

**Minister's Report
All Souls Board of Trustees
March 13, 2019**

Overview:

Numbers:

| | 2016/2017 | 2017/2018 | 2018/2019 |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| August Adults | 123 | 139 | 122 |
| August Kids | 17 | 30 | 40 |
| | | | |
| September Adults | 129 | 131 | 114 |
| September Kids | 27 | 33 | 30 |
| | | | |
| October Adults | 123 | 125 | 102 |
| October Kids | 27 | 24 | 23 |
| | | | |
| November Adults | 149 | 135 | 121 |
| November Kids | 28 | 30 | 27 |
| | | | |
| December Adults | 110 | 159 | 128 |
| December Kids | 27 | 25 | 22 |
| | | | |
| January Adults | 138 | 136 | 95 |
| January Kids | 27 | 35 | 29 |
| | | | |
| February Adults | 140 | 134 | 123 |
| February Kids | 29 | 35 | 32 |

REPORTING ON OUR CONGREGATIONAL GOALS

FAITH FORMATION:

All Souls recognizes that we are life-long learners, and offers a full range of faith formation opportunities that are culturally sensitive, match the diversity of beliefs, spiritual types and learning styles that exist here, and that are relevant and accessible for every life stage. Our faith formation process exists to help our members learn and live UU values in their daily lives.

Worship

Our *Holy Hogwarts!* series has been particularly effective (especially when combined with social media) at attracting visitors in their 30s, encouraging members to invite their friends and family, and appealing to many (though not all) of our members. Revs. Kayla, Sarah Gettie and I helped create and support intergenerational post-worship activities for the Harry Potter series (go Quidditch!), and Rev. Sarah Gettie has especially enjoyed thinking of special activities to create for corresponding kids' programming. We are beginning to explore other texts that could produce a similar appeal and opportunities next year.

People are also engaging our worship online. In February we had 414 downloads of past audio sermons, and additional people watching our Facebook livestreaming. We have ordered a microphone to help with the sound quality of the latter; it should arrive by the end of the month.

The program staff are gathering in the next two weeks to lay out the worship calendar for the summer and next church year.

Children and Youth Programming

Classes

We are currently gauging interest in a 6-week Age of Reason program for the 3rd – 5th graders. The rest of our classes remain quite strong, including having over 13 kids in the Middle School OWL program (many of whom aren't regular members at All Souls, but are taking advantage of this excellent program)! At this stage, we are assessing teacher interest for next year and making curricular decisions for the summer and next church year.

Youth

Our youth group led a phenomenal worship service on 2/17 and Rev. Sarah Gettie continues to plan for the Boston trip in June. Our youth fundraising is going quite well, though we still have a long way to go to support those who have many family members who will be going to Boston.

Pastoral Care to Children, Youth, and Families

Rev. Sarah Gettie has attended to the pastoral care needs of two families this month.

Adult Programs

The Older Adult Group has been well-attended and congregants are really taking ownership of the group. The group which meets at All Souls has decided to focus on a particular topic relating to aging led by someone in the group. The Westminster group has expressed an interest in

being able to meet with committees or teams within the congregation to both stay in the loop and see what they can be more involved in. If you have a group you are involved in that would benefit from talking questions or problems through with some of the wisest folks we've got, let Rev. Kayla know.

All our Chalice Circles are going strong, with steady to high commitment.

The Aging Well Together series had a very high content level of programming, but with an average of just 10 attendees for each session (there were three). Rev. Kayla ways to increase attendance for this helpful and quality programming from professionals in the field.

The first of two Trans 101 sessions last week had 19 participants, and Rev. Kayla gives gratitude to Robert Thompson, who has been a tremendous help in these sessions.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE:

All Souls actively practices the art of hospitality to welcome and affirm all who come through our doors. Appreciating each other, we offer compassionate care and accompaniment to each other as we journey through life. All Souls embraces diversity in all its forms, seeks to mirror the demographics of the Indianapolis metro community, and provides opportunities to learn from that diversity.

