

## *Services*

**Watch the September newsletter and Grapevines for information on upcoming services!**



**August 23**

**Special Service,  
followed by Nora's  
Annual Meeting**

***"What If We are the  
Fortunate Ones?"***

10:30 am  
Outdoor Service

***2020 Annual Meeting***

11:30 am  
Fellowship Hall

**Daily Poetry  
Reflection**

*On Nora's You Tube  
Channel Tu.-Fri.*



# *MERE LYS*

## *August 2020 Newsletter*

### **Nora Unitarian Universalist Church**

---

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

It is not time for the things it is time for.

It is time for Smorg prep. Lefse making. Planning meetings. Lists and assignments. But there will be no Smorg this year. The decision we have put off and put off and put off has been made for us (for this one year, at least). We cannot safely (for either volunteers or customers) serve 300 meals in our church building in Time of Pandemic.

It is time for the Tri-State Gathering of Unitarian Universalists from Minnesota, Iowa and South Dakota. Worship and food and connection. Old friends and new acquaintances. But there will be no Tri-State this year. The Dayton House, where we gathered last year, is cool in summer heat and elegant, and too cramped to safely gather in, in Time of Pandemic.

It is time for school shopping. For stocking up on supplies and clothes and shoes and excitement. But this year some students eager to return to routine and friends or to move up into a new building are disappointed by announcements of distance learning. And some students who found their groove in distance learning last spring, against all expectation, are disappointed by announcements of open school buildings. And each day closer to the first day of school, robs another hour of sleep from parents and teachers and administrators trying to envision, plan, cope with school, in Time of Pandemic.

It's time for the State Fair. For food-on-a-stick and concerts and prize-winning preserves and livestock and plastic bags full of give-aways that will clutter the car for weeks to come. But there are no dawn-to-dusk strolls down Dan Patch Avenue in Time of Pandemic.

Soon it will be time for planning holidays and winter vacations. Coordinating schedules. Remembering whose turn it is to host. Picking destinations and booking flights. But this year planning too soon seems a folly. Too much remains uncertain, sure only to change. And thinking about Thanksgiving and Christmas—like Easter, under quarantine, stay-at-home, safer-at-home—thinking about The Holidays in Time of Pandemic just doesn't

bear thinking about.

It really doesn't seem to be time for any of the things it is usually time for in late summer. But the constricted vision and disorientation of stress are fooling me into thinking that that is so. Novelist Thomas Wolfe wrote "all things belonging to the earth will never change", and while we know that global climate change means that is not strictly true, *it is true that Time of Pandemic has not and will not interrupt the cycle of seasons and the ways of farm and field, forest and river, meadow and prairie.*

The halfway point between Summer Solstice and Fall Equinox has come and gone. It is time for the subtle shift in light this season brings. It is time for the year's first apple harvest (in the northern hemisphere). It is time for shorebirds to begin passing through Minnesota on their way to Central and South America winter grounds. It is time for many of the things, most of the things, it is always time for in late summer. And my heart always lifts when I chance to remember that, to notice that, to give thanks for that.

Constricted, disoriented, pandemic-centered vision and thought processes are natural responses to and consequences of the Time we're inhabiting. We must go easy on ourselves, for this is new and it is hard. May we also chance to remember, to notice, to speak to one another of, and to give thanks for all the ways and things that are old, that are familiar, that are easy, that are blessings, even now, especially now, in Time of Pandemic.

—*Lisa*

**Board Meeting**

The next board meeting is Wednesday, August 12th at 8:00 pm on Zoom

<i>A Note From the Treasurer</i>	
<b><u>Fiscal Year 2019/2020 Year End</u></b>	
<b><u>Financials</u></b>	
Pledge Income:	\$69,873
Sacred Places Grant:	\$13,000
PPP Loan:	\$11,000
All other: (Gifts/Memorials):	\$4,243
Total income:	\$98,116
A CD in the amount of \$33,343 was cashed in at the end of fiscal year 2018/2019 to cover the bill for the steeple repair early in fiscal year 2019-2020.	
Total Expenses:	\$133,753

**Annual Congregational Meeting—Part Two**

Nora Church's Annual Congregational Meeting will reconvene on Sunday, August 23, at 11:30 in the church sanctuary (to allow use of the sound system). Masks will be required, some pews will be blocked off, households must sit at least six feet from one another, and there will be no handouts. Written annual reports will be e-mailed in advance of the meeting, or sent via USPS upon request.

