

# *MERE LYS*

## *November 2019 Newsletter*

### **Nora Unitarian Universalist Church**

---

#### *Services*

##### **Sundays**

Coffee 10:00 am  
Worship 10:30 am

##### **Wednesdays**

Worship 7:00 pm



##### **November 3**

***“So Great a Cloud of Witnesses”***

*Ofrenda Altar / Potluck*

##### **November 10**

***“Cessation of Hostilities”***

##### **November 13**

***“Called Into Service”***

*Wednesday 7:00 pm*

##### **November 17**

***No Service***

##### **November 24**

***“Gratitude”***

*Led by Sally Ann & David Benson, along with Brett Lehman and Nita Gilbert.*

#### **A View From the Hill**

Months ago, maybe even more than a year ago, I heard someone say something very usual on the radio. I was driving and couldn't write it down, but it was so rare I remember the phrase and who uttered it. NPR's political editor Ron Elving had appeared on someone else's program as part of a panel, and when, at the end of the segment, the host thanked the panelists, Mr. Elving replied, “you're welcome.”

I don't hear that much these days. More often one person thanks another, and the second person dismisses it with “no problem” or “anytime” or, in the case of teenagers, “uh huh”. Sometimes the second person thanks the first person in return. Now, I'll concede there isn't really harm done by an excess of thanks. And I believe that when experts (or ordinary people) are invited to give their time and expertise to a discussion or a project, they are grateful that they have been recognized as having something valuable to offer, and thus their return thanks are genuine. Still, I think there is something lost with the decreasing use of “you're welcome”—something beyond the conventions of courtesy or good manners. (Convention alone is never a good reason to continue a practice, if it's lost meaning or become harmful).

“You're welcome” means “you are welcome to that which I have given you—my time, my expertise, my consideration, a gift or a gesture of kindness.” In expressing that sentiment, one person acknowledges that, yes, they have freely and gladly given something to the other person, who was worthy of receiving it. More than that, they acknowledge that what they have given has value, that it, their freely offered gift, is worthy of the thanks that has been uttered. “You're welcome” is a statement of generosity, and it is an affirmation of self-worth.

“Thank you for giving me something I value, something you possessed, something you were not obligated to give me.”

“You're welcome. I value what I gave you and I value you, too. You're worthy of my gift, and welcome to it.”

We're entering the season of thanksgiving. Of offering up our gratitude for the abundant blessings of our lives. Some of us will thank God. Some of us will thank the Spirit of Life or the Universe. Some of us will speak of our thanksgiving without specifying any source to whom we are thankful, by whom we have been blessed. The practice of gratitude is a good one. It improves our mental and spiritual health. It actually increases our sense of happiness and reduces depression. So, I encourage you to be lavish and unstinting with your thanksgiving this year. Thank Every One and everyone for every thing that makes your life good and rich and whole. Say, “you're welcome” when you are one of the everyone whom someone else thanks.

And then imagine Every One/God/Spirit of Life/the Universe/Life Itself, responding every single time, “You are welcome. You're worthy of health, family, abundant food, employment, education, travel, sunshine, crops gathered in, song. You are worthy and you are welcome to it all.”

Thank you/You're welcome.

It's polite. It's conventional. And, in bestowing mutual recognition of inherent, non-negotiable, undeniable worth, it's a blessing in four words. One we have the great good fortune of giving and receiving, whatever the season, throughout all our days.

-Lisa

Thank you everyone for all the hard work and good effort!

And speaking of Smorg...



### Smorg Survey

Watch for a survey regarding Smorg 2020. We'd like input on what traditions to maintain, what to revise, and how you feel about this community event. We'll pass out as many as we can at church and through friends and mail those that go to further distances. Everyone who has helped in any way is welcome to give feedback. Thanks!

