



MERE LYS newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

May 2007

VIEW FROM THE HILL

I continue to be impressed with the hospitality this congregation extends to grieving members and their friends when they turn to us following the death of a loved one. In an age in which violence and callousness and prejudice are common, a dozen or so of our longtime members welcome and feed some broken-hearted folks. Sadly, those long-timers have been busy this year.

I make no bones about enjoying what's now being called, "classic" country music. Hank Williams. Patsy Cline. Roy Acuff. Ray Price. For me, country music ended somewhere around 1975, when George Jones recorded a tribute to country's biggest stars, "Who's 'Gonna Fill Their Shoes?" Sure, it's a bit cheesy, but the idea was to take note that a generation of greats was aging and dying.

That song comes to mind when I watch our long-timers minister to the grieving. And I wonder if enough of us Baby Boomers will be there to continue that ministry. It's not about work ethic or donating time; it's about sheer numbers.

Later this month Sheldon and I will be meeting with the Board and Committee on Ministry, taking together the first step toward a long-range plan for Nora Church. We recognize the signs of a church in need of some mindful decision-making if it is to

remain vital. And, to a person, none of us is interested in anything less than a vibrant voice for liberal religion. Mere "hanging on" is not an option.

I imagine the meeting on the 28th to be the first of many. Long before returning to the congregation with a proposal for the future, time must be spent talking about what *process* we want to use. I envision a framework that looks at our future in, say, 3 years, 5 years and 10 years. Be assured, plans change and stuff happens. But there are things within our control, and a good long-range plan takes a bold, workable, *educated* guess about the future. Fortunately, your lay leaders and I understand our role in taking the initiative and proposing our best recommendations for that future.

So, when you see one of our long-timers performing yet another act of service and love, don't be shy about thanking them. Some appreciate it, others, I'm sure, will scold me for even suggesting it. And consider what Nora Church will be when our long-timers themselves are in need of ministry. Who's 'gonna fill their shoes?

Blessings,
Don



July 21, 2007 - July 28, 2007
Beloit College Campus, Beloit, Wisconsin

UU leadership schools exist to continue the tradition of fostering effective adult lay leadership in the UU community for people ages 18 and older.

Registration is open to applicants from and recommended by the member congregations of the three sponsoring districts and to seminary students not yet in candidate status

Complete information & registration can found on their website: www.yymwls.org. Information is also on the bulletin board.

SECOND SUNDAY OFFERING

Loose change on the 2nd Sunday of each month will go to "Food For All"

SOULFUL SUNDOWN

First and third Thursday evenings of each month, at Rhein River Arts Center, 208 N. Minnesota (New Ulm) at 6:30 P.M. Facilitated by Don Rollins, the format is music, silence, meditation and sharing. If you haven't tried it, come check it out! (And tell somebody else, too.)



The **gallivanting gourmets** will be meeting and eating at Goodfellows in Comfrey on May 23 at 11:30 a.m. This group is strictly social and is open to all comers. We hope to see you there.

NOTICE

A WOMEN'S SOCIETY BAKE SALE Planned for Saturday, May 5, HAS BEEN CANCELLED.

NORA WOMEN'S SOCIETY

The Women's Society held a well-attended meeting April 4 at the church to plan for future events. The women felt the Women's Society was still needed to initiate and organize fund-raisers and other events. It was the consensus of the meeting that the Nora Women's Society should continue to function and meet at quarterly intervals. The next meeting was set tentatively for 7 p.m. July 9 at the church.

SUNDAY, MAY 13

"Confessions of an Optimist: Reflections on the Work Toward GLBT Equality" by Phil Duran.

On this Social Justice Sunday, our speaker will be Phil Duran, a member of the First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis. Phil is Staff Attorney for OutFront Minnesota, an organization whose work is dedicated to the idea of leading Minnesota toward GLBT equality; he will be presenting remarks on the issues affecting the gay, lesbian, bi-

sexual, and transgender community, relating the work he's doing to UU principles, and his own experience as a UU latecomer

FAMILIES FIRST of Brown County

We want to extend a "Big Thank You!" to all the wonderful ladies who responded to our requests to make Baby quilts. Our shelves are restocked once again, and the families with new babies in Brown county really do appreciate your work!

