree for 2020

The Star Tree was a tremendous success this year! Nearly all the gifts were claimed and fulfilled, and we also received a LOT of cash to complete our gift-buying and to give to Lindsey House as part of our December Generosity gift.

Lynn Walter, Mary Baird, and Matt Baird delivered the gifts to Lindsey House on Monday, Dec. 21 after doing some creative car-loading: our collection included a bike as well as some other large items in boxes and bags.

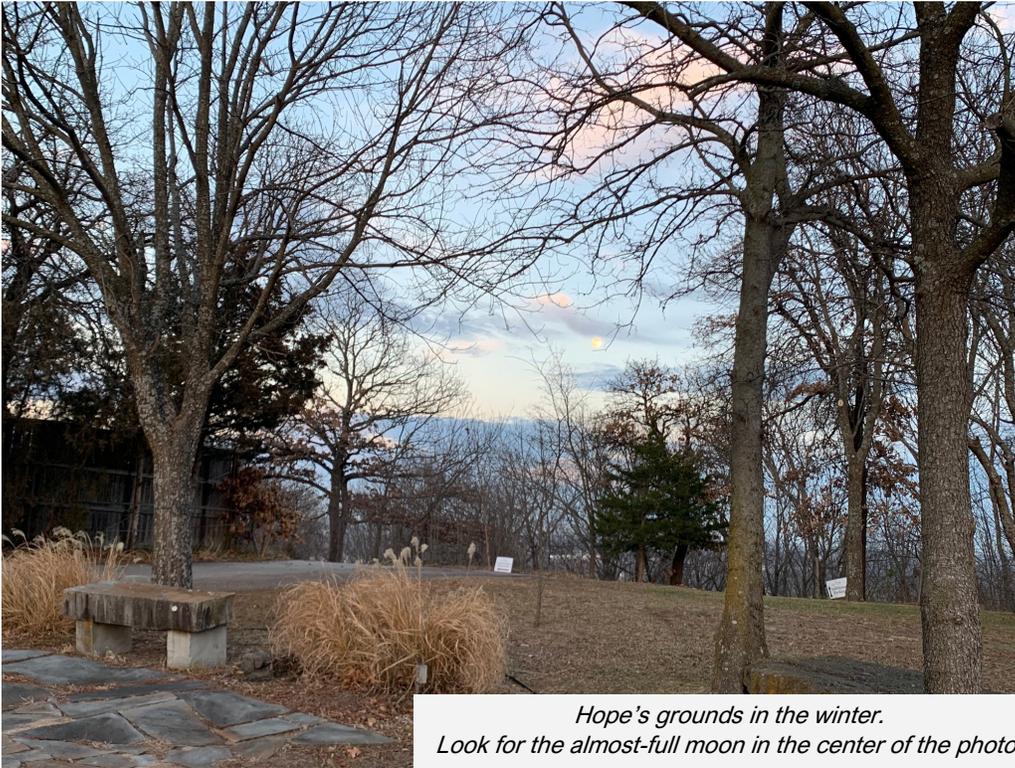
Thank you to everyone who donated gifts, money, and time to this very worthy cause, and to the organizers on the Outreach Team who made it happen! The families at Lindsey House had a happier holiday because of you.



Lynn Walters stands by all of the beautifully wrapped and labeled gifts in the Fellowship Hall

Garden and Grounds *by Julia Harris*

Winter is a special time for walking in the woods, especially on our Hill. If you need company or a guide, let **Julia Harris** know at scotfiddle@aol.com. Someone from our Garden Team will be happy to give you a tour.



*Hope's grounds in the winter.
Look for the almost-full moon in the center of the photo.*

Care Team Corner *By Deborah Whittaker*

The needs that have grown in our families, community, and the world over the last year are overwhelming. There's only so much we can do to alleviate the pain and trauma experienced by so many. Sometimes the smallest contacts we make can be transformative beyond our expectations. Consider making kindness the norm in your daily lives with these suggestions from the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation.

Happy World Kindness Day!

From the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation

We hope you're celebrating today by giving AND receiving a little extra kindness. It's a wonderful day to show the world how impactful kindness can be, so don't hold back!

