



MERE LYS newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

January 2008

VIEW FROM THE HILL

You can safely assume you've created God in your own image when God turns out to hate the same people you do.
-Anne Lamoll

If you really did find a magic lamp, genie and all, what wish would you make for the new year? Depending on which websites and accompanying polls you consult, your fellow Americans want:

- Out of Iraq
- Liposuction
- A stable economy
- A new president
- Botox
- New gadgetry (iPods, games, cell phones, TVs, etc.)
- A new relationship
- A pay raise
- Medical Insurance

Me, I've decided I want a new God. Not the one that:

- Was borne through history on the backs of people who thought the earth was flat.
- Can't decide whether to beat us like a rug or hug us like a loving parent.
- Tells Abraham to slaughter his son as a sign of obedience.
- Requires his [sic] son [sic] to suffer all manner of violence in order to prove that we are loveable, loved and loving.
- Is even now lying in the bushes of time, planning an apocalyptic end straight out of some acid-induced bad trip, just to scare us into believing the unbelievable.

The God I'm looking for is code for:

- Transcendence when I've tried to thwart it.
- Forgiveness when I don't deserve it.
- Wisdom when I don't possess it.
- Optimism when I've resisted it.
- Justice when I've ignored it.
- Love when I've failed it.

I don't know about you, but any new God I'm going to chase after this year had better be better than the old one. Something or Someone to get me off the schlide, out of my inertia and into authentic living. Something or Someone that haunts me into loving the people I don't. I'm looking for a holy nudge of the Spirit. I'm looking for a new God. But enough about my wish. Let's say *you* come across an old spouted lamp. Just for a few grins, you rub it and, suddenly, a genie really does appear! You're granted one wish – just one – for 2008. Whaddya' say? Straight up, what do you want in this new year?

Your fellow seeker,
Don



“UU and YOU” January 19

We've encountered a glitch in our negotiations for leasing space for our New Ulm service. If all goes as planned, we'll meet at 6:30 P.M., St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 125 S. Broadway. *CHECK FOR EMAIL AND/OR PHONE MESSAGES, AS WELL AS SUNDAY MORNING ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR ANY CHANGE IN OUR PLANS.* Sorry for the confusion!

3rd Annual MLK Event January 20

Martin Luther King, Jr. Dinner and Forum – Although still somewhat tentative as the newsletter goes to press, plan on attending this year's MLK event, at New Ulm United Church of Christ, 301 S. Minnesota. The dinner begins at 5:30 P.M. followed by the forum at 7:00. (More details are included in this newsletter.)

Our focus this year is racial and ethnic minorities in South Central Minnesota. Please distribute/sell tickets as you can. We are excited about the evening that is being lined up. Looks like there is quite a panel of individuals who have agreed to participate.

We will need church members to volunteer as they have in the past with the spaghetti dinner part of the event. Included in the newsletter is a flyer. Please feel free to duplicate this and post in locations that may encourage participation in the event.

“HONORING OUR FAITHFUL”

We'll be honoring three or four Nora long-timers each month through June, recognizing each for their dedicated service to our liberal religious community. Each honoree receives a frame-mounted certificate of appreciation, as well as having her or his name added to the plaque at the rear of the sanctuary.

Our honorees for January are Wally and Bev Wellmann, Noah and Janet Rosenbloom. Congratulations and thanks for your dedicated service!

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It's a new year and the people of Nora are taking on another challenge. So what else is new? As we tackle the challenge to grow through ministering to new people, we're taking a little bit of ourselves to New Ulm. We're introducing them to Nora Church and showing them how important our liberal faith is to us. We're showing them that community, social justice, and acceptance are not just ideas to think about, but values to live by. We're showing them that Nora has a positive, gut-level message. It's a big challenge we've taken on, and we'll need the help of everyone to pull it off. But this experiment in New Ulm, challenges and all, is nothing the people of Nora can't handle. Nothing at all!

ADULT RE & GROWTH

The Spirituality Study Group will be meeting at 6:25 PM at Nora Church each Thursday through January. During these initial sessions, the group will continue looking at various meditation traditions and techniques, and begin exploring other aspects of spirituality.

The Open Meditation will be held in the sanctuary at Nora Church at 7:00 PM each Thursday through January. This hour-long offering will be largely silent, providing among other things, time to unplug from the pressures and stress of daily life, and find a quiet space to let some peace and tranquility enter the mind and heart.

Both of these offerings are open to members and non-members of Nora Church, and people need not attend both in order to participate in the session that is of interest to them. If you have questions or would like more information, contact Christopher Olson, either via e-mail at ki-takis@aol.com or by phone at 507-995-7059.

SECOND SUNDAY OFFERING

Loose change on the 2nd Sunday of each month will go to “Food For All”. Please consider a generous donation. Many are less fortunate than us and need a helping hand.





LUNCH BUNCH

LUNCH BUNCH will start the new year on January 9th at the Grand Moon Chinese Buffet at 11:30 AM. This is located in the strip mall next to Wal Mart in New Ulm. Come join us at .