FAITH IN ACTION of Brown County

Senior Spring Clean-Up Day May 5th, 8 AM - 12:30 PM.

If you are an older homeowner and are in need of assistance with you spring chores, please sign up by calling 507-354-5370 or toll free 866-899-0662. There is no charge for these services, but donations are appreciated.

SOCIAL JUSTICE NOTES

The Social Justice committee has spent many hours trying to put together a vision of areas of focus for the 2007-2008 church year. Keeping in mind our mission: *To inform and educate Nora members about current social justice issues, lead and involve members in acting on issues, and to facilitate our connections with other social justice groups* we see five main focal areas. They include Economic Justice/Poverty/Hunger Issues, Environmental Issues, Intercultural Issues, Ending the War, and Equal Rights Issues. We are hopeful that we can articulate those issues briefly in a survey along with the specific focus areas we've been working on at Nora this past year and get your input on the direction for next year.

We plan to have these brief surveys available at the first three Sunday services in May and then based on the results will have a proposal for our areas of focus in place for the Annual meeting in June. We will have a box for you to put the completed surveys available on the bottom shelf of the table where you receive your bulletins each Sunday.

In addition to this future planning the Social Justice committee has been preparing for our invited guest speaker from Out-front Minnesota who will be with us for the service on May 13th.

BOARD NOTES

The Nora Church Board of Trustees met Wednesday, April 11, The Board scheduled a long-range planning meeting for April 28, to envision its hopes for Nora Church in 3, 5 or more years and consider ways to achieve its goals.



In other business, the board set Sunday, May 13, for the congregational meeting on the proposed budget. It also voted to move the Annual Meeting to June 10, 2007. The board decided to consider a bylaw amendment next year that would move the Annual Meeting date to the second Sunday in June. The Board also received committee reports, including one from the Buildings & Grounds Committee which is considering installing gutter guards on the Kaffe Stua, among other maintenance projects.

NOTES FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Springtime for churches is normally a time to wind things down. After all, even for those who have services all summer long, things just aren't as busy. But spring is also a time for planting seeds. We need to do that. That's why Membership is reorganizing now. It is why RE will be meeting to plan for the fall. It is why Social justice will be looking at where to best put our energies to help. It is also why your Board and the Committee on Ministry met to look at where we want Nora to be in 3, 5, and 10 years. Only by planting these seeds now can we have a harvest in the fall or anytime in the future. With all the distractions of the spring it is easy to lose track of getting these seeds planted but if we want Nora to not just maintain but grow, we need to do this. We need Nora to be there and so do a lot of other people even if they don't know it yet.

ANNUAL REPORTS

With Annual Meeting time approaching, committee chairs should be preparing year-end reports for the Annual Report booklet. Turn them in to office administrator Cindy Mosenden by **MAY 29** so she can compile the report. Thanks

BRAVOS FROM THE BOARD

It's hard to single out individuals each month for outstanding service. Many consider it just "doing their job." But we all enjoy a pat on the back now and then. This month's picks were Gil and Sally Hanson for their contributions to the music program at Nora; Anne Rieke and all who helped prepare and serve the Sunday School's Easter breakfast -- compliments to the chefs, and Bev Wellmann (with assists from Wally) for her attractive seasonal altar and table decorations.



SUNDAY DISCUSSION GROUP CONTINUES?

Since the choir is taking a break the next couple of months, perhaps the Discussion group could again meet at 9 a.m. If anyone is interested, just show up with some ideas for discussion topics.

CHOIR NEWS

The choir sang its last anthem for this year on April 22. There will not be any more choir rehearsals until next fall.

This year the choir prepared and performed 8 anthems that ranged from an African song arranged by Harry Belafonte (See it performed on the Muppet Show at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2TZhruT-Xs>) to a song written by the English composer John Rutter (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Rutter). The complete list of music that was performed can be seen and heard at <http://norauchurch.org/choir.shtml>.

Rehearsals were held on Sunday mornings from 9:00 - 10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary. Other rehearsal times were tried in the past, but this time generally worked best for all.

A big thank you is in order for all the work and dedication by the choir.

Anyone interested in singing in the choir is encouraged to contact Gil Hanson.