Need ideas? Head over to [our website](#) and check out all the wonderful sharable images or read the blog post by our Vice President, Brooke Jones. Share the beautiful graphic that includes "7 Ways to Start Making Kindness the Norm in Your Daily Life".

Whatever you do today, do it with kindness!



See the back of the calendar (last page of the PDF or center page of the print version) to see this full-size!

January Birthdays

Noel Scott	1
Bettina Larsen	2
Keith Hamilton	3
Pat McGinley	8
Lenny Hope	11
Larry Vandiver	12
Elke Goodman	14
Russell Muzika	20
Jay D. Stewart	25
Rebecca Jones	26
Barbara Witt	26
James Donovan	26

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/>



January Events



WOMEN OF HOPE
Thursday, Jan. 7
7:00 p.m. on Zoom

Redistricting 101:
Learn the basics of the Oklahoma House redistricting process.

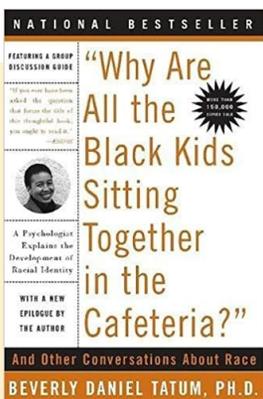
Women of Hope

Thursday, Jan. 7, 7:00 p.m. on Zoom

Redistricting 101: *Learn the basics of the Oklahoma House redistricting process.*

We tend to put a lot of significance in the changing of the calendar year. More often it's looked to as a means to make things better. After an intense 2020, one way is to engage in support of continued fairness in our elections. Join us Thursday evening, January, 7 at 7:00pm. We'll gather via Zoom for a brief presentation by Deborah Whittaker. Hope to see you all there.

Zoom link: www.hopeuu.org/WomenOfHope (Meeting ID: 913 8568 9368; Passcode: 576764)



Black Writers Reading Group

Tuesday, Jan. 12, 5:30 p.m. on Zoom

Rev. Greg's Black Writers Reading Group kicks off the new year with "*Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?*": *And Other Conversations About Race*, Beverly Daniel Tatum

This group meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 5:30, and you can still join, or just drop in occasionally. Contact **Molly** (molly@hopeuu.org) if you'd like to be involved.

Cocktail Hour with Rev. Greg

4:00 p.m. every Thursday on Zoom

Join Rev. Greg and your Hope friends for a lively talk before you start your evening. Bring along your favorite libation and meet us on Zoom!

Zoom link: www.hopeuu.org/CoffeeHour

(Meeting ID: 952 2971 4477; Passcode: 159899)

Hope Online Auction 2021



One of Hope's favorite events, the annual auction, will be weeklong and virtual. We need everyone's participation to make it a rousing success!

Dates to remember:

Monday, January 4: Bidder registration opens (\$10 per bidder). Link: <https://charityauction.bid/hopechurch2021>

First day to make donations (see below).

Sunday, January 24: Adult Forum with the Auction Committee

Thursday, February 25: Deadline for making donations.

Sunday Feb 28, 7 p.m.: Online auction kickoff on Zoom with MC James Donovan

Saturday March 6, 7 p.m.: Online auction closing celebration on Zoom, with entertainment and more!

The auction committee is working hard to simplify the process for you. As donor, you can post your own item on our auction site, or you can simply submit a donation form and we'll do it for you. Forms are available from **Rebecca Jones**, rebtax@cox.net. Your donated item can be picked up from you or you can deliver it to the church during preset days/times to be announced soon.

For your winning bids, pickup times and dates will be set, or you can pay a little extra and have contactless delivery to your home.

And yes, there will be a virtual gift card pull!

We are still working on this new process for our auction, so some details are subject to change. Be sure to attend the Adult Form on **January 24** for more information, including how to post your donations, bid on items, and more.

If you get stuck, **Eve Bjornsgaard**, technology assistant, will be available to assist you by calling **918-361-8444**.

More information will be coming in the next few weeks, so be sure to watch your weekly highlights and regular mail!

