

Cultivating
Religious Freedom, Diversity,
Inquiry, and Community



The Weekly Expression

Newsletter December 10, 2009

Upcoming Services:

December 13: "How is it Coming?"
Dr. Brent Smith

**December 20: CHRISTMAS CAROL
CANTATA**

**December 24: 6 pm CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHTING
SERVICE**

December 27: "For the Time Being" Dr. Brent A. Smith

Music Notes

Dr. Monique Salinas-Stauffer

I hope that everyone is planning to attend service on DECEMBER 20 at 11 am--as we are presenting the CHRISTMAS CAROL CANTATA--a musical and dramatic presentation of Charles Dickens A Christmas Carol. Charles Dickens was a great Unitarian novelist and his Christmas Carol is beloved by all ages. This presentation will include dramatic readings, congregational singing, instrumental music, and choral pieces. It is going to be absolutely beautiful--bring your friends and your family! We have all been hard at work on it, and are very excited to perform it for you. The Children's Choir will sing as well. This will be a wonderful way to truly feel the merriment and joy of the holiday season. We look forward to seeing you there!



Clearance on Auction Items:

Kim Waalkes and Heather Williams

Here is your chance to get amazing deals on two auction items that nobody bid on last week. We are offering them to the highest bidder, with no minimum bid. The first is an at home 1 Hr. Professional Teeth Whitening Treatment with custom trays from Dr. Lambert DDS. It is worth \$359. The second is 4 Admissions to the Public Museum and 4 Carousel Rides. Perfect for taking your kiddos or your grandkiddos on a fun day out. It is worth \$36. If you would like to bid on either of these items, please email your bid to ascc.auction@yahoo.com by this Saturday at 5pm. We would like to wrap up the accounting for the auction this weekend so we can let everyone know how much money we raised this year.

A big Thank You to those of you who helped support this year's auction: by donating items, painting with the RE kids, helping with set up, attending the auction, participating in the ASCC Only Auction, volunteering to work the auction, or helping with clean up. The auction committee really appreciates your support. We especially would like to thank Ruth Butler for doing another fabulous job as emcee this year. As well as San Chez, for providing the delicious food and beautiful facility, thanks Cindy and Dan! And to our amazing volunteers that helped make this auction run smoother than ever: Jen Hall, Tracie Coffman, Andy Truax, Annie Logan, Suzanne Zack, Elizabeth Weaver, Sandy VanDragt, Maggie Johnson, Kathleen Johnson, and Mikaela Harris.

SITE COMMITTEE

We are reconstituting the ASCC Site Committee. In keeping with our overall responsibilities for the church, The Board of Trustees would like to evaluate our options for where we hold Sunday worship and religious education. If you are interested in serving on the Site Committee, please email Dan Stegink at dstegink13@yahoo.com or call 616-246-6674.



Please also visit the website at www.allsoulscommunity.org and specifically the new calendar at <http://www.allsoulscommunity.org/Calendar/Calendar.htm> for this weekend's as well as important upcoming events. We also have a page on Face Book. Check it out!

SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE ITEMS

Georgine Linart Bello

The Social Action Committee (SAC) provides social action ideas, information and support to the boards and groups of ASCC. The SAC supports -to the extent possible and desired- the program boards and covenant groups or an individual's efforts at social action. The boards, groups or any individual are responsible for deciding on a project and carrying it out, but are welcome to ask for support. SAC members will decide if they can help in the requested capacity. The committee takes turns setting up an information table in the lobby with ideas and information regarding social action, on (most) Sundays during the fall program, primarily. The group chair is the liaison to the Michigan UU Social Action Network (MUUSJN) and partakes in its activities/committees to the extent possible and desired and would also provide info from MUUSJN to the SAC and ASCC via email and the info table.

1) **SAC Monthly Meetings** - Beginning in January, the Social Action Committee will meet monthly. Please contact me at glibello@hotmail.com if you would like to join the committee.

2.) **Southwest Community Campus (SWCC)** - As a member of the Social Action Committee and ASCC, I started building a relationship with Southwest Community Campus School and will present opportunities for ASCC members to participate in this effort. SWCC is a dual immersion (Spanish and English) K-8th grade school of choice of the Grand Rapids Public Schools. There are approximately 800 students. It is 98% free lunch, very low income, and a very diverse of a primarily Hispanic population (Cuban, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rican, Mexican, Guatemalan, Salvadorian) and a fair number of African Americans. Current efforts might include; classroom wish list, financial help with field trips, volunteers with Schools for Hope (a reading/mentor program already established in the school) and mentor program. The Hispanic population in GRPS needs attention, even more so with cuts to the budget. Dropout rate among Hispanics in GRPS is at an epidemic level.

Thus far, we have conducted a winter clothing drive. The Kindergarten teachers and support staff are truly grateful for all the donations they have received thus far from our winter clothing drive -several hat and glove sets, girls underpants, 5 winter jackets, and 1 snow pants. **Please remember that you can designate that your contribution to the ASCC Christmas Eve plate go to the SWCC winter clothing drive.** We'll see what the plate brings them. Their goal is to purchase more snow pants and jackets so kids can keep dry and warm at recess and when waiting for the bus. Thank you!!

