

# MERE LYS

## December 2016 Newsletter

### Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

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#### Services

Coffee 10:00 am  
Worship 10:30 am



**December 4th**

*“Not Yet.  
Just, Not Yet.”*

**December 11th**

*“We Need a Little  
Christmas”*

**December 18th**

*“Without a Dark to  
Stick It In ”*

**December 24th**

*Candle Lighting  
Service 5:00 PM*

**December 25th**

*“Born This Day”*



#### A View From the Hill

*The three right hands ... plunged in and out of the three distorted stockings, until there was nothing left but the time-hallowed tangerine in the toe. (It was curious how that tradition lingered, even nowadays when children had a good supply of fruit all the year round.)*

Jan Struther wrote those lines almost 80 years ago. And all these years later a tangerine or orange *still* nestles in the toe of many distorted stockings on Christmas morning.

Visits to Santa in the mall. A *Messiah* sing-a-long. Oyster stew on Christmas Eve or curry on Christmas Day. Watching *A Charlie Brown Christmas* or *Elf* or *It's a Wonderful Life* or *Christmas Story*. PJs all day or a post-dinner family walk or ice-skating every day during school break. Donating a Toy for Tots. Baking from family recipes, in cross-generational kitchens. Elf-on-a-Shelf.

Traditions linger. Holidays magnify their importance. But traditions start some-time and morph along the way to now. Those citrus-fruit-toed stockings may be time honored. But Elf-on-a-Shelf and *Elf* the movie, not so much.

At the parsonage, in my family, we're anticipating Christmas 2016 with a joyousness not seen since Dad's last Christmas with us 15 years ago. The arrival of a new child/grandchild/niece/cousin has that affect. The arrival of a new child with eleven holiday seasons already under her belt complicates the matter of Christmas traditions. As eager as I am to share my favorite foods, stories, rituals, and songs, just as eager is she to hold on to and share with me her familiar and beloved Christmas traditions.

Marriage, divorce, birth, death, adoption, even the simple passage of one more year changes everything in a family, in ways that are—surprise!—intensified at holiday time. The light of my life (that's what her name means!) and I have the advantage of having the change all out in the open. We have to address our differing experiences and expectations head-on. I can't say it's always easy or fun, but it is a practice I commend to you. As you engage in your family's holiday traditions, take stock with one another. What's each person's favorite tradition and least favorite tradition? Is there one that you'd all be happy to relegate to the realm of days gone by? Is there one that can be transformed from worn-out duty into merry-making magic with nothing more than a minor 21st century tweak? What tradition is so precious, so filled with memory and meaning, it needs only more time and more honor paid to it?

Merry Christmas, from my family to you, with all the traditional seasonal cheer we can send and you can receive!

*-Lisa*

# Thank You!

## From the board...

... to the people who helped plan and participate in the Parade of Lights.

### **Board Meeting**

The next Nora Board meeting will be on Sunday, December 11 after church.

### **Christmas Elves Needed**

On Friday, December 2, all elves available will decorate the church for Christmas. Many hands make the work go quicker. We'll set up the tree but leave ornaments for the kiddos to put on during Sunday potluck. Please come for any time you are available; we'll start at 1:30 pm. If necessary, decorating will continue Saturday at 10:00 am., watch for a Grapevine.

### **Art with Attitude**

Art with Attitude will take the month of December off, so everyone can concentrate on the holidays. But be prepared to come back in January for a new and exciting project! Watch the January newsletter for starting dates. Our first project will be to finish the NUMAS house quilts. Visitors are always welcome. The coffee is always hot!

*You may bring your own project to work on or just come to visit and spend the day. Bring a bag lunch.*

### **Lunch Bunch**

The Lunch Bunch crew will take a break from holiday preparations to relax over lunch at the Martin Luther College cafeteria in New Ulm on Wednesday, December 14, (note change of date) at 11:30 a.m. The food is good and the company better, so we'll look forward to seeing you there.

*Lunch Bunch is a monthly, social lunch gathering, open to any Nora members, friends or visitors.*

### **R. E. Saturday**

Join Lisa in the church social hall for Solstice-themed activities on Saturday, December 17, from 10:00 to noon. All ages welcome. Snack provided.

Please let us know by noon, Friday, December 16, [norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net](mailto:norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net) if you'll be participating.



