

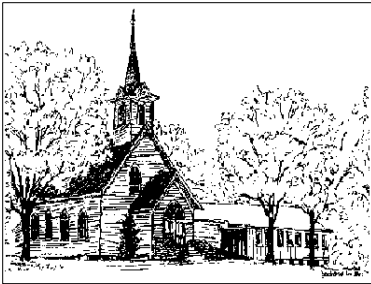


MERE LYS newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

November 2006

VIEW FROM THE HILL



*If you won't be thankful for what you've got,
be thankful for what you've been spared.*

I'm not sure as to the origins of the above statement; it came to me as a gift from a recovering alcoholic. But I've returned to that short quip on many occasions, often those that involve self-imposed limitations, ungratefulness and one-man pity parties.

With Thanksgiving coming on, perhaps you're not much in the mood for counting your blessings, even in terms of the various "toils and snares" that you've managed to avoid. (Speaking for myself, believe me when I tell you that I've earned a doctorate in overlooking life's many positives.) So let me list a few of the things I've been spared over the past year or so:

I've been spared the destruction and devastation of Hurricane Katrina
I've been spared the civil war that plagues modern day Iraq
I've been spared the relentless AIDS virus that continues to ravage Africa
I've been spared the discrimination that is the daily grind for gay folk
I've been spared the yoke of a religion that shames me into blind faith
I've been spared the burden of poverty that wears on the soul
I've been spared the crippling pain of illness and disease
I've been spared the searing loneliness that haunts the hours

Yeah, I know, there are multitudes of other things to add here, so perhaps you might take the time to write a list of your own. Then put it in your purse or wallet. Post it on your bathroom mirror or above your desk. Let its unarguable truth stare back at you until that moment when you realize you have a place in the world, here, right now. It ain't perfect? So what's new?

May our gratitude be plentiful. May that gratitude be the catalyst for our words and actions.

*Happy Thanksgiving,
Don*



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Thank you once again for your contributions to our Smorg. games. We earned \$103 for our service projects. That amount will be combined with our earnings from our Easter morning breakfast last Spring. We will begin some of our service projects at our RE Wednesday in November.

I have been in contact with the minister from Transylvania. Pictures of our kids will be taken in November. Our kids will draw pictures and send letters with their pictures to the kids in one of the congregations in Transylvania. The minister there thought this would be important to do, so the kids can get to know one another. Once a relationship has been established, then we will talk more about how our kids can help out the kids there.

Here are November topics for Sunday School:

5th: Young'Uns - **Daniel and the Lion's Den** and activity. Teacher - Janney Rieke
Juniors - **Timeless Themes #22 - Fiery Furnaces and Roaring Lions.** Teacher - Brenda Wiger
Tweeners - **In Our Hands #4 - Affirmation of Self.** Teachers - Warren and Kristine Paulson

12th: Young'Uns - **Joseph** and activity. Teacher - John Makepeace
Juniors - **Timeless Themes #23 - Flight to Egypt.** Teacher - Anne Makepeace
Tweeners - **In Our Hands #5 - Affirmation of Self and Others.** Teacher - Julie Peck

15th: RE Wednesday - We will make ornaments/projects for Christmas baskets, and work on our letters and pictures to send to the children at our sister church in Transylvania.

19th: All classes - **Guest at Your Table Activities**
Young'Uns - Teacher - TBD
Juniors - Teacher - Doug Anderson
Tweeners - Teacher - Diane Becken

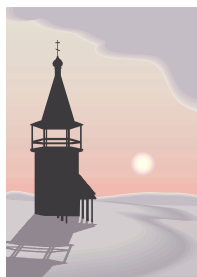
26th: No Sunday School - Happy Thanksgiving

Classes will be during the service after the children's story or the sharing of joys and concerns depending on the individual services.

Just a reminder, we will have our annual RE Winter service in December. The service will be on the second Sunday in December. Be on the look out for more information.



SOULFUL SUNDOWN



Our first Soulful Sundown service was held last month, with 22 in attendance. Many were Nora regulars but some folk were new to us. We sang, shared ideas, passed the “talking stone” and meditated together.

The Soulful Sundown dates for November are Thursday, the 2nd and Thursday, the 16th. We begin at 6:30. The topic for the November 2nd service is forgiveness. Please bring a poem, story, song, artwork, photo or some other way of expressing yourself on that topic.

