

Good Morning, and welcome to All Souls. My name is Dana Ivey and I've been a member of All Souls since 1997. Like many of you, I have come here by a circuitous route.

I grew up in Atlanta, GA, where I started going to the Presbyterian Church with the neighbors when I was 7. My parents were Theosophists and tended to sleep in on Sunday. When I was 11, my parents became charter members of the Unitarian Church in Atlanta, so we all went there. But at 15 I went back to the Presbyterians. When I was in college I went to church every Sunday because I was in the choir. That was a Congregational denomination. In my 20's I abandoned, then refound, a Christian belief, and became a Catholic! Only to become a lapsed Catholic after a couple of years. And all this religious jumping around had as a background an early immersion in Theosophy and its leaning toward Buddhism.

I lived in New York City a long time before I came across town to this church. I came on the recommendation of a family friend who thought I would respond to Forrest's preaching. He was right. Wally's wonderful music clinched the deal. There's still a lot of the eastern mystic in my religious search, but I am so

grateful to have found a home that embraces all searches, and whose main doctrine is freedom of thought.

I am an actress, and as a performer in the art of theatre, I am lucky to be inspired in my searches through my work. To my mind, all art is another religion, an attempt to make sense of the world we live in. Theatre explores human relationships. Like religion, it helps to teach us who we are. It helps to explain us to ourselves. It can spur our imaginations and expand the limits of our thinking.

One of the best and proudest experiences of my life was being in the original cast of the musical SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine. It's based on the life and work of the painter Georges Seurat. As well as telling a love story, like all musicals do, SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE brings metaphysics to life -- detailing the artist's aspirations; exploring differing notions of art and love; and, using the painter's canvas as a metaphor for life, the final message of the play is "So many possibilities." Perhaps I am prejudiced when I say I think it is Sondheim's greatest work. Being a part of it was certainly one of the highest points in my career.

Please rise now and join me now in the bond of union.