## **Lisa on the Loose**

Lisa holds "office hours" at area coffee houses. Join her for drop-in conversations in your community. During December Lisa will meet at the following locations:

Tuesday, December 20

River City Eatery, Windom from 11:00-12:30

Thursday, December 22

Ridgeway on 23<sup>rd</sup>, New Ulm from 3:00-4:00



### **Service Times**

At its August meeting, the Nora Board of Trustees decided to move Sunday service to 10:00 a.m., followed by coffee hour at 11:00, beginning January 8, 2017. The decision was made based on the discussion of an earlier start time at last June's annual meeting. The change will remain in effect through the remainder of this church year, at which point the board, with input from the congregation, will evaluate the experiment and make a decision regarding start times going forward.

### **Food Shelf Volunteering**

During January Nora Church, along with UCC, will furnish volunteers for the New Ulm Food Shelf. The work involves refilling orders as families come in. No special skill is needed and someone will explain what to do if you've not worked before. Our dates are Monday afternoons January 2, January 9 and January 16. The hours are 11:45 to 3pm. We should have 2-3 volunteers for each time. We are a small group so we need all who can assist. Please let Darrell Hinsman know if you can help or call 354-7494 or 276-66044.

### ***A Note From the Treasurer*** **October Income and Expenses**

**Income:** \$8,592.30

**Expenses:** \$6,323.66

*Income and expenses are listed for the full month prior to the publication of the newsletter, not including special collections or memorial gifts.*

**Direct Deposit for Pledges** Some people have requested direct deposit for pledges. To initiate this, anyone interested would have to set this up with their bank, much like an automatic payment for a utility or credit card. If you would like to make electronic pledge payments, please contact Julie Peck for Nora Church account information.

### ***Pastor Lisa's Schedule***

Pastor Lisa has Mondays off. Friday is sermon writing day. She can be reached on her cell when not in the office: 507-766-7822.

Lisa will be on sabbatical from January 1, 2017 through April 30, 2017 (completing the six months due her at this time). Complete sabbatical information printed elsewhere in this newsletter.

### ***NUMAS Haus Needs Volunteers***

NUMAS Haus needs volunteers to staff the house at least one three hour shift/month. Volunteers make sure residents and children are in a safe environment, interact with residents and children providing examples of good decision making skills, and contact the shelter coordinator in response to emergencies and resident problems and issues. Background check is required and training is provided. For more information talk to Lisa or check the NUMAS Haus website: <http://numashaus.org/index.php/category/volunteers/>

### ***Update from Larry Bakken***

To Friends and Family, Just a short note to let you know that Larry's 6 month checkup (CT scan and lab work) shows he is still in remission. Awesome report and we're thankful all is well. Happy Holidays!!! Thanks for your emails, cards and phone calls. They are all appreciated! Please do NOT send flowers. If you want to send cards, letters, etc., please send them to our home at 11900 175th St. W., Lakeville, MN 55044 or email [LBakken@frontiernet.net](mailto:LBakken@frontiernet.net). Larry would love hearing from you! We feel truly blessed to have such wonderful friends!! Larry and Vickie

### ***Fair Trade Booth Coming to Nora***

New Ulm's Own, is a group of people planning to open a fair trade market and artisan gallery in summer of 2017. Proceeds from the business will support local charities, particularly NUMAS HAUS. They will be at Nora Church on Sunday, Dec. 4 with Christmas ornaments, tree toppers, lanterns, nativity scenes, advent calendars, tea, coffee, chocolate and soap.

Fair trade markets products from artisans and craftspeople in developing countries helping them achieve self-sufficiency. We hope you will support the fair trade effort and local charity by purchasing a Christmas item or other fair trade item.

### ***A letter from Lisa***

To recap and update what I wrote last December:

I arrived at Nora Church in August 2009, as your consulting minister. Two years later you installed me as settled minister. As part of our negotiations at that time the Board agreed to allow me to include those first two years in the accrual of years toward a sabbatical. So the time has come, here in our seventh year together, for me to embark on sabbatical.

As of last year I was due six months away from ministerial duties for rest and renewal. I decided for a variety of reasons to split my sabbatical into two chunks. Having been away from Nora (and the parsonage) from for two months early last year, I'm now embarking on the second chunk of my sabbatical.

- The program committee (Christopher Olson, Nita Gilbert, Lee Drogemueller and Karen Farrell) has been busy scheduling a line-up of great speakers to fill the pulpit for four months (there's no service the first Sunday in January). You'll hear Unitarian Universalist ministers as well as ministers and lay-people from other faith traditions.

- If necessary, congregation president Karen Farrell, in consultation with the scheduled speaker, will make the decision regarding weather cancellations.

- Brooke will continue to work five hours a week, generally Tuesdays and Friday.

