

# FOCUS FEBRUARY 2026

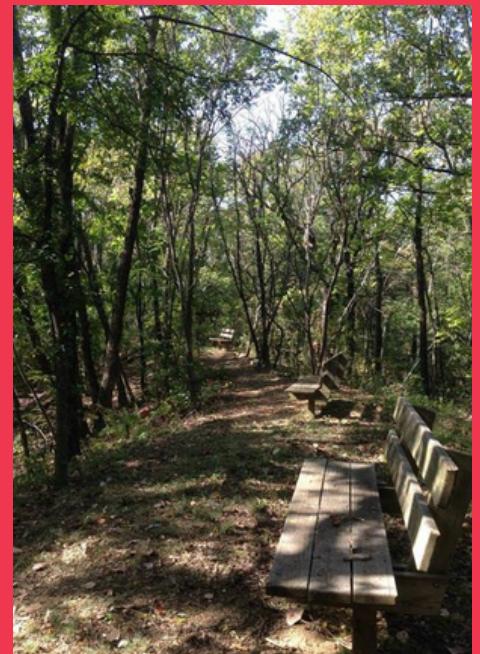


## EMBODYING RESILIENCE

# FEBRUARY AT HOPE

February at Hope carries its own kind of warmth, and this month it's wrapped in chocolate. Our Chocolate Auction on Sunday, February 8th at noon is the highlight of the month and a truly special gathering for our church family. More than just a fundraiser, this event is a celebration of generosity, creativity, and connection. From beautifully crafted treats to friendly bidding and plenty of laughter, the Chocolate Auction invites everyone to take part in something sweet that supports Hope. It's a moment we look forward to all year, and one that reminds us how joyful giving can be when we do it together.

Alongside this special event, February continues with the steady rhythm of life at Hope. Women of Hope gathers on Thursday, February 5th, followed by familiar and loved moments like Lunch Bunch, Game Night, Feed the Homeless, and Hope Happy Hour throughout the month. These regular gatherings ground us in fellowship and service, creating space to grow in faith and friendship week by week. As we move through February, we invite you to join us—not only for the sweetness of the Chocolate Auction, but for all the meaningful moments that make Hope feel like home.



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## EMBODYING RESILIENCE BY REV JUSTIN M. MCCREARY

I am writing this article as I sit in the lobby of a hotel in Albuquerque, New Mexico, at the UUMA's Institute for the Learning Ministry. Institute is an opportunity for us ministers to gather, hold space in worship, and continue our education through learning tracks. During this week, I've had the opportunity to sing, pray, learn, and experience the joy of gathering with beloved colleagues during this difficult time. In doing so, I am reminded how important it is for people to gather and have the opportunity to share together our joys, concerns, fears, dreams, and most of all, the hope that springs forth when we are surrounded by the people we love.

I believe that it is this love that plants the seeds of resilience in our hearts. We are told through conventional wisdom that when times get tough, the tough get going, but I think a better option is that when times get tough, the tough get loving. Then, when our seed of resilience begins to sprout, it will be watered by the hope that falls like rain when we are surrounded by the people we love. It is that hope that gives resilience its necessary strength to stand firm through the harsh reality we are living through.

- The truth is that we all get tired, we all get overwhelmed, but when we approach that with resilience grown from love and hope providing life-giving water, we discover staying power that will help us rise even in the most difficult times. So when you are disheartened and confronted with a world on fire, before you choose to despair, surround yourself with love, and hope will follow.



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](mailto: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.



# Embodying Resilience: A Call to Live Our UU Principles With Children at the Center by Nia Darrington-Stokes

As a religious educator, I am often asked how we teach resilience to children. My answer is simple and challenging: we don't teach resilience to children—we practice it with them. And in Unitarian Universalism, our principles give us a clear and faithful guide for what embodied resilience looks like in action.

The First Principle affirms the inherent worth and dignity of every person. For children, this means they are not projects to fix or behaviors to manage, but whole people deserving of respect. When we listen to children's feelings, honor their boundaries, and respond with care rather than control, we teach them that their bodies and voices matter.

The Second Principle calls us to justice, equity, and compassion in human relations. Embodying resilience requires us to notice which children are most often asked to "be strong"—especially Black and Brown children, neurodivergent children, and children carrying trauma. Compassion asks us to create environments that support their needs rather than punish their differences.

