

THE MUSTARD SEED



Vol. 36, Issue 10, June, 2009, Edition

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Coming Up. . .

June 14—Honor
Graduates
July 12—Whiz Bang
Parade
July 14—Women's
Group Planning
July 26—Outdoor
Service & Picnic
Sept. 6-13—Host
Families Moving
Forward

Regular Features. . .

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p.8
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Bible Adventures-
insert



*It's June.
Enjoy Your
Summer!*

From Your Pastor And Teacher

Contemplation is the only way to come back to unitive consciousness, to experience the primal, in-depth oneness of all things with God. It allows us to overcome the illusion that we are separate and to see the enchanted universe as inherently sacred and filled with meanings. Without it, the world is an empty place, and we have to create all the meanings by ourselves.

God is not *out there!*

For me, that is the enchanted universe that we have to see. The pattern of the universe is that we are one and that it is radically okay. God is on our side. So we can be at rest. We realize that life is a school. And I want to give myself to that school so that my soul can be formed.

From Creating Christian Community

God is within you. Each of you. God has become flesh and dwelt among us. Our story is the Gospel story. Our questions, our doubts, our fears, our weakness, our power, our courage, and our beauty are where God is revealed and made known. God is present in our sanctuary and in our homes and on our long walks. God is present in our arguments, our recovery, and our reconciliations. God is present in illness, our healing, our birthing and our dying.

The myth of "religion" is that you have to go somewhere to find out where God is. The myth continues that there is an answer to be had if only we find the right theology or the best preacher. The truth of living in the presence of God is that God is wherever you are. Nothing can separate you from that presence and that love. Nothing that is, except you.

We create the only barriers to the fullness of God's love and mercy. We are the ones who ignore the primal, in-depth oneness of all things. We are the ones who forget that we are all related. Sometimes I want to yell, "STOP."

We all just need to stop and look around and remember that we are created in God's image. All of us are. No exceptions. We need to remember that we are God's gift of love to others. My prayer today, as you read these words, is that we remember that the pattern of the universe is that we are all one, and that is radically okay.

See you in church,
T. Michael



June Schedule

June 7, 2009. First Sunday after Pentecost. Communion. Infant and toddler care available. Summer Adventures for children 3 years through 2nd grade 10:15 – 11:15 a.m. Lectionary texts: Isaiah 6:1-8; Psalm 29 (2); Romans 8:12-17; John 3:1-17.

June 14, 2009. Second Sunday after Pentecost. Service at 10:00 a.m. Infant and toddler care available. Summer Adventures for children 3 years through 2nd grade 10:15 – 11:15 a.m. Lectionary texts: 1 Samuel 15:34-16:13; Psalm 20 or Ezekiel 17:22-24; Psalm 92:1-4,12-15; 2 Corinthians 5:6-10,14-17 or 2 Corinthians 5:617; Mark 4:26-34.

June 21, 2009. Third Sunday after Pentecost. Service at 10:00 a.m. Infant and toddler care available. Summer Adventures for children 3 years through 2nd grade 10:15 – 11:15 a.m. Lectionary texts: 1 Samuel 17:(1a, 4-11, 19-23), 32-49; Psalm 9:9-20 or Job 38:1-11; Psalm 107:1-3, 23-32; 2 Corinthians 6:1-13; Mark 4:35-41.

June 28, 2009. Fourth Sunday after Pentecost. Service at 10:00 a.m. Infant and toddler care available. Summer Adventures for children 3 years through 2nd grade 10:15 – 11:15 a.m. Lectionary texts: 2 Samuel 1:1,17-27; Psalm 130 or Wisdom of Solomon 1:13-15, 2:23-24; Psalm 30; 2 Corinthians 8:7-15; Mark 5:21-43.

Worship at Robbinsdale United Church of Christ

Worship in June will bless us with four Sundays of four very special preachers. These four women will present a powerful story of living, creating, loving and learning. There are many blessings here at Robbinsdale United Church of Christ, and one of them is being surrounded by gifted preachers and teachers. We hope you come to worship and be filled with God's gift of presence and grace. We are all a part of this amazing and joyful feast.

