



The First Spiritualist Temple of East Aurora

A Member of the National Spiritualist Association of Churches, U.S.A.

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Newsletter, First Spiritualist Temple of East Aurora Sunday, September 19, 2021

By the numbers

Offering and attendance

- In August 2020, we held 5 religious services, with an average of 27 people at each service. Offering was \$1,303.50.
- In August 2021, we held 5 religious services, with an average of 25 people at each service. Offering was \$784.00.

NSAC Report

- Every year, we file a report with the NSAC, our chartering organization (National Spiritualist Association of Churches), due on August 31. The NSAC reporting year runs from July 01, 2020 through June 30, 2021. This year:
 - We held 52 religious services, with 1,388 attending.
 - We have 59 members (up from 55 members the previous year).
 - We had a net surplus of \$4,063.63 (income \$22,967.38, minus expenses \$18,903.75). That is, we spent less than we received. Numbers fluctuate a bit each year—some years we have a surplus, other years a deficit.

Quilt Fundraiser

- The gorgeous quilt created by Lyn Batt raised \$935 in raffle donations—woo-hoo! Lyn posted a video of the live drawing on our Facebook page. She says she's already purchased the supplies for the quilt she'll be working on as a raffle prize next year. This one will be predominantly in blues; yum!

Donation to Fox Cottage fund

- First Spiritualist Temple donated a total of \$1,000 to the Hydesville Memorial Park Endowment fund, in loving memory of Gladys Kellerman, long-time president of FST. This fund was established by NSAC so the Fox Cottage would be maintained in good shape for many years to come; it was dear to Gladys' heart. \$750 of this donation is allocated to general funds, with a matching dollar-for-dollar amount pledged by NSAC member Alice Robertson. The remaining \$250 will purchase a paving stone with Gladys' name engraved on it. Funds raised included \$250 from FST's operating budget, with the remaining amounts generously given by members and friends of the church.

Sunday Speakers

- September 19, Ron Skowronski
- September 26, Brenda Hawkins
- October 03, Bonnie Woods (Animal Blessing)
- October 10, Beverly Burke (Memorial for Judy Murnan; board meeting)
- October 17, Andrew Bozeman
- October 24, Gretchen Clark



- October 31, Bob Reuther
- November 07, Bonnie Woods (Pastoral Committee meeting with congregation)
- November 14, Robert Lowell Goller (board meeting)
- November 21, Ron Skowronski
- November 28, Darlene Feskun

General Events and Invitations

- Sunday, October 03, Bonnie Woods will offer a Blessing of the Animals during the worship service. With Covid restrictions, you cannot bring your critters with you—but bring them in your hearts, and when you get home pass the blessing along to them with our love.
- Sunday, October 10, Our regular Sunday worship service will be a memorial for Judy Murnan. Judy was a long-time member of First Spiritualist Temple: a gentle and loving healer, message minister, teacher and much more. Judy passed on March 29, 2021; a memorial service organized by Beverly Burke and attended by delegates of FST was held on April 10 in Batavia, New York. Family will attend the October service; anyone who wishes to say a few words and share memories of Judy may contact Beverly Burke (or me, and I'll pass the information along).
- Sunday, October 10 and Sunday, November 14 are the second Sundays of the month, when we hold board meetings. Officers gather to transact the business of running the church; any friend or member of the church is welcome to attend. If you would like to join in person, we gather downstairs; if you'd prefer to use Zoom, use the Sunday number noted at the end of this newsletter. We start about 1 p.m., give or take.
- Sunday, November 07 the Pastoral Committee will meet with the congregation, especially student workers, and anyone who would like to attend, immediately after the worship service (at about 12:30 p.m.) We'll discuss what's working well, what's not, and ask the membership questions about what they would like to see happening.
- Saturday, December 04 is the first Saturday of the holiday month, when the annual Christmas Bazaar is supposed to take place. We're going to keep an eye on how Covid-19 and the Delta variant is unfolding before announcing any plans. First and foremost, we want to keep everyone safe. We won't be able to serve a sit-down dinner; arrangement of baskets may be different than in previous years. If you are interested in helping brainstorm and put this event together, please contact Lyn Batt (or me, and I'll pass the information along).
- Wednesday, December 08 is our next All-Message service. When the pandemic first reared its ugly head, we did have one Mediums Day, with many mediums offering remote messages (by phone or Zoom). The remote-message option didn't appeal to many. Instead, we are trying to offer several All-Message services; mediums gather in the evening for a worship service which focuses exclusively on messages. We had planned one for mid-September—but many of our message ministers have day-jobs, and we couldn't schedule a workable date with enough people serving the platform. Our next All-Message service will be held at 7 p.m. in the church worship area.

