



MERE LYS

February 2017 Newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

Services

Worship 10:00 am

Coffee 11:00 am



February 5th

“Learn to Fly”

Speaker: Christopher Olson

February 12th

“On Lincoln and Darwin”

Speaker: Lee Drogemuller

February 19th

On the Women’s March on WA

Speaker: Nita Gilbert

February 26th

“Making Vision Reality”

Speaker: Alicia Bayer



A View From the Hill

From the archives!

The pain then is part of the happiness now.

That's the deal.

The pain now is part of the happiness then.

That's the deal.

Lovely, succinct, clear-eyed. These lines from the movie *Shadowlands* (the story of C. S. Lewis's love affair and brief marriage to Joy Davidson Gresham) are the perfect antidote to the flower-scented, candy-flavored, red & pink heart decorated version of love we're sold (literally sold) in February. It's seductive and exhilarating, that Valentine's Day. And oh-so-sweet when and while it blooms in our lives. But it doesn't last. It never lasts. Not in that elusive, heady (and frankly shallow) form. That's why we remind ourselves, in the words of Alfred Lord Tennyson, that "tis better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all."

But it's not an either/or proposition. Love/lost love. Love/absence of love. Flowers-hearts-candy-perfume/lovelessness. It's all part of one whole. As Blake said of life, "joy and woe are woven fine," so is it with love. The pain later, when death or estrangement changes the taste and texture of love, is part of the happiness now, when love is still soft and sweet. The pain now, when or absence or tragedy has muted the colors and changed the key of love, is part of the happiness then, when love was bright and melodious. It's all one. It's all love. It's all blessing.

The sounds of rock band Nazareth kept running through my head as I thought about this column. *Love hurts*. Then I listened to that song by Felice and Boudleaux Bryant recorded by other artists--the Everly Brothers, and Norah Jones and Keith Richards (!), and Roy Orbison. From hard driving to soulful, insisting that "love is just a lie". "Love hurts any heart that isn't tough or strong enough".

Love does hurt. Love hurts **every** heart--not just those that aren't tough or strong enough. But it's not a lie.

Love is as much truth as life ever holds. It's our insistence on red and pink doily hearts and boxes of chocolate that make it seem like a lie. As the annual retail assault on love begins, let us remember the pain is part of the happiness. And the happiness is part of the pain. That's the deal. And it's all a blessing.

-Lisa

From the board...

Thank You!

... to the people who took down the Christmas decorations.

... to Darrell and Warren for taking care of the water heater situation.

... to the people who continue with ongoing snow removal.

Board Meeting

The next Nora Board meeting will be on Sunday, February 12, after church.

Art with Attitude

Art with Attitude will be getting together Friday, February 10th and Thursday, the 16th, at 10:00 am. On the 16th there will be a mini potluck for lunch. Nancy will bring soup, everyone else can bring something to go with it.

We are still tying quilts for NUMAS house, plus, we are making tote bags out of animal feed or bird seed bags. If anyone has the large bags that feel like, please save them for us! We are looking for large animal food or large bird seed bags; the ones that are made out of a plastic-like material.

Please call Nancy if you are planning on attending so you may be notified, should cancellations be made. (507-439-6838 or 484-347-8816). 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.

Lunch Bunch

After the Mexican birthday celebration in January, Lunch Bunch is making a pivot to Asia. We will be meeting at the New Grand Moon Buffet, 1702 Westridge Rd., New Ulm, on Wednesday, February 15, at 11:30 a.m. We hope the weather cooperates and that you can join the crowd.

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

Service Times

Please note that the service times have changed for the new year. 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.

The decision was made based on the discussion of an earlier start time at last June's annual meeting.

Love of Lefse

Do you have it? A love for lefse. Want to give the gift of lefse love? Grab a half pound, or a pound, and enjoy it with your meal(s) next week or throw it in your freezer, or the freezer of someone you love.

Love is all you need.

Love, love, love.

Love is a many splendored thing.

Love me tender, love me true.

Love alone dominates fear.

Love is the mother of wisdom.

Love makes the world go round.

Love is something if you give it away.

Love teaches donkeys to dance.

Love understands love.

Love is never without some thorns.

Love is nature's second sun.

Love is the perfect form of the verb "live".

Love teaches eloquence.

Love will creep where it cannot run.

Love is the salt of life.

Love, love, love.

All you need is love.

A Note From the Treasurer December Income and Expenses

Income: \$9,698.00

Expenses: \$10,268.92

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.

Notes from the Nora Office...

Order Of Service ~ content due Thursdays

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

March Mere Lys ~ content due Feb. 17

I will be out of the office Friday, February 24, for a farming conference. I appreciate your support getting Mere Lys content sent in on time, so I may make the most of my time while in the office!

