

February AFS Meeting

Christopher Cameron: “Socialism, Communism, and African American Freethought”



Christopher Cameron

Atlanta Freethought Society is delighted to present our February Speaker, **Christopher Cameron**. This talk will explore the intersections of Black radical politics and secularism from

the early 20th century through the 1930s. While most historians attribute the growing appeal of socialism and communism among African Americans to the Great Depression and immigration from the Caribbean, he argues that these parties' secular orientation is what most appealed to black leaders and thinkers such as **Hubert Harrison**, **W.E.B. Du Bois**, and **Louise Thompson Patterson**.

Christopher Cameron is an Associate Professor of History at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. He is also the founder and past president of the African American Intellectual History Society. He received his B.A. in History from Keene State College and his M.A. and Ph.D. in American History from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His research and teaching interests include early American history, the history of slavery and abolition, and American religious and intellectual history. Cameron's first book, entitled *To Plead Our Own Cause: African Americans in Massachusetts and the Making of*

the Antislavery Movement, was published by Kent State University Press in 2014. His second book, *Black Freethinkers: A History of African American Secularism*, was published by Northwestern University Press in September 2019. Cameron is also the co-editor of *New Perspectives on the Black Intellectual Tradition*, published by Northwestern University Press in 2018.



Due to popular demand for as long as interest continues, Atlanta Freethought Society will once again conduct game night at AF Hall each month the night before the General Meeting starting at 7 p.m. Our first game night for 2020 will be held on Saturday, February 8.

Please bring snacks, beverages (beer and wine okay), and any games you'd enjoy sharing. It's a great way to relax and get to know your fellow freethinkers. See you there!

Calendar

Feb 2	Fellowship of Reason	10:30 a.m.
Feb 8	AFS Game Night	7:00 p.m.
Feb 9	AFS Potluck	12:00 p.m.
Feb 9	AFS General Meeting	1:00 p.m.
Feb 16	FFRF - "Food Inc."	4:00 p.m.
Mar 8	AFS Board Meeting	11:00 a.m.
Mar 8	AFS General Meeting	

All events are at AF Hall unless noted and are subject to change.

The February Potluck

Before the Feb 9th meeting we will have a Potluck Lunch, starting at noon. Join AFS members and guests for some good food and great socializing. Please bring food according to the first letter of your last name:

- A-G: Bring a main dish**
- H-P: Bring a dessert**
- Q-Z: Bring a side dish**

AFS will provide drinks, plates and silverware.



For the latest in upcoming AFS events, join our Meetup group!
[meetup.com/Atlanta-Freethought-Society](https://www.meetup.com/Atlanta-Freethought-Society)

Programs and Speakers

All programs are on the second Sunday of each month at AF Hall, 4775 N. Church Lane SE, Atlanta, GA, 30339 unless otherwise noted. Programs start at 1:00 PM, but feel free to arrive at 12:00 for socializing. Visitors are always welcome.

The views and opinions expressed by speakers at AFS do not necessarily reflect those of AFS members or its policy.



Feb 9: Christopher Cameron - Socialism, Communism, and African American Freethought

Mar 8: Ben Burgis

Apr 12: Richard Dien Winfield

AFS Email List

The AFS Announcements email list provides subscribers with reminders and updates on AFS activities. Send an email to AFS-Announce-subscribe@yahoogroups.com to subscribe. The AFS Forum email list is a place for discussions of freethought, atheism, agnosticism, church-state separation and religion. To subscribe to this list, send an email to AFSForum-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. The AFS Facebook page is at facebook.com/AtlantaFreethought. For calendar information on AFS activities, please join the [Meetup group](#). The AFS website is www.atlantafreethought.org.

To keep up to date on the Atlanta Freethought Society calendar of upcoming events, please join our Meetup group: meetup.com/Atlanta-Freethought-Society.

The Atlanta Freethought Society is a member-run organization dedicated to advancing freethought and protecting the rights and reputation of freethinkers, agnostics, atheists and humanists.

