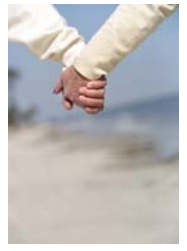


# New Hope

AUGUST 2010

A Unitarian  
Universalist

Congregation



## Minister Writes



New Hope- A Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
57885 Grand River, New Hudson, MI  
www.newhopeuu.org (248) 474-9108

*“In all pleasure, hope is a considerable part.”*

**Samuel Johnson**

Charlie and I “suited up” and headed east during July. Our three riding buddies from the Lake Superior trip in 2009 braved yet another adventure with us. As biking companions go – these three are outstanding. Our goal was to reach Kinhaven Music School in Weston, Vermont to visit the camp our oldest grandson is attending this summer. I am delighted to say that we got there intact and enjoyed a two hour concert presented by 95 excellent musicians, aged 14-18. These young adults, from all over the world, auditioned to be accepted into the summer program at Kinhaven, where they are spending six weeks of their summer vacation studying with some of the finest professional musicians in the United States and elsewhere.

I had forgotten how “hopeful” one can be during this time of life. It was a pleasure to be in the company of so much enthusiasm. While sometimes fraught with angst, the teen years are also a time of great anticipation and excitement for the future. This particular group of young people have found their passion – music – and it’s a glorious thing to witness. While their music brings them great pleasure, hope is a considerable part of that pleasure. Many are hoping that they will be great musicians someday, able to play professionally. Some, no doubt, will make the grade. Some will, as gifted as they are, may not be as fortunate. But during this

summer of 2010 – all things are possible. Our grandson, Charles (Chazz) Paul, exceeded our expectations and dazzled us with his bass violin performances.



It is a gift, indeed, when one finds their passion. Some, like Chazz, discover it early in life. Others, like me, are late bloomers. I rather stumbled upon my passion for ministry somewhat later in life. My

most current passion, of course, is New Hope and New Hope’s future. Part of the pleasure of New Hope has been our ability to hope and hope big. And so, as August looms on the horizon, I think of August as the “soft” start of the new church year. Although I realize that for most UU congregations September marks the “official” beginning of the church year – August can be a very productive month in church communities. Many times people new to an area start “church shopping” during August.

So I look forward to New Hope putting its best foot forward as we welcome new and old friends to our very special religious community.



I sincerely hope you are having a pleasurable summer and don’t forget to collect some “dirt” from some special place that you enjoyed. The sharing of our collected dirt will be on Sunday, September 12<sup>th</sup>. Mark your calendars.

In peace & love,  
Rev. Suzanne





## Sunday Celebration of Life Schedule for August 2010

Religious Education for Children and Child Care available for Pre-schoolers  
Kathy Silver, Director of Religious Education



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Service 10:30 AM	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 Service 10:30 AM	9	10 Program Committee Meeting 4:00 PM Board Meeting 7:00 PM	11	12	13	14
15 Service 10:30 AM	16	17	18	19 Women of Hope 6:30 PM	20 Annual "Lugnuts" Baseball Game in Lansing	21
22 Service 10:30 AM	23	24	25	26 Armchair Philosopher's Group "Foundations of Ethics -Thoughts on Religion and Values" 3-4:30	27 Men's Group 7:00 PM	28
29 Service 10:30 AM	30	31				



\*Our Services are held on Sundays at 10:30 a.m. Services last until 11:30 a.m.  
All are welcome to attend regardless of faith, race, age and sexual orientation.

We hope that you'll stay for coffee and conversation after the Services.



## Joys & Sorrows - August, 2010

We regret to announce the death of Jack Smith, husband of Sue Myers, on July 11<sup>th</sup>. A funeral service was held on Friday, July 16<sup>th</sup> in Brighton, followed by a lunch at New Hope. Our sincerest condolences to Sue and Jack's family and friends.

(Many thanks to the Women of Hope who prepared New Hope for the lunch.)

Birthday best wishes during August to Bill Strable, Paul Dexter, Samantha Strasser, Will Bruder, Bev Champagne, Ed Silver & Jacob Demeter.

