

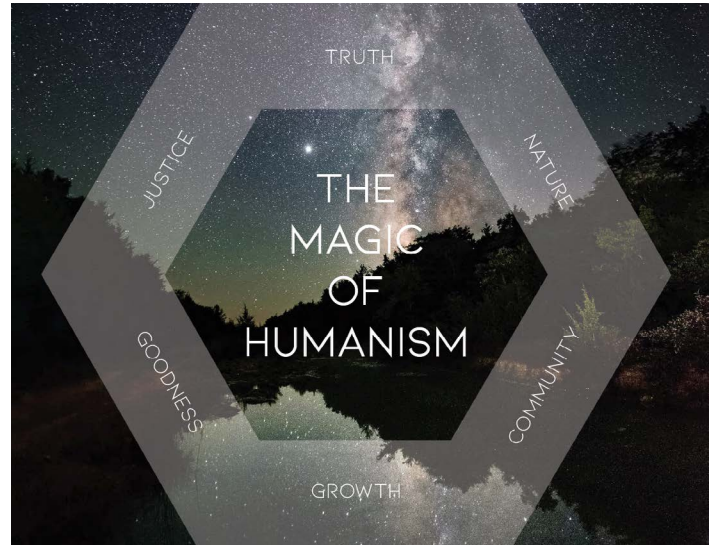
# ETHICAL CONNECTION



Ethical Society of St. Louis — Being Human, Together.

## APRIL'S THEME: STIMULATION

The theme of our 2020-2021 program year is **The Examined Life**. In April, we are exploring **Stimulation**. Join us as we dive deeper into the multifaceted topic of stimulation, together, all month long.



Don't forget to check out our eBook [The Magic of Humanism](#).

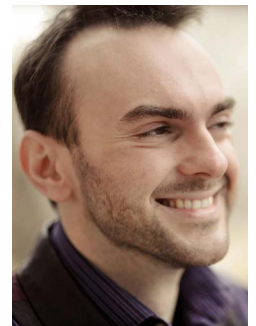
## SUNDAY PLATFORMS

April 4 at 11 a.m.  
"The Theology of 'Ha!'"  
David Misch  
No music, all comedy.



David Misch

April 11 at 11 a.m.  
"Doomscrolling: How  
Social Media Stimulation  
Affects Our Brains and  
Our Society"  
Leader James Croft  
Music: Leah Coloff



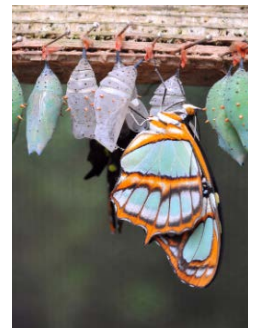
James Croft

April 18 at 11 a.m.  
"Green is Here for Good!"  
Jean Ponzi  
Music: Deborah Sharn  
and Steve Schenkel



Jean Ponzi

April 25 at 11 a.m.  
Coming of Age



MEETING ID: 384 422 5785



## CLIMATE ACTION NOW! WITH MICHELLE ELMORE

**How Low Can You Go: Track Your Personal Climate Impact with Carbon Footprint Calculators** – On Sunday, April 11, at 9:30 a.m. join Michelle Elmore, a regular member of our Climate Action Now! Team and a Ph.D. candidate in meteorology at SLU, as she challenges each of us to examine our personal habits and practices and their impact on the climate. She'll describe numerous carbon footprint calculators and how we can use them to determine which of our lifestyle choices have the most potential to reduce our individual climate impact. Be brave--take the challenge! Visit the [CAN! posts on the Ethical Society blog](#) for content from previous meetings. Send an "opt-in" request to [CAN.EthicalStl@gmail.com](mailto:CAN.EthicalStl@gmail.com) to get meeting reminders and action follow-ups.

Zoom meeting number 444 367 1640.

## MARCH WORKSHOPS

Leader Intern Christian Hayden is continuing his series examining aspects of Ethical Culture:  
**Wednesday, April 7, 7-8:30 p.m. – Black Freethinkers.** Get an introduction to Christopher Cameron's book *Black Freethinkers* and hear about some lesser known folks in the Secular/Freethinking Movement.

