

Collection Process for the All Souls Archives at Meadville Lombard

Notes by Bill Bechman after discussion with John Leeker, Director of Library and Archives, Meadville Lombard Theological School, May 2020

The [Archives at Meadville Lombard Theological School](#) provides access for research about Unitarian Universalism and its historical development. All Souls is a significant institution in the history of our denomination. We aim to send items to Meadville that have potential relevance and interest to people beyond our congregation; files that we think are probably not of interest beyond our own community can be kept at the church, and not forwarded to Meadville.

John Leeker requests:

- Since there have been no transmissions of materials from All Souls to Meadville since 2017, to get caught up the most important thing is to organize the effort, and encourage group leaders to submit their materials covering the last three years to archives@allsoulsnyc.org. Volunteers should get the materials organized so that eventually the church staff members can approve the next transmissions. We should probably aim to send items to Meadville on an annual basis.
- Documents should be in PDF format. Pictures or images should be JPGs or PNGs.
- Files should be in folders organized by the titles of groups, or by names of individuals. The folder contents should be organized by date, showing who created each document, and the year.
- Congregational archives will generally be arranged by group titles. This could include group reports and event descriptions.
- There should be folders by ministers' names, with sermons, etc. Ministers should decide whether to list marriages, funerals, memorial services, dedications, etc.
- Maintain a simple, coherent filing structure; don't have too many folders.
- Keep two copies of each document, perhaps one in Dropbox and another copy in an onsite backup location, on a computer or external hard drive located at the church. There is no need to have print backups.
- Board Minutes are needed back to 2014. Newsletters and Orders of Service are also important to send.
- It's important to note that archives DO NOT contain any documents that are describing current matters, e.g. active church business matters. These documents must be maintained by the All Souls business office. Archives are only topics that are completed.
- The Meadville Lombard Archive is a service provided to our denomination. All Souls provided the funding to get our immense collection organized and moved. Now, going forward, there is no additional charge, unless we ask for special assistance.
- John is available and happy to provide additional consultation as needed.