

# 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 •

## Thanksgiving at First E November 27, 2014

Thanks for the **Food** in front  
of us, The *Friends* beside  
us, and the **LOVE** between

**us.**

*At First E Thanksgiving  
potluck: left: Barbara Van  
Helsdingen. Below: Robin  
Stinson, Oceana Carr, Hubert  
Carr. Top right, Carol Sandi-  
ford, Bill Read. Middle right:  
Shelia Pattee, Liz Albright.  
Lower right: Charlene Ball.*



**First Existentialist  
Congregation of  
Atlanta**

470 Candler Park Drive,  
NE  
Atlanta, Georgia 30307  
404-378-5570  
[www.firstexistentialist.org](http://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,  
[revm@bellsouth.net](mailto:revm@bellsouth.net)  
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Board of Directors:  
D. Patton White, Chair  
Bill Read, Treasurer  
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Linda Bell  
Elaine Gale  
Bill Laney  
Hank Pfadenhaur  
Andy Weiskoff  
Cindy Lou Who  
Newsletter Editor:  
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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**

By D. Patton White, Board Chair

**The First E Board** discussed a variety of topics at the November meeting, including the 2015 Pledge Drive (has kicked off); Accessibility plan for entrance (will develop an implementation plan over the next few months); Holiday Giving (Lost n' Found Youth and a homeless shelter); a reminder that animals—with the exception of service animals—are not allowed in the building; and finally, that Charlene Ball and Libby Ware have joined the Fundraising Guild. The next meeting will be on Monday, December 1, at 7:00 PM. All are welcome! ~

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## **Community News & Activities**

--**The First E Third Friday Film Series presents To Prison for Poverty on December 19 at 7:30 p.m.** at First E. Donations \$1-\$10.00; no one turned away. Refreshments available. Discussion led by members of Women on the Rise.

--**The Social Justice Guild will meet** after the service downstairs on Sunday, December 14. All are welcome.

--**Assembly line for Lost-n'-Found after the service on Sunday, December 14.** Bring items on that date or before for care packages for LGBTQ youth living on the street, such as toothpaste, tooth brushes, soap, warm caps and gloves, packages of soup, and other items. Marsha will coordinate assembly of care packages.

--**Geek Chorus meets on Second Wednesdays.** Bring your favorite beverage to share, love offering to First E for allowing us to use the space, and musical instruments to pluck, bang or strum.

--**The First E Liberation Ukulele Group** meets 1st, 3rd, and 4th Wednesday evenings at First E around 7:30. Instruction available once a month. All levels welcome. 404-626-4763 for more information.

--**The Racism Action Project (RAP)**, a discussion group about race, will meet at the Little 5 Points Community Center on Sunday, December 21, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.

--**Lost-n-Found Thrift and Consignment Store**, 2585 Chantilly Drive, is open M-Sat 10-5; Sundays noon-6.

--**Submissions and news for the December Newsletter** are due to Charlene by Sunday, December 21. Send Board and Guild reports and news items to [mcharleneball@yahoo.com](mailto:mcharleneball@yahoo.com).

--**Contact Robert Stewart** with your news and activities for his weekly e-newsletter: [robertstewart369@gmail.com](mailto:robertstewart369@gmail.com) -- **\*\*NOTE CHANGE IN EMAIL.** ~

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## ***Guild Reports***

### ***Program Guild***

*by Charlene Ball*

**During 2014, the Program Guild** has continued our work to fulfill the purpose of our Guild, which is to create meaningful, lively, thought-provoking, soul-stirring Sunday Celebrations of Life through spoken word, music, and performance.

In 2014, we said goodbye to two people much loved by our congregation, Rev. Janna Nelson and Scott Hooker, both ministers, one of spoken word and the other of music. They moved to New Mexico to be near Janna's family. We are struggling to fill their shoes, and it won't be easy! We are fortunate, however, to be able to hear Rev. Kate Hauk, Rev. Marti Keller, Rev. Marsha Mitchiner, and Rev. Duncan Teague on a regular basis. We also invite guest speakers who are ministers, spiritual leaders, and community leaders. Our regular musicians are Aviva, of Aviva and the Flying Penguins; William "Bill" Chelton; Alan Dynin; Janet Metzger; and Charli Vogt. We are so lucky to have these amazingly talented people to accompany us when we sing and to bring us special music.

