



# MERE LYS

## December 2023 Newsletter

### Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

### Services

10:30 Services

First & Third Sundays

*Potluck follows 1st*

*Brown Bag Option 3rd*

[www.norauuchurch.org](http://www.norauuchurch.org)



### Schedule

December 3

*“Winter Faith and  
Summer Faith”*

*Guest Speaker:*

*Rev. Laurie Bushbaum*

*Followed by potluck.*

December 17

*“The Social Gospel in  
Nora History”*

*Prepared by David  
Benson*

**Nora Unitarian  
Universalist  
Church**

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### The Snow Fairy

Throughout the afternoon I watched them there,  
Snow-fairies falling, falling from the sky,  
Whirling fantastic in the misty air,  
Contending fierce for space supremacy.  
And they flew down a mightier force at night,  
As though in heaven there was revolt and riot,  
And they, frail things had taken panic flight  
Down to the calm earth seeking peace and quiet.

I went to bed and rose at early dawn  
To see them huddled together in a heap,  
Each merged into the other upon the lawn,  
Worn out by the sharp struggle, fast asleep.  
The sun shone brightly on them half the day,  
By night they stealthily had stol'n away.

—Claude McKay



### Services

#### December 3 “Winter Faith and Summer Faith”

We welcome guest minister Rev. Laurie Bushbaum back to Nora. Rev. Laurie Bushbaum retired in 2021, after 35 years in the UU ministry. She has been helped to form the first fabric co-op in the country. Think food co-op but for fabric and sewing supplies, especially for the hard-core quilters. The goal is to provide community and creativity and access to the fabric arts for many. Bushbaum has been serving UU congregations in the Upper Midwest for more than 3 decades. She is recently back in the Twin Cities after serving a 3 year Interim in Wisconsin. She loves to quilt, garden, cycle and walk. She is pursuing her yoga teacher training and looks forward to being a volunteer teacher for those who would not otherwise have access to yoga.

Join in a potluck meal after the service. All Nora members and friends are welcome.

#### December 17 “The Social Gospel in Nora History”

David Benson will be reading from Nina Draxten’s biography, *Kristopher Janson in America*.

## December Board Meeting

Monthly board meetings are the 3rd Wednesday of the month, via Zoom. Contact Sally for info.

### ***Inclement Weather***

In case of Sunday morning inclement weather, the decision to cancel church service will be made no later than 8:00 a.m. Announcements will be made via Grapevine email, posting on the Nora website and Facebook page, and a cancellation notice will be sent to KNUJ and KTOE. When church is not cancelled, you are responsible for your own safety. We love to see everyone at church but we would rather know everyone is safe. Please do not drive to church when road conditions, high winds or frigid temperature feel unsafe to you. We'll see you when we see you!

### ***Braver/Wiser: Inviting the "Aha"***

JD Stillwater - November 29, 2023

*"What history has shown is that when you are granted a perspective bigger than the one you had been harboring, you end up thinking differently about the world. For the better."*  
—Neil deGrasse Tyson

All I said was, "Science requires all five senses." This gentle mentor of mine smiled indulgently, paused, then replied, "Only five?" After establishing that he was not referring to psychic abilities, within minutes I was amazed to "discover" two additional human senses. By the next day, I had three more. They were obvious. We routinely refer to them as "my sense of \_\_\_\_" without ever connecting them to "the five." (I'll let you experience the Aha! on your own. There are many.)<sup>[L]  
[SEP]</sup>

In that moment I felt three very different emotions all at once: I felt stupid for not seeing the obvious, wonder at what else I might be missing, and determination to find other mental blocks I might carry.<sup>[L]  
[SEP]</sup>

"The five senses" were described by Aristotle some 2,350 years ago. Since then, textbooks and teachers alike have simply repeated the phrase without question. Kindergarten teachers pass it on to children as self-evident. It's conventional wisdom, and it's wrong.

I became obsessed with uncovering other examples of cultural inertia, especially in science. Criti-

cal thinking and self-questioning are the essence of science—more essential than any concept in the curriculum. I encouraged my students to question authority, especially my authority, because only rarely can we recognize our biases without help.

Those biases get installed early in our lives. Studies of implicit bias show us that racism, sexism, and all kinds of binary thinking are deeply-ingrained habits of thought. Like "the five senses."

When I'm lost and don't know it, I need someone else to point out that I'm on the wrong road. When someone does this (or gently asks, "Only five?"), it can be tempting to lash out at them for exposing my ignorance or bias. But if I take a pause to self-question, it can reveal vast new vistas to me.

Then it takes humility to admit my error, and effort to get back on track.<sup>[L]  
[SEP]</sup> Experiencing the world clearly and openly, with all our many senses, requires vulnerability and authentic self-questioning. I think it's a spiritual practice.

### ***Prayer***

*Source of all truth and clarity, bless us with companions who disrupt our inertias, curiosity to hear them out, and courage to seek the truth.*

#### ***A Note From the Treasurer***

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

October Income: \$ 2,002

October Expenses: \$ 1,723

*Income/expenses presented at the last board meeting(s). Income doesn't include memorials/gifts.*

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

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

**Please send content of any kind, for the  
Mere Lys, grapevines etc. to the Nora email**

*Working in office 1xweek and from home. No set in-office hours. I can be contacted through the Nora email. If you need to get ahold of me directly, or quickly, please connect with Sally.*

*Brooke Knisley, Office Assistant*