We welcome anyone who is interested in learning about living a good life free from religion through attending AFS speeches, debates, and discussions. We employ protests, letters to the editor, broadcast appearances, and any other reasonable and civil means available to achieve our mission.

We define freethought as “the forming of opinions about life in general and religion in particular on the basis of reason and the evidence of our senses, independently of tradition, authority, or established belief.”

We actively support a strict separation of church and state as the best means to guarantee liberty for all, regardless of religious belief or lack of belief.

We seek to educate ourselves on many topics but especially on religion and non-religion. We do this through a series of thought-provoking speakers and programs, and by maintaining a web forum and an extensive library of freethought, religious, and related books, pamphlets, videotapes, and audiotapes.

We provide an organization where freethinkers and non-theists can develop friendships, talk freely, socialize and enjoy each other’s company. We do not discriminate against anyone on such irrelevant grounds as race, sexual orientation, age, gender, class, or physical disability. We welcome members and leaders of all political parties and preferences. Any who are like-minded are welcome to join us.

Because we are designated by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) educational organization, contributions to AFS are tax deductible.

Views, opinions, positions or strategies expressed by authors are theirs alone and do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, positions or strategies of the Atlanta Freethought Society or any member thereof. The editors of *Atlanta Freethought News* reserve the right to edit or alter in any manner it sees fit any articles deemed to be obscene, offensive, defamatory, threatening, in violation of trademark, copyright or other laws, or is otherwise unacceptable; and also to correct grammar and to conserve space.

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Atlanta Freethought News

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Steve Yothment



Thank the Ones Who Need Thanking

Sent to Marietta Daily Journal, 26 Jan 2020

Dear Editor:

Nelson Price (his column, "Shakespeare on Impeachment," is reprinted below for the benefit of a few out of town/non-MD readers I'm sending this to; Sunday, 26 January 2020) is, unusually for him, trying to display his erudition with lots of Shakespeare quotations rather than Bible verses or phony founding father lines. Unfortunately for him, his concluding salvo reveals him as a mere pretentious pedant.

His last quote is from Macbeth, and Price thinks it's an apt description of the impeachment trial as "a tale told by an idiot, signifying nothing." But Macbeth uttered these words in bleak despair after his wife's suicide, indicting any creator god as an "idiot" and author of meaninglessness. The fuller context, from Act V, Scene V, makes it crystal clear that "life" is the tale told by an idiot:

*She should have died hereafter;
There would have been a time for such a word.
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-mor-
row,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief
candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the
stage
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.*

It also seriously undercuts Price's use of the quote that Macbeth himself goes on to die, revealed as a corrupt and treacherous (though not as treacherous as Lady Macbeth) traitor. Is that what Shakespeare foretold about Trump?

Regards,
Ed Buckner
Vinings

NELSON PRICE: Shakespeare on impeachment

Shakespeare, where are you when we need you? A tragedy — or is it a comedy? — is playing out in Washington. It needs a title. Perhaps of all the many expressions Shakespeare originated, this one would be a good title: "Foregone Conclusion." The cast of characters consists of two cadres. The one on the left is confident their foil, formerly known as "The Donald," before he became a titled leader, called President Trump, is guilty. The solipsist director of Act One, Nancy Pelosi, and her minions have successfully sent the approved script of the play, aka Articles of Impeachment to the Senate. Now the drama is being played out.

In his numerous plays, both tragedies and comedies, Shakespeare left us bits of wisdom related to such a cast of characters.

He was never so correct as in the play of Richard III when it was said, "Now is the winter of our discontent."

Hamlet's appraisal of his mother was tailored for Pelosi, "The lady doth protest too much, methinks."

This line is taken from "As You Like It" Act 2, Scene 7: "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players." Never has such a large cast of dramatists appeared on a stage at the same time.

In "The Tempest," Act 1, scene 2, is found this wisdom: "Good wombs have borne bad sons." That is sons and daughters. That speaks of many a mother's grief.