### Ofrenda/Day of the Dead Altar

On Sunday, November 3, we'll celebrate our continuing relationship with loved ones who have died. Please bring a photograph, favorite food item or other memento to place on the ofrenda, in remembrance of your deceased family members and friends. Here is a link to site with pictures, explanations and ideas about what you might bring. <http://www.mexican-folk-art-guide.com/day-of-the-dead-altars.html#.WfNn3WhSyM8>. (Our altar will be both family-friendly and church-friendly.)



### Lunch Bunch

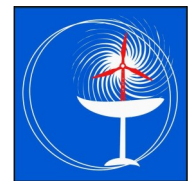
The Lunch Bunch Pub Crawl continues this month with a stop at the Crow Bar in Courtland on Tuesday, November 12, at 11:30 a.m. It'll be a nice break between Halloween and Thanksgiving, so we hope to see you there. *Lunch Bunch is a monthly social gathering open to all.*

### Supper Club

Supper Club will be Wednesday, November 20 at 6:30. We are headed to Viegel's Kaiserhoff, 221 N Minnesota St, New Ulm. Hope to see you there!

### 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.



### Donation Rotation



On November 3 (Potluck Sunday) bring your duplicate or excess kitchen items to the Kaffestua!

Trade out your unwanted items for a new find you'd like to take home.

Leftovers must be taken back home, unless someone volunteers to make a trip to the thrift store.

December 1st's Donation Rotation will be for holiday decorations.

### Buildings and Grounds Assessment

The Buildings and Grounds folks will meet during potluck on November 3 to review the necessary property management issues. Projects should be prioritized, and rough cost estimates determined so appropriate budget action can be taken. Recommendations for who can do a share of the work or what needs to be hired will also help.

### Board Meeting

The next board meeting is Sunday, November 10, after the service.

### SMORG Results are in!

Here are the details from this year's Smorgasbord:

There were just under 300 dinners sold from both eat-in and takeout orders.

Country Store brought in \$2,166.50, which included \$450 of donations.

Total income was \$7,735.50 but there will be a few hundred dollars in expenses still to be paid.

Final profit is estimated at about \$5,600.

## Lisa at Large

On September 26 I participated in a brief panel discussion on homeless at the New Ulm Library, following a screening of the movie, *The Public*. I continue to serve on the boards of the United Way of the Brown County Area and NUMAS Haus. Looking ahead, I will take part in the New Ulm Ministerial Community Thanksgiving Eve service on November 27. The location is yet to be determined. Look for announcement in the order of service and in Grapevines.



*"& this life, this new story & history you cannot steal or sell or cast overboard or hang or beat or drown or own or redline or shackle or silence or cheat or choke or cover up or jail or shoot or jail or shoot or jail or shoot or ruin this, if only this one, is ours." - Danez Smith*

## NUMAS Haus Fundraiser

The New Ulm Ministerial Association Shelter Haus (NUMAS Haus) invites you to HOPE: A Night of Stories and Music on Saturday, November 16 at the New Ulm Event Center. Christian artist Jason Gray will perform, and local artist Andrea Lyn will provide live music during the social hour and dinner. A live auction features a 5-night stay in Belize, along with other great auction items.

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

Income:	\$ 10,871
Expenses:	\$ 7,420

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



## Daylight Savings Time Ends

**Sunday, November 3th!**

*Don't forget to set your clock back an hour.*

NUMAS Haus provides emergency shelter and support services to homeless women and children in the Brown County area. This fundraising event supports the ongoing ministry of NUMAS Haus. Learn more and purchase tickets at [numashaus.org/gala](http://numashaus.org/gala) and plan to be part of this special evening!

## Pastoral Care

Please be aware that privacy laws prevent hospitals from calling churches and pastors when members are admitted—unless specifically asked to do so by the patient. If you or a loved one is hospitalized, and you would like a call or visit from Lisa, please call/text her at 507-766-7822, leave a message on the parsonage voice mail (507-439-6240), or ask a family member to do so on your behalf. You can also let us know (via any of those ways) if you'd like the church membership to be notified by Grapevine.

