



MERE LYS newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church
MAY 2008

VIEW FROM THE HILL

Having served congregations in northern climes before coming to Minnesota (Maine, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Ontario) I know that the longer the winter the shorter the patience. It's not easy to live here during the best of winters, much less this last one. Throw in the variables of advancing age or declining abilities, difficult circumstances or depression and you've got yourself the makings for a pretty rough stretch of time.

But, speaking only from a financial standpoint, if you're *not* one of the nearly half-million Minnesotans in the throes of a mortgage foreclosure, your winter hasn't been all that bad. Neither has mine. (Recall the old AA adage I cite to you every Thanksgiving: *If you won't be thankful for what you've got, be thankful for what you've been spared.*) Blame the borrowers, the lenders or the federal and state systems that helped create such suffering, but don't forget that holy havoc is ripping through the lives and dreams of millions of Americans. Right this minute.

Fact is, unchecked capitalism's excesses are many and longstanding – it's only when a hurricane devastates a poverty-stricken city or poor lending practices put the pinch on the working poor that those excesses are laid bare for all to see. But, pious as

that kind of talk can make a body feel, piety doesn't do much to address rising costs, flat employment statistics or foreclosures. Talk really is cheap.

It's only natural for everyone to pull back right now; you don't have to be in foreclosure or bankruptcy before feeling the pinch of recession, the President's avoidance of that term notwithstanding. But, for those of us who are not in the direst of straits right now, the worst thing we can do is withhold our giving to agencies that are working to address this situation, short- and long-term. Short-term, people need *legitimate* financial, legal and credit counseling. Affordable housing. Utility assistance. Food security. Long-term, elected officials need to hear from us, en masse, if we're to avoid a repeat of what is fast becoming a worldwide financial problem. Regulation is not a dirty word.

For those of us spared such hard times, this is a good time to increase our giving to charitable causes and change agents. It's a good time to be somebody's Good Samaritan and everybody's activist.

Blessings,
Don



MidWest Leadership School
the Resource for Training Programs

July 20, 2008 - July 26, 2008
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 be found on their website: www.yymwls.org. Information is also on the bulletin board. Registration deadline is June 1st.



SECOND SUNDAY OFFERING

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

NORA WOMEN'S SOCIETY

The Women's Society will meet on Monday, May 5th, 7 PM at the church. Please join us!!

2007-2008 ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of Nora UU Church will be held after church on Sunday, June 8. In addition to any business that members wish to address, the congregation will be asked to adopt the budget for the 2008-2009 church year. (Please note that while both friends and members of Nora Church are encouraged to attend, voting is reserved for members.)

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. The Annual meeting will be held following the service on June 8th.

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 Hanson - for enriching our lives with music as choir director. Christopher Olson - for the time and travel he's putting in for the Thursday meditation group. Wayne Johnson - for the seemingly never ending snow removal. The "Tator Team", Julie Sellner, Joy Rathman, Shirley Olsen, Diane Becken and all the others who helped serve and clean up and for all the generous donations of salads and desserts.

THANKYOU

Thanks to Julie Sellner for coordinating the trip to the April 19 Twins game, and congratulations to Julie on her two-year anniversary of cancer-free life!

CONGRATS!

Good news! The Rev. Ildiko Ilkei, minister to our partner church in Romania, has given birth to a daughter, Reka. Ildiko and Csaba, her husband, are sleeping through the night. Thus far. Read more news from Transylvania elsewhere in the newsletter.

CHOIR NEWS

When I became the Nora choir director, I stated that I had concerns that my hearing disorder might be a problem. Recently I have become aware that my sensitivity to sound is again increasing and I will no longer be able to continue directing the choir.

I have a hearing disorder called hyperacusis. This disorder makes me extremely sensitive to certain frequencies and only allows me an extremely narrow range of sound loudness that I can tolerate. At times, any sound much louder than a normal conversational level can be very painful.

