



Focus
April 2025

Joy

APRIL AT HOPE

Help us begin the month of April by welcoming new members into our community with a special New Member's Ceremony & Reception on Sunday, April 6th, at 11:00 AM. This is a wonderful time to support those who have chosen to make Hope their spiritual home and to extend our warmth and gratitude for their presence among us.

For those passionate about discussion and advocacy, the Women's Issues Group will meet on Saturday, April 12th, at 6:00 PM. This group provides a space for thoughtful conversation on topics affecting women locally and globally, fostering a sense of empowerment and shared learning. Then, on Saturday, April 19th, from 8:30 AM to noon, we invite all hands on deck for our Gardens & Grounds Cleanup Day. As spring blooms around us, this annual effort helps keep our beloved church grounds beautiful and welcoming for all who visit.

Finally, Easter Sunday brings a special morning of tradition and celebration. On Sunday, April 20th, at 10:00 AM, we will gather for Breakfast on the Hill, followed by a unique Godspell-inspired service.

A reminder to all committee leaders: Annual reports to the board are due on April 14th.

These reports are essential for reflecting on the past year's work and planning for the future. We appreciate your efforts in making Hope a thriving, engaged community.



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REFLECTIONS FROM THE MINISTER JOY

As I reflect on the theme of joy for April, I go back to the sermon that I preached a few weeks ago. Joy is an act of resistance. During difficult times it can be hard to access joy. The fact is joy can be difficult to access during good times, but when we express and feel joy, we live healthier and more fulfilling lives.

As Rev. Joe Cherry Said:

Joy is hard.

Joy requires us to feel safe enough,
to be safe enough, to open to vulnerability.
To feel joy, you must be brave.

The problem is when I look into the world and read the news, vulnerability is not on the top of my list, because I am afraid that someone might use that vulnerability against me. I suppose that means that the first thing I must do is find a safe place to express my joy. It occurs to me that not everyone around me deserves my joy. When I think of the places, I have felt the most joy I remember being surrounded by people that I trusted and people that I loved, I remember being able to be, fully, who I am.

That means that if we are searching for joy in this difficult time, it might be that we must search for people that help us feel safe, and when we are with them maybe we won't have to search so hard for joy, it might just find us where we are.



Rev. Justin would love to meet with you to provide pastoral care or just to get to know you!

His usual office hours are Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10 AM through 3 PM.

Please email him at revjustin@hopeuu.org to schedule an appointment to meet in person or via Zoom. If your need is urgent, call him at 918-481-0999, x2.



CITY LIGHTS

APRIL GENEROSITY RECIPIENT

City Lights Foundation of Oklahoma is dedicated to serving individuals experiencing homelessness through relational service and dignified housing. What began in 2013 as Night Light Tulsa—a heartfelt effort to connect with and support those often overlooked—quickly grew into a larger mission. By 2015, City Lights became a nonprofit, committed to fostering meaningful relationships and providing essential resources to those in need. Their approach is simple yet profound: learning names, listening to stories, and walking alongside individuals to restore dignity and hope.

Through programs like Night Light Tulsa, City Lights creates spaces where people can come together to serve, offering food, hygiene supplies, and companionship in an atmosphere of respect and care. Their work extends beyond immediate relief, advocating for long-term solutions that address homelessness and its root causes.

As a proud member of A Way Home for Tulsa, they collaborate with other organizations to create systemic change, ensuring that every person has access to safe and stable housing. Their partnerships, including with the Oklahoma Center for Nonprofits, further strengthen their capacity to make a lasting impact.

City Lights remains intentional in its efforts to be a light in the darkness, inviting others to walk alongside them in their mission. By prioritizing relationships and community-driven solutions, they strive to create spaces where everyone is seen, valued, and supported. Through service and advocacy, City Lights continues to build a more compassionate Tulsa, working toward a future where homelessness is met with understanding, action, and sustainable change.

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Joy by Nia Darrington-Stokes

George Bernard Shaw says, "The joy in life is to be used for a purpose. I want to be used up when I die."