Membership:

Total number of members: 261; friends: 58. We currently have 123 members listed in inactive status. 4 people joined membership this month: Laura Snyder, Madelin Foster, Sheri Jordan and Leslie Gibbs. 2 other attendees of the program are signing the book this month, Cheryl Olson and Jane Cook.

Welcoming and Hospitality:

We had 22 first or second time visitors this past month, a big increase corresponding with our Harry Potter series. Rev. Kayla and Allison continue to fine tune the responses to those interested in "Serving at All Souls" and "Community Engagement". Allison is collaborating with Rev. Kayla to be more readily recognized as LGBTQ+/TGQNB* welcoming. Specifically we are moving to include pronoun preferences on church email correspondence and name badges, updating our wayfinding for those in wheelchairs and labeling all gender restrooms. Allison continues invite and implement feedback on how best to create a welcoming environment.

Membership classes:

Our Membership programs were well attended with 8 folks in *Exploring UU* on the February 19, and 10 attendees at *Path to Membership* on February 26. We received positive feedback. We are recruiting for our next *Roots & Wings* class which starts next week.

Membership Database:

Allison is investigating membership database options that will allow us to better track long-term engagement at All Souls, as well as better tracking of our outreach efforts, contacts and responses.

Volunteerism:

Allison, Robert, Rev. Sarah Gettie, and I attended the Center for Congregations program on Volunteer Development.

Pastoral Care:

The Pastoral Associates meet every other month, and had a productive meeting discussing future skill- and topic-specific trainings and more explicitly discussing the action-reflection model of training they have been using in their regular meetings.

In total, the ministers had 9 in-person meetings, 4 phone call and 7 emails in the last month. Though new contacts have been lighter, providing pastoral care for Fran Lake and Teresa Quay and her family have required significant time.

Building the Beloved Community

The Diversity and Inclusion Team is now gaining a clear understanding of identity, and both our institutional and our intersectionality sub-teams have work that they have identified for the rest of the year. The institutional team is focusing on building anti-racism into our processes and governance structures. The intersectionality team will be highlighting Indianapolis examples of redlining and this affects our school system and transportation, working more on LGBTQ and ecojustice issues, and will be providing skill-building in having hard conversations across difference.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE:

Implement sound and transparent systems of governance and resource management to guide growth.

Growth Team:

The growth team is meeting every two weeks to deepen our understanding of practices that can support growth, and to identify specific next steps. We discussed fomenting a culture of care, embedded within our small groups, committees, and taskforces. We also recognized how important last year's council work of developing volunteer job descriptions was. Robert has been directed to put these up on our website. We also recognized that we need to have a

better system for asking volunteers to step out of work that they aren't performing. I see this as the role of the program council members next year. Having them go through this growth module would probably be excellent training.

Disruptive Person's Policy:

Diane Kennedy and I meet and made revisions to the sample disruptive person's policy (of First Unitarian in Columbus) that I suggested. We are now asking the board to vote on it. We also made further revisions to the behavioral covenant. We would like the congregation to have an opportunity to give input on this, and we would like to put it up for a vote at the Spring congregational meeting.

Shared Ministry:

The Committee on Ministry continues to meet, and is learning about the Appreciative Inquiry process so that they can effectively use this model in getting feedback.

I have scheduled and am organizing a ministry discernment retreat on March 23, 10am -2pm. The purpose is to use appreciative inquiry to have congregants identify what they want to work on together, aligned with our congregational goals. Your presence would be a great gift.

Rev. Kayla is asking us to think about those within our congregation who aren't able to be present in meetings, but who are a part of our congregation, and who provide particularly important voices. As we go about church-work, who is not at the table or in the room who would be affected by whatever is being discussed? How might we get their input? Just calling one or two people could change the direction we decide to take for the better, and bring more of our congregation "into the room" (even if they can't be in it). We'd love you all as leaders just keep this in the back of your mind, and maybe try it out once before the next board meeting.