Auction Committee: **James Donovan** and **Rebecca Jones**, co-chairs

Joan Bjornsgaard, **Eve Bjornsgaard**, **Lee Ann Cole**, **Christy Levine**

Services This Month at Hope

Theme: Race Matters

1/3 – “If You Keep Silent”

Rev. Greg Stewart

This is the story of Esther, a Jewish woman who could not keep silent and hide her identity any longer. Even her husband, the king, does not know about her origins. What role did race play in ancient times? What can it teach us about race matters? Together, let's explore why Esther is relevant to Unitarian Universalists today.

Adult Forum: Still She Rises (Generosity Recipient)

1/10 – “Colorblind or Color Bound?”

Rev. Greg Stewart

Please join members of the Social Justice Committee and me as we take a critical look at race matters within Unitarian Universalism. Recent calls for an end to white supremacy within our movement seem to have fallen on sympathetic ears, yet our past work in this area has rendered meager results. I believe religious liberals have historically moved from being colorblind to being color bound in race matters. Together we'll explore what this means for both our church and our movement.

Adult Forum (9:45): Spirituality Workshop #2: Sing in My Heart: Celebrations and Rituals, hosted by Deborah Whittaker

1/17 – “Nathan McCall’s Dilemma”

Rev. Greg Stewart

You would never know by looking at him that the accomplished *Washington Post* columnist Nathan McCall had earned his journalism degree while serving time in prison. McCall easily fits our image of the Black Urban Professional. McCall didn't come from an impoverished inner-city neighborhood but grew up in a middle class African-American enclave that drew families of means away from the ghetto. How did being Black create a diversion from the path of success that McCall's parents sacrificially plotted for him? How did liberal white allies help or hinder the life choices he made? McCall's dilemma speaks positively to our own feelings of inadequacy in race matters, both within the Church and beyond its doors.

Adult Forum: TBA

1/24 – “Out of Many, One”

Rev. Greg Stewart

Religion, for many, presents one dualism after another: it's right or wrong, black or white, gay marriage or “traditional marriage,” Jesus or Buddha, Big Bang or Adam and Eve. Yet a dualist worldview no longer squares with the world itself. In fact, to live among nature's unity while interpreting it dually creates a life out of balance. At least that is what the Ogala Sioux say and they should know: America's dualistic fervor changed their life of freedom into one of servitude. What the Ogala Sioux have learned about Nature's Way can inform our own responses to the dualist mold we are often pressed into by others.

Adult Forum: Auction Committee

1/31 – TBA

Adult Forum: TBA

Online Services

The Zoom link for our Sunday services is

www.hopeuu.org/SundayService

NEW Meeting ID: 499751

Please note that the Meeting ID has changed. The Passcode is no longer required.

Services begin at 11 a.m.

You can visit past services at

www.hopeuu.org/OnlineServices

Social Hour: Now EVERY Sunday at 8:45!

www.hopeuu.org/SocialHour

Meeting ID: 925 1504 1841

Passcode: 739318

Adult Forum: 10 a.m. (9:45 on Jan. 10)

www.hopeuu.org/AdultForum

Meeting ID: 944 2766 5124

Passcode: 174446

Children's Church: 2:30 p.m.

www.hopeuu.org/ChildrensChurch

Meeting ID: 932 9801 6660

Passcode: 124851

ADULT FORUM

Spirituality-Spirit of Life #1, *Exploring Spirituality for UUs*, was a hit! Thank you for attending!

#2, *Sing in My Heart: Celebrations and Rituals* will be January 10th, 9:45 to 10:45.

Hosted by: **Deborah Whittaker**

Happy Holiday to all!

Barb Witt

VP Programs

Having technical difficulties?

Contact our Technology Assistant, **Eve Bjornsgaard**. She can help you get set up on Zoom, no matter what kind of device you're using! If you need to host a Zoom meeting for your committee or team, she'll show you how. Email her at eve@hopeuu.org, or even better: text her at (918)361-8444.



8432 S. Sheridan Road
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 www.hopeuu.org

Seeking Hope, Love, and Justice—Together in Community

FOCUS v. 27, no. 1, January 2021 by Hope Unitarian Church
 8432 S. Sheridan Road, Tulsa OK 74133-4137

TO:



Hope Unitarian Church is an inclusive, affirming congregation.

