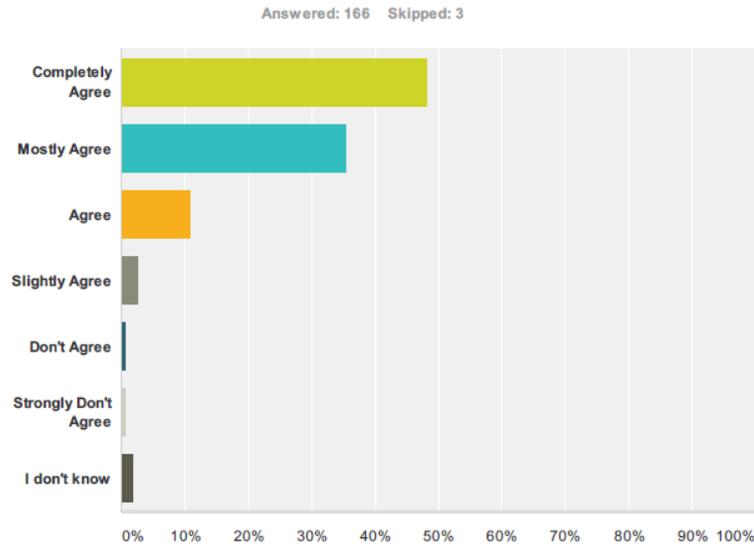


2014 All Souls Church Unitarian Congregational Survey Summary

One hundred sixty nine individuals responded to an on-line survey. The congregation continues to love its church its ministers and staff. While almost universally appreciating the value of Sunday services and the opportunities for involvement in church activities (many of us are limited from participating more only by lack of time not inclination), as Unitarian Universalists we have many suggestions for improvement in all areas of the church's programs, especially in the work of building the beloved community.

Q1. How much do you agree with the following statement: I find All Souls to be a vibrant and joyful community.

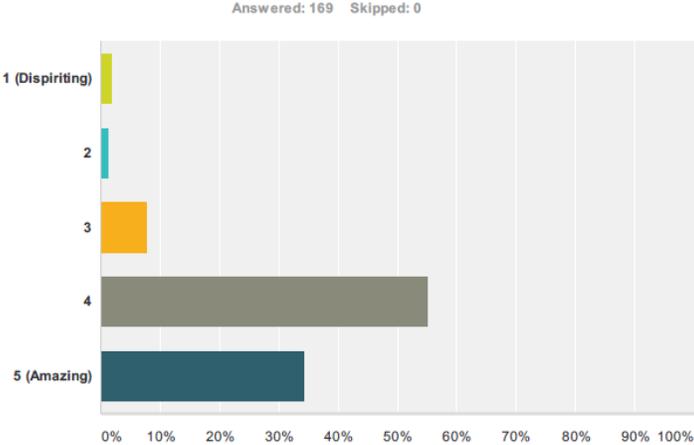
97% agree to some degree. Almost half (48%) completely agree while the majority of the rest (an additional 35%) say they mostly agree.



Answer Choices	Responses	
Completely Agree	48.19%	80
Mostly Agree	35.54%	59
Agree	10.84%	18
Slightly Agree	2.41%	4
Don't Agree	0.60%	1
Strongly Don't Agree	0.60%	1
I don't know	1.81%	3
Total		166

Q2. On a scale of 1 (dispiriting) to 5 (amazing), how would you rate your experience of Sunday worship?

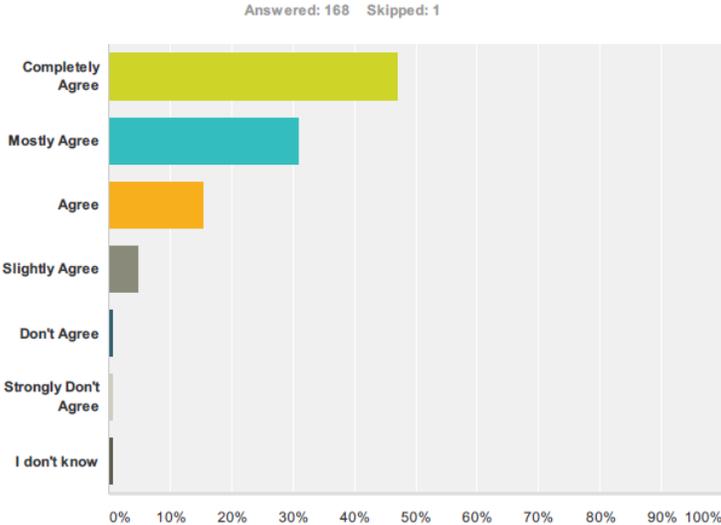
Almost 90% of respondents gave All Souls either a 4 or a 5 (over 34%) in answer to this question. This is consistent with the open-ended questions that made it clear that Sunday sermon is a strong spot for All Souls.