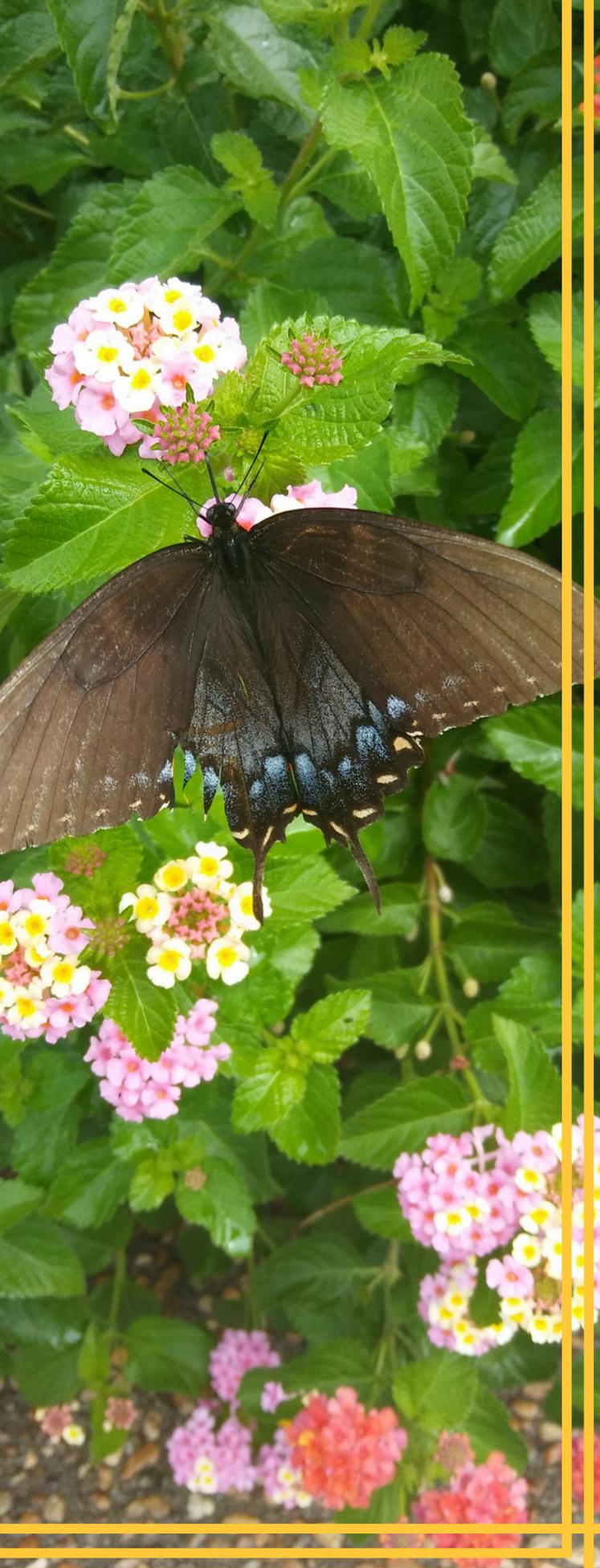
When I think about George Bernard Shaw's quote and my opportunity to serve as a DRE, I think about the importance of serving with intentionality and joy! Every chance I am given to serve, I do it with purpose and joy, realizing that life is a journey, and you can leave an essential footprint by serving others with purpose and joy.

Joy is essential when working with children because it creates an environment where they feel safe, valued, and free to explore. Joy fuels the children's curiosity, strengthens their sense of belonging, and fosters resilience. When adults bring joy into their interactions with children, they model a way of engaging with the world that is open, hopeful, and filled with possibility.

The goal of the CYRE department is to create strong, trusting relationships between the children, their families, and the serving adults. As adults, we understand that when children experience warmth and playfulness, they are more likely to feel secure and confident. Since joyful learning is essential, we encourage the children to build community with one another as they engage in play, laughter, and discovery. As adults serving in the RE department, we aim to foster emotional growth and opportunities for children to experience joy. These experiences teach the children that emotions are dynamic and that even in difficult moments, happiness can return. Joy builds resilience and emotional intelligence. It also brings people together and creates meaningful connections. In a joyful environment, children learn cooperation, empathy, and the power of shared experiences.

When we embrace joy as a practice rather than a pursuit, we find it woven into the fabric of our daily lives, waiting to be noticed and cherished. When we share joy with children, we create a foundation for a more compassionate, hopeful future.

I challenge you to find things that bring you joy, help you show compassion, and create a hopeful future in our community.



APRIL EVENTS

● Board and Committee Meetings

All Hope members are welcome to attend the following meetings, which are held at the church unless otherwise indicated:

- Finance Committee: 6:00 PM, Tuesday, April 15th.
- Board of Trustees: 7:00 PM, Tuesday, April 22nd.

