



HOPE United Church of Christ February 2021

Tidings of Hope published monthly by: **Hope United Church of Christ**
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Submissions for publication may be sent to the Church Office at the above addresses, either electronically or by paper.



The Reverend's Reflection

Throughout this pandemic my sense of time has been distorted. I have trouble remembering what day it is because I don't leave the house very often. I used to travel to the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays and of course church on Sunday, so my week was defined by travelling. But since mid-March last year, one day blurs into the next. One friend called every day, "*Blurs-day*" and that's exactly how it feels. So, to realize that Lent is almost here is very disconcerting. Didn't I just put the Christmas decorations away?

Lent is the Church season before Easter that lasts 40 days (to remember Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness). Lent is a somber time of penitence and sacrifice as we remember how Jesus suffered and died on the cross. Traditionally, the church has encouraged congregants to give something up during Lent (like chocolate or dessert) to be reminded of the sacrifice Jesus made for us. This has been a year full of sacrifices.

The pandemic has forced us to sacrifice being together in our building to keep each other healthy and Covid-free. We have sacrificed hugs and potlucks and meeting around a table passing notes and pastries. We have sacrificed the sound of our voices singing together in the sanctuary so that we can decrease the spread of virus droplets through the air. We have sacrificed praying together hand in hand. We have sacrificed seeing warm smiles because they are hidden behind life-saving masks. We have sacrificed so much this year so forgive me when I admit that I am not interested in sacrificing anything else for Lent.

What if this year in place of giving something up for Lent, we add something instead? Let's add more love, care and community. What if each week we reach out to someone new? Send a card, an email, a text or make a phone call to someone you don't know very well. Think of it as sitting next to someone new in the pew and greeting them with a warm handshake and inviting them to coffee hour in the narthex. Instead of a handshake, we can extend warm greetings through cards or calls. Make a new friend. Tell someone you care about them. Give someone new a sense of belonging, a glimmer of hope, the warmth of love. There are 40 days in Lent starting with Ash Wednesday and 6 Sundays in Lent. Whether you reach out to someone new each day or each Sunday or something in between, be intentional. Make it a spiritual discipline.

Lent prepares us for the hope, joy and new life of Easter. Last year I could never have imagined that we would be worshipping remotely for Easter AGAIN because of the pandemic.

But this year there is hope. There are vaccines and new treatments. We will be singing and hugging in the sanctuary again soon. But in the meantime, let's strengthen our connections, our bonds, our community so that even in our social distancing we are still connected through love.



Moderator's Moment

I want to wish everyone love and hugs during this time. Hope United Church of Christ is so full of love for others. We easily show God's love to our families, our friends and our communities.

Our missions of love include the Care Team. The Care Team send cards, food and good wishes to people who need a "hug." You may have received one yourself.

Deacons and the AV Team send their love to everyone each Sunday with a beautifully decorated alter and a video service that is incredible.

Growth and Development express their love within our church and outside of our church while planning activities, having OneBlood drives, creating and managing huge yard sales, bake sales and making sure we all have our Logo Shirts.

Justice and Witness keeps us aware and in tune with the many justice issues relating to the love of equality with diversity and the love of creation (thank you for that beautiful new tree in our south lawn – J&W!).

Stewardship shares their love of Hope UCC by conscientiously teaching us about the importance of pledging.

Christian Ed demonstrates UCC's Love of Children by their involvement in providing healthy loving activities for our children, even through Zoom.

Pastoral Relations LOVES our Pastor and takes good care of her needs.

Trustees take loving care of the Hope UCC building and property, making sure everything is in good safe working condition.

Your church Officers lovingly meet every month in the Council, using their discernment and knowledge to bring the committees together to create the best church we can be.

Happy
Valentine's Day!



So you see, even if you may live alone, have no family at this time, or just feel isolated because of this pandemic, know that you are loved by the Hope United Church of Christ family. We really ARE all working together to share God's love.

Happy Valentine's Day to everyone.
Melanie, Moderator



We have so many events happening in February and March. I hope you will plan to attend some of them.

The Food Collection Drive is scheduled for Feb. 3 & 6. Please plan to donate.

All of our church committees will be meeting at various times. Remember, all the meetings are open to guests. You are welcome to attend any meeting, just check with them for dates and times.

If you're into spending some time reading and relaxing this month, don't forget we have very interesting discussions on this month's book in the Book Club meeting.

And ladies, we are going to offer a virtual ladies luncheon the 4th Saturday of the month, with a door prize. Hope to see you there. Bring your own lunch!!

If you love public speaking – oh who doesn't – perhaps you would like to contact Deacons and volunteer to be a Liturgist.

Do you like to hit a nail, fix a water leak, spruce up the Memorial Garden, then Trustees could be your group.

We've got a "targeted" yard sale for media (books, cassettes, CDs, etc) and wall art coming near the end of March. Perhaps your strong arms and backs could help with set up.

We have something for everyone. No cliques here, just friendly people sharing God's love with each other.

Sharing Our Best

On January 23, 2021, the Hope United Church of Christ Growth and Development Committee sponsored a drive through, drop off hygiene drive to benefit the Brevard Schools Supply Zone in Cocoa, Florida. The 415 items collected will be distributed to students pre-K through high school in 30 of the top impoverished schools in Brevard.

