



The First Spiritualist Temple of East Aurora

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

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Newsletter June 20, 2021

How time flies when we're having fun. Between the late May board meeting (deferred a week in honor of Mother's Day), the June 6 member meeting, and the June 13 board meeting, I haven't had a chance to get out a newsletter until now.

By the numbers

- In May 2020, we had 5 online streaming services on Facebook (pandemic precaution). Total donations during this month were \$1,800.
- In May 2021, we had 5 in-person services in our church building. About 34 people attended each service. Total offerings were \$840.

Welcome new members!

At the June 2021 board meeting, the board approved four new members: Carrie Batt, Megan Boggs, Jennifer Mintz, and Jayette Sinclair. We'll hold a "right hand of fellowship" service for them at a mutually convenient time, to welcome them to our congregation. Congratulations!

Quick overview of annual meeting decisions

- Members approved a revision to our bylaws to establish a standing committee, Social Media and Information Technology. This committee replaces the *ad hoc* (as needed) committee on Social Media, chaired by Lou Fioretti, and expands the committee's tasks to include planning and using electronic equipment, possibly for live-streaming Sunday worship services. Members stated they did not want the message service broadcast.
- Lobby beautification: Andrew Bozeman's proposal to do some redecorating in the front-door lobby can move forward, to draw attention to our beautiful "welcome home" sign above sanctuary doors, and to thank all attendees for their presence.
- Members agreed we can now partially relax pandemic restrictions.
 - Masks are still required for everyone upstairs (as we may have non-vaccinated individuals attending), but they may be removed downstairs by those who are fully vaccinated. We will start singing again during services, rather than humming (with masks on). Affidavits and hymnals have been returned to pews. If it seems safe, we hope to return to brunch downstairs by fall.
 - In addition, we will resume the practice of individuals wishing healing sitting in healer chairs as of July 04. However, healers will hold their hands above individuals, rather than touching. Masks must be worn, and sanitizer used. On September 05, healers will resume hands-on healing. Those who have not been vaccinated are asked not to do hands-on healing, and not to sit in chairs for hands-on healing.
- Elections for board and pastoral committee resulted in the following people serving through May 2022. Terms of service are shown following the position title. Those elected at the June 2021 meeting are designated by an asterisk:
 - President (2021-2023) Jeanne Laurel*
 - Vice President (2020-2022) Darlene Feskun
 - Secretary (2021-2023) Sandra Lombardo*
 - Treasurer (2020-2022) Trisha Young



- Financial Secretary (2021-2023) Donna Bush*
- Trustees, even-year cycle (2020-2022) Lyn Batt and Julie Braun
- Trustees, odd-year cycle (2021-2023) Gina Braun* and Tom Schickling*
- Pastoral Committee (2021-2023) Beverly Burke*, Beth Heaney* and Cheryl Ziccardi*
- Delegates to 2021 NSAC Convention, October 3-8, Seattle Renee Sullivan (definite yes), Lyn Batt and Darlene Feskun (maybe). We are allowed to send 4 delegates to speak and vote on behalf of our church. We may also send 4 proxies, to be assigned as stand-in delegates for other churches who have not filled their allotment for delegates.

Committees

The annual member meeting is when we set committees for the coming year. To save time and avoid passing paper hand-to-hand, we put this task off when we met June 06.

Please consider joining one or more of the following committees. If you're already on a committee, or you are a committee chair, please confirm with committee members that they wish to continue serving. Of course, you may rotate the chair duties as you see fit among members.

Committee chairs are responsible for recruiting members, calling meetings, and preparing a brief written report to be discussed at each board meeting. Board meetings are held second Sunday of each month (next meeting: July 11)—all members and friends are always welcome to attend, listen, or bring business before the board.

