#### Faith can fill human need



It was the last night of our group's visit to Scot-land. We were enjoying our farewell dinner arewell dinner at the Glasgow at the Glasgow Marriott, punc-tuated by peri-odic roars com-ing from the bar. We knew that the roars

p. BUALD bur. We knew hant the roars were occasioned by the World Cup soccer game between England and Colombia. But who were the excited fans? One of the waiters reported that the bar was full of English guests. The cheers might have been theirs. On the other hand, it was made perfectly clear that the Scots – never fond of their English neighbors – were rooting for Colombial We Americans were middly amused. Red Wings fans will certainly have some idea of the kind of motions experienced by fans of international soccer. People who follow the annual football rivalry between the U of M and MSU will understand it, too. Where does the exhilaration come from? Why such a heavy emotional investment in a game which really has nothing to do with the brains or prowess of the fans? The emotional "high" comes, I think, from the intense feeling of being part of group. We all need to belong to something – a family, tribe, a people – something bigger than ourselves.

In the New Testament book of ger than ourselves.
In the New Testament book of

ger than ourselves.

In the New Testament book of 2 Timothy, the apostle is encouraging a young minister. He urges Timothy to "be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable..." Students of history know that religious movements and institutions flourish, maintain or decline depending in part on social circumstances. In other words, there are "favorable times for religious faith and "unfavorable" times for religious faith and "unfavorable" times for religious faith. In the United States, we can discern these fluctuations in our own history. There have been periods of religious indifference, and more than one "Great Awakening" and seasons of renewed interest in matters of faith.

Where are we now? Is this a "favorable" or "unfavorable" in "Infavorable" in "Infavorable" in "yes." The waning years of the 20th century are, in some respects, an "unfavorable in for religious faith. Observers have noted the proud secularism that has eaused people of faith to feel shy and become tongue-tied. Secularism has muscled its way into the limelight. No one would guess by watching movies or television, or reading novels, that religious faith or institutions play anything but a very marginal role in American conaciousness. Where religious faith is noted, it tends to be characterized as narrow, hypocritical, liopelessly out-of-date or in terms of goocy sentimentality, It would seem that his is an "unfavorable" time.

On the other hand, one can argue that this is an "andorable" time.

On the other hand, one can rargue that this is all a "lavorable" time for religious faith. There is a hunger for aprirtual experience strong enough to sustain us in a fractured world. I suspect that a lot of the intensity which accompanies sports rivalries is fueled by a need to connect with other people, to be a part of a community, to share an identity. On the negative side, this need for a meaningful belonging also contributes to people's enthusiasm for social philosophies often disguise prejudices which we may not acknowledge even to ourselves. In both cases, the driving force is the need to belong— and the easier of the case of people are longing. Itealthy forms of faith can have enormous healing power. They can help us develop a positive dentity which doesn't deep need to the people are longing. Itealthy forms of faith can have enormous healing power. They can help us develop a positive dentity which doesn't deep of the 20th century at it was in the first century, the 16th or the 19th or the 19t

# BELIEFS & Values

### Cable program brings all faiths into homes

BY BARB PERT TEMPLETON SPECIAL WRITER

BY BABB PERT TEMPLETON
SPECIAL WHITER

Learning something new about another person's religion used to mean posing awkward questions or doing library research. Not anymore.

Clicking the television remote to public access in Bloomfield this fall will allow viewers to enjoy a round-table discussions on topics addressed by elergy representing many religions.

Northwest Suburban Interfaith Ministerial Association and Bloomfield Public Access Television are creating a monthly program entitled. What's Faith Got To Do With It?

The taped production will run several times throughout the month and will feature local clorgy addressing faith issues from the viewpoints of their own religious traditions.

Rabbi Amy Brodsky, of West Bloomfield, who is the assistant directer of the Ecumenical Institute in Southfield, is helping organize the new cable show. She said the institute already has an established elergy dinlegue group that brings rabbis, ministers and priests from across the community together to discuss specific topics on a bimonthly basis.

Brodsky's experience with the sessions at the Institute have been very positive. They have hosted four in the last year and most are comprised of two 90 minute sessions held on two evenings.

minute sessions held on two evenings.

The Institute is an educational organization founded on the idea of having people talk with each other to learn about other religions? Brodsky said. 'We're not trying to convert anybody. The idea is that the more you know and understand about the religion the season of their religion the people and their religion the better you are going to get

along."

Blazing a trail of understand-Blazing a trai of understand-ing is nothing new for Brodsky who was the first full-time, female congregational rabbi in the state of Michigan when she completed school six years ago. She is happy to report that since

her debut, the number of female colleagues has grown. She currently divides her time between the Temple Kol Ami in West Bloomfield and the Institute.
"I'm hoping the cable show will work out because il know my own presentations on the road have been very successful," said Brodsky. "Feople thank me profusely for providing the opportunity to have the dialogue. I just wish it could be more often."
The plan for the upcoming

profusely for providing the opportunity to have the dialogue. I just wish it could be more often."

The plan for the upcoming cable show includes taking the film crow on the road to tape shows at a half dozen churches. Filming will be before a live audience. The first program, entitled "Who Wrote the Bible?" will be at St. Owen Catholic Church in Bloomfield Hills at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 10.

Dr. Allan Eickelmann of the Congregational Church in Birdington of the Congregational Church in Birdington will serve as moderator for each show, welcoming a panel of guests from the elergy. Brodsky envisions the members of the guest panel staying around after each monthly taping to address questions from the audience.

"This is a great way to reach out to people who won't necessarily come to our programs at the Institute," Brodsky sind, "We try to do these across a big geographic area so that we can bring in a larger audience."

Brodsky is hoping people, including members of the host churches congregation, some to the tapings so there can be a good interplay between the panel sits and the audience.

"My experience has been that people are more likely to come to something at their own church or synnogue, of they'll come if it's nearby," Brodsky and.

And the learning and enlighten accord left to the audience and the cond if it's nearby, Brodsky sand.

said.

And the learning and enlight-enment of such gatherings aren't left to the audience mem-

aren't left to the audience mem-bers.
"I spend a lot of time at other churches and synagogues as a guest speaker and I've learned a lot about Christians, Christiani-ty and even about Juddism,"

HERBAL PRODUCTS

Brodeky stated.

The debut program at St.
Owen will feature the fellowing participants: Rabib David Castiglione, Temple Beth El, Bloomfield Hills; the Rey. Dr.
Phillip Hemke, Beautiful Savior

Lutheran Church, Bloomfield
Hills and Father John H. West,
St. John Center for Youth and Family in Plymouth.
For more information about Phillip Hemke, Beautiful Savior

Amy Brodeky at (2:18) 353-2434.



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