We meet at Rhein River Arts Center, 208 N. Minnesota, in New Ulm. (Soulful Sundown is a smoke- and alcohol-free environment.)

INTERNSHIP CANCELLED

Sadly, Cris Brizuela, our expected intern for the UU ministry, has decided not to continue her studies, including an internship at Nora. We're grateful for the brief time Cris was with us and wish her the best as she pursues other interests.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It seems to me that trying things is part of what life is about. If you don't try things how can you experience anything? Thanks to Julie Peck we tried something in October, we hosted a film premiere. As of this writing I don't know how successful it was but I do know it did get people talking even before it showed and that is good. On another note, sometimes you try something and it takes longer than you expected. Such is the case with the 125th Anniversary book. Between my new job and the musical at

New Ulm, I am behind and the book won't be ready to be released in November. It should be ready late January or early February, I know you will understand it is better to do it right than do it rushed. Trying things, its part of what life is all about and its good to try things for Nora.

125th ANNIVERSARY

We are continuing to take orders for the 125th anniversary book. The cost is \$12 with an added cost of \$2 if you wish to have it mailed to you.



Are you thinking of gifts as the holiday season approaches???

The beautiful brass ornament is still available for a cost of \$10.

Please contact Shirley Olson---507-439-6879.

ANNIVERSARY DANCE

Our final 125th Anniversary Celebration will be on November 11th. In honor of Nora's ties to the Hanska Community Center it was decided to host a dance at the Center. Get your dancing shoes on and come ready to have good time.



Don will be our DJ. We hope to cover as many decades and styles (yes, even a polka or two) so we're asking to borrow your CDs, cassettes or vinyl records for the evening. Please contact Don to loan us some of your music for the dance.

The dance will be preceded by a “Baked Potato Bar.” If anyone is interested in volunteering Saturday afternoon, please let Shirley Olson, Julie Sellner or Joy Rathman know. We're also in need of donations of salads or bars.

LUNCH BUNCH



The Lunch Bunch will meet on Wednesday, November 15 at its usual time of 11:30 am. This month takes us to "Lemays" on Humphrey Street in Lake Crystal. Come join us!!

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

November Social Justice Program

As many of you may remember our SJ "event" on September 10th included welcoming Becky Marquez to the pulpit from the Cottonwood River Integration Collaborative. She talked about her work which involves a model of assessing not only where people are in terms of understanding other cultures but also where they think they are, or want to be. The effort seeks to increase intercultural integration and prepare individuals for positive interactions with other cultures in a global environment. She pointed out to us that there are many areas that fall within this "understanding" process. It could be issues around age discrimination, sexual orientation, economics, abledness, etc.

She will be returning to Nora the first Sunday in both November and December to continue with workshops following the potluck. On November 5th she will have the survey available for individual church members to complete. They take about 45 minutes to complete (which includes an introduction about how to complete and the use of the survey following it's completion and compilation with the other Nora church members surveys). We will make child care arrangements for that time. Becky told us that the survey is appropriate for ages from high school on up so we are hoping this can be a multi-generational event as well! Please note Coming of Age recent graduates we'd like to have you complete

the surveys as well if it works for you.

Following up in December on the first Sunday, Becky will return with the results of the survey and will share those results with those from the congregation (hopefully all!) who are interested in them. She will help us begin to look, as a church community, at how we might like to use that information as we move forward. The cost of individual surveys are \$10 apiece and so we will take a free will donation to cover their cost, but do not want to limit anyone who might otherwise attend but be burdened with the cost. We hope we have a comprehensive grouping of survey participants, so please plan to join us.

If anyone has questions please feel free to contact one of the SJ committee members. Copies of her September 10th sermon are available in the church foyer.

SMORGASBORD THANKS!!

Thank-you to all of you who worked so hard to make smorgasbord a success this year. The profits are up slightly from last 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 2007 even bigger and better!