MUUSJA ANNOUCEMENTS

Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC)

January 20, 2008 , 2 to 4:30 pm
First Universalist Church Social Hall
3400 Dupont Ave S, Minneapolis

MUUSJA

Annual Membership Meeting & Celebration

January 27th, 2008, 3p.m. – 5 p.m.
First Universalist Church, Chalice Room
3400 Dupont Ave South, Minneapolis

To Keep In Touch

♥
It appears we're entering the new year in good health. If you 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

SERVERS

GREETERS/USHERS

JANUARY

6	Norma & Roger Breu Ellen Byro	Joy Rathman Julie Sellner
13	Alon & Carol Chambard	Ron & Julie Peck
20	Gene & Georgine Tepley	Sheldon & Anne Rieke
27	Angie & Scott Becker Kudelka	Noah & Janet Rosenbloom

FEBRUARY

3	Darrell & Jeanne Hinsmann Wayne & Janet Johnson	Alon & Carol Chambard
10	Kevin & Shannon Weiss	Mimi Kamleiter Vicki Sieve
17	Doug Anderson Kristi Paulson	Gene & Georgine Tepley
24	Angie & Scott Becker Kudelka	Shannon & Kevin Weiss

MARCH

2	Warren & Kristine Paulson Jerry & Susan Allen	Elroy & Ardis Wellmann
9	Ross Chambard Chris Bodick	Wally & Beverly Wellmann
16	Dave & Jeanne Wenk	Mark & Brenda Wiger
23	Easter	John & Julie Schmitt
30	Clayton & Shirley Olson	John & Anne Makepeace

APRIL

6	Lee & Lynn Schmitt Christina Schmitt	Kristi Paulson Christopher Olson
13	Diane Becken Nancy Dickson	Dave & Jeanne Wenk
20	Elroy & Ardis Wellmann	Darrell & Jeanne Hinsman
27	CLEAN UP DAY	

MAY

4	Scott Chambard Michele Bethke Christopher Olson	Algot & Bonita Blomquist
11	John & Julie Schmitt	Christina Schmitt Susan Evers
18	Syttende Mai	Syttende Mai
25	Gene & Georgine Tepley	Gil & Sally Hanson

JUNE

1	Ron & Julie Peck Pat & Laurie Kunerth	Christopher Olson Diane Becken
8	Wayne & Janet Johnson	Kristi Bodick Edith Beckius
15	Alon & Carol Chambard	Roger & Norma Breu



**As part of the Nora Social Justice 2007-2008 Focus on Energy and the Environment,
the following is an article about specific ways to reduce energy consumption.
What can we do at Nora to decrease our energy consumption?**

Energy Consumption – Refrigerators

The average home actually causes more air pollution than the average car. This is because much of the energy we use in our homes comes from power plants, which burn fossil fuel to power our electric products. Burning fossil fuels causes air pollution and contributes to smog, acid rain and global warming.

Saving energy also saves money. By using energy-efficient products, the average household can save up to \$400 per year on utility bills. The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy estimates that if each of us increases the energy-efficiency in our major appliances by 10 – 30%, we'll release the demand for electricity by the equivalent of 25 large power plants.

Remember, saving energy prevents pollution. In most households, the refrigerator is the single biggest energy consuming kitchen appliance. Replacing a refrigerator bought in 1990 with a new ENERGY STAR qualified model would save enough energy to light the average household for nearly four months.

The energy efficiency of refrigerators has improved dramatically over the past three decades. A typical new refrigerator with automatic defrost and a top-mounted freezer uses about half energy used by a typical 1990 refrigerator. So if your refrigerator is old, needs repairs, or is nearing the end of its expected 15-year life, it may make economic sense to replace it now.

When buying a new refrigerator, consider the following:

1. Low Annual Energy Use

ACEEE recommends that you consider models that use at least 20% less electricity than that required by federal law. Models that are 20%, 25% and 30% better than the federal standard may qualify for rebates – check with your local utility.

2. Choose top-mounted freezer configuration over side-by-side

Side-by-side refrigerator/freezers use more energy than similarly sized models with the freezer on top, even if they both carry the ENERGY STAR. The government holds the two categories to different standards, allowing side-by-sides to use 10-30% more energy. Icemakers and through-the-door ice also add to energy consumption.

3. Size Matters

Refrigerators under 25 cubic feet should meet the needs of most households. The models over 25 cubic feet use significantly more energy. If you are thinking about purchasing such a large unit, you may want to reconsider. A smaller unit may well meet your household needs.

4. Minimize multiple refrigerators / Recycle your old fridge

If you need more refrigerator space, resist the temptation of moving your old refrigerator to the basement or garage for auxiliary purposes. Instead, have it recycled and think about other options if you need more refrigerator space.

