

Co-Lay Leaders' Report

The Administrative Council continued to meet on Zoom this year. Ann Perrone was welcomed as co-lay leader, filling the vacancy that had existed over the previous year. Ann brought her indomitable spirit, as well as her organizing and leadership skills, and moved issues forward with her focus while ensuring that all voices were heard.

Administrative Council meetings were held the first Monday of every month, alternating between a business meeting and a visioning meeting. Volunteers provided devotions at the beginning of each meeting.

Much of the year was spent in planning for the transition in clergy which will take place on July 1, 2022 with Rev. Robert Coombe's retirement. A transitioning committee was formed to work, along with the Staff Parish Relations Committee, on the church profile, a detailed document used by the Bishop to help determine the best match of pastor to the congregation. The profile highlighted ministries essential to FUMCOG's mission.

The transitioning committee presented a draft document to the Administrative Council, who then made changes and approved the document. A 100 word summary was also developed for use by the Bishop, District Superintendent, and cabinet.

Business meetings always featured monitoring of the current budget with actual compared to budgeted expenditures reviewed and actions taken where necessary. Passage of the budget for 2022 was a major focus of the Council. The Council praised Ruth Thornton for her leadership as chair of the Finance Committee.

The Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) had a full agenda in 2021-22. Along with the transitioning committee, they spearheaded the completion of the church profile, essential in the Bishop's naming of a new pastor for FUMCOG.

SPRC also took on the search for a technical specialist to support live streaming which began during a period when in-person worship ceased due to the pandemic. Live streaming proved beneficial to allow participants from a distance as well as those still not ready for in-person contact during the pandemic. The Council approved additional expenditures to allow the live streaming to continue with enhanced cameras and equipment. Thus, FUMCOG moved into a period of hybrid worship, with worshippers in-person as well as online. This model continues at the present time.

The music program experienced a transition in leadership, with periodic reports from the Music Committee to the Council regarding filling the position of director of music. FUMCOG is indebted to Jodi Bohr for filling in as music director while the search continues for a new director. Jodi will continue as organist, but has also been willing to step in as director in the interim.

An Environmental Justice Committee was established with Mark Smith as chair. This committee emphasizes the spiritual foundation of environmental justice, especially in the urban environment, creating awareness of the "moral imperative" of the climate crisis, leading to

action. Tree tending, solar power, tree planting, and urban heat relief have been taken on by the committee this year, in cooperation with community partners such as Philadelphia Interfaith Hospital Network and Second Baptist Church. Appreciation was expressed to Larry Moyer for his leadership on the PIHN/Second Baptist project.

The Trustees were able to negotiate down to 0 dollars the property tax bill received from the City of Philadelphia. In lieu of paying property taxes, the Council voted to donate \$ 5,000 to a group working in the Philadelphia schools. Plans continue to locate such a group for the Council to approve the payment.

The Council approved the placement of two sheds in the church backyard for the FUMCOG Scouts to store gear and supplies in. These sheds allowed for indoor storage space to be freed up in addition to providing organized and safe storage for Scout equipment and supplies.

Dolores Broberg & Priscilla Shaffer brought to the Council a plea for an updated church directory in order that they could recruit additional participants for the Senior Friends group. The Council approved an online directory, which will update the 2017 directory currently in use.

The Council authorized FUMCOG participation in vigil for Black Lives Matter at the Unitarian Society of Germantown Church. In fair weather, FUMCOG had responsibility for organizing the one-hour vigil on Tuesdays to demonstrate support for the BLM movement. Typically 15-20 FUMCOGers attended the Tuesday vigils.

Recently the Council has begun brainstorming about future directions and activities. Ann Perrone led a very fruitful discussion in which Council members ranked priorities from a lengthy list of ideas, and took responsibility for implementing projects.

The Administrative Council has benefitted from the spiritual and other guidance of Rev. Robert Coombe. Thank you for your service in ministry, Rev. Coombe, and best wishes to you in the next phase, retirement, of your life and ministry.

Submitted by Bonni H. Zetick, Co-Lay Leader