RELIGIONS EDUCATION

Our annual Easter Breakfast to raise funds for youth service projects was a huge success. Kristy Paulson, Cole Spilde, Shirley Olson, Janet Rosenbloom and Norma Breu had things well underway when we arrived. Norma and Roger Breu made the sausage. Reggie Peck, John Makepeace and Sheldon Rieke made the eggs. Julie and Nora Peck made the pancakes and French toast. Shirley Olson provided some of her berry syrups which were a big hit. The kids did a great job serving, taking turns, so all had a chance to eat. They also helped clear tables, and a special thank you to Thor Weiss for his help clearing the tables. Then it was time for clean-up, and along came Ron and Julie Peck, Warren Paulson, Kristy Paulson, Shannon Weiss, and I'm sure there were more helpers. They pitched right in to make everything sparkle. Two hundred dollars was raised for service projects. *Dear people of Nora, thank you for your warm, caring and generous spirit. It is greatly appreciated.*

There have been an extraordinary number of volunteers to teach Sunday School this year. Thank you all so much. It has been a great way for the kids to get to know more adults, and for the adults to get to know the kids. If you taught this year, you discovered how easy it is - so please consider volunteering again next year

We will be winding up our RE year with our annual End of the Year service on June 3rd.. We will be celebrating the kids and Sunday School teachers of Nora. The kids will be leading the service. Please plan on joining us.

We are looking for more people to join the Youth RE Committee. We generally meet three to four times a year to plan Sunday School and other youth events throughout the year. So if you would like to have a say in the youth programming, we would love to have you join us. Please talk with Anne if you are interested.

Fifty-three people signed up to attend the Twins game on May 12th. The cost is \$10 per person. If you have not paid yet, please get your money to Sheldon . Checks can be made out to Nora. The game starts at 2:55 p.m.. We would like to carpool up there, so if you have extra room in your vehicle, please let Sheldon, Anne or Julie Sellner know, so we can help arrange rides. The Twins play the Detroit Tigers. Our group will be recognized on the big

screen during the fourth inning. There has been talk of making circle me Bert signs.

MAY RE SCHEDULE

6TH: We will begin planning our June service. The kids will select what parts of the service they would like to lead. There will be activities for the younger kids to do and for the older kids to do after the planning.

13TH: We will practice for our service. There will be activities for the younger kids to do and for the older kids to do after the practice.

20TH: Syttendai Mai service at the Hanska Park.

27TH: Memorial Day Weekend - no Sunday School.

Thanks, again, to all who have volunteered to teach Sunday School.

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 12th: Intergenerational Activity : The TWINS Game:

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June 3rd: End of the Year Children's Service

It's hard to believe that it's time to start thinking about the end of the year service. Please join us as we celebrate this past church and Sunday School year. We will also recognize all of the people that volunteered their time to help teach Sunday School. The program works because of so many helping hands and hearts. **Kids participating in the service should be at church by 9:45 so we can run through the service in the church.**



SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS

Interfaith Partnerships and Coalitions: the good, the bad, and the ugly

Minnesota UU Social Justice Alliance General Meeting
Sunday, May 20th, 2007, 3-5pm ~ First Unitarian Society of
Minneapolis, 900 Mount Curve www.firstunitariansociety.org

Interfaith work can be powerful and rewarding, delivering social justice outcomes and important relationships. Interfaith work can also be tense and disappointing; delivering challenges and frustrations we are not always prepared to deal with. What are some local experiences working in interfaith contexts? What are the lessons we can take from successes and struggles? How can UUs become more effective interfaith partners for social change? Panel discussion will include Rev. Kendyl Gibbons from FUS, who recently returned from a trip to Israel/Palestine with an interfaith group of local clergy; Carol Koepf who has worked with Habitat for Humanity, Lisa Herschberger who has worked with Congregations Caring for Creation.

Plus - Report on MUUSJA strategic planning; introduction of new staff member, Ralph Wyman; and updates from MUUSJA working groups.

Connect with other UUs working for social change! Bring an appetizer or beverage to share. Questions? Contact: RWMUUSJA@gmail.com

Through the **UUSC COFFEE PROJECT**, your congregation, school or office can enjoy delicious coffee, tea and chocolate while helping small-scale farmers in Latin America, Africa and Asia as they build a better future for themselves and their families.

Through the project, farmers earn a fair price for their products, have access to affordable credit, and gain a long-term trading partner they can trust, a FairTrade Organization called Equal Exchange.

