

## **Services**

### **Sunday Services**

**10:30 am**

*Streamed on Facebook Live  
(or Zoom, as noted)*

**March 7**

*“The Prize, the Middle  
Distance, the Horizon”*

**March 14**

*“Beware”*

**March 21**

*“Kites in the Wind”*

**March 28**

*TBA*

*Program Committee  
Sunday, Zoom*

*Join all services on  
Facebook Live at 10:30  
Sunday mornings or later  
on YouTube (or Zoom, as  
otherwise noted).*

*Be sure to sign up for our  
Grapevine emails to  
receive updates, and  
changes.*

# **MERE LYS**

## **March 2021 Newsletter**

### **Nora Unitarian Universalist Church**

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

This month, March 2021, marks one year since the coronavirus and the disease it causes became real for most of us in this country (though by then we'd already heard whispers of it for three months). On various dates throughout the month it will have been one year since: our kids went to school; we worked in offices; we shopped for our own groceries in supermarkets; we hugged our parents or grandchildren; we ate in a restaurant. Your anniversaries will vary according to the details of your unique situation. Anyway we look at it, even with case numbers and deaths falling and vaccination numbers rising (though not as rapidly as we'd like), this month seems sure to bring the potential for some serious crankiness, bordering on despair, as we realize a year has come and gone and still our days are governed by our efforts to remain safe and healthy, and to contribute to the safety and health of our families and our communities.

In order to stave off March madness of one kind, we've decided to enter fully and playfully into another type of March Madness. Elsewhere in this newsletter you'll find a Vær Så God\* Bracket (because what is more quintessentially Nora than Smorg?), along with directions about how and when to vote at each level of elimination, until we determine the number one, favorite smorg food.

Beyond tempting you with a bit of all-in-good-fun competitiveness, all I have to say this month is what I said last month--take good care of yourselves. Get enough sleep, water and fresh air. Connect with folks outside your home, via text, email, phone, Facebook, Zoom, Google Meets. Continue to find the routines, breaks from routine, music, junk food or comfort food, books, TV shows, animal videos that dissolve your crankiness. Above all, be gentle with yourself when you don't or can't do any of this, when you're cranky (or lonely or sad or discouraged) anyway. And by that I mean, say to yourself what you would say to your most precious friend, your child or sibling, parent or partner, what I would say to you: “You are still breathing after a year unlike any we've ever known before. Today that is enough. Well done. I love you.”

\*"here you are!" "you're welcome!" "help yourself!"

—*Lisa*

## Sunday Services

Join all services on Facebook Live at 10:30 Sunday mornings or later on YouTube. Program Committee Sundays will be hosted on Zoom.

Be sure to sign up for our Grapevine emails to receive updates, and changes. Sign up by emailing the church at [norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net](mailto:norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net)

## News From the Board

There haven't been a lot of action items needed by the board recently. It seems we're all in the "every day's the same" mode that the pandemic has created. The new garage door has been ordered for the parsonage garage. The board's ongoing work is the Congregational Record which we file with the UUA for our search effort for half time ministry. Our goal is to have that on file by late March. As board president I have been zoom meeting with other Midwestern small congregations facilitated by Phil Lund. Feb. 23 will be a new format with congregational leaders from a specific geographical region meeting instead of the entire district.

Thank you to those who responded with pledges and donations to church in January. Bills are paid, and as of Jan. 31 we had a balance of \$8,870.

Results of our phone survey were very positive toward Facebook Live services. While not many view during typical Sunday morning service time, the services are viewed quite a bit (well over 100 views per week). It is easy to access from the Nora Website.

Those attending zoom chats on Wednesday evenings enjoy the social connection. For many, thinking of church on a Wednesday evening (1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month) hasn't become habit. Most respondents felt that they would feel comfortable returning to in person church services when all or nearly all members have received the vaccine.

Stay well and let's hope for efficient vaccine distribution so we can meet in person sometime this spring.