Anniversary congratulations to Judith & Don Skiff and Mary & Bruce O'Neill, who are celebrating their first anniversary.

(Email Rev. Paul with any Joy or Sorrow you would like included on this page)

## Religious Education

It's been a pretty low key summer so far in Religious Education. We've played games, watched a movie, and had some lazy discussions. Then two weeks ago, one of the students asked if we could have a lesson on God images. I remembered what I love about Unitarian Universalist Religious Education and UU kids!

So this past Sunday we had a God lesson and it was good. We took turns reading a story called "Finding God in Silence" from Hide and Seek with God by Mary Ann Moore. Then we talked about our reactions to the story, and our own feelings and ideas about God. We all agreed that there is no way to really KNOW God because no one we knew had ever seen, met, or talked with God.



We know that there are many people who think that they know a lot about God, and it's important for us to respect their beliefs. (That's why I use a capital G.) We can also think about God through various religious stories, and people's experiences and our own imaginations. We understand the difference between knowing something and believing in something.

After sharing our thoughts, we tried to spend a few minutes in silence (always a difficult thing to do). We wanted to come up a visual image that represented our own thoughts and/or feelings about the concept of God. Then using markers, crayons, stickers, and shiny sequins and confetti, we each created our own God image.

## Musically Speaking



*"The effects of good music are not just because it's new; on the contrary music strikes us more the more familiar we are with it."*

*- Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe*

Last year, one of my goals as Music Director was to expand our congregation's repertoire of hymns. To accomplish this, we learned one new hymn each month. Now we can proudly say we have a good base of hymns to choose from for Sunday's services this new church year!

Just this last July, we learned hymn #14, "The Sun at High Noon," a contemporary song that celebrates the wonders of the earth, the sky and our souls. Some hymns we learned were adapted from traditional melodies, such as #34, "Though I May Speak with Bravest Fire." It was adapted from a traditional English melody, with words written by a Baptist-trained composer based on a passage from the Bible. Last November, we learned #69 "Give Thanks," which comes from a traditional Southern US folk song. In March, we learned #57 "All Beautiful the March of Days," which is based on an English folk song.

We have continued to sing our favorite, and better-known hymns, such as #123 "Spirit of Life," #118 "This Little

One person drew the big bang. Someone else drew the earth in the universe. Another drew helping hands. One child put day on one side of her paper and night on the other. A young boy drew God in his heart. Out of the mouths of babes.....

I've been pondering the different possibilities for our curriculum for the coming church year. Since I've been at New Hope our RE curriculum map has been:

- 2006-07 Getting to know each other, New Hope and Unitarian Universalism
- 2007-08 All the world is a village and we learn to honor our differences
- 2008-09 Finding peace and spirituality in nature
- 2009-10 Living our Unitarian Universalist Principles

I'm thinking that this new year would be a good time to focus on the sources from which our Unitarian Universalism comes. We would talk about some of our famous UU ancestors, our Christian and Jewish heritage, other important prophets and teachings of the world's religions, and our direct experience of the mysteries and wonders of life.

As our church grows, so grows our Religious Education Program. More children make more interesting and fun classes on Sunday mornings. Regular RE attendance helps children to feel truly a part of the program and important members of New Hope. I always love the excitement and possibilities of a new church year!

See you at New Hope!  
Love, **Kathy**

Light", #348 "Guide My Feet, and #346 "Come, Sing a Song With Me." I am looking forward to being able to continue singing our old favorites along with our newly learned favorites this upcoming church year. I think we can all look forward to a wider variety of hymns while that we love to sing and that inspire us.

The New Hope choir will begin again the on September 19, meeting before service on every Sunday. This year, we will also add 2 evening rehearsals every month. This will give us just enough more rehearsal time to work on more interesting songs with more harmonies. If you have thought about singing with the choir, you should give it a try this year. I think we all have a great time learning our songs, and feel especially blessed to perform them for the congregation. If you have any questions about what it means to be in the choir, feel free to ask me or any of our current choir members.

