

# House of Hope Calls Senior Pastor and Head of Staff: Rev. Dr. E. Scott Jones



At the Sunday, February 16 Congregational Meeting, House of Hope members voted to call Rev. Dr. E. Scott Jones as our next Senior Pastor and Head of Staff.

Rev. Dr. E. Scott Jones has served as Senior Minister at First Central Congregational Church in Omaha, Nebraska from 2010 to present. He earned his PhD and Master's in Philosophy from the University of Oklahoma, following his BA in Religion and Philosophy from Oklahoma Baptist University. He is a two-time alumnus of the Yale Writers' Workshop. Scott also drew from his philosophical expertise to teach in the Philosophy Department at Creighton University.

Prior to his current call, Scott served as Pastor of the Cathedral of Hope in Oklahoma City, where he also wrote a column for the *Oklahoma Gazette*. His earlier ministry included roles as Associate Pastor and Youth and College Minister at churches in Arkansas and Texas. In the community, Scott has been actively involved in social justice work, serving with the anti-racism organization Voices United, co-authoring the Heartland Proclamation, and coordinating Nebraska's #ReadyToMarry campaign for marriage equality. While Scott finds fulfillment in various pursuits including hiking, reading, gardening, and travel, he considers being a father to his son Sebastian, age 9, the greatest joy of his life.

The vote of House of Hope's members in attendance at the meeting was 197 in favor of calling Rev. Dr. Scott Jones, two no votes, and three abstentions. His tentative start date at House of Hope is mid-May.

## Wednesday Lenten Series: Living into Matthew 25



Wednesdays,  
March 12 - April 9  
Dinner:  
5:15 - 6 p.m.  
Presentation and Conversation:  
6 - 7 p.m.

Join us in the Kirk Parlour for a soup and pizza supper followed by a program about Matthew 25.

- Register for meals at <https://bit.ly/WednesdayLent> to ensure we have plenty of food for everyone. You can access this link on the website under **Things to Know**. All are welcome to join us for the meal.
- Donations are appreciated to cover the meal cost.

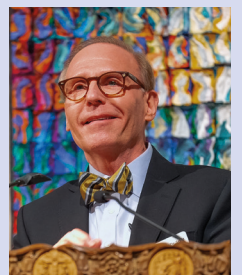
For more than a year, House of Hope has been designated as a Matthew 25 congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Matthew 25 congregations commit to eradicating systemic poverty, dismantling structural racism, and building congregational vitality. And bold visions require concrete actions! Come learn from leaders inside and outside our congregation more about this movement, and lend your voice to the direction House of Hope begins to take as we live out our unique calling to be a place of God's peace by working for God's justice.

### Schedule:

March 12:	Systemic Poverty, Speaker pending
March 19:	Rev. Dr. Scott Kenefake and Emily Meyer
March 26:	Rev. Elona Street-Stewart
April 2:	Rev. Anna Kendig Flores
April 9:	Next Steps

## Transitional Pastor Update

Rev. Dr. Scott Kenefake's last Sunday at House of Hope will be Easter Sunday, April 20. A farewell reception will be held after church on Palm Sunday, April 13. Scott and Gail will share with the congregation their plans for the future when finalized sometime in the coming weeks.



# WORSHIP

10 a.m.

Sunday, March 2, 2025  
*Transfiguration of the Lord*

**Motet Choir:**  
*I Will Arise, Shaw/Parker*  
*Laudate Nomen Domini, Tye*

Wednesday, March 5, 2025  
*Ash Wednesday Worship with*  
*Holy Communion, 7 p.m.*

Sunday, March 9, 2025  
*First Sunday in Lent | Youth Sunday*

**Bells of Hope**  
*Canticle of Hope, Dobrinski*  
*A Morning Prelude, Westenkuehler*

**Choir School**  
*St Cecilia and St Nicholas Choirs*  
*Praise to you, O God, Cora Cummings*  
*Thank you for the world so sweet,*  
Betty Bertaux  
*I lift up my eyes to the hills,*  
Paul Bowman