Covid stuff

- NSAC and Covid-19: There has been an outbreak of Covid cases at Lily Dale. In addition, the NSAC annual convention has been cancelled for the second year in a row, as announced on their Facebook page. The convention was to have been held in Seattle, Washington in early October, but air travel for delegates, and the gathering of a large group of people from across the country, suggested it might not be a great idea.
- All Masks, All the Time: As you know, the Delta variant of Covid-19 has been much in the news. Those who have been vaccinated may become infected. Cases in vaccinated people are less severe, but they can still transmit the virus to those who (for whatever reason) are not vaccinated, with potentially deadly effects.

At FST, we are following the recommendations of the CDC for best practices to prevent transmission of Covid-19. Beginning immediately, we require that all individuals in the building wear properly-fitted masks. You may take off your mask if you are serving at the rostrum (speaker, message minister, musician); and if you are in a class where your instructor indicates you may briefly remove your mask if he or she deems it necessary.

In addition, please: (1) Make use of hand sanitizer stationed throughout the building, and wash your hands frequently. (2) Let me or another board or pastoral committee member know if you have tested positive for Covid. (3) Stay home if you are not feeling well.

- Vaccination Policy for Rob's Development Class: All those who wish to enroll in Robert Lowell Goller's class for Pre-Development and Development must be fully vaccinated by September 21, or two weeks before the class begins. You may privately show your original vaccine card, or show (or email) your New York State Excelsior Pass Q-code to either Jeanne or Darlene to demonstrate that you are fully vaccinated. We do not wish to single anyone out as unvaccinated; hence private meetings, and two individuals collecting information. Only Rob will have the complete list of people eligible for his class, and this list will only show that you are eligible. If you choose not to get the vaccine, you may tell anyone who asks that you had other obligations and could not meet the class at the time it was offered. Full information is being circulated to all members of the church.

Classes

- Monday, September 20, Thought Exchange returns, by Zoom only, at 7 p.m. until about 8:30, led by Jeanne Laurel. It has been on hiatus for summer. This class is an open discussion on topics selected in advance by those who attended previous meetings. For our first meeting, we'll discuss "What I did on my summer vacation that was Spiritualist." You can find Zoom information at the end of this newsletter. Freewill donations accepted; visit the Financial Table downstairs, or add a note to your donation in the Sunday offering box upstairs.
- Monday, September 27, Informational session by Zoom on How-to Home Circle, 6:45 check-in, 7 p.m. start, until about 8:30, led by Jeanne Laurel. Information will be circulated to those who have placed their names on the sign-up sheet downstairs; please read this information before the meeting. If you are interested but didn't sign the sheet, please let me know.

One of the things we'll need to do at this informational meeting is decide on a schedule of in-person meetings. Sunday afternoons at the church are either booked solid—or there's a Bills home game. (Go Bills!) That means we'll need to meet on a weekday or Saturday; please bring your calendar-planners to this meeting. We'll probably try for 4 or 5 additional meetings on a regular schedule.

Anyone may join us, whether or not you have had experience bringing messages. The goal of this class is not to teach mediumship, but to teach what a home circle is and can do for you—and to offer participants an opportunity to break off into their own home circles which meet independently. Because home circles work best when the same participants meet consistently, you'll be asked to plan to attend all in-person meetings regularly. Freewill donations accepted; visit the Financial Table downstairs, or add a note to your donation in the Sunday offering box upstairs.

- Wednesday, October 06, Pre-Development and Development class for those interested in bringing messages from spirit, 7 p.m. at the church, led by Robert Lowell Goller. Runs every Wednesday through November 10; attendance at all sessions is expected; \$80 fee for all 6 weeks.
- Every Other Thursday at church, Darlene's Philosophy of Spiritualism class continues meeting at 6:30 p.m.; the group is currently discussing Marilyn Awtry's book *Living in the Light*. Please contact Darlene (or me, and I'll pass the information along) to find out what book the class is currently using, and to see if there is any variation in the schedule. Freewill donations accepted; visit the Financial Table downstairs, or add a note to your donation in the Sunday offering box upstairs.

