



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 20, 2022

Upcoming speakers and events

November 2022

Sunday 20 – Rev. Andrew Bozeman (last minute weather closing, no service Nov. 20)

Sunday 27 – Rev. Ron Skowronski

Sunday 27, set up for Christmas Bazaar after service

December 2022

Thursday 01, Christmas Bazaar final touches

Friday 02, Christmas Bazaar, baked goods delivery (times TBA)

Saturday 03, Christmas Bazaar, 10 a.m. until approx. 8 p.m.

Sunday 04 – Rev. Andrew Bozeman

Tuesday 06, Last day for donations to Toy Drive, FISH

Sunday 11 – Robert Lowell Goller

Saturday 17, 50th annual Carolcade, East Aurora (www.eanycc.com)

Sunday 18 – Lyn Batt

Saturday 24 – Special Christmas Eve Service, 7 p.m.; Darlene Feskun

Saturday 31 – Zoom ball drop watch party

Sunday 25 – Closed for Christmas Day

January 2023

Sunday 01 – Closed for New Year's Day

Sunday 08 – Beverly Burke (pet memorial)

Sunday 15 – Robert Lowell Goller (people memorial)

Reminder. First Spiritualist Temple of East Aurora will not hold service on either Sunday, December 25, or Sunday, January 1. We understand from our members that folks will be too preoccupied with family, football, and perhaps a wee bit of a grapejuice hangover, to attend regular Sunday services.

Memorial service for pets who have passed into spirit the past year January 8; memorial for people January 15. Speakers TBA.

Bills home games (traffic alert!)

Sun., Nov. 20, Browns, 1 p.m. (game moved to Detroit because of weather)

Sun., Dec. 11, Jets, 1 p.m.

Sun. Dec. 18, Dolphins, 1 p.m.



Weather and closings. If the weather seems treacherous, by all means stay home. To find out if the church is open, you can check any of the three local TV affiliates, either during broadcast or on their websites. You can also check our own website and Facebook.

- WGRZ, ch 2: <https://www.wgrz.com/closings>
- WIVB, ch 4: <https://www.wivb.com/weather/closings/>
- WKBW, ch 7: <https://www.wkbw.com/weather/school-closings-delays>

By the Numbers

- Last year, October 2021, we averaged 27 people each Sunday; offering averaged \$144.
- This year, October 2022, we averaged 21 people each Sunday; offering averaged \$132.
- The “offering” numbers do not reflect PayPal donations.
- Noteworthy expenses October 2022: \$1,960 for insurance (building and organization).
- Noteworthy income October 2022: \$400 (net of expenses), Mediums Day.

Christmas is coming

The Bazaar

The goose is *not* getting fat... it’s too busy running around in circles getting everything ready for the big day, Saturday, December 3. With the pandemic receding in the rearview window (hopefully to stay that way), we’re back to the days of yore.

Doors open at 10 a.m. Members, visitors, children, everyone will be invited in to purchase tickets to bid on baskets. The more tickets you place into the bag associated with a raffle basket, the more chances you have to win. We’ll also have baked goods available for purchase, and crafts by our members, as well as light refreshments leading up to dinner at 5 p.m., spaghetti dinner (\$10 donation requested).

We’ll draw the winning number for the quilt that Lyn Batt created; you can see it on our new website on the Bazaar page. It’s an absolutely astonishing piece of art to sleep under, guaranteed to give sleepers perfect dreams.

If you’re not able to be present for the Big Reveal—when Rob Goller has agreed to serve as Emcee drawing winning tickets for each (and... every... one!) of the baskets, no worries. We can call or text you to let you know what we’ve always known—that you’re a winner.

Help Wanted: Bazaar

As always, many hands make light work. We’ll need volunteers to help with setting up the pews as basket display stations, starting after Sunday service November 27. The Ways and Means Committee will be setting up the display, assembling baskets, and putting the finishing touches during the day on Thursday, December 1, and standing by to receive baked goods on Friday, December 2. Hours will be forthcoming shortly.

