

Cultivating  
Religious Freedom, Diversity,  
Inquiry, and Community



# *The Weekly Expression*

## *Newsletter September 25, 2009*

### Upcoming Services:

#### **September 27:**

#### **“Why I Am Being Called Elsewhere”**

Rev. Dr. Brent Smith on his decision to withdraw himself from consideration as All Souls called minister at Ahavas Israel

**October 4 and 11:** at New Branches School, 256 Alger Street SE, with Dr. Brent Smith

#### **Volunteer Opportunity Fair**

On Sunday September 27<sup>th</sup>, members and friends of All Souls will have an opportunity to learn about all of the different ways they can put their talents and interest to work for All Souls Community Church. Please plan on staying after the service on this day and participate in this wonderful opportunity. If you are a member of a board, committee or other group that would like to reserve a place for this event please contact Barb Lafler or Jock Ambrose

#### **Special Note:**

All Souls Community Church services will NOT be held at Ahavas Israel on September 20, October 4<sup>th</sup> and October 11<sup>th</sup>. Instead we will be having Worship Service and Religious Education at New Branches School, 256 Alger, at 11:00 AM.

Please also visit the website at [www.allsoulscommunity.org](http://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!

To All Souls Community Church:

This letter is to tell you that after a three month period of intense discernment I have chosen to withdraw my name from consideration for the Called Minister position which you are currently pursuing. While I am contracted with you as your Consulting Minister through July 2010, and will remain to fulfill that contract, I am confident that it is time for me to pursue ministerial opportunities in a new way. I am also confident that in our time together we have re-established our faith tradition - Unitarian Universalism - and its unique religious role – of liberating and cultivating the human spirit – in this church such that spiritual freedom can again thrive in Grand Rapids.

I have loved my time building this church with you. We have done great work together. In a larger sense what we have done together was not for me or for you, but for a noble idea, freedom, and a way to create, sustain, and deepen freedom in community. You started this congregation in the fall of 2001 two days before that fateful 9/11 day. In our almost eight years together now you can see how Grand Rapids needs a congregation and faith tradition that will stand up for the separation of church and state, for excellence in public education, for healing racism and homophobia, and for science and reason and rationality as spiritual aims, not smothered by church doctrine or diminished by a hollow secularism. You can see how Grand Rapids needs the enduring presence of an historic, long standing faith tradition that BELIEVES in the human spirit and human personhood as a great and grand thing, and not despise it as depraved. You can see how Grand Rapids needs the presence of a strong spiritual community that ACTS WITH A TRUST in the future, and holds that humanity working together, in fellowship and affection and freedom, will make the promise of a better life a real thing.

This is what is embodied in All Souls. It has been my privilege to walk with you since January 2002 on this remarkable journey. But when my contract as your Consulting Minister comes to a close next July 2010, it will be time for us to take different paths. You have able leadership to keep your congregation moving forward, and an outstanding Search Committee which will find the minister to lead you in your next stage of formation and growth.

This Sunday, September 27, I will preach a sermon entitled, “*Why I Am Being Called Elsewhere,*” which will give the reasons why I have chosen to withdraw my name from consideration for your Called Minister position. I hope to see you in church so that you can hear from me directly about this.

In Faith and Freedom,

Dr. Brent A. Smith

## All Souls Community Church Directory

### Note from Teri Davis

The new ASCC photo directory is taking shape. If you have a digital photo you would like to use please email your photos to [jazzebloos@msn.com](mailto:jazzebloos@msn.com) with ascc and your family name in the subject line (ex. "ascc davis"). Photos will be taken at Ahavas as needed by appointment with Teri Davis. Simply call my cell (616-262-7829) and I will plan to meet you before or after service on a Sunday.

Please report any changes to your information by using the above email and subject line.

