

FOCUS

The monthly newsletter from Hope Unitarian Church



Seeking Hope, Love, and Justice—Together in Community

VOL. 27, NO. 3 | MARCH 2021

Hope's Annual

AUCTION

ONLINE
FEB. 28 - MAR. 6



This Month at Hope: Our Virtual Auction!

Bidding is now open for Hope's Online Auction 2021!

<https://charityauction.bid/hopechurch2021>

Bidding closes on **Saturday, March 6, at 8:00 p.m.**
It's not too late to register, buy a ticket, and make a bid!

You may register and buy a ticket at any time up to the auction's closing.
See the closing event on Zoom with your host, **James Donovan**
and his lovely assistant, **Kim Rauh**.

Live auction, entertainment, and more!

Saturday, March 6, 7:00 p.m.

Watch your email for Zoom access information.

(...and see p. 6 for a preview of some of the amazing items you can bid on!)

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](https://www.facebook.com/HopeUnitarianChurch)

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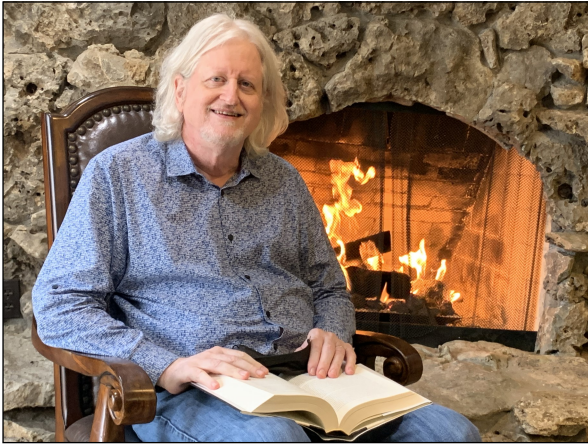
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Calendar: Back (PDF
version); Center (print
version)

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 VISIONARY FUTURE By Rev. Greg Stewart

I'm so pleased that Hope Church has renewed my contract for an additional year. We lost so much time in 2020 that would have been otherwise reserved for interim ministry projects and events. Moreover, the Transition Team and I had to adapt my work to fit shorter time frames, interact with a virtual audience, and limit hands-on opportunities. It was a challenging year for most interim ministries and ministers.

This church year (2020–2021) we continue to explore who Hope wants to be through the lens of the "Five Tasks" of interim ministry: **heritage, leadership, mission, connections, future**. I've written about these previously in *Focus*, if you'd like more details about each "Task." Now visions of Hope 2026 are pouring in, and with them a renewed enthusiasm for congregational life. Your voice matters, so please speak up!

What will Hope Church be and look like in 2026? What is Hope's vision of Beloved Community as expressed in interim ministry feedback from members and friends? A full-time minister is in the pulpit, perhaps a person of color. Hope's music program is expanded to include a children's choir. The church has grown numerically from pastoral size (50–150 members) to program size (150–350 members). The kitchen is four times larger than it is now. The building has abundant storage space. The parking lots are level and paved. Ditto for the "winding road." The patio is two to three times larger. A contemplative atrium for prayer and meditation exists. More parking is paramount.

How can you get involved? Make a commitment to attend monthly Forums about interim ministry. Read articles sponsored by the Transition Team. Read the book [*In the Interim*](#). Pay attention to congregational life, even if you cannot attend virtually. Send your comments to me about how you see and experience Hope Church in 2026. One thing's for sure: there is Hope in Tulsa!

The joy continues,

FEELING DOWN?

Is your life out of balance? Are you feeling angry or depressed? Our interim minister, the Rev. Greg Stewart, is available for pastoral care and spiritual counseling by appointment. This is no time to "go it alone" when it comes to the "new normal." To schedule a confidential appointment, please contact Rev. Greg at the church.

