
The Existentialist

Newsletter of the First Existentialist Congregation of Atlanta

470 Candler Park Drive, N.E., Atlanta, GA 30307 • Founded in 1976 •

A Philosophically Based Spiritual Community

Dedicated to Human Liberation

and Founded on Existentialist and Feminist Principles •

"Eye 2 Eye" - Paintings by Dawu



More information about the artist on page 7

**First Existentialist
Congregation of
Atlanta**

470 Candler Park Drive,
NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30307
404-378-5570
www.firstexistentialist.org

All Are Welcome
Join us in our
Celebrations of Life on
Sundays at 11:00 a.m.
Children's Program
during Sunday services

Fellowship Minister:
Marsha Mitchiner,
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D. Patton White,
Chair; Stell Simonton,
Recorder; Mark White,
Treasurer; Charlene
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Chesnut, Bill Laney,
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We are a philosophically based
spiritual community
dedicated to
human liberation
and founded on existentialist
and feminist principles.



Notes From the Board of Directors

By D. Patton White, Board Chair

The Board of Directors met on Monday, July 11, 2016, at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. The board was treated to a demonstration of the fully functioning automatic door opener that Bill Laney has installed. Thank you, Bill Laney! The board also heard reports from Marsha and Edith. Marsha proposed holding a post-service discussion around the topic of embracing our Commitment Statement. Edith reported that Primavera Preschool will return this Fall, and she is in final negotiations with their contract. She also reported that Fiddler's Green is now a regular renter. The Fundraising Guild reported successful proceeds from the various fundraisers that were held in June: the yard sale, the Existential Moment Coffeehouse, and the Book and Bake Sale. And the Social Justice Guild reported that they were able to complete the purchase for and hang the Black Lives Matter banner in front. The Board will meet on Monday, August 1, at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome to attend. ~

Community News & Activities

--**Art Exhibit: "Eye 2 Eye,"** paintings by Dawu, will be on the walls of First E through August 27.

Rev. Marsha is starting a discussion group at First E to talk about the turmoil in our country. Our Commitment Statement will provide the basis for discussing our individual and group responses to the ongoing struggles. The first discussion was held on July 31.

--**An exhibit of the art of Rev. R. Lanier Clance** will go up on August 28, as part of our 40th Anniversary Celebration in September. If you have art by Lanier and would like it to be part of the exhibit, please contact Patton White.

--**Aviva has offered to lead singing/ teach us to sing**, so if you're interested please let her know. A class will be scheduled soon, probably immediately after a COL.

--**Anyone interested in an ongoing meditation group** after Sunday services, please contact Andy at Andyweiskoff952@icloud.com.

News From First E Members and Friends

--**Mark White's son**, who has been profoundly depressed, has just completed a 6-week session of electro-shock treatments in Boston. He has improved somewhat, and is both feeling better and is more attentive.

--**Shelly reports that ZuZu has gone to work for a month** on the northern Cheyenne reservation in Montana. After what Shelly describes as 'perhaps too much exposure to affluence,' ZuZu will have a chance to be with people who have little.

--**Cindy Lou Who's co-worker Pete Shem** died of esophageal cancer. Pete was a sweet guy with whom she worked for many years in the theatre.

Community News continued on page 6.

Guild Reports

Art Guild

By Charlene Ball

The Art Guild arranges for exhibits of visual art on the walls of First E, as well as other kinds of artistic expression throughout the year. In August, we are pleased to present an exhibit, "Eye 2 Eye," paintings by Dawu. In September, in honor of First E's 40th birthday, we are sponsoring a special exhibition of the art of Rev. R. Lanier Clance, our founding minister. (A call for artwork is on page 5.) The exhibit will be on display August 28 through October 2. Members of the Art Guild are Glen Lopez, Chair; Charlene Ball; Elaine Gale; Patton White, and Kitty Wimbish. We welcome feedback from members and friends. ~

Fundraising Guild

By Charlene Ball

The Fundraising Guild is pleased to announce that the Atlanta Area Friends of Folk Music will hold their monthly coffeehouse, "Fiddler's Green," at First E starting in August. First E will handle the concessions. The first Fiddlers' Green will feature Elise Witt and Friends on Saturday, August 20. If you would like to volunteer to help with concessions, contact Libby (toadlibby@yahoo.com), Stell (simontone@bellsouth.net), or Charlene (mcharleneball@yahoo.com). If you'd like to help the AAFFM set up, contact Chris Moser at chrismoser@bellsouth.net. ~

