

FOCUS

Monthly News from Hope Unitarian Church



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**This Month:
Our pledge
drive kicks off!**

We hope you'll join us on Zoom on Sunday, April 4, for our Easter service. There will be a special musical selection from our cherished choir. Come along before the service to catch up with your Hope friends in Social Hour, and hear this month's Generosity Recipient speak at Adult Forum.

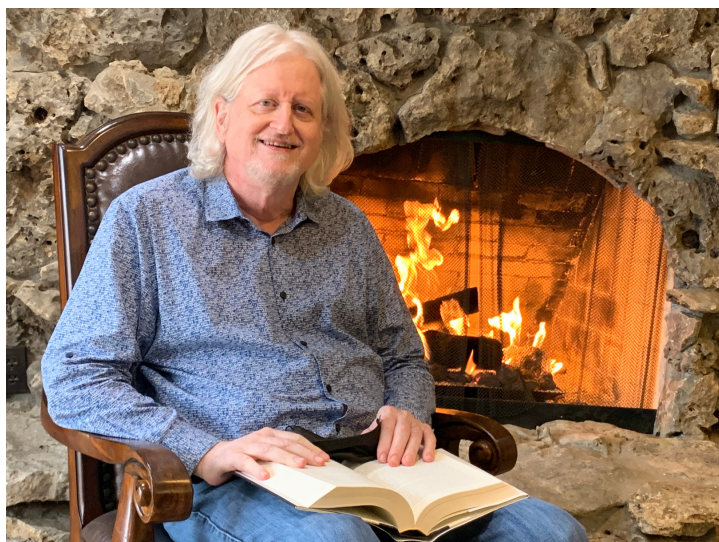
You've probably received a brochure, a letter, and a pledge card in the mail for this year's pledge drive. The theme this year is Ready for Renewal, and we are! Keep reading for more information about the pledge drive.

This month we'll continue with Rev. Greg's sermon series, "Deadly 'Sins' for Lively Liberals," and of course, our usual social events like Cocktail Hour and Women of Hope.

Join us this spring!

Are You Ready for Renewal?

by Rev. Greg Stewart, Interim Minister



Money matters. This is especially true for not-for-profit agencies of change, like Hope Unitarian Church. It costs money to change lives, save the planet, build community, demand justice, make music, educate our children and youth, and grow to a sustainable size. Lofty ideals need sacred ground to anchor them. Hope's congregation needs wider horizons in which to offer, "Not hell but hope and courage," both to fulfill the meaning of our days, and to spread the good news of Unitarian Universalism.

That's why this year's pledge drive theme is "Ready For Renewal." After a long season of separation, it won't be long before we fling wide the doors, be with old friends, meet some of society's needs, garden, expect and welcome visitors, and worship together in spirit and in truth. The roof is being fixed, the parking lot will be paved, the staff is expanding (see below), and our hearts are opening to change. Trust me, this is no sinking ship! We're not sputtering along. We are moving at full throttle!

We have hired Steven Williams to help us focus our efforts on member growth and retention. Steven will still be preaching on the Sundays I'm not in the pulpit, offering fresh perspectives on how we'll live our best lives now. We'll also have Steven available during the week, for five hours until he graduates this spring; then he'll work ten hours per week. Given that this is Steven's last year in seminary, he has accumulated a breadth of experience in the arts of ministry. He's offering pastoral care and will consult with Hope's wonderful RE program.

This is the essence of faith: to envision a lively, bustling, serving, growing, congregation before it comes to pass, and then planning as if the growth is occurring now. There are about 150-200 viewers for every virtual Sunday service, and some will show up on "opening day." If we treat these newcomers like we treat each other, we cannot help but grow! I'm not talking about becoming a large church, just a stronger one. One that is less encumbered with financial worry and laser-focused on its mission and vision. In other words, a healthy church that knows who it is and where it's going.