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

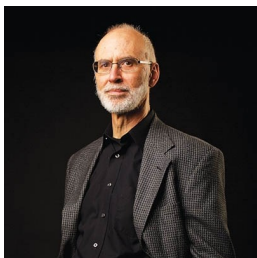
On Call: For pastoral emergencies, 24/7

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

Hope's choral and solo musicians recorded music for the auction to enliven our spirits and enhance our sense of giving and adventure. Their efforts were and continue to be special gifts to the Hope community.

Speaking of gifts, February 22 was the 100th birthday anniversary of the great Italian actress Giulietta Masina, who starred in several films directed by her husband, the renowned film director, Federico Fellini. One of her best remembered roles was Gelsomina in the 1954 film *La Strada* ("The Road" or "The Way"), directed by Fellini, in which she is a poor and simple girl sold to an itinerant circus performer and strong-man named Zampanò. Gelsomina is naïve and somewhat mentally slow, but she is also full of sparkle and life and possesses a magical sense of intuition and a strong capacity for love. Zampanò's abuse hurts her time and time again, but at a certain moment she starts humming a melody composed by Nino Rota that becomes the signature musical theme for the film.

Along the way Gelsomina meets another circus performer, The Fool ("Il Matto"). She hears him playing that same melody on a tiny violin. The Fool tells Gelsomina a parable and she finds her purpose, and this haunting melody now accompanies her. Soon, however, Zampanò abandons her, and years later he recognizes the same melody being sung, whereupon he inquires and learns that Gelsomina had died. This awakens the realization that he had carelessly squandered a priceless gift, and amidst the regret that he now feels, he discovers, perhaps for the first time, the power and meaning of love.

The music by Nino Rota strongly and effectively communicates strongly the emotions and meaning wrapped up in this story. When Giulietta Masina died in 1993 (following her husband in death by only five months), this same melody by Nino Rota was performed for her funeral at her request. The music theme helps us to understand that Masina herself was a special gift. It can do the same for each of us.

Care Team Corner

By Tara Saylor

We bless those of us with pain in our hearts.

May we be filled with strength.

We bless those of us with pain in our bodies.

May we be filled with the courage to live one day at a time.

**We bless those of us who are lonely,
and those who have not been connected to Hope recently.**

*May we feel the presence of our loving community
and be encircled with love.*

We bless those of us who are overwhelmed.

May we know compassion for ourselves.

**We bless those of us who give their heart and hands
in service to Hope and the wider community.**

*May we feel secure, even when shouldering
the commitments of the Church, in an uncertain time.*

May we all know we are loved.

On February 14, the Adult Forum focused on **Compassion**. As part of our study, we broke into small groups and wrote a blessing for the staff and members of Hope Church, knowing that these times are beyond difficult.

Tara Saylor, the host of the spirituality workshop, edited the several blessings produced in the workshop into this blessing. We hope it touches you, as we were sincerely moved by writing our hopes for you.

To read more about what inspired this workshop, visit [A Hospital Blessing](#).

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:

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Music

Dr. Joseph Rivers:

joseph.rivers@hopeuu.org

Outreach

outreach@hopeuu.org

Board

boardpresident@hopeuu.org

Church 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

March's Generosity Recipient

By Mary Newman

Iron Gate

Hope's March Generosity recipient is [Iron Gate Tulsa](#).

Their mission is simple: to feed the hungry of Tulsa—every day.

Iron Gate is a soup kitchen and grocery pantry in downtown Tulsa. If you're hungry, they will feed you. Iron Gate has been open through the Coronavirus pandemic, continuing to provide hot meals and bags of groceries to those in need. They have transitioned to providing carry-out meals and a drive-through/walk-through pantry to provide a safe way for people to get food.

Those who eat at Iron Gate are considered guests, because they have been invited to eat with them. The philosophy of Iron Gate is that we are all guests on this earth, and guests treat one another with courtesy, kindness, and respect.

Iron Gate's vision is to be a friendly, welcoming place where all are greeted with a smile—a place of comfort and a wholesome food, and a temporary respite from the major problems awaiting their guests outside their gates: unemployment, poverty, healthcare, shelter, transportation, and more. The numbers of people needing food assistance are staggering. They are more than numbers to Iron Gate; they are people they know and care about.

