



MERE LYS newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

APRIL 2009

A VIEW FROM THE HILL

A couple of months ago, in January, I promised that I would talk or write more about the church. Back then, I said one of the purposes of the church is to help us make sense and make meaning in this sacred life we enjoy. Religion is the framework in which we are helped “to tie together again” the disconnections we experience.

The continuing financial meltdown in the world is a significant “disconnecting” event in history affecting everyone. I do not believe I am backtracking on this New Year’s resolution to you when I say that this financial and economic crisis should not pass without comment. Unlike commentators who argue what the government should or shouldn’t do, my concern is for everyone’s spiritual well-being, considered within the framework of religion and the purpose of the church.

The economic events of the last several months have shaken an indelible myth in the United States. That myth, in shortened form, is the belief in the soundness of our economic system. That system is now in critical condition and many millions are financially hurting as hundreds of millions of dollars in wealth has disappeared.

Humanity “seems to be unable to live without myth,” so writes Alan Watts in his book, “The Wisdom of Insecurity.” So our culture will have to rewrite this myth of what has been called, “American exceptionalism,” a term rooted in the writings of Alexis de Tocqueville. Perhaps now the curse we’ve had to endure from this concept is over? I am not going to hold my breath, but I can hope.

My hope is that an epidemic of modesty occurs. When we hear politicians or other leaders talk about the greatness of the U.S., they would do so in terms of our ideals and our values, not our material wealth. When this country has realized its role in perpetuating unending warfare and a global financial meltdown, a little humility is in order.

Of course, all of this has a significant spiritual dimension. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, “As you know, what you treasure is your heart’s true measure.”* It calls for a review of meaning, principles, and values. I look upon our seven Unitarian Universalist principles with renewed respect and a hope that perhaps there is a road map for “a way forward” to avoid the greed, pride, and arrogance that helped get us in this mess.

It is also clear to me that a renewed sense of community is paramount. People are hurting as a result of this debacle. People will need to support people, spiritually, emotionally, psychologically, and certainly, financially. It is time for a re-examination of “treasure,” as Jesus so wisely said. Like repairing the economy, all of this will take time and effort, but it has to be done.

*Matt. 6:21, Scholar’s Version.

“UU & YOU”

Our dates for UU & You, our outreach ministry in New Ulm, are Saturday, April 4 and 18 at 5:00 P.M. We meet at Rhein River Arts Center. Bring a friend and join us!

LUNCH BUNCH



We'll be dining at the Grand Moon Buffet in New Ulm on April 16 at 11:30 AM. It is located in the strip mall near Walmart. Everyone is welcome to join us for this social occasion.

THANKS FROM THE BOARD

Thanks from the Board this month goes to the Social Justice committee for all the work they put into planning and coordinating Krisztina's visit.

Thanks also to everyone who helped out with the Potato Bake. It went very smoothly and was enjoyed by everyone who came.

Lastly, Thanks for all the preliminary work the Search committee has already done in the process of finding a new minister.



The American Red Cross will hold a blood drive in the Hanska Community Center on Wednesday, April 15th 1:00 p. m. - 7:00 p.m. For an appointment or more information, call Darlene @ 507-439-6302



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Tweeners and Association class have been discussing belief systems. We watched the DVD of the ABC News Special "Heaven, Where Is It? How Do We Get There?" In this News Special was a series of interviews with people of differing belief systems including: Christian Evangelicals, Catholics, Jewish, Islamic, Buddhism and Atheism.

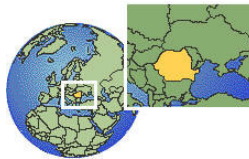
On March 15th Jason Mack spoke to the class about Buddhism. We learned a great deal from

him and were saddened to learn about the plight of the Tibetan people. A portion of the proceeds from the Easter Sunday Breakfast will be given to Tibetan Relief efforts. We plan on meeting with the Buddhist Monks in Mankato to learn more about their tradition. Jason is helping to arrange this. He has been a good teacher and we appreciate his time and efforts.

We will be meeting with members of Nora church on the coming Sundays to understand more about their stories and religious journeys. Our goal is to better understand what the phrase 'freedom of belief, religious community, and social justice' really means.

Religious Education classes are also available for younger children. They have been focusing on the basic UU Principles.

If you have questions regarding the RE Program, or would like to get involved please see Ryann Rathman or Kristine Paulson.



News About Krisztina

This is an update from the Partner Church Council concerning Krisztina Pall, the representative from our Romanian sister church in Benced. She visited Nora in late February. The information below is current as of 3/18/2009. Please consider making a contribution to help offset Krisztina's medical expenses and lost income. Some of you might not know this yet - Krisztina Pall suffered a terrible car accident as she was riding with her colleagues to work. She is in the hospital in Udvarhely.

