

Cultivating
Religious Freedom, Diversity,
Inquiry, and Community



The Weekly Expression

Newsletter December 31, 2009

Upcoming Services:

January 3: Dr. Brent A. Smith - The New Year for All Souls

January 10: Dr. Brent A. Smith - Passed Through the Fire

January 17: Ministerial Search Committee-- **Beyond Categorical Thinking** presents Rev. Laurie Thomas - Crossing Borders

January 24: Dr. Brent A. Smith - The Center of All Things

January 31: To Be Announced

Guest Speaker for January 17th, Rev. Laurie Thomas

A proven leader in the disability community for nearly 25 years, Rev. Laurie Thomas has worked in two Centers for Independent Living and for United Cerebral Palsy of Michigan. She is the author of *Proud Voices: A Short History of the Disability Rights Movement in Michigan (1960-1980)*. Laurie has also written a curriculum, "Perspectives on Disability." Last year she served as interim minister with the Unitarian Fellowship of London, Ontario. Rev. Thomas is a person who happens to have a disability. She has a Masters of Divinity from McCormick Theological Seminary, and has her credentials from the Unitarian Universalist Association. Laurie is an ordained community minister, has a relationship of affiliation with the Unitarian Universalist Church of Greater Lansing. She is dedicated to the dismantling of ableism and to the inclusion of all people.

COMMUNITY LIFE AT ALL SOULS

First, a note of thanks to Linda and Amy Busby for chairing the Community Life Program!

Due to scheduling conflicts, they have resigned, but we are hoping they will remain on the board, and will reconsider the position again at a point when childcare and time constraints are lessened. They came on board in the summer with an ambitious list of activities for the year, and we hope their replacement will be found soon, so that meetings and planning can resume. On Sunday, February 28th, we will be out of Ahavas again, so that means a potluck may be in the cards!?!

Please contact one of us to state your interest, and you will be welcomed into the Program Council fold of volunteers! Our PC meetings are on the 4th Sunday of the month at 9:15 at Ahavas. (That's right, our next meeting is this Sunday, December 27.) We are looking forward to an exciting year, with planning for 2010 events beginning this week.

Happy Holidays, Happy New Year!

Cindy Coleman ccoleman@provide.net
and Jock Ambrose jockambrose1@comcast.net

Music Notes

Dr. Monique Salinas-Stauffer

A hearty congratulations and thank you to all musicians and thespians involved in the wonderful Christmas Carol Cantata and Christmas Eve services. Choir, you sang sweetly, musically, and spiritedly! What a joy to conduct you!! You are the best!! Instrumentalists and keyboard, your artistry never fails to inspire me and move me--you add so much to our musical experience at ASCC! Thespians--you were moving, delightful, and wonderfully dramatic! Your interpretations added life and lilt to the story. Children's Choir, your song was sweetly sung, and soloists you were marvelous! Soloists and Duets, your music on Christmas Eve was true, inspired, and beautiful! Brent, your script was perfect for the Christmas Carol Cantata! You distilled Dicken's masterpiece in a form that worked wonderfully for All Souls. Thank you all for all your hard work, and in Tiny Tim's words GOD BLESS US! GOD BLESS US EVERYONE!



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!

Coming in January...

Beyond Categorical Thinking

The Beyond Categorical Thinking (BCT) program works with Unitarian Universalist congregations to promote inclusive thinking and help prevent unfair discrimination in the ministerial search process. During the Beyond Categorical Thinking visit, the congregation will learn more about its institutional culture, examine ways it can be more inclusive in its consideration of ministerial candidates, and surface subtle and often unintentional, unconscious biases members hold that may result in a decision to not select the minister who would be the best fit for their ministerial needs.

Unitarian Universalist ministers who identify as people of color; as Latina/Latino/Hispanic; as bisexual, gay, lesbian, and/or transgender; or as a person with a disability often have a more difficult time in the ministerial search process because of unconscious congregational biases. Even in congregations that have called a minister, interim minister, or intern from one of the aforementioned identity groups, new biases have arisen because the congregation mistakenly assumed that the presence of these ministers means that they have adequately addressed diversity issues and need no further work.

The Beyond Categorical Thinking program creates opportunities for conversations and reflection for the congregation to identify issues related to identity. In the process, congregations explore some of these biases, learn more about the search process, and begin to think about next steps, such as further consultation, education, or training beyond the BCT program.



All Souls Community Church would like to thank you for participating in this year's 6th Annual Silent Auction.

Thanks to your generous support, we have raised almost \$8,000, with a third of the net proceeds going to the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce's Institute for Healing Racism.

This money will be used to eliminate individual and institutional racism by providing scholarships for people to attend their two day or ten week reflective learning programs.

We appreciate you walking with us, as we work to liberate and cultivate the spirit. We look forward to your participation next year.



*All Souls Community Church
Auction Committee*

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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)

January 2010- Calendar

Sunday, January 3 11 am: Worship (all ages in Sanctuary) - The New Year for All Souls - Dr. Smith

Tuesday, January 5 7 pm: Adult Education Monthly Meeting, Walburn home

Thursday, January 7 7 - 9 pm: Adult Choir Rehearsal, Ahavas

Sunday, January 10 9:30 am: Newcomers Program Board Meeting, Ahavas 11 am: Worship and Children's RE - Passed Through the Fire - Dr. Smith

Thursday, January 14 7 - 9 pm: Adult Choir Rehearsal, Ahavas 7 pm: Executive BOT Meeting

Sunday, January 17 - King Sunday 11 am: Worship and Children's RE - Crossing Borders - Rev. Laurie Thomas 12:15 pm: Music Board Meeting, Ahavas

Monday, January 18 - MLK Jr. Day 5 pm: Covenant Board Meeting, Cascade Library

Tuesday, January 19 7:30 pm: Branches X Meeting, Glenda Ring home 7 pm: RE Board Meeting, Jeff Williams home

Thursday, January 21 6:30 pm BOT Meeting, Ahavas Meeting Room 7 - 9 pm: Adult Choir Rehearsal, Ahavas **7 pm: Beyond Categorical Thinking Workshop - Rev. Keith Kron, Ahavas Chapel**

Sunday, January 24 9:15 am: Program Council Meeting, Ahavas 11 am: Worship and Children's RE - The Center of all Things - Dr. Smith 11:05 am: RE Chalice Circle, Ahavas Meeting Room

Tuesday, January 26 7 pm: Humanist Covenant Group

Thursday, January 28 7 - 9 pm: Adult Choir Rehearsal, Ahavas

Sunday, January, 31 11 am: Worship and Children's RE - TBA

Tuesday, February 2 7 pm: Adult Education Monthly Meeting, Walburn home

Thursday, February 4 7 - 9 pm: Adult Choir Rehearsal, Ahavas