From "Measure for Measure," the character Angelo speaks, "When once our grace we have forgot, nothing goes right." The word "grace" appears 25 times in this play that contrasts law and grace. Perhaps the absence of grace explains why so few things have gone right.

From the masterpiece, "Othello," comes this line: "When I love thee not, chaos comes again." How brilliant is that? Think of what he is saying: "Chaos comes to us when we choose not to love." Where there is no grace, there is no love.

In "A Midsummers Night's Dream" is found this gem: "Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind, and therefore winged Cupid is painted blind." What of Cupid's features is pictured as being blind? The mind. This is apparently true of some of these play characters.

Then of time he says in "Richard II": "I wasted time and now doth time waste me."

Of the brain and memory in "Hamlet" he speaks of carrying on "whilst memory still holds a seat in this distracted globe." That is much cooler than just calling it is mindless. Many acts today in Washington seem mindless.

These words attributed to Shakespeare himself seem to reveal President Trump's attitude, "Love me or hate me, both are in my favor ... if you love me, I'll always be in your heart ... if you hate me I'll always be in your mind."

This council for President Trump, comes from the play Henry IV, Act 5, Scene 4, "The better part of valor is discretion."

Shakespeare left us this final quote regarding guilt or innocence as our drama draws to an end: "To be, or not to be: that is the question."

This quote originated by Shakespeare may well define this entire event as being a "wild goose chase."

When it is over, hopefully these words from "Macbeth" won't sum it up: "It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

I appeal for persons to do as Nancy Pelosi urged and proceed "prayerfully."

We are living through an epic experience. Looking back on experiences of our government historically, this one will someday be looked back upon as a Mount Everest.

The Rev. Nelson Price is pastor emeritus of Roswell Street Baptist Church in Marietta.

End blasphemy Laws Internationally

atheists.org

American Atheists submitted testimony on January 27 in support of House Resolution 512, which calls for the global repeal of blasphemy, heresy, and apostasy laws.

The resolution calls on **President Trump** and **Secretary of State Pompeo** to prioritize the repeal of blasphemy laws and the release of imprisoned blasphemers in bilateral relationships with all countries.

“Thankfully, [the U.S.] Congress has the ability to promote international religious freedom and encourage other governments to follow the protection of freedom of thought, conscience, expression, and exercise,” wrote **Alison Gill**, American Atheists’ Vice President for Legal and Policy. “Several countries have taken steps toward repealing these blasphemy laws, including Greece, Ireland, and Canada, but more needs to be done on the international scale.”

The resolution also encourages the President and the Secretary of State to designate countries that enforce blasphemy laws as “countries of particular concern for religious freedom.”

Finally, it urges the President and the Secretary of State to oppose the United Nations and other international forums if they support blasphemy laws.

“Sadly, we must note that the United States does not have a perfect record when it comes to anti-blasphemy laws,” said Gill. “States such as Massachusetts, Michigan, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Wyoming continue to have inactive anti-blasphemy provisions within their state law. Just as the U.S. condemns blasphemy overseas, Congress should encourage states to repeal these outdated statutes.”

Paula White must resign from White House after ‘satanic pregnancy’

ffrf.org

The Freedom From Religion Foundation, a national state/church watchdog, is calling on evangelist **Paula White** to resign her official post after she appealed to Jesus Christ to “command all satanic pregnancies to miscarry right now.” Long known as **President Trump’s** “spiritual adviser,” White was appointed late last year to a paid position with the White House’s Faith & Opportunity Initiative.

“It’s an embarrassment to our nation that White is a government employee,” says FFRF Co-President **Dan Barker**. “If White doesn’t step down, Trump should fire her. Such primitive thinking, superstition and bigotry should have no place in 21st century U.S. governance.”