## Farm Store Open

In August we opened a Farm Store at Alternative Roots Farm. It's stocked with organic apples, eggs, sugar-free applesauce and apple butter, seasonal produce and more.

I invite you to come check it out sometime! We'd love to be your stop for local apples. Hours are Wednesday and Thursday evenings 4:00-7:00 pm, Friday mornings 9:00-12:00. Located at 11197 130th St., Madelia, just 10 minutes East of Nora, across 15. -Brooke Knisley

## Energy Assistance

Many local families find it difficult to pay their monthly energy bills. Minnesota Valley Action Council's Energy Assistance Program provides a grant for income-eligible households which can help defray some of these costs. This leaves more of the family resources available for other expenses. They 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 [mnvac.org](http://mnvac.org). The deadline to apply is May 31, 2020.

### **Braver/Wiser: The Growing Season**

*"Gardens are a form of autobiography."  
—Sydney Eddison, "The Wilds Within," Horticulture Magazine, August/September 1993.*

The six-year-old and the nine-year-old, co-creators of our neighborhood garden this past spring and summer, survey the backyard plot after our first good, hard frost: "Ooo, that's a lot of dead stuff," says one. "Guess we're done here," says the other. They make their way to the far corner, where a drooping pumpkin vine has revealed a few small, orange orbs that we had missed in previous pickings. I stand over a daunting patch of blackened dahlias.

The dying back shows evidence of our months of enthusiasm, but also horticultural ineptitude: trowels and forks here and there, lost these past weeks (months?) until the weeds that obscured them were laid low. Heaps of too-tall flowers that grew leggy for inadequate sunshine, then flopped over into barely discernible paths. Twisted, odd-angled stems of cabbages and collards planted too shallow. Mats of green mush where crowded lettuces succumbed to the cold, bare soil.

I see so much we could have done differently, so many mistakes made in haste, so many times I chose not to weed, so many corners cut, and no way to do them over until the next spring. (How many seasons does a gardener get? Ten, twenty, thirty, maybe—depending on when they start? This finitude makes the regret over missed opportunities and poor choices all the keener.) There is relief and remorse equally in my heart as the growing season comes to a close.

Then the nine-year-old is at my side again, attempting mightily to whisper through excitement: "Look! Look!" And I look where they are pointing. There I see a trio of goldfinches, annual migrants from more northern climes, hanging upside down to bet-

ter reach the seeds in the gracefully nodding, brown heads of spent sunflowers. And just below that, on a bright tithonia blossom, a monarch!, somehow both flower and butterfly spared from the cold snap. The insect is lingering over the precious, late-season nectar, even as gray clouds gather overhead.

I think for a moment how this weedy chaos, these beds of failed attempts, look to the wild things. It looks like food. It looks like shelter. Imperfect, but earnestly done, with best efforts, tools on hand, and our collective wisdom-such-as-it-was, it looks like a place of giving. Children and grown ups and creation itself was tended here, and fed.

*By: Teresa Honey Youngblood*

### **Prayer**

*Greater Good to whom we belong, let us remember that we are loved and needed, however in-process our presentations of self: rough and overgrown in some places, stunted and pinched in others. Help us make the spaces we inhabit—bodies and gardens and neighborhoods—places of giving. Help us let go in the fall, learn in the winter, and try again with exuberance in the spring and summer. May we grow into our goodness together.*

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

**Some emails I have sent from the Nora outlook email 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.**

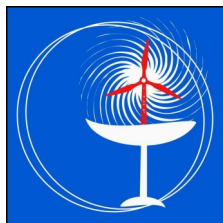
**Thank you!**

**December Mere Lys ~ content due Fri., Nov. 22**

**Order Of Service: Content due Thursdays**

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

*Brooke Knisley, Office Assistant  
In the office most Tuesdays & Fridays*



## **Nora Unitarian Universalist Church**

12333 155th Avenue, Hanska, Minnesota 56041

Phone: 507.439.6240

Email: [norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net](mailto:norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net) Website: [www.norauchurch.org](http://www.norauchurch.org)

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