This, of course, is where you come in. We need your generosity like never before! Hope Church is approaching a crossroads in its historical journey. Is Hope a phoenix that is ready for renewal? Will Hope rise from the ashes of COVID, and complacency, and the status quo? This year, go out on faith and raise your pledge or make a new one. A member's matching grant will triple your investment. In fact, incorporate faith into all walks of your life and learn that risk-taking is often the path to redemption.

The joy continues.

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

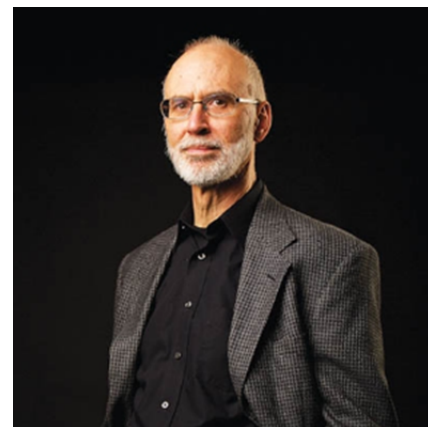
Social Times (on Zoom):

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

I just received my second dose of the Covid vaccine, and due to weather interruptions in February when I was originally scheduled, my doses had to be rescheduled for this month. My wife just completed her vaccinations a week earlier. As more folks are vaccinated, more of us are viewing the future with a more positive outlook. We will certainly want more and more, and as soon as possible, to begin gathering together, and start making music together. However, as President of the UUA, Susan Frederick-Gray, has encouraged us, we still need to navigate this "in-between time" with patience along with hopefulness. In the meantime, we continue to move forward in serving Hope with music - weekly hymn leading, piano accompaniment and special music, and occasional anthems prepared virtually by Hope's choir members. For Easter, the choir is preparing a special anthem to mark this time of hope and commitment to the values that we all stand for, as we allow love and hope to blossom along with the flowering of spring around us.



by Dr. Joseph Rivers,
Music Director

April Events



Women of Hope

Thursday, April 1
7:00 p.m.

www.hopeuu.org/WomenOfHope

Women of Hope

Thursday, April 1 - 7:00 p.m.

www.hopeuu.org/WomenOfHope

Join us Thursday, evening, April 1 at 7:00 p.m. We're going to extend Women's History Month with a TED Talk by an attorney who produced a documentary, titled *The Computers*. They were six women who did the computing before UNIVAC. We'd like you to share with us an historic woman that you've thought highly of when growing up. Or, tell us about a woman who's been important in your life. We look forward to seeing you on Zoom for an entertaining evening.



Cocktail Hour
with Rev. Greg

4:00 THURSDAYS

Cocktail Hour

Every Thursday at 4:00 p.m.

www.hopeuu.org/CocktailHour

(Meeting ID: 980 3776 9619; Passcode: 307923)

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: Monarch butterfly gardens, whether the church should move to a new location, and leads on where to get vaccinated.

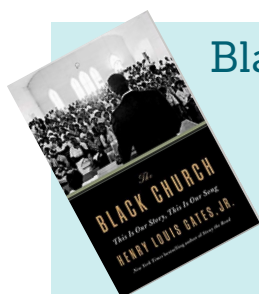
Please make it a point to stop by any Thursday, 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. We'll save a stool for you (with proper ID, of course).

Black Writers Reading Group

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

This month's selection is *The Black Church: This is Our Story, This is Our Song*, by Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

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.



News & Announcements

Welcoming Committee

The Welcoming Committee will meet Sunday, April 11 at 2 p.m. We will be addressing plans for Pride week in June, which will be a live event this year. We will also finalize plans for the upcoming Adult Forum on Sunday. Other plans include the Day of Silence and Gay Straight Alliances in the Schools. Everyone is welcome to attend.

The Welcoming Committee will sponsor Adult Forum on Sunday, April 18, at 10 a.m. to address Gay Straight Alliances in the Schools. It will be hosted by Janet Nobles, who was student sponsor for Bixby High School, and Bixby's past president Erin Martin (who grew up in Hope). Joan Bjornsgaard, adult sponsor for Nathan Hale High School, and Hale's former president Matthew Jones, will also be presenting. Come hear about the history, the struggles, where these brave students are today, and how being in charge of their respective GSAs impacted their lives.

