



The First Spiritualist Temple of East Aurora

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

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Newsletter, November 05, 2020

Christmas Bazaar Plans Develop

Our legendary Christmas Bazaar cannot be squashed by the pandemic. Hours will be Fri., Dec. 04, 2020 (5 pm to 8 pm) and Sat., Dec. 05, 2020 (10 am to 8 pm) for basket viewing and bidding, and for craft sales. There will be two special raffles plus door prizes (one each adult, child). Winners will be drawn after service on Sun., Dec. 06, 2020; you need not be present to win. (We'll call and arrange transfer of goodies if you're not at the church.)

To reduce the risk of Covid transmission, we'll have one-way traffic flow. Masks are required in the building at all times. Hand sanitizer will be available. We'll disinfect the handrails on stairwells.

Call or text Lyn Batt at 585-322-3213 for more information about safety precautions, bazaar setup, basket assembly, or to volunteer. We need volunteers to be at the church while baskets and crafts are on display (see days & hours above). We rely on donated baskets (and crafts!) from members, friends, and local merchants, as well as members to staff the church for the event. Empty baskets are free for borrowing in the downstairs area of the church.

Christmas Festivities

It appears from the Pastoral Committee meeting with the congregation on Nov. 01 that we will be holding our Christmas Eve service this year, as enough people have expressed interest. In past years, we have gathered on Dec. 24 (a Thurs. this year) for a 6:30 pm healing service, followed immediately by a 7 pm worship service including messages. We'll do so again this year.

Of course, as Spiritualists we do not celebrate the birth of a savior through a miracle. As much as we admire Jesus as a master teacher, we don't believe in sin, eternal damnation, or redemption. Yet our church family has found comfort and upliftment in gathering at a time much of the rest of the world sets aside for spiritual reflection.

Classes

1. **Thought Exchange** continues the first and third Mon. of each month. The next meetings are Mon., Nov. 16; Dec. 14 and Dec. 28. (We'll see if anyone plans to be around on Dec. 28 before locking that date in!) I'm your host, Jeanne Laurel. Meetings begin at 7 pm, and run until about 8:30 pm.

You can attend in person if you wish. Come to the back door; be sure to wear a properly fitted mask and social distance while inside. Or, if you wish, you can attend virtually using Zoom; email me if you want the meeting ID code. (If you don't know how to Zoom, I can show you—just let me know during Sun. church service, or we can try to talk through it by phone.)



2. **Spiritualism 101**, our class for prospective members and those who want to know more about what we teach, is wrapping up. We just need to hear from those interested in this foundational class to start another one running.
3. **Pre-development and Development** are currently on hold. If you haven't already expressed interest, please feel free to email me.

It's Happening! Sermons on Facebook!

Thanks to Andrew Bozeman who kindly recorded and added titles to the sermon presented by Gretchen Clark Sun., Nov. 01, 2020. He sent the video to me, and I uploaded to Facebook. Easy peasy, and a beautiful result!

My own effort to livestream, sadly, was not so successful with Celeste Elliott Sun., October 26. I tried to use Zoom; my collective of guinea pigs reported the results were mixed. Apparently, Facebook is a better way to do this.

We're not going to be broadcasting live—sermons will be uploaded by the end of Sun. (fingers crossed). And we're only recording the sermon. Why? (a) We're a casual, friendly church. We don't want information or images of people (even mentioned in passing) uploaded to a publicly accessible space. There are bad people out there in cyberspace. (b) Likewise, we want to welcome children, and we want families to feel comfortable. Some folks do not feel comfortable with having their kids' images uploaded. Again—those bad people. (c) Our hymnal music is copyright-safe; it can be used in any reasonable way. However, if we have a soloist performing someone else's music, or even hitting a few licks of it, and that gets uploaded—we could be in serious trouble with copyright holders.