Sunday, March 16, 2025  
*Second Sunday in Lent*

**Motet Choir:**  
*Dixit Dominus, Naumann*  
*Give Us the Wings of Faith, Bullock*

Sunday, March 23, 2025  
*Third Sunday in Lent*

*Ubi Caritas, Gjeilo*  
*The Eyes of All, Harris*

Sunday, March 30, 2025  
*Fourth Sunday in Lent*

**Motet Choir:**  
*Sing a New Song, Macmillan*  
*Brother Sun, Sister Moon, Argento*



## A Note from Phil

*Community Care*

**“You are the salt of the earth...”**  
**-Matthew 5:13**

The season of Lent (the 40 days—excluding Sundays—between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday) has traditionally been a time for Christians to add a spiritual practice, or to remove an obstacle to spiritual practice. Like rampant consumerism has with Christmas, Lent has—to borrow a current turn of phrase—taken on a bit too much of a self-care vibe. Don’t misread me: I think adding personal practice, or abstaining from an unhelpful habit, is spiritually significant. I think it is modeled and encouraged throughout the Bible and centuries of Christian practice. And it always has the potential to lead us to deeper engagement with our inner lives.

But it cannot stop there.

We are not called to be salt to ourselves: enhancing the flavor of our personal well-being without regard for others. Nor are we called to be salt only to those we know, like, and agree with: making ourselves comfortable with the flavor of our chosen communities. We are salt of the earth: all creation, all that God has made and called good, including that and those we wish weren’t part of our reality.

The spiritual practices we choose to undertake, or the habits we choose to abstain from, or the resolution

to keep on keeping on without changing anything in our lives at present: if these do not center the care of our wider community; if they are not concerned with those in our midst who are marginalized, being erased or attacked, stripped of dignity, made to be hungry or homeless; they are nothing more, in the words of the apostle Paul, than noisy cymbals or clanging gongs.

Where do you see community care happening in this congregation? If you are salt of the earth, how will your presence add depth to that care?

Where do you see community care happening in this neighborhood? If this congregation is the salt of the earth, how will our presence broaden and deepen that care?

Where do you see community care happening in our region, our state, among and across our denominations and religious traditions? If Christians are the salt of the earth, how will our presence enhance the work of justice, peace, hope, and healing that is global in scale?

“...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve.” May these words from the gospels of Matthew and Mark guide us through this Lenten season, showing us where in the world we might make our communities places of care, compassion, hope, and love. Amen.

– Phil

### It’s Time to Pay Per Capita



Per capita is a funding mechanism to support the work of the PC(USA) at the local, regional and national levels. HOH annually pays per capita for each of its members (not each household). **2025 per capita is \$40 per member**, and we ask every member to contribute now. **House of Hope’s per capita for 2025 totals \$46,680** based on membership of 1,167 members in 2023. Please note **Per Capita** when paying by check or online: [bit.ly/HOHGiving](https://bit.ly/HOHGiving) > Fund: Per Capita Gifts

## Nominating Committee



Nominations forms are available for open positions on our Deacons, Trustees, and Session boards. The Nominating Committee asks you to prayerfully consider the strengths of your fellow congregants and nominate people you think would be good

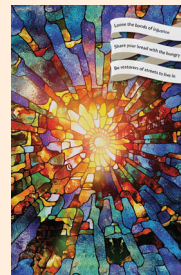
additions to our church leadership. You may nominate yourself. Please ask individuals you'd like to nominate for permission to submit their name.

The Congregational Meeting to approve the slate will be on Sunday, May 4. Use the online form on the church website at [hohchurch.org](http://hohchurch.org) under **Things to Know**. Paper versions of the form are available at the church kiosks. The deadline for submissions is Sunday, March 9, 2025.

If you have any questions, please contact Nominating Chair Mercedes Sheldon: [mmseldon@me.com](mailto:mmseldon@me.com)

## One Great Hour of Sharing Offering

Received during the season of Lent, Presbyterians worldwide join in sharing God's love with our neighbors-in-need around the world by providing disaster assistance, food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed.



