

OPENING WORDS
Alice Heminway

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Good Morning and welcome to church. I'm so happy to be with you. My name is Alice Heminway and All Souls has been my spiritual home for the past 19 years. In preparing for this occasion I kept coming back to the same thought - I *love* our church. I love coming to All Souls because when I am here I feel able to connect to something greater than myself. When I sit in the sanctuary I am inspired by the music, the prayers and sermons - even the physical space of the sanctuary is deeply meaningful to me (this is where my husband and I were married and where our children were dedicated by this congregation). So, I come here to feed my spirit during worship, but I also come to church for another important reason – I come to experience community with you.

Years ago I brought a group of kindergarten students from the school where I teach to visit All Souls. We were studying the neighborhood and since the school is a few blocks away from here, it was an easy trip to make. We met the Rev. Forrest Church in his office, and after he answered the children's questions, Forrest talked about our church and how people come here from different backgrounds and different religious traditions. One particularly observant child piped up and said, "So you mean this place is not just for *some* of the souls it is for *all* of the souls?" "Yes! That's exactly it." Forrest exclaimed. I've remembered that interaction ever since. That little boy was spot on! We are not just for some of the souls we are a place for all of the souls.

When I was a young adult attending All Souls, I saw very few children at church. They were here - I just didn't see them! I think this was because I never came to the 10am service and so I always missed multigenerational worship, I also saw few children during coffee hour. Looking back, I think I was missing something important. Church is one of the few places in our lives where we can forge connections across generations. It's really like a family. I am now a parent with children in the religious education program and I look at things differently. I feel so strongly that we need to build community across the generations at All Souls. And here's some good news - today we have an opportunity for intergenerational fun! Today is the annual Halloween party in Reidy Friendship Hall. The children of our congregation will be dressed in their costumes. There will be crafts, face painting and cupcake decorating for Monday Night Hospitality! You are invited, you are invited to join in the fun during coffee hour. So please come, please come and enjoy fellowship with the youngest members of our family of All Souls.