

FOCUS NOVEMBER 2025

**NURTURING
GRATITUDE**

NOVEMBER AT HOPE

As the season of gratitude settles in, November at Hope is full of opportunities to connect, celebrate, and give back!

🌟 Annual Auction – “Puttin’ on the Ritz”

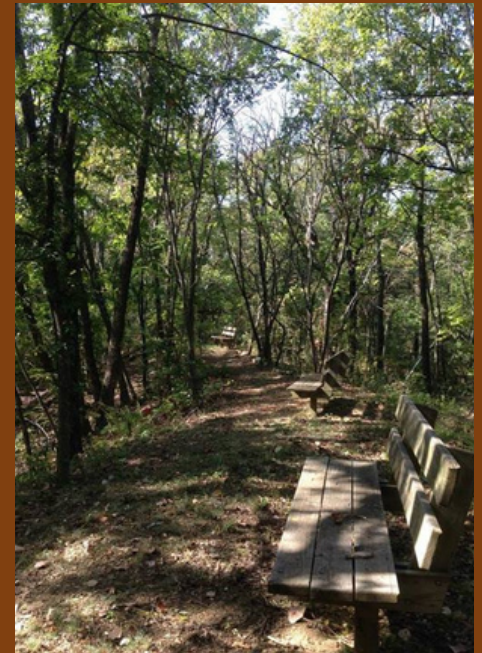
Saturday, November 8 | 5:00–8:00 PM

Our biggest event of the year is almost here! Get ready for an evening of sparkle, laughter, and community as we raise funds to support Hope’s mission and programs. Browse and bid on tons of creative, handcrafted, and one-of-a-kind items in the online auction—and join us in person for an unforgettable night of fun and fellowship. Online bidding opens Sunday, November 2 at noon and closes Saturday, November 8 at noon, so be sure to get your bids in before time runs out! Tickets are still available for purchase until Sunday, November 2nd. Don’t miss out on a great event!

🍲 Stone Soup Sunday

Sunday, November 23 | 12:00 PM

One of Hope’s most beloved traditions, Stone Soup Sunday brings our community together for a shared meal that reminds us of the power of generosity. Bring a pot of soup, bread, or dessert to share—and stay for good company, warm food, and heartfelt connection.



IN THIS ISSUE

REFLECTIONS FROM
THE MINISTER

GENEROSITY RECIPIENT

FROM THE PRESIDENT

NOVEMBER EVENTS

ABOUT HOPE CHURCH



NURTURING GRATITUDE BY REV JUSTIN M. MCCREARY

This month's theme is Nurturing Gratitude. It seems appropriate for the month of November that we would focus on Gratitude. We live in a world that calls us too often to be busy, to want more and more, without truly understanding what we have. We have within us worlds upon worlds, we have within those worlds joys, suffering, and emptiness. Oh, so much emptiness, culture calls us to fill that emptiness with stuff, with toys with food with experiences, but none of those things seem to be enough.

Our psyche, like a hungry ghost, wants to devour, to fill that emptiness, when the reality of the situation is that we can never fill that emptiness with things. What we can do is fill it with Gratitude, and many of us know this, the problem is that the path of gratitude is a difficult path.