MOVIE NIGHT A SUCCESS

The movie, "Conversations with God", played in New Ulm and Hanska on Oct. 20 and 21 respectively and drew enough viewers to cover our expenses and provide a tidy profit. A total of 49 tickets were sold, and after ex-



penses were paid, the church made more than \$200. Thanks to Julie Peck who saw this opportunity and made it happen -- and provided refreshments. Thanks also to the Makepeaces who made the Rhein River Room available and to Chris Bodick who helped with the tech stuff, and to those who came to support this project.

NEW ULM AREA DINNERS FOR SHUT-INS

This program assists people who cannot prepare hot, nutritious meals for various reasons. Volunteers deliver to their homes between 11:00 and noon every day in New Ulm. Meals are prepared by the New Ulm Medical Center Dietary Dept. The cost of the meal is \$3.45. There is assistance with the cost of meals for those who qualify. Participants are able to select the days of the week they wish meals delivered and special considerations are made for special diets. If you would benefit from this service and have questions regarding it, please call the hospital at 233-1184. If you know of someone who could benefit from this service, please speak to them or a family member about the program. This program is dependent on the support of the United Way of New Ulm. Your contributions are always greatly appreciated.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO DELIVER MEALS

Can you help us out? We will work with you to schedule the days that you are able to deliver. You may sign up for one delivery or as many as you wish per month. If you can only deliver certain months, we will also work with you on that. We are flexible. This program **DEPENDS** upon **VOLUNTEERS**. Deliveries usually run about one hour from 11:00 am to noon. Can you share a little of your valuable time? Please call Phyllis Raebel at 359-1097 if you have any questions or wish to enroll as a volunteer.

NEW ULM AREA FOOD SHELF

Nora Church has been added to the roster of churches that volunteer at the food shelf 1305 South Front in New Ulm. We will be sharing the month of December 06 with the United Church of Christ. We will need 2 volunteers each for the dates of December 11th, 13th and 27th. from 11:45 until 3pm. If you're able to help at any of those times please let Darrell Hinsman know. The work involves packing up orders and he can get you started. The food shelf serves rural areas of Brown County including Hanska and Comfrey.

AREA FOOD SHELF BENEFIT

The Monument Brass is performing a concert Tuesday evening November 28th at the New Ulm Junior High Auditorium. Benefits go to the New Ulm Area Food Shelf. Advance tickets are \$4 or \$5 at the door. Food donations are also appreciated. The group is a 6 piece brass ensemble. Tickets can be purchased from Darrell Hinsman.

HEART TO HEART

A Couples' Enrichment Weekend Retreat. November 3 - 5 at the Koinonia Reatreat Center, 80 miles northwest of the Twin Cities. Heart to Heart is a program designed to enrich communication and intimacy in your relationship. The weekend emphasizes personal reflection and couple dialogue. Participants are not asked to share with the group, but rather, to dialogue privately with their partners. All couples committed to their partners and to their relationships are welcome - same-sex and opposite-sex, married and unmarried.

More information is available on the church bulleting board or go to their website at <http://heart.mn.cx> or call 651-227-0486.

WEBSITE FOR UU SINGLES

UUsingles.com provides matchmaking services for Unitarian Universalists and other like-minded liberal religious thinkers. They make it fun to meet other singles while promoting the inherent worth and dignity of every individual — a fundamental principle of Unitarian Universalism. Individuals age 18 and older of all sexual orientations are welcome to join. Posting ads is free and membership dues are modest.

This matching service differs from other like matchmaking services in several ways:

Minimal Advertising. Keeping true to their values, the owners limit the amount of advertising you will be exposed to while connecting with other singles.

Commitment to Social Justice. UUsingles.com donates **ten percent** of all profits to further the work of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (<http://www.uusc.org>).

Privacy. Your email address will never be sold or shared with another company or organization.

Jeanne Lamont, VM Foundation & Bailey-Boushay House 206-341-1331

ATTENTION UU PEOPLE OF COLOR

The Annual DRUUMM Conference will be held this November 10-12 at Unity Church Unitarian in St. Paul MN. DRUUMM is the Diverse and Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministry and holds caucuses for African Descent, Asian/Pacific Islander, DRUUMM Seminarians, DRUUMM YaYA, Men of Color, MultiRAC and Queers of Color. Please check their website at www.druumm.org for registration and programming information.