June 7th – Communion Sunday

Scripture – Isaiah 6:1-8

Sermon: “A Call To Ministry” --Rev. Sherry Braun

We are very grateful to have Sherry bless us with her story of gratitude for the humble servants in her life who taught her what ministry is about by simply serving and loving. This will be a Sunday of gratitude for the servants in our midst.

June 14th – Honoring Graduates

Scriptures: Mark 4:30-32, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Philippians 2:1-5

Sermon: “Living a Joy-Filled Life” – Rev. April Davis Campbell

I invite you to come to worship and be ready to participate. We will consider the following statements; "Another word for joy is..." and "I share my joy with others when..." I look forward to hearing what the Word has to say to us about joy and its implications for each new day.

June 21st

Scripture – Mark 4:35-41

Sermon: “In the Boat Together” – Rev. Rachel Rand

Rachel will bless us this morning with a reflection on living in community, appreciating one another, and discovering the many gifts of those around us.

June 28th – General Synod Sunday

Scripture Readings: Wisdom of Solomon 1:13-15 and 2:23-24; Mark 5:21-43

Sermon: “Hemmed In” – Dawn Carlson Conn

Faith requires intention. I want to be healed. I want to be closer to God. I want to forgive and be forgiven. The women in this story are healed by intention, stubbornness and persistence. Come and explore the gifts of these powerful women and those who love them and perhaps even consider your own pathway to healing.

CENTERING PRAYER at Robbinsdale United Church of Christ

Starting in August we will be entering a new ritual in the life of Robbinsdale United Church of Christ. From 9:40 to 9:55 a.m. the sanctuary will be silent for a time of Centering Prayer. All are welcome to enter, but with the mindfulness of quiet contemplation. The guides for Centering Prayer are simple.



Continued on next page

Centering Prayer continued

At 9:40 a.m. we will have a short prayer followed by the ringing of the prayer bowl to begin this time.

Each person chooses a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and movement within. (Examples of Sacred Words: Jesus, Kyrie, Love, Peace, Mercy, Shalom, Faith, Trust, or any other word that would be easy to return to.)

Sitting comfortably with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within.

When you become aware of thoughts, return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.

At the end of the prayer period, the bell will ring. Remain in silence for a couple of minutes, and we will end with a slow a deliberate expression of the Lord's Prayer.

The Prelude Music will then begin as the doors of the sanctuary are opened.

All are welcome to explore this spiritual practice. There is no right or wrong way to pray in this way. It is the hope of the Worship Ministry and the pastors that this practice will provide all of us with an opportunity to deepen our soulful journey of healing and living with God.

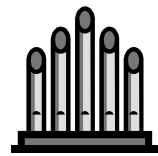
Thirty Years!

And, Hopefully, Many More!

Thirty years ago I got a phone call from Kathy Plumb, who told me that her church, the First Congregational Church of Robbinsdale, was in need

of an organist. I interviewed for the job and as they say, "The rest is history." I especially want to thank Bill Sowden, former director of the Chancel Choir, Mary Lauder, director of the Now and Then Singers, and David Nordli, director of the Chancel Choir, for their support and encouragement throughout my time here.

I am so blessed and honored to be working with such gifted and dedicated musicians at this church. Assuming that Shakespeare was correct in saying, "All the world is a stage," the organ bench has certainly provided me with "the best seat in the house." 30 years of "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today" and "Silent Night"; 30 years of Baptisms, Confirmations, New Members, Weddings and Funerals have given me a wonderful sense of



belonging to a very special church family. It is with love and humility that I look forward to continuing on my journey as your organist. Thank you so much for your love and support.

--Steve Quesnel

Happy Birthday!

Greetings and best wishes to all members and friends of Robbinsdale United Church of Christ who celebrate their birthdays in June.

June 1	Jim Benshoof
June 4	Wayne Roelofs
June 9	Nico Gardner
June 9	Rico Gardner
June 10	Christina Gilbert
June 10	Ben Talberg
June 13	T. Michael Rock
June 14	Evie Sands
June 15	Joan Young
June 16	Doug Weiss
June 17	Kristin Sonquist
June 17	Dale Spielman
June 19	John Rost
June 19	Adam Wicklund
June 25	Carol Welton
June 25	Deb Murray
June 25	Ashley Truehart
June 26	Kyle Nordli
June 27	Stewart Whelan
June 27	Clare Bossert
June 28	Karen Paulsen
June 30	Peter Goldstein

Book Discussion...