Our speaker for the March 7th Adult Forum is **Carrie Vesely Henderson**, Iron Gate's Executive Director.



Outreach News by Anita Ward

Monthly Meal for the Day Center

In February, due to the weather and our inability to get to the top of the Hill, we sent money to the Day Center for them to buy the meal, using one of their preferred caterers.

We hope that in March we'll be able to resume our usual monthly cooking and delivering!

Cereal Days

This month's CEREAL DAYS will be **Friday, March 19** from **10 a.m. to noon** and **Saturday, March 20** 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. Check the list below for donation ideas.

When Women of Hope is meeting in person, they collect menstrual products; those are always appreciated in our Cereal Days collection as well.

Our Cereal Days continue to help us help the Day Center and its clients. Thank you for your generosity!

Tulsa Day Center for the Homeless winter needs

You can always find the Day Center's current needs list here: <https://tulsadaycenter.org/give-help/> But here are some of the items they are in need of now:



General Shelter

- Bath towels
- Men's & Women's clothing (all sizes)
- Men's & Women's tennis/athletic shoes (all sizes; no dress shoes please)
- Flip flops (shower shoes)
- Men's & Women's socks
- Men's & Women's belts (all sizes)
- Men's & Women's underwear (all sizes)
- Women's sports bras (all sizes)
- Men's & Women's long johns
- Men's & Women's hoodies
- Men's & Women's jackets & coats
- Men's & Women's hats, gloves & scarves
- Hand warmers
- Backpacks or small duffle-type bags
- Men's & Women's wallets

- Diapers/Wipes
- Travel size deodorant
- Nutritious snacks for kids: e.g., Jell-O Cups, granola bars and Fruit Rollups
- Cereal (no Cheerios please)
- Books/Magazines

Medical Clinic

- Canes (aluminum, adjustable)
- Wheelchairs (new or gently used)
- Walkers with seat
- Adult athletic socks
- ChapStick
- Individual tissue packs

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.

Why should I make my child go to church?

It is a question with a myriad of answers. I can tell you that I made my kids go to church for connection, so that they felt love and belonging outside of our home. As much as we may not want our children to age, they will grow into adults and be released into the whole wide world.

I am currently facilitating a Zoom class for adults on Brené Brown's book *The Gifts of Imperfection*, and will happily repeat the class. I address Adult Religious Education (ARE) in conjunction with Children's Religious Education (CRE) and Youth because our Unitarian Universalist honors LifeSpan Religious Education. It is by sharing our faith and values with our children that we prepare them for the journey of hardships in this thing called life.

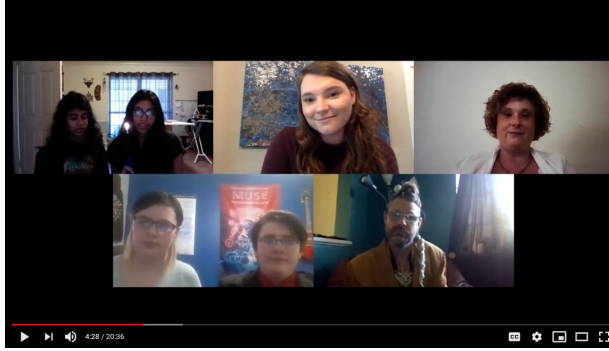
Every spring Unitarian Universalist churches celebrate the children who have entered high school with the Coming of Age (CoA) rite of passage. Last year **Siannan Dunn, Kiri Simpson, Chris Dunn, and Eden Simpson** completed CoA by creating their own credo statement, telling us what they believe and why. Due to the pandemic, the ceremony was on Zoom. The Youth did not have the after-church party with cake and congratulations to mark this important time. Because we are a small congregation, we have had years without a CoA ceremony. Last year's ceremony was so important for the entire congregation, including the young children. Our children's participation on Sundays cannot be based on whether they are interested in what we are doing that week. Every week we teach something that is important to their journey towards Coming of Age and adulthood.