3.) **Opportunity at SWCC - *Become a reading mentor at SWCC.*** SWCC is a Schools of Hope site. Schools of Hope is a reading program of United Way that seeks to close the reading achievement gap between the highest performing districts in Kent County and the Grand Rapids Public Schools. This is a 30 minute weekly commitment with the same child (30 minutes is spent with the child; 5 minutes to log activity and progress). A one time, very informative, 2 hour training is provided and a background check required. I met my child this week and am thrilled! I wasn't sure of what I was doing, but I think he was more thrilled than I was! And, there is a lot of support to help you help them. Let me know if you are interested at glibello@hotmail.com.

There is a lot of Social Action going on at ASCC. Some examples of which I am currently aware are: The All Souls Community Church Annual Auction of which portions will go to Institute to Heal Racism, a Covenant Group is meeting regularly with Kids Food Basket, the Religious Education (RE) Program's Thanksgiving Food Drive and Toiletry Drive for Dagage, and our warm weather clothing drive for Grand Rapids Public School's South West Community Campus (SWCC). Thanks everyone for your time, contributions, concern and efforts.

NEWCOMER'S BOARD--Newcomer's Support

The Newcomer's Board will be trying a new initiative to involve the greater congregation in welcoming visitors. Newcomer's board members and other volunteers will staff the Welcome Table. When a visitor approaches the table, he/she will be greeted, given an information packet and an information card to fill out IF they wish.. The table worker will then introduce the newcomer to the scheduled support person, who will then continue making the person feel comfortable, by showing around the building, taking to RE, showing the sanctuary and offering to answer any questions and greeting on following Sundays. A list of suggestions will be available for the "helper" to assist with this task.

If you can to assist with this, please contact Barb Lafler at wblafler@yahoo.com or Glenda Ring at glendaring@netzero.com. A member of the newcomer's board will continue to send a welcome e mail, note or phone call to all who complete visitor cards.

Collecting Toiletries for DeGage Ministries

This holiday season, the children in the Religious Education program will be collecting much needed toiletry supplies for those who can't afford them. The children will be putting together toiletry "dopp kits" and delivering them to DeGage for their visitors. We are looking for TRAVEL SIZE shampoos, toothpastes, toothbrushes, deodorant, soap, mouthwash, etc. We are also hoping for pairs of socks. If you would like to donate these items, there will be a colorfully decorated box on the RE table for you to drop items into. Also, if you'd like to make a cash donation towards the purchase of these items (we are also hoping to get small nylon bags at a dollar store to put the items in), that would be appreciated as well.

Thank you!
Lynn Shackelford



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Visit Us Online!
www.allsoulscommunity.org

All Souls Community Church is a church dedicated to religion, but not to a creed. It is a liberal religious community of free individuals of all ages walking together in relationship to one another, to our larger community and to the transcending mystery of the universe. Our community is based on open communication, democratic process and a belief in the capacity for goodness in all people. Our spiritual health and our growth as a church community are intimately connected with the spiritual growth and development of our children. We pledge to develop our church community with this always in mind. This church aims at celebrating and cultivating community, a sense of inquiry, moral character and insight, religious freedom, and helpfulness to humanity. That is, it aims at liberating and cultivating the human spirit.

Upcoming Events

(ALL EVENTS HELD AT AHAVAS ISRAEL AT 2727 MICHIGAN AVE. NE, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)

December Calendar

Sunday, December 6

10:15 am: Adult Choir Warmup
11 am: New Member Sunday
11 am: Worship and Children's RE - Who is Coming?
Dr. Smith
12:30 pm: Congregational Meeting, Ahavas Social Hall

Tuesday, December 8

7 pm: Stewardship Committee Meeting

Thursday, December 10

7 pm: Executive BOT Meeting, Ahavas
7 - 9 pm: Adult Choir Rehearsal, Ahavas

Sunday, December 13

9:30 am: Newcomers Program Board Meeting, Ahavas
10:15 am: Adult Choir Warmup
11 am: Worship and Children's RE - How is it Coming? -
Dr. Smith
Youth Group Sledding / Tubing, Pando Winter Sports Park

Thursday, December 17

7 pm: BOT meeting, Ahavas
7 - 9 pm: Adult Choir Rehearsal, Ahavas

Saturday, December 19

Adult Choir Performance - Christmas Carol Cantata,
Covenant Village Retirement Center

Sunday, December 20

10:15 am: Adult Choir Warmup
11 am: Worship (all ages in Sanctuary) - Christmas Carol
Cantata - Dr. Smith
Youth Group Caroling, Porter Hills Retirement Community

Tuesday, December 22

7 pm: Humanist Covenant Group

Thursday, December 24 - Christmas Eve

6pm: Christmas Eve Candlelighting Service - Dr. Smith
Goodwill offering to purchase warm apparel for students in
need at Southwest Community Campus in Grand Rapids

Friday, December 25 - Christmas

Sunday, December 27

9:15 am: Program Council Meeting, Ahavas
11 am: Worship (all ages in Sanctuary) - For the Time
Being - Dr. Smith

Thursday, December 31 - New Year's Eve

Friday, January 1, 2010 - New Year's Day