Holidays we celebrated are Martin Luther King's Birthday, Susan B. Anthony's Birthday, Black History Month, Women's History Month, Earth Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Juneteenth, the Day of the Dead, and the Native American Giveaway.

We welcome a new member to the Program Guild: Hank Pfadenhauer. Hank has spoken at COLs and has organized the Traditional Existentialist Christmas for the past two years. It's becoming one of our traditions! Dr. Jean Heinrich has become an ex officio member since her return to the States and has become a lively and soul-stirring musical presence in our COLs. She has also organized the First E-Street Band, who have played at COLs and fundraisers during the year.

Some members of the congregation who have facilitated in 2014 are Charlene Ball, Lorraine Fontana, Bill Laney, Rev. Marsha Mitchiner, Libby Ware, D. Patton White, Cindy Lou Who, and Ted Pettus. We are always looking for

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### ***Membership Guild***

*by Wilj Sturkey (with additions by Charlene Ball)*

**The Membership Guild met on Sunday, November 16.** At the meeting we talked about the Thanksgiving dinner to be held at First E on Nov. 27, organized by Lynn Tippetts and her partner, Barbara. Some of our members volunteered to take food even if they won't be in attendance.

Also we talked briefly about the things we do to welcome visitors at First E and to attract new members. We mentioned advertising as a possible method to attract new members. A number of publications were mentioned where we previously advertised, like the Emory Wheel and the Candler Park newsletter. Andy said we don't really have someone who does advertising at First E anymore. The possibility of having a meeting with the First E Board was brought up so that we could discuss with them the issue of attracting new members. When our meeting ended, I asked Bill Read if that would be a possibility. He said that maybe we could have a retreat to talk about that issue. Carol suggested we aim for the first of the year to have our meeting with the Board.

Robert said we should check with Ashlea about her ideas for new First E brochures. This would be in conjunction with our campaign to seek new members. ~

# October 2014 Finance Report

<u>2014 Cash Flow</u>	<u>Operating</u>	<u>All Other</u>
Total Income	48,911	12,257
<u>Total Expenses</u>	(49,690)	(8,405)
Net thru September 31	(779)	3,852

**Fund Types & Names     Account Balances on October 31**

< unaudited >

**General Operating Account** (779)

**Designated Operating Funds** 25,449

Use Where Needed Fund	712
Sanctuary Accessibility	18,384
Lanier Clance Lighting	
Leadership Development	0
Community Garden/Labyrinth	388
Building & Grounds	111
Woodland Sanctuary	1,569
Minister's Discretionary	1,047
Original 1st E History	68
Social Justice	1,273
Attic Insulation Fund	1,250
Children's Program	452
Music Fund	195

**Pat Hewatt Revolving Loan Fund (\$8K)** 5,064

**Special Use Permit Loan Fund (\$4.5K)** 44

**Total First E Funds** 29,778

**Old Stone Church History Project** 2,207

***Guns are not allowed on the property  
belonging to the First Existentialist  
Congregation***

*Third Friday Film Series  
presents*

## To Prison for Poverty

Friday, November 21, 2014

*Doors open 7:00 pm – film starts at 7:30 pm*

*Popcorn and refreshments available*

*Donations welcome - \$1 to \$10 sliding scale*

*No one turned away*

*Co-sponsored by*

*Women on the Rise*

*and First E's Social Justice Guild*

*Discussion after the film led by*

*Members of Women on the Rise*

### 2015 Members and Friends Pledge Update

*First E's 2015 Members and Friends Pledge Campaign started at Thanksgiving and now is in full swing during December with wrap-up to follow in January. Everyone is encouraged to please reply by Dec. 31, 2014. The 2015 pledge form is available on the First E website and also in the sanctuary on the literature rack. Or we can email a form to you. Please pledge your 2015 support now in Dec. 2014.*