Membership Guild

By Charlene Ball

The Membership Guild organizes kiddushes and potlucks and arranges for Sunday greeters, those nice people who greet you as you come in the door and hand you a bulletin. The Guild is brain-storming for an enterprise that would help others outside our congregation and acquaint them with us. We welcome suggestions from our congregation. If you're interested in joining us, contact Wilj at cincomemayo55@comcast.net or Elaine at ergale@hotmail.com. ~

Program Guild

By Charlene Ball

The Program Guild secures speakers, facilitators, and musicians for Sunday Celebrations of Life. This month's lineup can be found on page 9. We will hear regular speakers Rev. Duncan Teague and Rev. Angela Denise Davis, longtime friend of the Congregation Franklin Abbott, and a new speaker, Rev. Joan Armstrong Davis, who knew Lanier and has attended services at First E. We are glad to welcome her to our podium. Our members are Patton White (chair), Linda Bell, Charlene Ball, and Saralyn Chesnut. Rev. Marsha Mitchiner also gives input.

If you would like to recommend a musician, let Patton know. Contact him at patton@beacondance.org. If you would like to facilitate, contact Charlene at mcharleneball@yahoo.com. If you would like to recommend a speaker, you can contact any of us. The next meeting of the Program Guild will be August 30 at 5:00 p.m. in the First E Sanctuary. All members and friends are welcome to attend our meetings. ~

Social Justice Guild

By Linda Bell and Charlene Ball

The Social Justice Guild meets every other month. Our next meeting will be August 7 downstairs after the COL service. Members remain active in various social justice projects, including writing for the Social Justice Corner in *The First Existentialist Newsletter*, sponsoring the Book Discussion Group, and taking part in community social justice activities. Guild members are Katrice Baker, Linda Bell, Saralyn Chesnut, Lorraine Fontana, Edi Kelman, and Libby Ware. We welcome new members. All members and friends are welcome to attend our meetings. ~

Social Justice Corner

The Shannon L. Clark Memorial Scholarship Fund

By Edi/th Kelman, BiRacial History Project Manager and SJG Member

Our Social Justice Guild, Minister's Discretionary Fund, First E Yard Sale, numerous First E folks the Clark family, and other friends have joined hands in support of the BiRacial History Project's new scholarship fund: The Shannon L. Clark Memorial Scholarship. So far, together we have raised \$1,000 to encourage and assist Atlanta-born law student, Ruby-Beth Buitekant, as she pursues her legal education at City University School of Law in New York City. Ruby-Beth is a law student, organizer and activist. She bases her work on the radical idea that humans should be free from state and interpersonal violence.

This summer, Ruby-Beth has an internship with The Center for Constitutional Rights, where she is one of only three first-year law students in the country accepted into this highly sought after program. Before law school, Ruby-Beth worked as an anti-gun violence organizer for Youth Organizing to Save Our Streets at the Crown Heights (Brooklyn) Community Mediation Center. She is a graduate of Wesleyan University, Paideia High School, and the Atlanta Friends School.

This scholarship honors the life and memory of Ms. Shannon Lois Clark (1991-2015), a fourth-generation daughter of the Antioch East Baptist Church and a researcher with the BiRacial History Project, who tragically lost her life in an auto accident in April 2015. A brilliant student and 2014 graduate of the University of Georgia in the material sciences, Shannon offered to work with the History Project while taking time off to plan her graduate studies path.

It is our hope that holding up these two young women of exceptional academic and social justice engagement encourages meaningful connections for healing and a more just future.

We welcome fully tax-deductible donations to "BiRacial History Project/ First E" with "Scholarship" on the memo line. Please mail to **BiRacial History Project, PO Box 5567 Atlanta GA 31107.** ~

First Existentialist Celebrates 40th Birthday in September with Exhibit of Lanier's Art

This September 18, Founders Day, the First Existentialist Congregation will celebrate its 40th birthday! In honor of this milestone, we will have a special service with Rev. Marsha Mitchiner, our Fellowship Minister, speaking. In honor of this 40th Birthday Celebration, the Art Guild is presenting an exhibition of the visual art work of our founding minister, Lanier Clance. This special art show will hang on First E's walls from August 28 through October 2.

If you would like to loan any of Lanier's work you may have so it can be displayed for this month-long celebratory exhibition, please contact Patton White at patton@beacondance.org. ~

Atlanta Area Friends of Folk Music Moves Fiddler's Green Coffeehouse to First E

By Chris Moser, President, AAFFM

Atlanta Area Friends of Folk Music (AAFFM) is so very pleased to announce the relocation of our coffeehouse concert series Fiddler's Green to First Existentialist Congregation of Atlanta. Some of your congregants may recall that AAFFM presented occasional concerts at 1st E before starting Fiddler's Green 30 years ago. So for us it's like coming home!