The Third Principle invites acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth. Children grow spiritually when they are safe to be curious, emotional, joyful, and imperfect. Resilience flourishes when mistakes are met with guidance and repair, not shame.

The Fourth and Fifth Principles the free and responsible search for truth and meaning and the right of conscience remind us to take children seriously as moral beings. When children are allowed to ask hard questions, express dissent, and take part in decisions that affect them, they learn that resilience includes discernment and courage.

The Sixth and Seventh Principles call us toward the Beloved Community and respect for the interdependent web of all existence. Children cannot embody resilience alone. They need communities that regulate together, care collectively, and model what it looks like to rest, repair, and reconnect.

Embodying resilience is not about teaching children to endure harm. It is about ensuring they do not have to. When we live our UU Principles with intention especially in how we care for our youngest members we create a faith community where resilience is not demanded but lovingly grown.

May we continue to be a congregation that centers children's dignity, honors their bodies, and voices, and lives our values aloud.

## CYRE Survey

Hope's Children and Youth Religious Education Committee, CYRE Director, and staff would like your input! Please take this brief survey to indicate your interests and help us continue to co-create a program that is meaningful and supports Hope's Mission: To create a Welcoming Community that Celebrates Diversity Nurtures Spiritual Growth and works for Justice and Compassion in the World! Parents, Grandparents, Caregivers, Interested Persons, and YOUTH ages 13 and up are all encouraged to take this survey. Please note that this survey mentions the OWL (Our Whole Lives Lifespan Sexuality Education) and a Coming of Age Program - Please click the links for more information regarding these programs. [Survey Link](#)

