

# Minister's Report

## All Souls Board of Trustees

### November 14, 2018

#### Overview:

I am noticing a deepening of connection at All Souls, that I find encouraging despite the low attendance numbers. Our three Chalice Circles are full and running, adult program participation is higher than in previous years, and the quality of feedback from these sessions and via the connection cards is positive. I really appreciate the leadership of the board and board committees and how their conversations and work are bringing our institution to a new level of maturity.

I really appreciated the participating in the "Start Up." I am humbled by the maturity, resilience, generosity and overall health of this congregation, and find it a great honor to serve here.

#### *Numbers:*

Our numbers are still not as strong as in former years. October tends to trend low in terms of attendance, in part because of the Fall retreat, and in part because of school breaks. This dip in attendance is one significant reason that we moved to a Spring pledge drive.

	2016	2017	2018
June Adults	120	104	119
June Kids	6	13	18
July Adults	130	111	97
July Kids	20	17	17
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

# 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

I feel very positive about the quality and nature of our worship services. I am particularly appreciative of Peg Paulson and Melissa Bruhn for their work physically preparing our sanctuary for our latest sermon series, "Gifts of the Dark Woods." The visual enhancements were greatly appreciated. We had a solid half-day retreat with the worship team leaders on 11/17 to prepare for the three series that we are running between now and April.

## Children and Youth Programming

The Faith Formation classes' average attendance was lower in the month of October, averaging 23, presumably due to many of our families being away at the church Fall Retreat and/or out of town due to their school district's fall break (we serve children from as many as seven school districts).

## *Classes*

Nikki Cunningham has stepped forward as our Nursery Coordinator, filling this important staffing need. Sarah Gettie and the Children's Faith Formation Committee will first meet Wednesday, November 14 to commence their work together. Goals include setting out a curriculum map and vision for the program, as well as thinking creatively about volunteer recruitment and sustainability.

Our first Teacher Appreciation Breakfast of the year was held October 28th, with teacher development being a major component of their time together.

## *Intergenerational Programming*

The November 2 Intergenerational *Coco* movie showing and discussion was a success, with 30 in attendance, good food, and great discussion afterwards!

## *Youth*

CONtagious took place at All Souls Nov 9-11.

Our youth group continues to meet on the 1st and 4th Sundays of each month, and the youth have raised nearly \$450 in the past month toward their Boston trip! Rev. Sarah Gettie will hold a parent information meeting for that trip in the next month.

## Adult Programs

We have launched a number of adult programs including 3 Chalice Circles (31 participating), *Get Ready!* a session to prepare your UU elevator speech (10 participants); *Roots and Wings* (10 participants; 8 completed); Diane Ensign's grief class (14). We have heard back that these programs are effective in helping people find belonging at All Souls.

On November 20, Rev. Kayla is launching an older adult group (meeting twice a month) . The group will meet alternate meeting at and at All Souls.

## Leadership Development

The Program Council offered the second session of the Leadership Seminar Series, again with 15 participants. We are having conversations that we had not had previously. I am seeing the beginnings of a leadership culture develop. I also submitted a grant to the Center for Congregations that is focused on preparing our leadership to grow our congregation. This includes board development, among funding for other resources.

## **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:

Allison has started as our membership coordinator. As part of the on-boarding process, we are also clarifying what functions she is primarily responsible for, and which ones lie with me, or with a volunteer. In a nut shell, I am going to work with a "growth" team on strategies for growth and Allison is going to work with volunteers on executing our identified tactics. Accountability for growth will lie with me, the board and with the overall congregation.

## *Member Recruitment:*

Our visitor rate is starting to pick up again. The staff is working on getting the content for the website up. We are offering *Exploring UU* and *Path to Membership* at the end of the month.

Several members of our staff attending a Center for Congregations workshop on 11/7 on welcoming and attracting visitors. Our welcoming processes are very aligned with best practices. Additional next steps could include: ensuring our website is targeted towards the demographics we want to include and improving our search optimization, building a culture of welcoming (through “secret greeters” and section hosts), social media alignment and improving the entrance and appearance of our facility.

#### Pastoral Care:

Over the past month, Revs. Kayla, Sarah Getie and I have had six pastoral visits/meetings, seven casual pastoral conversations at church, seven email conversations and five phone conversations.

#### Building the Beloved Community

The Diversity and Inclusion Team has mission statements for its two newly formed sub-teams!

They are:

- Process Team – Vision a new way of being, as a congregation that has shed our white supremacy, and outline steps of how to make this a reality.
- Intersectionality Team – Expand and deepen awareness of the swirling layers of oppressions that impact all people in our congregation and wider communities.

I organized an informal meeting between some staff members and congregants to put together a multi-month LGBTQ-related program series. This will include classes, plays, and worship series featuring the Indianapolis Men’s and Women’s Choruses

#### **CONGREGATIONAL LIFE:**

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

#### Staffing:

I had conducted mid-year performance reviews for all of our continuing staff and am nearly complete with the first performance check-ins for Sarah Gettie and Kayla.

#### New Teams and Committees:

We are restructuring some of our internal committees. I am reforming the membership Committee into two distinct groups: a Growth Team to do big picture, strategic thinking and to

follow up with some of our identified initiatives, and a membership team that would help implement our welcoming practices and which would meet mostly for training purposes. We are attempting to recruit a Safety and Security Team to help us improve our security processes and to implement some basic safety practices.

I am nearly complete in recruiting a Communications Team, which will work with a communication firm this year on our branding, communication strategies and instruments. This communications firm is half funded through the Center for Congregations grant.

### *Financials*

Pledges payments are running ahead as some people are paying in full for the year. Donations are behind budget so far, in part because of lower attendance.

Professional expense for staff is over budget to date due to many of the workshops falling at this time of year. I have reviewed minister and staff professional development plans and approved in-budget plans for the year.

Building is running over due to the purchase of the listening devices and speaker and because of needed roof repairs.

Water, Sewer & Storm water is under budget but the second half of the storm water bill was paid in early November which will change that.

We purchased housekeeping, office paper supplies, and RE supplies in bulk. The budget should even out in coming months.

### Committee on Ministry

As a minister in preliminary fellowship, Rev. Kayla is required by the UUA to have a Committee on Ministry (CoM) who will provide to them an evaluation of her level of ministerial competence. I have asked her to structure the CoM not only be a sounding board and to support Kayla, but to be discerning, evaluative, and shaping body on the shared ministry of our congregation. Current members include: Jackie Anderson, Jerry Hoover, Bruce Russel-Jayne and Pat Fisher, and they might add one more young adult member.

### **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.***

### Freedom School

I will be applying for a 2019 Summer Youth Program Grant for our CDF Freedom School Site. We are planning on 50 scholars again.

### Center for Interfaith Cooperation

I will be one of the co-chairs leading the CIC's efforts to pass hate crime legislation. I have begun organizing our interfaith efforts, and connecting with partner organizations

### Faith in Indiana

We hosted our 5 phone banking to turn out the vote, and we hosted the Get-Out-the-Vote Rally. We also participated in a press event on 11/14 to highlight the unlawful detention of immigrant children. I am traveling down to Texas Wednesday- Friday to continue this prophetic witness.

### **Other:**

#### Vacation

I am going to take November 19-21 and Dec 3-6 off.