

**All Souls Church Unitarian  
Leadership Development and Nominating Committee  
Annual Report to the Congregation  
April 23, 2023**

The Leadership Development and Nominating Committee (NC) is comprised of All Souls congregants who are charged with three core goals according to current bylaws:

1. Working with the Council, Board, and Executive Team to identify leadership gaps and recruit new leaders;
2. Managing the process for nominating trustee and officer candidates, striving to present a slate that reflects the diversity of the All Souls community; and
3. Overseeing leadership development by, among other things, providing training, workshops, and individual outreach.

Last year, after careful study of the responsibilities of nominating committees of other UU churches, we recommended a bylaws change to the Board of Trustees that would remove the broad task of leadership development from the domain of the NC. Consistent with this recommendation, this year's NC focused on recruiting the best possible slate to serve the congregation in leadership roles.

### **2023 Nominations**

This year, the NC sought candidates for the following positions:

- Two board positions for 3-year terms
- Treasurer
- Assistant Treasurer
- Six NC members, four for 2-year terms and two for one-year terms.

We did not recruit a candidate for the position of Moderator because we understand that, if approved, the pending bylaws revisions will eliminate that position from the church's roster of officers.

A one-year NC position remains open. Please contact the NC if you are interested. NC service suits outgoing members who know or are willing to get to know a wide array of members across the various demographics that comprise our church and can objectively assess others' suitability for covenantal and fiduciary leadership roles.

Despite extensive outreach, both targeted and congregation-wide through church communications, we were not able to recruit a congregant for nomination to the Assistant Treasurer position. Pursuant to the bylaws, the Board may appoint a congregant to this position between annual meetings.

Photos and personal statements for each of these candidates are attached.

## **Recruiting and Nominating Trustees and Officers**

The NC's recruitment process is guided by All Souls' commitment to a multiracial and multigenerational community in leadership and membership. We evaluate candidates' service to the congregation, professional experience, skills and interests that are suitable to trustee service, and voting membership.

The NC is elected by and accountable to the congregation. However, while recruiting, we sought broad input from lay leaders, and staff, including the Executive Team. The NC also consulted with conveners of church affinity groups to identify prospective board members who reflect the racial, sex/gender, and generational diversity of the congregation as well as to identify members with varying experiences and backgrounds for the board. We also sought suggestions from the congregation by including a notice in the weekly bulletin, amplified during Sunday services.

While we strived to include BIPOC church leaders on the slate this year, we learned that many were unavailable for board service at this time, in part because of involvement on other church committees, including Rev. Sinkford's ministry team, the Transformative Justice Committee, the Search Committee, and Beckner Advancement Fund.<sup>1</sup> Several BIPOC leaders who could not serve as trustees this year expressed interest in doing so in the future.

Our slate this year includes talented and dedicated members who have served the church for many years: Alan Abramson, Brian Petruska, and Elizabeth Andrews Zitelli. We hope you will read their bios, below, and express your appreciation for them when you see them around church or in the zoom room.

## **With Gratitude**

We are deeply grateful to:

- Trustees Neil Manzullo (president), Bernard Mustafa (treasurer), Joseph Feuer and Chuck Wooldridge, who are completing their service;
- Trustees who assisted the NC by speaking with prospective candidates about board service; and
- Every trustee, officer, committee chair, RE and OWL teacher, care team volunteer, lunch volunteer, Geo Group leader, covenant group leader, usher, counter, greeter, singer, staff member and involved congregant who is co-creating beloved community through service and leadership.

Finally, we thank those who took our calls, replied to our emails, and engaged in discussions about leadership, including those who are not on this year's slate but may be in the future. We value our connections with all of you. Some said yes to a conversation. Some said yes to further discernment. Some pointed us to others who might serve. And some – Alan, Brian, and Elizabeth – said yes to board service. Eileen, Georgia, Lydia, Mark, and Topher said yes to NC service. Thank you, all.

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<sup>1</sup>Given the limited pool of members interested in substantial leadership roles, the NC asked Beckner liaison Rev. Rob Keithan to consider whether the Fund (which largely makes grants to outside organizations) requires nine church members serving four-year terms to function effectively.

Our community is indeed fortunate to have these talented and faithful members stepping into leadership at this transitional time.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Leadership Development and Nominating Committee,  
Bill Kules (Chair), Taquiena Boston, Chuck Dulaney, Sarah Raymond, and Tracy Zorpette

## Nominees for Trustee

The NC is pleased to present as nominees to the ASC board of trustees:

### Alan Abramson



Alan Abramson became a member of All Souls Church in 2002. At All Souls, Alan has served on the Beckner, fundraising, and nominating committees; taught religious education; ushered; and participated in service trips to New Orleans and North Carolina. In recent years, the All Souls Parents of Teens group has been an important part of Alan's life. Selfishly, above all, Alan just loves coming to services to listen to the sermons and music and see friends. After many years – even decades – together, Alan married Alex Wilson at All Souls on 10/10/10, a date that Alex picked so neither one would forget it. Extra special was having their son Ben serve as Best Man. In his day job, Alan is a professor at George

Mason University where he teaches nonprofit management and directs Mason's Center on Nonprofits, Philanthropy, and Social Enterprise. Alan previously worked at the Aspen Institute and Urban Institute, and has been a member of quite a few local and national nonprofit boards and advisory committees. His volunteer activity has included service as president of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), the nation's major association of university-based and other nonprofit researchers. Alan earned his B.A. at Wesleyan University in Connecticut and his Ph.D. at Yale University.