As we look forward to teaching sex education with Our Whole Lives (OWL), permission from parents and caregivers and weekly participation is required. We teach OWL not only for our children, but to maintain our status as a Welcoming Congregation with the UUA.

The loss of physical connection has been difficult for our members of all ages. As we move forward to returning to the physical church, it is more important than ever that our children feel connection, love, and belonging.

Special guests are exciting and engaging for our children.

If you would like to share your gifts or experience with our children, contact me at tennille@hopeuu.org.



*Last spring's Coming of Age ceremony Youth and leaders: **Eden Simpson, Kiri Simpson, Paige Clark, Tennille Wilson, Siannan Dunn, Chris Dunn, Lenny Hope***

March Birthdays

Warren Cox	1
Preston Pierce	1
Stan Young	3
Michael Simpson	4
Lora Marschall	5
Christy Levine	6
Siannan Dunn	7
Diane Dudley	9
Lottie Wilds	11
Anita Mills	11
Shaden Prather	15
Lavon Boeck	18
Norma Eagleton	19

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/>



March Events

Women of Hope

Thursday, March 4, 7:00 p.m. on Zoom

We'll start out with our usual socializing, then watch a video called "More Than Funny," by [Michael Jr.](#) It is quite funny! Something that we can all appreciate during these COVID times. Deborah will send out a reminder of the meeting.

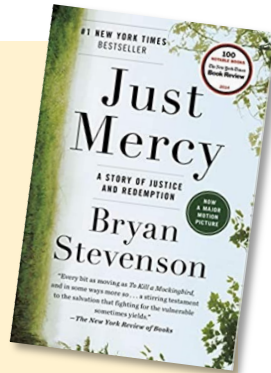
Zoom link: www.hopeuu.org/WomenOfHope (Meeting ID: 961 8760 8554; Passcode: 206460)

Black Writers Reading Group

Tuesday, March 9, 5:30 p.m. on Zoom

This month's selection is *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*, by Bryan Stevenson

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

Grab a drink and tell us what you think!

Did you know that Hope Church offers a weekly cocktail hour, hosted by Rev. Greg? Bring your beverage of choice and virtually join other members in a free-flowing conversation that will have you coming back for more. Recent topics: Sing Noel, Monarch butterfly gardens, whether the church should move to a new location, leads on where to get vaccinated, and, of course, the election. Please make it a point to stop by any Thursday, 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. We'll save a stool for you (with proper ID, of course).

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

AUCTION

It's not too late to [register as a bidder](#) so that you can bid in this year's annual auction—online for the first time! Here's a preview of some of the things you can bid on.



A custom sermon from Rev. Greg!



A variety of work by Hope's talented artisans!



Gift baskets galore!



A weekend getaway at the lake!



Mouth-watering homemade goodies!



Workshops with Tennille & Lenny!



Services This Month at Hope

Theme: Deadly “Sins” for Lively Liberals (continued)

3/7 – “Deadly Sins for Lively Liberals: Pride”

Rev. Greg Stewart

It is quoted too often: “Pride goeth before a fall.” Yet we begin with pride because it is the source of the other six deadly sins. Gluttony, anger, greed, envy, lust, and sloth all spring from the garden of pride we cultivate in our souls. Pride left unchecked keeps us from knowing who we really are and isolates us from those we need the most. We can become egotistical and arrogant, putting ourselves at the center of the universe. Aristotle had much to say about pride and his words inform my own words about it.

Adult Forum: Iron Gate (Generosity Recipient)

3/14 – “Deadly Sins for Lively Liberals: Gluttony”

Rev. Greg Stewart

How are those New Year’s resolutions working out for you? The gyms and health clubs always report an uptick in membership in January followed by a downturn come Feb. 1. The mind begins rationalizing, “I’m going to eat that because I deserve it. I’ve worked so hard on this diet that’s time for a diet-free day. I can always start up again tomorrow.” Gluttony becomes “sinful” when our obsession with food borders on addiction and drives our decision-making. The result is isolation from others with a little self-hate on the side. There are antidotes to gluttony, and we’ll explore them together on Sunday.

