

All Souls Unitarian Church
Indianapolis, Indiana
Annual Report to the Congregation
2022-2023

Current Membership: 208

Board of Directors, 2022-2023

Jean Miller (President), Babette Miller (Vice-President), Teresa Quay (Treasurer), Jane Gosling (Secretary), Alison Cole (At-Large), Rex Martin (At-Large), Bob Rayhill (At-Large), Virginia Snell (At-Large), Elaine Mancini (At-Large-Through 12/22), Carmelo Leal (appointed to fill Elaine's term until next election)

Monthly board meeting minutes and governing policies are more are posted here:

<https://allsoulsindy.org/about-us/our-governance/>

Ministers, 2022-2023

Rev. Katie Romano Griffin, Senior Minister, beginning 8/2022

Elizabeth Valencia, Summer Minister, and Community Multicultural Ministry Partner

Staff, 2022-2023

Nancy Baney, Financial Administrator

Sarah Cannon, Director of Children's and Community Programming

Amanda Giorgianni, Nursery Coordinator

Nasreen Khan, Communications and Programs Coordinator

Gabe Perbieri, Director of Music

2022-2023 Board Annual Vision of Ministry



"Catching the Glow"

Together we create transformative experiences each week that fuel people forward into their lives in the community, and then they come back for more.

Priorities:

- Creating Clear Paths of Connection & Belonging to Strengthen and Facilitate Fierce Commitment to Social Justice and Multigenerational Engagement
- Radical Hospitality & Inclusion
- Create a Culture of Healthy Conflict

Letter from Rev. Katie Romano Griffin, Senior Minister

Dear All Souls Members, Friends and Fans,

A year ago almost to the day of this year's annual meeting we will also be celebrating the historic call of me as your minister! I spent some time earlier looking back at photos of that day, the incredible Installation service we held and many other memories that have been created this year.

We have so much to celebrate. We started our time together in August with a "Multicultural Ministry Start-up" led by two UUA staff! You voted historically to be at the ready as plaintiffs in the ACLU's case against the state for the near abortion ban and voted to support my involvement in the case. We have navigated challenges and threats to our safety with transparency, clear and open communication, stronger systems have been built and we have even danced as an act of faithful resistance. We engaged a multicultural ministry coach, Julica Hermann de la Fuente who has worked with the Board and me. We created a more clear and transparent budget creation process, and we had a VERY successful Stewardship drive. Our Easter Egg Hunt this spring was gigantic and welcomed many new people from the neighborhood. We held a prison abolition class for weeks, brought back the Adult Forum, and continued with children's programming. We started more multigenerational programming, and enhanced our worship. Our YouTube streaming has become more consistent. Our Caring Team, Hospitality, and Memorial teams along with Ushers, Greeters, Worship, AV/Tech, Faith Formation and many, many other volunteers have been making church happen side by side with staff this year. We have shown up at the Statehouse to fight the "Slate of Hate," we have supported the Black Church Coalition and Faith in Indiana. We welcomed the "Unwelcomed" exhibit. We took 17 people to Cali, Colombia for a Spanish language immersion and have continued to strengthen our relationship with the migrant community. We met with the organization FaithX so that we can move into considering growth based on local data. We were awarded several grants large and small for our work and we are just beginning.

Amidst the celebrations I am also present to the hard times that we have navigated. We have had some staffing changes, some were more traumatic to our system than others. We lost our beloved Minister Emeritus, Rev. Dr. Bruce Clear just days after losing his step-child Kelsey. We faced threats of safety and have begun doing training to help keep the congregation safe. As a team we acted quickly, decisively and transparently. We have had some really hard conversations and engaged conflict lovingly and directly. We have a lot to be proud of!

I am excited to build on the work of this year. Our Staff program team, Nasreen, Gabe, Sarah and I, have been planning experiences together that will support people of all ages and are based on what we learned from [FaithX](#). We plan to simplify our website because the data is very clear about how our website does not support the way in which our target markets need to engage. Simplifying will also help accomplish the goal of "Clarifying" roles, responsibilities and pathways. We are dreaming of having Closed Captioning available on screens in the Sanctuary during worship to support members and friends who are hearing impaired. We are excited about the many creative ways we will gather as a community to explore what it means to be Unitarian Universalists in our bodies, minds, and spirits. We are excited about Membership and Social Justice teams regathering and meeting the needs of the times. We are planning more

multigenerational events and have several grant proposals out that will allow us to be a leader among Mid-Western congregations in the areas of multiculturalism, and mental health.