With your support, these communities invest in education, health care, and agricultural improvements.

In addition, for each pound of coffee, tea, or chocolate purchased by UU congregations through the project, Equal Exchange makes a contribution to UUSC programs that support the human rights and social justice work of community-based cooperatives in coffee-growing regions.

Equal Exchange is committed to Fair Trade on 100% of our coffee, tea and chocolate products.

DRUMBEAT FOR DARFUR at GA 2007 in Portland, Ore.

As genocide devastates Darfur, we must be relentless in our efforts to end it. At the 2007 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association, UUSC will hold a full-day activists' training to increase awareness and organize action to bring peace and justice to Darfur: Wednesday, June 20, 2007, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Ambridge Events Center, Portland, Ore.

This landmark event will feature three inspiring speakers: Darfurian activist Omer Ismail, author and activist Frances Moore Lappé, and UUSC President Charlie Clements. Small group workshops facilitated by experienced activists will help you build the skills necessary to help organize a Drumbeat for Darfur within your own community.

There is no charge for attending, and registration for General Assembly is not required. Lunch will be provided. Space is limited and filling up quickly! To inquire about registration, contact Rachel Jordan at volunteerservices@uusc.org or 617-301-4307.

More about this exciting event can be found online at www.uusc.org/drumbeatfordarfur/generalassembly.html.

WATER: Our Right, Our Responsibility Youth Call To Action

Whereas under the United Nations Charter all humans are guaranteed the right to life and as water is necessary for life, it follows that water is a right of all people. In order to protect this right to water, it is the responsibility of humanity to cooperate for the effective management of this resource for the sake of future generations.

Today, 20% of the world's people lack access to potable water, 60% of infant mortality is due to infectious and parasitic diseases, most of them water-related. A serious water crisis is upon us. With the encroachment of corporate involvement and privatization, military waste and an increase in military spending, we need to address this on a personal, national, and international level.

The Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office educates Unitarian Universalists about the structure, function, and actions of the United Nations. Inspired by the UU principles, we are committed to peace, freedom, and environmental responsibility, as well as social, civil and economic justice for all.

As individuals, we can work to educate ourselves and disseminate information about the global water crisis. In turn, we can educate our communities and initiate a call to action. Beyond committees, it is essential that there will be a national commitment to a fair and equitable water policy. Our country has an opportunity to positively impact the place of water on the international agenda.

We urge the UU-UNO to partner with organizations that specialize in water issues and take on a specific area of the world in need of access to water, from Iraq to Bolivia, from the Asian rivers to the Canadian glaciers. With the real possibility of devastating repercussions due to the lack of water, it is necessary that safe water be made equally available to all.

Count to 8...a child just died of a water-related disease. In this time of crisis, it is important that we recognize water as a fundamental human right and take responsibility to ensure equal access to our most precious resource.

Resolution adopted by the Youth Caucus at the 2003 Annual Intergenerational Spring Seminar – Water: Our Right, Our Responsibility, April 12, 2003

SYTTENDE MAI 2007
**The Magical-Musical Hill of the Norske Huldras
and the Hanska Homefolk**



The Hanska Business Association presents its 23rd Annual Syttende Mai Productions. Come and visit this magical hill in Hanska and experience the beautiful/mystical Norske Huldras. This promises to be a fun and exciting springtime romp following Ole and the trolls thru Hanska looking for the mystical Huldras. Of course all your favorite Hanska entertainers will wrap this up in the music you know and love.

A professional band from the twin cities along with directing and choreographing from the “**Norvold Sisters**” plus performing from these talented young women will give us an incredible production.

Show times are May 17th, May 18th, May 19th, and May 20th. There will be one performance per night at 7:00 PM with the exception of Saturday which will **also** have a 2:00 PM Matinee. These performances will be held at the usual location, which is the Hanska School Gym. Just look for our famous rosemalled water tower and you will be in the right area.

There will be a parade on Sunday beginning at 12 noon and food stands and entertainment in the park.

LIFE WORK PLANNING CENTER
FREE ONE TO ONE COUNSELING

Do you need to talk to someone, but don't know who to turn to? Do you have questions about where your life is taking you, or which direction to turn?

Life-Work Planning Center is offering you the opportunity to speak with one of our two interns, about your life challenges and questions. They are Masters level students in the field of Community Counseling at Minnesota State University Mankato.

