

MERE LYS

September 2019 Newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

Services

Sundays

Coffee 10:00 am
Worship 10:30 am

Wednesdays

Worship 7:00 pm
∞

September 8

*“Homeward Bound: a
Life’s Journey”*

September 11

“When the Sky Fell”
Wednesday 7:00 pm

September 15

No Service

September 22

“Balancing Acts”

September 29

*No Service, Clean Up
Sunday/Week*



A View From the Hill

I’ve been reading detective novels set in Venice, Italy all summer long—at least half a dozen—filling in the gaps in the much longer series I’ve read occasionally over several years. The Inspector Brunetti books by Donna Leon have all the things I like in other mystery/detective books: a crime, witnesses and suspects not clearly delineated one from the other, detectives, medical examiners, and other criminal justice personnel who are human and thereby flawed but recognizable as the ‘good guys’ by their essential humaneness and the fact that they care about solving the crimes (unlike their superior officers who care only about projecting an image of safety and security to the press). I also enjoy details unique to these books: the mouthwatering descriptions of Venetian meals and the exotic (to me) images of Inspector Brunetti navigating a city without motor vehicles, catching public transportation boats or walking if he’s in a hurry and can’t be bothered to wait for the next #1 or #82 vaporetto.

Reading Leon’s books one after another in a short period of time, I’ve noticed overarching themes and a prevailing mood that didn’t stand out to me when I read her other books haphazardly, mixed in with other titles by other authors. Setting her books in Venice, a city at sea-level, and focusing on a father of teens/young adults, give Leon an intimate canvas and a generational immediacy for painting a compelling picture of the effects of climate change. And then there is corruption. And regional prejudices. And a certain fatalism against which Brunetti strives to find the culprits all the while knowing that meaningful justice is seldom served.

It is tempting to view all this as part of the Venetian exoticism. To imagine that corruption, such as might be found closer to home, is the exception rather than the rule, to believe the same of justice, that more often than not guilty parties are arrested, tried and convicted, that detectives are basically humane and the tactics they employ don’t violate rights, that superior officers don’t really frustrate and undermine investigators at every turn, and that PR doesn’t supersede all other concerns. Regional prejudices? Well, ok, yeah, we have ‘East Coast Elites’, western cowboy/survivalists, unsophisticated Midwestern wholesomeness, Southern charm/ignorance tropes playing in the background of social media, entertainment media and the press most of the time. I’ll admit it. But all the other?—that’s not Minnesota, not the United States of America. It’s 21st century Venice, Italy. Period. End of sentence.

Except, of course, it’s not. That’s the brilliance of well-written fiction, well-made movies, and thoughtful, passionate art of any kind. The work can be hundred percent authentic to setting in both time and place AND reveal universal truths. The details may vary but climate change is destroying our shores and farmlands and forests and prairies. Corruption is to be found at every level of government. Our systems of policing and criminal justice are rooted in white supremacy and are thereby inherently unjust. And inept, power-hungry, and press-obsessed superior officers, bosses, co-workers are to be found in all fields. Art functions, at least in part, to draw us into the story and then pivot us toward

reality, inviting us into reflection, self-examination and, ideally, action.

But circumstances don't always allow us the leisure to absorb universal truths from literature, poetry, movies, plays, art installations. Sometimes we simply must listen, intently and silently with open hearts as people speak their truths directly: people, communities, our planet are dying now. Native women are disappearing now. Trans women of color are being murdered now. Racial gaps in incarceration rates, infant/maternal mortality rates, graduation rates, homeownership rates mean indigenous communities and communities of color struggle to thrive now.

The canals of Venice have been a good place for me to spend a summer of waiting for, preparing for, and recovering from surgery. But with September's arrival it's time for me to be back at work, in Minnesota, in Brown County, at Nora Church. Serving the wider community through NUMAS Haus and the United Way, and inviting us here at Nora to pivot from wherever our summers focused our attention toward reality, and into reflection, self-examination and perhaps even action. In the name of faith and the pursuit of justice, guided by love.

-Lisa

News From the Board Meeting

Buildings and Grounds: The Nora Church Board met on Tuesday, August 20. Preceding the board meeting, Building and Grounds committee convened and began an assessment of church grounds and buildings to determine what concerns need to be addressed in the next few years. They looked at all exterior features and will meet again on September 5 to assess interior conditions. Thank you to Scott, Warren, Darrell, Lee and Karen for spending the time to do this work.

