MEMBERS SPEAK

Each August, we have the opportunity to hear from our members, and it is a treat to experience Platforms given by the very people who comprise our congregation. We look forward to the topics and conversations we’ll enjoy this month. We hope you’ll participate in the discussions. All are welcome.

SUNDAY PLATFORMS

August 2, 2020
Member Jim Rhodes
“The Climate Crisis & You”
Music from Aidan Haynes, marimba

August 9, 2020
Member Kyle Nienhaus
“Humanist, All Too Humanist: A Nietzsche Interpretation”
Music from Jonathan Hill, piano

August 16, 2020
Platform TBA
Music TBA

August 23, 2020
Member Brian Vandenberg
“Life Expectancy in our Apocalyptic Age”
Music from Landon Escher, piano

August 30, 2020
Leader James Croft
“Ethical Humanism & Judaism”
Music from Devon Krimmel, guitar

See Platform details on Pg 5
The CARES Act passed by Congress this year allows for up to $300 per taxpayer ($600 for a married couple) in an above-the-line deduction for charitable gifts made in 2020. This means that you can lower your income tax bill by giving to the Ethical Society, even if you take the standard deduction on your taxes.

**TUESDAY WOMEN’S ASSOCIATION**

The Tuesday Women’s Association will resume meeting, by Zoom, on August 4th at 10 a.m. The meeting number is 384 422 5785. We are excited to be resuming after our long break.

The programs are as follows:

- **August 11**, planning meeting for the 2021 International Relations Lecture Series.
- **August 18**, quarterly business meeting.
- **August 25**, Dignity Through Work: Providing a Living Wage for Immigrants and Refugees. Speaker: Terri Stipanovich, CEO of The Collective Thread, a sewing school that works with individuals interested in sewing, fashion design, and up-and-coming apparel lines in St. Louis.

**BLACK LIVES MATTER VIGIL, AUGUST 9**

The Ethical Society has resumed our monthly Black Lives Matter vigils. Join us August 9 and on the second Sunday of every month, 1-2 p.m., up on Clayton Road. Since we cannot enter the building, you should bring your own mask, sign, and water. All are welcome to participate. Questions? Reach out to Krystal White.

**ETHICAL SOCIETY ONE BOOK FOR 2020**

The One Book Project group has selected Bill McKibben’s book Falter to recommend to the Ethical Society membership to read over this summer. Falter addresses climate change as well as other existential and humanist issues. Book discussion groups will kick off in August. Opportunities to participate will be announced. The Society has arranged for Left Bank Books to make copies of Falter available at a discount to our members. (Left Bank is offering curbside pickup.) Get a copy and enjoy a serious author delving into the crucial topics of our age.

**DEDUCTION ADDED FOR CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS**

The CARES Act passed by Congress this year allows for up to $300 per taxpayer ($600 for a married couple) in an above-the-line deduction for charitable gifts made in 2020.
GROUP UPDATES

Sci-Fi Book Club

The Science Fiction Book Club will be reading *The Long Earth* by Terry Pritchett and Stephen Baxter for August. Keep up with the club through the Ethical Society Science Fiction Book Club on Facebook.

Virtual Travel Club

We hope you will join us on Zoom for a virtual trip to Spain on Friday, August 14 at 7 p.m. Ron and Sue Williams will share pictures and information from their vacation in Spain. Zoom number: 384 422 5785

Tai Chi

Fridays at 10 a.m. Log into www.zoom.us, then click join a meeting and use code 384 422 5785. That should be all you need to do. Wait to be admitted. Class runs about an hour. If you cannot attend the class, you can learn tai chi at your own pace and time through Don Beere’s website. Go to www.donaldbeere.com/taiji.html.

We Thinks Good

The “We Thinks Good” Philosophy Discussion Group will meet August 8 & 22, from 3–4:30 p.m. on Zoom. The theme for August is racism. Join member Michelle Ciurria (Philosophy Ph.D. who teaches philosophy at UMSL) for a facilitated conversation.

End Racism Team Planning Sessions

The End Racism Team meets every fourth Sunday at 10 a.m. to plan educational and ethical action events. All are welcome to join and participate. Our next meeting is on Sunday, August 23rd; reach out to Krystal White (krystalsnowwhite@gmail.com) for the Zoom access code. You can also join our Ethical End Racism distribution list at ethicalstl-end-racism@googlegroups.com.