Garden & Grounds

Although our church building remains closed this month, the Hill is open and welcoming Spring with gusto! Each week the landscape is celebrating with something new in bloom, so come often to retreat into our sanctuary where there is never a dull sermon. Grounds are open dawn to dusk.

For those of you who support public radio, the spring pledge drive is this month. An "early-bird" donation made by April 13 qualifies for a \$20 coupon from Southwood Landscape. If you are a supporter of KWTU/KWGS but have no need for flowers from Southwood, please donate early and pass along the coupon to our Grounds Team to purchase things for the church gardens.

If you would like to join our team, there are many different opportunities to participate during the year, and we are always learning. Send your info to scotfiddle@aol.com to join our contact list.

Programs

It's time again for Hope's Annual Report 2021. Program chairs, please produce a short report on all active programs and send to me by April 20th. The BOT will be reviewing reports at the April Board Meeting.

If you have any questions contact me at sbottowitt@cox.net.

Thank you!
Barb Witt
VP Programs

April Birthdays

Gary Fincher 1
Eddie Humphreys 1
Coe McGinley 2
Carmen Kinsey 3
Elizabeth Mosier 4
Deborah Whittaker 6
Lizzie Savage 13
Daryl Mosier 16
Helen Bordelon 24
Ella Reiman 26

HOPE is SEEKING Delegates for the UUA General Assembly!

Have you ever attended a UUA General Assembly? Now is your chance! GA this year is 100% virtual! June 23-27, 2021

Registration for virtual GA 2021 is now open. Registration is \$200 per person. Financial support for registration as well as a payment plan are available. General Assembly registrants receive access to the 2021 Online Participation Portal, including live, simulive, and on-demand video content, the virtual exhibit hall, chat features, support, and a (new!) GA mobile app.

For complete information, including the schedule of events and opportunities to volunteer, visit <https://www.uua.org/ga>.

If you are interested in determining the direction of the UUA at a national level, please consider serving as Hope's delegate.

Contact Lee Ann Cole (boardpresident@hopeuu.org) if you are willing to serve.

Outreach News

Feed the Homeless

In March, we were able to deliver our monthly meal. We had a lot of donations during our Cereal Days, so there was much to deliver!

Anita Ward did the shopping. The cooks were **Mary and Joe Newman, Coe McGinley, Eddie Humphreys, Janet Nobles, and Anita Ward**. Janet and Anita also delivered the meal.

Thank you to all of our dedicated volunteers for your time and talent!



This month's CEREAL DAYS will be **Friday, April 16 from 10 a.m. to noon*** and **Saturday, April 17, 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. 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!

* If there is still construction going on in the building, we will not have a donation collection on Friday.

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/>

April's Generosity Recipient



Our April Generosity Recipient is the **Family Safety Center**, whose services focus on helping families who are victims of domestic violence. Their goal is to provide "wrap-around" assistance at their downtown location with the objectives of obtaining protective orders, helping children exposed to domestic violence, offering forensic medical assistance and legal support, and ensuring that perpetrators are prosecuted. Domestic violence has increased during the Covid pandemic, which makes this organization especially important to our community right now.

The director of the Family Safety Center, **Suzann Stewart**, will be our Adult Forum speaker on Sunday, April 4, at 10 am. Join us to learn about the place where family safety comes first and professionals come together to give assistance in many areas. Be sure to watch for the Zoom link in Highlights this week. Hope members and friends are pleased to offer their monthly generosity offering in April to the Family Safety Center.

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.



It's That Time Again!

Our 2021 pledge drive starts NOW!

By now you should have received an envelope with a brochure, a letter, and your pledge card in it. If you didn't, please email the church:
hopeuu@hopeuu.org.

Wondering how much to pledge? The UUA has a Fair Share Pledge guide at <https://www.uua.org/finance/apf/contribution-guide>

Questions?