**Wednesday, April 21, 7-8 p.m. – What Should I Do? Community Support in Ethical Living.** Do you have a burning ethical dilemma? Would you like support in figuring it out? Are you at your wit's end, and just want to bounce ideas around? Come experience this agenda-less workshop where we practice community care by supporting one another as we navigate living through the lens of Ethical Culture. Submit your dilemma ahead of time, by April 19, to Christian at [chayden@ethicalstl.org](mailto:chayden@ethicalstl.org).

Both workshops will take place on Zoom.  
Zoom ID 384 422 5785.

## JOIN THE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Would you like to take an active role in guiding our Society toward becoming a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive society for all? The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee is now seeking candidates for several three-year appointments beginning in May 2021. If interested, please email Scott Wright at [s.wright.0626@gmail.com](mailto:s.wright.0626@gmail.com) for additional details.

## SPECIAL TAI CHI CLASS

The Special One Day Class for the month of April will be Fan Through the Back, Repulse Monkey and Row the Boat, all taught by H H Lui. These individual movements can be repeated again and again, developing more and more energy. This class is suitable for beginners or experienced tai chi students. Everyone is welcome. Participants do not have to be Ethical Society members. There is no cost. The Special One Day Class is an excellent way to find out whether someone would like to learn tai chi. This class will take place on Zoom Friday, April 30, at 10 a.m.

The other Fridays in April, we will continue learning the first part of the Yang Secret Long Form as taught by H H Lui at 10 a.m. Everyone is welcome. There is no cost. The teacher is Don Beere. He has been learning, practicing and teaching tai chi for over 45 years. Mr. Lui was his teacher for over 20 years. You can learn about Don's background on the tai chi page of his website [www.donaldbeere.com](http://www.donaldbeere.com).

Zoom ID 384 422 5785.

## VIRTUAL YOUTH GROUP

Each Sunday at 10 a.m., our teen leaders research and present a topic, and we'd love for more teens to join the conversation. Join us for community and discussion with other teens!



Zoom ID 871 5256 0728.  
Passcode 529160.

## Second Sunday Dinner Theatre

The Second Sunday Dinner Theatre will meet in the Ethical Society's Zoom meeting room on Sunday, April 11, at 5:30 p.m. Georgie Herz will direct three short comedies.

Zoom meeting ID: 384 422 5785.

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## Virtual Travel Club

The next Virtual Travel Club presentation is Friday, April 16, at 7 p.m. Carole Beere will be presenting on Berlin, a place she has visited 18 times. The session is open to members and non-members.

Zoom meeting ID: 384 422 5785.

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## We Thinks Good

April's theme will be children and political oppression. April 3, Michelle Ciurria will be presenting on "queer parenting" and alternatives to the heteronuclear family. April 17, Professor Eric Wiland from the philosophy department at UMSL will be presenting on his paper, "Should Children Have the Right to Vote?" We Thinks Good meets on the first and third Saturdays of the month at 3 p.m. All are welcome.

Zoom meeting ID: 384 422 5785.

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## Science Fiction Book Club

For April, the Sci-Fi book club will be reading *Metropolis: The Dawn of Uncivilization* edited by John Scalzi. The meeting will be Monday, April 26, 7-8 p.m., via the Society's Zoom account. Keep up with the club through the Ethical Society [Science Fiction Book Club](#) on Facebook.

Zoom meeting ID: 384 422 5785.

## First Friday Forum

The next First Friday Forum talk is titled, "Unpacking the Mystery of Hypnosis." Hypnosis is a trickster, upending our assumptions about our minds, our bodies, and how we experience the world. It has done so for 250 years—beguiling as it informs. The talk is Friday, April 2, 7 p.m. Come meet the trickster. Our speaker is Brian Vandenberg, a member of the Ethical Society. Before retiring, Brian spent 37 years as a professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, and has published a number of articles on hypnosis. Please join us and invite your friends.