I'm making arrangements for pastoral care coverage from Unitarian Universalist colleagues. **Information on the procedure for accessing pastoral care will be provide in the January newsletter.**

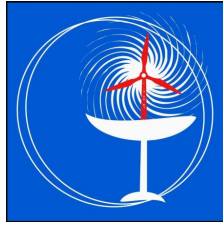
I will be 'retreating in place', due to being the mom of a fifth grader, from January 1 through April 30. You may see us around the church grounds or in Hanska or New Ulm, but I won't be conducting church business or participating in church social or worship life. I'll continue the reading and writing projects I began last year, and also spend time at my loom. I anticipate returning to Nora life rested, inspired, and oh so grateful for your generosity in granting me this time away from ministerial duties.

In our shared faith,  
Lisa



## Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

12333 155th Avenue  
Hanska, Minnesota 56041-4310



Phone: 507.439.6240

Website: [www.norauuchurch.org](http://www.norauuchurch.org)

Email: [norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net](mailto:norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/NoraChurchUU](http://www.facebook.com/NoraChurchUU)

### *20156– 2017 Server/Greeter/Usher/ Partner List*

**If your name is not on this list** and you would like to participate, contact Susan Allen 359-2856.

**If your name is on this list** and you are not able to help, please call someone on the list and try to arrange a switch, or contact Susan Allen. Contact information is in the Nora Directory. Please let Lisa or Brooke know any schedule changes so the order of service can be corrected – [norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net](mailto:norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net).

**ATTENTION PARTNERS:** Please communicate with each other regarding food provision, as necessary. **Also, please remember that your job includes greeting.**

#### **DECEMBER**

4—Potluck—Norma & Roger Breu, Kristine & Wayne Paulson  
11—Colleen & Glenn Hokenson, Lee Drogemuller  
18—Diane Becken, Cindy Backman, Lara Fletcher  
24—Greeters: Karen Farrell & Dick Gurska  
25—Susan & Jerry Allen

#### **JANUARY**

1—No Service  
8—Potluck—Kristine & Warren Paulson, Julie Seller  
15—Jeanie & Darrell Hinsman, Shirley Olson  
22—Nancy Bruderie, Wayne Johnson, Nita Gilbert  
29—Christopher Olson, Julie & Ron Peck

#### **FEBRUARY**

5—Potluck—Susan & Jerry Allen, Scott Chambard  
12—Carol Chambard, Janet Rosenbloom, Vicki Sieve  
19—Joy Rathman, Jeremy Schmitt, Louise Guggisburg  
26—Lee & Lynn Schmitt, Christina Schmitt

#### **MARCH**

5—Potluck—Georgine & Gene Tepley, Wayne Johnson, Edith Beckius  
12—Norma & Roger Breu, Michelle Bethke  
19—Sally Ann & David Benson, Christopher Olson  
26—Kristine & Warren Paulson, Kristy Paulson

#### **APRIL**

2—Potluck—Jeanie & Darrell Hinsman, Scott & Tracey Schmiesing  
9—Julie Sellner, Shannon Hoescht, Susan Evers  
16—Easter—Edith Beckius, Diane Becken, Nancy Bruderie  
23—Beverly & Wally Wellman, Joy Rathman  
30—Carol Chambard, Julie & Ron Peck

#### **MAY**

7—Potluck—Sally Ann & Dave Benson, Karen Farrell & Dick Gurska  
14—Sytende Mai  
21—Colleen & Glenn Hokenson, Lee Drogemuller  
28—Shirley Olson, Lara Fletcher, Louise Guggisburg

#### **JUNE**

4—Potluck—Joy Rathman, Cindy Backman, Scott Chambard  
11—Sally & Gil Hansen, Nita Gilbert  
18—Service at Lake Hanska

#### *Inclement Weather*

In case of Sunday morning inclement weather the decision to cancel church service will be made no later than 8:00 a.m. At that time a Grapevine will be sent out, an announcement will be posted on the Nora website and Nora Facebook page, and the cancellation notice will be sent to KNUJ and KTOE. When church is not cancelled, you are responsible for your own safety. We love to see everyone at church but we would rather know every one is safe. Please do not drive to church when road conditions, high winds or frigid temperature feel *unsafe to you*. We'll see you the next Sunday, or the next month or in April!!

#### *Notes from the Nora Office...*

Please send content of any kind, for the newsletter or order of service to the Nora email. Announcements generally run for two weeks.

#### **Order Of Service ~ content due Thursdays**

#### **January Mere Lys ~ content due Dec. 20**

Church Email: [norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net](mailto:norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net)

Phone: 507.439.6240

*Brooke Knisley, Office Assistant  
In the office Tuesdays and Fridays.*