AAFFM is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating about and promoting folk music, broadly defined in all its forms. Our main activities are our website www.aaffm.org, sponsorship of the Frank Hamilton School, fostering of picking parties, and presenting Fiddler's Green almost continuously since 1986. For its first two decades Fiddler's Green was at the Garden Hills Community Center. We've been in different locations since then and have been in Candler Park since moving to Epworth UMC last September. We showcase local and touring performers of all sorts of folk and other acoustic music, traditional and contemporary. The program is almost always on the third Saturday night of each month. Our first show at 1st E will feature Elise Witt and Friends Saturday, August 20, 8:00 pm.

Everyone on the AAFFM board is excited about the move to 1st E. We're deeply gratified by the warmth of your welcome already. We hope you'll see us not just as a renter but as a partner. We welcome you as F.G. volunteers. We're pleased that you'll be operating concessions at least at the launching, and we hope that will continue. Other volunteer opportunities include setting up and taking down chairs and tables, helping with social media promotion and participating in talent booking. Those interested in volunteering can reach me at 770-482-1209 or chrismoser@bellsouth.net.

Thank you so much for inviting us into your community. We hope we're beginning a partnership that will thrive for many years to come. ~

Celebration of Life for Claiborne DuVal White

The Family (Nancy, Patton and Terry) and Partner (James Nash) of Claiborne DuVal White will be hosting a Celebration of Life to bring the many people that were part of Claiborne's life together to share, laugh, cry, dance, eat and celebrate a life well lived. Claiborne was an artist in many ways, so if you have any of his work, please bring some of it to share so that we can see it again! Claiborne was an amazing cook/chef/baker, so we will share a pot-luck meal to honor his memory. And most of all, Claiborne was a people person of all people persons, so we hope everyone will share some of their favorite memories of the times that they spent with him. For all people coming from out of town, we will be researching over the coming few weeks possible lodging/accommodations, so please let us know if you would like assistance with this. And finally, since this is over Labor Day Weekend, we hope that this will be only one of many opportunities for us to be together informally over the course of the weekend. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to Lost-N- Found Youth, lnfy.org, 2585 Chantilly Dr., Atlanta, GA, 30324, or The First Existentialist Congregation of Atlanta Endowment Fund, firstexistentialist.org, 470 Candler Park Dr., Atlanta, GA, 30307. ~

Community News & Activities

Continued from Page 2

--Patton White, whose brother Claiborne died 1 ½ weeks ago, announced there will be a Celebration of Claiborne's life at First E on September 3.

--Jo Hamby's partner Elvie is in Kansas City helping her aunt and uncle, Terri and Mike. Mike is suffering from Parkinson's disease, and Elvie's training as a nurse guides her in caring for them both. Please keep Elvie, Jo, Mike and Terry in your loving thoughts.

--Lorraine requests that we continue to keep brother Itai Jeffries in our thoughts as he fights leukemia, which he contracted after he left Atlanta.

Nathaniel attended 1st E on Sunday, and while his living situation is challenging, said he's glad to be able to get here. Lorraine will help him get to a meeting this week with doctors and hopefully social worker/s to improve treatment and living.

--Stell's younger daughter Olivia, 22, is moving to LA, she wants to be an actress. Please send them all lots of positive thoughts and good wishes as she starts a new phase of life.

--Bill Read was very, very glad that his brother and family are all right, after a fire erupted in their home due to wiring problems in a closet. Thankfully it occurred when everyone was awake, in mid-afternoon, and everyone was able to get out safely. They will be out of their house for 3 months while it's being repaired. Please keep them all in your thoughts and meditations.

--Mary Turnpaugh is seeking a mentor for her grandson, a sweet 17-year old who needs a positive adult (other than his grandmother) in his life. Mary's email is mary.turnpaugh@gmail.com if you'd like to discuss volunteering with her.

--Andy requests your feedback on having a continuing meditation group meeting after COL's. Please reach him via email at aweiskoff952@icloud.com.

--Rev. Marsha announced that school is beginning soon and some children are in need of supplies. She asks that we collect basic items and bring them to First E by Sunday, August 13. All goods will be donated to a local organization assisting underprivileged children.

Community:

--Sister Harriet, a women's spirituality circle, meets on the second Sunday of every month in the First E Sanctuary at 2:00 p.m. Rev. Angela Denise Davis leads the circle.

--Submissions and news for the September newsletter are due to Charlene by Sunday, August 21. Send to mcharleneball@yahoo.com.