Previous First Friday Forums can be watched at the [Ethical Society's You Tube channel](#). If you have suggestions for other members who have expertise they can share at a future First Friday Forum, please send your suggestion(s) to Carole Beere ([Carole.Beere@cmich.edu](mailto:Carole.Beere@cmich.edu)).

Zoom meeting ID: 384 422 5785.

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## Great Books Discussion Group

The Great Books group will meet via Zoom the second Wednesday each month through May 2021. The next meeting is Wednesday, April 14, from 7:30-9 p.m. The selection for discussion is an article that appeared in the New Yorker in January 2021. The title is *The Plague Year*. The author is Jim Wright. [Find the article at this link](#). If you are interested in participating in the Great Books reading group, please contact Alan Easton at [ameast89@yahoo.com](mailto:ameast89@yahoo.com).

Zoom meeting ID: 384 422 5785.

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## Black Lives Matter Vigils Suspended Until Further Notice

Due to new restrictions on gatherings of ten people or more, our monthly Black Lives Matter Vigils are suspended until further notice. Black Lives Still Matter!

# NEWS FROM BOARD PRESIDENT STEPHANIE SIGALA

Our goal is to report only good news for this Ethical Connection Board update. And we can do it easily.

Despite our forced distance from one another, the Ethical community is still strong. The building looks great and our staff is beavering on just as if we were physically there. It seems like there is light at the end of the tunnel—planning is going on now for a re-opening.

Our volunteer action has also been terrific despite social distancing. Kent Forrest spends many days at the Society repairing the vestibule woodwork. He has been rewarded by a big special gift from the Ethical Board. It's what he wanted—a gift card to Menard's!

Jim Rhodes linked up with environmentally active friends to propose that the Society Board ratify the Climate Emergency Declaration which encourages Missouri institutions to prioritize climate action.

The Board has also recognized another one of our super members for the AEU Anna Garlin Spencer Award for volunteer contributions. That super long-time member is David Brown who has been Board president, Governance Plan implementer, and now leads our good works with the International Institute.

Our financial picture at the Society is rosy, despite a somewhat declining membership now at 334.



Photo captured by Member Kent Forrest on June 24, 2020.

2020-21 pledge monies are still rolling in. And the good news is that we are not spending as much while we are closed.

The 2021-22 pledge team is keeping up the good work and ensuring adequate funds for a great year when we finally to see each other in person.

See you at the Annual Meeting, May 13 at 7 p.m. Details below. Please join us and show off your special dessert! Celebrate with us! It's our last Zoom Ethical Annual Meeting, we hope!

If you have questions about the Ethical Board of Trustees, contact me or other friendly Board members. [Stephanie.sigala@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Stephanie.sigala@sbcglobal.net).

## JOIN US FOR THE 2021 ANNUAL MEETING, MAY 13, AT 7 P.M.

The Ethical Society of St. Louis Annual Meeting will be held on Zoom again this year again Thursday, May 13, at 7 p.m. The Zoom address is 384 422 5785, our regular Platform Zoom account.

Board President Stephanie Sigala will preside. She will present an agenda which includes elections of new Board members, a revision to the bylaws, and other Society business. Leader James Croft will discuss the challenges of the past year and plans for in-person meetings later this year.

The Society needs a quorum of attendees and voters to make our business official. Please check in a few minutes early to help us get off to a timely start.

In previous years, a dessert party has preceded the Annual Meeting. Consider making a special dessert and showing it off to your Zoom friends before the meeting, so that we can continue this tradition virtually.

Here is the wording for the proposed bylaw change:

6.4 The presence, in person, of ten percent of Active Members of the Society shall constitute a quorum at meetings of the membership. A majority vote of Active Members at the meeting, both those present and those voting by absentee ballot, shall be required to approve any action except where otherwise specified in these Bylaws.