2020–2021 Board Members and Trustees

Lee Ann Cole, President
Anita Mills, President-Elect
David Lynn, VP of Finance and Planning
Barbara Witt, VP of Programs
Judy Sims, Secretary
Elizabeth Obal, Treasurer
James Donovan, Past President
 Trustees: **Bettina Larsen**, **Brian Tolle**



Our Staff

The Rev. Gregory Stewart, Interim Minister
Tennille Wilson, Director of Religious Education
Paige Clark, Youth Director
Dr. Joseph Rivers, Director of Music
Molly Ives Brower, Church Administrator
Eve Bjornsgaard, Technology Assistant
Chris Powell, Pianist
Susan Michael, Michelle Steyve, Nora Potter,
 Childcare
Rebecca Jones, Accountant (off-site)



HOPE UNITARIAN CHURCH

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 hopeuu@hopeuu.org
 www.hopeuu.org



January

2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 NEW YEAR'S DAY	2
3 Social Hour, 8:45am Adult Forum, 10am Service, 11am Children's Church, 2:30pm	4 AUCTION REGISTRATION OPENS	5 Programs Council, 7pm	6 Hope Singers, 7pm	7 Cocktail Hour, 4pm Women of Hope, 7pm	8	9
10 Social Hour, 8:45am Adult Forum, 9:45 am Welcoming Committee, 2pm Children's Church, 2:30pm	11	12 Black Writers Reading Group, 5:30 p.m.	13 Hope Singers, 7pm	14 Cocktail Hour, 4pm	15 Cereal Days 10-noon	16 Cereal Days 2-4 Feed the Homeless
17 Social Hour, 8:45am Service, 11am Children's Church, 2:30pm	18	19	20 COVID Response Team, 5pm Hope Singers, 7pm	21 Cocktail Hour, 4pm	22	23
24 Social Hour, 8:45am Service, 11am Children's Church, 2:30pm	25	26 Board of Trustees, 7pm	27	28 Cocktail Hour, 4pm	29	30

Zoom Links

Women of Hope: www.hopeuu.org/WomenOfHope (Meeting ID: 913 8568 9368; Passcode: 576764)

Social Hour: www.hopeuu.org/SocialHour (Meeting ID: 925 1504 184; Passcode: 739318)

Adult Forum: www.hopeuu.org/AdultForum (Meeting ID: 944 2766 5124; Passcode: 174446)

Sunday Service: www.hopeuu.org/SundayService (Meeting ID: 499751; no passcode required)

Children's Church: www.hopeuu.org/ChildrensChurch (Meeting ID: 932 9801 6660; Passcode: 124851)

Hope Singers: www.hopeuu.org/HopeSingers (Meeting ID: 349 768 514; Passcode: 003843)

Cocktail Hour: www.hopeuu.org/CocktailHour (Meeting ID: 980 3776 9619; Passcode: 307923)

Black Writers Reading Group: Contact Molly Brower, molly@hopeuu.org

Board of Trustees: www.hopeuu.org/BoardMeeting (Meeting ID: 913 5756 5440; Passcode: 367781)

COVID Response Team: www.hopeuu.org/COVIDResponseTeam (Meeting ID: 920 7967 1865; Passcode: 814780)

Welcoming Committee: <https://zoom.us/j/98272294095?pwd=MU9oVkdqcUtwcG5tUC8zNnBvdGV4UT09> (Meeting ID: 982 7229 4095; Passcode: 388366)

7 WAYS TO START MAKING KINDNESS THE NORM IN YOUR DAILY LIFE:

- 1 Send an uplifting text to a friend or family member.
- 2 Let that guy merge into traffic with a wave and a smile.
- 3 Include intentional moments of kindness, laughter and delight in your daily routine.
- 4 Go *slightly* outside of our comfort zone at least once a day to make someone smile.
- 5 Share a compliment with a co-worker or friend.
- 6 Reach out to a family member you haven't spoken to in awhile.
- 7 Treat someone to a cup of coffee (a friend, stranger, or even yourself).

**make
kindness
the norm.**

#WorldKindnessDay
#MakeKindnessTheNorm
www.randomactsofkindness.org