

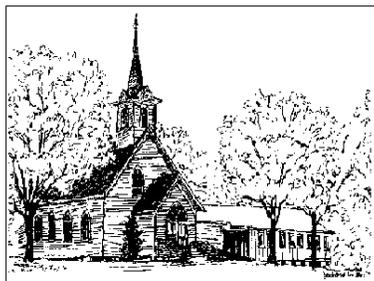


MERE LYS newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

December 2010

VIEW FROM THE HILL



“...all the stockings were hung by the chimney with care, in hopes that Saint Nicholas soon would be there...”

Ah, stockings! Hand-knit. Felt applique with sequins. Wool hunting socks. Hanging limp and expectant on mantles or doorknobs or bedposts. Red plastic netting filled with cheap toys and trinkets and novelty candies hanging from store racks. What would December be without stockings?!

Santa will fill *my* stocking for the forty-sixth time this Christmas. Ragged and matted red “plush” with white trim, and hand embroidered white block letters: LISA. Its beauty is decidedly faded but the magic hasn’t dimmed. When I arrive at Mom’s house Christmas morning I’ll find it hanging in the living room, stuffed and bulging, intriguingly misshapen. I’ll reach in and pull out miniature delight, again and again and again, until the stocking in empty down to the toe and my lap is filled with candy and toys and gadgets and baubles and of course an orange. Then, popping a piece of candy into my mouth, I’ll fill it back up again-because that particular treasure trove just belongs with the stocking. It will be days before I finally empty it completely, assimilate the contents into the my daily life, and fold the stocking away for another year.

This wintery season of holidays-Hanukah and Yule and Solstice and Christmas and Kwanzaa-reminds me of a gigantic stocking. The basic

outline is familiar, but each December it bulges in different places, has a slightly different heft, offers up a unique mix of the expected and unexpected.

Reach in your hand, explore the as yet unseen shapes and textures, emerge with a cd of beloved carols. Dive in again and pull out a handful of recipes. A Messiah sing-a-long. A mug of hot cider or mulled wine. The luminary-lit walk at Nora. Dark, quiet evenings near a sparkling tree. Candles burning low in the menorah in the window. Yule logs burning in the fireplace. Silent Night and flickering candlelight. Crumpled wrappings, discarded ribbons. A mailbox full of cards. Candy canes. Latkes. Sleigh-bells. Dreidels. Plum pudding. Eggnog. Starlight.

Unseen hands (like Santa’s) loving, creative, busy, fill the stocking-shaped season once again. It’s Christmas morning-now, today. Reach in and begin to claim your gifts.

-Lisa



NOTES FROM THE BOARD

I am very pleased at the end result that came out of the cottage meetings. With all the positive comments given for Rev. Lisa, I think I already knew what the result would be. It is nice to know so many people feel the same way. In the coming weeks, we will be working toward making Rev. Lisa a settled minister here at Nora.

I think the report given to the board from the cottage meetings will be very helpful for myself and the board. It will give us some insight as to what the congregation wants and expects. Christina, Kristy and Scott did a great job along with the hosts and all who took the time to attend and voice their opinion.

Copies of the report will be in the church entry. Look it over... it is very interesting.

-Scott

THANKS FROM THE BOARD

The board would like to thank Christina Schmitt, Kristy Paulson and Scott Kudelka for conducting the recent Cottage Meetings and also anyone that attended one of these meetings. All in attendance agreed that they would support a formal call to Reverend Lisa Doege for settled ministry. Board President, Scott Schmiesing has contacted the Prairie Star District office to determine our next steps.

Many thanks, also, to the Social Justice Committee and their success with obtaining the initial grant for the Prairie Beacon wind turbine. A groundbreaking ceremony for it's construction was held November 21st.

LUNCH BUNCH

The holiday celebration continues with a Lunch Bunch outing to Martin Luther College cafeteria on Thursday, December 9 beginning at 11 AM. Please note the earlier starting time. The cafeteria may be crowded and it was decided to try to beat the rush. Come join us!