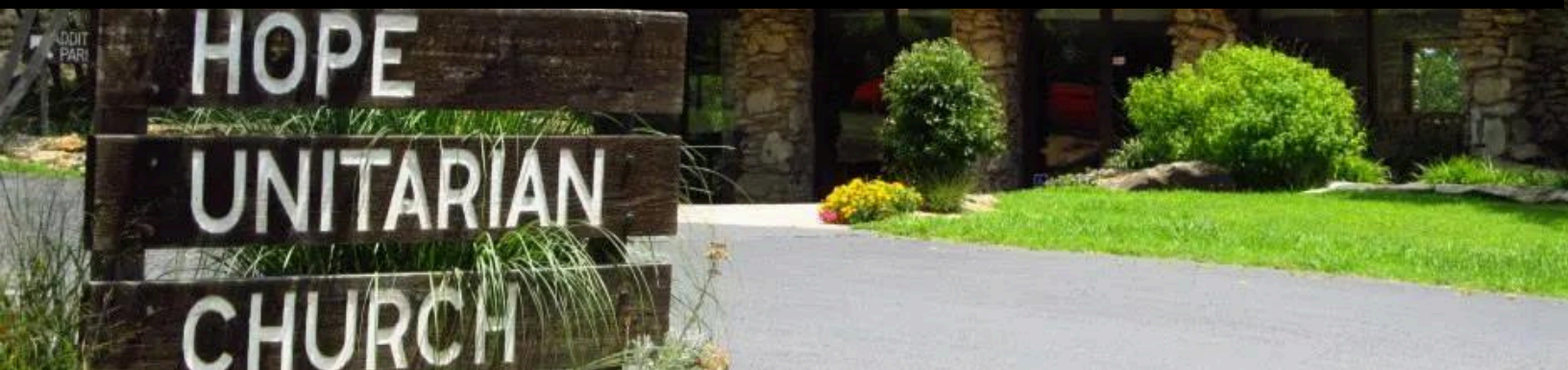
The topic this month is not simply Gratitude but Nurturing Gratitude, because we know that it is something that must grow within us, something like a garden that must be tended and cared for. It is with that spirit of Gratitude that we choose to nurture daily through practice that we will fill that emptiness. So during this season lets make a commitment to grow within that empty space something new.



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.



HOPE UNITARIAN'S ANNUAL AUCTION



Check Out What's Up for Bid! 🎉

The excitement is building for Hope's Annual Auction – “Puttin’ on the Ritz”! Now’s the time to browse all the amazing items and experiences waiting for your bids.

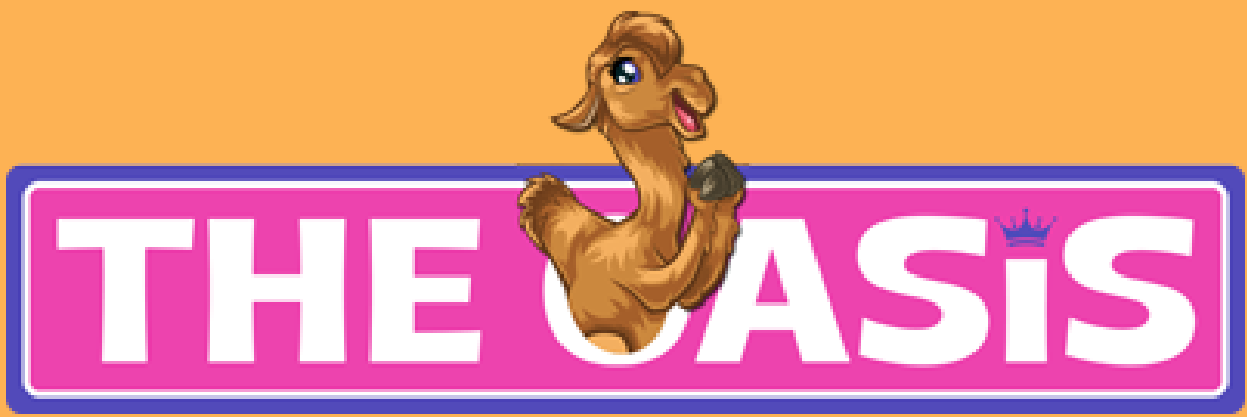
From handcrafted treasures and themed dinners to getaways and gift baskets, there’s something for everyone!

🛒 Online bidding opens Sunday, November 2 at noon and runs through Saturday, November 8 at noon — so don’t miss your chance to claim your favorites!

🎫 Haven’t grabbed your tickets yet? Ticket sales close Sunday, November 2, so be sure to secure your spot before it’s too late.

Please drop off your donations by Sunday, November 2nd.

Get ready to sparkle, bid big, and make this year’s auction our best one yet! ✨



OASIS ASCENSION PROJECT NOVEMBER GENEROSITY RECIPIENT

The Oasis Ascension Project is pioneering a holistic approach to supporting people experiencing homelessness in Tulsa.