Church Email: norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net
Phone: 507.439.6240
*Brooke Knisley, Office Assistant
In the office Tuesdays and Fridays.*

Tiny Deaths

Teresa Honey Youngblood

"Suddenly summoned to witness something great and horrendous, we kept fighting not to reduce it to our own smallness."

—John Updike, "Tuesday, and After," The New Yorker, September 24, 2001

We sat on the back steps watching transfixed as hundreds of rust-red spiders, big as thumbs, dropped on strands of silk out of the pecan tree in the backyard. It was exquisite, a great exodus of faith and instinct, leaping from one life and floating down to the next.

But then, something was wrong. An interfering. What was happening? Spiders began to crumple and drop. There was something else. Wasps, dark and formidable, impaling them, following them to the ground...for what, we could not see.

The spiders numbered in the hundreds. The wasps were so fast, so efficient. The silk shimmered. The wind changed, but not enough to save anybody.

We wished it would stop. We knew it would not stop until the unknown purpose was served, appetites satiated, progeny provided for, territory protected.

The four-year-old wanted to know why the spiders were not fighting back. Sometimes, you get caught by surprise, I said, and overwhelmed. Then there were no words. Over the back fence, we heard

laughter, and saw the ponytailed tops of the neighbor kids' heads as they bounced on their trampoline.

It was brutal, haunting, and holy, this moment shared by three species of hunters: one living, one dying, and us, bearing witness.

Some people say that our democracy is all but dead, that the last gasps of the American Experiment will be drowned out by the static roar of white nationalism celebrating itself in cyrillic script on January 20.

Though we may have fallen, my people — my beautiful, colorful, many-faithed, differently abled, lovers-of-all, polyglot people — this is no darkling plain. We have found each other in our shining pain, even in the tall grass, and in numbers we huddle not to hide but to strategize; not to blame but to build.

Prayer

Guide our hands, Great One, as we spin the stuff of hope, even now.



To ♥ Keep In Touch

If you know of anyone needing our assistance or attention, please call one of the **Caring Committee** members:

Georgine Tepley (chair): 359-3060 (weekdays after 5 pm)

Shirley Olson: 354-1866

Carol Chambard: 354-2242

Pastoral Care

During Lisa's sabbatical please contact Nora president, Karen Farrell – fargurskarelli@hotmail.com or 507-834-6917 – with any concerns. Emergency pastoral coverage is being provided by Reverend Don Cameron. For pastoral care contact Don—

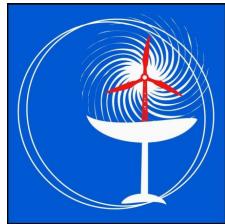
uucams@gmail.com or cell: 507-508-7809.

Rev. Cameron received his M. Div. from the Starr King School of Ministry in Berkeley. Don currently serves at the Interim Minister at Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Mankato.

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

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

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Phone: 507.439.6240
Website: www.norauuchurch.org
Email: norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net
Facebook: www.facebook.com/NoraChurchUU

February Greeters

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

FEBRUARY

5—POTLUCK—Susan & Jerry Allen, Scott Chambard, Vicki Sieve
12—Julie & Ron Peck
19—Joy Rathman, Jeremy Schmitt, Louise Guggisburg
26—Lee & Lynn Schmitt, Christina Schmitt

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.

The full Server/Greeter list was last posted in the December Mere Lys, which may be accessed on our website and is posted in the kitchen.

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 announcements will be posted on the Nora website and Facebook page, a cancellation notice will be sent to KNUJ and KTOE and, whenever possible, a Grapevine will be sent out. When church is not cancelled, you are responsible for your own safety. 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!

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/>

Energy Assistance Program

Many local families and individuals find it difficult to pay their monthly energy bills. The Energy Assistance Program provides a grant for income-eligible households which can defray some of these costs, leaving more of the family resources available for other expenses. We can also assist households in crisis situations with disconnect notices or when they are almost out of heating fuel. Grants are paid directly to the vendor on their behalf.

Households can request an application by calling MVAC at 507-345-6822 or 800-767-7139 or by downloading it from their website mnavc.org. Applications are currently available, with funds becoming available later in the year, generally mid-late November. The program ends May 31st, 2017.



Grab some Nora flyers!

Grab 1 or 10 or 20 of the quarter-sheet flyers promoting service at Nora.

Hang them up in a good spot in your community, leave a stack at a coffee shop, or keep a few in your purse to hand out.

let's make this a community effort to get the word out!

The flyers are in the fellowship hall.