### Music Program Update

from Dr. Monique Salinas-Stauffer

CHILDREN'S CHOIR STARTS THIS SUNDAY---9:45-10:30 at Ahavas--this is a wonderful opportunity to introduce your child to the joys of singing and the excitement of performing! All kindergartners through 4th graders are welcome. This year the choir will have a definite *Kodaly* twist. *Kodaly* is a form of Hungarian music education that is child centered and sequential and works with the whole child, physically and mentally. It is a marvelous musical experience. I attended Belmont University in Nashville, TN this past summer and received certification in level 1 of Kodaly Music Education. I am excited to begin choir this year and I hope that your child will be excited to sing with us as well. Liz Smith will be rejoining us again as choir assistant and she is marvelous with the children!

Hope to see YOU this Sunday-- Call Monique 890-1164 if you have any questions!!

### All Souls Community Church ROOTS Program

The next Roots Classes will be held on Sunday evenings from 6-8pm at Ahavas on October 25, November 1, 8 & 15. Child care will be provided but we ask that you let us know the number & ages of children so we can plan appropriately. If you are interested and have not signed up yet please stop by the Newcomers' Table.

We are in need of a child care provider to assist us during the Roots Classes (Oct 25, Nov 1, 8 & 15 from 5:45-8:15pm). One of the Newcomer Board members will be there but we will need one youth (or adult) to help out. If you are interested please stop by the Newcomers' Table or contact Barb Lafler (616-902-3288) or

[wblafler@yahoo.com](mailto:wblafler@yahoo.com).

All Souls Community Church  
of West Michigan  
P.O. Box 150081  
Grand Rapids MI 49515-0081  
We meet at:  
2727 Michigan Ave. NE  
Grand Rapids, Michigan



general email:  
[info@allsoulscommunity.org](mailto:info@allsoulscommunity.org)

newsletter email:  
[Danikristine80@yahoo.com](mailto:Danikristine80@yahoo.com)

Dr. Brent A. Smith, Minister:  
(616) 954-1673  
[basmith525@aol.com](mailto:basmith525@aol.com)

Visit Us Online!  
[www.allsoulscommunity.org](http://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)

### September Calendar

13 11 AM Worship and Religious Education (RE); Adult Choir Rehearsal 10:15am : HOMECOMING SUNDAY; Newcomer's Board meeting (9:15am); RE Children's Registration; Adult Choir and Instrumentalists Party 7-9pm, at Smiths home, 4130 Baywood Drive SE

14 Adult Education Board meeting, at Coleman's house, 2454 Richards SE; Drop off items for Garage Sale on 9/19 to Busby Home, 1835 Belden Ave SW Wyoming

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17 Adult Choir rehearsal 7pm

19 Community Life Garage Sale 8am -2pm Fifth Third Ballpark; Community Life Campfire S'mores 7 pm Duke Creek Campground, Cedar Springs

20 11 AM Worship and Religious Education (RE) AT NEW BRANCHES SCHOOL, 256 Alger St SE; RE Children's Registration

22 Community Life Game Night 6:30pm , Busby Home, 1835 Belden Ave SW, Wyoming; BRANCHES X at Heckamans 7642 Thornapple Club, Ada; Humanist Covenant Group 7pm

24 Adult Choir rehearsal 7pm Ahavas; Board of Trustees meeting 7pm

27 11 AM Worship and Religious Education (RE); RE Children's Registration; CHILDREN'S CHOIR BEGINS! 9:45-10:30am; Adult Choir rehearsal 10:15am ; Newcomer's Board VOLUNTEER FAIR after worship; All Souls Ministerial Settlement meeting; High School Youth Group (6pm) Ahavas

30 Community Life Dinner Out 7pm , Olive Garden on 28th St. Please RSVP to Amy & Linda 551-1358 by 9/29

### October

1 Adult Choir rehearsal 7pm Ahavas

4 11 AM Worship and Religious Education (RE) AT NEW BRANCHES SCHOOL, 256 Alger St SE; Children's Choir Rehearsal 9:45-10:30am; RE Children's Registration

11 11 AM Worship and Religious Education (RE) AT NEW BRANCHES SCHOOL, 256 Alger St SE; Children's Choir Rehearsal 9:45-10:30am; RE Children's Registration