



MERE LYS newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

March 2008

VIEW FROM THE HILL

As I write, Minnesota Public Radio (MPR) is conducting its winter-spring pledge campaign. Lots of creative pleas, tempting “gifts” for donors, matching funds and even a touch of guilt for airwave freeloaders. For those of us whose radios are more or less frozen on one MPR station or another, pledge drives are a reminder of how much we’d miss public broadcasting were it to disappear.

In between today’s MPR sales pitches came a short piece on epidemic diseases, such as Ebola, AIDS and the bird flu. Serious stuff. And studies are always being conducted on emotional, as well as physical pain. (The Book of Job comes to mind.) We’ve come a long way in our understanding of disease and illness.

But have you every heard of a disorder called congenital insensitivity to pain and anhidrosis (CIPA)? I hadn’t. Not until I came across it in *The Intellectual Devotional: Revive Your Mind, Complete Your Education and Roam Confidently with the Cultured Class*. (That’s the title, I swear. You can’t make up stuff like that!)

CIPA is a nervous system disorder that prevents one from feeling pain – in most cases, emotional as well as physical. Sounds pretty good on its surface, doesn’t it? A life free from, as *The Intellectual Devotion* puts it, the broken heart as well as the broken arm? Such a deal, no pain!

Not so. Think of a world in which a child never learns to respect fire. Imagine a broken ankle that goes undiagnosed, leaving an athlete partially disabled. And what about the bittersweet undertaking of trying to live love? If our souls can’t be moved and our minds can’t be troubled, how do we learn empathy or remorse? Take away our capacity to learn from the natural consequences of our decisions, and how do we grow? Straight up, minus the universal experience of suffering, how do we put the human in our quest to be *humane*?

Look here, I admit it – there are plenty of times I’d like to be spared any and all painful circumstances. I’ll bet that’s true for you, too. And since we’re being honest, God knows I’ve caused pain, too – pain that was unnecessary and unkind. I’ll bet I’m not alone on that one, either. But it’s worth noting that those who suffer from CIPA have a high death rate due to infections from untreated injuries. How could that be any less true for the heart?

Woeful indeed is the person who *only* learns from pain. Still more woeful is the one who only seeks to avoid it. Somewhere in between stand you and me, doing the best we can with what we’ve got, forever learning from life’s inevitable pain: live and grow, live and grow. (The Buddha had a fair amount to say on that one.)

The bottom line? Bless life. Bless even life’s pain. Bless us all.

Don

“UU & YOU”

Our next date for UU & You, our outreach ministry in New Ulm, is Saturday, March 1 at 6:30 P.M. We meet at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 125 S. Broadway. Bring a friend and join us!

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MEETING

All our RE “stakeholders” – parents, teachers, RE Committee members and interested adults – are invited to gather in the Kaffe Stua during the after-church potluck on Sunday, March 2. Please do your part to support our RE program! Thanks!



For over 25 years, Minnesota FoodShare has worked with food shelves to organize the largest food and cash drive in the state of Minnesota: The March Campaign. It is responsible for more than half of all food distributed each year at the food shelves.

In 2007, we raised the equivalent of 25 million pounds because of increased need. We want to do it again! Food is always appreciated, but cash goes farther. In 2007, we raised 4 million pounds and 5.1 million dollars. Since the food shelves can convert cash into more pounds, the 5.1 million amounted to about 21 million pounds. With your help it will happen again!!

Bring your Cash and food donations to church any time during March. They will go to the New Ulm Food Shelf and will be matched proportionately with additional funds.

FOOD FOR ALL

March is "our" month to help distribute food items at Food for All in St. James. It will be Saturday morning March 8th from 8:30 until 11. If you haven't volunteered before, give it a try. We need 5 people. Let Darrell Hinsman (507-359-7494) know if you're able so we can keep track of numbers and car pooling. Thanks.

