



# MERE LYS

## December 2024 Newsletter

### Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

### Services

1st & 3rd Sundays

*Potluck Follows 1st*

*Brown Bag Option 3rd*

www.norauuchurch.org



### Schedule

December 1

*“A Medley of Bells”*

*History & Handbell  
Ringing*

December 15

*“Touchstones for Hard  
Times”*

*Rev. Laurie Bushbaum*



**Nora Unitarian  
Universalist  
Church**

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### View from the Hill

"...it is a serious thing  
just to be alive  
on this fresh morning  
in the broken world..."

~Mary Oliver~ from Invitation

I write this message to you on November 16, post-election. I have been numb for days. Then I have cried so hard that I woke up with swollen eyes in the morning. Then I am numb again. In between denial and rage and numbness I have gone for walks in exquisite, warming sunshine, trying to let the heat sink all the way in and warm my broken heart. I bought a bouquet of yellow flowers as a visual touchstone to keep in view. I have talked to friends and family. Disbelief, anger, numbness, around and around and around. I have tried to comfort myself with some philosophical meanderings about human nature, and the cycles of growth and destruction. I thought about the eruption of Mt. St. Helen's in the 80's and how the mountain has come back to rich life, one tiny species at a time. Does this apply to human nature, too? I don't know; right now I just don't know. I have tried to remember that horrors in human history have come and gone. Some people survive and rebuild and even love again, literally out of the ashes.

At this moment, this is all that I have to offer you. My struggle for meaning next to yours. My longing for a more loving world, next to yours. I trust I will lean into Hope again, but I am not there yet. But this I do know: I look forward to standing in the pulpit at Nora, the ancient prairie outside the windows singing to us, the church bell ringing, our voices joining, the candles and the chalice lit again as we are together. We will find our way, one step at a time.

Yours in faith,  
Rev. Laurie

### December Services

December 15 *“Touchstones for Hard Times”* Rev. Laurie Bushbaum

What grounds me in this moment is meditating on basic elements: dirt, water, fire, bread, flowers. And I realize that each of these items are elements of ritual. Of communion. Of transformation. What are they telling me? I'm trusting that these elements will make a place for us to rest and heal, until the path forward reveals itself.

### Buildings & Grounds Updates

Several past residents of the parsonage have indicated a problem: squirrels like to take up residence. The board decided to engage Plunkets wildlife experts. Mitch Jensen was able to identify entry points for squirrels and mice and attempted to seal those. This may not be the end of these problems but we



will keep at it. There are similar issues with squirrels in the social hall.

The roof of the log cabin museum will be replaced. A group of Norwegian tourists lead by Joel Botten visited this summer. That prompted us to do some cleaning and spend more time in the building. We noted that the cabin could use work on the inside and out. Otherwise it gets little attention and some of the more fragile pieces should be housed better than they are. The board is pondering the future considering scarce resources and competing needs.

The foundation of the porch on the north side of the parsonage has been secured and three fiberglass pillars installed replacing the ones that deteriorated. This option is in keeping with the character of the building. The porch decking was painted and will be reused.

The seasonal snow fence has been put up and has been doing its job. We have been hiring Brian Kjelshus of Hanska to do this. He also mows the cemetery and church grounds.

Darrell Hinsman, Buildings and Grounds

### ***Congrats to Pasha!***

Pasha Bohomez is the October All-Star Student! "For displaying outstanding character, effort and sportsmanship during physical education."

### ***Nora Directory Update!***

I am currently updating the Nora Directory. Please review your listing by looking at the current copy in the church entry way and filling out the provided forms, or email me to check your listing.

All edits need to be received by the end of January.

Printed copies will be available at church beginning with March services (or maybe earlier if there are any church functions). Thank you!!

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

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

October Income: \$1,587.00

October Expense: \$11,863.21

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

#### ***In Memorium***

### ***Rebecca Lynne Johnson***

*July 9, 1941 — October 24, 2024*

### **Ring Out, Wild Bells**

*by Alfred Lord Tennyson*

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light;  
The year is dying in the night;  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:  
The year is going, let him go;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
For those that here we see no more,  
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
And ancient forms of party strife;  
Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care the sin,  
The faithless coldness of the times;  
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,  
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
The civic slander and the spite;  
Ring in the love of truth and right,  
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease,  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;  
Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

### ***December Board Meeting***

The next Nora Board meeting will be Wednesday, December 18, at 7:00pm, via Zoom.