● Church Events

All are welcome to attend the events listed below. (This is not a complete list of events taking place at the church this month; other events may be private or limited to members of specific church groups.) Dates and times listed below may change! Please check the church's online calendar at www.hopeuu.org/calendar for the most current schedule of events.

Women of Hope: Thursday, April 3rd, 6:00 PM

New Member's Ceremony & Reception: Sunday, April 6th, 11:00 AM

Women's Issues Group: Saturday April 12th, 6:00 PM

Game Night: Thursday, April 17th, 6:00 PM

Gardens & Grounds Cleanup Day: Saturday, April 19th, 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Breakfast on the Hill/Godspell Service/Easter: Sunday, April 20th, 10:AM

Sundays: Children and Youth Religious Education: 9:45 AM, Adult Forum: 10:00 AM, Sunday Service: 11:00 AM

● Log Cabin Rentals

The following support groups currently rent the Log Cabin on a weekly or monthly basis:

- Sundays, 3:00-4:00 PM: Gamblers Anonymous (GA)
- Tuesdays, 6:30-7:30 PM: SouthSide Recovery/Narcotics Anonymous (SSR/NA)
- Wednesdays, 10:00 AM-noon: Al-Anon
- Wednesdays, 5:45-7:00 PM: Codependents Anonymous (CoDA)
- Usually the 3rd Saturday of each month, 4:00-6:00 PM: Victims' Voices (victim impact panel).

Check their website or www.hopeuu.org/calendar for specific dates.

● Cereal Days

Breakfast cereal (no Cheerios, please!) for the Tulsa Day Center for the Homeless can be dropped off at the church on Sunday morning, or Tuesday thru Friday from 9AM-3PM.

This Month's Cereal Sunday will be on April 13th.

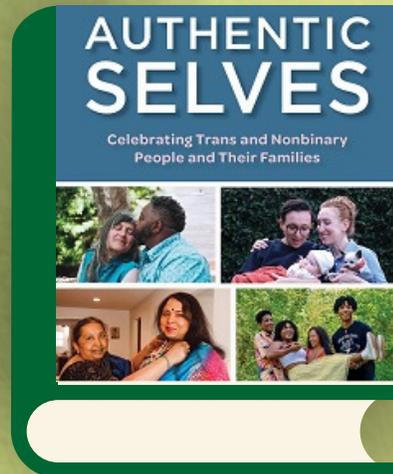


APRIL EVENTS

Happy Birthday!

April Birthdays

Gary Fincher - 1
Eddie Humphreys - 1
Coe McGinley - 2
Carmen Kinsey - 3
Elizabeth Mosier - 4
Deborah Whittaker - 6
Elizabeth Savage - 13
Barbara Delozier - 15
Daryl Mosier - 16
Ali Sheehan - 21
Ella Reiman - 26
John Robinson - 26



UU Common Read 2024-2025

When we do a UU Common read together, we share in reflection, learning, and action. This year's common read book is "Authentic Selves: Celebrating Trans and Nonbinary People and Their Families" edited by Peggie Gillespie

April Adult Forums

April 6th: Generosity Recipient, City Lights

April 13th: Banned & Challenged Book Club - Maus by Art Spiegelman

April 20th: Easter Walk on the Trails/Breakfast on the Hill

April 27th: Budget with Rebecca Jones





ABOUT HOPE CHURCH

HOPE'S MINISTER

Rev. Justin M. McCreary

Rev. Justin's usual office hours are Tuesdays-Thursdays, 10 AM-3PM.

Please email him in advance at revjustin@hopeuu.org to schedule an appointment to meet in person or via Zoom.

If your need is urgent, call him. 918-481-0999, x2.

SUNDAYS

Children's Church and Youth: 9:45 AM

Adult Forum: 10:00 a.m.

Sunday Services: 11:00 a.m.

Weekdays

Hope's general office hours are 9:00 AM-3:00 PM Tuesdays through Fridays. If you wish to visit the church in person, please call ahead to check staff availability. (For security reasons, external doors are kept locked unless an event is in progress.) We respond to email and voicemail messages from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM Tuesdays through Fridays.

HOPE'S STAFF

Justin McCreary

Minister

Nia Darrington-Stokes

Director of Religious Education

Morgen Fields

Church Administrator

Rachel Hay

Interim Lead Teacher

Elizabeth Obal

Church Accountant

Christy Stalcup

Music Director

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2024-2025 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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