ENERGY SAVING TIPS

Minimize the energy consumption of your existing refrigerator by following these tips:

- **Check Door Seals** Check the door seals or gaskets on your refrigerator/freezer. You can do this by putting a dollar bill in the door as you close it and see if it holds firmly in place. Or, put a bright flashlight inside the refrigerator and direct the light toward a section of the door seal. With the door closed and the room darkened, inspect for light through the crack.
- **Adjust the Thermostat**
The refrigerator compartment should be kept between 36 degrees F and 38 degrees F, and the freezer compartment between 0 degrees F and 5 degrees F.
- **Move the Refrigerator to a Cooler Location**
If your refrigerator is in the sunlight or next to your stove or dishwasher, it has to work harder to maintain cool temperatures.
- **Check Power-Saver Switch**
Many refrigerators have small heaters built into the walls to prevent moisture from condensing on the outer surface – as if the refrigerator doesn't have to work hard enough already! On some units, this feature can be turned off with an energy-saver or power-saver switch. Unless you have noticeable condensation, keep this switch on the energy saving setting.
- **Minimize Frost Build-Up**
Manual defrost and partial automatic defrost refrigerators and freezers should be defrosted on a regular basis. The buildup of ice on the coils inside the unit means the compressor has to run longer to maintain cold temperatures, wasting energy. If you live in a very hot, humid climate and don't use air conditioning, defrosting may be required quite frequently with a manual defrost model. After defrosting, you might be able to adjust the thermostat to a warmer setting, further saving money.
- **Manage Your Food and Storage Space**
To keep your refrigerator from working too hard, let hot foods cool, cover foods, label items for quick identification, and keep your freezer full.



DIVERSITY THROUGH DIALOGUE

3rd Annual
MARTIN LUTHER KING EVENT

Sunday, January 20, 2008

**United Church of Christ,
301 S. Minnesota, New Ulm**

SPAGHETTI DINNER

5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

Includes salad, roll & beverage

ADULTS \$7.50

STUDENTS \$5.00

5 AND UNDER FREE

7:00 p.m. ~ Forum

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

- What is the experience like to be a minority here?
- What local stories describe examples of harmonious racial diversity?
- What recommendations would make our communities more welcoming/ accommodating?
- Thinking about change ... what needs to happen next?

PANELISTS

Carl Zeidler: Human Resources Director, City of New Ulm

Diane Rasmussen: Human Resources Director, New Ulm Medical Center

Scott Goheen: Director of Human Resources, Kraft, New Ulm (invited)

Gilma Morales: Life-Work Planning Center Multicultural Peer Counselor

Bukata Hayes: Exec. Director of Greater Mankato Diversity Council

Reggie Edwards: Director of Region Nine

Dan Engelberg, Director of the Cottonwood River Integration Collaborative

Special youth guest, Isaac Rysdahl: reading from his finalist essay

on school integration (invited)

Sponsored by the Nora Unitarian Universalist Church & the New Ulm Human Rights Commission
Facility host is the United Church of Christ



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7:00 p.m. ~ FORUM: Diversity Through Dialog
including area leaders in diversity

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NORA CHURCH CALENDAR

JANUARY 2008

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



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6 Muffy	Norma & Roger Breu Ellen Byro	Joy Rathman Julie Sellner		6:25 Spirituality Group 7:00 Open Meditation		
13 Sally	Alon & Carol Chambard	Ron & Julie Peck				
20 Mimi	Gene & Georgine Tepley	Sheldon & Anne Rieke				
27 Jordan	Angie & Scott Becker Kudelk	Noah & Janet Rosenbloom				
6 No Choir 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service POTLUCK	7	8	9 Lunch Bunch 11:30 AM - New Moon Buffet, New Ulm	10 6:25 Spirituality Group 7:00 Open Meditation 6:30 Board Mtg- UU Fellowship, Mkto	11	12
13 9:00 Choir 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service	14	15	16	17 6:25 Spirituality Group 7:00 Open Meditation	18	19 6:30 PM "UU and YOU"
20 9:00 Choir 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service MLK BENEFIT	21	22 	23	24 6:25 Spirituality Group 7:00 Open Meditation	25	26
27 9:00 Choir 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service	28	29	30	31 6:25 Spirituality Group 7:00 Open Meditation		

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
12333 155th Avenue
Hanska Minnesota 56041-4310

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United States Postage Paid
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Hanska, MN 56041



EMAIL
Nora church @ sleepyeyetel.net

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

Nora Church Sunday Services JANUARY 2008

Social Hour 10:00 AM

Worship Service 10:30 AM

January 6 "Hope Floats" - Jill Wagner

January 13 "Time Flies Like an Eagle, Fruit Flies Like a Banana: Does Your Soul Ever Laugh?" - Silliness is powerful stuff, especially in the throes of a Minnesota winter. When was the last time you got goofy?

January 20 "Politics, Religion, Ethnicity and Immigration" - Systems theory tells us that even a slight change can cause anxiety throughout a system, be it a family, organization or entire nation. Given that life is always in flux, little wonder change is the only thing that's constant.

January 27 "Spiritual Uncle-ing" - What precious little I know about raising children to cultivate spirituality comes from watching real-life parents and their real-life kids. But that's not to say that being somebody's uncle (and granduncle) is without its insights.