This disorder forced me into an early retirement in 2001. In 2006 when I took over as the choir director, my hearing had improved enough to allow me to work with a small choir. But now once again, I will have to stop all activities that involve sound.

These last two years with the choir have been very special. I was privileged to work with a wonderful group of people to again create music.

--- Gil Hanson

KUDOS TO YOU!

This month we will be honoring 5 people for all their efforts in keeping Nora and its community a place to be proud to belong: Edith Beckius, Roger Breau, Norma Breau, Wayne Johnson, Janet Johnson. Many thanks to all of you for all you do!

HUMANITY SERIES

Periodic Provocative Presentations

The UU Humanity Series will present Father Elias Chacour, author of *Blood Brothers* and *We Belong to the Land*, Monday May 12th at 7:00 PM. Nomi-

nated several times for the Nobel Peace Prize, Father Chacour is a world renowned Palestinian priest who has spent his life working to achieve peace and reconciliation among Israeli Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Father Chacour has built schools, libraries, and summer camps for children of all religions. He is in the U.S. this spring and we feel fortunate to have him as a Humanity Speaker. Some review comments; "Charcour's personal story offers a rare and valuable view inside contemporary Galilee." San Francisco Chronicle. "A wrenching and determinedly honest book that speaks eloquently and without haterred from the Palestinian side of a tragic conflict: Kirkus Reviews



The NAMI-MN FaithWays Program serves as a resource to faith communities on programming designed to erase the stigma of mental illness. FaithWays, in collaboration with other mental health organizations, provides technical assistance and customized educational forums and trainings to meet a congregation's need.

Faith communities are in a unique position to combat stigma and provide a message of acceptance and hope. Serious mental illnesses are diseases of the brain that cause disturbances in a person's thinking, feeling, moods, and ability to relate to others. They can diminish a person's capacity for coping with the regular demands of ordinary life and can place tremendous burdens on family members and loved ones.

Unfortunately, both ignorance and fear continue to play leading roles in perpetuating the stigma that those with these no-fault brain disorders face. This stigma leads to under funding of government programs for public mental health services, discrimination by insurance companies, lack of appropriate housing and employment options, and pervasive media portrayals of persons with mental illnesses as violent, dangerous, or hopeless.

And yet, mental illnesses do not discriminate. These disorders affect people of every race, ethnic heritage, gender, language, age, and religious orientation. According to the U.S Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), at any given moment more than 48 million Americans are suffering from a "diagnosable" mental illness, and 11 million are suffering from a "severe" mental illness. Persons with mental illnesses are our

neighbors, our coworkers, our siblings, our friends. They are even members of our churches, synagogues, and other faith communities.

Religious communities are in a unique position to combat stigma and provide a message of acceptance and hope. Proclaiming the values of social justice, respect for all persons, and non-discrimination, faith communities can reach out to individuals and families affected by mental illness in many helpful ways. Sharing the message that all persons are worthy in the eyes of God, a faith community may be the only place where a person with a mental illness truly feels accepted, valued, and loved.

For people who find no other welcome in the larger community, being welcomed in a house of prayer by a concerned and caring community can make a critical difference for consumers with mental illnesses and their families. Churches, synagogues, and other places of worship can spread the message that serious mental illnesses are "diseases of the brain" and help families understand that "it's not their fault." They can open their doors and their hearts to consumers and be a supportive presence in their on-going recovery.

Programs:

Adult forums on Mental illness 101

- Specific forums on adult and/or children's issues
- Presentations on teen issues for youth and adults
- Confirmation class presentations
- Collaboration with other organizations on presentations

Trainings:

- Befriender and Stephen's Ministers
- Religious Education teachers
- Youth Ministers
- Clergy
- Pastoral care and lay ministers
- Parish Nurses

Miscellaneous:

- Help congregations assess programming needs
- Provide support group facilitation training
- Speaker's Bureau
- Provide bulletin inserts
- Provide information for Mental Illness Awareness Week in October

Ways congregations can help:

- Host any of the NAMI education programs: Family to Family, Hope for Recovery, Kidshops or Children's Challenging Behaviors
- Recruit teachers for our education programs
- Participate on the NAMI-MN legislative network

For more information please contact: Mary Jean Babcock, 651.645.2948, ext. 107, or e-mail to: mbabcock@nami.org.

