

MERE LYS

May 2025 Newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

Services

1st & 3rd Sundays

Potluck Follows 1st

Brown Bag Option 3rd

www.norauuchurch.org



Schedule

May 4

***“A Light That Belongs
to All: A Testimony
Rooted in Divine
Oneness”***

*Video presentation
arranged by Mark Wiger*

May 18

“Love is Loud”

Rev. Terri Burnor

**Nora Unitarian
Universalist
Church**

12333 155th Ave.,
Hanska, MN 56041
507-439-6240

norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net
www.norauuchurch.org
[www.facebook.com/
NoraChurchUU](http://www.facebook.com/NoraChurchUU)

View from the Hill

I usually have just one basic theme in my newsletter, but this month there are multiple items to I want to share with you.

First, those who were in church on Easter so generously celebrated my news that my son and his wife are expecting their first child. That means I get to be a grandma! I have been practicing the last few years with my grand-dog, but this a whole new level of excitement.

My husband Michael and I are utterly delighted and look forward to baby's arrival near the end of November. I'll get right to work on a few baby quilts. While we hope that there is some parenting wisdom we can share, parenting has changed a bit in the last 30 years, and we look forward to learning right along with our son and daughter-in-law.

Secondly, many of you requested a copy of my Easter sermon. Brooke, the Nora office assistant, has kindly sent it out to many of you. Some printed copies will also be available for those who may not be computer users.

Some of you asked on Easter Sunday how you can learn more about the marches and rallies that are happening now on a regular basis. And not just in major cities but in smaller towns all over MN and the country. On April 5, there were marches / rallies in New Ulm, St. Peter and Mankato just to name a few. First, you can check in online with the organization **50501**, which is spearheading many of these gatherings, in collaboration with other organizations. (<https://www.fiftyfiftyone>) They have a listing of all the actions listed by date and place. The next big event is planned for May 1. Secondly, you can search for **Indivisible**. This is an organization built during the first Trump Administration to help save the Affordable Care Act. Local chapters of Indivisible also help plan events. **50501**, **Indivisible**, and **The Women's March** often co-list events. At 50501, you can also find online trainings about how we can rise up right now and play our part in protecting American Democracy. If you are on Facebook, **Alt National Park** is one of the best organizations to follow! They detail what is happening around the country and are significant movers and shakers. You can read reports from those attending events around the country and feel like you are part of the uprising and uplifting of American Democracy.

Remember, the Momentum is building. Every phone call to your State and Federal Representatives matter. Every letter, letter to the editor and standing with others in the streets matters. If you have never been to a march before, consider joining one soon. If you have worries or concerns, feel free to call me and talk or ask a friend to join you. We are all learning; it is important to support one another, especially those who may be new to political activism.

As we sang on Easter, “Rising Green, Rising Green, Rising Green to build a new day.”

May you feel the Greening of the Earth lift you spirits.

Yours in faith, Rev. Laurie

Rhubarb

by Bill Holm

In this treeless, chilly place,
rhubarb comes early and fast,
shoots out of the ground like a fist,
keeps growing into a forest.
No place else could you use this
excuse for your sudden absence:
“I was lost in the rhubarb forest.”



May Board Meeting

The next Nora board meeting will be held via Zoom, May 21st at 7:00 pm.

May Services

May 4 “A Light That Belongs to All: A Testimony Rooted in Divine Oneness”

Video presentation arranged by Mark Wiger

This presentation is a personal testimony shaped by the mystical path of Islamic Sufism. Through poetic imagery, sacred music, and spiritual reflection, Mert Gunal offers an experience that explores the unity between the cosmos, nature, the human being, and the Divine. Mert is not presenting a theological explanation, but a heartfelt witnessing of the One Light that moves through all.

Mert Gunal is a licensed cultural guide and a Sufi-influenced storyteller from Turkey. He blends sacred music, history, and inner wisdom in his work, designing unique cultural and spiritual experiences for travelers from around the world. His artistic project, Cosmic Sufi, brings together sound, imagery, and mysticism to explore universal truths rooted in Divine Oneness.