Housed in a 48,000-square-foot facility at 10 N. Guthrie, the Oasis provides essential services designed to restore dignity and foster independence. Each participant receives secure access to digital copies of their ID, birth certificate, Social Security card, Medicaid, and SNAP cards through a facial recognition phone app virtual wallet. The facility also offers a private mailbox, lockers, showers, laundry, sensory and serenity rooms, a clinic and vet clinic, cafeteria, trading post, and work programs. This comprehensive environment helps members regain stability while addressing both practical and emotional needs.

The Oasis Ascension model emphasizes participation, engagement, and incentives. Members earn “program hours” by updating their daily portal, demonstrating medication compliance, and engaging in therapy, community service, or collaborative programs.

These hours translate into access to transitional living beds, low-barrier emergency overflow beds, and permanent supportive housing units. By combining experiential interventions, psychosocial rehabilitation, and curriculum work, the Oasis ensures that participants not only receive services but also gain the tools to rebuild their lives.

Beyond its innovative programming, Oasis Ascension is committed to breaking the stigma surrounding homelessness. The team encourages community members to approach the unhoused population with kindness, seeing them as individuals rather than challenges. Through collaboration with local agencies and a focus on individualized care, Oasis Ascension is setting a new standard for support services in Tulsa, offering hope, dignity, and a path toward long-term stability.

DONATE





FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK - A SEASON OF GROUNDING AND GROWTH

VANESSA B. SELF - PRESIDENT, HOPE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

From the President's Desk: A Season of Grounding and Growth

As autumn settles in and we turn toward the season of gratitude, I want to share a few highlights from our Board's work this past quarter (July–September) and offer a reminder of the deep care that surrounds our Hope community.

🌀 Board Highlights: July–September

This quarter, the Board focused on strengthening our governance foundation and preparing for the year ahead. Key activities included:

- **Board Retreat & Role Discernment:** In September, we gathered for a retreat centered on clarifying board roles, streamlining responsibilities, and aligning our work with the congregation's evolving needs. Using feedback from the Congregational Survey and our bylaws, we explored new ways to foster transparency, collaboration, and spiritual grounding in our leadership practices. Please review [member resources](#) online, where you can see board meeting minutes, access the Handbook, and the Membership Directory. Email: Hopeuu@hopeuu.org if you need login assistance.
- **Strategic Planning Conversations:** We began mapping out priorities for the coming year, including stewardship, community engagement, and deepening our commitment to equity and inclusion. We have identified a need to proactively work on mapping out plans for Facilities Maintenance and Renovations, and renewing our [Welcoming Congregation](#), and [Green Sanctuary](#) designations. We have also initiated the re-formation of a Healthy Relations Committee. The board supported the formation of a Logo Task Force to consider a Hope logo re-design. These conversations will continue into winter as we seek input from committees and members.
- **Policy Exploration:** In light of national concerns around immigration enforcement, we've begun exploring how UU congregations can establish policies regarding ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement). So far we have approved a policy establishing the Minister's Study, AV Room, and CYRE Director's office as designated "Private Spaces – Access limited to religious purposes of Hope Unitarian Church." For those interested in learning more along with us, please visit: <https://www.uua.org/leaderlab/ice-agents>



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK - A SEASON OF GROUNDING AND GROWTH

VANESSA B. SELF - PRESIDENT, HOPE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

♥ A Circle of Care

As we enter colder months and cope with the on-going government shut-down, please remember: you are not alone. If you or someone you know is experiencing food or housing insecurity, our **Care Team, Minister, and Board** are here to support you. Whether it's connecting to resources, offering pastoral care, or simply listening, we are committed to walking with one another in times of need.

✉ You can reach out confidentially to the Care Team by emailing hopeuu@hopeuu.org, or speak with Rev. Justin McCreary directly. Board members are also available after worship or by email.

📅 Upcoming Adult Forum: Hope's Future Together

Please join us on **Sunday, November 16** for a special **Adult Forum** titled:

Hope's Future Together: Board Work & Congregational Wisdom

We'll share updates on board initiatives, invite your reflections on our shared priorities, and explore how congregational wisdom can guide our path forward. This is a chance to connect, ask questions, and help shape the future of Hope. Let us continue to build a community where care is not just a value—it's a practice.



Congregational Survey Summary

Total Responses: 46

Survey Period: Summer 2025

Compiled for: Hope Board Retreat

Key Themes & Insights

1. Governance & Communication

- Respondents expressed a strong desire for clearer decision-making processes and transparent communication from leadership.
- Many asked for more accessible explanations of board roles, responsibilities, and how decisions are made and shared.