# Family Promise

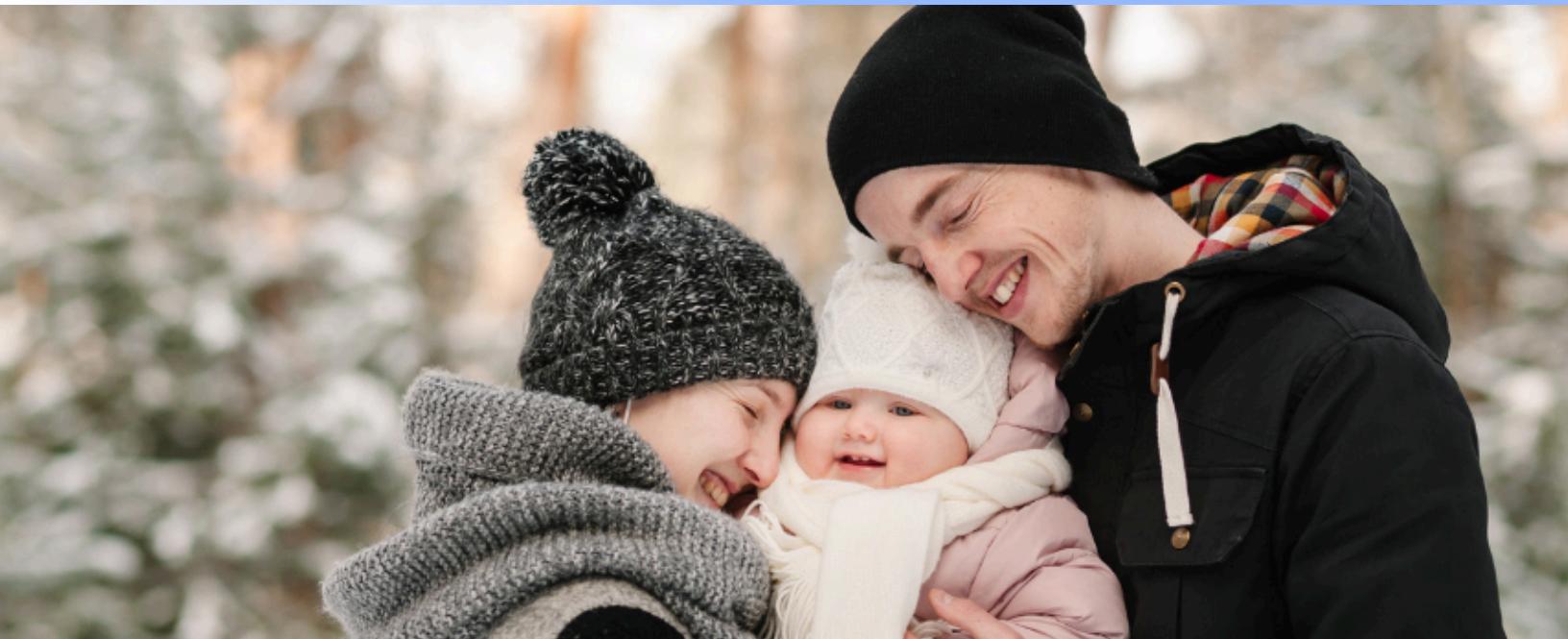
## FEBRUARY GENEROSITY RECIPIENT

Family Promise of Tulsa County exists to meet families at one of the most vulnerable moments of their lives and walk with them toward stability, dignity, and lasting independence. Their mission is to prevent and ultimately eliminate family homelessness by providing essential support and services that empower families on a path toward sustainable independence. Guided by a vision of a community where every family has a home, a livelihood, and the opportunity to build a better future, Family Promise brings together local congregations, volunteers, and community partners to offer not just help, but genuine hospitality. Families are welcomed with respect and compassion, creating an environment where they feel accepted, supported, and valued.

One of the primary ways Family Promise serves families is through its Apartment Shelter Program. Families experiencing homelessness are provided a safe, temporary apartment for 30 to 90 days while working closely with a case manager on an individualized plan for success. During this time,

Family Promise helps cover basic necessities such as diapers, formula, hygiene items, and limited transportation, while also assisting families in obtaining vital documents like birth certificates and IDs. These supports reduce stress and allow parents to focus on securing employment, saving money, and finding permanent housing. When a family successfully transitions into their own home, another family is welcomed into the program, continuing the cycle of care and restoration. Family Promise also works to prevent homelessness before it begins through its Future Starts at Home prevention and diversion program. By offering one-time financial assistance of up to \$1,000 to families on the brink of losing their housing, this program helps keep families stable and prevents them from entering homelessness altogether. This December, as our Generosity Recipient, Family Promise of Tulsa County invites us to be part of a meaningful solution—helping end homelessness one family at a time by investing in hope, stability, and a future that begins at home.

### Donate





# FEBRUARY EVENTS

## Board and Committee Meetings

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

Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup> - 7pm - Finance Committee Meeting

Tuesday, February 24th - 7 PM - Board of Trustees Meeting

## 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](http://www.hopeuu.org/calendar) for the most current schedule of events.

Women of Hope: Thursday, February 5<sup>th</sup> - 6PM

Chocolate Auction: Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup> - 12PM

Lunch Bunch: Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup> - 11:30 AM

Game Night: Thursday, February 19<sup>th</sup> - 6:30 PM

Feed the Homeless: Saturday, February 21<sup>st</sup>

Hope Happy Hour - Thursday, February 26<sup>th</sup> 5:30 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](http://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 February 15<sup>th</sup>.



# FEBRUARY EVENTS

# Happy Birthday!

## February Birthdays

Tim Nagengast - 5

Ruth Jackson - 7

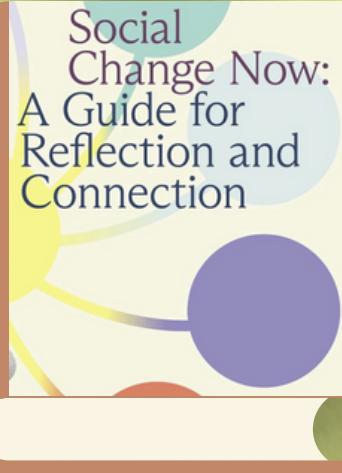
Mary Baird - 7

Alice Van Wormer - 10

Carol Young - 11

Gale Luria - 21

Jo Ann Howse - 25



## 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

## February Adult Forums

February 1<sup>st</sup>: Generosity Recipient, Family Promise

February 8<sup>th</sup>: UU Common Read Discussion - Social Change Now: A Guide for Reflection and Connection by Deepa Iyer

February 18<sup>th</sup>: 2SLGBTQIA+ Terms 101

February 22<sup>nd</sup>: A Discussion about the Book "On Tyranny" by Timothy Snyder led by Rev. Justin McCreary





# 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](mailto: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.

## 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

## 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.

## CONTACT US

Hope Unitarian Church

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918-481-0999

[hopeuu@hopeuu.org](mailto:hopeuu@hopeuu.org)

[www.hopeuu.org](http://www.hopeuu.org)

## 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