Answer Choices	Responses
1 (Dispiriting)	1.78% 3
2	1.18% 2
3	7.69% 13
4	55.03% 93
5 (Amazing)	34.32% 58
Total	169

Q3. How much do you agree with the following statement: All Souls offers you opportunities for spiritual growth and development?

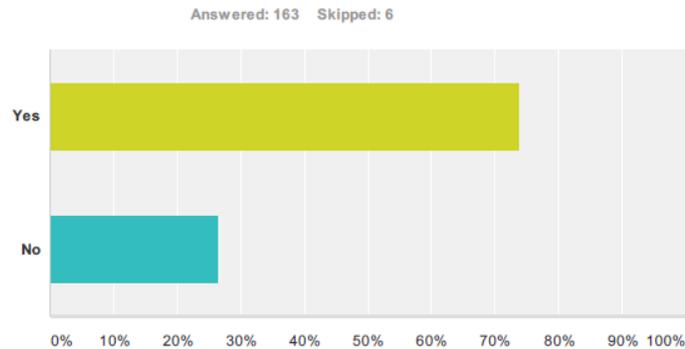
Almost half of the respondents said that they “completely agree” with this statement (47%). Another 31% mostly agree and 15% agree.



Answer Choices	Responses
Completely Agree	47.02% 79
Mostly Agree	30.95% 52
Agree	15.48% 26
Slightly Agree	4.76% 8
Don't Agree	0.60% 1
Strongly Don't Agree	0.60% 1
I don't know	0.60% 1
Total	168

Q4. Do you participate in spiritual growth and development opportunities at All Souls?

74% said yes and 26% said no.



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	73.62%	120
No	26.38%	43
Total		163

Q5. What is your greatest source of spiritual growth and development at All Souls?

A substantial number of people called out Sunday service and those who made a distinction called out Rob's sermons in particular. People also mentioned (to a lesser extent) music on Sunday and covenant groups. A minority of responses mentioned classes and volunteering. Social Justice work, Vespers services, teaching in the Children's RE program, Young Souls, singing in a choir and committee work are among other activities often mentioned.

Q6. How do each of these activities/experiences contribute to your spiritual development and well-being?

Of all the aspects of church life, the congregation finds that the sermons and music at the Sunday service contribute significantly or very significantly (sermons 90%, music 94%) to their spiritual development and well-being. In declining order of significance, other aspects of the church's contributions (% significant or very significant) are: social justice work 43%; volunteering on Sundays 34% ; covenant groups 34%; pastoral care 20%; participating in Young Souls, Silver Souls, etc. 20%; and children's RE program 19%. Of note, covenant groups, pastoral care, children and adult RE, and affinity groups all had over 50% of respondents saying they don't participate in these activities or don't know if they contribute. (See below for details, most common answer highlighted in yellow)