On Friday, Jan. 24, the same day Trump became the first president to address the anti-abortion March for Life rally in Washington, D.C., Right Wing Watch **posted video of White** appearing to wish miscarriages for a certain category of pregnancies defined by her. The off-the-wall sermon was given to the congregation at New Destiny Christian Center, an Apopka, Fla., mega-church, at which she was formerly senior pastor:

In the name of Jesus, we command all satanic pregnancies to miscarry right now. We declare that anything that’s been conceived in Satanic wombs, that it’ll miscarry. It will not be able to carry forth any plan of destruction, any plan of harm.

White’s bizarre miscarriage “command” followed a long rant, which included the following remarks:



FFRF/AFS Meeting

On Sunday, February 16, 4-6 pm at Atlanta Freethought Hall we will view the documentary “Food Inc.” This 2008 film is about how mega-corporations control the agricultural markets and feed us a diet that is good for their bottom line, but not for us. The influence of big agriculture adding to our underfunded USDA is just one of the major issues in 2020 elections that gets little attention. After the film, we will discuss what we can do to make this a priority for our political leaders. Please bring your ideas and experiences about this subject so that we can all share ideas and strategies on how to cope.

Some brief announcements about our activities, future meetings, and local issues will follow.

FFRF will provide hot chocolate, coffee, and soft drinks. If you like, bring snacks and your favorite beverage. Doors open at 3 pm so come early to socialize with like-minded people! After the meeting, we will adjourn to a local restaurant for dinner, conversation, and networking.

All events are free and open to the public.

We cancel every surprise from the witchcraft in the marine kingdom, any hex, any spell, any witchcraft, any spirit of control, any Jezebel, anything that the enemy desires through spells, through witchcraft, through any way that is manipulation, demonic manipulation, we curse that, we break it. According to the word of God, in the name of Jesus, we come against the marine kingdom, we come against the animal kingdom, any — the woman that rides upon the waters, we break the power, in the name of Jesus.

The video had more than 8 million views by Monday morning. Reaction included this tweet by reproductive health columnist and ob-gyn **Jennifer Gunter**: “So Paula White wants everyone at @WhiteHouse to know she is praying for abortion.”

Tennessee Should Put Kids First And Reject Discrimination

By Nik Nartowicz / Wall of Separation Blog • www.au.org

The very first thing the Tennessee Senate did when it reconvened in January was pass a bill to allow discrimination that would harm children in foster care. HB 836, passed by the House last year, would authorize taxpayer-funded foster care agencies to turn away couples seeking to foster or adopt children because they are LGBTQ or the “wrong” religion.

Republican Gov. Bill Lee said he intends to sign this harmful bill (even telling one news outlet that **he already had**). If he does, the law would undermine the bedrock child welfare standard that requires these foster care agencies to provide services based solely on what is in the best interest of the child. He will be hurting kids in need of loving homes and the families that want to provide for them.

Across the country, there are more than 111,000 children in care who are eligible for adoption; there are nearly 9,000 kids in foster care just in Tennessee. Many states already face a shortage

leaving care without finding their forever family increases.

Our client, **Aimee Maddonna**, knows the harm these bills can cause. Aimee, a Catholic mother of three, grew up in a family that provided a home for countless children in foster care. She tried to work with Miracle Hill Ministries, a government-funded foster care agency. Miracle Hill initially told her that her family was a great fit to work with kids. But after Aimee told Miracle Hill that she is Catholic, she was turned away because Miracle Hill only works with people who are evangelical Protestants (the agency has since said it will consider Catholics who will sign the agency’s statement of faith, which doesn’t align with Aimee’s beliefs). That’s why, with our help, Aimee is suing her home state of South Carolina and the federal government to stop these discriminatory policies.

Aimee isn’t alone in facing discrimination. **Lydia Currie** also reached out to Miracle Hill so that she and her husband could adopt, but **she was turned away** because she is Jewish. **Beth Lesser**, who is also Jewish, attended a three-day training to learn more about mentoring children in care but was **told on the last day** that non-Protestants were not welcome.

