
FOCUS
NOVEMBER
2026
HEALING



HOPE AUCTION! LAST CALL!

Dust off your finest flapper dresses, straighten your fedoras, and get ready for a night of 1920s glamour at Hope's Annual Auction on Saturday, November 7! We're transforming our space into a speakeasy for an evening of Italian food and friendly bidding. Dressing up in your finest Roaring Twenties attire is encouraged, so don't be afraid to bring a little vintage flair to the festivities!

The online auction opens November 1, giving you the perfect opportunity to explore the wonderful items up for bid, discover unique homemade treasures, plan exciting experiences, and find parties you won't want to miss. Take a look, choose your favorites, and start building your bidding strategy! November 1 is also the last day to purchase tickets and the deadline to bring any remaining auction donations to the church.

More than anything, the Hope Auction is a chance to celebrate what makes our community special. Every donated treasure, shared talent, and offered experience represents someone giving a little of themselves to help our church thrive. It's an opportunity to gather around good food, make memories, support the place we call home, and remember that the heart of Hope has always been the people who make it what it is. We hope you'll join us for a truly special evening.



IN THIS ISSUE

REFLECTIONS FROM THE MINISTER

RE CORNER

GENEROSITY RECIPIENT

NOVEMBER EVENTS

ABOUT HOPE CHURCH

SPEAKEASY

Hope's Annual Auction

Saturday, Nov. 7th - 5 PM

LAST CALL FOR TICKETS - DEADLINE NOVEMBER 1st

$60 in person | $30 online only



GRIEF IN PROCESS
BY REV JUSTIN M. MCCREARY

I have a special painting on my mantel. It is a cityscape full of buildings, and off canvas, a sun is setting. We know the sun is setting because there is red light, like fire, reflecting off of the buildings. Actually, I don't know if it is painted or drawn or a mix between. I just know I love it, and I love it for so many reasons. It makes me think about that world in the painting. I love it because it is pretty. I love it because it looks simple, yet I cannot replicate anything like it. It is an amalgam of joy and sorrow. But most of all, I love it because my friend Paul painted it.

I met Paul in 2007 or 2008. I had moved to Jackson, Mississippi, to take a chaplain residency at the G.V. Sonny Montgomery VA Hospital. I didn't know anyone there and, after a month, had grown very lonely in my small apartment. Paul was my neighbor and would later become my best friend. It was one of those friendships where he was my best friend, but I wasn't his. But I was fine with that. Through Paul, I met so many people and made so many friends.

It's funny. I only lived in Jackson, Mississippi, for six months at that time and would move back to Memphis, but the friends I made in Jackson became like family to me, not because they were better people or kinder than any friends I had ever had, but because I NEEDED them. I could not survive without them. I could not survive without Paul.

Paul was an artist. He was born in Jackson, Mississippi, and lived in Jackson, Mississippi, his whole life. He had a young son who lived in Texas, whom he only saw once a month. But those were always exciting days for Paul. Over the years, Paul would be the best man at my wedding, and I would get to return the favor by performing a wedding for him. Later, I would be a pallbearer at his father's funeral.

I would do my best to help him through his divorce, but the problem is, by that time, I had recently moved to Oklahoma and was trying to convince this wonderful little congregation that I was a good minister.

I never knew how bad my friend's drinking had become until one day, while working at his home, having had too much to drink, he fell and broke his knee. His knee never really healed. He lost his house and became more dependent on alcohol. He was deep in the throes of depression, and then I remember receiving a call right around New Year's Eve 2022 that he had died.

His memorial service was two months later in Jackson, Mississippi, strangely in the same place where he had served as my best man. I was unable to attend, actually performing a memorial service for Hope. Some days that feels like yesterday, some days it feels like it hasn't happened yet, and other days it feels like it was a decade ago.

I have so many conflicting emotions about his death: sadness, grief, pain, anger, frustration, and self-doubt. His death was not like the death of loved ones who had lived a full life. His death came like a thief in the night that robbed the world of beauty. It was as if Prometheus took fire away from us and gave it back to the gods. It wasn't fair.

I learned after Paul's death that healing takes place slowly, and sometimes mourning never stops. There is a part of me that hopes I never fully heal, because I can pretend he is still alive in the pain.

I understand this is not the kind of Focus article I normally write, but it was on my mind. Please take whatever you find helpful and ignore the rest. The thing is, healing is always in process, and grief never really goes away; it just changes into something else.

This article asks no questions and gives no answers. It is just me, reflecting on grief in process.

OCTOBER GENEROSITY RECIPIENT: TAKE CONTROL INITIATIVE

Take Control Initiative (TCI) is working to ensure that everyone in Tulsa County has access to the birth control options and information they need, regardless of insurance status or financial circumstances. Since 2010, TCI has worked to remove barriers to reproductive healthcare and help individuals make informed decisions about if and when they want to become pregnant. Their mission is rooted in the belief that everyone deserves dignity, autonomy, and the ability to make decisions about their own health.

