



Runners at the start of last year's race with All Souls Church on the left.

Photo courtesy of Dan Kerr

# SOLES for All Souls event returns in the fall

## Running, walking for the accessibility of all

BY DAN KERR

Since 1896, historic All Souls church has stood on the hill overlooking Stony Brook Village. Although much has changed since then, the simple beauty of the chapel has remained true to famous architect Stanford White's original vision.

Located at 61 Main Street, its doors are open every day for visitation and reflection and the "little church on the hill" offers much to the community. Suffolk County

Poet Laureate Chip Williford said, "I'm fortunate to have experienced spirited Native American Drumming, concerts, and poetry readings at the very welcoming historical All Souls Church." Many people that would like to visit the chapel are not able to walk up the steep hill and are concerned that the church does not have a bathroom.

On Sunday, October 5, All Souls will host the 17th annual SOLES for All Souls 5K Race/2K Walk to celebrate the role of the church in the community and to raise funds for the church accessibility project to address these issues.

Assemblywoman Rebecca Kassay commented, "All Souls Church creates an inviting atmosphere all year long with its inclusive programming. I applaud their effort to make their programs and services accessible to all visitors."

Brookhaven Councilmember Jonathan Kornreich observed "All Souls Church has always been a cornerstone of Stony Brook Village — welcoming, inclusive, and central to our community life. Like many historic buildings, it was built before current accessibility standards. The annual

race/walk helps raise the funds needed to make sure everyone can access and enjoy this space. Thank you to all those who show up every year to support and special thanks to Outreach Chairman Dan Kerr for his leadership, compassion, and steadfast dedication to fostering a truly inclusive community at All Souls."

Church Warden Herb Mones reports "the accessibility project has continued to move forward due to the generosity of both our sponsors and participants of the SOLES for All Souls. We have now finished a feasibility study and have a design plan to make the historic church handicapped accessible along with an outdoor gathering space and a restroom facility."

SOLES For All Souls is perhaps the most inclusive Race/Walk on Long Island. Serious runners compete for gold, bronze, and silver medals in age groups from under 13 to over 80 and receive their hard-won medals in an Olympic-style awards ceremony. Dogs are welcome to accompany their masters and students from Stony Brook University, Ward Melville High School, and others often come in costume. Senior citizens with walking sticks line up at the starting line along with parents pushing their kids in strollers.

Gold medal winner for her age group and Port Jefferson resident Grace Leyhane said, "Participating in Soles for All Souls is a wonderful way to give back to the community on so many levels. For our family, it's become a family affair with three generations running and/or walking, enjoying quality time together, and getting a little exercise, too. We're proud to be part of this Fall tradition in beautiful Stony Brook Village."

Overall 2024 Female winner and Port Jefferson Station resident Margaret Kennedy shared, "I've been running this 5K for several years, and it has become a touchstone that

keeps me motivated and connected to the local community. It's a fun and rewarding challenge, with beautiful scenery, a welcoming atmosphere, and the best post-run raffles around."

Long time Stony Brook resident and previous gold medal winner for the 70+ age group Dick Halluska said, "Few things in life are both good for your body and good for your soul; SOLES for All Souls is one of them. Training for and then conquering the beautiful but difficult run through Stony Brook is good for your body. Contributing to and supporting the wonderful works of All Souls Church is good for your soul. This is why I look forward to participating in this race every year."

Episcopal Bishop of Long Island Lawrence Provenzano commented, "SOLES for All Souls brings out the very best of our community — creativity, generosity, and a shared sense of purpose. It's inspiring to see so many come together to support preserving a historic landmark while making it more welcoming and accessible to all."

Registration for SOLES for All Souls 5K Race/2K Walk is through the ACTIVE.COM website (Search: SOLES for All Souls) or register on Race Day (Oct. 5). The Registration desk at the Reboli Center for Art & History, 64 Main Street Stony Brook will be open from 7:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.; the starting bell is at 9 a.m. Complimentary stretching will be provided and local band The North Shore Rockers will perform throughout the morning.

Please call 631-655-7798 for more information about the event or if you would like to be a sponsor. Donations dedicated to the Accessibility Project can be mailed to All Souls Race, P.O. Box 548, Stony Brook, NY 11790.

Author Dan Kerr is the SOLES for All Souls Race/Walk Director.