	Very significantly	Significantly	Slightly	Not at all	I don't know/don't participate	Total
Weekly sermons	59.88% 100	29.94% 50	7.78% 13	1.80% 3	0.60% 1	167
Music at service	64.07% 107	29.94% 50	4.19% 7	1.80% 3	0.00% 0	167
Other parts of Sunday services	10.00% 16	55.63% 89	28.75% 46	1.88% 3	3.75% 6	160
Volunteering on Sundays (e.g., usher, worship associate, greeter, meals, etc.)	12.20% 20	21.34% 35	17.07% 28	1.22% 2	48.17% 79	164
Covenant groups	18.99% 30	14.56% 23	5.70% 9	1.90% 3	58.86% 93	158
Pastoral care	6.79% 11	13.58% 22	9.26% 15	4.32% 7	66.05% 107	162
Social justice activities	14.20% 23	29.01% 47	24.07% 39	2.47% 4	30.25% 49	162
Religious education (children)	6.96% 11	12.03% 19	6.96% 11	6.33% 10	67.72% 107	158
Religious education (adult)	4.46% 7	14.65% 23	22.29% 35	2.55% 4	56.05% 88	157
Affinity groups (e.g., Silver Souls, Young Souls, Black Souls Potluck)	10.63% 17	9.38% 15	16.25% 26	5.63% 9	58.13% 93	160

Q7. What would you like to see more of in spiritual growth and development opportunities?

A number of congregants note that there already is a wide variety of opportunities for spiritual growth and development at the church and, indeed, a difficulty is finding time to take advantage of them. However, many suggest more opportunities would be welcome. Themes were: more short-term ASD opportunities, improved covenant groups, more exploration of non-Christian religions, and more group-specific opportunities (e.g., single mothers and gay couples). Details are in the recommendation section below.

Q8. One definition of “shared ministry” affirms that everything we do together to serve each other, our church and the broader community is ministry. What does the term “shared ministry” mean to you?

All but a small handful seem to have a definition of shared ministry that worked very well with the definition offered in the survey. Respondents mentioned the beloved community and support for one another. The term meant many other things to members, often reflecting a “responsibility” to care for each other and participate in the work of the church, recognizing that the church is too large for our ministers to do it all. One difference is that some interpret the term as the work of the church is being shared, while to others it means that both congregants and ministers/staff do the work together. Some stand-out definitions include:

- “Spiritual development, community building, and social action are a shared responsibility of all, and we should treat all our actions in (and outside) the church as a ministry, an expression of religious values.”
- “A community of people who care in spirit and in action for one another...”
- “Everyone should participate in some way to serve the church community, not just partake of whatever part(s) of church life serve us.”

Q9. Do you feel like you practice a "shared ministry" at All Souls?

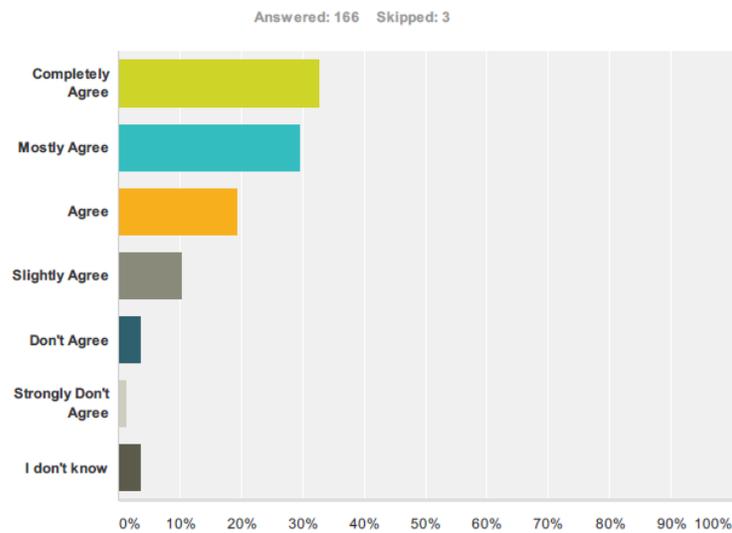
This response was varied. A majority feel they do practice a ministry and offer examples spanning the range of church programs. While a large minority (68 total respondents) said either an unqualified “yes” or “definitely,” most respondents had qualifications or said “somewhat” or “to an extent” while 20 people said “no.” It is important to note that many of the “no” responses are difficult for All Souls to control (a representative example: “No. My work life and travel schedule leave me little time and opportunity to participate in the ministry of All Souls.”)