**This Lenten season, please give generously to One Great Hour of Sharing.** You may give at any time.

### Ways to give:

- Special envelopes in the pew racks on Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday, or mail your gift with memo: OGHS
- Online: [bit.ly/HOHGiving](https://bit.ly/HOHGiving) > Fund: Other Gift > OGHS
- Text: **HOH OGHS** to 73256

## From Mercedes Sheldon, Deputy Clerk of Session



Well, your Nominating Committee has been meeting now for close to two months. We have reviewed nomination forms, talked with clergy and other church leadership, poured over the directory and the rosters of those currently serving, and prayed together for guidance and clarity. We are working to balance the needs of each board and of the various committees with the need for institutional knowledge {returning volunteers} and fresh perspectives {first-time Deacons, Elders, Trustees}. There are a lot of details to consider before we start calling individuals to ask them {you?!} to serve on one of the boards. That's our responsibility, after all!

What do we ask of you? If you receive a call from a member of the Nominating Committee, we truly hope that you will say "Yes!" Or, more realistically, "I have some questions and need a few days to think and pray about this."

Each of us on the committee, every Deacon you see on Sunday morning,

each Trustee and Elder, said "yes" for a reason. Many of those "yes" responses came along with some trepidation, with concerns about time commitments, with uncertainty about what comes next. But they—we!—did say yes, and House of Hope is blessed by their willingness to put their gifts to work through the grace of God.

Within our faith tradition, we talk about discernment. The *Oxford English Dictionary* offers this definition for discernment within a faith tradition: "The ability to make sound judgments in spiritual matters; the exercise of this ability; spiritual understanding or insight." The PNC went through an intense, complex process to guide their sound judgment in calling a new pastor to our congregation. The Nominating Committee undertakes an annual process to seek spiritual understanding of the needs and gifts of the church in order to call {literally on the phone and spiritually to serve} fellow congregants.

Then, if you get such a call, we ask you to self-discern, to exercise your good judgment and spiritual insight, to determine whether this is the right time—or the "good enough" time—for you to say "yes."

We truly hope that you will! With gratitude, Mercedes

## Children, Youth and Family Ministry



### Children and Family Ministry

Contact Jimmy Hoke:

[JimmyH@hohchurch.org](mailto:JimmyH@hohchurch.org)

### Sundays at House of Hope:

Nursery: Room 8 | 8:45 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
PreK - 2nd Graders: Room 4  
3rd-5th Graders: Room 7

**The Children's Library has reopened!**

**Intergenerational Enrichment Hour with Children's Book Author and Illustrator Nancy Carlson**  
**Sunday, March 9**

**Assembly Room | 11:15 a.m.**

### Youth and Family Ministry

Contact Elsa Kendig:

[ElsaK@hohchurch.org](mailto:ElsaK@hohchurch.org)

### Youth Group

**Sundays, March 2 and 16**  
**Youth Room | 6-8 p.m.**

Snacks, chat, games and more.

**Youth Sunday Rehearsal**  
**Saturday March 8 | 9 a.m. - Noon**

**Youth Sunday | Sunday March 9**  
**Youth Room | 9 a.m.**

Let's meet for bagels before worship.



## A Note from Scott Kenefake about the House of Hope Foundation

Our February *Anchor* newsletter featured an article describing recent actions of our governing bodies to begin the process of establishing a new House of Hope Foundation in order to expand our fundraising and program capabilities. I am pleased to announce that we have hired a highly skilled professional to become the new Executive Director of this developing organization, Madeline Cieslak. She brings a wealth of experience and a proven record in leading and developing nonprofit organizations. We are truly fortunate to have such a talented and gifted person joining our staff. She has initially been hired as a part of the church staff, and her salary will be paid for now out of the 2025 operating budget. Over the next few months she will work with our governing boards and other volunteers to get the Foundation organized and incorporated. Then, when this is completed, she will be the first employee of the new Foundation.

## HOH Welcomes Madeline Cieslak



House of Hope is delighted to welcome Madeline Cieslak as its new Executive Director of the House of Hope Foundation.

With over 25 years of experience in community arts education and nonprofit leadership, Madeline brings a deep commitment to fostering the arts as a vehicle for education, connection, and service.

A St. Paul native, Madeline has long been an advocate for the arts and a passionate community builder. She is also a former member and section leader of the Motet Choir, strengthening her deep ties to the House of Hope community and its mission.