SCOUTING FOR FOOD

Saturday, March 15 is the Scouting for Food Drive in New Ulm. We need FIVE volunteers representing Nora Church to help with sorting and shelving food that day, in shifts from 9:30 to 12:30 or 1:00 to 4:00. Please contact Angie Becker Kudelka at 359-3834 if you are available to help.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Friday, March 7, at United Church of Christ, 301 S Minnesota St., New Ulm. 9:30 AM - Coffee. 10:00 AM – Service.

LUNCH BUNCH



Pizza and other items will be on the menu for the next Lunch Bunch gathering. We'll be meeting at Happy Joe's in New Ulm on March 12 at 11:30 a.m. Come join us for food and fun.

THANKS FROM THE BOARD

The board members recognized several members for their special contributions to Nora Church at our February meeting. Thanks go to Wayne Johnson and Warren Paulson for their great job of snow removal. Thanks also go to Julie Sellner for keeping the church tidy. The members appreciate your time and work.

In January the board recognized and gives thanks to the Social Justice Committee: Jeanie and Darrell Hinsman, Mark and Brenda Wiger and Scott Kudelka and Brenda Becker Kudelka for their efforts in making the MLK dinner a success.

THANK YOU

It's time once again to say thank you...for all you do for our church, community and folk here at Nora. This month we're honoring Shirley and Clayton Olson for all they do.



LOST HEARING AID CORD

A gray hearing aid cord was found at New Ulm United Church of Christ following the January 20th MLK dinner/panel. Contact the church office (507-354-4242) to claim the cord.

A NOTE OF THANKS

Thank you for making our first annual *Association Sunday* a great success. Gifts from Nora UU to date total \$609. Over 650 congregations, representing over 130,000 Unitarian Universalists, conducted an "Association Sunday." Over 1.3 million was raised as of Jan 22, 2008 to "Grow Our Faith".

OUTFRONT MINNESOTA

At the Capitol... in the classroom... in the courthouse... in churches, workplaces, even in backyards... OutFront Minnesota spreads a message of fairness. The 2008 legislative session began Feb 12. We'll be advocating for positive legislation on behalf of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Minnesotans. But our work would not be possible without contributions from fair-minded individuals. Your support is essential. Please give today! *OutFront Minnesota, 310 38th Street East, Suite 204, Minneapolis, MN 55409*

INSTALLATION OF MINISTERS

Kathryn Rohde will be installed at The First Unitarian Church of Omaha on Sunday, March 2nd at 7 PM. 3114 Harney Street, Omaha, Nebraska. A reception will follow.

Kent Hemmen Saleska will be ordained and installed at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Minnetonka on March 9 at 4 PM. 605 Rice Street, Wayzata, MN. A reception will follow.

CONFERENCE FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Young adult conferences are a great way for us to stay connected district-wide, to share resources, ideas and recharge together! This is for ages 18 – 35ish. It will be held at First Universalist Church of Minneapolis on April 25-27. Registration forms are available at church.



WHALECOAST ALASKA 2008

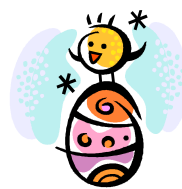
Five Alaskan UU fellowships invite you to experience our eco-cultural program this July in our 12th year! See *REAL* Alaska, with UU homestays in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Seward, Juneau, and Sitka. UU's host events and lead tours. We visit Tlingit and Inupiat Native Alaskans, see lots of wildlife like bears, moose, caribou, whales, sea otters and bald eagles and visit Denali and other National Parks. Dave Frey, a 27-year Alaska resident, leads the programs. Visit our website, www.wuurl.org, email waltonfrey@gci.net, or phone 907-322-4966 for a brochure. Reservation deadline March 15.

CATALOG CHOICE

Within three months we've become a community of over 450,000 strong, opting out of more than five million unwanted catalogs - that's about 60 million catalogs in a year. More than 100 merchants are participating in Catalog Choice's Merchant program, including some of the largest mailers in the industry. The number of participating merchants is growing every day. You can view a list of merchant account holders at <http://www.catalogchoice.org/pages/merchants>.