Two broad (somewhat contradictory) themes that ran through some of the responses: some responders felt that the ministers/paid staff play a heavy role in leadership and may be viewed as hindering shared ministry or that there is a hierarchy between staff and volunteers (“I don't feel like my role is respected equally with that of the paid staff. I do my part, but there is a hierarchy in folks' hearts and minds that I personally disagree with.”). The second theme is that some felt

that the staff left people isolated or out on their own. A few people also mentioned the staff turnover has impacted shared ministry. (“...Staff turnover is a worrisome and all too frequent event at the church. How can you share ministry when the staff departs before making any meaningful connections? How can you share ministry when the leadership is unable to connect with the members as individuals?...”)

Q10. How much do you agree with the following statement: I have opportunities to share my gifts and talents at All Souls in way that feels meaningful to me.

One third completely agreed and 30% mostly agreed that they have opportunities. Nineteen percent agreed and 10% slightly agreed. Less than 5% did not agree.



Answer Choices	Responses
Completely Agree	32.53% 54
Mostly Agree	29.52% 49
Agree	19.28% 32
Slightly Agree	10.24% 17
Don't Agree	3.61% 6
Strongly Don't Agree	1.20% 2
I don't know	3.61% 6
Total	166

Q11. Say more about your answer to the previous question (on opportunities to share your gifts and talents).

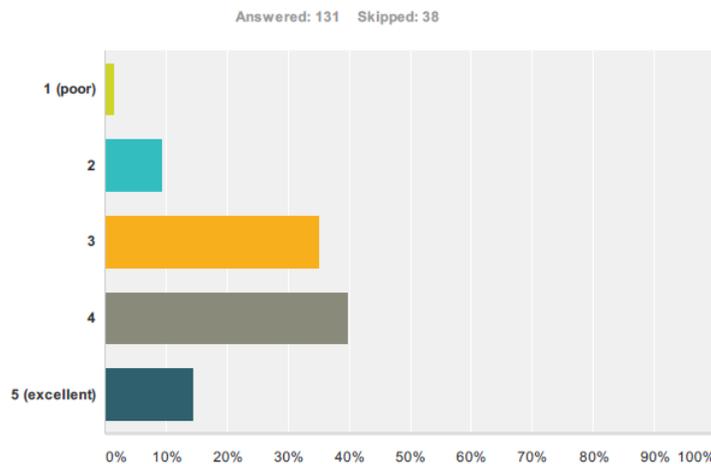
Many people appreciated the large variety of opportunities available and spoke about wanting to contribute more but not having the time to do so: “Bottom line: opportunities abound at All

Souls.” “The opportunities aren’t limited, just my time to participate.” “I feel like my participation has been happily received, which makes me glad.”

A minority mentioned feeling excluded from doing so, (representative examples: “I have expressed an interested to participate in a few ways, but haven't always gotten a response from whoever is in charge of the committee.” and “I find it challenging to get involved in a meaningful way. I've done a few one off events but there does seem to be a core group of people leading things that I can't break into....”). Other impediments to participating included: lack of child care and easy parking, lack of “office” support for affinity groups and events, lack of coordination among groups, an emphasis on youth and families making others feel less welcome, and always being “asked” for something.

Q12. On a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent), how would you rate the quality of the congregation’s ministry to the church’s children and youth?

Most (over 75%) of respondents gave us either a 3 or 4 on this question with 14% giving a 5.



Answer Choices	Responses	Count
1 (poor)	1.53%	2
2	9.16%	12
3	35.11%	46
4	39.69%	52
5 (excellent)	14.50%	19
Total		131

Q13. Do you have any ideas for improving the practice of shared ministry at All Souls?

Themes: some approached this question from an individual stance, citing what they could personally do to improve their own shared ministry. Others offered very practical program

and/or procedural suggestions (e.g., regarding incorporating new members into the life of the church). Many people suggested reminders of shared ministry from the pulpit and other events, including covenant groups (“Improving the practice of shared ministry would be to make a “mindfulness of shared ministry” statement before/during every activity, every outreach, every discussion, every event, so that people become mindful of the daily opportunities for sharing love and concern.”).

A detailed list of congregants’ suggestions is included in the recommendations section.

Q14. Is there anything else you would like to comment on with respect to the ministry at All Souls?