May 4 is a potluck Sunday, with the potluck at Noon. We may have extra visitors attending the potluck prior to the exploration of a Hanska Historical/Preservation gathering at 1:00.

May 18 “Love is Loud”

Rev. Terri Burnor

Unitarian Universalists have “good news” to share about our faith tradition, our values, the ways we put love at the center. But we don’t always bring out our UU-selves in public. Our actions speak. How about our words too?

Rev. Terri Burnor (she/her) is Acting Executive Director of MUUSJA (the Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance). She also serves the St. Croix Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Wisconsin as their quarter-time minister. Terri inspires people to reflect, act, and lead grounded by their faith, spiritual practices, conscience, and values. She is a life-long Minnesotan and lives in St. Paul with her spouse, Brian, and two dogs, Marvin & Betty.

Mark your calendars for Nora’s June 1 service, our final for the church year, Nora’s Annual Meeting and another visit from Rev. Laurie!

Update from the Board

The board met on April 16th. There were a number of topics discussed that have impact on our church community. Although we are financially healthy at this time, we realize that our attendance is dwindling and is projected to continue to decline in the future. For this reason, the board sent out a request for feed back regarding the future of Nora UU Church. We reviewed your responses and will be compiling a summary report for the annual meeting in June.

The board compiled a recommended budget for the upcoming 2025-26 year based on our expenses for 2024-25 with any known modifications. This includes for a continuation of the service contract

A Note From the Treasurer

We appreciate the giving to Nora in any way it’s given. Just a reminder that if you can’t make it to church for services and fellowship that pledges can be mailed directly to the church. Thank you.

Income and Expenses

March Income: \$3,946

March Expense: \$11,745

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

with Rev. Laurie Bushbaum and contacting the UUA to put our search for a ½ time minister on hold for now.

Lee is looking into finding someone to complete an inventory of the Museum contents. Once completed, we can move forward with discussion for the future of the museum building as well as its contents.

Five members of Nora attended a meeting of Hanska area individuals concerned with the preservation of our immigrant history. Nora is hosting the next meeting on May 4th at 1:00 pm to continue the discussion. If you are interested, please join us! This group was also invited to attend the pot luck which, (please note) will start at noon.

For further details, see the report of the board meeting.

The Nora Board

Hanska History & Preservation Follow Up

Following the service at Nora on April 6th, a few people from Nora attended a meeting at the Hanska Community Center. The purpose of meeting was to gather people from the Hanska area who, for one reason or another, find themselves in a similar position as the members of Nora. We all have ties to historic sites, buildings and items that have value but are, or will be at some point, no longer serving their original purpose. The group decided to meet at least one more time to discuss the future and potential goals of a “Hanska Historical Society.”

We offered to meet at Nora on Sunday, May 4th at 1:00 pm. We also invited them to join in the pot-luck starting around noon (a little later than usual). We don’t know if anyone will join us for the pot-luck but we wanted you all to know we may have guests and to invite anyone interested to stay for the meeting.

Hope to see many of you then.

Vicki S.

Mark Wiger Update

The best way to follow Mark’s healing journey is through his [Caring Bridge website](#) where he posts updates.

Notes from the Nora Office...

Newsletter content should be sent by the 20th of each month.

Orders of service content by Noon the Thursday prior to service. Please send content to the Nora email.

Office hours are not set, mostly working from home. 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

Minutes: Nora Board Meeting, April 16th 2025

The Nora Church Board met for its monthly meeting at the New Ulm Country Club. The meeting was attended by Sally Hanson, Vicki Sieve, Julie Peck and Lee K. Drogemuller. Nita Gilbert was absent.

Secretary’s Report: A correction from the March 2025 Secretary’s report should show that Sally Hanson did talk to Jeanie Hinsman regarding the status of the renting family in the Parsonage, With the correction a motion was made and seconded to accept the report as given. Motion carried.