I just spoke with Krisztina. She was speaking very clear English - a good sign, I think. I had been prepared to make it a very short call if I thought it was difficult at all for her to speak in English, but it seemed not to be and she seemed to want to talk.

Here is what I learned about her condition from her: She has multiple breaks in her leg/hip which was operated on. She has a broken pelvis. She has double vision which the doctors hope will clear up soon. She also had blood in her spinal column so they are keeping her flat and still in bed. They expect this will clear up soon as well. She has had no loss of feeling at all, the good news. They are predicting that she will be in bed for 3 months.

Her mother is with her all the time - she has a bed at the hospital next to Krisztina's. Her mom is caring for her and feeding her. Her brother has fixed her up with an MP3 player with lots of soothing music (and love songs Krisztina says - but nothing too energetic)

As bad as her physical shape is, her mental state is also still traumatized. The accident happened when the car she was riding in slid off the road and broke through the guard rail and plummeted 150 feet down a cliff. The police and firemen had to pry her out of the car and then lift her by ropes back up to the road. She says she can't sleep because of the nightmares she has as she remembers going down - and just as upsetting - coming back up.

She was very teary - she said she had been crying most of the day. It was snowing outside and was cold and gray. She said that was probably part of why she was crying.

I don't know if you are aware, but despite the fact that Romania has national health care, one only gets proper attention and care as a result of "gifts" and "little attention" (bribes) to the doctors, nurses, orderlies, etc. She will be immobilized for a couple of months at least and at the mercy of the hospital staff. Some of us (Cathy Cordes, Dick Ford, Eileen Higgins and other American friends) have put our heads together and will be sending a donation to cover some of her medical costs. If you would like to pitch in (anywhere from \$25 to \$100), please send your check made out to my husband, Dean Dalton, to our address:

*Dean Dalton
1904 Banks #2
Houston, TX, 77098*

We will be converting the total amount into LEI (Romanian currency) and transfer the money to her bank account.

If you would like to talk to her, call her on her cell at 011-40-740-785390. She is in the hospital and has her cell phone with her.

EASTER BREAKFAST

The Nora youth and their families will be hosting a breakfast Easter Morning. A sign up sheet for volunteers will be passed around during services. We encourage you to sign up to help.



Volunteers should plan on arriving at church at 8:30 on that morning.

Breakfast will be served from 9:30 to 10:30. A free-will offering will be taken to fund youth service projects. The menu includes pancakes, scrambled eggs, coffee, milk and juice. We hope you will join us.

SPIRITUALITY GROUP

The Spirituality Group will meet at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 1st and 15th at South Point Federal Credit Union in New Ulm. The April activities will be an evening of yoga by Gwen Schmid and watching an interview with Ainslie MacLeod, a psychic and author who has explored the soul and its effects on Human beliefs and behavior with a discussion to follow. We hope you will join us.

TREASURER'S REPORT

For the first time since I have been the treasurer, in February 2009, our receipts for the year-to-date were less than our expenses.

| | <u>YTD</u> | <u>PRIOR YTD</u> |
|----------|------------|------------------|
| Receipts | \$56,542 | \$78,090 |
| Expenses | \$59,901 | \$56,145 |

I encourage everyone to keep this in mind as you make your contributions for the rest of the year. A reminder - the church's fiscal year ends June 30.

We really appreciate all the contributions we have received.

Sally Hanson, Treasurer

UU Spring Gifts from the CLF

Give the perfect UU gift to celebrate Mother's Day, Father's Day, UU volunteers, Coming of Age students, mentors, RE Teachers, your favorite UU minister!

Visit our website: www.clfuu.org Click on **CLF Shop** to view and purchase products:

617-948-6150 Email: clf@clfuu.org

The Church of the Larger Fellowship proceeds support CLF's work to bring Unitarian Universalism to isolated religious liberals throughout the world.

UU involvement in Marriage Equality in April

You are urged to join up with MUUSJA's campaign: UUs Out For Marriage (UOO4M), organizing to support a statewide campaign to achieve marriage equality in Minnesota. UOO4M has been meeting and planning effective strategies for UU involvement in this issue. Meetings are the first Monday of each month at Unity Church Unitarian, 732 Holly, St. Paul. All are welcome to attend our next meeting on April 6 at 7 pm. Call Ralph at 612-889-6624 for more info.