Themes: The ASC ministers, staff and programs are much loved! Concerns were expressed over: the turnover of church staff, including in the Children’s RE program; marginalization of children and youth within the church and a lack of resources for the RE program; the need to help members find a connection/community in the church, especially those who may not fit into a subgroup (young, with children, etc); the Christian/theistic orientation of the church services; and management skills of Rob and the Executive Team.

Representative comments:

- “I think there is so much positive energy at All Souls. And a lot of tolerance. My only cautionary comment is that we, regular congregants/members, be on the lookout for people standing alone, people who want to be ‘invited’ to participate, but feel like they don’t quite know how to break through to find a place for themselves.”
- “All the ministers bring wonderful talents to the church. Rob is an inspiring preacher and a warm soul. Susan preaches from her heart and personal experience and is humorous and able to make fun of herself.”

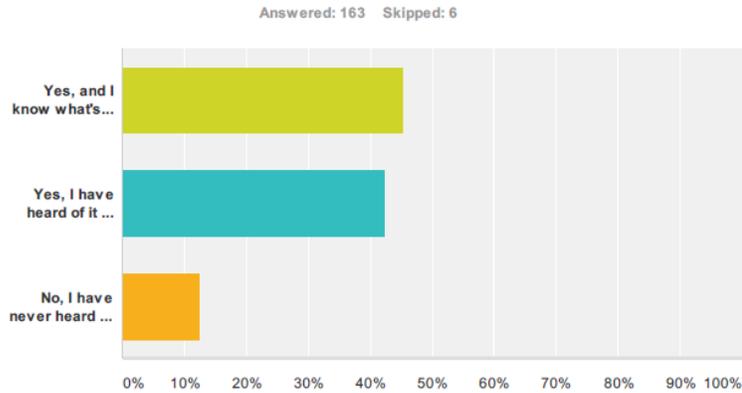
Q15. All Souls’ Covenant of Right Relations describes our ideals and living practices as we "covenant" (or agree) together to engage in the spiritual and everyday practice of loving better. Are you familiar with the Covenant of Right Relations?

More members of the congregation know about the Covenant than two years ago:

45% (versus 35% in 2012) of congregants say they’re familiar with it and know what’s in it;

42% (versus 37% in 2012) have heard of it, but aren’t sure what’s in it;

12% (versus 28% in 2012) haven’t heard of it.



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes, and I know what's included in it.	45.40% 74
Yes, I have heard of it but I'm not sure what is included.	42.33% 69
No, I have never heard of it.	12.27% 20
Total	163

Q16. The Covenant also describes a number of specific practices. To what extent do you perceive All Souls community members to... (the most common answer has been highlighted below).

	Very significantly	Significantly	Slightly	Not at all	I don't know	Total	Average Rating
... Practice hospitality, welcoming all who enter?	30.95% 52	52.38% 88	15.48% 26	0.60% 1	0.60% 1	168	4.13
... Foster a multiracial and multigenerational community that sees diversity in all of its manifestations as a sign of its strength?	38.10% 64	47.62% 80	13.69% 23	0.60% 1	0.00% 0	168	4.23
... Listen with respect and attention and	22.62% 38	64.29% 108	8.93% 15	1.19% 2	2.98% 5	168	4.02

	Very significantly	Significantly	Slightly	Not at all	I don't know	Total	Average Rating
– speak with care?							
– ... Resolve conflicts directly, using openness and compassion?	8.93% 15	32.74% 55	23.81% 40	2.38% 4	32.14% 54	168	2.84
– ... Acknowledge mistakes and shortcomings, and be willing to forgive those of others?	8.38% 14	41.92% 70	19.16% 32	3.59% 6	26.95% 45	167	3.01
– ... Support each other in times of joy and need?	32.14% 54	51.19% 86	13.69% 23	0.60% 1	2.38% 4	168	4.10

As far as practicing the covenant, there is little change from perceptions in 2012: 87% (significantly or very significantly) (vs. 84% in 2012) think we listen with respect and attention and speak with care; 86% (89% in 2012) think we foster a multiracial and multigenerational community; 83% (80% in 2012) think we practice hospitality; 83% (82% in 2012) think we support each other in times of joy and need; 50% (51% in 2012) think we acknowledge mistakes and shortcomings and are willing to forgive those of others; and 42% (51% in 2012) think we resolve conflicts directly.

