



MERE LYS newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

APRIL 2011

A VIEW FROM THE HILL

It's spring training time in the parsonage. Each year about this time I limber up, shake off the winter stiffness, and brace myself for the onslaught of questions, advice and opinions:

Do UUs do Easter? Why celebrate Easter? You're not going to talk about Jesus and the resurrection, are you? It's really a *pagan* holiday and we only want to hear about spring and new life, flowers and baby animals! Easter is *Easter* and my visiting parents/in-laws/cousins/college roommate is already suspicious enough of our church.

I'm happy to try honor and celebrate all Unitarian Universalist strands of belief and emotion surrounding this spring holy time, though not always in the same Sunday service and not even always in the same year. This year, for example, the vernal equinox (first day of spring) will have come and gone more than a month before Easter, so I'll probably concentrate primarily, if not exclusively, on liberal perspectives of the Christian holiday. Another year the timing and the emphasis will be different. The same goes for folding Passover into the mix at this crowded, shifting holy season. This year, while the beginning of the feast falls closest to the Sunday I'll be out of the pulpit, the holiday will continue until April 26, creating space and opportunity for a bit of Exodus among the alleluias.

To get back to the questions (and to explain my easy going flexibility regarding Easter and Spring and Passover), here's what I believe:

The facts don't matter.

None of it matters. It doesn't matter that Easter is layered on top of ancient pagan spring festivals, the symbols of which survive today. It doesn't matter that the miracles of the Passover and Easter stories seem unlikely to twenty-first century empirical minds. It doesn't matter that some of us want to celebrate the rebirth nature offers so generously this time of year, and some of us want to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, and some of us want to celebrate the liberation from bondage that is the heart of Passover. None of it matters, because the meaning of Easter and Passover are much simpler and far more profound than the confusion and the controversy and the proofs about the sequences of events.

The true story of Passover is this: the human journey brings us, each of us, again and again into slavery, and up from slavery, into the wilderness and into the Promised Land.

The true story of Easter is this: the human calendar is filled with Good Fridays and Easter mornings, days of death and days of resurrection.

The true message of both holy ties is this: the human spirit is capable, in ways not short of miraculous, of triumphing against all odds, and indeed does so again and again, as long as we live upon this earth.

That, in a nutshell, is the message we'll celebrate in one form or another on April 24 this year. And on Easter next year. And the next year. And it won't get old. I promise.

See you in church!
Lisa



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

By the time this newsletter comes out, let's hope for temps at least above freezing and no snow in the forecast! For me, this has been a long winter (as for all of us) so spring will be a welcome sight! And speaking of spring, April is here and with April showers also comes budget planning. We welcome input on this process.

We are also looking for a person to fill the shoes of Julie Peck who will be going off the board. I will not like to see her go but also know someone will step forward and take her place on the board and do a great job! (Hint, Hint) Thanks, Scott

LUNCH BUNCH

There was some talk of joining our friends at the UCC in New Ulm for their annual Spring fundraising luncheon, but upon checking, we found that the luncheon will not be held this year. So on to Plan B.



We drew lots and MLC was the winner. We'll meet at Martin Luther College, New Ulm on Thursday, April 14, at 11:30 a.m. We hope to see you there.

WE WANT YOUR TWO CENTS' WORTH!!

We're in the very early planning stage of creating a booklet to be given to each Nora Church child and youth, and you need to write it.

Watch next month's newsletter for details and an entry form. In the meantime, put on your thinking cap. What story, advice, memory, poem, joke, recipe or riddle will you offer for the betterment, education, entertainment, training or wisdom of our young people? Thanks to Kristine Paulson for the idea (and she can answer your questions!).

THANKS FROM THE BOARD

Thanks from the board goes to Gil Hanson for the exceptional job he did documenting the assembly and raising of the wind turbine. Also to Wayne Johnson, Warren Paulson and all of the others for a multitude of chores from moving dirt to mopping floors. Many thanks for the great team effort!

