



Services

1st & 3rd Sundays

Potluck Follows 1st

Brown Bag Option 3rd

www.norauuchurch.org



Schedule

April 6

***"The Spirituality of
Shared Values"***

Guest: Phillip Lund

April 20

"And Still I Rise"

Rev. Laurie Bushbaum

**Nora Unitarian
Universalist
Church**

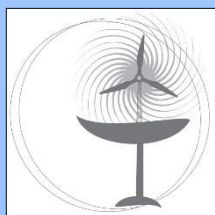
12333 155th Ave.,
Hanska, MN 56041

507-439-6240

norachurch@sleepyeyetel.net

www.norauuchurch.org

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MERE LYS

April 2025 Newsletter

Nora Unitarian Universalist Church

View from the Hill

I just got home from Albuquerque, NM. I was there for a week helping my daughter and her dog settle in for her 13 week contract as a Travel Nurse. She had only 4 weeks notice from the moment she accepted the position to her first day on the job. I helped her sort and pack. She and I drove 2, twelve-hour days with her big dog, both of us sick with a miserable cold. But we made it. While she attended 30 hours of orientation at the hospital, I grocery shopped, cooked, exercised the dog, made multiple trips to the Goodwill for items still needed to settle into her temporary housing. I got up at 5:45 each day to drive her to the hospital and back again at 7:00 pm to pick her up. Needless to say, I'm exhausted and still fighting off that cold.

So, as soon as I press "Send" I am declaring a 2 day Sabbath for myself. A time of deep, intentional and nurturing rest. For many years I have loved the book simply titled, *Sabbath* by Wayne Muller.

A "successful" life has become a violent enterprise. We make war on our own bodies, pushing them beyond their limits; war on our children, because we cannot find enough time to be with them when they are hurt and afraid and need our company; war on our spirit, because we are too preoccupied to listen to the quiet voices that seek to nourish and refresh us; war on our communities, because we are fearfully protecting what we have, and do not feel safe enough to be kind and generous; war on the earth, because we cannot take the time to place our feet on the ground and allow it to feed us, to taste its blessings and give thanks...

Sabbath is more than the absence of work; it is not just a day off, when we catch up on television or errands. It is the presence of something that arises when we consecrate a period of time to listen to what is most deeply beautiful, nourishing, or true. It is time consecrated with our attention, our mindfulness, honoring those quiet forces of grace or spirit that sustain and heal us."

In my Sabbath time I am looking forward to a slow, quiet walk around the lake, a long time on my yoga mat with peaceful music playing. A hot bath and then maybe a good book. A cup of tea and time to drink up restorative silence.

In these stressful times of our country, please take time to care for yourself. We do need to pay attention to what is happening and rise up against this attempted takeover of our democracy in whatever ways we can. And it is also essential that we nurture body and soul so that we have the strength, over and over, to rise up in dissent. Give yourself the Sabbath time that you need.

Yours in faith – Rev. Laurie

April Services

April 6 “The Spirituality of Shared Values”

Phillip Lund

Values are an important part of an individual's spirituality. They guide our actions and give meaning to our lives. The same is true for our communal spirituality. The values we share as a religious community help us answer such important questions as: “Who are we?” “Who are our neighbors?” and “What are we called to do?” This morning we'll explore how resources like the traditional Seven Principles and the more recent Share Values can help deepening our individual and communal spirituality.

Phillip Lund has over twenty years' experience serving congregations in the areas of faith formation and spiritual growth, first as a religious educator in Bloomington, Indiana, New York City, and Chicago, Illinois, and most recently as a congregational life consultant working for the Mid-America Region of the Unitarian Universalist Association. He holds a Master of Divinity degree from Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago and a certificate in InterSpiritual Counseling from One Spirit Learning Alliance in New York. Phil is based in Saint Paul, Minnesota.

April 20 “And Still I Rise ”

Rev. Laurie Bushbaum

This refrain from a poem by Alice Walker illustrates that way that she, as a Black woman in America, has had to rise and rise again, over and over and over... in the face of so much oppression.

In the face of the Trump Administration's cruelty and chaos, how do we rise? As we acknowledge Easter, what might Jesus' Resurrection remind us that we can and must do? I have been collecting stories of those who are, in fact, Rising Up and showing us how to do so. On Easter Sunday, let's gather, surrounded in love and beauty and prepare to Rise. Those who study Authoritarian Movements say that the magic number to turn back such a movement requires 3.5% of the population to rise against the tide. Let's prepare.