# NOMINATIONS FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Nominating Committee members (Samantha White [chair], Jo-Ellen Forrest, and Amanda Verbeck) are pleased to recommend the following members for election to serve as members and officers of the Ethical Society of Saint Louis Board of Trustees:

- Katie Borders, Secretary
- Lance Finney, President-elect
- Kitt Rogers, Trustee

**Lance Finney** has been a member of the Ethical Society of St. Louis for a decade. Lance currently serves as a member of the Platform Committee and assists Louise Jett with the Society's social media. Additionally, he usually coordinates the Platform chairs, but that role is on hiatus until we can meet in person again. Previously, Lance has served a three-year term on the Board, he founded the Ethical Navigators and led the Navigators Council for several years, and he has been on several other teams and committees for the Society through the years. Lance is a software developer who enjoys bike rides and travel. Lance's wife Jennifer and children Douglas (14) and Matthew (12) are also active in the Society.

**Kitt Rogers:** The phrase "deed before creed" is what drew Kitt Rogers and her husband, Tom, to the Ethical Society with their two young kids in tow. They found what they'd been looking for: a

non-theistic community and a place their children could learn about world religions and ethics. Kitt jumped right into volunteering as a teacher with the SEEK program, eventually becoming the SEEK administrator for a few years. More recently, Kitt was the facility coordinator from 2014 to 2018. Kitt has been a member of the Ethical Society since 2007 and is happy to say her kids were active in the SEEK program all the way through Youth Group.

The Nominating Committee has designated that, upon election at the Annual Meeting, current secretary and trustee Katie Borders will serve as board secretary for one year. Katie will be entering the second year as secretary of her three-year term as trustee. As secretary, Katie is a member of the Executive Committee, which includes the president, president-elect, past president, and ministry team leader.

Please note: This year's Annual Meeting is Thursday, May 13. Trustees are elected by Active Members present at the meeting plus those who submit an absentee ballot in advance. The Society's bylaws allow additional nominations to the Board by written petition signed by at least ten Active Members. If the nominee-by-petition is running to be an officer, the position must be specified. All such written petitions must be filed at the Society office at least 21 days prior to the Annual Meeting.

## TUESDAY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION APRIL EVENTS

**April 6: Book Review.** *Whispers of the Heart: A Memoir* by Uma Eachempati. Reviewer: Uma Eachempati.

**April 13: International Relations Series Lecture:** [Historical Heritage and Racist Art](#) with Dr. Akiko Tsuchiya, Professor of Spanish, Affiliate of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, and Center for the Study of Race, Ethnicity, and Equity, of Washington University.

**April 20: Spring Party: Haiku Slam.** TWA president, Sharon Poe, will tell us the history of haiku, share some of her writings, and lead us in an exercise to create some of our own haiku, in honor of National Poetry Month.

**April 27: River Styx** is a literary journal produced in St. Louis, Missouri. It is the oldest literary journal in St. Louis. Speakers: Members of River Styx will present dramatic readings of their prose and poetry.

# PLATFORM DETAILS

## 04/04 – The Theology of “Ha!” – David Misch

– Is there a relationship between comedy and the divine? (Here you say “Are you nuts?”) But hang on, maybe there is. Both start with a premise: one, that there’s an all-powerful, omniscient being who watches over the world; the other, that a priest, a rabbi and a gecko would walk into a bar. In comedy, accept the premise and you get a laugh – in religion, accept the higher power and you get eternal life, emotional support, and answers to all questions. (This may explain why there are more religious people than stand-ups.) This talk uses “Animal House,” Steve Carell, “Waiting For Godot,” Walt Disney and the novel “The Name of the Rose” to discuss whether comedy is fundamentally cruel or empathetic; how religion’s search for meaning has a corollary in comedy’s search for a punchline; how laughter is like religious ecstasy and transcendence; and how to achieve divinity through fart jokes. Seriously.

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## 04/11 – Doomscrolling: How Social Media Stimulation Affects Our Brains and Our Society – James Croft

– Social media is now a huge part of our lives, whether we use it ourselves or not. It shapes the media agenda; it influences political discussions; it molds our culture. It also affects our brains: social media platforms use sophisticated systems to encourage us to engage more and more, perhaps beyond the point where it’s healthy. How is social media affecting our brains and our society? Are the effects good or bad? And what can we do about it?

