

Services



September 6

Zoom Check In

10:30 am

September 13

**“Once Upon a Time
There Was a Tornado”**

10:30 am

Outdoor Service/Live
(weather permitting)

September 20

**“It Matters What We
Believe”**

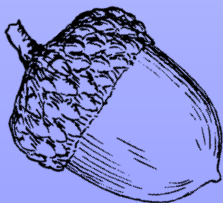
10:30 am

Outdoor Service/Live
(weather permitting)

September 27

Zoom Check In

10:30 am



MERE LYS

September 2020 Newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

A View From the Hill

It's acorn season in the church yard. Dozens of times a day Lucia and I are startled by the sharp rap of them falling on the roof. During acorn season I get where Henny Penny is coming from. And this year more than most. The sound is more alarming because I'm always waiting, half-consciously, for the next big, bad thing to drop into my/our world. The sky is falling; the sky is falling!

Sometimes it helps, just a bit, to remember we've been here before.

This is truly a moment like no other. A global pandemic. A shambles of national leadership. An impending election that feels perilous. Worsening wildfire and hurricane seasons that seem to be Nature pleading with us to take climate change seriously. A racial uprising met with hatred and vitriol and violence as movements toward wholeness and justice too often are. With each setting of the sun we're one more day deeper into a moment like no other.

And yet, we've been in moments like no other, time and again. Not just throughout the history of the world, or our country; we've been in moments like no other in our own lifetimes. World Wars. Nagasaki. Hiroshima. Chernobyl. Challenger. Columbia. 9/11. Katrina. Typhoons. Watts. Earthquakes. Kent State. The crash of 1929. Assassinations of political and moral leaders. Hijackings. Transportation disasters. Mass suicides. Industrial accidents. Tragedies and losses in our families and in our private lives.

It's tempting to say, “oh, but those happened one at a time; 2020 is happening all at once. The sky IS falling.” That's indisputable. Yet, at the time they happened, each of those moments *were* like no other. They upset everything. Changed the course of history. Exposed flaws and injustices and inequalities. Wiped out all that was known, safe, precious, or meaningful for thousands of people—or for one family or one person. It didn't matter that several events weren't all piled up, one on top of another, one after another. At each of those moments life ended, and everyone had to exist for a while in a kind of chaotic limbo, and eventually, slowly, with missteps and setbacks along the way, piece together a new and very different life, imagine, in hazy and shifting images, a new future.

As will we. And we'll do it the same way they did (the same way we did before): raging and lamenting; banding together with neighbors (and, please, God, recognizing a neighbor in the face of each person we encounter); interrupting the Henny Penny—Ducky Lucky—Turkey Lurkey rumor/despair chain; sharing wisdom and resources; taking shifts in the work of grief and the work of hope; getting out of bed, morning after morning.

And by coming to church—in person, on Zoom, via Facebook Life—to remember and to remind: *we are loved, we are alive, we are not alone.*

—Lisa

Sunday Zoom Check Ins

Opportunities to gather via Zoom on both September 6, with Rev. Lisa, and Sept. 27, with Jeanie.

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.

We'll Zoom in at 10:30 until just after 11:00. Chalice Lighting, Joys and Sorrows, coffee-hour type chat, and extinguishing the chalice. You may wish to light a chalice also (let me know if you need creative ideas for a homemade chalice). See you there!

September 6 Zoom Info: 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 #.

September 27 Zoom Info: Join the call by clicking <https://uuma.zoom.us/join>; or by opening your Zoom icon and entering the Meeting ID 885 245 3552 where it says "Join A Meeting." Or, join an Audio-Only Meeting by dialing on your phone 312 -626-6799, then entering the Meeting ID 885 245 3552 followed by #. Password: 1vyAJN

Looking forward to seeing you!

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

Board Meeting

The next church board meeting is Sept. 9 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. We will be discussing ministerial and board goals for the coming year. Your input is always welcome.

News From the Board

Annual Meeting

Twenty-one members attended our annual meeting Part Two on August 23. It was a warm day but still comfortable outdoors for our service, after which we moved to the sanctuary for the annual meeting. All annual meeting reports (Minister's, President's, Treasurer, Building & Grounds, Cemetery Assn., NWS) are available on the church website. I attempted to create a powerpoint of pictures of church activities through the past year. Unfortunately, the lighting in church was not con-

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

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Income: | \$ 3,302.00 |
| Expenses: | \$ 6,071.00 |
| <i>Income and expenses presented at the last board meeting.</i> | |

ducive to seeing the pictures but they will be attached to the annual report on the website.

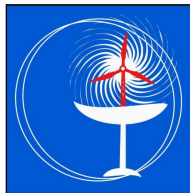
The most significant item of business was the proposal from the board to reduce the budgeted amount for ministry expense by 50% for the 2021-2022 church year. Voting members not in attendance will receive a ballot by mail by Sept. 8. All ballots will be counted on Sept. 20 so it is important you return your ballot promptly. There will be a church service on Sept. 13. You may bring the ballot to church if you attend that day.

Discussion took place concerning the painting of the church exterior. It was determined that we need to get a quote from a professional painter broken down by cost per project such as windows, the high parts needing a lift, the fellowship hall, etc. This breakdown will be useful in seeing if members would consider paying for a portion of the work, or if there are portions that would be possible to do with volunteers.