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

General Assembly 2011 in Charlotte, NC marks the 50th Anniversary of the merger of the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America. Nora Church may send two delegates. Please speak to Lisa Doege or Scott Schmiesing if you are interested in representing our congregation. The meeting will take place in the Charlotte Convention Center, 501 South College Street, Charlotte, NC 28202. General Assembly will commence on Wednesday, June 22, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. and conclude on Sunday, June 26, 2011, at 6:00 p.m. The business to be transacted will be set forth in the official agenda issued in accordance with the Bylaws of the Association.

Multigenerational Religious Education	
April 23, 2011	Passover and Easter
May 21, 2012	Memories
<p>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.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Nora Church Social Hall 1:00 - 4:00 pm no registration necessary</p>	

To Keep In Touch



Carol and Alon Chambard and Bonita and Algot Blomquist celebrated their 60th wedding anniversaries in March. Congratulations to all of them!!



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

PROGRESS MADE ON WIND TURBINE CONSTRUCTION

Nora Church members broke ground on a wind turbine project in November 2010 after receiving the approval of Prairie Beacon's small wind grant. Just before frost the cement base was constructed and the electrical lines to the social hall were pulled in. In preparation for further construction snow was removed from the hill on March 5th.

March 7, 2011 was the start of a busy week. Monday four employees of Steiner Electric of River Falls, WI arrived with the 120-foot tower and a Jacobs 21-30 generator made in Prior Lake, MN.

The two electricians worked to install electrical boxes outside the social hall as well as fuse boxes and shut offs in the furnace room. Space for the rather large inverter box was located in one of the downstairs closets of the Iverson room.

A four-wheeled hydraulic lift tractor was used to lift crates and to help assemble the three legged galvanized steel tower. The tower was bolted together with bracing in 20-foot sections. The generator as well as the gearbox is held upright in the top section. The three fiberglass blades were the last to be attached. The tower took three days to assemble in at times muddy conditions. The tower was constructed from the west with the top of the tower next to the cement base. A crane was located on the east side of the base. We were extremely fortunate that on Thursday March 11 there was very little wind. After some fog lifted the 110-ton crane arrived from Wabaso about 10:30 a.m. Lifting the tower into place took about an hour but considerable time was spent in setting up, hooking up and packing up.

We are very thankful that the crane could arrive before spring road restrictions were in effect and that assembly went as smoothly as it did. There were no injuries in spite of all the work and at times difficult conditions. Thanks to Gil Hanson, a slide show of the daily progress can be seen on the church's web site norauchurch.org. (Click on turbine and scroll down to the bottom.)

There was a lot of interest in the project and the steps the church has taken in the production of clean energy for us and for our neighbors. The Mankato Free Press, the Hanska Herald and the New Ulm Journal all covered the event as well as

KEYC TV in Mankato. It was a festive day. Workers and church members toasted the good fortune over a glass of punch and together enjoyed a light lunch. Members had been checking the progress during the week as well.

There are many people, too many to mention, who should be appreciated and deserve credit for their help, support and interest. Though approval of this project was not unanimous, we've appreciated the good will of all the members as this project comes to fruition.

Where we're at:

Because of the lack of wind on the day the tower was set, the machine could not be tested. Next steps are for state electrical inspectors and Alliant Energy engineers to arrive and for the tower to be tested, but it should not be long before it is in operation.

After grants and rebates Prairie Beacon has remaining debt of \$56,000 on the \$100,000 project. While we have not solicited monetary contributions, a few Nora Church members and friends have inquired about making a donation. Donations would significantly reduce the payback period making the turbine "free and clear" at an earlier date. If you'd like to add your support, checks may be written to Nora Church with Wind Project on the memo line. Beyond offsetting the start-up expenses and advancing the date at which Nora begins to receive monetary benefit from the wind tower, such donations are further evidence of our faith in Nora's future. We are deeply grateful for the support so many of you have shown for this project with your questions, your advice, and your votes.



From the Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF)
the arrival of two **NEW** pendants!

www.clfuu.org
Click on **CLF Shop**



NEW!
\$6

Celebrate your
Green Sanctuary or
Earth Day
with a green pendant.