The influence we have on merchants to honor opt-out requests grows with the size of our community. You can help by inviting your family and friends to join the community, using the "Invite a Friend" feature on the website. -The Catalog Choice Team

EASTER BREAKFAST



Watch the Sunday bulletins for information and help needed for our Easter Breakfast. We are talking about donating the proceeds to the Kids Against Hunger and doing that as part of the social justice with the kids.

ADULT RE & GROWTH

The Spirituality Study Group will continue to meet at 6:25 PM at Nora Church each Thursday through March. This month we will be moving beyond meditation traditions and techniques and focus on exploring additional aspects of spirituality, using Eckhart Tolle's book, "A New Earth - Awakening to Your Life's Purpose" and Gregg Braden's book, "Secrets of the Lost Mode of Prayer" as inspiration and resource material.

The Open Meditation will be held in the sanctuary at Nora Church at 7:00 PM each Thursday through March. This hour-long offering is largely silent, though usually accompanied by meditative music. This practice affords individuals the opportunity to step away from the pressures and stress of daily life and allow a measure of peace and tranquility to enter both 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, please contact Christopher Olson, either via e-mail at kitakis@aol.com or by phone at 507-995-7059.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Parents and RE teachers met on January 6 to talk about the calendar and plans for Religious Education over the coming months. The group put together a calendar including a list of who would be responsible for teaching or coordinating the activities each week. Here is the calendar March:

March 2... COA: Leadership (teacher: Anne Makepeace)

Jweeners: Appreciation of Nature (Kristy/Kristine Paulson)

March 9... COA: Respect (teacher: Julie Peck)

Jweeners: Feelings about Nature and the Web of Interdependence

March 16... Children attend service (topic related to St. Patrick's Day/Paganism -With music by "Simply Strings")

March 23... Children serve Easter Breakfast

March 30... All Children's Fun Activity (Scott Kudelka)

Note: On **Monday, March 31st** all RE children are invited to attend the program Starwatch by Mike Lynch which will be held at Flandrau State Park from 7:30-9:30 PM.

Mike Lynch is a meteorologist at WCCO Radio and has been teaching astronomy classes for 37 years. Come look through Mike's extremely large reflecting telescope (20") and see a close-up view of star clusters, Saturn and other celestial bodies in the early spring sky.

The RE parent group decided that the RE program will pay for any children who are interested in attending this group activity. We will circulate a sign-up sheet in church for interested children. Look for more information at church.

To Keep In Touch

Joanne Saxton has moved to assisted living and would love to receive cards of cheer.
850 Goldfinch Street, Apt 305,
Fairmont, MN 56031

♥♥♥

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Mimi Kamleiter, who is recovering from multiple injuries after being struck by a car while walking. After a rough time (and surgeries) she's stable and doing well. Her family members have requested that she not receive visitors for now, but that should change soon. Cards may be sent to her home address, 70256 South Long Lake Lane, St. James, MN 56081. Her daughter, Jill, also suggested that email messages would be welcome.

(See Don or contact Cindy Mosenden to get that address.)

♥♥♥

Our condolences to Wayne Johnson and all affected by the passing of his sister,
Shirley Urban.

♥♥♥

Congratulations to Nancy Dickson on the birth of 3 incredible little granddaughters, born to David Dickson & his wife.

Nancy thinks it's a
SUPER CREATION!

♥♥♥

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

WHY ST. PATRICK'S DAY IS CELEBRATED EACH YEAR IN AMERICA

The reason the Irish celebrate St. Patrick's Day is because this is when St. Patrick drove the Norwegians out of Ireland

It seems that some centuries ago, many Norwegians came to Ireland to escape the bitterness of the Norwegian winter. Ireland was having a famine at the time, and food was scarce. The Norwegians were eating almost all the fish caught in the area, leaving the Irish with nothing to eat but potatoes. St. Patrick, taking matters into his own hands, as most Irishmen do, decided the Norwegians had to go.