An outdoor service (weather permitting) will precede the meeting, beginning at 10:30. Benches will be positioned and flags will be placed to help us seat ourselves at least six feet from other households. Those attending our June 21st outdoor service will tell you how pleasant the experience was: great scenery, ideal weather conditions. We're hoping for a replay.

Two important discussions will be on the agenda of the annual meeting. These are a vote on reduction of ministry for the 2021-2022 church year and discussion of possibility of painting the church exterior.

If you have other items to bring to the discussion there will be opportunity to do so however a heads up would be helpful. If possible let Jeanie Hinsman know if you have items for members to consider.

## **Covid Dictates Smorg Cancellation**

The board discussed the impact of Covid restrictions on group gatherings and unanimously felt there is no safe way to host a dinner for 300+ attendees and no safe way for workers to prepare. Reluctantly we will be announcing to the public that Smorg 2020 is cancelled.

## **A Stable Church Board**

The first church board meeting for the 2020-2021 church year convened on July 15 via Zoom. Zoom meetings have enabled us to have 100% attendance at recent meetings. As there were no changes in members (having changed from 7 to 5 person board) the officer positions also were reestablished: President, Jeanie Hinsman; Vice-President, Julie Sellner; Treasurer, Joy Rathmann; Secretary, Lee Drogemuller. The next board meeting will be Aug. 12, 8:00 p.m. via zoom. In September we will set board goals and minister's goals for the church year. Covid impacts will make this a more challenging task. We welcome your input.

## **Pastor Lisa's Schedule**

As announced some time ago in a Grapevine, Lisa has taken a second job as library director at the Hanska Community Library. This development moves forward the time we all knew was coming: the time when Nora would no longer support or be supported by a full-time minister. She began on July 1. This month her time at the library will increase to 20 hours/week. It is possible, and perhaps to be expected, that any autumn or winter resurgence of COVID and/or state orders, will result in a return to reduced hours. Nevertheless, for the time being, this is a half-time commitment. At the August 12 board meeting Lisa and the board will negotiate a reduction of her time and compensation as minister at Nora Church. For the present, Mondays will still be Lisa's day off from church responsibilities, and Fridays will still be her sermon writing day.

## **Sunday Zoom Check Ins**

Because connection is our most urgent need in times of forced isolation, I will host a Zoom gathering each Sunday at 10:30 am Sundays, August 9, 16 and 30.

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 11:00.

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!

(please note, if you click on the Zoom link anytime other than 10:30 on Sundays I will not be there.)

## **Daily Poetry Reflection on the Nora YouTube Channel**

Lectio divina sessions are uploaded Tuesday-Friday. Links will be posted on Facebook. You can also search YouTube for Nora Unitarian Universalist Church and subscribe to the channel.

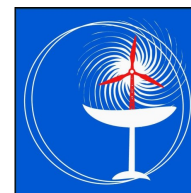
The session template is below. We had to cut the silence down to two minutes to fit YouTube's time frame. We welcome feedback and suggestions—kindly offered.

Rev. Lisa Doege

*Continued...*

### ***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.



### ***Lectio Divina***

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

**Mere Lys Newsletter content due  
the 20th of each month**

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 Tuesday afternoons.*

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

### **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!

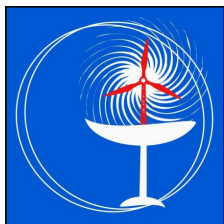
### **August Birthdays & Anniversaries**

- 2—Ryann Kaim
- 3—Peter Torkelson
- 7—Greg Johnson; Daniel & Rebecca Amborn
- 13—Carey Paulson
- 18—Ken & Luella Chambard
- 20—Robert Rabaschko
- 21—Jordan Kuelbs
- 22—Larry & Vicki Bakken; Peter & Viki Torkelson
- 23—Lee Schmitt
- 24—Brad & Linda Blomquist; Sydney Byro
- 26—Jerry & Susan Allen; Dan & Patsy Amborn
- 28—Melvin Mikkelson
- 29—Randy & Teresa Paulson
- 30—David & Michelle Bethke
- 31—Karen Farrell; Ross Gratwohl

**Instead of a full, church-year calendar we will email monthly calendar pages along with the newsletter (paper copies will be mailed to those who receive Mere Lys via USPS).**

### **Church Directory**

A new edition of the Nora Church directory will be available for pick up starting at the special service, August 23rd. If you have any last minute changes please send them to the church email.



## **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)