If Tennessee’s bill becomes law, it’s only a matter of time before this kind of religious discrimination could happen in the state. HB 836 undermines religious freedom, which gives Americans the right to believe, or not, as they choose, but it does not give anyone the right to use their religious beliefs to

discriminate against kids and families. That’s especially true when organizations, like these adoption and foster care agencies, get public funding to provide a service on behalf of the government. No taxpayer-funded organization should be able to use religion to justify refusing to place them in a safe and happy family because of the religion of the prospective parents.

By signing this bill, Gov. Lee would put the religious beliefs of child-placing agencies ahead of the best interests of the children whom the agencies contract with the state to serve. Instead, he should put kids first. There’s still time.



of families willing to take care of these kids. By allowing taxpayer-funded agencies to refuse to work with families that are a different religion or LGBTQ, HB 836 would only compound that problem. Because when an agency refuses to work with qualified parents, children in care face increased wait times, and the number of youth

P.S. This bill is part of **Project Blitz**, a nefarious political movement that is sweeping through state legislatures across the country with an agenda aimed at establishing the U.S. as a Christian nation. Project Blitz has the goal of passing an increasingly ambitious set of state laws to incrementally tear down the separation of religion and government, promote prayer in public schools and misuse religious freedom to justify discrimination. AU and allies are tracking Project Blitz and working to block it from spreading. Join us!

Other Meetings of Interest in Metro Atlanta

The Atlanta Science Tavern has several meetings planned. Please check meetup page for more information. (www.meetup.com/AtlantaScienceTavern)

The SOS (Secular Organizations for Sobriety) meets on Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. in Roswell. For more information, send an email to donnajgore@yahoo.com.

We Agnostics Atlanta meets on Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. at the Galano Club, 585 Dutch Valley Rd NE, Atlanta, GA 30324. Clubhouse phone number: (404) 881-9188. This is similar to Alcoholics Anonymous group.

Marietta Skeptic/Humanist Meetup has various get-togethers and discussion groups. Several upcoming events. (www.meetup.com/Marietta-Atheists-Meetup)

The Peachtree City Humanists participate in social and educational activities such as dinners, lunches, coffees, outdoor recreation, discussion groups, and book clubs with topics that include science, psychology, philosophy. (www.meetup.com/Peachtree-City-Humanists-PTCH)

The Southern Crescent Freethinkers Sunday Seculars at Starbucks, Peachtree East Shopping Center Sun mornings 10-12 (www.meetup.com/Southern-Crescent-Freethinkers)

Recovery from Religion - Morrow Chapter meets monthly at Barnes & Noble Booksellers Southlake, 1939 Mount Zion Road, Morrow, GA. Join the Meetup group for more information. There is no proselytizing of any kind allowed at these meetings. For more information and resources, please visit www.recoveringfromreligion.org. (www.meetup.com/Recovering-From-Religion-Morrow-Chapter)

Ethical Humanists of Atlanta: Mixed group documentary night is Fri, Feb 7, 6:45-10pm at Unitarian Universalist Northwest Congregation, 1025 Mt. Vernon Hwy Sandy Springs. The film shown is "13th" and is hosted in collaboration with Atlanta Volunteer, Sunday Assembly, Late 20s & Early 30s ATL, and Vegan Social Club. (www.meetup.com/Ethical-Humanists-of-Atlanta)

Black Nonbelievers' general meeting is Sun, Feb 9, 1 pm at AF Hall along with Atlanta Freethought Society. www.meetup.com/Black-Nonbelievers

There will be a **meetup for Decatur Atheists** Sun, Feb 9, 6 pm, Thinking Man Tavern, 537 W. Howard Ave, in Decatur. (www.meetup.com/Atlanta-Atheists)

GUST (Gwinnett: Understanding Secular Truths) will meet at 7-9 pm, Mon, Feb 20 at UUCG, 12 Bethesda

Church Rd, Lawrenceville. The topic is **Logical Fallacies**. Have you ever read an article or had a conversation and thought, that doesn't sound right? Have you encountered a theological argument that just doesn't make sense? There are lots of ways to construct logical arguments and to think about reasoning, so we need to understand which ones are logical and which aren't. (www.meetup.com/brights-295)

