



MERE LYS

September 2022 Newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

Services

**10:30 Services
First and third
Sundays.**

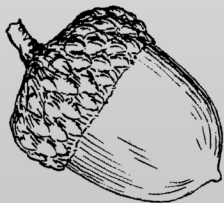


Schedule

**September 18
10:30 am**

**“Beginning at the
End”**

*Guest Speaker: Chad
Snyder*



**Nora Unitarian
Universalist
Church**

12333 155th Ave.,
Hanska, MN 56041
507.439.6240

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www.facebook.com/

The Brave Old Oak

A song to the oak, the brave old oak,

Who hath ruled in the greenwood long;
Here 's health and renown to his broad green crown,

And his fifty arms so strong.
There 's fear in his frown when the sun goes down,

And the fire in the west fades out;
And he showeth his might on a wild midnight,

When the storm through his branches shout.

—Henry Fothergill Chorley

Church Service Schedule

Please note services at Nora will be the first and third Sundays of each month. We look forward to Rev. Sarah Oelberg visiting us in October.

It was also suggested at the annual meeting to have coffee hour AFTER service, instead of 10:00. The first Sunday of each month will be the traditional potluck Sunday. The third Sunday bring a sack lunch and stay for coffee and conversation, as your schedule allows.

News from the Program Committee

September 18: Guest speaker, Chad Snyder “Beginning at the End”

Join us for the third Sunday of September as we welcome Chad Snyder back to Nora Church. In this

service we will consider beginnings and endings, aspirations and short-falls, and the power of starting again.

Chad is a member and Commissioned Lay Minister at Michael Servetus Unitarian Society in Fridley, Minnesota, and is beginning his first year of seminary this fall. He is also an actor, director, and guitarist and – because he’s not good enough at any of those things to make money – an attorney.

Coffee/social time will be after the service. Bring a bag lunch if you’d like.



September Board Meeting

The next Nora Board meeting is set for Tuesday, September 20 at 8:00 pm via Zoom. Contact Joy for information.

Text Tree

Help us get the word out and make sure you have your ear to the ground! We are starting a Text Tree as another way of keeping us all connected. Please contact Joy Rathman, 507-829-4979, or Julie

Sellner, 507-920-0131, with any questions, or to be added.

This Tree is not for any back-and-forth messaging, just providing a way to share information! If more information is needed on a topic, then questions can be directed to the appropriate individual.

Prayers Welcome

Our thoughts and prayers are with Wes Hromatko, after the loss of his sister and brother in law.

My sister in law Rabbi Ann Folb died last Friday in Arlington, Virginia followed by the Monday death of my brother in law Mike Gualandi in Arizona City, AZ.

Wes

Wesley V. Hromatko, D.Min.

752 121st St., Lake Wilson, MN 5651

507-760-0876



What's in a name?

A comment by Knut Heidelberg

As a former Norwegian Unitarian pastor that once wrote a master thesis on the Unitarian movement in Norway connecting to Kristofer Janson and others and also then Nora Free Christian Church, it is with great pleasure I from time to time visit Nora UU Church's webpage. It gives me a great pleasure in this way to follow the life of this historically important Unitarian connection between the USA and Norway.

Reading Rev. Lisa Doege's excellent article "What's in a name?", I came to reflect upon something when reading the following:

"Those handful of dissatisfied Norwegian Lutherans who founded Nora Church back in 1881 settled upon the name Nora Free Christian Church for

sound reasons. Nora paid homage to their Norwegian heritage. Christian described their theology at that time. And Free signaled all that had led them to break from Lake Hanska Lutheran Church—primarily dissatisfaction with church authority."

The word "Nora" itself does not need to reflect on Norway. In Norway we write the name of our country like this: "Norge" or "Noreg" so it is no obvious connection. The pronunciation of "o" in "nor" makes Nora and Norge sound very different. And Nora is a rather common Scandinavian female name. Probably more in use in the 19th century than today, but still in use. So if we accept - and I think we should - that this name paid homage to those first Unitarian's Norwegian heritage, in what way would that be the case other than being a typical Scandinavian name?

My guess - and it will only be a guess - is that they chose Nora for a particular reason pointing to something happening a couple of years before they founded their church in 1881. At that time the name Nora became famous for a very special scandal. But seen in retrospective a scandal that introduced liberty for women in particular. I am thinking of the Norwegian writer Henrik Ibsen.

In 1879 Henrik Ibsen published his drama "A Doll's Home". It premiered at the Royal Theater in Copenhagen, December 21, 1879. The play was a critique of the traditional roles of men and women in Victorian marriage, here represented with the couple Torvald and Nora Helmer.

The play ends when Nora leaves her husband in search of herself, after realizing that he was not the noble person she had believed. Her role in the marriage was like a doll, her home a doll's home and her husband Torvald constantly refers to her as his little "lark" or "squirrel". She is not even allowed to have a key to the mailbox.

In 1879 Nora leaving her husband to find herself, was something not accepted in society and the play created a scandal so strong that when it was to be presented in Germany, Henrik Ibsen actually had to rewrite the ending and let Nora stay for the sake of her children.

From that moment at the end of 1879 the name Nora came to represent something special in Norway and also other places. It represented the women's right to freedom within their marriage and was part of the awakening movement struggling for equality between men and women.

Thank You!

...members who made summer pledge payments.
...Julie Peck, for her time cleaning the parsonage.
...for Warren, Lee & Darrell's work on the internet.
...to the outgoing board members, for everything.

Autumn Chant

By Edna St. Vincent Millay

Now the autumn shudders
In the rose's root,
Far and wide the ladders
Lean among the fruit.

*Now the autumn clambers
Up the trellised frame
And the rose remembers
The dust from which it came.*

Brighter than the blossom
On the rose's bough
Sits the wizened orange,
Bitter berry now;

*Beauty never slumbers;
All is in her name;
But the rose remembers
The dust from which it came.*

Adapted from "Autumn Chant" in *The Harp Weaver and Other Poems*.

My guess is that the first Unitarians that founded Nora Free Christian Church 1881 took the name Nora because of what it came to represent. It had a double function: It paid homage to Norway because of Henrik Ibsen and in signaled the radical thinking of equality among men and women they all shared.

Rev. Lisa Doege ends her article with the following words: "It is a sign of self-confidence and institutional maturity that Nora Unitarian Universalist Church no longer feels the need to set itself apart from its past by declaring its freedom."

I would like to add that this self-confidence and institutional maturity Nora Unitarian Universalist Church shares with the founders that proved their own self-confidence and institutional maturity by breaking free from the theological and social fetters of their time by adding "Nora" to the name of the church.

Shared with us by Knut Heidelberg, Nederland, in February 2022.



Notes from the Nora Office...

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

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

*Brooke Knisley, Office Assistant
In the office 1-2 times a week, generally Tuesday*

A Note From the Treasurer

July Income and Expenses

Income:	\$ 1,192.00
Expenses:	\$ 3,712.67

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



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Facebook: www.facebook.com/NoraChurchUU