- Audit: Reviews receipts, ledger entries, assures financial records are kept accurately.
- Building & Maintenance: Maintains appliances, organization and cleanliness, building integrity inside and outdoors, garden.
- Bylaws: Drafts proposals for member review at annual meeting as requested by board, members, or on their own initiative.
- Kitchen: Keeps kitchen in working order, stocked with seasonings, utensils, paper goods.
- Library: Maintains records of books lent and returned; receives and catalogs book donations or acquisitions.
- Music: Selects music for Sunday worship; schedules musical solos, organist, pre-recorded hymn accompaniment.
- Reception: Greets visitors Sunday mornings; organizes and maintains seasonal or permanent sanctuary and lobby decorations.
- Social Media and Information Technology: Manages Facebook, MeetUp and other social media channels; reviews and oversees technology use and needs.
- Ways & Means: Oversees fundraising, including candy-bar sales, Christmas bazaar, special raffles and prizes.

Upcoming speakers and Sunday events

- June 20, Robert Lowell Goller
- June 27, Bonnie Woods (Pastoral Committee meets with congregation)
- July 04, Darlene Feskun (those wishing healing may sit in healer chairs; no hands-on healing)
- July 11, Lynette Lex (board meeting)
- July 18, Diana Moore (annual picnic)
- July 25, Cyndi Pirog

All-message service

Wednesday, June 23, 7:00 p.m., we will hold an all-message service. Members and friends of the church are invited to attend. We'll have a little music, and a few prayers, but the focus will be on messages. We currently have 6 student messengers who will be attending to messages from spirit.

Pastoral meeting with congregation

Sunday, June 27, 12:15 p.m., the Pastoral Committee will meet with the congregation, immediately after the Sunday worship service. Student healers and message workers are encouraged to attend. This meeting is held three times a year, to discuss what's going well, what needs attention, and other concerns anyone in the congregation has.

Picnic

Sunday, July 18, 12:15 p.m. With pandemic issues moving into the rearview mirror, we've decided we can hold our picnic this year. It will be a little different, but we'll still have the essential ingredients: food, fun, fellowship.

We will hold our regular church service this Sunday, with healing at 10:30 am, and worship service 11:00 am to 12:15 pm. After that, we will adjourn to Hamlin Park in East Aurora, where we have a picnic shelter reserved (and a restroom available!) We will have a sign-up sheet for the church to treat you to a barbeque serving of chicken. Members can bring their own "dish to pass" items, or may choose to bring their own meal. (Please remember we will not have on-site refrigeration in the park, and choose accordingly.)

You'll need to bring your own plate and personal utensils (fork, knife, spoon), and your own soft drinks or water. You may also want to include sunscreen, a folding chair, and other personal gear.

A map pinpointing the shelter, and a sign-up sheet for a portion of chicken will both be available shortly at the church. If you would prefer, you can email me and I'll convey the information to the right place (map to you, chicken request to those ordering).

Credential Renewals

Sunday, August 01 is the deadline for student healers and message workers to return their requests for renewal to serve our church. The Pastoral Committee has begun mailing out a letter and form. We require a yearly renewal for the safety and well-being of our church; there is no fee. You may snail-mail or email the form back, or drop it off at the financial table.

Sunday, August 01 is also the deadline for Ordained Ministers, and National Spiritualist Teachers to submit their NSAC renewal forms and fees to the church for processing by the board of trustees, and eventual filing August 31 with the NSAC. You can find the appropriate forms at <https://nsac.org/member-pages/forms/>. (Let me know if you need the password to get to the "member pages" of the NSAC site.)