Driveway Repair: Heiderscheit is submitting a bid for reshaping the driveway, directing runoff to the south side, putting in large rock to prevent erosion. We expect the bid to be less than the \$5,000 that was approved at the annual meeting in June 2018. The board has authorized the work to begin as soon as possible which we expect before the start of September services.

Belfry project: Goodrich Construction is nearly complete with the belfry repair. It looks great.

Hope you saw the Facebook post. When we get pictures of completed project and the printed invoice it will be sent to Sacred Places and our grant money will be forwarded.

Treasurer's Report: Julie presented June's financial statement. Bills for July had not been submitted so info is not current. The checking account is woefully low since there has been no income for most of the summer. Julie expressed that this is the lowest checking account balance she has ever dealt with and is unable to meet July expenses. We have a \$27,000 CD coming due at the end of August. Pending approval of the Endowment Committee, the CD will move from Citizens Bank to Frandsen to earn a better interest. At that time Julie will take out \$5,000 to replenish the checking account. PLEASE, if at all possible, consider making your 2019-20 pledge, or a portion of it, early in the church year.

Tri-State Gathering

Our 2019 Tri-State Gathering was especially successful. Much thanks to Dave and Sally Anne Benson and Brett Lehman for making arrangements, setting up, and doing cleanup! There was good attendance from several congregations including Sioux City, Sioux Falls, Iowa Lakes, Nora, and individuals from Lake Wilson, Fulda, and Worthington. The Dayton House provided a beautiful and comfortable location. Lisa's sermon on white supremacy was challenging. If you haven't read it on her Facebook or the Nora Church Facebook, you're missing out. Her message of "Donate your small talk," presents a doable first step in addressing the difficult conflicts in our societal anger and politics. What a great summer Sunday morning experience.

A Note From the Treasurer **July Income and Expenses**

Will be printed in October newsletter.

Church Year Total Income

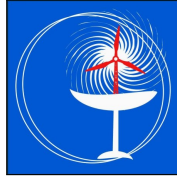
PLEDGES:	\$ 81,025.00
ALL OTHER:	\$ 6,373.89
CHURCH YEAR EXPENSES:	\$106,692.50
<u>DIFFERENCE:</u>	-\$ 19,293.61

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.



Clean Up Sunday Week

With fewer able members and everyone's busy schedules, we are tweaking our Clean Up Sunday plans. Joy and Julie will create a chores list available September 22. We ask that everyone and anyone willing to help with church cleanup projects, come out to church at your convenience, choose a project or two from the list and do whatever you can, whenever you can. We will still have a community clean on the 29th, hopefully there will be a more manageable list of projects for that day. The board set their next meeting date for September 23. We will convene at 4:00 and get started on some projects that day. Any questions or if you want to buddy up on chores, call Jeanie, Joy or Julie.

Road Clean Up

Six to eight walkers would be ideal, but we'll take however many we can get. Wear good shoes, bring gloves. If we start at 12:15(ish) we should be done by 1:30. Good way to enjoy potluck and walk off the calories and you're helping care for Mother Earth.

Schedule Change for 2019/2020 Church Year

At our annual meeting last June the congregation voted to experiment with a new worship schedule for the entirety of this church year. Churches are notoriously tradition-bound, so this is a groundbreaking, breath-taking, bold and stupendous gesture!! Well done, us!!

Beginning September 11, we will have a service on the second Wednesday of each month, with no service the following Sunday (September 15). Our Wednesday evening services will start at 7:00 p.m. and will be more reflective and meditative in nature than our traditional Sunday morning services. We will continue to announce Wednesday service and the following no-service Sundays prominently in newsletters, in announcements in the orders of service, and through the Grapevine.

Watch Grapevines for information about how to

sign up for Wednesday evening carpools. Carpools save resources, promote community, and allow participation by those who prefer not to drive after dark.

Board Meeting

The next board meeting is Monday, September 23 at 4:00. We'll be getting started on some clean up projects that day as well.

Supper Club

Supper Club will meet again Wednesday, September 18 at 6:30 pm, at La Plaza Fiesta in Madelia. *Supper Club meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30, at alternating locations.*

Lunch Bunch

Remember how we used to look forward to the beginning of school—especially when it was the kids' school? Well, it's that time again for Lunch Bunch. We'll be heading for Hahn's Dining and Lounge, 206 North Main, Winthrop, on Tuesday, September 17, 11:30 a.m. we won't be taking attendance, but we hope to see you there. *Lunch Bunch is a monthly social gathering open to all.*

SPAM Emails

A number of emails I have sent from the Nora outlook email lately have tossed back at me a handful of undelivered messages. Grapevines and newsletters, or random emails—some aren't going through. This may be why you missed something, if you feel you did. Please make sure the Nora Church email address is in your "Address Book" to avoid it going to spam—norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net. Thank you!