Treasurer’s report:

The Nora checking account as of 2/28/25 was \$71,198.50. Total income for the month was \$5,341.00. Expenses for the month totaled \$11,745.03. Of this total \$8,120.97 was for Repairs / Maintenance / Landscape line 305 of the Treasurer’s report. (\$2,500.00 for tree trimming and \$5,000.00 for a new roof on the Jorgensen Museum.)

A CD investment bond was also purchased at a cost of \$20,014.28. A decision that the Board made at the March 2025 Board Meeting. With this the new Nora Checking Account balance is at \$44,780.19. A motion was made and seconded to accept the report as given. Motion carried.

Old Business

1. Museum Inventory List: Lee K. Drogemuller talked to an Art Professor at Bethany College in Mankato Mn who showed interest in the project and said he would try to find a student that would be willing to work on the project. He want-

ed information from Nora as to what exactly we need for the inventory and what we would be willing to compensate a student for the work. We are looking farther into these questions. I will talk to the Brown Co Historical Museum Curator to see if she has any input on a job description.

2. Minister: The Nora Board will contact the UUA and put our search for a ½ time minister on hold for the time being. Sally Hanson reported that she talked to Rev. Laurie Bushbaum, (Board Minutes of March, 2025) who said she would be willing to continue to work with Nora for another. Year. A motion was made and seconded to renew the contract Nora Church has with Rev. Laurie Bushbaum from July 2025 through June of 2026. Motion carried.

3. Jorgenson Museum: Darrell Hinsman received a bid from Dietich's Log Home Restoration, Gibbon Mn to repair the Jorgenson Museum on the Nora property. This would include re chinking the logs, replacing some logs that are going bad, and spraying the logs with a sealer. The estimate for the work is approximately \$14,000.00 if we only repaired the outside of the cabin. \$ 28,000.00 if we repaired both the inside and outside of the cabin. The price could be reduced if we did some of the work in advance and didn't replace the bad logs. Darrell has not heard back from several other contractors as of yet. Any decision to spend this kind of money would require a vote from the Church congregation, so this issue has been tabled for the time being.

New Business:

1. Hanska Area Historical Society meeting: At the first meeting of people interested in preserving Hanska area history called by Larry Harbo in April 2025 at the Hanska Comm Center it was decided to hold a second meeting. The goal of the first meeting was to see if there would be enough interest to hold a second meeting. This goal being met it was decided to hold the second meeting at Nora Social Hall, May 4th 2025. This would be after the

Church service and on a Potluck Sunday. Interested persons are invited to join Nora members for a potluck lunch, with a meeting to follow at 1:00pm. The Jorgenson Museum will also be open to the guests. Vicki Sieve will send a grapevine notice to Nora members regarding this meeting.

2. Nora Survey: A survey was sent to active Nora members asking for input on the future of Nora Church. As the questions were open ended there was a wide range of suggestions, comments and ideas. Vicki Sieve will summarize the comments and they will be discussed at a Church meeting in the near future.

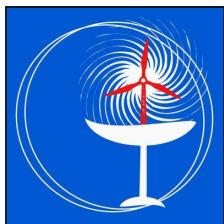
3. The Board decided to publish a summary of the Board minutes and post them in the newsletter to help keep the Nora congregation aware of what is discussed at the meetings.

4. The Nora Annual Meeting is coming in June, With this we are going need at least one new Board member. Lee Schmitt's name was brought up, so we will ask Joy and Julie to approach him to see if he has an interest. Colleen Hokenson was also mentioned as a possible member.

5. Nora Budget: The Board worked on setting a budget for the coming Church year. This budget will be presented to the congregation and voted on at the next Annual meeting.

The next Board meeting will be held via Zoom, May 21st, 2025. A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

These minutes are respectfully submitted by Lee K. Drogemuller



Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

12333 155th Avenue, Hanska, Minnesota 56041

Phone: 507.439.6240

Email: norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net Website: www.norauuchurch.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/NoraChurchUU