



MERE LYS newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

November 2007

VIEW FROM THE HILL

One of my favorite “trade” periodicals for ministers is *Christian Century*. Aside from the occasional knock on unitarian (notice the small “u”) theology and one of my heroes, John Spong, *Christian Century* provides lots of grist for the ministerial mill.

As seasons change here in the Northern Hemisphere, *Christian Century* just published its fall list of recommended reading. I’m sorting through the titles, not sure what I’m looking for, but certain that I’ll recognize it when I see it.

Christian Century also reviews current films – some are box office smashes, most are not. The reviewers look for movies that have religious themes, although they are often not overt or preachy.

And the same goes for music. I’ve been steered toward some recordings that I would not have purchased otherwise, and on at least one occasion I’ve passed on a release I was sure to get, just because of a respected magazine’s point of view.

I’m starting to think that what we read and watch and listen to says at least something about who we are and what we value. Sure, there are plenty of studies to back that up, but studies don’t always tell us the “why” behind whatever it is they’re designed to study. Why do some of us like reading science fiction rather than biographies? Why do romantic comedies hook some of us as opposed to, say, documentaries? How come Bach does it for some of us, yet others are drawn to Black Sabbath?

Although *Christian Century* doesn’t come out and say it, I suspect that one of the reasons their staff take the time to sample and review books, films and music is that literature and the arts have all but replaced religion when it comes to talking

about things of the spirit. Think about it, fellow religious liberals. When was the last time you picked up the Book of Deuteronomy? Corinthians? The Koran? (Taoism, Buddhism and a few other Eastern religions that don’t require supernatural beliefs get a pass. But what does *that* tell us about our preferences and what they say about us?)

All this is to ask you if you’ve ever taken the time to list, for example, your top five favorite books? Why do they speak and/or for you? Is the holy somehow at work there? How about films? Is that which some God captured by a certain character or scene? And what are your top five musical selections (symphonies, hymns, songs, operas, etc.)? Do you hear and feel something unique and compelling as you listen?

For the ancients, scripture was more than doctrine, more than history; *scripture was an expression of their encounter with life’s ultimate mysteries*. If that’s so, then the folks at *Christian Century* have it right when they suggest that many of us find grace and expression in what we read, watch and listen to.

On November 25, our last service in November, I’ll be leading a service on literature and the arts as scripture. I’ll greatly appreciate your help as I give shape to that theme. *Please take the time to tell me what books, films and musical selections move you*. Please complete the form below and return it to me in person or place it in my mailbox across from the upstairs restroom. If you prefer, just send me an email listing your top five in each category: drollins@sleepyeyetel.net.

Thank you!

Blessings,
Don





RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ATTENTION PARENTS:

There will be a meeting for all parents of children in Sunday School and for all people interested in teaching Sunday School this year on Sunday, November 4th during potluck. The RE Committee has several requests to ask of parents and teachers. We also need your input and assistance for the remainder of this year. Please plan on attending.

November Sunday School Schedule

4th: COA: What Do You Stand For ? - Citizenship. Teacher: To be determined.

Jutweens: In Our Own Hands - Unit 2 - Exploring One's Own Experiences - Fair and Unfair Experiences. Teacher: To be determined.

11th: COA: Kristine Paulson will join the class to share her experiences and views on liberal religions in comparison to other religions.

Jutweens: In Our Hands – Unit 2 – Exploring One's Own Experience - Peaceful and Hurtful Experiences. Teacher: To be determined.

18th: Children's Chapel - Guest at Your Table Activities. Teacher: To be determined.

25th: No Sunday School. Thanksgiving Holiday.

We raised \$136 from Smorg activities. The money will be sent to UNICEF. Nora Women's Society contributed \$54 from popcorn sales last November at the chili entertainment night. So we will be sending a grand total of \$190 to UNICEF. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the raffle and fishing pond. The raffle baskets were beautiful and all of the winners were happy to receive them.

Thank you to all who helped on the Nora Day of Caring team. A special thank you to John Makepeace for leading the team. The weather was beautiful and we shared good company and good food.

GUEST AT YOUR TABLE starts on Sunday, November 18th. At Children's Chapel that day, the children will learn more about the UUSC projects that will benefit from our contributions. Collection boxes and envelopes will be passed out at the end of the service that day.

CHILDREN'S WINTER SERVICE will be on Sunday, December 9th. If your child has something special he/she would like to do or share during the service, he/she should talk with Anne Rieke ASAP to make arrangements to be included in the service.

Adult RE & Growth

The Spirituality Study Group will begin meeting Thursday, November 29th, at 6:25 PM, at Nora Church. The study group will meet for 30 minutes, and will be an open group with no requirement that you attend every session. Initially, the group will be looking at various meditation traditions and techniques. The hour-long open meditation is scheduled to follow the study group, and will begin at 7:00 PM. You need not attend the study group to participate in the meditation. Both the study group and the open meditation are open to members and non-members of Nora Church. Anyone interested in joining, or in getting more information about either of these offerings, can do so by contacting Christopher Olson via e-mail at Kitakis@aol.com, or by phone at 507-995-7059.



THANKS FROM THE BOARD

Thanks go to Algot & Gordy for their effort in keeping the grounds looking great.

Thanks to Julie and Joy for organizing the Smorgasbord and to Shirley Olson for all her "behind the scenes" work.



LUNCH BUNCH

We'll be dining at Martin Luther College in New Ulm on November 28th at 11:30 AM. Enter from Summit and go to the Student Center Building. Come join us!