Secretly, he organized the Irish IRATRION (Irish Republican Army to Rid Ireland of Norwegians).

Irish members of IRATRION passed a law in Ireland that prohibited merchants from selling ice boxes or ice to the Norwegians, in hopes that their fish would spoil. This would force the Norwegians to flee to a colder climate where their fish would keep. Well, the fish spoiled, all right, but the Norwegians, as every one knows today, thrive on spoiled fish. So, faced with failure, the desperate Irishmen sneaked into the Norwegian fish storage caves in the dead of night and sprinkled the rotten fish with lye, hoping to poison the Norwegian invaders.

But, as everyone knows, the Norwegians thought this only added to the flavor of the fish, and they liked it so much they decided to call it 'lutefisk', which is Norwegian for 'luscious fish'.

Matters became even worse for the Irishmen when the Norwegians started taking over the Irish potato crop and making something called 'lefse'. Poor St. Patrick was at his wit's end, and finally on March 17th, he blew his top and told all the Norwegians to GET OUT!

So they all got in their boats and emigrated to Minnesota or the Dakotas--- the only other paradise on earth where smelly fish, old potatoes and plenty of cold weather can be found in abundance.

The End.



Annual Intergenerational Spring Seminar April 3-5, 2008, New York City

Join us at United Nations headquarters to address international efforts to achieve **sustainable** peace and discuss the importance of peace in the Unitarian Universalist faith.

Keynote Speakers:

Ambassador Prudence Bushnell (April 3)

Former U.S. Ambassador to Kenya and Guatemala
Dean of the Leadership and Management School at the
Foreign Service Institute

Rev. William Sinkford (April 4)

President of the U U Association of Congregations

Gillian Martin Sorensen (April 4)

Former United Nations Assistant Secretary-General
for External Relations
Senior Advisor at the United Nations Foundation

Keith Boykin (April 4)

Former White House Special Assistant to Pres. Bill Clinton.
New York Times best-selling author, CNN Political
Commentator and BET host

At the 2008 Intergenerational Spring Seminar you will:

- Meet inspiring individuals from UN, NGO, and UU communities who are doing important work to make the world's most vulnerable populations more secure.
- Examine case studies of peacebuilding efforts in places such as Burundi, Kosovo, Sudan, and Sierra Leone.
- Explore with each other the role that peace plays in your own faith.
- Bring tools for taking individual and collective action to build societies at home and abroad.
- Develop an action plan for taking individual and collective action to build a culture of peace at home and abroad. Share an enjoyable and energetic experience with UU friends in one of the world's most exciting cities.

Visit our website, www.uu-uno.org, for registration information or contact us to learn more.

For youth and youth advisors, there is a competitive application to attend the Seminar. Adults of all ages and congregation representatives are invited on a first-come, first-served basis.

Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office
777 UN Plaza Suite 7G, New York NY 10017

p.212.986.5165 ~ f.212.983.5498
springseminar@uu-uno.org

PRAIRIE STAR DISTRICT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

[psduua.org/annual conference](http://psduua.org/annual%20conference)



The 2008 PSD Annual Conference, "**Rebuilding a Faithful Democracy**," will be **April 11-13, in Omaha, Nebraska**. It includes 25 thought provoking workshops, moving worship services, and these exciting high-light speakers:

- Dr. Charlie Clements, President and Chief Executive Officer, Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
- Rev. Meg Riley, Director Advocacy & Witness for the UUA

March 21, is the deadline for the early-bird discount on the registration fee and the conference discount for hotel room rates.

Our Annual Conference is your best opportunity to get to know other UUs from across the district. We gather to meet, learn, and share together. We worship and conduct the district's business together. And we dine, discuss, sing, dance, and laugh together. We return home with new information to share, new skills to practice, and new friends to remember.

