

Services

Sunday & Wednesday

Services

Cancelled

Updates will be sent out as we know more, via Grapevines, newsletters and Facebook.



Sunday Zoom

Meetings

12:00-12:30 pm

Daily Poetry

Reflection

12:00 pm



MERE LYS

April 2020 Newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

A View From the Hill

Earlier this week I wrote the following schedule on the parsonage kitchen whiteboard: *breakfast - chaos - bedtime*.

I had, for the first 8 days or so of no school and 10 or more of social distancing, being dutifully posting a detailed schedule every day. I knew that both residents of the parsonage thrive on structure (and resist structure). I'd consumed a million pieces of internet advice, suggestions, warnings, and ideas. I'd paid attention to what pastors and parents on the West coast were saying about life farther along into the pandemic than we here in the Midwest. I'd been operating on the 'easier to start structured and loosen up than start loose and attempt to impose structure later' school of daily scheduling.

But that day I couldn't do it. I could neither predict nor decide what our day would hold other than a beginning and an ending and a whole lot of chaos in between. I'd done my best to hold chaos at bay, but that day here it was (even as on that very day the Surgeon General of the United States was saying "it's going to get bad this week").

I wrote on Facebook a few days ago "the first significant lesson of this time, for me, is that doing things the right way no longer means following the recipe as written." The second significant lesson is that I must let the chaos be chaos. Order and schedules will emerge. Order and schedules that make sense for this time. Order and schedules that I can neither impose nor even conceive, from my pre-pandemic mindset. My job, as pastor, as parent, as person, is to let that happen. To trust that it will happen, and have faith that it will contain blessings beyond my limited apprehension.

This is when I should be writing an Easter and/or Passover newsletter column. When I should be finding some not-yet-used metaphor to remind us all that personal Good Fridays and Easters, personal Passovers and Exoduses come into each of our lives. That the Biblical stories grew out of a need to make sense of lived, human experience, and that, far from being imposed by external authority, the holy days are organic reflections, recreations, and celebrations of those lived, human experiences. This year, instead, I'll just say: there is chaos in the Easter story, along with celebration. There is chaos in the Passover story, along with celebration.

And there will be celebration in our pandemic story, along with chaos, when the time comes to make of this time in our lives a story.

—Lisa

Sunday Zoom Meetings at Noon

A space for social connection, during physical distancing.

Because connection is our most urgent need in times of forced isolation, I will host a Zoom gathering each Sunday at 12:00 pm (after most on-line worship has concluded).

You will be able to join the gathering via your webcam or through a telephone. We will, for the most part, be able to see one another's faces and hear one another's voices.

I'll offer opening words and light a chalice. You may wish to light a chalice also (let me know if you need creative ideas for a homemade chalice). We'll share joys and sorrows, broadly defined. And engage in conversation until 12:30.

Join the call by clicking <https://uuma.zoom.us/join>; or by opening your Zoom icon and entering the Meeting ID 972 541 6879 where it says "Join A Meeting"; or by dialing 312-626-6799, then entering the Meeting ID 972 541 6879 followed by #.

Looking forward to seeing you!

Daily poetry Reflection on the New YouTube Channel

Daily lectio divina sessions at 11:00 am. We'll post a link on Facebook once the upload is complete. You can also search YouTube for Nora Unitarian Universalist Church and subscribe to the channel.

The session template is below. We had to cut the silence down to two minutes to fit YouTube's time frame. We welcome feedback and suggestions—kindly offered.

Rev. Lisa Doege

Lectio Divina

Make yourself comfortable in front of your screen. You may wish to have a journal and pen at hand. I will welcome you and invite us to breathe together.

Then I will read the day's poem aloud three times. Two minutes of silence will follow each reading for reflection and journaling. The camera will focus on a chalice during the silence.

The three readings of the poem (or scripture passage) are typically designated: listen, ponder, pray

(some Unitarian Universalists might say ask).

First Reading: Listen for a word or phrase that attracts your attention or 'jumps out at you'. Repeat it several times in your head/heart. Repeat it aloud.

Second Reading: Ponder why this word/phrase has captured your attention and how it might relate to your life. Can you express the relationship in a single sentence?

Third Reading: Ask what Life/God/the Holy is calling from you or for you, through the word/phrase? How will you live your response to your interaction with this poem?

After the third two minute silent period I will remind you that another video will be posted by 11:00 tomorrow, and then extinguish the chalice.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8WV1zYwpI7ILsQXE6iXXLw>

News From the Board

I'd like to apply the adage "No news is good news," to all the cancelled events and lack of routine business. I do appreciate all that Lisa has done with Facebook and Zoom and personal phone calls to keep Nora folks connected as best we can in these social distance times. As far as I know the good news is that our church members are well and doing their best to stay home.

For my part it's meant better sleep, less spending, and more appreciation for technology—internet and Facebook for carrying on business and communications and phone calls that bring us the music of each-others' voices. Writing this on the 24th, future scheduling is still very much in question so stay tuned to Lisa's messages. Stay home as much as possible.

Do communicate with friends and family and let Lisa or myself know if you have special needs that volunteers can help with. Stay safe, be well.

Jeanie

Mail Your Pledges!

While we are not able to gather at our usual times, in our usual places, expenses continue as usual. We appreciate it, as you are able, to continue to send your regular pledges in the mail, or arrange direct deposit with your bank (contact Julie for more info on direct deposit). Thank you!

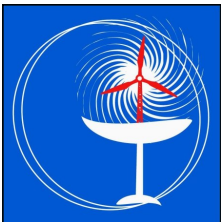
Church in a Time of Virus

As you will have noticed, having gotten this far into it, this month's *Mere Lys* lacks certain customary information—service dates and titles, Lunch Bunch date and place, Supper Club date and place, etc. Conflicting and confusing messaging from state and national leaders regarding the length of current social distancing protocols make planning difficult. However it seems clear to me (and Jeanie concurs), that scheduling any events for April would be an exercise in futility.

Should, by some miracle, the spread of the corona virus suddenly abate beyond all expectations, we could certainly schedule worship and other events and let you all know via Grapevine, Facebook and other means. That said, our Unitarian Universalist faith *counsel[s] us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.* Wishful thinking, magical thinking, blithe predictions of a quick and easy resolution of the current pandemic are idolatries of both the mind and the spirit. Though we are a *religious* institution, still we heed *science* when making decisions about the health and well-being of ourselves and one another.

We will gather again, on the hill, with outstretched hands and open arms, as soon as it is safe for us to do so. In the meantime, I continue (with Lucia's able assistance) to post poetry videos on Nora's YouTube channel every morning (M-F), and will continue to host Zoom gatherings for joys and sorrows and conversation at noon each Sunday. I will send Grapevine greetings several times each week. And I am available for phone calls and texts. Please keep reaching out to me and to one another, for quick check-ins, to tell jokes, with requests for help. I don't know which of my colleagues said it first, but we are all repeating it these days, 'church was never about a specific place'. We are still Nora, from our separate living rooms, dens, kitchens, basements, and bedrooms.

In faith and gratitude,
Lisa



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

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

Income:	\$12,891.00
Expenses:	\$ 6,580.77

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

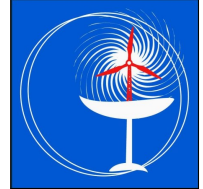
Pastor Lisa's Schedule

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.



Notes from the Nora Office...

May Mere Lys ~ content due

Monday, April 20

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.*

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

