

Frequently Asked Questions about Rev. Anastassia's Departure

1. Why are you leaving? I am leaving so that both Kent and I can live in a location where there are career (or really vocational) opportunities for each of us, and so that we are both home each night with our young children. I love All Souls Indianapolis, and have been honored and privileged to serve as your minister. If it were not for family considerations, I personally would not feel a need to look for other ministry opportunities.

2. Can we talk with you or your family about your leaving and what is next? Sure, saying goodbye is really important! I have seen that when members or staff have moved away, All Souls folk have done a wonderful job voicing appreciation for them and sending them off with well-wishes. I ask for nothing different for my family. Our daughter, Sadie, in particular, feels deeply connected to our covenant and congregation, and knows no other life than the one here in Indianapolis. These changes are big and personal, and I appreciate your care in expressing thanks and well-wishes.

I, myself, would prefer to focus on being present to you. Ministerial search is a stressful process – even without an audience – and can often involve a sense of loss and compromise as well as excitement and discovery. I can share where I will be headed when that is public knowledge (likely mid-April), but until then I would be grateful to your respecting my privacy about my search process.

3. What about if you don't find a congregation to serve? That is quite terrifying; don't scare me! Honestly, while that is too stressful to think about, I think it is unlikely. It also doesn't change our family's circumstances, and the necessity of this move.

4. What happens to us now? Over the last few years, I have worked with our wonderful lay leaders to get All Souls ready – for new members, for younger members, in publicly engaging our values, and for the landscape of 21st century ministry generally. While I think we could have had meaningful and productive ministry together for some years to come, I also believe that the congregation will be well served by its lay leaders and a new minister -- one who will be your partner for several more years as you really develop into the congregation you are becoming. You also have a truly wonderful staff you can rely on; be good to them and they will serve you well.

Practically speaking, the Board will hire an interim minister who will help the congregation through the search for a new settled minister. All will be well. All Souls' reputation in the larger UUA community is very positive right now – that should give you choices when it comes to both an interim and a settled minister.

5. Will you return? What about for memorial services? I will not return to All Souls Indianapolis for a period of at least three years. After that time, I may return for special occasions if invited by your new minister and if that would seem positive to the congregation as a whole. Perhaps most painfully, I will not be able to perform weddings, memorial services, or other rites of passage during this three-year period and likely beyond, as those would be the duties of the serving minister. Please know that I will honor such life moments myself privately.

6. Can we be friends? Can we stay in contact? The UU Minister's Association's Code of Ethics dictates that I will no longer have contact with All Souls Indianapolis and its members during the above

mentioned three-year period. I ask that you respect this policy – and my own need to set up a new life – by not reaching out to me after June 7. On Facebook, you will only be able to see my public posts, and I will no longer follow your posts. These boundaries are not about my affection for you – it is about giving you and your new, wonderful minister(s) space to forge a healthy relationship.

7. When is your last day with us? My last day will be Sunday, June 7, 2020.

8. What will you be doing between now and then? I will continue to lead worship and fulfil my core responsibilities as your minister. I also will spend a considerable portion of my time in these coming months trying to say goodbye in a healthy, loving way. This means closing any loopholes that might exist, making sure any institutional knowledge that I have is shared with appropriate people, and, most importantly, talking to you. I am available to meet with any of you who would like to do so – at church, at your home, at a coffee shop – whatever suits you. I have my availability posted on Calendly or give the office a call to set something up.