



The Spirit of All Souls

*Creating a diverse, spirit-growing,
justice-seeking community*

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*Looking down into my father's
dead face
for the last time
my mother said without
tears, without smiles
without regrets
but with civility
"Goodnight, Willie Lee, I'll see you
in the morning."
And it was then I knew that the healing
of all our wounds
is forgiveness
that permits a promise
of our return
at the end.*



Alice Walker's short poem speaks volumes about the unspoken guilt we carry around in our lives and of our need for forgiveness.

Many newcomers to All Souls say they're glad to finally find a church that doesn't preach a "religion based on guilt." But just because we've left guilt-based religion behind doesn't mean we don't still struggle with a guilty conscience, with a sense of having done wrong.

How do we understand our feelings of guilt? How do we get our souls and our lives back in right relationship again? How do we forgive?

We'll explore these questions and more during a three-sermon series on guilt and forgiveness, Sundays, February 10, 17, and 24. I hope you'll join me in exploring these difficult but important issues.

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Love,
ROB

Opportunities Abound

Shana A. Lynngood, Associate Minister



I frequently have conversations with members and friends of the church who are seeking new ways to be involved or avenues to explore at All Souls that might help deepen their spiritual lives. There are several events coming up that I want to take this opportunity to make you aware of so that you can start now to consider how you might engage with these possibilities. First up is a very special worship service on March 2. I have been asked to preach the auction-chosen sermon about the history of All Souls and the stellar exhibit the Silver Souls created that reminds us of the social justice legacy of our church. That service, entitled “Living History, Making History”, will honor longtime members (of 35 years or more) who have dedicated so much of themselves to helping All Souls thrive and will invite each of us to think about the role we play in writing the current and future chapters in the story of the life of our church as it now unfolds. What do you want to add to the legacy of All Souls Church?

The second event is the Spiritual Renewal Retreat planned for the weekend after Easter, March 28-30, at nearby Bon Secours Spiritual Center. A group of us (there are 40 rooms reserved) will spend a weekend in spiritual practice and conversation about our deepest hopes and struggles in living as people of faith. It will be a rich time to dig deep and explore. Please contact me (slynngood@allsouls.ws) for more information or to sign up. I look forward to continuing our efforts to grow together in Spirit and community

Blessings and love,
Shana

Interested in joining All Souls Church?

ASC's Welcoming and Membership Committee invites you to learn more about the church. Attending the sessions does not constitute a commitment to join. Contact Joyce Palmer (jpgalmer@allsouls.ws).

1. Introduction. Join us to learn more about Unitarian Universalism and All Souls Church. Sunday, February 17 after both services in the Eaton room.
2. Orientation. At this three-hour session, you will explore your spirituality and tour the church. If you decide to join, you can sign the book of members. Saturday, February 23, 9:00 am—12:00 noon, in the Eaton room.
3. New Member Sunday. We introduce the new members to the congregation. Sunday, February 24.

FEBRUARY WORSHIP SERVICES

3 “Tides of Life” Rev. Lynn Good. The natural cycles of the ocean remind us of one of the truths of our lives: all things ebb and flow. How do we adapt and find ways to go with the ups and downs of our lives? How do we see life’s changes not as an aspect of our living to be resisted, but rather as a truth to be embraced or, at least, held more reverently?

10 “Washing Our Hands of It: Guilt” Rev. Hardies. Many of us came to All Souls Church glad to leave behind what we thought of as “a religion of guilt.” But just because we’ve left guilt-based religion behind doesn’t mean we don’t still struggle with a guilty conscience. What is our guilt telling us, and how do we cope with it?

17 “Making It Whole: Confession” Rev. Hardies. When we’ve done wrong, how do we get our souls and our lives back in right relationship again? How do we right our wrongs with integrity?

24 “Begin Again in Love: Forgiveness” Rev. Hardies. Forgiveness is one of the scarcest commodities on earth, and not an easy task. How do we forgive? How are we forgiven?

Letter from the Board of Trustees

Members of the church leadership have enjoyed a time of renewal through training, learning, and growth opportunities in three areas: stewardship, leadership development, and community-building.

At the December Board of Trustees (BOT) meeting, we welcomed consultant Tricia Hart, who provided an overview of the FORTH program and its goal of developing a more integrated and comprehensive approach to stewardship.

January events included a JPD Board of Directors breakfast, participation in the Jubilee II Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression workshop and the All Souls Activity Fair, and the annual planning and orientation retreat of trustees, officers, and the executive team.

This month, we are looking forward to an initial planning session of the stewardship team on February 10 and a policy governance workshop at Arlington Church on February 8 and 9. In addition, the Audit Committee, a standing committee of the BOT, has been rejuvenated with returning and new members.

All are welcome to attend monthly BOT meetings. The next meeting will be held Thursday, February 28, in the Eaton Room on the second floor. Each meeting starts with a potluck (please bring a dish and utensils to share) at 6:30 pm; the meeting begins at 7:00 pm. Meeting dates for 2008 appear in the box to the right and will be repeated in *Happenings* and the *All Souls Weekly*.