A Hot Summer "Pick" You'll Fall For

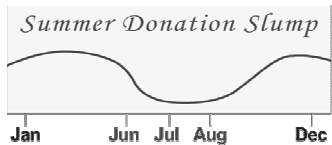
Bad pun. . . terrific book! Take along a copy of *The Shack* (by Wm. Paul Young) to the cabin, the beach or a shady spot in the back yard. We guarantee you'll still be talking about it come fall! (That's when Faith Formation is holding book discussions.)



You can get a copy at Target or Costco. And, if you've already read it...maybe you'd like to share it. Leave a copy with Gretchen in the office (or pick one up if you need one).

--Beckie Bernu

P.S. Beckie is *still* waiting by the phone for more book suggestions. Call her now at 763-529-9362 or it's gonna be a *really long summer!*



You Can Help Minimize Summer Donation Slump

Every summer as we get busy with our summer activities, attendance at our church service on Sunday goes down. In addition, we see a drop in weekly/monthly pledges we receive.

As a reminder, we do have a service which several of our members are using that allows for alternative methods for making pledge contributions. Most like it for the ease of use and the assurance that their giving is made in a timely manner to assist with our cash flow.

There are three options available. They are:

Credit & Debit Card Giving*

Sign up for *e.service*® Merchant Services—our credit and debit card solution

Online Giving*

Sign up for *e.service*® by Web—our secure website donation page solution

Direct Debit Giving

Enjoy our most popular service (used by our member participants) with low flat fees that allow members to have donations made directly from a checking or savings account.

*As an incentive Vanco Services will be waiving their registration or hosting fee for anyone signing up for these services by June 15th.

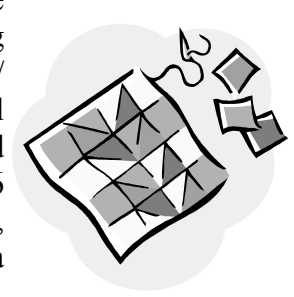
For more information regarding Vanco Services you can call 800-774-9355 or visit ElectronicDonations.com. Vanco Services is the financial technology company chosen by the UCC as a partner in offering *StillSpeakingMoney*. Go to www.UCC.org, keyword *Vanco*. An information sheet will also be posted on our bulletin board.

TABLES AVAILABLE

Thanks to a generous gift from the Pilgrim Guild we have been replacing our old 8' tables with a new lighter weight model. The old tables are available for you to use in your home or garage. They will be clearly labeled and against the wall in Fellowship Hall. If you need delivery, that can also be arranged by calling the church office. First come, first served.

The Quilting Group Thanks You!

- ◆ Thank you to all of the members of the congregation and friends and visitors who bought tickets for the quilt raffle. We sold over 200 tickets and raised \$431, which will be applied to the fund-raising line item in the budget.
- ◆ Thank you to Ellen Rowell, the winner of the raffle, for donating the quilt she won to the Lakota Re-Member project.
- ◆ Thank you to the members of the Quilting Group who designed and/or sewed those beautiful quilts that were displayed in the sanctuary April 26 to May 10: Erica Schultz, Angie Schultz, Louiva Puffer, Deb Murray, Oliver Fluegel-Murray, Dawn Carlson Conn, Clare Bossert, and Nancy Bossert.
- ◆ Thank you to those who helped tie the quilts: the designers/sewers listed above plus Sheri Beck, Lois Bossert, Tracey Fluegel, Kathy Herrmann, Tim Hoppe, Karrie Haugen, Lisa Lindesmith, Cheryl Nordquist, Jim Puffer, Morgan Rock, T. Michael Rock, Linda Smith, Lisa Stroessner, Barb Wills, and the kids (Jonah, Toby, Clare, Christina, Oliver, Zella, and Erica).
- ◆ Thank you to those who took home quilt kits* to sew so that we will have lots of quilts to tie when we resume in the fall: Karrie Haugen, Kathy Herrmann, Barb Jensen, Erica and Angie Schultz, and Kristin Sonquist.



*We have begun to prepare quilt kits for people to sew at home whether they attend quilting or not. This is a great way to widen the circle of participation in our outreach projects. If you'd like a quilt kit, please give Dawn or Nancy a call.