Jeanie

## Wednesday Zoom Meetings

**March 3 and 17.** Every other Wednesday we'll gather on Zoom at 7:00 p.m. for a chalice lighting and general conversation. Our February gatherings

### *A Note From the Treasurer*

#### **January Income and Expenses**

**Income:** \$13,117

**Expenses:** \$ 8,870

*Income and expenses presented at the last board meeting. Income does not include memorials and gifts.*

were small and intimate, giving a few of us a chance to go deeper but we've been missing you!! We'll commit to sending reminders and posting them on Facebook, too. You commit to joining in. Deal? Please? Clicking on the link sent in Grapevines, on your smart phone or tablet will connect you.

## March Madness:

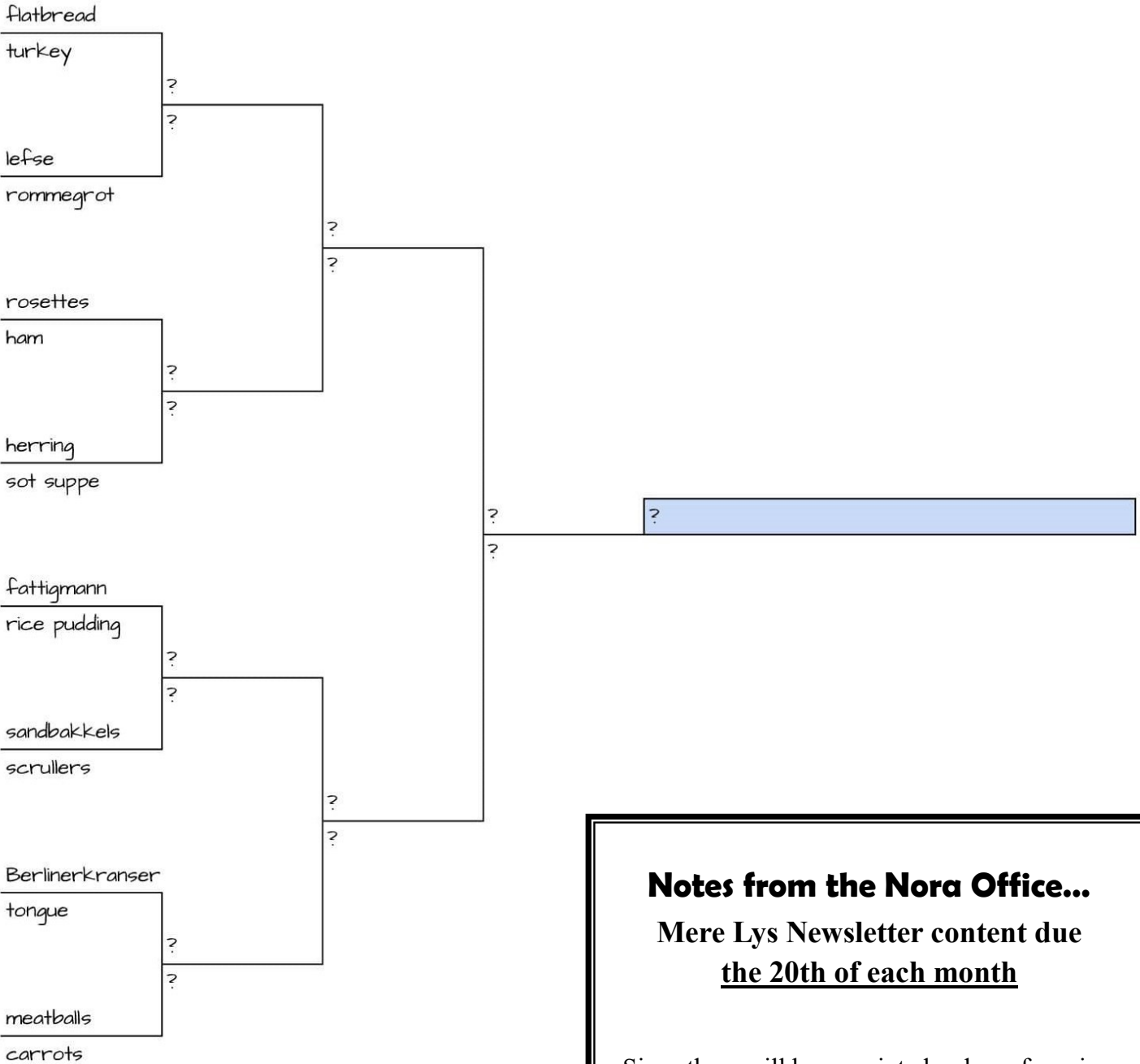
### Quintessential Smorg Food!

