

# Curriculum Vitae

## November 2008

### *The Reverend Doctor Brent A. Smith*

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### ***Formal Education***

Doctor of Ministry, Meadville Lombard Theological School, 1984. *My doctoral thesis constructed a model of liberal theology grounded in the philosophy of William James. The professors who most influenced my study were Ron Engel and Neil Shadle. Parish minister Peter Raible was my internship supervisor at University Unitarian Church in Seattle, Washington.*

Masters of Arts, Divinity School of the University of Chicago, 1983. *The professors who most influenced my study were Langdon Gilkey, Martin Marty, and David Tracy, who served as the chair of my doctoral thesis committee.*

Bachelor of Arts, Hanover College, 1976. *I graduated with a degree in literature, with a focus on James Joyce, and theology and literature.*

### ***Work History***

2002-Present, Parish Minister at All Souls Community Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan

1999-2001, Senior Minister at Fountain Street Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan

1990-1994, Co-Minister, and 1994-1999, Senior Minister at All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma

1983-1990, Parish Minister at Unitarian Church North in Mequon, Wisconsin

1982-1983, Interim Director of Religious Education, Unity Temple in Oak Park, Illinois, while a student at Meadville Lombard Theological School

1978-1980, Sales Representative, Oscar Mayer Meat Company, Nashville, Tennessee

## ***Personal Information***

I am married to Patricia Smith, who is Deputy Legal Counsel for Grand Valley State University in Allendale, Michigan. We have two grown children.

## ***Leadership Experience, Teaching, and Learning***

### EXPERIENCE WITH CHURCH INSTITUTIONS:

- Currently serve as Lead Minister with a church staff of 4 in an emerging congregation that is seven years old; have been Lead Minister with a church staff of 16 in one large congregation, and 15 in another large congregation, and 3 in another small church
- Currently serve as President of the Heartland District UUMA Chapter; Chair of the Heartland District Extension Committee; a member of the Midwest Regional Sub-Committee on Candidacy for the Unitarian Universalist ministry; mentor to 3 new colleagues; Advisory Board of the Journal of Liberal Religion; and member in good standing of the UUMA
- Led a congregation through all phases of planning, fund raising, construction, and occupation of the church's first (and current) building
- Worked with contractors and project managers in another congregation during the construction phase of multiple building projects
- Worked with lay leaders in congregations I have served to develop and implement long range Strategic Plans, and short range goals
- Organized the office in a large church, including the creation of a data base for membership retention, donor identification, solicitation, and tracking; and coordinated the staff training necessary to implement the system
- Founding member of: The Unitarian Universalist Conference on the Free Church, The Grand Rapids Downtown Ministers Group, The Ozaukee County (Wisconsin) Interfaith Thanksgiving Service and Discussion Group, The Grand Rapids Interfaith Thanksgiving Service and Discussion Group
- Served as President of the Central Midwest District UUMA Chapter; Board member of the Central Midwest District; member of the Central Midwest Extension Committee' member of the Southeast Wisconsin UU Council; member of the Southwest Conference Extension Committee; member of the UU Large Church Ministers Group; convener of the Tulsa Cluster of the SW Conference; Intern Supervisor for 5 students

#### EXPERIENCE WITH GENERAL PUBLIC AND NON-PROFIT INSTITUTIONS:

- Served as a Board member for the following Non-Profit Institutions: The Greater Milwaukee Conference on Religion and Urban Affairs (the interfaith organization in Milwaukee), Tulsa Metropolitan Ministries (the interfaith organization in Tulsa), Planned Parenthood of Eastern Oklahoma and Western Arkansas, the Mental Health Association in Tulsa, Habitat for Humanity of Tulsa, Parent/Child Center of Tulsa, Planned Parenthood of Western Michigan, and Project Rehab (alcohol and drug rehabilitation center) in Grand Rapids, Michigan
- Founder of the Citizens for Common Ground, a Committee of the Forest Hills Public Schools dedicated to preserving the separation of church and state

