



# The First Spiritualist Temple of East Aurora

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

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## Newsletter, October 15, 2020

### Halloween: Will we dress up in costumes?

On October 25, the Sunday service before Halloween, the board suggested that those attending the service come in costume. However, there was concern that visitors who aren't familiar with our church may get the wrong impression about Spiritualism. Those who serve the church—speaker, service chair, healers, message ministers—are asked to stick to our Platform Decorum guidelines. This basically means business casual—a dress, skirt or slacks, blouse or sweater, and dressy footwear for women; a suit with tie and jacket for men. (If you would like a copy of our Platform Decorum, most recently revised in May 2016, please contact me.) Those who are not serving on the platform may dress as they wish.

### Classes and Meetings

For all classes which meet at the church: please wear a mask, stay home if you're not feeling well or need to quarantine, observe social distancing guidelines, and bring your own snacks or coffee if you wish. For meetings not held after a worship service, please use the back door (and ignore the sign on the back door that says "enter through front"!)

1. **Spiritualism 101** will be led by Judy Murnan starting Sunday, October 18 at 9 a.m., and lasting until 10:20 (Healing Service portion of our service begins at 10:30). You'll need to purchase the \$10 workbook for the event; copies will be available October 18. The class will run for several weeks on Sunday mornings, and will give participants an overview of what we believe and teach, what we don't, and why. You may apply for church membership after completing this class, but it's not required.

This class will continue the Spiritualism 101 course that was halted in March 2020 by the pandemic, and will accept new people. Zoom will not be available for this class, although if we get a handful of people interested in a Spiritualism 101 class we may set one up in the future. There is no charge for this class, although donations are always gratefully accepted. All are welcome.

2. **Thought Exchange** is off to a great start, with 9 people attending by Zoom and in person on October 5. The next class meets Monday, October 19, with Jeanne Laurel as facilitator. The topic is "How do you know it's spirit talking to you, and not just your monkey mind?" The event starts at 7 p.m., and runs until 8:30 p.m. No advance notice is necessary to attend; you can come to any meeting without having been to others. Meetings will continued the first and third Mondays of each month—so November 02 and 16 will be our next meetings.

If you would like to attend by Zoom, please let me know in advance at the contact information at the end of this mailing. There is no charge for this gathering, although donations are always gratefully accepted. All are welcome



3. **Pre-Development** will be led by Judy Murnan starting Thursday, October 22 at 6:30 p.m., running until 8 p.m. More information about future meetings will be available at that time. Pre-development introduces students to basic concepts of mediumship and healing, and is a required class for those who want to take classes on either mediumship or spiritual healing.  
Zoom will not be available for this class, as it needs face-to-face discussion. (We may revisit this idea if weather is an issue.) Class members must have completed Spiritualism 101 and be a member of the First Spiritualist Temple of East Aurora. There is no charge for this gathering, although donations are always gratefully accepted. There will be no book-purchase requirement, although books will be recommended; students will read selections of many books, including those from our library.
4. **Pastoral Meeting with Congregation** will be held Sunday, November 01 upstairs in the worship area, right after service ends—about 12:15 p.m. The pastoral committee and board members will be available to talk about how things are going, what’s working well and what’s not, as well as student healers and message worker concerns. The board is especially interested in knowing whether we are likely to have a (too-)packed house or an empty house if we hold our annual Christmas Eve service on December 24. Everyone is welcome; student workers are especially requested to attend.
5. **Board Meeting** will be held Sunday, November 08 starting at about 1 p.m. in person, downstairs in the dining area, following social distancing guidelines. Members are welcome to join; the board addresses issues brought by members at the beginning of the meeting to avoid making you hang around. Zoom attendance is available; let me know if you need a link. Board meetings are held the second Sunday of each month (with rare changes, announced in advance, due to special circumstances).