1. Print out and fill in the entire bracket with your prediction for the winners of each round.
2. Mail or e-mail your completed bracket to the church office Nora Church 12333 155<sup>th</sup> Ave, Hanksa, MN 56041 or [norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net](mailto:norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net)
3. Vote for round one by Friday, March 5. Winners will be announced on Facebook and via Grapevine on/by Sunday, March 7.
4. Vote for round two by Friday, March 12. Winners will be announced on Facebook and via Grapevine on/by Sunday, March 14.
5. Vote for round three by Friday, March 19. Winners will be announced on Facebook and via Grapevine on/by Sunday, March 21.
6. Vote for round four by Friday, March 26. Winners will be announced on Facebook and via Grapevine on/by Thursday, April 1.
7. **The Quintessential Favorite Smorg Food will be announced on Facebook and via Grapevine on April 1st!**

Anyone who turns in a completed bracket and successfully predicts the Quintessential Favorite Smorg Food will receive a fabulous food-themed prize.

# the Quintessential Smorg Food Is.....!

Round One      Round Two      Round Three      Round Four



## Board Meeting + Special Meeting.

The board is having a special meeting, regarding hiring for next church year, on Tuesday, March 2nd at 7:00 pm, on Zoom.

The March board meeting is Tuesday, March 16th at 7:15 pm, on Zoom.

## Notes from the Nora Office...

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

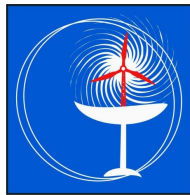
Since there will be no printed orders of service, please send announcements for Grapevines via email, or pass along to Rev. Lisa for me.

Please send content of any kind, for the newsletter and more, to the Nora email.

*Brooke Knisley, Office Assistant  
Working from home and in the office Tuesdays or Wednesdays.*

### ***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.



### **Member, Family and Friend Updates**

Diane Becken and Kate Becken thank everyone for the generous outpouring of love following Jen's death. Phone calls, notes, the meal that served more than a dozen family members in two different locations, and all the offers of assistance mean more than words can express.

### **Upcoming Social Justice Book Discussion**

**Thursday, April 22 6:30-8:30pm—Zoom information to follow.** Please join Nora Unitarian Universalist Church and the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Mankato for a discussion of the [2020-21 UUA Common Read is \*Breathe: A Letter to My Sons\* by Imani Perry](#). *Breathe* reflects on race, racism, and the hope that one's child will be wholly known and valued by society. It is "an unforgettable lesson in Black resistance and resilience." The *New York Times* calls *Breathe* "an elixir of history, ancestry and compassion, which, together, become instruction...a parent's unflinching demand, born of inherited trauma and love, for her children's right simply to be possible." Revs. Rita Capezzi and Lisa Doege will co-facilitate the discussion, and we look forward to having our congregations together. More discussion dates may be added as needed. To order the book, please go to [InSpirit: UU Book and Gift Shop](#). Let Lisa know if you need assistance with purchasing a book. [Click here to register for this discussion.](#)

### **General Assembly Goes Virtual**

General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Participants worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process. Anyone may attend; congregations must certify annually to have voting delegates. The UUA Board of Trustees has passed a resolution making the 2021 UUA General Assembly a 100% virtual event. Let's reach record-breaking attendance June 23-27, 2021!

Registration for virtual GA 2021 is now open! Registration is \$200 per person. Financial support for registration as well as a payment plan are available. General Assembly registrants receive access to the 2021 Online Participation Portal, including live, simulive, and on-demand video content, the virtual exhibit hall, chat features, support, and a (new!) GA mobile app.

[Register now!](#)

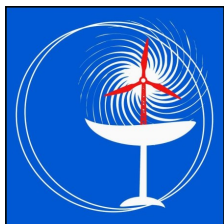
[GA Website](#)

### **Direct Deposit for Pledges**

Direct deposits for pledges become even more pertinent during this time of distance worship.

To initiate this, anyone interested would need to set this up with their bank, much like an automatic payment for a utility or credit card.

If you would like to make electronic pledge payments, please contact Julie Peck for Nora Church account information.



## **Nora Unitarian Universalist Church**

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