For 17 years, Madeline served as the Executive Director of St. Joseph's School of Music (SJSM), providing visionary leadership, strategic direction, and program development while cultivating a vibrant community of artists, teachers, staff, and volunteers. Under her leadership, SJSM thrived, staying true to its faith-based mission of making high-quality music education accessible

to all. One of her most significant accomplishments was overseeing the school's 2022 relocation, leading the planning and project management of the re-design and renovations within the historic Richards Gordon School. Most recently, she successfully orchestrated the merger of SJSM with the St. Paul Conservatory of Music, broadening the school's programming, funding opportunities, and community impact.

Madeline is a co-founder of the Minnesota Bach Ensemble, where she served as its first Managing Director, laying the groundwork for the ensemble's continued success. Prior to her career in nonprofit leadership, Madeline spent 15 years as a professional classical singer, performing across the country in both opera and concert.

Madeline holds a B.A. in Music and French from Wellesley College, with additional studies at the Université and Conservatoire d'Aix-Marseille in France. She earned a Master of Music in Voice from the University of Minnesota, followed by a Post-Graduate Diploma from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and nonprofit executive education at the University of St. Thomas.

## Pastor Julia Carlson Celebrates 25 Years of Ordained Ministry



Scott Kenefake congratulates Julia following worship.

My heart is full. Thank you for sharing in the celebration to mark my twenty-five years of ordained ministry. In that time I served as an interim at Stillwater First, St Croix Falls, Rochester Community, and Buffalo. I also served as a Resident Chaplain for Fairview University Hospital and did Spiritual Care with Hazelden Betty Ford. All of this prepared me for these last ten and a half years with The House of Hope. When I started here, we didn't know what the path would bring. My tasks and project load have shifted with every new head of staff and my job description changed along with the title in 2022. It hasn't always been easy yet it has always offered me spiritual and professional growth.

So, thank you again for the financial gifts, for the notes, texts, and emails from Portland, Ireland, Namibia, Rotterdam, Colombia, and Mexico; and for the handshakes and hugs in the Kirk Parlour. I enjoyed interim ministry and, as a second career female pastor, did not expect to have an installed call. While I may not think of it this way every single day, on the whole, it is an amazing blessing and gift to be one of your pastors and Sunday was the icing on the cupcake! Blessings,  
Julia

# MARCH

## Mardi Gras Celebration and Chili Cook-Off

Sunday, March 2  
Great Hall | 11:15 a.m.



Join us in the Great Hall for a Mardi Gras Celebration after worship. This congregational event is filled

with fun, fellowship, and delicious chili. Suggested donation is \$5. One talented chef will win a prize!

### Chili Cook-Off Sign-up:

<https://bit.ly/HOHChili2025>

Bring your favorite chili in a slow-cooker. Contact Jimmy Hoke with questions: [JimmyH@hohchurch.org](mailto:JimmyH@hohchurch.org)

## Welcoming Class

Sunday March 9  
Library | 11:15 a.m.

Whether you're new to House of Hope, or just want to know more about how our community works, join our Welcoming Class. This class provides information about church membership, as well as other ways to connect to community life at HOH. We'll get to know each other, learn about shared congregational values, and connect to opportunities to live out those values through our church life.

## Children's Book Author and Illustrator Nancy Carlson for Adults and Children

Sunday, March 9  
Assembly Room | 11:15 a.m.

Nancy Carlson has written and illustrated more than 60 children's books since 1979. Her latest book comes out in March called *A Swing for Samara*. Over 15 years ago Nancy began drawing a daily doodle and posting it online. She will share where she got some of her ideas for her books and her experiences of over 40 years in the publishing industry. Nancy will also draw some of her characters for the children in the audience.

## The Singers Concert: *My Soul's Repose, French Cathedrals*

Sunday, March 16 | House of Hope | 3 p.m.

HOH Artists in Residence The Singers, Aaron David Miller, and The Singers Sinfonia will present sacred works of Maurice Duruflé, Gabriel Fauré, Francis Poulenc, and Olivier Messiaen – a quartet of French composers responsible for some of the most harmonically lush choral music ever written. Tickets available online at: [www.singersmca.org](http://www.singersmca.org)

## Music Lecture with Dr. Daniel Freeman

Sunday, March 23  
Assembly Room | 11:15 a.m.

Music historian, Dr. Daniel Freeman, has presented his entertaining lecture series over the years with classes on music history, and the lives and music of great composers, operas, and music.