Through a network of community partners and healthcare providers, TCI offers free access to all birth control methods, IUD and implant removals, morning-after pill kits for eligible individuals, and free Lyft rides to partner clinics. They also provide educational workshops, training for healthcare providers, and resources to help community organizations better support those seeking care. By addressing financial, transportation, and informational barriers, TCI helps make healthcare more accessible throughout our community.

TCI also works to empower individuals with the knowledge to advocate for their own healthcare needs and feel confident exploring the options available to them. Their work extends beyond direct services through community education and partnerships that encourage dignity, trust, and respect in healthcare.

Everyone deserves access to the information and resources needed to make personal healthcare decisions with confidence. Whether you are exploring birth control options, looking for a nearby clinic, or simply have questions, Take Control Initiative is here to help. To learn more about their services, visit takecontrolinitiative.org or text (539) 302-3615 for support.

Donate Volunteer




HAPPY
Halloween








MERICA





DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION REFLECTION: HEALING BEGINS HERE

As we enter our month of exploring Healing, I invite each of us to remember that healing is not about perfection. It is about making space for growth, compassion, and hope.

Children naturally understand healing. They know that scraped knees need bandages, but they also know that hurt feelings need hugs, kind words, and someone willing to listen. As adults, we sometimes forget that our hearts need care just as much as our bodies do.

Throughout this month, our children and youth will discover that healing can happen through creativity, friendship, gratitude, forgiveness, service, laughter, and quiet moments of reflection.

They will explore how caring for others, caring for our world and caring for ourselves are all connected.

Healing also happens in community. Every smile shared, every helping hand extended, every story listened to with compassion strengthens the bonds that make our congregation a place of belonging.

May this month encourage each of us to ask:

- What helps my heart heal?
- How can I offer healing to someone else?
- What small act of kindness can I practice today?

As I end this article I want to ask each of you to remember that life is not a race. So may you trust that every small step matters, receive kindness with an open heart, offer compassion without hesitation and may you find strength in community, hope in tomorrow, and peace within yourself.

May our congregation continue to be a place where every person is welcomed with love, accepted without conditions, and encouraged to grow into the fullness of who they are!

With gratitude,
Nia Darrington-Stokes
Director of Religious Education



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:

Tuesday, Oct. 19th - 7 PM – Finance Committee Meeting
Tuesday, Nov. 17th - 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 for the most current schedule of events.

Annual Auction -Saturday, November 7th - 5 PM
Gardens & Grounds Cleanup Day - Saturday, November 14th - 9 AM
Hope Lunch Bunch - Wednesday, November 18th - 11:30 AM
InReach - Friday, November 20th - 1:30 PM
Feed the Homeless - Saturday, November 21st
Stone Soup Sunday - Sunday, November 22nd - 12 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 15th.

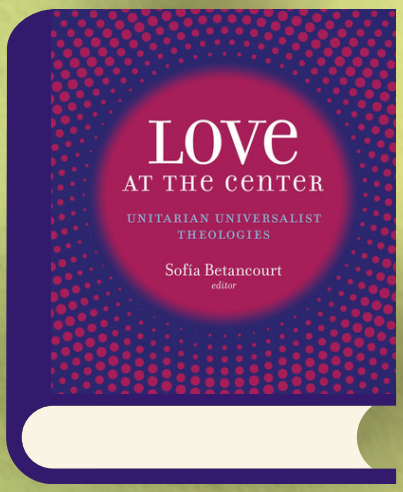
NOVEMBER EVENTS

Happy Birthday!

November Birthdays

Ken Jones - 4
Lydia Reece - 13
Nancy Sahler - 17
Mariah McAlpin - 23
Steve Witt - 25
Linda Tracy - 29





UU Common Read 2027-2028

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 1st - Generosity Recipient Take Control Initiative

November 8th - A Conversation About Suffering, Loss, Grief, and Trauma

November 15th - Board of Trustees Long Range Planning with Jeff Dossett

November 22nd - Surviving the Holidays with Jo Ann Howse

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.

HOPE'S STAFF

Justin McCreary
Minister
Nia Darrington-Stokes
Director of Religious Education
Morgen Cavanah
Church Administrator
Rachel Hay
Lead Teacher
Christy Stalcup
Music Director
TaMar Tease
CYRE Teacher
Megan Dennison
CYRE Student Teacher Assistant
Montreal Love
Sexton

2026-2027 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Jeff Dossett, President
Christy Chesnut Levine, President Elect
Vanessa Self, Past-President
Rebecca Jones, Vice President of Finance and Planning
Gail Hawk, Vice President of Programs
Larry Cochran, Secretary
Gail Nagengast, Trustee
Cheryl Manasco, Trustee

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
8432 South Sheridan Road
Tulsa, OK 74133
Mailing address:
PO Box 35284 Tulsa, OK 74153-0284
918-481-0999
hopeuu@hopeuu.org
www.hopeuu.org