We can always use extra hands before and during the bazaar. We need members and friends to make theme baskets. Some ideas from past years: fixin’s for a spaghetti dinner (jar of sauce, pasta, bottle of wine); critter goodies (dog or cat toys, beds, treats); home spa (potions and lotions, soaps and scrubbies); cellphone accessories; children’s’ activity books and toys... your imagination is the limit. You can either bring the loose assemblage in for Ways and Means to wrap, or snag one of the empty baskets that seem to multiply downstairs this time of year. (Please use clear cellophane wrap so people can see what they are bidding on.)

We also need home-baked goods, and homemade crafts—please use your own judgment about regifting or store-bought items, as we’d like to offer new items that people can’t find elsewhere.

During the event, we’ll need people to sell tickets for basket raffles, mind the baked-goods and crafts tables, set up and clear away for dinner—whatever your “thing,” we can probably put you to work.

Decorations and Seasonal Goodies

Rob Goller and his husband Jason have agreed to set up our new tree. (Thanks to Carrie Batt, Lyn Batt, Tina Chlewicki and Darlene Feskun for various tree related contributions—donating a new tree, lights, and wrangling the whole caboodle through our church doors to get it where it belongs upstairs.) Rob and Jason ask that visitors to the church help decorate by writing the name of an animal or human loved one in spirit on one of the paper doves that will be available, and hanging it on the tree. We'll leave the tree with these names up until after the Pet Memorial service on January 8, and the People Memorial service on January 15.

Don't forget that we're selling soy (clean-burning) candles in an assortment of delicious holiday scents for only \$10. These are substantial in size—and as someone with allergies nose, I can vouch that they smell realistic and pleasant (none of that "air freshener overload" stuff from the supermarket aisles). We are collecting money and taking orders until November 30.

Finally, we're always selling Niagara Candy chocolate bars, \$3 for two (or \$1.50 each if you can resist temptation to buy more than one). Chocolate makes every holiday better, and there's no better stocking stuffer. Talk with us if you want to take a box in to sell where you work.

Internet and communications

Shout-out and thanks to Carrie Batt for agreeing to serve as chair of the Social Media Committee. Plans include revitalizing our use of Facebook, setting up an Instagram account, and developing a more robust website.

Meanwhile, I've given the website a much-needed facelift and update. We're still at the same address: firstspiritualisttemple.com. However, we now fly under "https"—that extra "s" at the end means it's a secure site, hardened against bad actors.

The new information on the website is very much a work in progress. Please let me know if there is other useful information you would like to see there.

Repairs to the chimney

Saint Nick will have a first-class chimney to slide down after we wrap up our Christmas Eve service on December 24. Any rain or snow seeking entrance, however, will have no such luck. It was expensive, and there's still a little work to be done. But the main job is completed and came off without a hitch—even the weather cooperated.

Shout-out to Darlene & Willie Feskun for coordinating and "babysitting" the three-day project; Willie also worked to revamp the gutter outlets in the back of the building. Thanks as well to Don King and Richard Betts for additional work on the building, especially cleaning up our autumnally-challenged garden.

Classes

- Thought Exchange. Jeanne Laurel, group discussion meeting by Zoom only. 7 to 8:30 p.m. on the first and third Mondays of each month. (If there's a fifth Monday, we ignore it.) All are welcome; freewill donation via PayPal or in church. The topic for November 21 is "Thanksgiving Holiday: Problems and Gratitudes." Topics are chosen by participants. Folks have said they would like a text message reminding them about meetings; please let me know if you'd like to make this happen.
- Philosophy of Spiritualism. Darlene Feskun, group discussion in person and by Zoom, currently using Marilyn Awtry's *The River of Life*. 6:30 to 8 p.m. on the first and third Thursdays of each month. (If there's a fifth Thursday, we ignore it.)
- Introduction to Spiritualism (Spiritualism 101). Darlene Feskun's class is wrapping up; it's been meeting in person before Sunday services. This course explains what we teach, what we don't, and why. We ask those interested in church membership to attend this class before deciding to join us officially. If you are interested in taking this class, please let us know; once we have a handful of people, we'll offer it again.

- More classes. We want to offer more; but what? If you have specific ideas about classes or workshops you would like us to offer in 2023, please let us know by noting it on the signup sheet downstairs (ask at the Financial Table if you don't see it). Pastoral Committee will convene a meeting of those who teach classes in January, to discuss what we can do to meet your requests.