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Included in this newsletter is a copy of the Energy Challenge for us as Nora church members 2007-2008. If you were at the recent service (October 14th) you may have already received and returned this pledge. If so, we thank you for your individual/family contribution to this 2007-2008 initiative. As you may remember, the congregation voted on the addition of initiatives/education related to the topic of environment and what we as a congregation both individually and collectively can do to promote a healthier world. We intend to track our success during the year with the "Nora group's" collective emissions and our ability to reduce them. We've extended the date for gathering the pledges to November 7, allowing those who are learning about this via this newsletter to participate.

NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL HOSPICE AND HOME CARE MONTH

Thursday, November 1, 6:30 - 8 p.m. : An informational meeting about hospice care and how it can help you and your family. Where: Hilltop United Methodist church, 108 S. Manitou Dr., Mankato. Open to the public and free of charge.

Tuesday, November 13, 7 - 8 p.m.: Life's Journey: keeping it all in Perspective. Where: Hosanna Lutheran church, 105 Hosanna Ave, Mankato. This is a community presentation focusing on the shortness and uncertainty of human life, and our responsibility to live our lives with that in mind. This program is a gift to the community by Immanuel St. Joseph's Hospice. Open to the public and free of charge.

SMORGASBORD THANKS!!

Thank-you to all of you who worked so hard to make smorgasbord a success this year. We are a small church and although it might not seem like it when the kitchens are overcrowded on Smorgasbord Sunday, we count on each of you to make the day a success. If there is some way that you think we could make the day run more smoothly or some other way you would like to help, please don't hesitate to let us know. Once again, thank-you for all your help and lets make Smorg 2008 even bigger and better!

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

A reminder for members of the Board and the Committee on Ministry that we will be meeting with our consultant, Lynn, on November 17th. This meeting will again be at Nora and run from 9-noon.

AREA FOOD SHELF

The following items are needed by the New Ulm Area Food Shelf. This includes the rural areas of Hanska and Comfrey: tomato soup, toilet tissue, flour, ramen noodles, pancake syrup, pancake mix, and canned fruit.

BOOK SALE DONATIONS



The Friends of the New Ulm Library are having a book sale on December 7-8. (Friday: 9:30-5; Saturday: 9:30 to noon) We need YOUR quality books, CDs, DVDs, audiotapes and so on. All proceeds will benefit the New Ulm Public Library and its programs. BRING YOUR DONATIONS to the Library by Monday, Dec. 3. or you can give them to Diane Becken at church.

UUA NEWS

Important news: The UUA launched a national marketing campaign about Universalism in *Time* Magazine this fall. The first issue with our ads hit the stand on October 5. More information is available on the website: www.uua.org

PLEASE COMPLETE THE LISTS BELOW WITH BOOKS, FILMS AND MUSIC THAT SPEAKS TO YOU.
PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO DON NO LATER THAN SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 18. THANK YOU.

MY TOP FIVE...

BOOKS

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____

FILMS

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____

MUSICAL SELECTIONS

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____

NAME (OPTIONAL) _____

VETERANS DAY


Veterans Day has its roots in what was called Armistice Day, the day when a peace agreement was signed with Germany ending World War 1. Armistice Day was established with a proclamation by President Woodrow Wilson which reads in part: "Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations." On June 1, 1954, Armistice Day was renamed Veterans Day to honor all U.S. veterans. On Veterans Day this year, let us remember and honor those men and women who gave of themselves, and let us continue to pray for our men and women currently serving in the military.

NORA CHURCH CALENDAR

NOVEMBER 2007

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



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
MUSICIAN SERVERS 4 Muffy Wally & Beverly Wellmann Jason & Katie Monnens 11 Jordan Elroy & Ardis Wellmann 18 Jordan Warren & Kristine Paulson 25 Muffy Ron & Julie Peck			GREETERS - USHERS Jerry & Susan Allen Wayne & Janet Johnson Pat & Laurie Kunerth Mark & Brenda Wiger		1  Set your clocks back before you go to bed Saturday Night	2 3 BAKE SALE @ Rhein River Radical Hospitality Workshop 10 am-3 pm @ Nora
4 9:00 Choir 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service POTLUCK RE meeting w/parents & children during potluck	5	6	7 Social Justice Committee (?)	8 Religious Education 6:30 @ church	9	10
11 9:00 Choir 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service	12	13 Program Committee 6:30 @ church	14 Board 6:30 @ church	15	16	17 9 am - noon Comm. on Ministry/Board - Long range planning
18 9:00 Choir 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service	19	20 Newsletter Articles Due	21 7 PM -NU Area Community Thanksgiving Service @ Oakwood United Methodist Church	22	23	24
25 9:00 Choir 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service	26	27	28	29 Spirituality Group meets @ 6:25	30	

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



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
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Hanska Minnesota 56041-4310

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Hanska, MN 56041

NOVEMBER 2007



EMAIL
Nora church @ sleepyeyetel.net

WEB SITE
<http://www.norauuchurch.org>

Nora Church Sunday Services **NOVEMBER 2007**

Social Hour 10:00 AM

Worship Service 10:30 AM

November 4 "Fading Sunlight: The Spirit and Seasonal Affective Disorder" - Minnesota, as the old maxim goes, has two seasons: winter and the Fourth of July. Let's talk about winter as a metaphor for spirituality.

November 11 "A Day to Honor Our Veterans—A Veteran's Perspective " Guest speaker is Greg Peterson, Brown County Veterans Service Officer.

November 18 "Thanksgiving on East Point" - Don will recreate the one-man presentation he gave in his first Thanksgiving service at Nora. Written by a UU minister, this chronicle of aging tracks one man's life, losses and loves.

November 25 "Literature, Arts and the Soul: Books, Films and Music in Our Lives" - If holy writ from ancient religions was created to feed the soul and transmit things of importance, literature, movies and music must surely be the scripture of modern Westerners. (Be sure to complete and return your "top five" lists form to Don by Sunday, November 18.)