--Contact Robert Stewart with your news and activities for his weekly e-newsletter: robertstewart369@gmail.com. ~

ART BY DAWU



City of Atlanta - Art Technician

- Gilbert House
- Southeast Arts Center

Participating Artist -

- Piedmont Arts Festival - Atl GA
- Hammon House - Atl GA
- Blacks Arts Festival - Atl GA
- Art Walk - Jacksonville, FL
- Savannah Arts Festival
- Harriet Tubman Museum - Macon
- Jacksonville, FL Art Life Youth Program

"Jump for Joy" UNICEF Card

"Art is the core of my being. As I have struggled with dyslexia early in my life art was a great means in which to express myself."

"EYE 2 EYE," AN EXHIBIT OF PAINTINGS BY DAWU, WILL BE ON DISPLAY AT FIRST EXISTENTIALIST THROUGH AUGUST 28. ~

There will be no one like us when we are gone, but then there is no one like anyone else, ever. When people die, they cannot be replaced. They leave holes that cannot be filled, for it is the fate - the genetic and neural fate - of every human being to be a unique individual, to find his own path, to live his own life, to die his own death. ~ Oliver Sacks

Speakers in July

August 7: Franklin Abbott

Franklin Abbott is a psychotherapist in private practice in Atlanta. He is Chairperson of the Queer Literary Festival, a poet, and the author of several books. He will speak on "Courage, Creativity, and Change" on August 7. ~

August 14: Rev. Duncan Teague

Rev. Duncan Teague, an ordained Unitarian Universalist (UU) Minister and a longtime friend of and speaker at First E, will speak on August 14 on "What Happened at Summer Camp."

Duncan says, "This year I was the Friday Minister of the Day at the second largest gathering of UUs in the country, the Southeastern UU Summer I. I have much to share about being in the hills of Cullowhee, NC, with 1000 plus Unitarian Universalists with the most expressed purpose to have fun. What serious work fun is."

Duncan has more than twenty years of work in HIV/AIDS advocacy, prevention, education and research and is a recognized leader in the GLBTQ community. He is happily married to his husband, David Thurman. ~

August 21: Rev. Joan Armstrong Davis

Reverend Joan Armstrong Davis is an ordained Unitarian Universalist minister with thirty years of experience as a parish-based pastor, educator, and counselor. She is a 1989 graduate of Emory University's Candler School of Theology. In 2003 she returned to Emory for a residency in pastoral care at Emory University Hospital.

"We might ask "Where does our sense of what is ethical come from?" Are we "hard wired" with a sense of what's good and right? Or, do we learn that?" Reverend Joan Armstrong Davis will address these questions in her sermon "Building a Life Ethic," on August 21.

Joan is the Affiliated Community Minister at the Northwest Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Sandy Springs and she has a private practice in premarital counseling and weddings. She and her husband, Bob, live in Smyrna. ~

August 28: Rev. Angela Denise Davis

Rev. Angela Denise Davis will speak on August 28 on "The Art of the Impossible." Angela is a regular speaker at First E. She is a certified rehabilitation counselor, a freelance graphic designer, and an ordained minister, and she facilitates a spiritual collective, Sister Harriet, started in 2010. A graduate of Clark Atlanta University, she holds a master of divinity from Vanderbilt University Divinity School and a master of science in rehabilitation counseling from Georgia State University. She lives in East Point with her partner Mary Anne Adams and their canine child Kasi. ~

August 2016 Sunday Celebrations of Life

- August 7** ***Courage, Creativity, and Change***
Speaker: Franklin Abbott
Facilitator: Dr. Saralyn Chesnut
Accompanist: David Tyberg
- August 14** ***What Happened at Summer Camp***
Speaker: Rev. Duncan Teague
Facilitator: Dr. Sharon Mathis
Accompanist: Alan Dynin
- August 21** ***Building a Life Ethic***
Speaker: Rev. Joan Armstrong Davis
Facilitator: Dr. Charlene Ball
Accompanist: William Chelton
- August 28** ***The Art of the Impossible***
Speaker: Rev. Angela Denise Davis
Facilitator: D. Patton White
Accompanist: Aviva and the Flying Penguins

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dedicated to human liberation and founded on existentialist
and feminist principles.***

The Back Page



In a Broken and Fearful World

In a broken and fearful world

the Spirit gives us courage

to pray without ceasing,

to witness among all peoples to our common humanity,

to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,

to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,

and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.

***Prayer posted on Facebook by Rev. Greg Allen-Pickett;
revised for a secular congregation by Charlene Ball***

The Existentialist is published monthly. Deadline for the September 2016 newsletter is August 21. Send your articles and announcements to mcharleneball@yahoo.com. The editor reserves the right to edit or refuse any material submitted.