Q17. Do you have any additional thoughts you would like to share on the covenant of right relations or otherwise people agree to engage in the spiritual and everyday practice of loving better at All Souls?

Most people recognized the need for/value of a Covenant in a large organization and many offered suggestions for improving its practice. In particular, a number of members spoke to the practices of hospitality and fostering a multiracial, multigenerational community, citing the importance of being very intentional, individually and as an institution, to improve our welcoming and community building or face a more white, less diverse congregation and continued revolving door of people not feeling welcome and not staying.

Many people noted that we could be better at:

Welcoming -- “be deliberate about welcoming new members *after* new member Sundays. For example, follow up by sending them a welcome letter from the minister; make their contact information available to affinity groups and/or the ASD and covenant group programs so they can be informed about opportunities and invited to participate, etc.”

Diversity -- “We do not live up to our claim of being a diverse congregation and we are not doing anything significant to change that. Prior efforts to address our [multiracial/multicultural] weaknesses have been pushed to the side by other priorities. We need to be more intentional about doing deep work such that church leadership embraces AO/AR/MR/MC as a matter of course, as part of the spiritual work of the church, that it is not surface and token.”

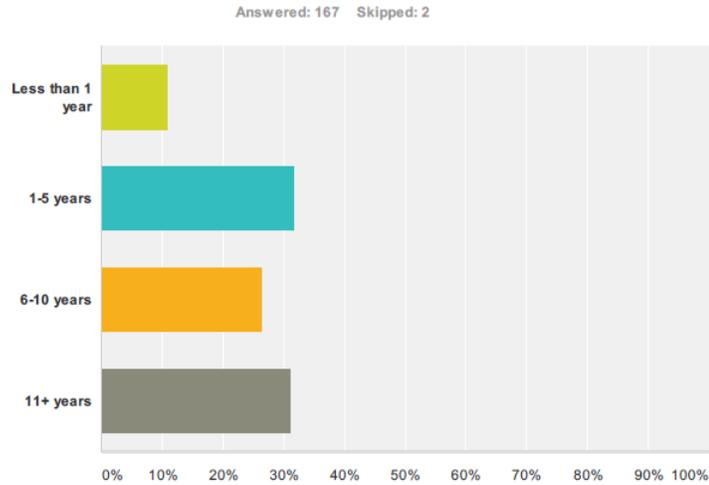
Pastoral care -- “In terms of supporting others in time of joy and need, I think we have a lot of growth needed in our pastoral care. It needs to have its own presence on the website -- right now, a person looking for how to get help or how to find help for a fellow congregant would find nothing on the website to tell him/her where to turn. I appreciate what Rev. Susan and Carrie Davidson are doing, and I hope it leads to a much more vigorous presence throughout the church.”

Other suggestions are included in the Recommendations section.

Demographic Questions:

Q18. How many years ago did you first start attending All Souls?

11% started attending church less than 1 year ago; 32% 1-5 years ago; 26% 6- 10 years ago; and 31% 11 or more years ago.



Answer Choices	Responses	
Less than 1 year	10.78%	18
1-5 years	31.74%	53
6-10 years	26.35%	44
11+ years	31.14%	52
Total		167

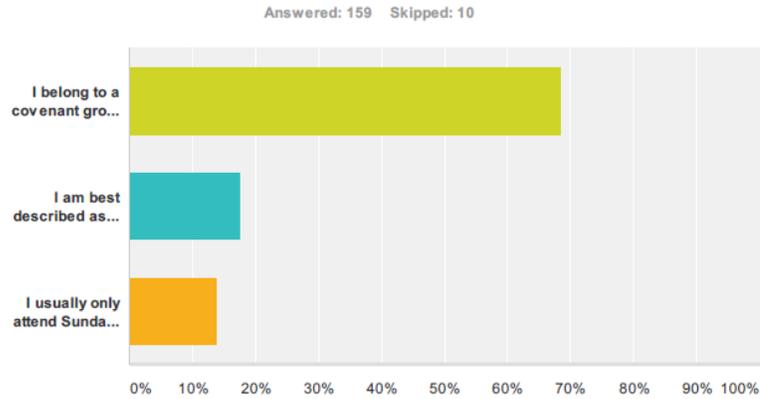
Q19. Are you a member?

