

Services

Sundays

Coffee 10:00 am
Worship 10:30 am

2nd Wednesday

Worship 7:00 pm



March 1

“Celebrating”

*Part 3 of 4 on the future of
Nora Church*

March 8

“A Question of Gender”

March 11

“Giving Up”

Wednesday 7:00 pm

March 15

No Service

March 22

“Return to True”

March 29

To Be Determined

MERE LYS

March 2020 Newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

A View From the Hill

Here a bracket, there a bracket, everywhere a bracket. You’ve seen them. March Madness isn’t just for basketball anymore. In recent years brackets have whittled down fields of 16 (or 32) to the Hottest Disney Dudes, the tastiest potatoes (that is, fries vs baked vs mashed, not Yukon vs Idaho), the best Mariah Carey hit singles, best Kansas City barbecue, legendary guitar riffs--to name just a few. A handful of UU brackets have circulated, too--which is more UU: lighting the chalice or singing Spirit of Life? (Neither would top my bracket).

It’s good fun in a month when the calendar says spring but in our part of the world the weather says winter--whether a few bucks or a meal or bragging rights or nothing at all rides on that coveted spot in the middle. Good fun, generally low-stakes, welcome relief from politics or world affairs or endless weather-related conversation. I’m wondering if there might be a more practical, real-life application of the bracket system for me this month.

Maybe it would be a way for me to get started on my household chores. I could pit 16 chores (or 32 if I want to be really thorough) against each in pairs, advance the more pressing of each pair to the next round, until the one, most pressing chore of all emerges at the top or middle of the bracket. And then I could do that chore. But then what? Some household chores might be more urgent than others on any given day, but they all have to be done sooner or later.

Hmmmm....maybe a bracket of favorite meals to simplify meal planning? No, that would have the same result as the cleaning bracket. Once I prepared the winner I’d be back to square one. Unless I wanted to serve my family the same meal, night after night, week after week.

Maybe there isn’t a practical real-life application for the bracket system. After all, most of real life isn’t lived among the best, the most beautiful, the tastiest. At least not the *single* best, the *one* most beautiful, the *one and only* tastiest without rival in all the world and of all time. We move through shades of gray, not black and white. We perceive individual favorite colors and flavors. We deal in family compromises for holiday feasts and week-night meals. We absorb and reflect (or reject or adapt) cultural norms of beauty. We encounter multi-generational and cross-cultural taste in music. Despite our affection for brackets this time of year, and our obsession with best of lists at the end and beginning of New Years, we live among the good, the bad and the ugly, so to speak, and at the same time, among the best and the other best and that other best. And we undertake the seemingly insignificant along with the urgent, often simply doing the next important thing, because that’s what it takes to get through the day.

If we’re very lucky we have families and communities among which our very best and favorite and most important things are both shared by and

Continued on Page 2

complimentary to others' very best and favorite and most important things—allowing us to benefit from the top (or is it the middle?) of lots of brackets. Inviting us to see a different most beautiful, taste an unfamiliar most tasty, hear a new best beat. And calling us to work together to get all the chores done, for the good of the family, the community, without the drudgery falling too heavily upon any one individual. May it be so for you, this March Madness, and always.

-Lisa

On Wednesday Night Services

Monthly, 2nd Wednesday worship continues through May. These services have familiar elements including joys and sorrows, a meditation, and offering. Three sets of reading-reflection-silence-music replace the sermon portion of a typical Sunday morning service. Nora members who have attended these services find them a calm and welcome break in midweek. Carpools are available for those who prefer not to drive after dark.

Please join us on March



Board Updates

Weather delayed February's board past the newsletter deadline.

Please look for extended board update in the April edition of Mere Lys.

Smorg Survey Results

The board compiled feedback to our Smorg survey and would like to share these results at the March potluck. We will not discuss at this time, only share the various viewpoints that were given. We had a good response rate and appreciate the thoughtful and considered responses that were turned in. Hope you can join us for potluck on March 1!

Lunch Bunch

Watch weekly orders of service and the Grapevine and Facebook for the date and location of March's Lunch Bunch.

Supper Club

Supper Club will be at 6:30 pm, Wednesday, March 18 at Turner Hall, New Ulm. Hope you can join us!

Vision Sermon Series

On March 1 Lisa will preach *Celebrating*. This follows, *The View from Here: Grief and Guilt*, on January 5, and *Lingering* on February 2. Her series on alternative visions of the future of Nora Church will conclude on April 5 with *Transforming*. Titles subject to change if/as the spirit works.

Hanska Community Meal

Our next Hanska dinner is Wednesday, March 25. Much thanks to Susan Allen for helping with food preparation in January and February. Looking for help for this month—we usually start at 2:00 at the Community Center and then need cleanup help at 6:30.

The Community Meal is a free event for the purpose of encouraging community connections for and with the residents of Hanska, free will offering will be accepted.

Lisa on the Loose

Lisa on the Loose is tentatively scheduled for 11:00 on Tuesday, March 24, at Jubilee Market and PeaceMeals, in Mountain Lake. Watch Grapevine for updates.

Lisa holds "office hours" at area coffee houses—join her for drop-in conversations in your area.

Sunday Coffee Servers

There are lots of open dates for Sunday morning coffee. Please look at your schedule and check the coffee sign up hanging in the Fellowship kitchen.