A year into our time together and I find myself continuously grateful that I get to be your minister and to serve this amazing community. Thank you for your trust in me. It is an honor to journey with you.

Believing in you,

Rev. Katie

Letter from Jean Miller, Board President

Dear All Souls,

As our board has continued to lean into policy governance, I'm proud of our progress toward becoming less of a "doing" board and more of a visionary board as well as one that is working toward fulfilling the hopes and dreams of the church that were captured during the ministerial search process. The data collected from all of you by the Ministerial Search Committee about what All Souls was hoping for in a new minister translated into these 4 primary areas of focus for the minister, summarized below and available in fuller detail [HERE](#):

1. We would like our next settled minister to help us discover our common purposes.
2. We need help creating a culture around healthy conflict.
3. We would like our new minister to help us become a more open community that makes room for new members to feel like they belong.
4. We would like to be welcoming to a more diverse group of people: particularly young adults and BIPOC (Black Indigenous People of Color). We would like our next settled minister to help us become the beloved community that we aspire to be.

As you read Rev. Katie's summary of the year, you can see how she has been leading us in all of those areas. You have heard us say a lot this year that we are striving to become a multicultural, multi-generational ministry - that is how we accomplish priority #4 above.

At our August retreat, the board used this information as we developed, together with Rev. Katie, our annual Vision of Ministry and our Priorities, which are captured on page 1 of this report.

It's clear that the Annual Vision of Ministry we developed last year is rich and extensive enough that we are considering it to be a multi-year Vision. The Board may decide to tweak or concentrate on certain areas each year. Our Open Question Town Hall, which is being held June 4, is designed to gather your input to inform us as we lean more into this vision over the next year.

In conclusion, I want to name my gratitude for:

- The Ministerial Search Committee (Jerry Hoover, Judy Lumbert, Tom Miller, Annie Rayhill, Emily Salinas, Tom Sibert, Jenny Yumibe) for the immense work they did and for bringing us Rev. Katie!

- The board officers (Babette Miller, Teresa Quay, Jane Gosling) who have remained consistent for the past two years, providing stability through this time of transition (and three are serving a third term, providing additional stability)
- Outgoing board member Babette Miller, who has served for 5 years, most recently as VP for two years, providing me with invaluable wisdom and support
- Outgoing board member Bob Rayhill for his leadership on governance and for his practice of thoughtful listening followed by the most astute observations/questions
- The entire board for their commitment to learning and growing, for their critical thinking and thoughtful discussions, and for their leadership during a challenging year
- The congregation for all of their efforts to keep the church running smoothly and their commitment and patience during this time of transition—not only ministerial transition, but also post-pandemic transition. We are not who we were, and we are still discerning the path forward. It's not easy to live in this time of "in-between" for so long. Thanks for hanging in there with us. It will be worth it.

In service and with love,
Jean Miller, Board President

Report from Teresa Quay, Treasurer

A. GENERAL FINANCIAL STATE OF THE CHURCH AS OF 5/7/23

All Souls has had an exciting year with the arrival of our settled minister and a new music minister as well. Overall, the financial health of the congregation remains stable, despite some challenges our aging building provides, and unanticipated increases in the cost of utilities and recycling expense. We continue to expand on our connection with ECMHSP, and that revenue has certainly been a boost to help us with all of the challenges we face. As with congregations of all faiths across the country, we will face new challenges in the future with the number of pledging units dropping, and a heavy reliance on a small group of donors. Members continue to step up with strong pledging for next fiscal year, but we must be responsible and seek other revenue streams for our future viability. We have not yet had to dip as deeply into our reserves as our 2022-23 budget anticipated, but we have again included reserve funds draws in the 2023-24 budget to meet all needed expenditures (although not as much as we did for 2022-23), and this is not sustainable into the future. As of today, the balance in the operating reserve is \$85,726 with an additional amount expected from the final employee retention credit payment of approximately \$12,000. Our building reserve balance is at \$48,517 and anticipated additions by the end of the fiscal year of approximately \$10,000.

