



MERE LYS

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church
Hanska, MN

April 2014 Newsletter

A VIEW FROM THE HILL

People show up.

For years I've fielded questions about Unitarian Universalist beliefs and Easter. In the chair at the hair salon and from the pulpit and everywhere in between I've spoken of ancient and varied layers of meaning in spring holy days; about rebirth and resurrection and how one is no less natural, no more supernatural than the other; about the relationship between Easter and Passover. Dozens of times, scores of times, I tried to explain why "Unitarian Universalists do Easter," but I got it backwards.

We celebrate Easter at Nora Unitarian Universalist Church simply and solely because people show.

Seems like if there were one Sunday we'd stay home, this'd be it, but it's not. For the most part, as a tradition, we gave up believing in the miracle of the resurrection a long time ago. Yet we show up—out of habit, for the kids or the grandkids or the visiting relatives, for the breakfast. But mostly, I think, because there is about this holy day something sacred, sacred in an intensely personal way for each and every one of us. We come to church on Easter to pay honor to and to celebrate that something.

Easter is about what was seemingly dead coming to life again. Flowers out of dry, wrinkly bulbs. Leaves out of bare branches. Baby chicks out of eggs. And in us, love, joy, happiness, laughter out of hearts that were weary and broken, empty and stone cold. When it needs to, the human spirit wraps itself into a tiny ball, entombs itself, encases itself in a seed, and waits out the harsh winter, the drought, the heat. And then when spring is on the horizon, it cracks open again, sprouts roots and branches, and blossoms again. When the threats of life subside the spirit breaks forth again. And Easter dawns.

On April 20th, this year, we will make our way to church, in thanks and in praise of all the times we've survived and thrived. All the times we've emerged yet again from the tomb to begin life anew. For all the times we've blossomed. And it will be Easter *because* we show up to sing alleluia.

-Lisa

SERVICES

Coffee 10am
April 13 Breakfast
9:30a.m.

Worship
10:30am

April 6
Praying in Public

April 13
"Enough!!!"
Reflections on
What Suffices
The Rev. Meg Riley

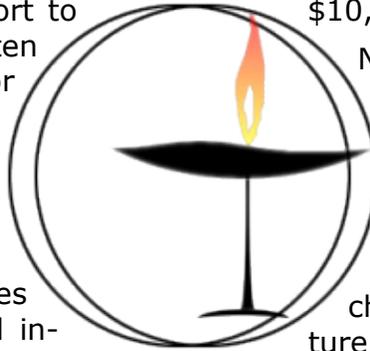
April 20 Easter
All the Wrong Places

April 27
I Said Yes

A NOTE FROM THE TREASURER

It's budget time again! The Nora Board of Trustees makes a contemplated effort to prepare a modest annual budget, often not spending funds budgeted for some projects. The Church also avoids significant expenses with individuals who donate their time, skill and often parts for repair and maintenance projects.

Even with our controlled expenses and volunteer efforts; pledges and income have not met all liabilities and savings have



been used to cover the shortfalls of up to \$10,000 annually for the past 3 years.

Nearly 60% of our yearly budget is for ministerial expenses. I feel most of the congregation would agree that Rev. Doege does an excellent job and the prospect not having a full-time ministerial position would be detrimental to church life. Please consider the future of Nora Church when making your pledge this year.

PRAIRIE BEACON AND NORA BOARD

The Prairie Beacon Annual Meeting/NORA Board meeting will be Thursday, April 17 at 6:00 p.m. at the church.

GUEST SPEAKER

The Program Committee looks forward to April 13 when the Reverend Meg Riley will be our guest speaker. Reverend Riley is Senior Minister of the Church of the Larger Fellowship. You can see her welcome-video at the CLF website: www.clfuu.org

UPDATE DISCUSSION POTLUCK ROUND TWO

Due to bad weather in March, round two of the Discussion Potlucks will take place in May. More information will be in the May *Mere Lys*.

LUNCH BUNCH

Lola's calling again, and as you know "Whatever Lola wants, Lola gets," so Lunch Bunch will be at Lola's Larkspur Market, 16 N. Minnesota St., New Ulm, on Thursday, April 17, at 11:30 a.m. The weather should be better by then so we hope you can join us. Also welcome are ideas on new places to meet and eat. See you then!

NORA MUSEUM

Algot Blomquist has enjoyed taking care of Nora's museum for many years. However, he now feels it is time to retire from this position. If there is anyone interested or who has ideas to share on how best to move forward, please send an email to the church (norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net) or let Nita or Algot know. Thank you so much, Algot, for all you've done to preserve this important part of Nora's (as well as the Hanska Community's) history!

EASTER BREAKFAST

Easter Sunday (April 20) we will have our traditional gathering for Easter Breakfast at 9:30 a.m.. We hope you all can join us along with your families. Diane and her crew of Edith, Kate & Jason will be hosting, and ask of us to sign-up for bringing some food or to help where we can. I remember some SCRRRRUMPTIOUS egg bakes from last year worth repeating... And, of course for some of us, gluten-free and vegan recipes would be much appreciated!