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## 04/18 – Green is Here for Good! – Jean Ponzi

– Our region is growing an abundance of local, sustainable, striving-to-be-equitable enterprises. From local food systems to our native plant landscaping movement, from energy policy to green jobs: much to be proud of, to support and enjoy! Prepare to be nourished by this report, and discussion that will surely complement it, with presenter “Green Jean” Ponzi of the EarthWays Center at Missouri Botanical Garden.

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## 04/25 – Coming of Age

View speaker bios at [ethicalstl.org](http://ethicalstl.org)

## April 1 – April 3

Thursday, April 1	6 p.m.	Post-Platform Discussion
Friday, April 2	10 a.m.	Tai Chi with Don Beere
	4 p.m.	Men’s Group Chat
	7 p.m.	First Friday Forum
Saturday, April 3	3 p.m.	We Thinks Good

## April 4 – April 10

Sunday, April 4	10 a.m.	Virtual Youth Group
	11 a.m.	The Theology of “Ha!”
Tuesday, April 6	11 a.m.	TWA
	4 p.m.	Men’s Group Chat
Wednesday, April 7	9 a.m.	Ethical Mindfulness Practice
	7 p.m.	Black Freethinkers
Thursday, April 8	6 p.m.	Post-Platform Discussion
Friday, April 9	10 a.m.	Tai Chi with Don Beere
	4 p.m.	Men’s Group Chat
Saturday, April 10	7 p.m.	Games with Weezy

## April 11 – April 17

Sunday, April 11	9:30 a.m.	Climate Action Now!
	10 a.m.	Virtual Youth Group
	11 a.m.	Doomscrolling
	5:30 p.m.	Second Sunday Dinner Theatre
Monday, April 12	6 p.m.	Board Meeting
Tuesday, April 13	10 a.m.	TWA - IRLS
	4 p.m.	Men’s Group Chat
Wednesday, April 14	9 a.m.	Ethical Mindfulness Practice
	7:30 p.m.	Great Books Discussion
Thursday, April 15	6 p.m.	Post-Platform Discussion
Friday, April 16	10 a.m.	Tai Chi with Don Beere
	4 p.m.	Men’s Group Chat
	7 p.m.	Virtual Travel Club
Saturday, April 17	3 p.m.	We Thinks Good

## April 18 – April 24

Sunday, April 18	10 a.m.	Virtual Youth Group
	11 a.m.	Green is Here for Good!
Tuesday, April 20	10 a.m.	TWA
	4 p.m.	Men’s Group Chat
Wednesday, April 21	9 a.m.	Ethical Mindfulness Practice
	7 p.m.	What Should I Do? Community Support in Ethical Living.
Thursday, April 22	6 p.m.	Post-Platform Discussion
Friday, April 23	10 a.m.	Tai Chi with Don Beere
	4 p.m.	Men’s Group Chat
Saturday, April 24	7 p.m.	Games with Weezy

## April 25 – April 30

Sunday, April 25	10 a.m.	Virtual Youth Group
	11 a.m.	Coming of Age
Monday, April 26	7 p.m.	Science Fiction Book Club
Tuesday, April 27	10 a.m.	TWA
	4 p.m.	Men’s Group Chat
Wednesday, April 28	9 a.m.	Ethical Mindfulness Practice
Thursday, April 29	6 p.m.	Post-Platform Discussion
Friday, April 30	10 a.m.	Tai Chi with Don Beere
	4 p.m.	Men’s Group Chat

# ETHICAL CONNECTION



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Katie Borders, Secretary  
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Website [www.ethicalstl.org](http://www.ethicalstl.org)  
Social Media [@ethicalstl](https://www.facebook.com/ethicalstl) [#ethicalstl](https://twitter.com/ethicalstl)

Submission deadline for the Ethical Connection newsletter is the 15th of the preceding month  
Email items to [connection@ethicalstl.org](mailto:connection@ethicalstl.org).

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