

News of *Hope*



New Hope, A Unitarian Universalist Congregation

August 2020

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"Startled Into Noticing"

by Elea Kemler

Minister of the First Parish Church of Groton, MI

"One of the regular columns in our small town, weekly newspaper is the Animal Activity Blotter from the Animal Control Officer. It's my favorite thing in the paper. Here is a recent entry:

March saw a relatively small number of Animal Control calls, as follows:

Loose dogs: 5

Squirrel in house: 1

Skunk in trap: 1 (able to talk trapper through an uneventful release)

Dog menacing walker: 1

Raccoon advice: 1

Possum advice: 1

Report of mangy fox: 1



The Animal Activity Blotter asks me to think about things I've never really considered, like what an eventful skunk release versus an uneventful one would look like, and probably smell like. But what I love is that it reminds me how deeply the people around me care. Someone is paying close enough attention to a fox to notice its mange. Someone is concerned enough about the well-being of a possum to pick up the phone for advice.

Last fall, there was a bear in the church parking lot. I was about to get out of the car, distracted by a million things, and there it was, big and shaggy brown and beautiful. I didn't think to call the Animal Control Officer. I just watched in amazement as the bear lumbered away. So much hovers at the edge of my attention. I am always trying to fit in one more email. It took a bear at my door to startle me into noticing.

In these pandemic days, I am trying to attend to the world differently. Maybe it's easier because right now there is so much less to look at and listen to. Spring is slow to arrive here, so I am watching the purple crocuses finally push their way through the muddy ground. I have learned the different barks of the neighbor dogs and I notice how the early magnolia blossoms have come and gone quickly while the bright yellow forsythia lasts.

There is suffering everywhere in the world right now, including in my own small community, where we are grieving the death of elderly parents and bringing soup to those who are sick, as are people everywhere. But I dare to hope. I hope that this Great Silence, which has come alongside the suffering, holds the beginnings of our healing. I hope that the slowness required of us now might teach us to understand ourselves, and help us to see the tender, sturdy threads, which connect all living things.

The Animal Control Officer ended his column with the wish that we all stay safe during these difficult days, the humans as well as our wild neighbors. I pray that we will."

I share this story with you because I have days when I feel like I am just going through the motions and there is very little new or interesting or arresting that happens, ever. Oh, the news is full of terrible stories of illness and violence and government abuses, but in my world, there is very little new that actually happens. I wonder if your life feels this way too.

I would love to find a bear in my backyard. It would wake the whole neighborhood up, I'm sure. Suddenly we would all have something to say to each other, a common experience to combat our staying home and staying safe boredom.

Anyway, I have really missed being with you these last few weeks. It was nice not to feel the pressure to always be on top of things, but it also felt way too silent for me. I guess that I prefer the **Great Spirit** over the *Great Silence*. I am so happy to be together with you all again. Monica has missed you too. We will see you in church very soon!

Stay safe. Be well. **Love, Kathy**

Sunday Celebration of Life Schedule for August 2020

In the age of Covid-19, New Hope meets online at 10:30 AM on Sunday mornings. If you wish to join the service, please contact Denise Harris at jutta474@yahoo.com or Kathy Silver at ksilver192@gmail.com. You will be notified of the link before the service. Please join us!

SUNDAY, August 9, 10:30 AM – “Whose Land?”

Who were the first people to inhabit the lands of southeast Michigan? What did they believe? How did they live their lives? Watching the UUA General Assembly honor Native Americans got me thinking about the earliest inhabitants of our area. What do you know? Come and join us as we learn together.



SUNDAY, August 16, 10:30 AM – “Making Amends”

There has been a lot of talk lately about what America needs to do to make up for our past racist beliefs and practices, concerning both our African-American and our Native American peoples. What do we owe to the folks who have been held down, held back, and held up for centuries? What do you think is just and fair? Come and share your thoughts with all of us.

SUNDAY, August 23, 10:30 AM – “Covid Check-In”

How are we all doing during this long and extended virus era. Are you tired and cranky and longing to travel? Can you still find things to feel grateful for? Do you have any new hobbies or interests? Are you finding things that make you feel happy and satisfied?

SUNDAY, August 30, 10:30 AM – “Bless The Creatures”

Each year New Hope holds an animal blessing service. We invite you all to bring your favorite pet, animal picture or fuzzy replica to church and introduce them to us. We all have animals that we love. Some of them live with us. Some of them live in the trees, and woods, and waters outside our houses. Some of them live in far off jungles, deserts and oceans. We are all part of the interdependent web of life. We are all one with the universe. Join us and have some fun!



KATHY SILVER, DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

*Our Services are held on Sundays at 10:30 a.m. All are welcome to attend regardless of faith, race, age and sexual orientation. We hope you'll stay for coffee and conversation after Services.

All we need, all we need is hope
And for that we have each other...
And we'll rise up, rise like the waves
We'll rise up in spite of the ache
We'll rise up... and we'll do it a thousand times again.

—Andra Day, "[Rise Up](#)"

August Notes

August 10, Board Meeting, 6:30 on Zoom

August 13, Book Club at 3pm via zoom. “The Giver of Stars” by JoJo Moyes. Please contact Denise if you wish to join.

August 20, Women of Hope, Picnic?? Maybe at Turtle Head area, Kensington Park

NO CHARITY POKER IN AUGUST

Announcements

PB and J Donations

Active Faith Community Service
PO Box 188
South Lyon, MI 48178

If you have your pledge for New Hope, please send it to:

Mike Kelleher, treasurer
3796 Loon Lake Road
Wixom, MI 48393

Social Justice Project- August is our time to honor our furry friends. Due to restrictions related to COVID-19, please send your check donations to: Livingston County Center for Animal Care
2464 Dorr Road
Howell, MI 48843
(You can attach a note to let them know you are from New Hope.)

Get Out The Vote, sponsored by the Sierra Club

Go to sc.org/gotv and volunteer to write letters, make phone calls and/or send texts.