B. OPERATING REVENUE/EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR TO DATE

At the end of March we were almost 67% into our fiscal year (which ends 6/30/23). Our revenue total for the year is at 84% of budget, with pledges received at 85% of budget and plate collections at 125% of budget. For expenses, despite some categories exceeding budget (notably electricity at 144%, trash/recycling at 182%, and administration costs at 161%), overall we are at 75% of budget for the year. While we still have 3 months to go, if we can sustain at this rate we will not have to dip as deeply into reserves as we had budgeted. As of 3/31 we have

transferred \$20,000 from building reserves to cover the repair of the boiler, and we have not transferred any from building or operating reserves yet.

D. ENDOWMENT FUND

As any of you with investments know, it has been a rough year for the market, with losses averaging 20-30%. A year ago we engaged Commonwealth Capital to handle the investments, and our investments are showing a net gain of 2.2% for 2023 so far. When I reported the balance at this time last year, it was \$799,754. As of the end of March 2023 the Endowment balance currently stands at \$798,105.

Report from Sarah Cannon, Director of Children's and Community Programming

This was a year of new developments in faith formation, including a children's and youth caucus and referendum on calling Rev. Katie as our settled minister, and expansion of events that were popular last year such as holiday gift-making workshops and family pitch-in lunches. In response to the children's feedback, we did a service project for Indy Humane and spent a morning touring and volunteering in the facility. We trained three facilitators on the brand-new revision of the elementary OWL program, and next year we'll continue to expand our OWL teaching cohorts for all ages, including adults. We're wrapping up a K-1 OWL class that attracted several families from outside the congregation, some of whom have also attended Sunday services. We had 100% retention of our faith formation volunteers this year, who cited that their act of service also feels like an act of ministry. We've added four children ages 8-10 to our team of worship associates. Two of our youth and two faith formation volunteers attended the Spanish immersion trip to Calí, and additional families in our program are pursuing Spanish language learning. We currently serve twenty children and youth in the congregation as well as visitors, and are increasing outreach to neighboring communities by expanding the size and range of our community events as well as our online and streetside advertising. Sarah and Graeme also worked to rebuild Heartland Area programs for our youth by collaborating with adults and youth from UUI and Kalamazoo to plan and run a weekend event at the UU Church of Tippecanoe County, which attracted attendees from seven UU churches in three states. In the next fiscal year, we encourage the congregation to support growth by actively participating in multigenerational community events, learning new practices of welcome, and sharing information about our programs widely.

Report from Nasreen Khan, Director of Programs and Communications

This year I have been adjusting to a new portfolio and also shifting to accommodate when our staffing numbers were down. I am now covering Communications, Grant Writing, Adult Programming and that includes Membership and Sunday Morning Ushers, Greeters, and Hospitality teams.

I have been central to some really big programming lifts this year. These include programs like, "Prophetic Voices," which was a three part series of Sunday Services that highlighted Indianapolis voices rarely heard in our pulpit. This took a lot of organization and extra staff

hours. I handled each part of the process from collaborative planning with Greg Sanders and Rev. Joel –and then Rev. Katie to craft a vision for the Services, to meeting with each of the participants to help them define and craft the order of service for the day—I also ran the sound and streaming for each of these services. The prophetic voices series was paid for from our EYA grant fund—a grant I wrote and received in 2022.

We also hosted “The Unwelcomed Exhibit,” which was a partnership with the fair housing center of Indianapolis. I learned of the program through a colleague in the arts scene and facilitated a relationship with the center in order to bring it to All Souls. Unfortunately we were not able to advertise to and welcome the public as widely as we would have liked as our hosting of the materials coincided with our need for temporary increased security. We recently hosted a screening of “Arab Indianapolis: A Hidden History,” with a grant from Indiana Humanities. It was a successful event that was well attended (19 signups were non All Souls congregants). I wrote and submitted the grant, sourced and prepped panelists, facilitated the discussion, created all the advertising content and social media push for the event, set up the AV and screen for the event, ordered/picked up/cooked food for the lunch we served, and completed the final grant paperwork for Indiana Humanities (many thanks to the volunteers like Jean Miller/Margi Heckley/ Sherri Shuelke/ Zach Schenetzke/ Judy Lumbert/ Virginia Snell who signed up to do cleanup and set up chairs and manage the attendance list) . I list all this out to highlight that an event like this is a huge lift in terms of breadth of knowledge and skill set as well as staff and volunteer hours. It is also one of the best ways that we bridge the congregation/citywide divide.