Adult Forum (9:45): Spirituality Workshop #4: Blow in the Wind, Rise in the Sea: Nature and Spirit. Hosted by Judy Sims.

3/21 – “Deadly Sins for Lively Liberals: Envy”

Rev. Greg Stewart

Of all the so-called “seven deadly sins,” envy is the most hidden and secretive. While some may proudly proclaim other sins as their own, envy is an embarrassment we often keep to ourselves. Envy claims its victims by making them feel either cheated (“Why does good fortune always allude me?”) or entitled (Why don’t I get what I truly deserve?”), and thus out of right relations with self and others. The good news is that there are antidotes for the green monster when it comes calling, and that’s what we’ll explore today.

Adult Forum: Julie Skye, MBA, of Sustainable Advisors Alliance & the UUA’s Committee on Social Responsible Investing will talk about Socially Responsible Investing & the Unitarian Universalist Association.

3/28 – TBA

Adult Forum: Transition Team

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.

Social Hour: Now EVERY Sunday at 8:45!

www.hopeuu.org/SocialHour

Adult Forum: 10 a.m. (9:45 on March 14)

www.hopeuu.org/AdultForum



Having technical difficulties?

Contact our Worship Tech Coordinator, **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**.

Transition Team: Adult Forum

Join us **Sunday, March 28** in the Adult Forum. **Joan Bjornsgaard** will lead us in an expanded visioning exercise for Hope’s future. A brief presentation of this was made in January. The responses were remarkable. We know it’s been difficult to stay connected this last year. As we transition to searching for a new minister, your input is vital for our future. You don’t want to miss this opportunity!



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Seeking Hope, Love, and Justice—Together in Community

FOCUS v. 27, no. 3, March 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, Worship Tech Coordinator
Chris Powell, Pianist
Susan Michael, Michelle Styve, Nora Potter,
Childcare
Rebecca Jones, Accountant (off-site)



HOPE UNITARIAN CHURCH

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www.hopeuu.org



March

2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
AUCTION! Online all week!	¹ AUCTION	² AUCTION	³ AUCTION	⁴ AUCTION Cocktail Hour, 4pm Women of Hope, 7pm	⁵ AUCTION	⁶ AUCTION ENDS
⁷ Social Hour, 8:45am Adult Forum, 10am Service, 11am Children's Church, 2:30pm	⁸	⁹ Black Writers Reading Group, 5:30 p.m.	¹⁰ Hope Singers, 7pm	¹¹ Cocktail Hour, 4pm	¹²	¹³
¹⁴ Social Hour, 8:45am Adult Forum, 9:45 am Children's Church, 2:30pm	¹⁵	¹⁶	¹⁷ Hope Singers, 7pm	¹⁸ Cocktail Hour, 4pm	¹⁹ Cereal Days 10-noon	²⁰ Cereal Days 2-4 Feed the Homeless
²¹ Social Hour, 8:45am Adult Forum, 10am Service, 11am Children's Church, 2:30pm	²² FOCUS Deadline	²³	²⁴ COVID Response Team, 5pm Hope Singers, 7pm	²⁵ Cocktail Hour, 4pm	²⁶	²⁷
²⁸ Social Hour, 8:45am Adult Forum, 10am Service, 11am Children's Church, 2:30pm	²⁹	³⁰ Board of Trustees, 7pm	³¹			

Zoom Links

Women of Hope: www.hopeuu.org/WomenOfHope

Social Hour: www.hopeuu.org/SocialHour

Adult Forum: www.hopeuu.org/AdultForum

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

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

Board of Trustees: www.hopeuu.org/BoardMeeting

COVID Response Team: www.hopeuu.org/COVIDResponseTeam