Mark your calendars for a service on Islamic Spirituality, organized by Mark Wiger and Jeanie Himsman, on May 4, and Rev. Terri Burnor returns to Nora for the May 18 service.

April Board Meeting

The next Nora board meeting will be held Wednesday, April 16, 11:30, at the New Ulm Country Club for lunch.

News from the Board

For those of you who receive a questionnaire about the future of Nora Church, please answer as quickly as you can.

The board has several factors to consider, and congregation input is very important.



On Hanska's History, and Future

For those In the 1850s, Norwegian and other European immigrants settled in southeastern BrownCounty, establishing communities in Linden, Hanska, and Lake Hanska. In 1859, a small group gathered in Linden to establish the Linden Lutheran Church, followed by similar communities centered around Zion, Nora, and Lake Hanska churches. Today, we are fortunate to have the historical sites, structures, artifacts, and stories of these early settlers.



A Note From the Treasurer

Income and Expenses

February Income: \$3,922.00

February Expense: \$9,739 (\$5,000 billed for garage and porch work done last year)

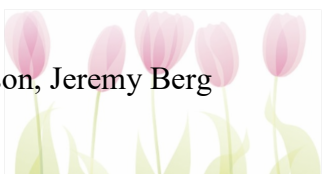
Income/expenses presented at the last board meeting(s). Income doesn't include memorials/gifts.

What will happen to these historical structures and collections?

Join in community **Sunday, April 6, 2025, at 1:00 PM at the Hanska Community Center (downstairs)** to discuss this. This gathering is intended to be a conversation about the historical sites in and around Hanska, Lake Hanska, and Linden. Hope to see you on April 6th.

Thank you

Larry Harbo, Amy Johnson, Jeremy Berg



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

Braver/Wiser: Storms

Cover my earth, Mother, four times with many flowers.
Let the heavens be covered with the banked-up clouds.
Let the earth be covered with fog; cover the earth with rains.
Great waters, rains, cover the earth. Lightning, cover the earth.
Let thunder be heard over the earth; let thunder be heard;
Let thunder be heard over the six regions of the Earth.
—Zuni Prayer for Rain

How do you experience rain? Not the rain on the weather maps, but the rain that falls on you?

All my life, I lived in densely populated areas. My skies were small spaces cut out by buildings, houses, and tall trees. So when a rain storm came, it enveloped me and made me feel like my whole world had become the storm. I wouldn't know when it would start or when it would stop. It came and went, and I was smack in the middle of it.

Then I moved to New Mexico. These big skies had been calling my soul for thirty years, and I now understand why: they aren't just beautiful, they are also changing the way I exist.

During the summer, the humid air from the Gulf of Mexico lifts to our high desert terrain and produces tremendous scattered thunderstorms. In the vast landscapes of New Mexico, and under its big skies, those storms appear as if they've been magicked out of the weather maps. I can witness the rain falling near and far—some softly and others in earnest cloudbursts—blue skies in between and beyond.

The storms teach me how limited my perspective is. When I'm in one of those storms, I am not aware of the blue skies behind the torrential rain. I also cannot experience what it is like to be in that storm when I am outside of it and observing it from a safe distance.

Life is full of events like those storms. Some are nurturing, others are destructive. A storm can land softly on some of us while bringing devastation to many of us. But blue skies are also possible between the storms. Knowing this gives me the courage to go on. It also reminds me to keep widening my perspective, continuing to learn, and growing my compassion. When the storm is powerful, we need each other to weather it.

By Tomo Hillbo, Braver/Wiser Mar. 12, 2025

Prayer

Dearest Universe, the source of life: grant us humility to know that our perception is limited, give us genuine concern and curiosity to find out how others are experiencing this world, and nurture our creativity so we can transform that curiosity into compassion.

Don't Hesitate

by Mary Oliver

If you suddenly and unexpectedly feel joy, don't hesitate. Give in to it. There are plenty of lives and whole towns destroyed or about to be. We are not wise, and not very often kind. And much can never be redeemed. Still, life has some possibility left. Perhaps this is its way of fighting back, that sometimes something happens better than all the riches or power in the world. It could be anything, but very likely you notice it in the instant when love begins. Anyway, that's often the case. Anyway, whatever it is, don't be afraid of its plenty. Joy is not made to be a crumb.