Nancy Heege Prairie Star District Executive
122 W. Franklin Avenue #303 Minneapolis,
MN 55404 612-230-3273



COMMENTS AND NEWS TO SHARE

> Cindy, Many thanks for the outstanding October Newsletter. We appreciate staying in touch. -Ken Hallberg

> Please send your Nora email to my new email address at cvangsgard@gmail.com. I was the Mankato UU secretary for 9 years so I am still interested in knowing what is happening at Nora UU Church. I moved to Fridley, MN about one month ago and am hoping to get acquainted with the UUs here also. -Best regards, Charlie Vangsgard

> Dear Cindy, In reply to your survey: Yes, I would be happy to receive NORA's newsletter online. My address is mick-eynurse@yahoo.com. Thank you for not dropping me over the years! I remember the 100th Anniversary well (as do my kids, who were quite young) and was sorry to miss the 125th celebration. I was in East Africa with Kenya Relief.org, on my 3rd medical mission. It is how I am seeing the world (the real world) now that my children are "launched". I am still at the U of MN Children's Hospital and live in St. Paul, as do Heather, Bucky & Kirsten. "Hi" to the many I fondly remember and whose names I recognize in 'MERE LYS'. -Blessings, Carolyn Koehler

**NEWSLETTER ARTICLES ARE DUE BY THE
20TH OF EACH MONTH.**

**WEEKLY BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS ARE
DUE BY THURSDAY (noon if possible)**

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

NOTE: I either had to eliminate a page (which is hard to do), leave this page blank, or find something to put on it. Here's what I came up with. Hope you enjoy it!

DO YOU KNOW
THE SEVEN WONDERS OF THE WORLD?

A group of students were asked to list what they thought were the present Seven Wonders of the World. Though there were some disagreements, the following got the most votes:

1. Egypt's Great Pyramids
2. Taj Mahal
3. Grand Canyon
4. Panama Canal
5. Empire State Building
6. St. Peter's Basilica
7. China's Great Wall

While gathering the votes, the teacher noted that one quiet student hadn't turned in her paper yet. So she asked the girl if she was having trouble with her list.

The girl replied, "Yes, a little. I couldn't quite make up my mind because there were so many."

The teacher said, "Well, tell us what you have, and maybe we can help."

The girl hesitated, then read, "I think the Seven Wonders of the World are:

1. to touch
2. to taste
3. to see
4. to hear

She hesitated a little, and then added:

5. to feel
6. to laugh
7. to love."

The room was so full of silence you could have heard a pin drop.

Those things we overlook as simple and "ordinary" are truly wondrous. A gentle reminder - that the most precious things in life cannot be bought.

I hope your life is filled with the these Seven Wonders

PRESCRIBED BY THE
GREAT PHYSICIAN

~*~A GREAT RECIPE~*~

Fold two hands together,
And express a dash of sorrow.
Marinate it overnight,
And work on it tomorrow.

Chop one grudge in tiny pieces,
Add several cups of love.
Dredge with a large sized smile,
Mix with the ingredients above.

Dissolve the hate within you,
By doing a good deed.
Cut in and help your friend,
If he/she should be in need.

Stir in laughter, love and kindness,
From the heart it has to come.
Toss with genuine forgiveness,
And give your friends some.

The amount of people served,
Will depend on you.
It can serve the whole wide world.
If you really want it to!!!

author unknown

JOY

I live in my own little world.
But it's OK...
They know me here!

I expect to pass through
this world but once;
any good thing therefore
that I can do,
or any kindness that I can show
to any fellow creature,
let me do it now;
let me not defer or neglect it,
for I shall not pass this way again.



DON'S SCHEDULE

Don will continue with the same (more or less) schedule for the 2006-07 church year. Monday is his day-off and Fridays are reserved for sermon writing. While he continues to have other set commitments (New Ulm Ministerium, drug/alcohol unit presentations, board meetings for Healthy Communities/Healthy Youth, etc.) don't hesitate to call to schedule an appointment.