As always, I welcome fresh ideas, suggestions and comments regarding New Hope's music program. Some of my happiest musical discoveries have come from friends' recommendations and suggestions! My hope is that New Hope's music program enriches your spiritual journey and experience at New Hope.

In harmony,  
Deb Tyler

# Nostalgia

By Don Skiff

*(I wrote this a couple of years ago, but it still feels current to me. —ds)*

Last evening Judith and I were watching the finale of the television show “American Idol,” with its over-the-top glitz and mostly unfamiliar (to us, anyway) music but somehow engaging in its portrayal of talented and eager young people grasping at the golden ring of stardom. The program was a showcase for the final dozen contestants, each one given a spotlight for the type of song that fit them best. The contest itself was finished, although the grand winner was not announced until the end of the show.

Over the months of weekly auditions, we had come to know these youngsters a little, judging their performances along with the three official judges and millions of viewers around the world, trying to guess who would make it to the end. I found that my critical aptitude was mostly obscured by my personal responses to the people themselves: one fellow with his persona of a week’s growth of beard and unkempt hair, looking as though he had just gotten out of bed; a woman with blond curly hair, who often performed in bare feet, reminding one of Carol King; another woman with straight black hair and a tattoo covering her entire upper right arm; and the youngest boy in the group, only seventeen, whose innocence provoked all the budding motherhood of the mostly female theater audience. I could never decide, as they all went through their remarkable transformations during the months of the show from youthful wannabes to polished performers, who was the “better singer.” My gut only told me which one appealed to me. And I had noticed that I responded more to the ones who sang old songs that I knew (although at the same time I judged how well they compared with the professionals who had made the songs popular).

Last night Brooke White, the Carol King type, had the great fortune to sing “Teach Your Children,” made popular by the Sixties group Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young—in a duet with Graham Nash, who wrote it—she singing and playing acoustic guitar and he singing and playing piano, using the close harmony that made that group famous.

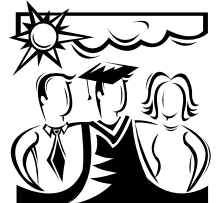
It took me back to 1970, when passion and idealism were rampant among young people—and among some who were older. I was in grad school, trying to find out who I was at 41. My wife, hearing the song on the radio one day, turned up the volume and told me how much it moved her. With two young children, we were very aware of the generational tensions of the

time, as young people raised their voices against the war in Vietnam and against what they felt were the unfeeling machinations of society. That particular song was labeled at the time the “anthem” of the counterculture. It was the harmony that most appealed to me, but I also recognized the plea for understanding and tolerance that the song was about. She and I were trying to cope with our own stress of being far from home and individually struggling with what we wanted from life, from each other, and from ourselves. Our marriage didn’t make it through the experience. Our children, however, did.

Thirty-eight years later, the pain and confusion of those days have yielded to a better perspective and more tolerance for the fumbling of human beings caught up in the swirl of a national social catastrophe. Still, in the midst of a new war and a new outcry for love and justice, the simple lyrics of “Teach Your Children” seem as powerful today as they did then. In the subdued lighting and soulful singing of that song, I could lean back a little and stop trying so hard to follow what was going on.

Our two children have long since grown up and grown mature, reflecting back to us the love and concern we felt toward them in those turbulent days. I don’t know if they ever learned the lyrics to that song. Perhaps they don’t even remember it at all. I feel grateful that they were young enough not to have been caught up in the angst of those days. By the time they reached their teen years, the “generation gap” was perhaps less important than it was in 1970.

*You who are on the road  
Must have a code that you can live by  
And so become yourself  
Because the past is just a good bye.*



*Teach your children well,  
Their father's hell did slowly go by,  
And feed them on your dreams  
The one they picked, the one you'll know by.*

*Don't you ever ask them why, if they told you,  
you would cry,  
So just look at them and sigh and know they love you.*

*And you, of tender years,  
Can't know the fears that your elders grew by,  
And so please help them with your youth,  
They seek the truth before they can die.*

*Teach your parents well,  
Their children's hell will slowly go by,  
And feed them on your dreams  
The one they picked, the one you'll know by.*