## Sunday-Weekday Connections

Tuesday, March 25  
Kirk Parlour | 5:30 p.m.

Join us for dinner and conversation. Mercedes Sheldon will be our speaker. Mercedes currently serves as Deputy Clerk of Session and a PhD candidate in English literature. Register by Thursday, March 20 at: <https://bit.ly/HOHSundayWeekday>

## A Local Perspective on Antisemitism and Why it Matters with Rabbi Adam Stock Spilker

Sunday, March 30  
Assembly Room | 11:15 a.m.

Rabbi Adam Stock Spilker has served Mount Zion for nearly 28 years. As a co-founder of Minnesota Multifaith Network, he cares about developing relationships with neighbors and learning in interfaith settings. He will provide historic perspectives of antisemitism and how it has impacted the Twin Cities and how antisemitism is showing up today.

## 2025 Men's Retreat:

### The Isolation Problem: Finding Community in a Busy World

Friday - Saturday, March 21 - 22

"The fracturing of community in America is driving a deeper spiritual crisis that threatens our fundamental well-being." Two-time US Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy offers this sobering reflection as part of his "Parting Prescription for America," which he published in early January 2025. Through learning, stories, Scripture, and concrete commitments, facilitators Rev. Phillip Romine and Rev. David Stewart will offer opportunities to reflect on and engage in community building exercises. Ample time for small- and large-group discussions, fellowship, and even some music will be on hand. Join us for a time to connect, unwind, and recharge!

Friday: 6 - 9 p.m. with dinner

Saturday: 8 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. with light breakfast and lunch included. Cost will be \$50 for both days, or \$20 for Friday and \$30 for Saturday. Sign up: <https://bit.ly/HOHMensRetreat2025>



## Earth Care

### Earth Care Congregation

Since March of 2020, House of Hope has been certified as an Earth Care Congregation of the PC(USA). Earth Care Congregations initially commit to an Earth Care Pledge, developed by the Social Justice and Peacemaking Unit of the Presbyterian Church (USA), to **care for God's creation in areas of worship, education, facilities, and outreach**. Our Session affirmed the pledge in November 2019. Each February we apply for recertification by reporting on our actions in these four areas over the past year as well as the progress we hope to make in the coming year. House of Hope is currently one of eleven Earth Care Congregations in the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area. For more information: [https://bit.ly/EarthCare\\_PCUSA](https://bit.ly/EarthCare_PCUSA)

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**COVENANT NETWORK OF PRESBYTERIANS**

*The House of Hope Presbyterian Church is a Covenant Network Congregation.*

## March Food Drive



1 in 9 people in Minnesota have limited or uncertain access to adequate food. You can make a difference during the March Food Drive as we support the food pantries at Hallie Q. Brown Community Center and Neighborhood House. Rising food costs and inflation are drastically

affecting families in our community. More people than ever are turning to food pantries for support, and the truth is, food banks are strained to keep up with the increased need. Here are updated facts about hunger in Minnesota:

- Feeding America reports that 537,890 Minnesotans are facing hunger. 34% of these individuals are under the age of 18.
- Minnesotans made an estimated record-breaking 9 million visits to food shelves in 2024. This is up 20% from the previous record of 7.5 million set in 2023.
- Annual visits to food shelves are now 150% higher than they were prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our March Food Drive is vitally important as we help the 1 in 8 hungry children, or 1 in 9 people overall. Food insecurity makes children uneasy, stressed, and unable to concentrate. Parents worry they can't fulfill basic food needs for their family.

### How can you help?

• **Financial donations help our food partners buy much more. They can multiply cash gifts through buying in bulk, and they can buy what they need the most.**

• Bring food donations to the shopping cart outside the Elizabeth Chapel and in the Narthex.

• Join other **HOH volunteers at Loaves and Fishes.**

Contact Norma Herther or Kevin Loney for more information.

• **Volunteer opportunities** are available at Neighborhood House for adults and youth.

### Ways to Give:

- By Check with memo: Food Pantry  
*Financial donations help our food partners buy more.*
- Text **HOH Food** to 73256
- Online: [bit.ly/HOHGiving](https://bit.ly/HOHGiving) > Fund: Food Pantry
- Bring groceries to the church. A list of most needed items are available at HOH welcome centers.