90% of those answering the survey are members.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	89.51%	145
No	10.49%	17
Total		162

Q20. How would you describe your activity at All Souls outside of Sunday worship?

69% belong to a church group or provide an ongoing service (e.g., ushers, choir members); 18% are ad hoc participants/volunteers and 14% usually only attend Sunday worship.



Answer Choices	Responses
I belong to a covenant group, religious education course, or other group that meets regularly or provides an ongoing service (e.g. ushers, choir members)	68.55% 109
I am best described as an ad hoc volunteer/participant	17.61% 28
I usually only attend Sunday worship	13.84% 22
Total	159

Q21. How old are you?

A quarter of respondents fall into each of four age ranges: 19-34 years; 35-49; 50-64; and 65 or older. Note: The children were surveyed separately and so are not reflected below.

Answer Choices	Responses
0-10 years old	0.00% 0
11-17 years old	0.00% 0
19-34 years old	23.64% 39
35-49 years old	26.67% 44
50-64 years old	24.85% 41
65+	24.85% 41
Total	165

Q22. Are you a parent or guardian?

47% of respondents are parents or guardians.

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	47.24% 77
No	52.76% 86
Total	163

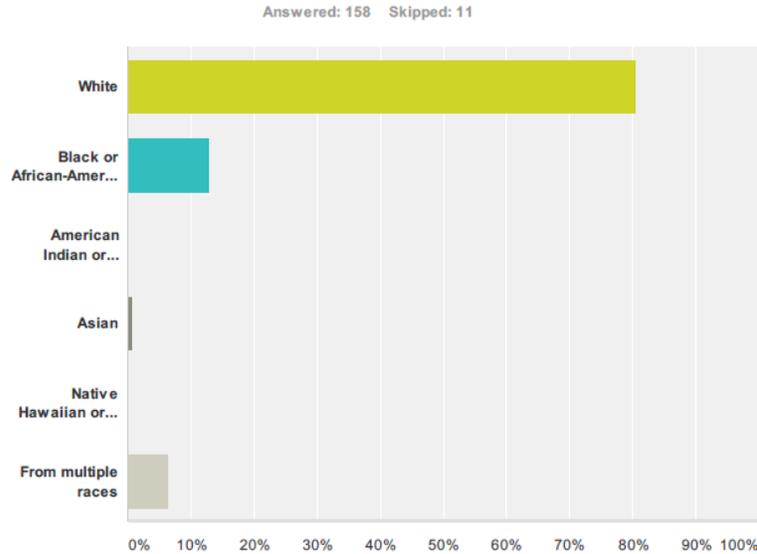
Q23. Do you currently have a child or children in the All Souls Religious Education (RE) program?

18% of those answering have a child or children in the RE program.

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	18.40% 30
No	81.60% 133
Total	163

Q24. Are you White, Black or African-American, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific islander, or some other race?

80% identify as White; 13% as Black or African-American; 6% as from multiple races; less than 1% identified as Asian; and 8 as Other.



Answer Choices	Responses
White	80.38% 127
Black or African-American	12.66% 20
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.00% 0
Asian	0.63% 1
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.00% 0
From multiple races	6.33% 10
Total	158

Q25. Are you Mexican, Mexican-American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Cuban-American, or identify with some other Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino group?

One person identified as Mexican; three as Mexican-American; one as Puerto Rican; and three as some other Spanish, Hispanic or Latino Group.

Answer Choices	Responses	
I am not Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino	94.20%	130
Mexican	0.72%	1
Mexican-American	2.17%	3
Chicano	0.00%	0
Puerto Rican	0.72%	1
Cuban	0.00%	0
Cuban-American	0.00%	0
Some other Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino group	2.17%	3
From multiple Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino groups	0.00%	0
Total		138

EXAMPLES OF RECOMMENDATIONS BY CONGREGANTS

Opportunities for Spiritual Development:

- Expanded/strengthened covenant groups including personal invitations to join, groups starting throughout the year
- Opportunity to pursue a pathway in the church, for example: meditation, followed by a class followed by a spiritual trip
- More ASD classes, especially on spirituality and spiritual practices, world religions, religious texts and UU history
- Sermons on UU identity, history and tenets, and the larger picture of our denomination as well as a wider variety of theological thought and expression from the pulpit, e.g., secular humanism, atheism and Buddhism
- Continued Vespers (even increasing to weekly)
- Roots and Wings groups
- Lunches after service
- Post-service discussion groups (on the sermon and on other spiritual themes)
- More opportunities for facilitated connection
- Book groups
- Meditation groups
- Opportunities to “get to know people”

Improving the Practice of Shared Ministry:

- Long-term commitment of staff to the development of shared ministry
- Promoting it from the pulpit and the website

- Make the church directory more user friendly
- Make a list of lay leaders and contact info. available to lay leaders
- Explain it in new member orientations and Roots and Wings
- Recognize and thank those who serve the church
- Lay people share readings from the pulpit
- Improve ways to browse the ASC website for opportunities and to sign up
- Put attention on covenant group leadership training, selection, and nurturing to improve their success rate
- Integrate children and youth more into worship
- Be thoughtful about the number of activities for specific ages of people -- include don't exclude
- Make the church's decision process more transparent; have a suggestion box
- Be radically welcoming to people, especially those underrepresented in our church
- Consider ways to have the ministry fairs be less chaotic/noisy -- smaller/more frequent?
- Have more congregation participation in songs and "less [choir/solo] performance and more all of us in it together," e.g., distributing lyrics not just for hymns
- Publicize in the newsletter which group will be performing music each Sunday
- Put the new RE director on the Executive Team
- Have true family services
- Build the expectation that membership includes giving of time to the church
- Do more to identify talents among congregants and involve them in the church
- Potluck game nights
- Reduce staff turnover
- Improve program/administrative staff cooperation and collaboration
- Increase the number of teachers in total and for each RE class
- Offer social justice and other ministries 5 minutes in the pulpit once a month to talk about what they do
- Develop "systems" to help members find and practice a ministry -- the booklet of opportunities, operations manual and EASIS are examples
- Long-term commitment of staff to the development of shared ministry
- Pastoral care should be more of a resource center for individual members, covenant groups, committee members, parents
- Improve membership committee to better engage new members and their talents; not just signing the book, but follow-up
- More participation in Sunday service music – e.g., fewer soloists

Additional Suggestions about Ministry:

- Members be on the lookout for people standing alone after service and welcome them into conversation

- Help create community by making it easier for people to connect to each other – e.g., photo directory
- Staff with data management skills to support Neighborhood Souls
- Offer largely social activities
- More programming for Seniors
- Better ways to experience the service with a baby/toddler and to hear/view the service when a parent is staying with one's kid (working headsets!)
- Improve adult/child ratio in nursery to make parents more willing to leave children
- More instrumental music in services
- Take attendance some time other than at the beginning of the sermon
- Office hours at a coffee shop for our ministers
- Expand the diversity of ministerial team while searching for new social justice minister
- Set sermon time limit for guest ministers
- Increase emphasis on creating a multi-racial community
- Make sermons available as podcasts or via an iTunes channel

Improving the Practices of the Covenant of Right Relations:

- Have an annual “reconvening” service
- Make the specific practices the basis of sermons or monthly themes
- Pastoral care needs to have its own presence on the website (some way to tell someone where to turn)
- Have the church youth lead the adults in role playing the practices such as acknowledging mistakes
- Follow-up to engage new participants
- Train the Executive Team in the use of the Covenant when dealing with the rest of the staff
- Have person at front desk and ushers know when it's a Story For All Ages Sunday to be able to direct visitors with children to the proper place
- A mentorship program for elders and younger members to learn from each other or a covenant group with this specific aim
- Be intentional about work on diversity
- Recognize the value of having a congregation from diverse class backgrounds, not just races and cultures
- Designated volunteers to welcome guests in addition to the visitors table
- Sponsors to help people get connected, invite them to dinner and talk with them about opportunities
- When coffee hour is announced remind people to approach someone you don't know and introducing yourself
- Have way to publicly acknowledge people putting Right Relations in Action
- Have it be subject of an adult education class