Celebrate your
Welcoming Congregation
with a rainbow pendant.




To reach a real person, contact
The Church of the Larger Fellowship
e-mail: clshop@clfu.org
617-948-6150

Purchasing your UU gifts from the CLF is another way
to support Unitarian Universalism throughout the world.
All proceeds from CLF Shop sales sustain the many ministries
of the Church of the Larger Fellowship.

INTERESTING ABOUT THIS YEAR

This year we're going to experience four unusual dates. 1/1/11, 1/11/11, 11/1/11, 11/11/11 and that's not all...

Take the last two digits of the year in which you were born -now add the age you will be this year, and the result will be 111 for everyone...!!

This year October will have 5 Sundays, 5 Mondays and 5 Saturdays. This happens only every 823 years...

FRIENDS OF THE UUA

It's that time of year again! As you may know, in addition to our regular mailings to Friends of the UUA donors, we conduct an annual fundraising phonathon. This year, we will be focusing on the UUA's Tapestry of Faith, a series of programs and resources for all ages that nurture Unitarian Universalist identity and spiritual growth that is easily accessible online and free at UUA.org.

Later this month, Stratcom, our telemarketing firm located in Toronto, will be phoning *only* UUA donors who have expressed a preference to receive telemarketing appeals.

Our contract with this firm requires that all callers must be courteous, respectful, and succinct as they offer identified Unitarian Universalists telemarketing donors an opportunity to support our Association directly.

We are notifying you of our fundraising activities because of your leadership role within your congregation so that you may share with members this information in case they are contacted and would like to report back on their call experience. This will help us to monitor overall call quality. Members can submit their comments or request to be placed on our "no call" list by emailing me at jsarber@uua.org or calling me at 617.948.6544.

Thank you so much for your support in our fundraising efforts which allows us to provide better services and programs to all of our member congregations.

With gratitude,
Jill Sarber

Communications Manager
Stewardship and Development
Unitarian Universalist Association



Last month's newsletter asked that you send your emails in an effort to improve church communications. This list would be used to inform members of memorial services, weather related cancellations, newly scheduled events, last minute meetings or pastoral concerns. We have received a few responses, but I know there are many more to come. If you DO wish to receive such announcements and reminders please send an e-mail to nora-church@sleepyeyetel.net with "add me to the grapevine" in the subject line.

NORA CHURCH CALENDAR

APRIL 2011

Parsonage: 507-439-6240

Lisa's Cell: 507-766-5682

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 <p>Happy Easter</p>					1	2
3 9:00 AM Choir 10:00 AM Coffee Time 10:30 AM Service Congregational Meeting Pot Luck Dinneer	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 9:00 AM Choir 10:00 AM Coffee Time 10:30 AM Service	11	12	13	 14	15	16
17 9:00 AM Choir 10:00 AM Coffee Time 10:30 AM Service	18	19	20 Newsletter articles due . Thanks for being prompt!	21	22	23 RE at Nora 1 - 4 PM
24 EASTER 9:00 Choir 10:00 AM Coffee Time 10:30 Easter Service	25	26	27	28	29	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

MUSICIAN	SERVERS	GREETERS/USHERS
3 Jordan Rathman	Julie Sellner & Susan Evers	Karen Farrell
10 Muffy Rathman	Jason & Kate Monnens	Kristi Paulson
17 JoAnn Huss	Wayne & Janet Johnson	Ellen Byro
24 Sally Hanson	EASTER	Scott & Angie Becker Kudelke
	Sheldon & Anne Rieke	



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



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

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Hanska, MN 56041



April 2011

EMAIL
norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net

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

Nora Church Sunday Services APRIL 2011

Coffee Time 10:00 AM Worship Service 10:30 AM

April 3: "At the End of the Rainbow, the Beginning"

April 10: "Well, This is Awkward..."

April 17: "Rituals of Remembrance, Renewal and
Restoration" guest, Rev. Sarah Oelberg

April 24: "Where Is He? "