Rentals:

One-time rentals are increasing at this time of year. One-time rentals from February and March have brought in \$400, including the Portfolio Club who is interested in signing a one-year contract with us beginning in April to have architecture presentations in the Atrium. Long-term rentals continue to be happy in our space. ManKind Project will be hosting a series of social justice events beginning March 18 through May. They are paying us to rent the space for those workshops, advertising widely in the community, and hoping that All Souls members will come. This is great opportunity to get new people in the door, and provide additional quality programming to our members. Fat Turtle Theater Entertainment also continues to rent from us, and they have expressed interest in forming an official partnership with us. They pay

approximately \$2500 a year in rent, and they have been happy using the east downstairs classrooms, despite the clutter.

Staffing:

Robert will be moving into a full-time administration and communications role with us starting March 18. Judy Lumbert and I meet with Robert to discuss an expanded job description that includes facility management. Robert will stay in this combined role until August and then he will scale back to just communications work. During the intervening months he will help Judy and I recognize what should and shouldn't be part of an expanded administration position. During the budgeting process, I would like to work with the board to determine how many hours for administration and how many for communication we wish for next year.

I will have a high school intern shadowing me and doing some work with us from March 18 – May.

Communication:

Robert has started putting more pictures and design work into In The Know newsletter that comes out on Wednesdays. We have now begun measuring the open rates and total number of people that opened the newsletter. The open rate for February 2019 was 44%, which is higher than 2018 at 38%. However, the average amount of people that read the newsletter in February was 186 compared to 218 in 2018. Robert updated our constant contact lists to make them more concise, resulting in the higher open rate, but may have lost some people in the process. He will double check all of our contacts to correct this, and come up with ways to promote our newsletter.

Website:

Robert has been in touch with Willow Marketing about how to sort through the governance files. Many of the files that Robert found were photos instead of pdfs, and were too blurry to make out. He will be reaching out to current and former board members to collect any files they may have.

The staff continues to regularly update and improve our website. I have identified for how Robert can connect with technical help around site functionality. Over 2,500 people visited our website in February.

Financial Administration:

The electricity budget is high due to the fact that the March 3 bill had to be paid at the end of February in order to be there on time.

Postage and office supplies running high has been addressed in previous months. The upcoming budget will be adjusted for the increase in the cost of postage to 50 cents.

OUR PRESENCE IN THE BROADER COMMUNITY GOAL:

All Souls is recognized for its community engagement and for joining with interfaith and secular partners in actions that embody our shared values in the public sphere. All Souls opens ourselves to our neighbors to build relationships with those beyond our doors.

Laramie Project:

Auditions are going well for the *Laramie Project* (April 11 + 12); we are planning to donate half of our profits to the Indiana Youth Group.

Freedom School

We are currently fundraising for our portion of our Freedom School costs (we brought in just over \$10000 during our crowd-funding campaign). As per our last board meeting, I am attaching the agreement the Indianapolis Freedom School Partnership has asked us to sign. In this we agree to their use of space, and to raise \$16,000, which is what we provide them with last year. For the past three years, we have raised these funds through our crowd-funding campaign, our share the plate, a few voluntary individual donors, partnership gifting, and sibling congregation donations. Now that our crowd-funding is complete, I will turn our efforts to connections beyond All Souls. Rev. Sarah Gettie and I are scheduled to meet with Clifton next week to discuss our partnership this summer; your input on this arrangement is welcomed. We will also communicate with them about how.

Planned Parenthood

I testified on behalf of individuals and families needing reproductive health options on Feb 13.

Justice PalUUza

Rev. Kayla and the DIT have decided to postpone this justice, partnership event

Other:

I am taking study leave on Feb 12-14, attending a spiritual writing conference held locally.

ACTION and DISCUSSION:

- **Vote to adopt the disruptive persons policy.**
- **Provide instruction on what All Souls' priorities and concerns are regarding the All Souls Freedom School.**
- **Plan to attend the Ministry Discernment Retreat on March 23.**