Nora Calendar Upcoming Events

Sept. 8: 1st Sunday Service, Potluck, Road Cleanup, Program Committee meeting

Sept. 11: 1st Wednesday service, 7:00 p.m.

Sept. 15: No church service

Sept. 18: Supper Club, 6:30 p.m.

Sept. 22: Road cleanup—if rained out on the 8th

Sept. 22—29: Cleanup week!

Oct. 6: Smorg, with prep work on Oct. 4 and 5

Oct 14, 21, 28, Nov. 5: Community Ed Class:

Norwegian Treats from the Nora Church Kitchen

Smorgasbord Work List

We've eliminated the Clean Up folks, please help during Clean Up Week!

Country Store: Mimi Kamleiter, Shirley Olson

Museum: Lee Schmitt, Algot Blomquist

Parking: Jeremy Schmitt, John Schmitt

Tickets: Warren Paulson, Kristine Paulson, Wendy Tuttle (caller)

Hosts: Jeanie Hinsman (Kaffe Stua), Julie Peck (Fellowship Hall)

Buffet Table: Julie Sellner, Shannon Hoechst

Coffee: Scott Chambard

Beverages: Susan Allen

Meat & Carrot Server: Christina Schmitt

Meat Slicers: (Saturday @ 12pm) Roger Breu, Lee Schmitt, Wally Wellmann, Tony Erickson, Carson Erickson

Potatoes: Edith Beckius, Kate Monnens

Cookie Trays: Kate Becken, Diane Becken

Appetizers: Susan Evers, Vicki Sieve, Bev Wellmann, Jordan Kuelbs

Wait Staff-Kaffe Stua: Colleen Tasto, Courtney Schmitt, Toby Weiss, Thor Weiss, Kadence Hesse

Wait Staff-Fellowship Hall: Nora Peck, Nita Gilbert, Kristi Paulson

Wait Staff-Iverson Room: *Karen Farrell, Lucia Reyes

Take Outs: Norma Breu, Georgine Tepley

Publicity: Georgine Tepley, Jeannie Hinsman

Dishes-Kaffe Stua: Scott Schmiesing, Lee Drogemuller, Pat Roberts

Dishes-Fellowship: Daryl Hinsman, Ron Peck, Dick Gurska

Greeters: Gil & Sally Hanson

Floater: Joy Rathman, Carol Chambard, Louise Guggisberg

Donations

Bread: Kate Monnens (2 of each)

Carrots and Celery: Janet Rosenbloom

Coffee: Ryann Kaim

Scrullers: Susan Evers, Georgine Tepley

Cookies-Fancy: Julie Peck, Shannon Hoechst, Colleen Tasto, Karen Farrell, Susan Allen, Vicki Sieve, Louise Guggisberg, Nita Gilbert, Jordan Kuelbs

Romme Grot: Edith Beckius, Janet Rosenbloom, Carol Chambard, Vicki Sieve, Georgine Tepley

Flat Bread: Shirley Olson, Carol Chambard

Rice: Jeannie Hinsman, Julie Sellner, Jordan Kuelbs

Sot Suppe: Kristine Paulson (1/2 of what she made)

Cottage Cheese (3#): Lisa Doege, Gil & Sally Hanson

Berliner Kranser: Diane Becken

Sandbakkels: Chrissie Schmitt, Edith Beckius

Milk (1 Gal): Scott Chambard, Jeremy Schmitt, Mimi Kamleiter, Lee Drogemuller, Ross Chambard, Nita Gilbert, John Schmitt

Fattigmand: Susan Evers

Rosettes: Bev Wellmann, Norma Breu

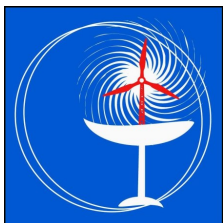
Kringla: Julie Sellner, Joy Rathman

Notes from the Nora Office...

October Mere Lys ~ content due Mon., Sept. 23 * Order Of Service: Content due Thursdays

Please send content of any kind, for the newsletter or order of service to the Nora email.

Hey folks! I'm now in the office MOST Tuesdays and Fridays. I am doing more work at home these days, with baby. Let me know if you have any questions! Brooke Knisley, Office Assistant



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