



## December Luncheon Christmas Celebration

Now that the turkey is put away, it is time for our annual Christmas celebration. As in the past it is led by our own good board member David Langseth, and accompanied by pianist Kathleen West.

This has always been a well attended event, with many members bringing guests. Feel free to do so. Perhaps Santa will bring some treats this year.

Our Christmas leader has requested that this year, we follow the current practice of the Lutheran Church and mask up while singing, so we can sing heartily and safely.

Make your reservation today, see notes below. The order for fresh fish is now due Monday morning preceding the luncheon.



Our Christmas leader, Pastor David Langseth and his helpers Sandy and Gail at our 2019 song fest

## November Luncheon

Thanks to Bruce Carlson and Karl Pearson for the Vasa Park presentation, which was more of a walk through Viking and immigration roots as well. Well done! Our attendance was increased, the fish was good and the aquavit was cold. Tusen Takk!



### ***Torske Klub Luncheon - December 11, 2021—Reserve today!***

The luncheon will be held at the Des Plaines Elks Club, 495 Lee Street, Des Plaines, IL (847)824-1556 for directions that day). Cocktail hour begins at noon; dinner starts promptly at 1:00 P.M. when, according to our tradition, our BOSS rings the bell to seat us for dinner. Make your regular dinner reservation **by the evening of Sunday December 5** for the luncheon. Timely reservations insure that fish and a table space can be reserved for you. The fish order is called in after the deadline. There is \$5 surcharge for late reservations.

Call **(847)886-4841** at any time day or night to leave a reservation. As usual, please leave your MEMBERSHIP NUMBER, NAME, and the TOTAL number of people in your party. The same information is required when you reserve for other members. We have reservations from the following members: **38, 51, 55, 84, 97, 98, 120, 135, 149**. Board members note that they have a reservation automatically and must call or prearrange to cancel *or add guest to the count*. If you are not a member and wish to attend, call the same number and leave your name according to the principle "Once a guest, twice a friend, three times a member!" If you prefer email reservations, please send to **reservations@torskeklub.com** (not .org) with your total number of reservations, including yourself and guests. We will respond with a confirmation email. **\*\*TIP** – Don't know or remember your membership number? Check the mailing label. It is the number by your name. **FREE Raffle Ticket** to each member that brings one or more guests to the dinner this 2021/2022 season, excluding father/son/daughter day in April and excluding ladies day in February.

***Reservation Line: 847-886-4841***

Birthday remembrances for December include our good treasurer Milt Gustafson, Egil Fosslie, M.D., our good assistant boss Garry Grube, Michael Mogil, and Harold Bendicson. Happy birthday, God Jul, and Skål!

At the last meeting, our good member Stuart Bentley brought his sons Stuart Bentley of Roselle and Scott Bentley of Huntley, who have joined our group. Welcome all!

## Scandinavian Jul

Nordic Christmas roots go into the pagan holiday of Yule, a days-long feast that was perhaps the most important celebration of the year, the winter solstice. Christmas in the Nordics is still referred to by its pagan name: Jul in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, Jól in Iceland, and Joulu in Finland.

The idea that candles and a lively hearth should be part of the Christmas tradition is a hand-me-down from the Winter Solstice, as Stephen Nissenbaum explains in his Pulitzer Prize finalist book, *The Battle for Christmas*. The ancients sent the darkness scattering by filling their homes with fire-light.

For early Christians, the birth of Jesus was not a big holiday to celebrate—Easter was the main event. It was not until the 4th century AD that the papacy made the birth of Christ an official holiday. As Nissenbaum said in an interview with *Livescience*, “It never occurred to [the Church] that they needed to celebrate his birthday.”

The table for the Christmas Eve meal is often set with pinnekjøtt (dry-cured lamb ribs), ribbe (bone-in pork belly), and the acquired taste of lutefisk (cod that has been cured in lye) are local specialties, with the risengrynsgrøt; a hot rice pudding served with sugar, cinnamon and butter. The drink of choice is gløgg, a mulled wine that is often used to dip pepperkake, Norway’s answer to gingerbread cookies, but which features many more spices than ginger alone.

Many families have their own traditions this evening, such as decorating the Christmas tree, making a gingerbread house, or eating the risengrynsgrøt. An almond is hidden in the pudding, and if the almond turns up in your portion, you win a marzipan pig! On Christmas Eve, five bells ring from the churches, and gifts are opened at night, not on Christmas morning, as is the tradition elsewhere. Christmas Day itself does not have particular traditions, but in the week leading to New Year’s, time is taken to visit family members who you’ve not had time to see during the year.



In Sweden, the Christmas table will bring with jellied pig’s feet, sausage, lutefisk (note the slightly different spelling), ham (boiled, glazed with egg and dusted with mustard and crumbs), homemade pate, an anchovy dish called gubbröra, and pickled herring.

A Danish spread on Christmas Eve would likely contain stuffed duck or goose with apples and prunes, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, sliced beets and red cabbage—a bit of a parallel to the American Thanksgiving, but with a twist. Rice puddings rule dessert here, too, with two variations: risengrød, hot rice pudding or ris a l’amande (a French tradition of rice pudding mixed with whipped cream, vanilla, almonds and cherry sauce).

### Remember to send in Dues

The dues notices were sent in October for 2022. Call us if you did not get one. Members without dues are removed from the mailing list. Moving forward, all checks must be written to “Milt Gustafson” as our treasurer.

### Chicago Torske Klub Board of Directors

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