

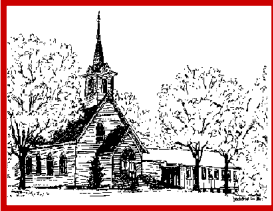


MERE LYS newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

February 2010

A VIEW FROM THE HILL



...I, therefore, with the authority vested in me by the church and by the state of Minnesota, acknowledge that you are Husband and Wife...

After fifteen years it still sometimes takes my breath away. I utter those few words and sign a piece of paper--and then the legal status of two people, a man and a woman, changes. He and she who had been single are now married. And in a sense, in the eyes of the powers that be, I was instrumental in making that happen.

Now, lest I get carried away with delusions of my own power or the couple lose sight of their ultimate responsibility for the creation, care and well-being of the marriage, I always include this statement in my opening words: *Into this holy estate you two come now to be joined in a ceremony, which to be true, must be a symbol of something inner and real--a sacred union of hearts and lives, which the church may bless and the State may make legal, but which neither state nor church can create. You only may do that.*

Still, the fact remains; the state grants me, as minister, the legal authority to solemnize weddings--for some couples. For a man and a woman.

I've probably blessed nearly as many same-sex unions as I have weddings between men and women. I send the same packet of information to all couples. I ask the same questions of all couples. I personalize ceremonies for all couples. I charge the same fee for non-member couples, whether male/female or same-sex. The only difference of any significance is that I don't sign a marriage certificate for the same-sex couples--and I feel compelled, regretfully, to remind the same-sex couples that their ceremony has no legal consequences.

Marriage between two women or two men is legally recognized in just five US states; Minnesota is not one. In fact, Minnesota passed a Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in 1997. My Unitarian Universalist (and other progressive) colleagues take difference approaches to this issue of inequality, injustice, and discrimination. Some have refused to sign marriage certificates for any couple until they are legally able to sign marriage certificates for ALL couples. Others request that male/female couples (in lieu of a fee) make a donation to an organize fighting for marriage equality. I sign every petition or letter of protest that comes my way. And I keep on blessing the union of any couple that asks for a blessing.

February is the month for love. It's a very good time for us to live out our values (you know, inherent dignity and worth, justice, equity and compassion, those sort of things) to the end that love might know no bounds. Visit <http://www.oufront.org> for information on local efforts or <http://www.standingonthesideoflove.org> for information on Unitarian Universalist efforts.

Nothing I or our church or any state may do now or in the future will change reality. The hard, beautiful fact is love, commitment, partnership, and family find expression every day, become embodied every day in all sorts of couples--male/female, same-sex, married or partnered. Always have; always will. That's a done deal. But legal recognition will be more than the frosting on the cake. It will bring with it security, equality, safe-guards; rights and privileges now available only to male/female couples. I can't think of a better way for Unitarian Universalists to send a Valentine to all of our brothers and sisters than to speed the day of that recognition.

Here's to love!
-Lisa

SECOND SUNDAY OFFERING

Loose change on the 2nd Sunday of each month goes to "Food For All."

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hey, didn't the choir sound good on Sunday the 17th? (nice job!) Every once in a while, we find ourselves in a situation where we stand back and wonder how did we get here or how did this happen? It doesn't help to look at each other and try to place fault or blame. Sometimes it is better to pick yourself up and proceed with the task at hand. What is the task at hand you ask?



Well it is the 125th anniversary book. Right now it is in a box ready to be organized and then taken to the next step. We all have our special talents. Mine might be farming or highway maintenance (or not!!) Now what I am looking for is someone or a group who is really good at finishing a task such as this. If you are that one person or persons, please contact me on this before it fades away. Thank you so very very much!!!
-Scott

SPIRITUALITY GROUP

Please feel free to join us on the first and third Wednesday every month as we watch, read, and discuss different materials that guide us along our own spiritual journeys in a caring, loving and accepting setting.

Our group includes members from Nora, as well as others from surrounding communities. People come when they can. Watch the Sunday bulletin for times and places.

WIND POWER

Al Christensen of Mankato is part of "Energy Harvest Group". He will be available after the Sunday service at Nora on Feb. 21. He works in the field of wind power production and is knowledgeable about constructing turbines. He will be available to answer questions that members may have about this subject as we struggle to make decisions about green energy production.

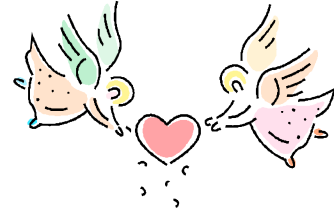
FROM THE BOARD

Thanks from the board this month goes to all who helped decorate the church for Christmas. Also a thank you to all who donated Poinsettias.

THANK YOU

Thanks to all who attended the open house at the parsonage on January 24. It was a delight to welcome you into my home. Special thanks to the members of the Committee on Ministry (and Mom, Claire and Michel) for their help. Thanks also to my colleague Meg Barnhouse, whose writing inspired the fortunes. Meg's book, *Did I Say That Outloud?*, is available at the UUA Bookstore

<http://www.uuabookstore.org>.



CALLING ALL ANGELS An invite to my friends at Nora

*You're invited to Morning Tea!!
Proceeds to Benefit the
Minnesota Ovarian
Cancer Alliance*

Hosted By: Julie Sellner

February 6 at 10:00 am

\$5 per person.

All proceeds will benefit MOCA

Nora Unitarian Church

12333 155th Ave.

Hanska, MN 56041

RSVP appreciated, but not necessary
to Julie at 507.375-8737

February is **Calling All Angels** month, a grassroots effort to help raise awareness of ovarian cancer in Minnesota. **They say the movement of an Angel's wings creates tiny changes in the social atmosphere that ultimately causes large scale awareness.** We know this to be true because in the past five years, **Calling All Angels** has raised over \$85,000 in funds dedicated to raising awareness of ovarian cancer. Visit www.mnovarian.org for more information.

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

FEBRUARY 2010

Parsonage: 507-439-6240
 Lisa's cell: 507-766-5682



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 Spirituality Group NU - 6:30 PM	4	5	6 Morning Tea @ Nora 10 AM
7 9:00 Choir 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service POTLUCK	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service	15	16	17 Spirituality Group NU - 6:30 PM	18	19	20
21 9:00 Choir 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 10:00 Coffee Time 10:30 Service						

Newsletter articles
 due. Thanks for
 being prompt!

Let's do
 Lunch!

Watch the Sunday bulletin for info on
 where the Lunch Bunch meets this month.

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
7 Muffy Rathman	Darrell & Jeanie Hinsman	Wally & Bev Wellman
14 JoAnn Huss	Gene & Gorgine Tepley	Mimi Kamleiter
21 Jordan Rathman	John & Anne Makepeace	Christopher Olson
28 Mimi Kamleiter	Clayton & Shirley Olson	Diane Becken



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



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Hanska Minnesota 56041-4310

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EMAIL
norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net

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

Nora Church Sunday Services FEBRUARY 2010

Coffee Time 10:00 AM

Worship Service 10:30 AM

February 7 - "Hot Air"

February 14 - "Never Having to Say You're Sorry? Really?"

February 21 - "Theological Footnotes"

Why don't we take communion? What does universal salvation mean? Do you believe in angels? Why should I go to General Assembly in June?

These and all your questions (theological and otherwise) answered to the best of Lisa's ability during the service on February 21, 2010--if you submit them in writing by February 14. Some ministers preach an annual Question Box sermon. Theological Footnotes is Lisa's version. Questions may be submitted by e-mail, to revlmd@yahoo.com, or placed in the offering plate on February 7 or 14.

February 28 - Guest Speaker