2. Spiritual Engagement

- Members value spiritual depth and seek more opportunities for ritual, reflection, and multigenerational worship.
- There's interest in programming that integrates UU values with personal growth and community connection.

3. Community & Belonging

- A recurring theme was the importance of feeling heard, seen, and included.
- Respondents emphasized the need for intentional relationship-building across age groups and committees.

4. Leadership Development

- Many expressed interest in clearer pathways to leadership, including onboarding, mentorship, and succession planning.
- There's enthusiasm for legacy-building and cultivating a collaborative leadership culture.

5. Programming & Outreach

- Suggestions included expanding adult faith formation, social justice engagement, and intergenerational activities.
- Several respondents requested more flexible and accessible formats, such as hybrid options and varied scheduling.





LET'S TURN THE MINISTER'S OFFICE INTO A MINI FOOD BANK!

We know many in our community are struggling right now due to the ongoing government shutdown. To help, the Minister's Office at Hope Unitarian Church is transforming into a Mini Food Bank to collect and distribute non-perishable food for those in need.

You can help by bringing donations of items such as:

- **Canned fruits and vegetables**
- **Canned soups and stews**
- **Peanut butter and jelly**
- **Pasta and pasta sauce**
- **Rice and beans**
- **Canned tuna or chicken**
- **Boxed meals and macaroni & cheese**
- **Cereal and oatmeal**

Every donation—large or small—makes a difference. Drop items off at the Minister's Office during church hours or on Sunday mornings. Together, we can offer hope and nourishment to those most affected.

Hope Care Team - careteam@hopeuu.org



NOVEMBER EVENTS

● Board and Committee Meetings

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

- Board of Trustees: 7:00 PM, November 18th

● 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.

Annual Auction: Saturday, November 8th

- 5:00-8:00 PM

Feed the Homeless: Saturday, November 15th

Hope Lunch Bunch: Wednesday, November 19th,
11:30 AM

Stone Soup Sunday: Sunday, November 23rd, 12:00
PM

● Log Cabin Rentals

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

- 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 November 9th.

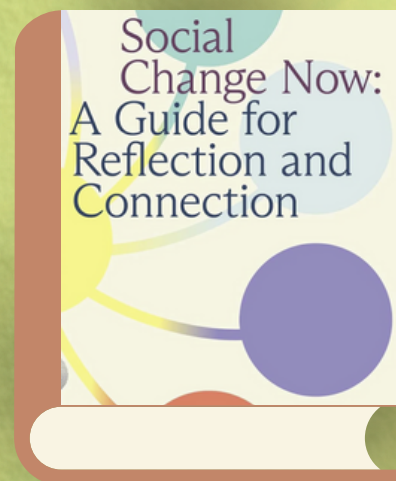


NOVEMBER EVENTS

Happy Birthday!

November Birthdays

Ken Jones - 4
Nate Newman - 5
Alice Perrault - 5
Lydia Reece - 13
Nancy Sahler - 17
Steve Witt - 25
Linda Tracy - 29



UU Common Read 2025-2026

When we do a UU Common read together, we share in reflection, learning, and action. This year's common read book is "Social Change Now: A Guide for Reflection and Connection" by Deepa Iyer

November Adult Forums

November 2: Generosity Recipient: Oasis Ascension
November 9: A Review of Hope Safety & Security
November 16: Hope's Future: Board Work & Congregational Wisdom
with Vanessa Self, President of the Hope Board of Trustees
November 23: Thankfulness Discussion
November 30: Coffee & Conversation, No Adult Forum





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 Cavanah

Church Administrator

Rachel Hay

Lead Teacher

Elizabeth Obal

Church Accountant

Christy Stalcup

Music Director

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2025-2026 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Vanessa Self, President

Jeff Dossett, President Elect

David Tracy, Past-President

Rebecca Jones, Vice President of Finance and Planning

Gail Hawk, Vice President of Programs

Christy Chesnut Levine, Secretary

Vacant Position Treasurer

Carol Young, Trustee

Gail Nagengast, Trustee