Your host congregations, First and Second Unitarian Churches of Omaha have focused on providing a great atmosphere for your conference. The Old Market Embassy Suites is well suited for sharing and entertaining. The large two-room suites will accommodate active families and make sharing a room with friends much more comfortable and convenient. The Old Market is the centerpiece of Omaha's entertainment, restaurant, and shopping areas.

Childcare is available at the conference. This year children in grades one through six will take a field trip on Saturday to Omaha's world-class zoo and then to the excellent, hands-on Children's Museum.

You will find complete information and registration material at the PSD Annual Conference pages of our web site.

For more information, email psdregistration@firstuuomaha.org

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The Prairie Star District Board has authorized the creation of a scholarship fund to subsidize attendance at future Annual Conferences for those who could not otherwise attend. When you register for this year's conference, you will have the opportunity to make a voluntary contribution to this fund. The criteria for awarding of scholarships will be published when funds are available.

CHOIR

The Annual Conference Mixed Choir is back! Join with your fellow singers by attending either or both rehearsals at 5:00 p.m. Saturday and 8:15 a.m. Sunday.

The Choir will perform twice. They will sing a number at the Saturday night banquet as well as participating in the Sunday morning worship service.

PSD SOCIAL JUSTICE TRAINING

Going to Omaha for the PSD Annual Conference in April? Plan to arrive by 1:30pm Friday to attend the Social Justice pre-conference Workshop - an exciting skill-building opportunity!

"Interfaith Congregation-Based Community Organizing" with trainer Willie Bennett. How can we leverage congregational and community power to bring about important and needed social change? Mr. Bennett is the Lead Organizer of Dallas Area Interfaith, an affiliate of the Industrial Areas Foundation, a 60+ year old network of community organizations committed to social justice and the common good. He has been a community organizer with the IAF for over 12 years in cities across the southwest including Austin and Fort Worth, Texas.




There is no charge for this workshop. Info on the workshop is at www.psduua.org/AnnualConference2008/SocialJusticeWorkshop or contact Ralph Wyman at 612-998-6624, rwmusja@gmail.com.

NORA CHURCH CALENDAR

MARCH 2008

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



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 "UU & YOU" 6:30 PM
2 9:00 Choir 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service Pot Luck / RE mtg	3	4	5	6 6:25 Spirituality Group 7:00 Open Meditation	7	8  <i>turn clocks ahead before bed</i>
9 9:00 Choir 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service	10	11	12 Lunch Bunch at Happy Joe's, New Ulm 6:30 Board Mtg, Mankato UU Fel- lowship	13 6:25 Spirituality Group 7:00 Open Meditation	14	15
16 9:00 Choir 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service	17 	18	19	20 Newsletter articles due 6:25 Spirituality Group 7:00 Open Meditation	21	22
23  9:30 Easter Breakfast 10:30 Easter Service	24	25	26	27 6:25 Spirituality Group 7:00 Open Meditation	28	29
30 9:00 Choir 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service	31					

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 keeping me informed
so I can keep you informed.*

Cindy Mosenden, Office Administrator

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

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

March 2008



Nora Church Sunday Services MARCH 2008

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

March 2 “What’s Darwin Got to Do With It?” – Don will serve as service leader for one of Nora’s longtime friends and guest speakers, the Rev. Wes Hromatko, as he re-visits Darwin and his work.

March 9 “The Ego vs The Self” with Ursula Christ.

March 16 “Oh, Those Wacky Celts!” – Earth-centered traditions have cast a long shadow in Western religion, including Unitarian Universalism. Celtic musicians, Vicki Beckendorf and Lori Smart (“Simply Strings”) will provide the instrumental music as we explore our Celtic roots. *(Note: This will be an intergenerational service. There will be no religious education classes that day.)*

March 23 “And Now You Know the Rest of the Story” – The Easter event did not happen in a vacuum; on the Christian liturgical calendar, there’s Holy Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, too. This year, let’s look at Easter in its biblical and historical contexts.

March 30 “The Kindness Factor: Lessons from Nature” with Tracie Welton