Items included packages of razors, shaving cream, toothbrushes, tooth paste, dental floss, new underwear, feminine hygiene products, soap, body wash, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, body powder, combs, brushes, hair ties, lotion, personal cleansing wipes, hydrogen peroxide, and hand sanitizer.



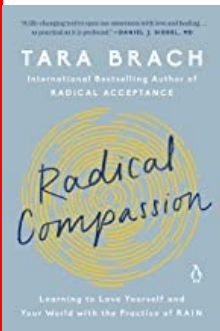
Thank you to our church and community for your support!

January 18, Justice and Witness led a virtual MLK Day service on zoom. They also continue to collect peanut butter for the Cocoa High School Fresh Market food pantry, and they also are purchasing a live oak to plant in honor of Earth Day. A new endeavor for J and W is collecting plastic bottle caps for the Florida Institute of Technology Indian River Lagoon cleanup initiative. The bottle caps will be placed in mesh bags and placed strategically throughout the lagoon in an effort to aerate the water. It's also a good way to repurpose wasted plastic. You can drop them off at the church any time, and they will be delivered to the Central Brevard Zoo, the official collection site.

February 3 and 6, we will have another drive through food drop off for the Central Brevard Sharing Center food pantry from 9-11 a.m.

Saturday, March 20, we plan to host another community blood drive along with an outdoor yard sale featuring art work, frames, books, CDs, DVD's, and a cookie sale. Monies will go to our general fund. We've had to tighten our belts a bit, so committees went to a zero budget to make a balanced budget this year. Instead of our usual two large two day yard sales which bring huge proceeds, we've been doing virtual sales and targeted sales through social media and word of mouth. So far it has been very successful.

Book Club February 2021



For February, the Hope Book Club will read and discuss “Radical Compassion: Learning to Love Yourself and Your World with the Practice of RAIN” by Tara Brach. Tara Brach is one of the most trusted mindfulness teachers in America. In this book, she explains the RAIN meditation and how it can help us deal with the stresses of our modern world.

RAIN uses a mixture of eastern spiritual practices as well as contemporary brain science. In this book Brach explains and illustrates the four steps of RAIN: Recognize, Allow, Investigate, and Nurture. She includes practical hints as well as memorable stories from her teaching experiences.

We hope you will join us on Zoom on Tuesday, February 23rd at 1:30 pm to discuss this book and use of the meditation method, RAIN.. Meeting ID: 892 1409 7952.



HOPE Book Club Reading List 2021

January	<u>Florida (Short Stories) - Lauren Groff</u>
February	<u>Radical Compassion: learning to love yourself and the world with the practice of RAIN - Tara Branch</u>
March	<u>Mother Country - Irina Reyn</u>
April	<u>The Twenty-something Soul: understanding the religious and secular lives of American young adults</u> <i>Tim Clydesdale and Kathleen Garces-Foley</i>
May	<u>Just Mercy - Bryan Stevenson</u>

A Message from Stewardship Committee

Hello to one and all!

The Stewardship Committee wants to say thank you to all of you who have pledged for the upcoming year and have invested in the care and longevity of the Church.

Stewardship wants to remind everyone about the what it means to be a 5 for 5 church. We contribute funds to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) five time a year to five ministries beyond the local church. OCWM provides funding for conferences and national ministries of the United Church of Christ such as Wider Church Ministries, Local Church Ministries, Justice and Witness Ministries, General Ministries, and Pension Boards.

The five ministries are OCWM basic support, One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, and the Christmas Fund. Fund. These offerings sponsor vital ministries that bring hope to people in the U.S. and around the world.

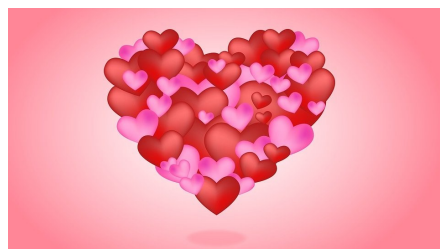
There will be more information forthcoming starting in February. about the first special mission, then late spring, mid summer, and Christmas time for the remaining three offerings.

Again, thank you to all those that have supported these missions financially and with prayers.

We wish that this year brings each of you Hope, Health, and Happiness.

Blessings,

Stewardship Committee





- 2/7 - Communion Worship
Zoom Mtg. No. **874-1336-0966**
- 2/14 - Worship
Zoom Mtg. No. **874-1336-0966**
- 2/21 - Worship
Zoom Mtg. No. **874-1336-0966**
- 2/28 - Worship
Zoom Mtg. No. **874-1336-0966**

Drive Through Food Drop-Off
for Central Brevard Sharing Center
February 3 and 6
9 am - 11 am

Book Club
February 23 - 1:30 pm
Zoom Mtg. No. 892-1409-7952

Virtual Ladies Luncheon
February 27—noon
Zoom (Details to come)

Happy Seekers
Fridays at 10:00 am
Zoom Meeting No. 916 6472 2064

Coffee Hour
Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:30 am
Zoom Mtg. No. 425 599 5598

Theology on Tap
Wednesdays at 6:00 pm
Zoom Mtg. No. 815 9776 7294



- 2/5 - Denise King's Birthday
2/11 - Jacquie Park's Birthday
2/18 - Christi Scheirer's Birthday
2/21 - Jeannie Robert's Birthday
2/22 - Heavan Elam's Birthday
2/27—Joyce Gordon's Birthday

Valentine's day
14 February