#### TEACHING:

- Taught courses and/or individual class sessions at numerous high schools in various areas of the country, plus Hanover College (Indiana), Concordia College (Wisconsin), The University of Tulsa Law School, Tulsa Community College, Aquinas College (Michigan), Calvin College (Michigan), Calvin Theological Seminary (Michigan), Meadville, and Starr King
- Created the Southeast Wisconsin Unitarian Universalist Summer Institute, a regional, week long, lay seminary educational experience while at Unitarian Church North in Mequon, WI; the Seminary for a Day, Wednesday Connections, Housing Outreach, Partners in Education, and Village Banking programs at All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa, OK; the Annual Mid-Winter Lectures at All Souls Community Church in Grand Rapids, MI

#### CONTINUING EDUCATION:

- Student at the Freedom Forum's First Amendment Center (Washington, D.C.) seminar on the separation of church and state in public education
- Student in various continuing education seminars on Leadership Development, Long Range Planning, Organizational Administration, Fund Raising, and Church Growth through the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Alban Institute

### ***Fundraising and Development Experience, Teaching, and Learning***

#### EXPERIENCE WITH CHURCH INSTITUTIONS:

- Currently leading an emerging congregation in the planning, development, and implementation of congregation's first ever Annual Operating Fund Drive, while working to create the congregation's Endowment program

- Led Annual Operating Fund Drives in 4 different congregations since 1984; 25 Annual Campaigns in all
- Led parts or all of 4 different Capital Fund Drive Campaigns in 4 different congregations
- Solicited gifts, and advised in the investing and dispensing of Endowment Funds in 2 different large congregations

*SUMMARY: During my 25 years as a Parish Minister, I have been the lead professional in the creation and implementation of Annual Operational Budgets and Capital Fund Budgets, for the construction of 1 complete building and the renovations of 2 other existing church structures; operational budgets ranging from \$36,000 to \$1.5 million, and capital projects ranging from \$80,000 to \$1.5 million*

#### EXPERIENCE WITH GENERAL PUBLIC AND NON-PROFIT INSTITUTIONS:

- Was invited and served on the Executive Committee as Chair of the Congregational Support portion of the Capital Fund Drive for Tulsa Metropolitan Ministries, an interfaith organization composed of over 900 religious communities; through solicitation to congregations and local businesses, secured funding for the purchase of the organization's first headquarters; on an occasion prior to this, served as Chair of the Annual Fund Drive
- Was invited and served as a Board member and Chair and/or member of the Fund Raising Committees of each of the following Non-Profit Institutions: The Greater Milwaukee Conference on Religion and Urban Affairs (the interfaith organization in Milwaukee), Tulsa Metropolitan Ministries (the interfaith organization in Tulsa), Planned Parenthood of Eastern Oklahoma and Western Arkansas, the Mental Health Association in Tulsa, and Planned Parenthood of Western Michigan

#### TEACHING:

- Served as consultant with the following congregations on fund raising and Annual Budget Drives: University Unitarian Church in Seattle, Washington, First Unitarian San Francisco, Eastshore Unitarian Universalist Church in Kirtland, Ohio, Eliot Chapel in St. Louis, First Unitarian Church of St. Louis, Emerson Unitarian Church in Houston, Unitarian Universalist Church of Corpus Christi, Texas, Unitarian Universalist Church West in Brookfield, Wisconsin, United Unitarian and Universalist Society of Mukwonago, Wisconsin, Hope Unitarian Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Unitarian Universalist Church of Bartlesville, Oklahoma, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Tahlequah, Unitarian Church of Stillwater, Oklahoma, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Fayetteville, Arkansas.