If you like our sermons and want to find out more about Spiritualism online, consider these resources, with presentations from NSAC Spiritualists, and from aligned individuals and organizations:

1. Lily Dale now has an internet radio station. Visit <https://www.blogtalkradio.com/lilydaleradio> to play podcasts from your computer, or download the "Google Podcasts" app and search for "Lily Dale Radio."
2. The NSAC has listings on Facebook of "NSAC Online Services and Classes" at <https://facebook.com/groups/340569476910210>.

A Request during Healing and Worship Service

Please don't sit in the front row of pews while our regular healing service is in session (each Sun., 10:30 to 11 am). For one thing, we're trying to follow safe social distancing protocols. Another problem is that healers, and those sitting for healings, can feel crowded and energy disrupted if folks are moving about too close.

I know—in the past, we've asked you to sit toward the front if you want a healing, to avoid congestion in the aisles as those who want a healing move toward the front of the worship area. But with new distancing, and everyone's heightened awareness of other people close to them, we've heard from some that the healing chairs can easily feel crowded.

Likewise, please put cellphones away, in addition to putting them in silent mode. Yes—you're welcome to read the Principles from your phone, or to have the phone set to "vibrate" for emergency calls. However, we ask that you avoid extensive texting or social media activity during our worship service out of respect to those around you.

Buffalo Dream Weavers

Several of our church members work with this organization to provide cheer and warmth throughout the cold, dark winters—for homeless people, seniors, and folks who could generally use a warm fuzzy feeling. I've condensed and sketched out the current initiatives—I'm sure more are in the offing if you miss a deadline.

1. **Warm It Forward #14.** Donations needed through Nov. 6, 2020. Clean new/gently-used (1) jackets and coats; (2) sweaters and sweatshirts; (3) hats, gloves, mittens; (4) scarves; (5) winter boots; (6) thermal or long underwear. Each item should be bagged and labeled—ex. "men's gloves, size large." (If you miss this go-around, another will be along directly.)
2. **Blessing Bag Drive for Seniors.** Donations needed Nov. 21 through Dec. 5, 2020. Supplies requested for each bag: (1) hand lotion; (2) pair of socks or gloves; (3) lip balm; (4) large-print crossword or word search book; (5) nightstand-sized holiday decoration; (6) sugar-free candy.
3. **Stocking Drive for St. Luke's Mission of Mercy.** Donations needed Nov. 28 through Dec. 15, 2020. Supplies requested for each stocking: (1) a \$5 gift card to food vendor; (2) pair of socks; (3) two candy canes; (4) small toy.

To find out more about "BuffaloDreamWeavers," search for that term on Facebook, or visit the shortened link I've created: <https://urlnet.xyz/9Sm1U>. You can also call church member all-star Tina Chlewicki at 716-308-0780 if you would like to schedule a pick-up or drop-off at church, or to find out more.

FISH, our Local Ecumenical Service Organization

From the FISH Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/fishofeastaurora>)

FISH is currently experiencing a 30% increase in the number of families we serve from our area. We remain a drive-thru for food distribution on Tues. and Thurs. from 1 to 3pm. Any help with food or monetary donations would be greatly appreciated. Also, to keep our clients and volunteers safe, our clothing room remains closed.

For the upcoming holidays, FISH will accept any food donations at this time. We are basically low on all food items. Donations of small chickens, small turkeys, hams, stuffing mix, instant potatoes, fruit, vegetables, pasta a roni, rice a roni, cranberry sauce, cake mixes, brownie mixes, jello, pudding, and juice are examples of our holiday needs.

1. **Thanksgiving** Food Distribution: Tues., Nov. 17 and Thurs., Nov. 19
2. **Christmas** Food Distribution: Tues., Dec. 15 and Thurs., Dec. 17.
3. **Toy Drive:** We are also accepting new, unwrapped toys and gift cards for teens for our Toy Day on Dec. 19. We would need all donations by Dec. 10. Toy Day will be a drive thru for those families who are registered with us.

FISH will be closed Dec. 23 to Jan. 1, 2021.

With love, light, laughter to all, Jeanne Laurel, president@firstspiritualisttemple.com, 716-876-4805 (home/land), 716-208-0624 (cell)