## Events and Fundraisers

1. **Mediums Day** is being held October 24, 2020. Mediums working in the church include Darlene Feskun; Lynette Lex (spirit art); and Judy Murnan. Those working remotely include Cyndi Pirog, CM, Celeste Elliott; Gretchen Clark, CM; Bonnie Woods (spirit art); and Brenda Hawkins.  
The cost is \$30 for a 20-minute reading (in person or remotely); readings with spirit art are \$40 for a 20-minute reading. For readings with remote mediums, please pay by check before Tuesday, October 20, 2020. All readings are by appointment; to remain within pandemic safety guidelines, walk-ins will not be accepted. Please wear a mask; stay home if you aren’t feeling well; observe social distancing and hand-hygiene; those coming to the church please enter through the front door. Appointments are on the hour; we’ll use the extra time between readings to clean and sanitize. You can make an appointment by calling 716-427-3203.  
This is the first year we’ve tried remote readings for Mediums Day. Time slots for in-person readings at the church are filling up fast; remote readings, not so much. If you want us to continue remote readings in the future, kindly let us know, or vote “yes” by booking an appointment.
2. **Christmas Bazaar** is definitely on! Plans are still taking shape, so don’t take this as the last word—but we’re looking at:
  - a. Review of baskets downstairs in dining area, Friday, Saturday and Sunday morning (December 04-06, 2020). Limited groups of people; one-way traffic flow; frequent disinfection during viewing hours.
  - b. Limit of 100 baskets, to avoid crowding and distribution issues. Folks in this church are generous, so we may reallocate and combine materials from some baskets.
  - c. Crafts for sale (please, no “rummage sale” recycles—crafts only); but no bake sale.
  - d. One adult and one child door prize; fewer special items.
  - e. Drawing on Sunday, December 06, with appointments for the lucky winners to pick up prizes.
 So please, do start putting together baskets! The hard-working elves of Ways & Means Committee will probably want to have all baskets in right after Thanksgiving so they can spend extra time planning a pandemic-safe but still-glorious display. Empty baskets will be available downstairs or on request. We’ve

seen some creative recycling of festively-decorated boxes as well. You can bring in stuff without baskets as well—new, or in new condition, please.

## **The nitty-gritty: numbers and speakers**

### **1. Attendance and offering**

- September 2020 (4 weeks) attendance totaled 125 present (about 31 per week), offering \$666.00 (\$166.50 per week).
- September 2019 (5 weeks) attendance totaled 182 present (about 36 per week), offering \$775.75 (\$151.55 per week).

### **2. Upcoming Sunday speakers and chairs:**

- October 18, 2020: speaker Barbara Kellerman, chair Cheryl Ziccardi
- October 25, 2020: speaker Celeste Elliott, chair Cheryl Ziccardi
- November 01, 2020: speaker Gretchen Clark, chair Beverly Burke
- November 08, 2020: speaker Robert Lowell Goller, chair Cheryl Ziccardi
- November 15, 2020: speaker Beverly Burke, chair Cheryl Ziccardi

## **Techno church**

1. **Zoom** is coming to church! Yes we've been Zooming here and there, but mainly coat-tailing on the good graces of Julie Braun, board of trustees member, who has her own pro account. We are going to invest the \$150 per year to get the church its very own Zoom account, which should make us able to push out notification of meeting IDs more quickly. The extra money gets us unlimited-time meetings, and some storage space for recorded material.
2. **Uploads and streaming** are coming! A number of folks have asked for live-stream services, like the ones we did between the end of March and the beginning of July. I'm looking into using Zoom for live broadcasts, and Facebook for uploads: <https://www.facebook.com/First-Spiritualist-Temple-of-East-Aurora-NY-762684440559318>; or, in a shortened link, <https://urlnet.xyz/U9IFH>. We want to make sure our members are safe from internet trolls and trackers, so we won't broadcast anything but the sermon—and then, only if the sermon presenter agrees.

I'll try to use the camera; I know I can Zoom from my phone; and... I've got a lot of other stuff to do around the church. Right now, this is a tentative, likely imperfect foray into using the technology. Anybody who wants to jump in and help out is welcome! Basically, I don't want "the perfect to become the enemy of the good"—trying to get it all exactly right, and therefore postponing indefinitely. Let me know if you want to be among the guinea pigs to receive a Zoom broadcast of the sermon, starting 11:15 to 11:30-ish, assuming the speaker that day is amenable.

## **'Tis the Season**

1. **Weather** may close the church; watch our website <http://www.firstspiritualisttemple.com/>; our Facebook page; and local TV channel weather-closing crawls on WGRZ, channel 2; WIVB, channel 4; and WKBW, channel 7.
2. **Feed** people (FISH of East Aurora); pets (Saint Matthias Pet Pantry); and each other's souls. See a board member for more information on the first two—consult Spirit about the final item.

Love you all – Jeanne Laurel, President, First Spiritualist Temple of East Aurora

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Addendum: In the October 15, 2020 newsletter, I supplied some information on classes. Please note the following changes:

1. **Spiritualism 101**, our introduction to what our church teaches, **will** start as planned on Sunday, October 18, 2020, running from 9 a.m. to 10:20. However, Darlene Feskun will teach the class.
2. **Pre-Development**, an introduction to the basics of healing and mediumship, **will not** meet on Thursday, October 22 at 6:30 p.m. The class is being postponed. We'll supply announcements as soon as we have more information.

Thank you for your patience! Love, light, laughter—Jeanne Laurel, 10/16/2020  
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