For a wealth of additional information, articles and ideas, visit NAMI's Outreach to Faith Communities at [NAMI FaithNet](#).

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH Brown Bag Lunch Series

Mondays - Noon - 1:00 PM ~ New Ulm Public Library, 17 N Broadway - Downstairs Meeting Room

May 5: **Community Resources for Children and Adults with Mental Illness** ~ Laurie Strunk, MSW: What is Case Management? ~ Dick Embacher, MSW: Resources for Adults in Brown County and within the Mental Health Initiative.

May 12: **Services available for veterans and their families** ~ Catherine Job, Executive Director, Sioux Trails Mental Health Ctr. ~ Gregg Peterson, Veterans Service Officer for Brown County.

May 19: **Advocacy resources and family support. Legislative update on Mental Health legislation** ~ Sue Abderholden, Executive Director NAMI-Minnesota ~ Julie Soper, President of NAMI-Mankato

- Free & open to the public
- Sponsored by Brown County Family Services and the Local Advisory Councils (LACs for Adult and Children's Mental Health Services)
- Bring your lunch
- Coffee, water & desserts will be provided
- Questions: call Dick Embacher 507-359-6512

ADVENTURE VOLUNTEERISM IN TRANSYLVANIA

REGISTER IMMEDIATELY deadline - end of April. Join us this summer for two unforgettable weeks in rural Transylvania. Discover the beautiful birthplace of Unitarianism and become a part of a global community for positive change. Through service projects in the villages, you will gain experience and insight in the dynamic field of sustainable rural development. With homestay families and Agora's experienced staff, your group will explore the region's history, culture and landscape, make new friends and discover new ways of thinking, living and having fun. **Registration closes at the end of April** for this summer's Agora Experience volunteer opportunity in Transylvania.
(www.experience.green-agora.ro).

ARE YOU IN NEED OF EXTRA FOOD?

A special Food distribution will take place on Tuesday, May 13, at the Brown County Fairgrounds Youth Coliseum in New Ulm from noon to 3 pm. Please bring your own boxes to transport your food items. Other non-food items may also be available. **ANYONE WHO IS IN NEED OF FOOD IS ELIGIBLE!!** This special food distribution is a joint effort of Second Harvest Heartland, New Ulm Emergency Food Shelf, MVAC and the Salvation Army. **VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED** to help with this event. Call MVAC at 507-354-3138 or the New Ulm Food Shelf at 507-354-7668.

CERTIFICATE IN VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP Leadership Training Series

- Earn your Certificate in Volunteer Leadership by completing an 8-topic training series in two days.
- Gain a way to demonstrate your expertise and professionalism to employers, peers and the community.
- If you are new to the field or are looking for rejuvenation in your career, please join us.

May 22nd & June 9th - 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

Lunch is included,

Rhein River Arts Center, 208 N Minnesota, NU.

More information is available on the bulletin board at church, website: www.MAVnetwork.org or call Matt Altstiel 612-578-3819. To register go to the website or call the MVAC office 651-255-0469
Facilitators: Anne Makepeace, Executive Director, United Way of Brown County Area; Carla Reichel: Volunteer Coordinator, St. Johns Lutheran Home; Jessica Roschen, MS Walk Coordinator, Mankato MS Walk; Tamara Merchlewitz, Coordinator, Immanuel St. Joseph's Hospital

UU JEWELRY & NOTE CARDS

The Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF) offers several styles of the chalice jewelry for all genders and all ages.