A VISIT TO AL SWANSON

(received last month too late for the November issue)

Algot and Bonita stopped to visit Al Swanson in Worthington on Saturday, October 16th. Al is currently a resident at the Crossroads Nursing Home

where many of his former students are caregivers. Al was not having a good day when we were there but the nurses assured us that on his better days he is the same jovial Al that we have all learned to know and love. We then drove to Luverne where we were joined by our daughter, Patsy, as we traveled to Hills. Mn where we visited with Vernon Iverson who lives there in an assisted living apartment. He is 91 years "young" with a sharp mind and appears to be in reasonably good health. He can get up from his chair with much more ease than either of us can. He appreciates very much that many of the residents in his complex are Norwegian and can speak the language. He had one very close friend with whom he spent much time daily, who died in his sleep the previous week. He said he really misses his daily visits but at the same time appreciates very much the almost daily visits of his nephew, Ralph Iverson and his wife, who live in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. His family is a very important part of Nora Church history and he has many memories of traveling to Nora for the Sunday activities. We encourage anyone who knows Al or Vernon and are in the neighborhood to stop in and visit them.

-Algot and Bonita Blomquist

NEW HYMNBOOKS

The new supplemental hymn books are here and are in use. Thanks to the following for donating copies: Nita Gilbert, Algot & Bonita Blomquist, Carol & Alon chambard, Shirley Olson, Gil & Sally Hanson, Lorraine Becken, Lisa Doege, Edith Beckius, Kathryn Monnens.

We need donations for at least five more supplements to receive the discount on our next order. Send your check for \$15 per hymn book, along with the form indicating your dedication, to the church office. Thanks in advance.

YEAR END PLEDGE GIVING

Giving statements will be going out in January for your 2010 contributions. Please have all contributions in by December 30. Since we have no service on December 26th, contributions after this day can be mailed to Julie Peck, 1608 Northridge Lane, North Mankato, MN, 56003. Anything received after January 1st will recorded in 2011.

Our number of pledge cards returned was very low this year. It's not too late...if you would still like to return yours, please do so. It helps the financial committee in planning our budget.

GRANT COMES THROUGH

On November 9th Nora Church received word that Prairie Beacon was successful in their USDA Small Wind grant application for \$20,000 toward the cost of an alternative energy production system. The congregation voted at their annual meeting to proceed with this wind project if we were successful with the grant.

Things have moved very quickly since that point. The selected contractor was Energy Concepts (web site energyconcepts.us) of Hudson, Wisconsin, and they were anxious to get started with cement work before winter sets in. The footings and bases for the three legs were poured on Nov 18th and will need to cure for 30 days. This was done ahead of the planned ground breaking on Sunday Nov 21. The electrical lines were also dug from the tower located on the south side of Mt. Pisqua to the north side of the parish hall. This is where the electrical inverter will be located.

A Jacobs 31-20 generator (web site WITC.com) was selected. This is a 20kw generator with 31 foot blades. A 120 foot lattice tower will be delivered and depending upon the weather it may be constructed this winter. The tower is assembled on the ground with the generator and blades attached and will be raised by crane.

The project should be able to meet the church's electrical demand and with reverse metering through Alliant Energy provide green energy for others. The grant received will help make this form of producing electricity more cost competitive.

The congregation is excited to be embarking on this clean energy project which helps to make Nora Church literally a beacon on the prairie.

CIRCLE SUPPERS ANYONE?

One of the topics at the November 10 membership committee meeting was discussion about resurrecting circle suppers.

We're thinking of waiting until after the holiday season, perhaps the weekend preceding Valentine's Day. Let any of the committee know if you think this is a good idea. Would you like to attend a circle supper? host a circle supper?

Give your feedback to Julie Sellner, Jeanie Hinsman, Diane Becken or Carol Chambard. Thanks.



HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

The Hanska Community Chorus
invites you to their concert
"Christmas By the Fire"

a variety show of holiday favorites

Hanska Community Center
Sunday, December 12th at 4 PM
lunch afterwards.
Cost is \$5 at the door.

Happy
Holidays!

To Keep In Touch



If you know of anyone needing our
assistance or attention...please call
one of the committee members:

Georgine Tepley (chair)
359-3060 (weekdays after 5 pm)
Shirley Olson - 354-1866
Carol Chambard - 354-2242

THANK YOU! - Caring Committee

**Nora Unitarian Universalist Church
Multigenerational Religious Education
2010 - 2011**

Join consulting minister, the Reverend Lisa Doege, for multigenerational religious education programs once a month throughout the 2010 - 2011 church year. Each Saturday program will last approximately three hours and will include a story, discussion, craft or group activity, and refreshments. **Families and individuals of all ages are encouraged to participate.**

Nora Church Social Hall
1:00 - 4:00 pm
no registration necessary

<u>Date</u>	<u>Theme</u>
December 18, 2010	Light and Dark
January 22, 2011	Neighbors
February 12, 2011	Eew! (Love!)
March 19, 2012	Mud and Buds
April 23, 2011	Passover and Easter
May 21, 2012	Memories

We'll talk about the Winter Solstice and decorate gingerbread houses. Please let Lisa know if you'll be attending, and bring a bag of candy...

GROUND BREAKING

Jeanie Hinsman (left) reads "The Voice of the Wind," a compilation of brief statements from literary works and lines from poetry about wind, at the Sunday ground-breaking of the wind turbine site for Nora Unitarian Universalist Church in rural Hanska while church members Julie Peck, Janet Rosenbloom and Carol Cham-bard listen.

UU Jewelry Sale
at the Church of the Larger Fellowship's
Online Shop!
www.clfuu.org

**Pewter sale
through March 2011**

20% discount offered on

- = pewter pendants
- = pewter lapel pins
- = enamel lapel pins

Go to **www.clfuu.org**
Click on **CLF Shop**
and simply write the words
"CLF Rocks!"
in the **Add Comments** field!

CLF Rocks!

Your 20% discount will be processed within a week
and offered as a credit card refund
Questions? 617-948-6150

All jewelry sale proceeds support the many UU ministries of the
Church of the Larger Fellowship
www.clfuu.org



NORA CHURCH CALENDAR

DECEMBER 2010

Parsonage: 507-439-6240



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5 9:00 Choir 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service POTLUCK Decorating of the church for the Holidays	6	7	8 	9 	10 	11
12 9:00 Choir 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service	13	14	15	16	17	18 1:00 PM Multigenerational RE
19 9:00 Choir 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service	20 Newsletter articles are due!	21	22	23	24 5:30 PM Christmas Eve Service	25 CHRISTMAS DAY
26 No Service	27	28	29	30	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE	

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
5 Jordan Rathman	Wayne & Janet Johnson Ellen Byro	Edith Beckius
12 Sally Hanson	Julie Sellner, Susan Evers	Karen Farrell
19 JoAnn Huss	Scott & Angie Becker Kudelke	Jerry Peterson
24 Muffy Rathman	CHRISTMAS EVE	
	Wally & Beverly Wellman	Christopher Olson
26	NO SERVICE	



PASTOR'S SCHEDULE
Pastor Lisa will have Mondays off.
Friday will be sermon writing day.
She can be reached on her cell when not in the office:
507-766-5682



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

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Happy Holidays!



EMAIL
norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net

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

Nora Church Sunday Services DECEMBER 2010

Coffee 10:00 AM

Worship Service 10:30 AM

Dec 5 ~ "A Waiting Game"

Dec 12 ~ "Pause"

Dec 19 ~ Bring the Light"

Dec 24 ~ 5:30 PM Candle Lighting Service

Dec 26~ No service per Nora Church "tradition."

Jan 2, 2011 - No Service - HAPPY NEW YEAR!