Warm regards,
Joneis Thomas, ASC Board of Trustees

February 28

March 27

April 24

May 22

June 19

July 24

August 28

September 25

October 23

November 20

December 18

Adult Spiritual Development

All Souls Adult Spiritual Development (ASD) classes, open to all who are interested, are a great means to explore a wide range of issues including theology, spiritual practice, culture, and social justice while getting to know fellow congregants. To register, visit the All Souls registration webpage (<http://www.all-souls.org/groupus/asd.php#registration>) or contact Matt Costello (202-256-2082 or mcostello@gmail.com).

On February 6, at 6:30 pm, the ASD Committee will host a forum for previous, current, and aspiring teachers of adult spiritual development classes. We welcome those who are curious or interested in facilitating or co-facilitating a course next year to come learn more about our program and how to develop a class for the future. Members of the ASD committee will lead a workshop to assist interested facilitators in how to design their course offerings. Contact Anastassia Zinke (anastassiazinke@yahoo.com or 202-557-1438).

Social Justice & World Religions: Exploring the Feminine Divine

Social Justice & World Religions, a weekly discussion group that has met every Sunday for several years, explores how the world's religions pertain to social justice. This winter/spring, we will take up the issue of gender. We will start by devoting three Sundays to the neo-Pagan tradition, whose growing popularity is partially due to yearning for a female image of the divine in western culture. Using material from *The Spiral Dance* by noted feminist author and teacher Starhawk, we will focus on the feminine divine in traditional earth-based fertility traditions, the rise of modern nature spirituality, its basic beliefs and the needs that it fills, and what the broader community might learn from it. Come explore this with us every Sunday, 10:15 – 11:15 am in the library. Facilitator: Kat Liu (shaktinah@gmail.com).

The Spiritual Path of Generosity

This course will bring together a community of folks who want to deepen the connection between their spirituality and their financial generosity. This course will not be about giving to All Souls or any other institution, charity, or individual. Rather, we will focus on each person and her or his individual path in:

- challenging his/her own generosity
- giving back to the world
- making the change in the world she or he wants to see.

The group will examine the values we consciously and unconsciously hold around money and work and explore how a spirit of generosity challenges and deepens those values and our own connection with others. Participants will tell their own stories about poverty and wealth and, through exercises and shared reflections, will seek an appropriate balance between what they need and want, and what they can use to benefit others. Your financial portfolio should not determine whether you take this course. Finding ways to be generous

is as important for those who are financially stretched as those who have disposable income. Come explore this at the remaining seven of eight sessions, every other Monday evening. Feb. 11, 25, March 10, 24, April 7, 14, and May 5; 6:30 – 8:30 pm at All Souls. Facilitators: Mark Ewert (mewert@hotmail.com) and Sharon Groves.

Reading for JUUstice

ADORE is sponsoring a reading series on *Playing in the Dark* by Toni Morrison. Feel free to attend even though the course has already started. Monday and Tuesday, February 4 and 5. Facilitator: Jim Armstrong (Jacycle@principle2.org).

Coming in March

Pilgrimage: in the Footsteps of the Buddha, March 1

In November 2007, Chuck Wooldridge spent 20 days in India on pilgrimage to the sites associated with the Buddha's life. He also visited Hinduism's holiest city, Varanasi, on the banks of the Ganges. Travel to specific sacred places is an aspect of many spiritual traditions. However, pilgrimage is more importantly a deep inner journey that ineluctably leads us back home. What draws spiritual seekers of all traditions to set out on pilgrimage? What makes up the pilgrim experience? What is the significance and promise to Unitarian Universalist spiritual practice? Come share the images and sounds of the "Buddha Path" pilgrimage and reflect together on how we might apply the mindfulness of pilgrimage to all our travels. Saturday, March 1, 1:00 – 4:30 pm. Facilitator: Chuck Wooldridge (c.wool@verizon.net).

Spiritual renewal retreat, March 28-30

A group of 40 adults from the All Souls community will participate in a new weekend-long retreat devoted to spiritual practice and reflection. We will meet at the Bon Secours Spiritual Center in Marriotsville, Maryland (about an hour away), which has a labyrinth, chapel, pond, and Japanese gardens on a beautiful 313-acre property. We will build a sense of spiritual community and have opportunities for personal and group deepening. The retreat begins Friday evening and concludes after a morning worship service on Sunday. Reserve your spot early. If you have any questions, contact Rev. Lynngood (slynnngood@allsouls.ws).

Congregational News and Events

Social Justice Sunday Forum

February 3, 1:00 pm. “To Know the Other: a Conversation About Palestine.” DC educator Nora Buch spent the past year teaching English at Al Quds (Jerusalem) University, located east of the separation wall. Nora lived in the village of Abu Dis with an extended Palestinian family that included the chair of the Gender Studies Department at the university and a refugee worker who helped some of the 750,000 Palestinians still living in camps in Palestine and surrounding countries. During her sojourn, Nora discovered much about Palestinian society that Americans rarely see - the social, religious, and personal strengths that have kept Palestinian society intact over 40 years of occupation, about women in Islam, about the lives of Christians in the Palestinian diaspora. She was welcomed into the village homes of her students, traveled through many of the over 500 military checkpoints, and discovered a people with an unrivaled love of education. You are invited to see her slides and learn from her experience.