Atlanta Astronomy Club will meet on the third Friday at 7:30 pm each month at Fernbank Science Center, 156 Heaton Park Dr, Atlanta, GA 30307 unless otherwise noted. Check website for more info. (www.atlantaastronomy.org)

Atlanta Atheists has third Sunday at Sceptre Brewing Arts, 630 East Lake Dr Suite E, Decatur on Feb 16 at 2 pm. (www.meetup.com/Atlanta-Atheists)

FFRF will meet Sun, Feb 16, 4-6 at AFS. (www.meetup.com/Freedom-From-Religion-Foundation-of-Georgia)

Sunday Assembly Atlanta's upcoming assembly is on Sun,

Feb 16, 5:30 pm at First Existentialist Congregation, 470 Candler Park Dr NE, Atlanta. The topic is **The Power of Love**. The speaker is **Greg Loughlin** from **Men Stopping Violence**. SAA is an extremely active community with a large number of upcoming events including rock chorus, secular support, mindfulness meditation, wonder club, urban wonder, book club, volunteering, queer beyond belief group, public speaking series, etc. Please check the Meetup page for other activities. (www.meetup.com/Sunday-Assembly)

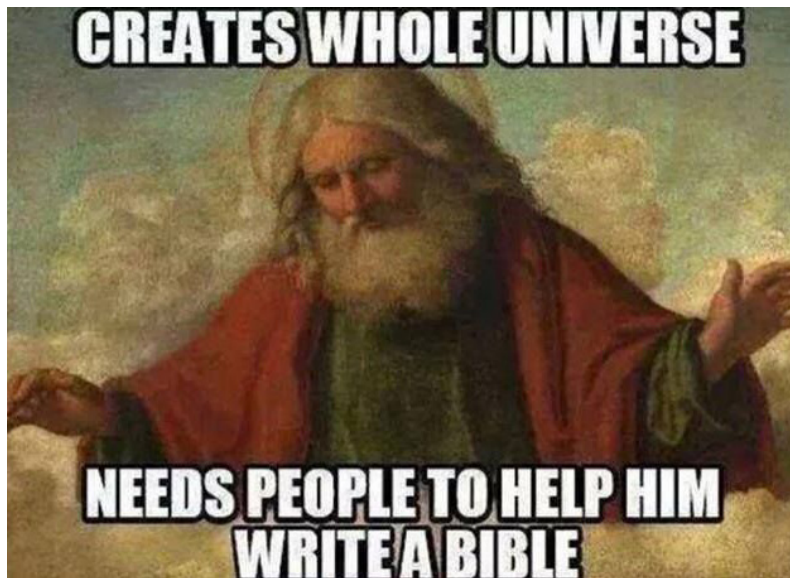
Satanic Temple Atlanta at press time has not listed their monthly meeting. (www.facebook.com/TSTATL/)

Atlanta Atheists Monthly Meetup is Sun, Feb 23, 4 pm, Keegan's Irish Pub, 4687 S Atlanta St #224, Smyrna. (www.meetup.com/Atlanta-Atheists)

Atlanta Sceptics has "Drinking Sceptically" on the first Friday of each month at 7 pm, Taco Mac at the Prado 5600 Roswell Rd, Sandy Springs, though location is subject to change. (www.meetup.com/AtlantaSceptics)

Atlanta Atheists has first Sunday meetups each month: the place varies. Check Meetup for info on the get-together. (www.meetup.com/Atlanta-Atheists)

Fellowship of Reason meets on the first Sunday of every month at 10:30 AM at AF Hall. Meetings for book discussion, philosophy, a classic film course, Ancient Greek language classes, and other events. (www.fellowshipofreason.com)



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(Or renew your membership with this form or online at www.AtlantaFreethought.org!)

