



MERE LYS

May 2024 Newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

Services

1st & 3rd Sundays

Potluck follows 1st

Brown Bag Option 3rd

www.norauuchurch.org



Schedule

May 5

“On Loneliness and the Longing to Belong”

Guest: Rev. Sara Smalley

May 19

“Readying the Soil for the Seeds of Transformation”

Guest: Meleah Houseknecht

**Nora Unitarian
Universalist
Church**

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The Oak Tree

A mighty wind blew night and day
It stole the oak tree's leaves away
Then snapped its boughs and pulled its bark
Until the oak was tired and stark

But still the oak tree held its ground
While other trees fell all around
The weary wind gave up and spoke,
"How can you still be standing Oak?"

The oak tree said, "I know that you
Can break each branch of mine in two
Carry every leaf away
Shake my limbs, and make me sway.

But I have roots stretched in the earth
Growing stronger since my birth
You'll never touch them, for you see
They are the deepest part of me.

Until today, I wasn't sure
Of just how much I could endure
But now I've found, with thanks to you
I'm stronger than I ever knew.

—Johnny Ray Ryder Jr.

May Services

May 5 "On Loneliness and the Longing to Belong"

We are in the midst of a loneliness epidemic, says the US Surgeon General, and it's negatively affecting our physical, mental, and spiritual health. The cure is connection. Join Rev. Sara as we reflect on the painful reality of loneliness and the joyful healing that can happen when we gather in authentic community.

Rev. Sara Smalley is the minister of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Northfield.

May 19 "Readying the Soil for the Seeds of Transformation"

Poet Yehuda Amichi writes, "From the place where we are right, flowers will never grow in the spring. The place where you are right is hard and

trampled like a yard.” If we want to plant the seeds of a more loving and just world, we will need to till the soil of our hearts and communities so that our seeds can take root and grow. We all love to be right, but insisting on our own righteousness usually comes at the cost of being an effective force for change. Our ability to cultivate the fruit of transformation may depend on the degree to which we can take pluralism seriously and “embrace our differences and commonalities with Love, curiosity, and respect.”

Our guest speaker will be Meleah Houseknecht. Meleah is following her call to Unitarian Universalist ministry and is in her third year at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities. A life-long UU, she spent two decades engaging stakeholders in environmental policy development and implementation. She holds a master’s degree in environmental management from the Yale School of the Environment and was a part of the 2019–20 cohort of the Humphrey Policy Fellows. Meleah serves as a trustee for Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice and as an active member of First Universalist Church of Minneapolis. The title of her sermon is “**Readying the Soil for the Seeds of Transformation.**”

March Board Meeting

The next board meeting will be Wednesday, May 15th, 7:00 pm on Zoom.

New Ulm’s Own

On May 11 we celebrate World Fair Trade Day to recognize the benefits that fair trade purchases provide to workers in third world and developing countries. Fair Trade purchases give hope to many hard workers trying to earn a livable wage, a sustainable income, and decent working conditions. Respect for the environment is another principle of the fair trade movement. The use of repurposed material and organic farming practices help save our climate.

New Ulm’s Own will be celebrating World Fair Trade Day on Saturday, May 11, 10:00 to 4:00. Find beautiful products from Haiti, the Phillipines, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Nepal, Ecuador, Peru, and more. Every purchase makes a difference!

The Finches

The ears stung with cold
sun and frost of dawn
in early April comes

the song of winter finches,
their crimson bright, then
dark as they move into

and then against the light.
May the year warm them
soon. May they soon go

north with their singing
and the season follow.
May the bare sticks soon

live, and our minds go free
of the ground
into the shining of trees.

by Wendell Berry



A Note From the Treasurer

Income and Expenses

March Income: \$5,470

March Expense: \$3,090

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