- Last Sunday of each month, Beverly Burke and Lynette Lex are happy to meet with anyone who wishes to join a study group for those enrolled in the MPI (Morris Pratt Institute) class offering. The meeting is after church, downstairs.
- Additional classes in the wings
 - One or more sessions for those wishing to train as student healers to serve the church. We cannot offer hands-on healing at this time, but we can discuss distance and absent healing, and review how healing works generally. Details still being hammered out.
 - In January 2022, Andrew Bozeman will offer Working with Angels: An Experiential Workshop. Classes will meet on Saturdays, 2-1/2 hours per class, and will include a portfolio of printed materials. It is designed for those who (1) suspect they have experienced Angelic contact, (2) believe Angelic communication and assistance are a possibility, or (3) just want to get an idea of what this "Angel thing" is all about. The fee will be \$15 per class session, or \$60 for all four classes.
 - A possible offering in 2022 by Lynette Lex on using artwork in mediumship; details are not yet set.

Help wanted

- Buffalo Dream Weavers. Warm clothing for Buffalo winters for folks who need it. Search Facebook for "BuffaloDreamWeavers." You can drop off gently used clothing, preferably bagged and labeled, at church. Our thanks to Donna Bush, Tina Chlewicki, and Beth Heaney for serving as our connectors between church and this organization.
- FISH of East Aurora. Ecumenical resource in East Aurora for various forms of assistance, including food pantry. Search Facebook for "FishofEastAurora." You can drop off unexpired nonperishables with us, clearly labeled. FISH will probably be gearing up for Thanksgiving and Christmas food and toy drives in the near future. They have also started making their community closet (closed previously for Covid) available, and are in need of seasonal (warm!) clothing donations. Thanks to Beverly Burke for ferrying food and other donations to FISH.
- St. Matthias Pet Food Pantry. Cat & dog food (especially canned), cat litter, for pets in need. Search Facebook for "Smcpetpantry." You can bring in donations, label them and leave them with us. Thanks to Diana Moore for serving as our connector between church and this outreach effort.
- First Spiritualist Temple of East Aurora. Yes, we need help too!
 - Secretary: The position calls for someone with organizational and computer skills, attention to detail, and an ability to attend board meetings and take minutes (second Sunday of each month), as well as attending most Sunday services. When I held the office, I found myself spending several hours each week out of church (sometimes more, sometimes less) on various tasks. The specific duties to be assigned are in a state of transition.
 - Committee member, Audit: The Audit Committee reviews the books of FST (purchases, income), comparing ledger entries to receipts, checking math as needed, and assuring that our books are well-kept and in order. Audits are performed at least once a quarter.
 - Committee members, Reception: As the name suggests, we need friendly faces to meet new and returning visitors at the front door of the church on Sundays. Despite the name limitation, Reception Committee is in charge of decorations and general spiffing up of the worship and lobby areas. Members in Reception may also wish to take on some of the pre-planning each Sunday: making sure water, tissue-boxes, offering box and similar details are in place.

Zoomies

Our system of one meeting number for each day of the week seems to be working well! On any Monday, at any time of the day, if you have a class or meeting, you can use the links below. (We can only host one meeting at a time under the terms of our account, so there cannot be any overlap.)

- Mondays, link <https://zoom.us/j/98908343264>, ID 989 0834 3264
- Tuesdays, link <https://zoom.us/j/93782889733>, ID 937 8288 9733
- Wednesdays, link <https://zoom.us/j/99498052420>, ID 994 9805 2420
- Thursdays, link <https://zoom.us/j/93033218920>, ID 930 3321 8920
- Fridays, link <https://zoom.us/j/94842337658>, ID 948 4233 7658
- Saturdays, link <https://zoom.us/j/97800261770>, ID 978 0026 1770
- Sundays, link <https://zoom.us/j/98423834708>, ID 984 2383 4708

To get into the Zoom meeting, you'll have to install Zoom's proprietary software. Let me know if you've got questions about how to do that. Then:

- Click the link; or open Zoom and enter ID number.
- For any meeting, audio only, dial 929 205 6099 and enter meeting ID.

Thank you to everyone who helps keep this church moving forward, in ways big and small. It's all important, from buying a single raffle ticket to singing a hymn with us on Sundays, to sharing your ideas on how this church can remain a harmonious, welcoming place for all. If you need more information, please feel free to contact me by phone (home 716-876-4805, cell for text or voice 716-208-0624) or email (jeannelaurel@gmail.com). Love, light & laughter – Jeanne Laurel, President, First Spiritualist Temple of East Aurora