We couldn't have done it without all of your support - **thank you, thank you, thank you!**

PLEASE NOTE:
The next issue of the Mustard Seed is for July AND August. Please submit information for both months by the deadline, June 21.

Cabaret Night Success!

As usual, Cabaret Night was fabulous. The music was amazing--few of us will forget Curtis' solo or Tim Hoppe's combination song/dance/martial arts routine. And it was all held together with Ole and Lena jokes--only in Minnesota! I think we raised close to \$700 after expenses. We served over 110 people, and I'm pretty sure they enjoyed the food!

Thanks must be given to all who helped! This is truly a group effort, but there are always a few who go above and beyond the call of duty. Special thanks to David Nordli and Steve Quesnel who coordinated the entertainment for the evening. Patty Miller and family plus friends helped served the dinner, sang (beautifully), brought tables and cloths, and recruited help for set up and take down. Willa Truehart and Carol Abild kept things going smoothly in the kitchen. The Miller girls' friends dressed up and served us graciously so we even did a little outreach. And I can't forget to thank my family for putting up with me. They also helped in the kitchen and with planning and shopping. Again, there were plenty of others who helped, but these are the people who helped make this event happen. Best of all, the money that Cabaret made last year enabled us to get that new dishwasher which is such a dream to use for clean up compared to our former antique.

While Cabaret is more of a secular (fund-raising) event, I can't help but think of it being such a Christian act on many levels--sharing, helping, creating a sense of community, and getting to know each other in a different way. Thanks to all who came and supported this event.

--Kathy Jo Gausman

Women's Group to Meet in July for Planning

The Women's Group needs some fresh ideas to get things up and running again for fall. The last two meetings had rather spotty attendance. In that spirit, we will be having a planning meeting on **Tuesday, July 14th, at 7:00 pm**. We plan to develop a strategy for next fall, so please bring any ideas that you would like to see implemented. The first few meetings last year we had excellent attendance, and we're thinking that this is a viable group that is wanted and needed. But maybe we're off the mark in

meeting individual needs. If you can't attend but wish to be heard, please talk to Kathy Plumb, Dawn Conn, or Kathy Jo Gausman, and we will pass on the information. We welcome any ideas, criticisms, and/or suggestions for changes that need to be made. NOTE: There will be no meeting in June.

The Women's Group is for any women who are looking for a sense of community and hospitality. There are no age requirements. No attendance requirements. No officers. It has been a chance for those of us who have been a part of it to get to know other women in our church family. We have had the opportunity to get to know them in a way not possible just attending meetings together or greeting one another after church.

Coordinating Council May 19, 2009

*Fund raising continues: quilt raffle made \$431; putting out coin jar each week; Cabaret was a success; Fruit of Spirit auction planned for fall, need leadership.

*Listening team interviews have begun. Need information from them for goal setting in fall.

*Opportunity Next Door: The price on the units next door has been dropped by \$300,000. Looking into if this makes project more feasible.

*Pilgrim Point: MN Conference considering selling part of acreage. Open discussion May 31st at New Brighton UCC.

*Families Moving Forward: Need to raise funds in order to retain staff and continue operating. We are scheduled to host September 6-13.

*Worship: No more verbal announcements; all should be in bulletin. Complaints from congregation about length of announcement time.

*Faith Formation: Planning outdoor service and picnic for July 26.

*Trustees: Lots of outdoor work accomplished on Cherish the Church day. Church had gas leak that, fortunately, was caught and remedied quickly. (See article elsewhere in this issue.)

*Bible Adventures: Finished year with carnival and started planning for next year. Glad to have April here!

*National and Global: Focusing on planning and fund raising for next year's Guatemala trip.

*Community Outreach: May 31 is sendoff of car being donated to PRISM. We hope to fill with food!



June Schedule...

**INTERFAITH LEISURE AGE
9 AM. SOCIAL HOUR
12 NOON LUNCH AND PROGRAM:
Lunch Reservations Required
Elim Lutheran Church.
3748 West Broadway in Robbinsdale**

June 4—Musical program by Randy Roloff.

June 11—Ron Peters on the accordion.