NORA & UUFM CHOIRS COMBINE

Every year since 2007 the UUFM choir and Nora UU choir have joined for combined choir performances celebrating our sister church relationship. This year Gil Hanson from the Nora church is leading the choir and has chosen two pieces by Stephen Foster. We sang at the UUFM on March 30th and will be singing for the Nora UU Church service on April 6th. We hope you can come to enjoy the performance and celebrate with us.

Musically Yours,
Michelle Sturm and Gil Hanson

To Keep In Touch



Wes & Marilyn Hromatko

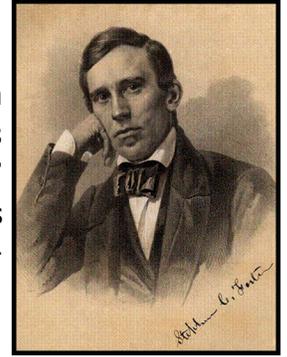
were in a car accident March 7. An oncoming van spun out of control due to the icy road. Thank goodness everyone survived. Wes had a cracked wrist and cracked heel, and is recovering at home. Marilyn had a broken ankle and her hip had to be repaired. She is now recuperating at Good Samaritan, 1131 N Hiawatha, #503, Pipestone MN. 56164. The main number is 507-825-5428.

If you know of anyone needing our assistance or attention...please call one of the Caring Committee members:

Georgine Tepley (chair)
359-3060 (weekdays after 5 pm)
Shirley Olson - 354-1866
Carol Chambard - 354-2242

Stephen Collins Foster, 1826-1864

Stephen Foster was born on the 4th of July and in his short life of just over 37 years he became known as "The Father of American Music."



He was considered a liberal, non-believer and free thinker whose values closely align with our UU Principles.

2014 marks 150 years since his death so it is fitting that we sing his music this year for our combined-choir performance.

OFFICE STAFF CHANGE

While we look for a new office assistant Nita Gilbert will be producing the weekly bulletin and the newsletter. Announcements and other information for both should be sent to the church email address (norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net). We'll keep you informed as this transition progresses.

APRIL	PIANIST	SERVERS, GREETERS, USHERS
6TH POTLUCK Bring extra for UUFM Choir	Sally Hanson	Colleen Hokenson, Ardis & Elroy Wellman, Christina Sschmitt
13TH	Jordan Kuelbs	Kristine & Warren Paulson, Shannon Weiss
20TH EASTER Breakfast	Muffy Kaim	Diane Becken, Edith Beckius, Kate & Jason Monnens
27TH	JoAnn Huss	Joy Rathman, Wayne Johnson, Ellen Byro

PASTOR'S SCHEDULE



Pastor Lisa will have Mondays off.



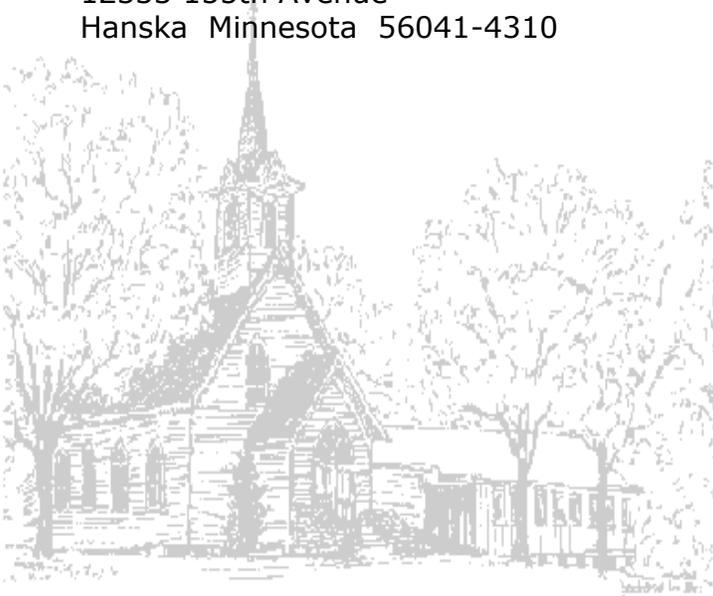
Friday will be sermon writing day.



She can be reached on her cell when not in the office:
507-766-5682

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Website: nora-uu-church.org
Email: norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net

The Fawn

Sunday morning and mellow as precious metal
The church bells rang, but I went
To the woods instead.

A fawn, too new
For fear, rose from the grass
And stood with its spots blazing,
And knowing no way but words,
No trick but music,
I sang to him.

He listened.
His small hooves struck the grass.
Oh what is holiness?

The fawn came closer,
Walked to my hands, to my knees.

I did not touch him.
I only sang, and when the doe came back
Calling out to him dolefully
And he turned and followed her into the trees,
Still I sang,
Not knowing how to end such a joyful text,

Until far off the bells once more tipped and tum-
bled
And rang through the morning, announcing
The going forth of the blessed.

- Mary Oliver