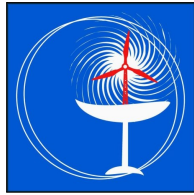
Larry Bakken Update

Dear Family and Friends:

Been a while since we sent an update. Larry has been in remission since December of 2018. January of 2020 his PET scan showed 1 lymph node the size of a pea that had active cancer. Since it's so localized it was decided to use radiation which starts on Monday at Ridges in Burnsville for about 2 weeks.

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.



January of 2019 he fell in the bathroom. His heart went into A-Fib and pneumonia. Didn't know that the imbruvica (chemo used in 2018 could cause heart problems). From this he got a L1 compression fracture. Healing OK with physical therapy.

Then in September he was lifting landscaping blocks (80-85 pounds each) out of the truck and twisted. From this he got another compression fracture in the L3. This one did not heal because of the severity of the fracture.

In December he had a Kyphoplasty. They use a balloon to push the fragments together before pushing cement into the vertebrae. Still minor pain. Hoping to have a medial branch (facet) nerve block done in March.

Thanks for your emails, cards, prayers and phone calls. They are all appreciated! Please do NOT send flowers. If you want to send cards, letters, etc., please send to our home at 11900 175th St. W., Lakeville, MN 55044. Larry would love hearing from you!

Thanks for your support! We feel truly blessed to have such wonderful friends!! - Larry and Vickie

1.2020 4th treatment plan - radiation
11.8.2017 3rd chemo treatment plan established

Notes from the Nora Office...

April Mere Lys ~ content due
Monday, March 23

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
Working from home, and in the office most
Tuesdays & Fridays.

10.25.2017 out of remission
4.7.2016 in remission
10.08.2015 out of remission – Chemo #2
12.5.2013 open heart surgery to repair mitral valve and replace aortic valve – new cow valve
10-11.2013 hospitalization for heart
5.08-11.09 Rituxan maintenance
Feb-Mar 08 – finished chemo #1 treatments
11.8.07 open heart surgery
9.5.07 starts chemo #1
8.13.07 diagnosed with Mantle Cell Lymphoma

2nd Session:

Towards an Honorable Death

Saturday, Feb. 29 10:00 a.m.

New Ulm Middle School

Presentation from the U of M Anatomy Bequest Program

More info: Jeanie Hinsman, 359-9293

The Spark of Life

“Just as you can hear the wind but can't tell where it comes from or where it will go next, so it is with the Spirit. We do not know on whom [the Spirit] will next bestow this life from heaven.”

—John 3:8 (The Living Bible)

Fred didn't have very long to live; that's why he had called me to see him. I'm his pastor.

"So, Reverend," he asked, "when you visit someone who's dying, and they ask you where we go when we die, what do you tell them?" I smile inside at this way of asking a vulnerable question as if it's for someone else. I'm not sure, but I wonder if that fear of seeming uncertain is a sign of Fred's

A Note From the Treasurer

January Income and Expenses

Income:	\$ 7,395.76
Expenses:	\$ 7,006.27

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

Sunday, March 8

Set your clocks ahead 1 hour!



past as a Baptist deacon. Those of us from fundamentalist backgrounds often still carry an inner voice condemning us for lack of faith.

I answer as honestly as I can: “I tell them I have no idea.”

Fred was shocked, but it’s the truth. I don’t know what happens when we die. It’s not like I haven’t thought about it; I’ve lost a lot of people I love. I’ve lost friends of all ages to suicide, drugs, and cancer. I’ve lost friends, lovers, family. I imagine most people think ministers are at peace with death, but I’m not. For someone in a profession that frequently accompanies the dying, I’ve never reconciled myself to death. That’s why I have to be honest: “I have no idea.”

After his initial shock at my blunt answer subsides, Fred grows still and says with a deep sigh, “I don’t know either.” He then tells me of his many years traveling the country artificially inseminating bulls. Frankly, I hear more about bull semen than I care to admit. Then Fred says, “I know scientifically where life begins—when sperm meets egg—but how do two cells touching generate life? Where does that spark of life come from?”

I respond so fast I’m not even aware what I’m say-

ing; “Fred, if we don’t know where the spark of life comes from, can we know for sure where it goes?” He smiles and says, “So there is hope, then.”

Fred died the next day.

Whenever I recall this moment, I’m reminded again how, together, Fred and I found hope—but not in our answers; we found hope in being honest about we honestly didn’t know.

Rev. David Kohlmeier (Braver/Wiser)

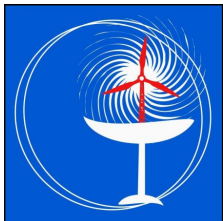
Prayer

*Spark of Life, wherever you come from,
wherever you go, may we not be afraid of
our unknowing. May we be open to our vul-
nerable places of doubt, so that even in the
presence of death, we will know the pres-
ence of life, and find hope in all we can
never know.*

It was one
of those
March
days when the sun shines hot
and the
wind blows cold:
when it is summer in the
and winter in the *light,*
shade.

~Charles Dickens

<p>To ♥ Keep In Touch</p> <p>If you know of anyone needing our assistance or attention, please call one of the Caring Committee members:</p> <p>Georgine Tepley (chair): 359-3060 (weekdays after 5 pm) Shirley Olson: 354-1866</p>



Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

12333 155th Avenue, Hanska, Minnesota 56041

Phone: 507.439.6240

Email: norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net Website: www.norauuchurch.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/NoraChurchUU