June 18—Blood pressures taken 9:30-11:30 a.m.
Program: Hall Family Singers.

June 25—June and July Birthday Party. Program:
Jack Frost as “Mr. Bones.”

NOTE: No Leisure Age in July!

Leisure Age meets on Thursday from 9:00-2:00. Lunch costs \$9.00. It is now necessary to make reservations if you plan to attend. If you're present one week, you can sign the reservation book that is passed at the table to attend the following week. If you are not present, you can make reservations Monday 9 a.m. to noon by calling Jean Lindstrom at 763-537-1171. You may also use this number to cancel a reservation.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Jan Paulsen, 763-529-1986

or Keith Smith, 612-588-1401 or 763-588-4356

Thanks to T. Michael for doing chapel at Leisure Age on April 30th. We are proud to be a part of this community outreach. Once again, RUCC will have the opportunity to serve at Elim on September 4th and September 11th. We are in need of 8 helpers each day. See the sign up sheet on the board across from the office. This is our time to reach out and share with others in our community. To serve is a very rewarding experience. Thank you for helping at this time.

TRUSTEE Ministry Updates

The **TREASURER** team is reporting that monthly pledges are down somewhat from the budget, but are not of great concern at this time as some annual pledges were pre-paid. This is keeping our income situation in good shape through the first half of the year. Assisting that strong situation is the fact that overall expenses have been very close to budget expectations or less – which has been great for the cash flow!



The **CHERISH OUR CHURCH** activity was a mixed blessing on Saturday, May 2nd. We had a terrific crew attending to the construction of the new retaining wall and planter area and other outside cleanup and landscaping tasks. Please recognize the wall building crew, headed up by Jim Greenwood and including Dick Reiersen, John Rost, Wayne Pitmon, John Lloyd and many others who shoveled and carted yards of gravel, dirt and mulch to create the new look! Special praise also for Lisa Stroessner and her partner Bob (not even a member!) who each spent hours working behind wheelbarrow and shovel and still put together a great lunch for all who worked that Saturday! Unfortunately, only a couple people were available for interior clean-up and maintenance, so we got only the most critical items dealt with and left many housekeeping tasks for our janitor.

SHRUBS and FLOWERS for the new planter area will be going in soon! The Garden Group will be getting some new flowering shrubs planted toward the end of the month. Trustees are working with the Garden Group to get flowers and ground cover to complement their plantings and provide some color and attractions nearly year-round.

GAS LEAK at RUCC! On Monday, May 11th, Vicki Nicole came to work in the morning and discovered a strong gas odor in the lower level. The building was evacuated and the gas company, fire department, and boiler service company were called to ventilate the building and safely explore the source of the leak. An electric 2-position valve on the gas supply line to one boiler had failed and was allowing gas to leak through the burner into the boiler room and out into the lower landing. The boiler gas supply was turned off and the valve will be replaced during the normal summer burner service work. Fortunately, we had turned off both boilers and all the heating pumps about 10 days previously, or we could have had a significant problem with the volume of gas that was leaking. We will be putting some warning signs on the boiler room doors to provide instruction to people in the building if there should ever be another gas leak or emergency. Thanks to the fast response and smart actions by Vicki Nicole, RUCC avoided a potential major problem with damage to the building and possible injury to people!

**Robbinsdale United Church of Christ
LISTENING PROJECT**

Five Assumptions:

1. This church belongs to the people for the purpose of worshiping God and serving ALL people.
2. Every opinion and/or idea matters when living in community.
3. It's time to listen to the needs, concerns, and visions of our congregation.
4. If we all learn to listen, we further our understanding of living a "we" existence in a "me" world.
5. It's the best way to remind folks that every one of you are loved.

During this year of 2009, the Coordinating Council has supported the formation of a Listening Project to guide us into a long range planning process. Our goal is to sit down, one on one, with every member and close friend of our congregation. The interviews will be both meaningful and short. During the first few months, the team will conduct interviews after worship and other gatherings of the church. The second phase will be home visits and phone calls to those who don't attend on a regular basis. Please be open to what may happen when all of us feel heard, honored, and loved. This coming fall we will hold a congregational meeting to report on these findings and hopefully determine a clear vision for our future together. Please be thinking and praying on the questions you will each be asked.