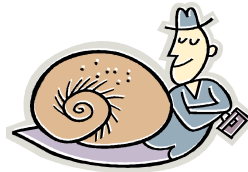
EMAIL OR SNAIL MAIL

Many thanks to all who returned their card or emailed me their preference to receiving the newsletter via email or postal. Unfortunately, we still need many more on email before we can cut the amount receiving the hardcopy. In order to receive the lower postage rates, we need to maintain a certain number. What this means is that those that specified "email" will be receiving the hard copy in



addition to the email for the time being. We are still hopeful to get more responses for email so that we can totally implement this program. We realize, of course, that not everyone has email, and that's fine. If you are unsure whether or not you would "like" it through email, we'd like you to give it a try for one month. Return the card you received last month with both options checked or send me an email saying you want to receive it both ways.

If you then decide the email version is for you, send me an email telling me to drop you from the hard copy list. I appreciate your patience and understanding and thank you in advance. -Cindy cindymo@sleepyeyetel.net **Please remember to put "NORA" in the subject line.**



An added note – eliminating some of the hard copy letters will save expenses on postage, paper, ink, and secretary fees. (We all know how rural churches are struggling with expenses). PLUS helping the environment by saving some trees.

To Keep In Touch



Congratulations to Marylinn O'Reilly on her 80th Birthday.

The celebration on October 22nd was a fun memorable day enjoyed by all.



Please keep our military personnel in your prayers. They need our support.



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

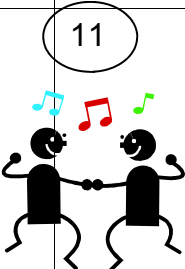

Georgine Tepley (chair)
359-3060 (weekdays after 5 pm)
Shirley Olson
439-6879
Carol Chambard
354-2242

THANK YOU! - Caring Committee



NORA CHURCH CALENDAR

NOVEMBER 2006

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|-----|-----------------|---|--------------------------------------|-----|--|
| | | | 1 | 2 SOULFUL SUNDOWN -6:30 PM | 3 | 4 |
| 5 9:00 Informal Discussion 9:00 Choir 10:00 Social Hour 10:30 Service *Potluck *SJ Workshop | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11  |
| 12 9:00 Informal Discussion 9:00 Choir 10:00 Social Hour 10:30 Service | 13 | 14 | 15 LUNCH BUNCH -11:30 @ Lemays, Lake Crystal RE WEDNESDAY | 16 SOULFUL SUNDOWN -6:30 PM | 17 | 18 |
| 19 9:00 Informal Discussion 9:00 Choir 10:00 Social Hour 10:30 Service | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25  |
| 26 9:00 Informal Discussion 9:00 Choir 10:00 Social Hour 10:30 Service NO SUNDAY SCHOOL | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | |
| | | MUSICIAN | SERVERS | GREETERS - USHERS | | |
| | | 5 Mimi | Wally Beverly Wellmann Jason & Katie Monnens Kay Steffle & Mimi Kamleiter | Matt Harbur Kathleen Baril | | |
| | | 12 Sally | T arrie Swenstad & Vicki Sieve | Diane Becken, Doug Anderson | | |
| | | 19 Jordan | John & Anne Makepeace | Edith Beckius, Kristi Bodick | | |
| | | 26 Muffy | Sheldon Anne Rieke | Roger & Norma Breu | | |

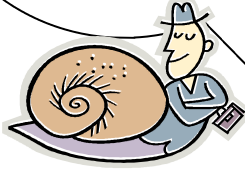


Nora Unitarian Universalist Church
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Hanska Minnesota 56041-4310

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Important
If you received the
newsletter via email
and
snail mail..
Please don't fret.
Read more about it
inside the
Newsletter.



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

Nora Church Sunday Services NOVEMBER 2006

Social Hour 10:00 AM Worship Service 10:30 AM

November 5 "Public Education in Crisis" – The institution begun, in part by Unitarian Horace Mann, is on trial before voters in several local districts. What relationship is there between liberal religion and public education? And why should we care?

November 12 "The Bill Schultz Challenge" – A reflection and a response to the Berry Street Essay given at General Assembly in June. (available on line uuma.org for anyone who cares to read his essay beforehand) Guest speaker: Rev. Eleanore Rice

November 19 "Feeling Grateful, But Don't Know Who to Thank!" – If, as many of us posit, God is more an experience than a being, who gets credit for the good stuff?

November 26 "What Would Kristoffer Janson Do?" – Okay, it's a bit tacky to substitute Nora's first minister for Jesus in that now famous phrase, but it's also engaging to wonder what Janson would say about certain modern issues.