UOO4M is mobilizing for OutFront Minnesota's JustFair Lobby Day. This is an annual event which for many years has drawn substantial UU support. *You are needed this year more than ever:* a statewide Marriage Equality effort is being publicly launched this year at Lobby Day!! Numbers will be crucial to sending a strong message! We urge you to arrange for your congregation's banner to be present at lobby day, and wear a congregational T-shirt or purchase the UUA's 'official' LGBT equality T-shirt "Standing on the Side of Love" by calling Kat Liu at the UUA at (202) 393-2255 x13.

Information on JustFair lobby day and the People of Faith presence:

Stand for Justice on April 23rd - Faith Voices for Marriage Equality

OutFront Minnesota's *justFair* Lobby Day is Thursday, April 23, 2009.

Plan now to join your voice with others for an interfaith message of support for marriage equality.

Register at www.outfront.org or call Jo Haberman at 612-822-0127 ext103 or 800-800-0350 ext103.

Bring your congregation's banner to the noon rally – state capitol front lawn.

OutFront Minnesota convenes the People of Faith Allies roundtable - people, congregations, and denominations working together in support of marriage equality in Minnesota (FFI on the Roundtable: 612-822-0127 x103).

Each year, lawmakers learn more about GLBT people, issues, allies – and the moral positions of faith-based coalitions working for equality. **Register today - bring your faith voice to OutFront Minnesota's *justFair* Lobby Day!**

PSD ANNUAL CONFERENCE Live Streaming on Internet

New this year. If you can't attend the Annual Conference in person, we are planning to stream some events live on the Internet.

We are using technology that hasn't been perfected and are not sure how well it will work. We invite you to join us in this experiment.

Events currently scheduled for live streaming:
Keynote Address: Linda Barnes and Mark Runquist, Friday, April 3, 7:45 to 9:00 PM

Judy Memorial Lecture: Peter Mayer, Saturday, April 4, 9:00 to 10:15 AM

UUA Presidential Candidates Forum: Saturday, April 4, 1:30 to 2:45 PM

For more information about these events see <http://www.psduua.org/AnnualConference2009/ConferenceHighlights> and <http://www.psduua.org/AnnualConference2009/PresidentialForum>

Go to <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/psduua> to see and hear these events from the Annual Conference. Note the times listed on the online schedule are Pacific Time. Central Time is 2 hours later. When a broadcast is in progress, you won't need to do anything once you are at that Web site; the video will start automatically.

These events will also be available for playback at <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/psduua> and several days after the Conference we hope to have a higher quality version on the PSD Web site <http://www.psduua.org>.

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 CHURCH CALENDAR

APRIL 2009

Parsonage: 507-439-6240

Dana's cell: 612-229-5907

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|-----|-----|---|---|-----|--|
|  | | | 1 6:30 pm Spirituality Group @ South Point Federal, New Ulm | 2 | 3 | 4 5 pm UU and YOU @ Rhein River Arts Center |
| 5 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service POTLUCK | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 EASTER 9:00 Choir 9:30 Easter Break- fast 10:30 AM Service | 13 | 14 | 15 Bloodmobile in Hanska Spirituality Group @ South Point Federal, New Ulm - 6:30 pm | 16 11:30 am LUNCH BUNCH @ Grand Moon Buffet in New Ulm (near Walmart) | 17 | 18 5 pm UU and YOU @ Rhein River Arts Center |
| 19 9:00 Choir 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 AM Service | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 Clean up day  | 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

| | | |
|------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 5 Jordan Rathman | Lee & Lynn Schmitt Christina Schmitt | Christopher Olson Kristi Paulson |
| 12 Muffy Rathman | EASTER | Dave & Jeanne Wenk |
| 19 JoAnn Huss | Louise Guggisberg Chris Bodick | Beverly & Wally Wellmann |
| 26 | Clean up Day | |



PASTOR'S SCHEDULE

Pastor Reynolds will be at the parsonage late Tuesday/early Wednesday thru Sunday afternoon/evening. This is, of course, subject to change depending on what's going on.



Nora Unitarian Universalist Church
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Hanska Minnesota 56041-4310

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization
United States Postage Paid
Permit No. 2
Hanska, MN 56041

April 2009



EMAIL

norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net

WEB SITE

<http://www.norauuchurch.org>

Nora Church Sunday Services APRIL 2009

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

April 5: *"Evil: Theories of Its Origins."*

All cultures have explanations of evil. We will explore some of them.

April 12: *Easter*

April 19: *"Earth Day: It's Report Card Time!"*

It is generally agreed that the report is not a good one.

We will look at the changing attitudes about our planet.

April 26: Nora Church clean up day.