### Elizabeth Andrews Zitelli [Note - Elizabeth decided to withdraw from consideration, after LDNC submitted this report.]



Elizabeth Andrews Zitelli has been a member of All Souls Church for 25 years. She is a writer, theatrical director, and arts educator who was the Drama Director at Holton-Arms School for twelve years, and founded the KUUMBA Players, All Souls' community theater group that operated between 2002-2011. Elizabeth has a background in communications and has worked at nonprofit organizations in DC including Young Playwrights' Theater, National Geographic, The Studio Theatre, and her current position at Milton Gottesman Jewish Day School. She has taught Sunday school, served as worship associate, sang with the Jubilee Singers, and currently sings in

the All Souls Choir. She and her husband Ben Zitelli were married at All Souls in 2007 and live together in Silver Spring with their daughter, Taylor who is a proud member of All Souls' Junior Choir and frequent actor in Stories for All Ages during Sunday services.

**Nominee for Treasurer  
Brian Petruska**



Brian J. Petruska has been a resident of DC since 2005. He has attended All Souls since 2006, and became a member in 2019. He has served as All Souls' Assistant Treasurer since January of 2020.

Brian is married to Juliene James, who is a member of the All Souls Choir and of the Women's 8 singing group. Julie and Brian have two children: Raffi (12) and Johanna (10) who both perform in the All Souls Junior Choir.

Brian is the General Counsel for the Mid-Atlantic Regional Organizing Coalition of the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA!), where he serves as counsel for LIUNA's organizing campaigns in the Baltimore-Washington area. He is a graduate of NYU Law School. In 2004, Brian served as a judicial law clerk for United States Circuit Judge Charles W. Pickering, Sr., of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit and in 2005 for United States District Judge Virginia Emerson Hopkins in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Alabama.

Brian was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and is a life-long Cardinals fan.

**Nominees for the Nominating Committee**

**Lydia Mosher (two-year term)**



I came to All Souls around 1991 to be with Jubilee Singers. My husband and I joined in 1996. Greeting and Silver Souls were added to my activities as I continued my 52 years as a teacher and Head of school. I have been a member of the women's covenant group for over 20 years. I have developed and taught art lessons in RE based on the church monthly theme in person and on zoom. A trained OWL teacher, I now also serve on the RE committee. Vespers village is an important part of my spiritual life. I look forward to being able to serve the larger church community.

**Georgia Yuan (two-year term)**



Georgia is Mom to two wonderful 30 somethings, an attorney, an executive coach, geologist, pianist, harpsichordist, flautist, quilter, sewist, knitter, and curious about life in general. Georgia and her husband Larry Meinert joined All Souls in 2010. She has served on the Board of Trustees and the Committee on Ministry and is currently serving on the Beckner Advisory Committee, Rev Sinkford's ministry committee, and helping with the ASC archives.

**Mark Matthews (two-year term)**



A second-generation Unitarian, Mark Matthews joined All Souls in the late 1980s. He served on the Nominating Committee several times in the past--once as chair. He has also been Church Secretary and held various roles on Annual Giving campaigns. He is currently a co-coordinator of ushers and a member of the Migrant Solidarity Team. His half-century in journalism included many years as a DC-based diplomatic reporter, a posting to the Middle East, and a decade editing a technology-focused higher education magazine.

**Eileen Findlay (two-year term)**



Eileen Findlay has been a member of All Souls for almost 30 years. She was married and raised her children at the church. She has been active in a wide range of spaces at All Souls: Jubilee Singers and the All Souls Choir, the Adult Spiritual Development Committee, RE teacher, covenant groups, a founding member of the Parents of Teens and the White Folks Confronting Racism study/action groups, among others. All Souls has sustained her through decades of joy and deep grief. She can't imagine life without this church. Eileen is Professor of Latin American and Caribbean History at American University, where she chairs the Department of Critical Race, Gender, and Culture Studies.

**Topher Kandik (one-year term)**



Topher Kandik first started attending All Souls Church right after 9/11, and he has been a member of All Souls since taking ASC's very first Roots and Wings class. As a high school English teacher, Topher has served as a teacher for the Religious Education program and as a leader for the Adult Spiritual Development committee. He has both led and participated in ASD classes. Topher has drawn motivation from two trips to New Orleans with All Souls. Additionally, Topher has served as an usher, a money counter, and even volunteered in the front office when he was between jobs.

His son Theo and wife Allison Denny are both currently active in RE programming.