*Thank You, The 2014 Congregation*

## FUND OF THE MONTH CLUB

*The ongoing Fund of the Month is the Music Fund. This fund pays for tuning the piano and keeping it in good working order, as well as paying for expenses related to music. At present, the Music Fund contains \$195.00. This will not quite pay for tuning the piano once. Please write "Music Fund" on your check. ~*

# Social Justice Corner

## First E's Social Justice Guild Activities in 2014

At the beginning of 2014, the Social Justice Guild of First E joined the Moral Monday Georgia Movement as an affiliated organization and made a monetary contribution to its work. Since then, every member of the Guild has participated in both MMGA organized, and MMGA support actions both at the state Capitol January through March and at other venues throughout the year, including the Jailed for Justice Tour this summer which visited many cities in north, central and south Georgia.

One of our members has been arrested as part of civil disobedience actions on three occasions: opposing our Governor's refusal to expand Medicaid, opposing the "Guns Everywhere" bill and supporting the repeal of Georgia's Stand Your Ground law, and speaking out against voter suppression efforts in Georgia. Others attended meetings of the New Jim Crow Action Group, participated in several rallies/ protests, and attended ABLE meetings, focusing on working to get Gover-



Left to right: Carol Sandiford, Libby Ware, and Charlene Ball at West End voter registration with We Count! Photo courtesy of the photographer.



Lorraine Fontana with members of Occupy Our Homes. Photo courtesy of the photographer.

nor Deal to "Ban the Box" state-wide, meaning "the box" that asks job applicants to tell whether they have ever been arrested for or convicted of a felony. This information is often used to dismiss applicants, regardless of their qualifications for the job.

Some of us participated in voter registration and Get Out The Vote efforts through Georgia WAND and We Count! before this November's election. We continue to support all Moral Monday Georgia activities and events, including spreading the word about MMGA's first action next year, on Jan 12, 2015, the opening day of the legislative session - SAVE THE DATE!

We continued the Third Friday Film Series, showing feature films and documentaries that related to social justice. Films shown in 2014 were *A Place at the Table*, *Arranged*, *Fruitvale Station*, *Inequality for All*, *Cloud-*

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## Social Justice Corner ~ Continued from page 5

*burst, Persepolis, Good Night and Good Luck, Crisis in the Congo, Dirty Wars, Winter's Bone, United in Anger, and To Prison for Poverty.* Co-sponsoring community organizations included The Atlanta Food Bank, Erace, SisterLove, and Women on the Rise.

The Social Justice Guild consists of Braden Baker, Linda Bell, Lorraine Fontana, Edi/th Kelman, Carol Sandiford, and Libby Ware. We wish you Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year! ~

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## Program Guild Report ~ Continued from Page 3

more facilitators, however, so if you would like to try facilitating, see one of us. It's a chance to meet interesting people and to see First E from a different perspective.

On behalf of the Program Guild--D. Patton White, Chair ([patton@beacondance.org](mailto:patton@beacondance.org)); Charlene Ball ([mcharleneball@yahoo.com](mailto:mcharleneball@yahoo.com)); Linda Bell ([lbell@gsu.edu](mailto:lbell@gsu.edu)); Bill Laney ([bill3391a@yahoo.com](mailto:bill3391a@yahoo.com)); and Hank Pfadenhauer ([amirtechnicality@gmail.com](mailto:amirtechnicality@gmail.com))--we wish you Happy Holidays and a Joyous New Year! ~

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## Evening of Storytelling

The Evening of Storytelling at First E fundraiser on Saturday, November 8 brought in \$795.00 in donations from admission, refreshments, and a silent auction. A small but enthusiastic audience enjoyed the talents of storytellers Barry Stewart Mann, Dorothy Kirk, Gail Reeder, and Nita Roberts and musicians Aviva, Andy Weiskoff, and Ted Pettus while enjoying drinks and delicious snacks. Many thanks to all the talented performers and wonderful volunteers who made this event a success. ~



*Top right: Aviva. Left: Gail Reeder. Bottom right: Nita Roberts. Photos courtesy of the photographed.*

*You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have. ~ Maya Angelou*

# *BiRacial History Project Update 2014*

*By Edi/th Kelman*

*--Fall 2013: Mary Lin Elementary School Third Graders visit Old Stone Church and tour Legacy Markers in Candler Park on their way to pizza lunch.*