If you've enjoyed what you've read, we enthusiastically invite you to join the Atlanta Freethought Society. Every month you will get our acclaimed monthly newsletter, the *Atlanta Freethought News*, voting rights in the organization—and enjoyment of the superb speakers we have coming up, as well as the social and activist events that we sponsor!

Individual memberships: One person can become a member for \$50 per year.

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Life memberships: Avoid the hassle of renewing every year. A life membership lasts a lifetime. **Paper newsletter:** We encourage members to receive the newsletter by email. This avoids the printing and mailing expenses. But if you really want the paper version of the newsletter, just let us know and we will send it to you at no additional charge. (You can also pick up a paper newsletter at any AFS meeting.)

Thank you for your support! We look forward to your being with us in the coming months!

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AFS Art Display Program

4775 N. Church Lane SE Atlanta, GA 30339

www.atlantafreethought.org afs@atlantafreethought.org

Person or entity displaying art: _____

Address: _____

Phone(s): _____

Email: _____

Description of artwork (subject, color, dimensions, weight, frame, price, materials, other info — list on separate page if necessary): _____

Display dates: from _____ to _____

Owner if other than above: _____

Address: _____

Phone(s): _____

Email: _____

Is artwork for sale? Yes / No \$ _____ Upon sale owner agrees to pay AFS a 33.3% fee.

Terms: All artwork displays will be submitted to Atlanta Freethought Society art committee for approval (afs@atlantafreethought.org). Installation & removal will be done by artist/owner overseen by AFS art committee. Damage to building will be repaired by artist/owner. The owner assumes all risk for artwork at all times. AFS will not be responsible for any damage or loss while artwork is in our possession.

Owner agrees to terms: _____

Signature/date _____

AFS Art Committee approval: _____

Signature/date _____

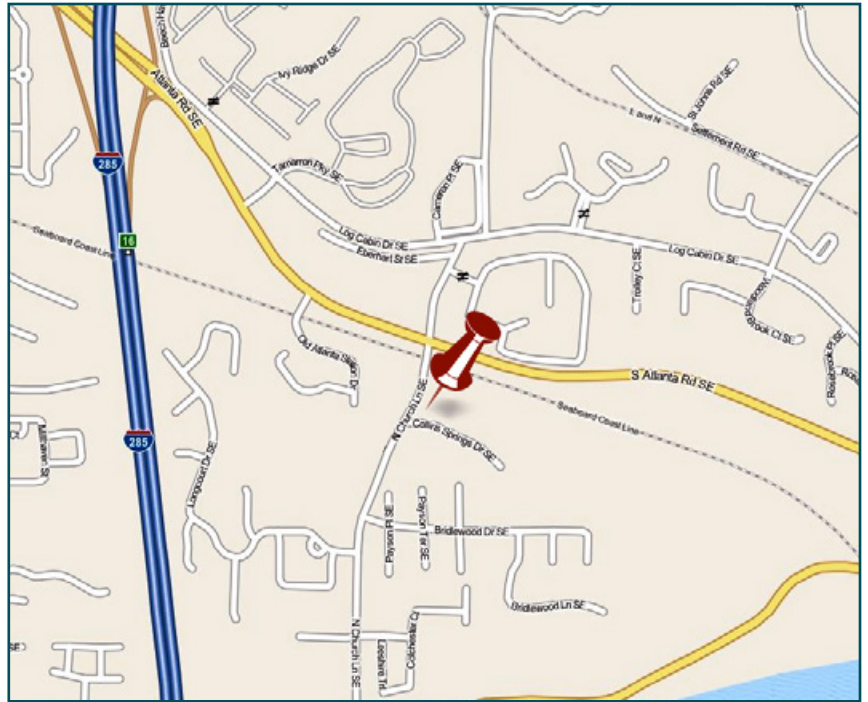
*Dare To Think
For Yourself!*



**February 9th meeting
1:00 at AF Hall
4775 N. Church Lane SE
Atlanta, GA 30339**

**Christopher
Cameron**

ALSO POTLUCK LUNCH!



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