SUBMIT ANNOUNCEMENTS TO THE CONNECTION

If you would like an announcement to appear in the Connection, please submit it to announcements@ethicalstl.org. This helps the staff manage the many requests they receive throughout the month. The deadline for submissions remains the 15th of each month.

Thank you.
NEWS FROM BOARD
PRESIDENT STEPHANIE SIGALA

As Board President, I visit the Ethical Society building at least once a week to take care of Society business. The building itself looks great but I have been wondering how come no weeds? It’s because there has been a hardy band of selfless weeders who have just decided to go out and do it. They are Sharon Poe, Nancy Burgess, Jeanette Langton, Ann Eggbrech, and Kent Forrest. When you see them, give them a shoutout and/or see if you can join in and get some good Ethical karma.

Another July heroine for me is Louise Jett. She is our Society media manager and has her fingers into Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Meet Up. Her monthly Board reports are an amazing panoply of ways that Ethical reaches out to galaxies far, far away to let people know about what we do here. In addition, she is the major shaper of the Weekly and the Connection. Now she also hosts Zoom meetings like the “1619 Project” and Saturday game night. She is a busy woman and deserves a shoutout as well. Thank you, Louise!

For those of you who are worried about Society finances, let me say "so far, so good." Our main sources of revenue are investments, pledges, and rentals. Investments are doing okay, pledges are holding steady, but rentals are taking a hit. It seems unlikely that we will have any outside group meetings for the foreseeable future. The Nursery School is anxious to reopen and we are figuring out safe ways to make that happen.

The July Board meeting provided the final vote on the Board goals for the next year. It’s hard to formulate meaningful goals when we don’t have a crystal ball in these crazy times.

Our goals are: to actively support prudent Society operations (like a financial audit and future Second Leader search); simplify and streamline Board documents (like the Policy Manual) and procedures; improve communication with Board committees; cooperatively guide the Society’s pandemic response (with staff and Ministry); and ensure Board communication to the membership. It is not an agenda that rings with drama, but it allows us to work strategically and effectively for now.

Please contact me (or other Board members) if we can answer questions or provide more information about what the Board does to make the Society stronger. Stephanie.sigala@sbcglobal.net.

1619 PODCAST COMMUNITY LISTENING

Join us on Wednesday, August 5, at 7 p.m., for the final discussion of the 1619 Project, as we discuss Episode 5: The Land of Our Fathers, Parts 1 and 2. The conversation will be found on the Ethical Society’s Zoom address. You need not have listened to the podcast to join in on the discussion. Questions? Reach out to Louise Jett or Krystal White.
8/2/2020 – “The Climate Crisis and You,” Jim Rhodes – We live in a fast-changing world confronted by multiple major problems. Ongoing racism, the coronavirus pandemic, the global economic meltdown, and governmental dysfunction are all real and cry out for solutions. Yet, climate change may be the biggest challenge the world faces. The talk will summarize the climate crisis problem and what we can all be doing to help to solve it.

8/9/2020 – “Humanist, All Too Humanist: A Nietzsche Interpretation,” Kyle Nienhaus” – Friedrich Nietzsche is perhaps the most misunderstood philosopher ever, and even this is not fully understood. He has been portrayed for over a century as a nihilist or Nazi but this is a result of misunderstanding him, as he mentally collapsed just as he was beginning his magnum opus, never to recover. The truth is rather (I claim) that the aim of Nietzsche’s philosophy is toward Humanism. He brilliantly coined new words and new ideas to express his intentions, often leading new and casual readers into confusion. I aim to show his philosophy was Humanist, All Too Humanist.

8/23/2020 – “Life Expectancy in our Apocalyptic Age,” Brian Vandenberg – When will things return to normal? Will they return? What is normal, anyway? We are in the midst of dramatic changes that pose fundamental questions about our life expectancies.

8/30/2020 – “Ethical Humanism and Judaism,” James Croft – While most Ethical Society members know that Felix Adler, the founder of the first Ethical Society, was the son of a rabbi and grew up Jewish, we rarely talk about the relationship between Ethical Humanism and Judaism. In this Platform – the first of a new annual series exploring the similarities between Ethical Humanism and other religious traditions – James Croft will trace the Jewish roots of Ethical Humanism and show how our philosophy drew heavily on the Reform Judaism of Felix Adler’s upbringing.

Views speaker bios at ethicalstl.org