The CLF also offers colorful UU-themed note cards for all occasions, available for gift giving

www.clfu.org

Mothers Day ~ Graduates ~ Father's Day ~
Coming of Age Students or Mentors ~ RE Teachers

Carbon Offsets

As part of our environmental theme for the church year, the Social Justice Committee has been actively seeking out a way for the Nora congregation to have a positive affect on Climate Change. One of the ways we can do this is through Carbon Offsets. What are carbon offsets? All of us create carbon by the very act of living – driving, heating and cooling our homes, watching TV and many more daily activities. The carbon we create can be offset by reducing our “carbon footprint” on our planet. Below is one idea for using carbon offsets to help our planet.

Carbon offsets enable anyone to reduce their climate footprint by supporting projects that reduce carbon dioxide emissions to balance out one’s own footprint. If you choose to offset your entire carbon footprint, that is called being carbon neutral. At Carbonfund.org, we call that ZeroCarbonTM

Carbon dioxide emissions

Carbon dioxide emissions are caused by the burning of fossil fuels: oil, coal and natural gas. Obviously, your car uses gasoline, and your house may burn natural gas for heating and hot water. But your house, your office, the factory that produces your clothes, your favorite restaurant, your local theater and other places we use every day use electricity that generally comes from power plants that burn fossil fuels. More than 50% of America’s electricity is created by burning coal, and virtually all of our transportation needs are fueled by oil.

The average American is responsible for 10 tons of CO2 emissions annually through their direct energy use at home, driving and flying. However, the average American is responsible for about 23 tons of CO2 when you also include their purchases, activities and the other services we all share throughout the economy.

Getting to Carbon Neutral

While most people can reduce their energy use by improving the efficiency of their homes, buying cars that get better gas mileage and making other changes, which we strongly support, reducing it to zero through individual actions is nearly impossible. Carbon offsets are a cost effective way to reduce the remainder of one’s climate footprint.

How much you reduce inside your home or car vs. offsetting through Carbonfund.org is a personal and economic decision, and Carbonfund.org’s goal is to make it easy and affordable for every person or business to reduce their climate footprint to zero.

For more information: <http://www.carbonfund.org>

We thought you would enjoy reading some of the latest correspondence we've received from our friends in Transylvania and so are including there recent emails in this newsletter.

(from the pastor) I am sorry that I did not write You.

How are You, and Your Congregation.

I am fine, I am now in 39 th week, it is possible that in every moment come our baby. She’s name will be Reka, this is az old hungarian name.

Here in congregation everything is good, many people come every sunday in church. We had many nice celebration.

2008. June 28 here in our congregation will be a big celebration: my inauguration. My congregation and I want to invite You and Your congregation to this celebration.

We have a lot to do, we want to repairing our two churches. I send You some pictures about our church in Felsobenced.

You can see us in www.benced.ro

I wish You the best, write me about You and Your Congregation. Ildiko (pastor)

(Another email received approximately a month ago)

I am very happy that You wrote me.

It is fantastic that Your Church is gaining with new people. And it is really sad what did You write about Your choir director. How many members count Your choir?

It is fantastic what did You write me, that You and Your Congregation want to invite us in Hanska, and we accept this invitation with pleasure. I have never believe that we will have possibility to go in USA. I don’t know if I can express me clearly, but we are very happy. This meeting for us will be good next summer, if is possible, but if You can come WE WILL WAITING YOU THIS SUMMER IN BENCED.

I hope in our meeting, and I wish You the best, with love, Ildiko(pastor)

Nora Women's Society
BAKE SALE
Rhein River Arts Center
Saturday, May 3, 9 AM

PURSUING JUSTICE; SEEKING CHANGE
Are You Interested?

The Social Justice committee invites any member or friend of Nora to participate. Our next meeting is Wednesday, May 7, at 7 pm at Brenda and Mark Wiger's home. On the agenda will be choosing local and global SJ themes for the 2008-2009 church year. Please RSVP to Mark/Brenda for directions and additional info about the evening 507-354-5256. We'd love to see you there!