- Served as Presenter to the Tulsa United Church of Christ judicatory on Fund Drives in local congregations, and their relationship to mission and vision

#### CONTINUING EDUCATION:

- Student in the Leadership Development and Fund Raising programs of the Willowcreek Association and the Leadership Network

### *Communications Experience, Teaching, and Learning*

#### EXPERIENCE WITH CHURCH INSTITUTIONS:

- Published articles, essays, and opinion pieces in *Sightings, The Journal of Liberal Religion, The Christian Ministry, First Days Record, Tulsa World, and Grand Rapids Press* [see WRITING SAMPLES]
- Founder and first editor of the UU Voice, a national periodical
- Founder and first editor of the Free Spirit, a regional periodical
- Worked 9 years with the development, funding, creative conception of and as an on-screen presenter for All Souls Television, including the series *Faith in the Free Church*, a weekly series on a national cable television channel
- Editor of and essayist in *God and Country*, essays on the separation of church and state, distributed to administrators, teachers, and parents of the Tulsa Public School and surrounding school districts
- Chapter in Scott Alexander's *Salted with Fire*; author of *ROOTS*, an adult education curricula for unchurched newcomers (used by numerous churches around the country); *BRANCHES*, a covenant group educational experience (used by numerous churches around the country); *Before We Say Goodbye*, a workbook for end of life issues
- Led in the development of websites for 3 different congregations, including All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa, one of the first Unitarian Universalist church to have a web presence

#### EXPERIENCE WITH GENERAL PUBLIC AND NON-PROFIT INSTITUTIONS:

- Currently the UUA's representative (since 1998) to the Odyssey Network of the Faith and Values Interfaith Cable Channel ([www.odysseynetworks.org](http://www.odysseynetworks.org))

- Interviewed on both television and radio many times over the years, concerning such topics as evolution, the concept of the Sabbath, gay and lesbian rights, anti-Semitism, abortion rights, separation of church and state, the political effect of the Religious Right, and other issues

#### TEACHING:

- [see teaching experiences under LEADERSHIP heading]
- Delivered public lectures and papers on following topics (among others): *Congregational Polity in the Free Church Tradition, The Doctrine of the Church in the Unitarian Universalist Tradition, Religion and Democracy, Religious Institutions, Change, and Accountability, Homer and the Roles of Men and Women in Ancient Greece, Feminism and Language*
- Presenter at UUMA Preaching Seminar
- Taught preaching and public speaking to 5 different Student Interns

#### CONTINUING EDUCATION:

- Student at UUMA Preaching Seminars
- Student at UUA Media class for Large Church Ministers

### ***Volunteer Engagement Experience, Teaching, and Learning***

#### EXPERIENCE WITH CHURCH INSTITUTIONS:

- [See current and past volunteer service under LEADERSHIP heading]
- Helped to create and present Board of Trustees orientation program in every congregation I have served
- Supervised the creation of a congregational data base at two congregations
- Helped to create and present Program Board and Program Committee orientation programs in every congregation I have served

#### EXPERIENCE WITH GENERAL PUBLIC AND NON-PROFIT INSTITUTIONS:

- Past member of these organizations: Human Rights Commission of Tulsa (mayoral appointee), National Conference for Community and Justice (formerly, the National Conference of Christians and Jews), Oklahoma Religious Coalition

for Abortion Rights, The Interfaith Alliance, Downtown Development Commission of Grand Rapids (mayoral appointee), Grand Rapids Forest Hills Public School's Citizens for Common Ground

- [See full list of Public and Non-Profit Board service under LEADERSHIP heading]
- Helped to create and present Board of Trustees orientation in various Non-Profits

#### TEACHING:

- Currently teaching classes for the Osher Lifelong Learning Center of Aquinas College (Michigan)
- Developed ROOTS and BRANCHES curricula for spiritual identity formation for lay Unitarian Universalists
- Wrote and taught following classes for faith development of congregants: *William Ellery Channing, Jenkin Lloyd Jones, Women Mystics, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, Introduction to Theology, Feminist Theology, Bible, The Origins of Hinduism and Buddhism, Abraham Lincoln*, among others

#### CONTINUING EDUCATION:

- Workshops taken on the recruiting, training, and nurturing of volunteers with Ms. Marlene Wilson, founder of Volunteer Connection, and dubbed "The First Lady of Volunteerism"
- Workshops taken with Carl George and Lyle Shaller on the care and feeding of volunteers, through the Willowcreek Association and the Leadership Network