Other programs this year in this category include the Abolition course (run by Dr. Coleman of IUPUI and the Mazarakia Scholars program). I approached Dr. Coleman last year with an idea for a community approach to college education and am grateful for his partnership and the opportunity to build on the abolition call from UUA president Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray issued in 2020. We were able to design the class together and there have been about 5 All Souls congregants that have attended faithfully and consistently. It was a privilege to co-write the class with Dr. Coleman and was a very fun trip back to my academic roots. Adult Forum is back and running with a core of consistent attendees. We are getting ready to run a summer chalice circle facilitated by Lata Ganesh that focuses on Yoga through an interfaith lens. I also co-led a chalice circle with Erik Mroz on the book *See No Stranger*, which the staff and board also read this year. I also collaboratively planned and executed the Easter Egg hunt with the rest of the program team. These are all a part of the successful adult programs we have experienced this year that are inclusive and created with a justice lens.

I have also successfully written several grants that All Souls has been awarded and am excited about the ones we have in process for next year which will definitely help us achieve our goals of offering Radical Hospitality, Justice and Multicultural Engagement. These grants include

- Indiana Humanities Screening grant-\$250 (awarded)
- Chalice lighter grant-\$10,000(awarded)
- Mental Health Initiative (I am spearheading the congregant team that will be working on this)
- UUfunding panel grants-\$20,000 (I wrote this application with input from Rev. Katie and Rev. Espinel, the UUA staff that reviewed the application responded with feedback that it is the first grant app they have ever reviewed that fit multiple grant categories so I rewrote the application for their 2 other open portals. This is a first in UU Funding panel history.)

My work in public art also affects All Souls because it expands my network of resources and community partnerships that I often call on for All Souls programs. Although much of this relationship building happens on my own time, outside of my direct work at church, All Souls is a direct beneficiary of my reputation, and relationships with the wider Indianapolis community. Some public art initiatives I have engaged in include—

- The Chicken Chapel of Love at the Tubefactory artspace (this highlights an interfaith and immigrant perspective to faith and ecology)
- The Equity Ambassador Program through the Indy Arts Council—Myself and 3 other BIPOC artists served as DEI auditors for the organization from Board policy to website design over the course of 2 years
- The Looking Glass Alliance in partnership with Newfields—Myself and 4 other community members are re-curating the American galleries to highlight marginalized voices and challenging the organization to serve the community better in a more equitable manner.
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Report from Gabe Perbieri, Music Director

The church year of 2022-2023 was full of changes and adjustments. The arrival of Rev. Katie brought a new vision to All Souls and also challenges. Since January 2023, the Music Ministry has become more active and engaged with the congregation, opening space for new members in the choir, and including congregants that do not participate in the choir programs. Acknowledging that different people have different tastes and ways to worship, Gabe introduced shakers for the congregation to use during the celebrations, as not everybody feels comfortable singing.

The choir rehearsals moved to weekday evenings, which freed time for sound check and preparation for the Sunday services. Liz Ellsmore and Charlie Metzger became integrated staff of the church, which affirms value to their talents and efforts, as well grows their capacity to serve the church in services and in the preparation for them. The quality of our musical performances would not be possible without Liz's performance on the piano, and the growing quality of the All Souls Choir would not be as significant without Charlie's vocal guidance. The latest addition to Gabe's desk is the supervision of the AV team. Currently he counts on volunteers to do the hard work, while he is leading the hiring process of the new AV technician. Currently we have a calendar featuring a series of special performances happening one Sunday per month. Since January of 2023, we have had Audra Gipson, Joel Tucker, Rex Martin, Charlie Metzger, and we still will have Jane Alexander, the Rayhill Family and Maryanne Matthews performing in April, May, and June respectively.

For next church year, we will keep working towards amplifying the voice and giving visibility to the talents of our in-house performing artists, as well as growing the outreach to other artistic faith communities. For the year of 2023-2024, among other projects, we will be creating connections by programming an exchange between choirs, in which we would meet with different groups, rehearse in different spaces, and perform in their home faith community locations, as well at All Souls.

We look forward to making Intergenerational connections and fomenting the cultural growth of our community. In face of so many activities, we encourage you to participate actively with the music ministry, either performing, or supporting the programs.