

OPEN QUESTIONS 2021-2022

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

Open Question 1: What are ways we can be intentionally and actionably kinder to each other at All Souls with the ability to become a soft-landing place?

1. What is a way that All Souls (or UUism) changed your life?
 - a. Provided the opportunity to learn and grow and be more connected through inspiring and uplifting sermons
 - b. Provided love and support when going through difficult times
 - c. Provided a safe haven for free thought and expression
 - d. Provided an open forum creating a community with the freedom to explore social issues and spiritual pathways
 - e. Provided opportunities and avenues to join together in service to help those in need

2. What gets in the way of All Souls changing lives?
 - a. Reluctance to proselytize
 - b. People don't know about our church or UUism
 - c. Reluctance to embrace change in the way we do church
 - d. Not being aware of the needs of new members, and not as diverse as we should be
 - e. Not as welcoming as we think we are, to other political beliefs, Christian UUs and persons of color; even asking newcomers offensive questions
 - f. Show bias toward like-minded intellectual, liberal, educated people
 - g. Poor communication and lack of transparency in the church structure
 - h. Due to the elimination of the membership coordinator position, there is a lack of follow-up with new members
 - i. Social gatherings like the coffee hour are difficult for introverts due to cliquishness
 - j. Need more casual activities like small groups to make it easier to get people involved
 - k. Need to attract younger people to the church
 - l. Tendency to a mentality of "We tried that"
 - m. Too much emphasis on social justice and not enough on humanism and promotion

3. What could All Souls do differently so that everyone coming here would have the same life-changing experiences?
 - a. Be welcoming to all, but don't assume that all people want the same thing; recognize that we can't be all things to all people
 - b. Be intentional in thinking about who we want to come to our church and what we need to offer them
 - c. Be radically welcoming, with hospitality and acceptance at a hyper level; newcomers need to feel they can trust and be trusted.

- d. Get better at conflict management
- e. Need a membership coordinator and find ways to get newcomers connected and paired with ambassadors/mentors
- f. Partner with other churches
- g. Follow-up with visitors and those that have not been attending
- h. Need better marketing; press releases, social media, podcasts, NPR ad and better signage
- i. More informal gatherings and short, casual ways to get involved
- j. Personal invitations to people to join activities
- k. More implicit bias training
- l. Better utilize UUA resources
- m. Need better communication and contacts about activities and events
- n. Consider whom we can serve well and decide what members of the larger community we are ready to truly welcome
- o. Make a concerted effort to get to know people in the congregation
- p. Recognize that introverts need more time for introspection

Open Question 2: How do we make change and support others making change in the wider world?

1. What social justice work has All Souls done that has been most meaningful to you?
 - a. Anti-racism/Anti-Oppression – DIT, Selma Trip, Beloved Conversations and Jubilee training
 - b. Environmental Justice – Green Team, Green Sanctuary, Transit/Advocacy for Indy bus lines (phone banking), Dakota pipeline, Earth Day program, tree planting, solar panels recycling and community garden
 - c. LGBTQ – Transforming Hearts training, welcoming sanctuary, Pride parade and festival
 - d. Community Outreach – IHN, Freedom School, Head Start, Coburn Place donations, hosting food pantry, rummage sale, blood drive, CROP walk
 - e. Advocacy – Rallies at statehouse, getting out the vote
 - f. Other – Learning via sermons and Adult Forum, partner church

2. What gets in the way of you doing social justice work at All Souls?
 - a. Covid
 - b. Too many options and issues - need to narrow focus to 3 or 4 things
 - c. Time of day – work conflicts, lack of child care, don't drive at night
 - d. Lack of younger people participating
 - e. Distance from work
 - f. Opportunities offered don't align with personal passions
 - g. Not comfortable in groups and intimidating to enter ones that are already formed
 - h. Personal finances
 - i. Aging population and physical limitations

- j. Participating in other efforts outside All Souls
 - k. Lack of clear leadership and contact information – need to make it easier for people to show up and also to see what the options are
 - l. Need to let new members know what activities are available
 - m. Inertia/laziness/tiredness
 - n. Lack of time
 - o. Want to be involved, but not as a leader
 - p. Burnout - as the same people are always doing the work
 - q. Disagreement about how things should be done
3. What social justice work energizes you right now?
- a. Anti-racism, BLM, racial justice
 - b. LGBTQ
 - c. Climate justice, environmental education
 - d. Education (tutoring, reading)
 - e. Disability justice/rights: intersectionality with other marginalized groups
 - f. Refugees and immigrants
 - g. Freedom school
 - h. Getting out the vote, voters rights
 - i. Indigenous rights, especially as intersecting with environmental justice
 - j. Racial equality
 - k. Using arts and creative expression to promote social justice
 - l. Recycling
 - m. Homelessness
 - n. Blood donations
 - o. Women’s reproductive rights
 - p. Bail project
 - q. Criminal justice reform
 - r. Fighting poverty
 - s. League of Women Voters
 - t. Redistricting and gerrymandering
 - u. Healthcare
 - v. Partnering with Kherpw Institute
 - w. Partner justice
 - x. Gun control
 - y. Other: Living a life that reflect my ideals