The question of continuing outdoor services, moving services into the sanctuary and/or continuing some Zoom programming was discussed. The board along with Lisa will make final decisions about when to have indoor services dependent on the current prevalence of Covid. There was favorable comment about continuing outdoor services as long as the weather cooperates. We are implementing a Covid Preparedness Plan. The bathroom and commonly touched surfaces (handrails, light switches, doorknobs) are sanitized before and after services. Sanitizer is available. Masks are required. There is no passing out or handling of items like hymnals, order of service, collection plate or serving of food. The fellowship hall is off limits. There will be no singing or responsive readings. With these protections in place some members feel comfortable being present in church. We also know that this is not true for all members and every effort will be made to use Facebook Live or other technology to bring services to those who

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.



cannot attend. Lisa has ordered an amplifier and webcam equipment to enable us to do more.

Special thanks were given to Warren Paulson for his continuous care of the church. He is on the grounds almost daily taking care of lawns, picking up sticks, sweeping, emptying garbage, checking the dehumidifier, smoothing out ruts. In winter he is scooping snow, scraping ice, checking furnaces. This is only a partial list of all the chores around Nora that are mostly invisible to most of us but not to Warren. We don't give enough appreciation for all the ways in which Warren lovingly cares for Nora Church and by doing so cares for us, the members. Much gratitude, Warren, for all you do.

The next church board meeting is Sept. 9 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. We will be discussing ministerial and board goals for the coming year. Your input is always welcome.

Wind Turbine

The wind turbine was given an oil change and maintenance checkup on Aug. 11. All is well. The turbine happily spins atop the hill and continues furnishing church and parsonage with its power.

Compensation Team

As Lisa has taken part-time employment as librarian for the town of Hanska, the board has asked Sally Hanson, Susan Allen and Vicki Sieve to meet with Lisa and discuss how her ministerial compensation will be impacted. Rev. David Pyle from UUA Mid-America region has also been consulted and is giving suggestions on both compensation and duties. This will be a somewhat fluid situation as library services may be impacted by Covid. The board will make final determination when we have all the information that is needed.

Member, Family and Friend Updates

Shirley Olson is recovering well from her shoulder replacement.

Edith Beckius had hip replacement on August 26, and is at home recovering well.

Georgine feels like a new woman following placement of a pacemaker earlier this summer.

Gil's foot is slowly healing, and he is pleased with being able to walk greater distances.

Vickie Bakken reports that as of August Larry's troublesome lymph nodes had begun reducing in size and he was experiencing no ill effects of ongoing chemo--thrilling his oncologist, Larry and Vickie!

We had two weddings in the extending Nora family this summer: Julia Beckius married Jared Larson and Erik Byro married Chelsey Bertrand.

Send your news to Brooke or Lisa for the next newsletter and for Grapevines in between!

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

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 v invite us to breathe together.

Notes from the Nora Office...

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

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 Tuesday
afternoons.*

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!

Monthly Calendars

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 and upon request.)

Church Directory

A new edition of the Nora Church directory was sent out via email. I have received a few edits thus far. After a little time, once I receive no more edits,

I'll sent out a updated copy. Please send in any changes you may have! (Paper copies will be sent out to those who receive the newsletter via USPS.)

Braver/Wiser: Ground Control

Screwdrivers are my nemesis. I don't know why on earth we need a zillion types of screws, but those little exchangeable screwdriver heads are the bane of my existence. They seem to migrate out of the tool box and into the couch cushions and under the furniture and I never have the right one when I need it.

So I employ a creative strategy, which is to pick one that is kind of close to right, and then to

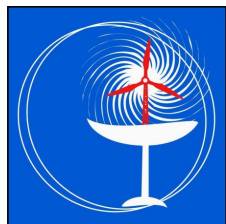
press really hard. Sometimes this works. Sometimes, though, it goes KAJUNK KAJUNK KAJUNK and the bit spins and the screwdriver doesn't move and if I don't stop immediately, Bad Things Occur. The screw and the bit can get stripped, changing shape into a groove that leaves everything stuck.

I think about this sometimes in meetings. I'm good in meetings... usually. Over the years, I've built up an impressive array of tools: I-statements, being assertive, and all of that stuff. What I could improve on, though, is knowing when to switch tools: noticing the interpersonal KAJUNK KAJUNK KAJUNK faster and responding not by pressing harder but rather with, This strategy isn't working. I need to try something different.

I remind myself to pause and test out bits—the old faithfuls like, “Maybe I'm not hearing what you're trying to say; let me say it back to check,” and “You have an unmet need here; can we figure out what it is?” Because it never works to respond with the “There's an app for that” bit when the “Tell me how you feel about this” bit is called for. (Even when there is an app for that.)

Spiritually, I'm also learning to hear and respond to the KAJUNK KAJUNK KAJUNK. I have a list of simple bits to try (go for a walk, get a good night's sleep, journal...) that are deceptively simple, but remarkably effective. The older I get, the more I understand that the goal isn't having the most or best screwdriver bits; it's learning to hear the KAJUNK KAJUNK KAJUNK, to take a deep breath, and to switch strategies.

By Liz James (Braver/Wiser Aug. 31, 2020)



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