Ways to help our community

- FISH of East Aurora. Ecumenical resource in East Aurora for various forms of assistance, including food pantry. <https://www.facebook.com/fishofeastaurora> Non-perishable and unexpired food items, seasonal clothing, and cash are always appreciated. This year, December 6 is the last day to donate to the drive for Christmas toys and gift cards (especially useful for teens).
- St. Matthias Pet Food Pantry. Cat & dog food (especially canned), cat litter, for pets in need. <https://www.facebook.com/smcpetpantry> You can bring in donations, label them and leave them with us. Thanks to Diana Moore for getting us connected, and to Julie and Gina Braun for serving as our current connector between church and this outreach effort.
- Buffalo Dream Weavers. Warm clothing for Buffalo winters for folks who need it; various drives depending on time of year including Christmas stockings for children, blessing bags for seniors. <https://www.facebook.com/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.
- First Spiritualist Temple of East Aurora. Yes, we need help too!
 - Snow. Let's face it—many of us are old and creaky. We could use someone to shovel front and rear entryways when Buffalo happens on Sundays or class days. (The town of East Aurora keeps our parking lot clear.) Volunteer or paid.
 - Food. Thanks to Donna Bush and Tina Chlewicki for jump-starting our brunches. We need folks to sign up to purchase light refreshments and set up the coffee for our social hour downstairs after service on Sundays. Reimbursement for costs of food items purchased.

More

- Silver bowl. A lady in Maryland found in her attic a silver-colored porcelain or china bowl. She identified it as ours because it has a notation on the underside, "71st Anniversary, 1982, First Spiritualist Temple East Aurora NY." We've referred this mysterious artifact to Rob Goller for his inspection, possibly more info.
- Pastoral committee. Our current Pastoral Committee (Beverly Burke, Beth Heaney, Cheryl Ziccardi) is presently serving a two-year term ending in May 2023. At our annual meeting, we will vote to appoint members for the coming two years. Current members may run; members in good standing for at least two years may stand for election to this committee. Our bylaws require us to invite interested members to indicate their intent to run in January, and invite them to discuss their interest and qualifications at the March 2023 board meeting. Watch your mail for the invitation letter and application form.
- Special appearance. Our dear friend Tom Hartigan has let me know that he plans to attend our Christmas Eve service. Tom is from the East Aurora area, and although he lives in Maryland, he includes us in his visits to family several times a year. He has also been a very generous supporter over the years.

PayPal

If you'd like to use the convenience of PayPal to make donations, or to pay for classes or membership dues, you can visit this website: <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/FSTofEastAurora>

Zoom

We use a “day of the week” schedule for Zoom links. Whatever meeting or class, you can quickly tell what Zoom number we’ll be using.

- Mondays: <https://zoom.us/j/98908343264>,
- Tuesdays: <https://zoom.us/j/93782889733>
- Wednesdays: <https://zoom.us/j/99498052420>
- Thursdays: <https://zoom.us/j/93033218920>
- Fridays: <https://zoom.us/j/94842337658>
- Saturdays: <https://zoom.us/j/97800261770>
- Sundays: <https://zoom.us/j/98423834708>

For any Zoom meeting you wish to attend, you may click the link to join with audio and video by computer or mobile device. If you want to use audio only, you can dial 929-205-6099, and enter the string of 11 digits at the very end of the link.

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Ho-ho-ho, and away we go, rushing headlong into the holidays and the new year. I’ll be using the church Zoom account to host a “ball drop watch party” on New Year’s Eve, December 31 starting at 10:30 p.m. Use the Saturday Zoom number, and pull up a chair, a television, and a glass of champagne to usher in 2023. I started this Zoom meeting in 2020 during the pandemic lockdown, but it seems like a nice alternative for those averse to crowds and cold. Anyone and everyone is welcome.

With love, light & laughter, Jeanne Phoenix Laurel, President, First Spiritualist Temple of East Aurora. Home 716 876 4805, cell 716 208 0624. President@FirstSpiritualistTemple.com or JeanneLaurel@gmail.com.