Visit from Rev. James Reeb’s granddaughter

On Sunday, February 10, Leah Reeb, the granddaughter of the Reverend James Reeb, the former assistant minister of All Souls Church, will worship with us. Rev. Reeb was martyred in Selma, Alabama in March, 1965. This will be Leah Reeb’s first visit to All Souls Church. We will have the opportunity to meet Leah after each service and to view some of the items from our church archives that relate to her grandfather’s life and ministry. Please help welcome the granddaughter of someone who, in giving his life, gave so much to our faith, our nation, and the cause of justice.

Book Discussion Group

The next meeting of the Book Discussion Group will be on February 10, about 1:30 pm at our regular meeting place, the Goodrich's. The book is *A Summons to Memphis* by Peter Taylor. We are a welcoming group fully committed to multicultural in-reach as well as to reading a broad selection of literature. We usually meet right after lunch at a home near the church. Questions? Contact Denise Rathman (djrathman@yahoo.com). The book for March 9 is Marilynne Robinson’s *Gilead*.

Honors Sunday

On March 2, which will be called “Honors Sunday,” the church will acknowledge the committee members who created the remarkable exhibition, “The Ministers’ Journey towards Social Justice.” As an extension of this celebration, the church will hold a special luncheon for All Souls’ long-term members (those with ASC 35 years or longer) and their guests. Contact Joyce Palmer (jpalmmer@allsouls.ws).

Books for homeless children

Bright Beginnings and All Souls have teamed up to support the literacy needs of homeless children. Through a partnership with Reading is Fundamental, we will help host five book distributions where each child will receive five books to take home to the shelter. The first two are February 21, 3:00–4:30 pm and April 17, 3:00–4:30 pm, at Perry School, 128 M St. NW, 20001. Volunteers will help children pick books and read to them in the selection process. A great reason to get out of work early. Contact Louise Green (lgreen@allsouls.ws). More information at www.brightbeginningsinc.org.

New Orleans trips

Two All Souls groups leave for New Orleans in March for our next intergenerational service trips. You can also be part of the congregational commitment to Gulf Coast Advocacy by making your financial contribution to our New Orleans Trip Fund. Donations will be used for scholarships, local transportation and meals, and gifts to the partner organizations. No amount too small. Make your check to All Souls and be sure and put New Orleans Trip Fund in the subject line. Checks can be sent to Gabrielle Farrell or Louise Green at the church or delivered to the office.

Helping refugee families

All Souls Social Justice Ministries is working with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) to explore congregational sponsorship of a refugee family. This would involve opportunities for our own education and advocacy and months-long direct service in the resettlement of a family. Are you interested in being part of a team of leaders who would create the welcome team and new home for a family in need? Contact Louise Green (lgreen@allsouls.ws). More information at www.theIRC.org, or come meet Kate Evans of the IRC after services on February 10.

Soulful Sundown service

On Saturday, February 23, 5:30 pm, the All Souls Jubilee Singers, the Urban Nation H.I.P.-H.O.P. Choir of DC, and the All Souls Youth Choir will collaborate in the third annual Soulful Sundown service at All Souls Church. You will not want to miss the stimulation and excitement brought by this multi-cultural, multi-generational showcase of music and oratory by talented youths and the young at heart. The previous Soulful Sundown services were highly regarded by those who attended. A generous number of talented youth are emerging at All Souls Church, so this year we will be blessed to have the All Souls Youth Choir participate in Soulful Sundown for the first time. The goal of the Youth Choir is to use musical performance as a path toward artistic excellence and personal development. A \$10 donation for tickets will help offset the programs expenses; however, nobody will be turned away. For tickets, contact any member of the Jubilee Singers, Leonard Starks (lstars@allsouls.ws), or the church office (202-332-5266).

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MISSION and ENDS STATEMENTS

Mission Statement of All Souls Church

To create a diverse, spirit-growing, justice-seeking community that transforms ourselves and our world into one great family of all souls.

Ends Statements. In 2008, we will be able to say of our congregation:

1. Church members of all ages discover and articulate the source of love in their lives and cultivate the ability to act on that love in ever-expanding circles.
2. All Souls is an ever-more diverse congregation, overcoming the barriers that divide the human family.
3. Our building and grounds are welcoming, comfortable, and accessible to all who seek their use in congruence with our mission.
4. All Souls Church is a congregation where members generously share human and financial resources to support our growing mission and ends.
5. All Souls Church is a leader in the Unitarian Universalist movement, by witnessing to UU values in our nation's capital.
6. The Columbia Heights/Adams Morgan/Mt. Pleasant neighborhood is a more just and compassionate community because of All Souls' prophetic leadership.
7. All Souls Church is a vibrant and joyful community of communities where all seekers find connection, support, and spiritual growth in groups large and small.



The Spirit of All Souls
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Return service requested

The deadline for *The Spirit of All Souls* is the third Friday of the month. Submit notices, articles, and letters to spirit@allsouls.ws.

Upcoming deadlines:

March issue: February 15

April issue: March 21

Editor: Gary Penn

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