*--March 2014: Third year giving BiRacial History Project Walking Tours through Atlanta Preservation Center's "Phoenix Flies" celebration of Atlanta's historic sites. On board for 2015 tours.*

*--April - May 2014: Grants awarded through Atlanta Mayor's office and Park-Pride to replace damaged Legacy Markers inside Candler Park.*

*--August 2014: Candler Park Neighborhood Organization and Inman Park volunteers turn out in force to install replacement Legacy Markers.*

*--January-December 2014: Individual donations cover cost of History Project office rent at First E. Donors also step up to support website and Markers incidentals.*

*--Fall 2014: Feature articles on Legacy Markers installation in The Existentialist newsletter & on CPNO website.*

*--October 2014: Begin making Elder connections toward new Legacy Marker for historic Hooper Street, 100 years of African American residents. Underwriter steps forward to fund the Marker.*

*--November 2014: Research with Antioch East Baptist Church toward preservation of their original historic documents and identifying Antioch history point person.*

*--November 2014: Edi/th Kelman makes annual History Project update presentation at Antioch East's 140th Church Anniversary service. ~*



*Edi/th Kelman (left), First E members, and Candler Park neighbors installed new Legacy Marker in Candler Park to replace damaged marker. Photo: Bonnie Palter.*

# December Celebrations of Life

December Celebrations of Life will feature members of First Existentialist this year, plus one guest speaker.

On the first Sunday in December, Rev. Marsha Mitchiner will speak on the topic: "The Men Under the Bridge." Marsha is our Fellowship Minister and speaks once every other month, while facilitating one Sunday on alternate months.



*Hank Pfadenhauer*

On December 14, Rev. Marti Keller will return, speaking on "Unfrozen." Marti is a Unitarian Universalist minister and poet, and she is very active around social justice issues. She recently co-edited an anthology entitled *Jewish Voices in Unitarian Universalism*.

members will be joining Hank in bringing us the spirit of Christmas with an Existentialist twist.

Hank Pfadenhauer, a First E member who has recently joined the Program Guild, is coordinating a program of spoken word and music entitled "A Traditional Existentialist Christmas" on December 21. Other



*Rev. Marti Keller*



*D. Patton White*

And on December 28, Dr. Jean Heinrich will bring us "An Existentialist New Year's Celebration!" Joining Jean will be D. Patton White and others for a celebratory ending to 2014.



*Dr. Jean Heinrich*

We hope you can join us for these Celebrations of Life. ~

*I never lose sight of the fact that just being is fun. ~ Katharine Hepburn*



# **November 2014 Sunday Celebrations of Life**

***December 7 The Men Under the Bridge***

***Speaker: Rev. Marsha Mitchiner***

***Facilitator: D. Patton White***

***Accompanist: Alan Dynin***

***December 14 Unfrozen***

***Speaker: Rev. Marti Keller***

***Facilitator: Bill Laney***

***Accompanist: Aviva and the Flying Penguins***

***December 21 A Traditional Existential Christmas***

***Hank Pfadenhauer and Others***

***Facilitator: Ted Pettus***

***Accompanist: Aviva and the Flying Penguins***

***December 28 An Existential New Year's Eve Celebration!***

***Dr. Jean Heinrich, D. Patton White, and Others***

***With Music, Dance, Poetry, and More***

***Accompanist: Dr. Jean Heinrich***

*I am grateful for what I am and have. My thanksgiving is perpetual.  
It is surprising how contented one can be with nothing definite - only  
a sense of existence. ~ Henry David Thoreau*

# The Back Page

Members and Friends Speak Out

## More Thanksgiving Pictures



*Above, left to right: Phyllis Thakis, Cindy Lou Who, Robin Stinson, Oceana Carr, Hubert Carr. Right: Table setting. Below right: Hubert Carr. All Thanksgiving photos by Libby Ware. ~*

**The Existentialist** is published monthly. Deadline for the January 2015 newsletter is December 21. Send your articles and announcements to [mcharleneball@yahoo.com](mailto:mcharleneball@yahoo.com). The editor reserves the right to edit or refuse any material submitted.