SYTTENDE MAI 2008
"Jukebox Jamboree"

Performances are scheduled for 7 PM on Thursday thru Sunday, with a matinee performance on Saturday at 2 PM. Sunday will begin with a pancake breakfast at 8:30 in the club house in the park followed by a church service at 10:30 in the Big Tent in the park. The parade begins at 12:30 followed by arts & crafts in the park & entertainment in the Big Tent.

All roads lead to Hanska!
Come for a day fun and socializing!

"A Home for Our Heritage"

This DVD tells some of the story of the early years of Universalism in New England in the late 18th and early 19th centuries with special attention to the enduring theological themes which are important to us still in the 21st century. It can be ordered from: Universalist Heritage Foundation, PO Box 6441, Nashua, NH 03063-6441. A donation of \$5 would be appreciated to cover production and mailing costs.

To Keep In Touch



CONGRATULATIONS

To Brenda & Mark Wiger on the birth of their first grandson, Ty Jonathan. He was born to Jon & Laura on April 19th.



Mimi Kamlieter continues to recover from and rehabilitate her injuries. For now, she's still at St. James Health Center, 1207 6th Avenue S., Room 112. (The general line is 507-375-3261.) Visits, calls, cards are appreciated.



Deloris Chambard is recuperating from surgery at Pine Medical Center, 109 S Court Av, Sandstone MN 55072. telephone: 320 245 2212.



"Please join our family as we celebrate Janney's graduation from New Ulm High School. There will be an Open House for her on Saturday, May 31st. from 2-5 p.m. at our home in rural New Ulm. We look forward to seeing you. " Sheldon, Anne, Janney, Fritz and Ben Rieke

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 2008

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



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 Bake Sale at Rhein River UU & You Service, St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 125 S Broadway, NU at 6:30 PM
4 10:00 Social Hour 10:30 Service Congregational budget meeting after church Pot Luck	5 Nora women's Society 5 PM at church	6	7 Social Justice Mtg, Wiger's home, 7 PM	8	9	10
11 10:00 Social Hour 10:30 Service Mother's Day	12	13	14 Board Mtg at Church, 6:30 PM	15	16	17 Long-Range planning Mtg, Board & COM 9-noon UU & You, 6:30 PM
	Work on newsletter articles & Annual Reports					
18 Sytende Mai in Hanska See schedule page 6	19	20 21 Newsletter articles due	21	22	23 Annual Reports Due	24
25 10:00 Social Hour 10:30 Service	26 	27	28	29	30	31
<p>Come join us and remember those who have gone before us. MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE Hanska Community Center, Monday May 26, 10:00 AM A potluck dinner will follow. Bring a dish to pass. Beverage, bread and eating utensils will be provided.</p>						

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
4 Muffy	Scott Chambard Michele Bethke Christopher Olson	Algot & Bonita Blomquist
11 Jordan	John & Julie Schmitt	Christina Schmitt Susan Evers
18	Syttende Mai	Syttende Mai
25 Sally	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
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Hanska Minnesota 56041-4310

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

May 2008

Happy syttende mai



May 17

Nora Church Sunday Services MAY 2008

Coffee Time 10:00 AM

Worship Service 10:30 AM

May 4: "Trouble in Paradise" Rev. Lisa Friedman ... This morning, I invite you to revisit the story of Adam and Eve with me through the eyes of the great American author Mark Twain. The biblical story of the first man and woman and their fall from paradise is foundational to western theology. But is there something in the story that we might have missed after all this years? What if Eve knew what she was doing after all?

May 11: "Moms Are People, Too" - From a child's point of view, moms just happen to be people. From a *mature* child's point of view, people just happen to be moms. That deeply spiritual transition can take a long time.

May 18: Syttende Mai Community Service, Hanska 10:30 A.M. (Details to be arranged)

May 25: "Straight Up, How Do *You* Want to Be Remembered?" It's a good thing to remember – to mark Memorial Day by sorting through some photos or decorating a grave – but what about being remembered? What will others call to mind once you're gone?