Contact our accountant, Rebecca Jones (rebecca@hopeuu.org) or our administrator, Molly Brower (molly@hopeuu.org).

Give More With Matching

Thanks to a very generous member, we have up to \$15,000.00 in matching funds for every dollar in new and increased pledges! Every donation helps. Fill out and return your pledge card today!

You can also pledge online at

<https://www.hopeuu.org/connection/donate/>

Click on the Realm link and choose "2021-2022 Pledge" for the fund.

Plants for Pledges

We are putting on a drive-through pledge drive! Come up to the Hope Church main entrance on April 25th at 1-3pm, give us your pledge card or proof of pledge, and we'll give you an herb, vegetable, or flower start!

Leftover plants will be donated to Catholic Charities of Eastern Oklahoma.

April Services

Sunday mornings at 11 on Zoom and Facebook

April 4

Easter Sunday: Throw Yourself Like Seed
Rev. Greg Stewart

All ages are invited to worship as we celebrate Easter with words and music, flowers and bells, and candles and praise. The sermon is surrounded by seasonal hymns and soaring music. Together we'll celebrate the coming of spring and new life. Renewal—personal, corporate—is the rite of spring that challenges us to grow—intellectually, spiritually—just as the green blade rises and the flower opens.

Adult Forum: Generosity Recipient

April 11

Rev. Greg Stewart

Deadly “Sins” for Lively Liberals: Greed

“More, more, more! My possessions define who I am as a person and serve to illustrate my success. Without all my toys, I’m nothing. Too much of everything is never enough! So I savor the security that accumulation brings.” Does this sound like you? I know it sometimes applies to me. The wisdom of Epicurus says that wealth consists not in having great possessions but in having few wants. We’ll also look to Seneca, another stoic philosopher, for the antidotes to greed.

Adult Forum: Spirit of Life #5: Move in the Hand: Living our Spirituality in our Day-to-Day Lives, hosted by Rebecca Jones

April 18

Rev. Greg Stewart

Deadly “Sins” for Lively Liberals: Sloth

“I’m too lazy to write a blurb about this sermon. You’ll just have to wait and see what I have to say. Or not. It really doesn’t matter. You see, I am being a good sloth already!”

Adult Forum: Welcoming Committee

April 25

Rev. Greg Stewart

Your Money and Your Life

This week we wrap up our 2021-22 pledge drive!

Adult Forum: Transition Team

The Zoom link for our Sunday services is

www.hopeuu.org/SundayService

Meeting ID: 499751

Live on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/HopeUnitarianChurch



Social Hour: Now EVERY Sunday at 8:45!

www.hopeuu.org/SocialHour

Adult Forum: 10 a.m. (9:45 on April 11)

www.hopeuu.org/AdultForum

Children's Church: Every Sunday at 2:30 p.m.

www.hopeuu.org/ChildrensChurch

(Meeting ID: 932 9801 6660; Passcode: 124851)

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.

Zoom Links

Women of Hope: www.hopeuu.org/WomenOfHope (April 1, 7:00 p.m.)

Social Hour: www.hopeuu.org/SocialHour (Every Sunday at 8:45 a.m.)

Adult Forum: www.hopeuu.org/AdultForum (Every Sunday at 10:00 a.m.)

Sunday Service: www.hopeuu.org/SundayService (Meeting ID: 499751; no passcode required) (Every Sunday at 11 a.m.)

Children's Church: www.hopeuu.org/ChildrensChurch (Meeting ID: 932 9801 6660; Passcode: 124851) (Every Sunday at 2:30 p.m.)

Hope Singers: www.hopeuu.org/HopeSingers (Meeting ID: 349 768 514; Passcode: 003843) (Every Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.)

Cocktail Hour: www.hopeuu.org/CocktailHour (Every Thursday at 4:00 p.m.)

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

Board of Trustees: www.hopeuu.org/BoardMeeting (Fourth Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.)

COVID Response Team: www.hopeuu.org/COVIDResponseTeam (Third Wednesday at 5:30 p.m.)

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)

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