*Don't you ever ask them why, if they told you,  
you would cry,  
So just look at them and sigh and know they love you.*



## View from the Bleachers

### This Sporting Life

Return with us now to the evening of June 2, 2010. The scene: Comerica Park, downtown Detroit. The players: the Detroit Tigers vs. the Cleveland Indians. The protagonist: one Armando Galarraga, a decent but not outstanding Detroit starting pitcher born in Venezuela. The antagonist: Jim Joyce, a 22-year, highly respected umpire, a true professional described by Yankee Mariano Rivera, perhaps one of the all-time best "closing" pitchers in history, as "...the best umpire we have in our game. The best. And a perfect gentleman." At stake: a Perfect Game, a feat only accomplished 18 times in professional baseball since 1900. More people have [orbited the moon](#) than have pitched a Major League Baseball perfect game. By definition, a *perfect game* is one in which a pitcher faces the minimum of 27 batters ... nine innings X three outs per inning ... with no batter reaching base. It is both a "no-hitter" and a "shut-out", two less-rare but still incredible athletic accomplishments for a pitcher and his teammates.

What occurred on that June night was a lesson in humility and sportsmanship that captured the nation's attention and proved, once again, why baseball remains the superior game that it is. With two outs to go in Galarraga's quest for perfection, a Cleveland player smashed a pitch deep, deep into center field where an over-the-shoulder, no-look, magical catch by the center fielder left the game with but one out to go. One out away from a Tiger pitcher recording the only perfect game in the team's 110-year history. He needed what would be the fewest number of pitches in a perfect game, just 83, since 1908. Then came the call. Perhaps you remember it. The Indians batter hit a soft, infield ball picked up by the Tigers first baseman who tossed it to Galarraga who had rushed over to cover first. The runner was clearly out, as endless loops of videotape showed relentlessly. Game over. Perfect game. History. But no. Joyce, a man 100 current major league players voted the best overall umpire in baseball, ruled the runner safe at first. Goodbye perfect game. Goodbye history. Goodbye immortality, at least in the annals of American sports.

The reaction of everyone involved, including the protagonist and antagonist, the Tiger's manager, fans at the game, the media covering the game, and even a White House spokesman is an example of how adults should react under these circumstances. Let's not forget that these athletes are playing what is, after all, a child's game for enormous sums of money. It's not life or death. It's not science. It's a game. That's why you "play" baseball, you don't "work" it.

There was Galarraga, standing on first base, knowing in his heart-of-hearts that he had accomplished the near-impossible when, a split second later Joyce, just a few feet from the bag, took it all away from him. It was a "blown call," a huge mistake that, according to the rules of baseball, cannot be overturned. Did the pitcher rant and rave? No. Did he clobber the umpire? No. Did he spew spit and derision on Joyce? No. Galarraga smiled. He shrugged his shoulders. The Tigers manager came out, yelled at the umpire for a bit when his emotions were high, then returned to the dugout. Galarraga stepped back onto the mound to get the next guy out to end the game.

Joyce didn't try to hide his mistake, make excuses, or shirk responsibility. Immediately after the game, he was in tears ... something "real" men never do, especially in a game where, as Tom Hanks correctly pointed out in the movie *A League of Their Own*: "there's no crying in baseball." Said Joyce, admitting his mistake: "I did not get the call correct," insisting that he "took a perfect game away from that kid over there that worked his ass off all night." He next asked Galarraga to come into the umpire dressing room, something absolutely never done, and apologized. Galarraga told reporters after the game that Joyce "probably feels more bad than me. Nobody's perfect. Everybody's human. I understand." Before the next day's game, Joyce, still in tears, met Galarraga at home plate. The two shook hands and Joyce gave the pitcher a pat on the shoulder. The gathered fans in the ballpark exploded into cheers, knowing they had witnessed a rare demonstration of compassion, maturity, and forgiveness.

"Nobody's perfect. Everybody's human. I understand." That's a lesson many people need to learn. It's an example of using reason to overcome emotion. It's a demonstration of how conflicts can be averted.

It's why baseball often imitates life, and remains to this day, our National Pastime.

C.R.P.