Please call Life Work Planning Center at 345-1577 or 800-369-5166 if you would like confidential, quality time to talk about YOU! A single session or a series of sessions may be scheduled until May 2007. Appointments will be made on a first come first served basis.

To Keep In Touch



CONGRATULATIONS

on the birth of Jocelyn Michaela, born April 5 to Kelli and Michael Marcott of Hastings. Weighing in at 8 lbs and 20 in long, She is the granddaughter of Luella & Kenneth Chambard of Sandstone, MN. Paternal grand parents are Gloria and Gary Marcott of Hastings. Jocelyn was welcomed home by Darion, Madeline and Rebecca.



THANK YOU

I would like to say thank you so much for all the cards and well wishes I have received since my surgery and following my treatment. Things are going okay. I have two chemo treatments left.

Thanks again.
Luella chamard



Marylenn O'Reilly recently suffered a bout with pneumonia and was hospitalized in Madelia. We hope she has a speedy recovery.



Know of someone who needs special mention? please let us know.



Please keep our military personnel in your prayers. They need our support.



Caring Committee members:


Georgine Tepley (chair)
359-3060 (weekdays after 5 pm)
Shirley Olson—439-6879
Carol Chambard - 354-2242

NORA CHURCH CALENDAR

MAY 2007

Parsonage: 507-439-6240
Don's cell: 507-276-8464



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3 6:30 pm - Soulful Sun- down - Rhein Rivers Arts	4	5
6 9:00 Discussion 10:00 Social Hour 10:30 Service Pot Luck	7	8	9 Board meets at 6:30 PM (church)	10	11	12 TWINS TRIP
13 HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY 9:00 Discussion 10:00 Social Hour 10:30 SJ Service Congregational Budget meeting	14	15	16	17 6:30 pm - Soulful Sun- down - Rhein Rivers Arts	18	19
Work on newsletter articles! & Annual Reports						
20 SYTTENDE MAI Service at Hanska park 10:30 AM Newsletter Articles due	21	22	23 LUNCH BUNCH Comfrey - 11:30	24	25	26
27 9:00 Discussion 10:00 Social Hour 10:30 Shared ser- vice with New Ulm UCC	28 	29 Annual Reports Due	30	31		

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES
ARE DUE BY THE 20TH OF EACH MONTH.

WEEKLY BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS
ARE DUE BY THURSDAY NOON

cindymo@sleepyeyetel.net

please be sure to include "NORA"

in the subject line

(507) 439-6380

20894 County Road 6, Hanska. MN 56041
Thanks for your help in getting articles to me.
Cindy Mosenden, Office Administrator

MUSICIAN	SERVERS	GREETERS - USHERS
6 Mimi	Mark & Brenda Wiger Chris Olson & Charles Anderson	Algot & Bonita Blomquist
13 Jordan	Doug Anderson John & Julie Schmitt	Christina Schmitt - Susan Evers
20	~ Syttende Mai ~	
27 Joanne Saxton	Gene & Georgine Tepley	Gil & Sally Hanson

DON'S SCHEDULE

Monday is his day-off and Fridays are reserved for sermon writing. While he continues to have other set commitments, don't hesitate to call to schedule an appointment.



Nora Unitarian Universalist Church
12333 155th Avenue
Hanska Minnesota 56041-4310

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Nora church @ sleepyeyetel.net
<http://www.norauuchurch.org>

May 2007

Happy Syttende mai



May 17

Nora Church Sunday Services MAY 2007

Social Hour 10:00 AM Worship Service 10:30 AM

May 6 "Poetry as Scriptur  – Twice now we've scheduled this service! It was snowed out once, then set aside for another topic. Weather and circumstances permitting, we'll consider how poetry can become sacred texts.

May 13 "Confessions of an Optimist: Reflections on the Work Toward GLBT Equality" by Phil Duran.

May 20 "Syttende Mai Sunday" – It's our turn to coordinate the Sunday worship at Hansk 's Syttende Mai Festival. Unless notified differently, we'll meet in the tent at 10:30. Come join us!

May 27 "Voices of Unity" – Most years, we share a worship service with our United Church of Christ (UCC) friends from New Ulm. We're hosting this year, so come join us for a service of music, readings and reflection.