- Who/What is God to you? Are there any barriers to that relationship?
- What is Robbinsdale United Church of Christ to you? Are there any barriers to that relationship?
- If you could change anything you wanted about RUCC what would it be?

Along the way, if you have any questions, please talk with T. Michael at any time.

HONORING OUR GRADUATES!

On Sunday, June 14th, we'll honor the graduates of RUCC. If you know of anyone who is celebrating this achievement in life please let the church office know. Whether it is pre-school or doctoral studies or anything in between, your church family wants to celebrate this event with you.



**Robbinsdale United Church of Christ
at WHIZ BANG DAYS
July 12, 2009**



Let's be in the parade! Hand out candy and walk alongside our RUCC float. Our float will be better than ever this year, and fun will be had by all. We will have a great time building this art project, but an even greater time spreading the good news of Robbinsdale United Church of Christ to our community. Please talk with T. Michael if you would like to help with frame construction.

Biking at Robbinsdale United Church of Christ

It's time to think of spring and getting back on the bicycle. There are many folks at RUCC who love to ride. Check out our "Sunday Rides" this summer. We invite anyone and everyone out for Sunday afternoon bike rides of various lengths and challenge. We will also stop for ice cream along the route. It should be a great way to get the heart pumping and to spend some time with our church family.



Congratulations to our team who rode 30 miles for MS on May 9th. We raised over \$1000 and had a great time. We hope you can join us next year.

Hosterman-Myers Community Garden

What a gift it has been to build this beautiful garden. The greater gift will be to harvest and share its bounty. A special thank you goes out to Carol Ahlgren, Mark Mueske, John Norberg and Jim Greenwood for helping to create this wonderful place to grow good food and great relationships.



YOUTH AT RUCC

Plans are underway for fun, faith, and fellowship this summer. Please watch your mail for unique opportunities for both Middle School and High School youth.

Our congratulations to Kayla Miller for completing her Confirmation process. We are very proud of you, Kayla!

Congratulations to the Class of 2009: Ellen Amundson, Kyle Lanz, Jordan Lanz, and Kaira Miller. And to college graduate Laura Anderson, University of Minnesota.

Community News

Baptism

We share our joy with The Rev. April Davis Campbell and Bob Campbell whose son Solomon Davis Campbell was presented for baptism on May 10th.

Thank You...

I would like to thank everyone for their prayers, cards, and calls. A special thank you to those who gathered in prayer for me on May 1st at church. I was in my pre-op room at 7 a.m. waiting to be taken into surgery and just knowing that people had gathered on my behalf was so very calming for me. It made me feel good going into surgery knowing that I was not alone. Thank you all so much for your support.

--Sharon Mallak

July/August Issue. . .

Mustard Seed



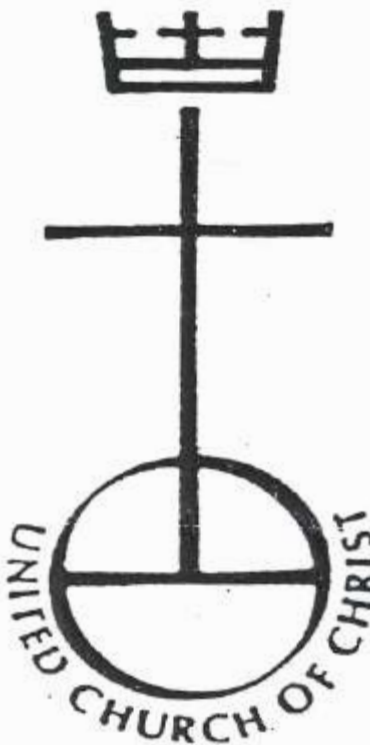
Please place all articles for the next issue of the Mustard Seed in the box marked "Mustard Seed" on the shelf inside the door to the workroom in the church office, *e-mail* to thewillses@aol.com (preferred) or mail them to Barbara Wills, 6214 Upland Lane No., Maple Grove 55311, so that they are received by the deadline.

JULY/AUG. ISSUE DEADLINE

Sunday, June 21 , 11 a.m.

No exceptions please.

(July/August issue will be mailed Friday, June 26.)



Robbinsdale United Church of Christ
4200 Lake Road
Robbinsdale, MN 55422

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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