Classes

- Completed: **Spiritualism 101** with Darlene Feskun wrapped up in May. We will offer another class, which we ask individuals to take before applying for membership, when we have another handful of people requesting the class.
- Completed: **Terminology for Development Students**. This class met on Tuesday, June 08, with Jeanne Laurel. It covered the vocabulary and concepts useful to students of healing and mediumship. (Pre-development module. Recommended for those who plan to enroll in Development. You are not obliged to enroll in Development if you take this course.)
- First and third Mondays of each month: **Thought Exchange** with Jeanne Laurel. This is a Zoom-only class; the next meetings are June 21 and July 05, from 7:00 to 8:30 pm. (No meeting July 19.) There is no expectation for regular attendance; anyone is welcome. The topic for June 21 was prompted by Ron Skowronski's sermon on 06/06/2021, a quotation from the Dao De Jing (Tao Te Ching) by Laozi (Lao Tzu, 6th century BCE): "You should want more for others than you want for yourself." Topics are chosen at the end of each meeting for the next meeting. Free-will donations are appreciated; please give funds to the instructor, at the financial table, or note explicitly in memo line if you place a check in the offering box on Sunday.
- Started June 15 and meeting mostly on Tuesdays by Zoom: **Homiletics**, how to prepare and deliver a sermon for Spiritualists with Jeanne Laurel. A specific schedule and a textbook have been distributed. Late entry is possible; please contact me. You must have taken Spiritualism 101; church membership preferred. Consistent attendance expected. The cost is \$60 for the entire course, or \$5 per meeting (except for 2

workshops, which are free.) Please give funds to the instructor, at the financial table, or note explicitly in memo line if you place a check in the offering box on Sunday.

- Last Sunday of each month: **Morris Pratt Institute Study Group**. Next meeting June 27; facilitated by Beverly Burke and Lynette Lex, recent MPI graduates. Drop in as needed for help with Morris Pratt lessons. Free-will donations are appreciated; please give funds to instructor, at the financial table, or note explicitly in memo line if you place a check in the offering box on Sunday.
- Sunday, July 11, 18 and 25: **The Nine Principles of Spiritualism** with Tom Schickling. Meets in person only, 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. Free-will donations are appreciated; please give funds to the instructor, at the financial table, or note explicitly in memo line if you place a check in the offering box on Sunday. (Pre-development module. Recommended for those who plan to enroll in Development. You are not obliged to enroll in Development if you take this course.)
- Wednesdays starting July 07: **Meditation**, six sessions with Andrew Bozeman, running through August 08, Wednesdays in person, from 7:00 to 8:30 pm. The cost is \$90 for all 6 sessions, or \$15 per session. Please give funds to the instructor, at the financial table, or note explicitly in memo line if you place a check in the offering box on Sunday. (Pre-development module. Recommended for those who plan to enroll in Development. You are not obliged to enroll in Development if you take this course.)
- Thursdays starting July 15: **Philosophy of Spiritualism** with Darlene Feskun. Meets in person at church, and by Zoom, from 6:30 to 8:00 pm. Future schedule of Thursday meetings to be determined with attendee input. Book for discussion: *Living in the Light* by Marilyn Awtry. Free-will donations are appreciated; please give funds to the instructor, at the financial table, or note explicitly in memo line if you place a check in the offering box on Sunday. (Pre-development module. Recommended for those who plan to enroll in Development. You are not obliged to enroll in Development if you take this course.)
- Wednesday, September 8 and continuing on Wednesday evenings, **Pre-Development and Development**. Led by Robert Lowell Goller. In-person only. Cost and specific time to be announced. Consistent attendance expected. Spiritualism 101 and church membership required. Participation in one or more of the pre-development modules (noted in descriptions above) preferred.

Zoom numbers

Zoom's setup assumes a schedule of meetings (and how people are notified) different than what we actually use. There's been a little confusion in our first half year of use. As I've noted in a previous newsletter, here is the new schedule we'll use until the end of the year:

Day of the week and number:

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

How to use:

Click the link; or open Zoom and enter ID number.

For any meeting, audio only, dial 929 205 6099 and enter meeting ID.

If your meeting is on a Monday, use the Monday link or number—etc.

If you're unfamiliar with the technology, I may be able to help; feel free to call me.

Wow; this newsletter is full of stuff! Thanks to everyone who makes this church possible. Stay happy and healthy. If you have any questions about something missing from this newsletter, or about anything regarding the church, please feel free to contact me. Love, light and laughter – Jeanne Phoenix Laurel, President, First Spiritualist Temple. (Cell 716-208-0624; home 716-876-4805; email jeannelaurel@gmail.com or president@firstspiritualisttemple.com.)