

## **Staff Pastor/Parish Relations Committee Report**

The role of the SPRC is to support the staff of the Church- (clergy, office, music, and publications) and to serve as sounding board and liaison to the congregation. This past year our main focus has been preparing for the retirement of our Pastor Bob Coombe and working towards a transition to a newly appointed senior pastor. Beginning last June, SPRC members participated in the Church wide Transition Task Force which evaluated the activities, strengths, and weaknesses of the church to create a profile of FUMCOG. This was a carefully honed document that we presented to our District Superintendent, Rev. Andrew Foster in November. When Dr. Foster requested a shorter, more precise version, several members quickly responded to offer the most truthful and sincere summary we could create.

The decision to assign a new Pastor lies with the Bishop and his cabinet. As does the decision to move (or not move) our Associate Pastor Gabe Lopez who was newly commissioned in 2021. In early February the SPRC was introduced to our new, three quarter time Pastor Reverend Alisa Lasater Wailoo. We learned that she is an ordained elder in the Baltimore-Washington Conference, having served as Lead Pastor at Capitol Hill UMC in Washington DC for 13 years. She previously served as the Protestant Chaplain at Georgetown Law Center, and Minister of Local Missions and Young Adults at Myers Park UMC. An On-call Chaplain for the US House of Representatives, she offers prayer to Congress regularly. She is equally passionate about sharing prayer with unhoused neighbors living on the street and working together for affordable housing. Reverend Wailoo is a graduate of Duke Divinity School and the University of Kansas. The SPRC was very glad to meet the Pastor and we believe she will be a blessing to the Congregation.

SPRC was overjoyed to inform the church that the Bishop has chosen to have Reverend Gabe Lopez remain as our full time Associate Pastor. Rev. Lopez is glad to stay on with us.

We have been less successful finding a permanent music director. A person was hired for the position but it became clear it would not be a good match and we wished them well on their new endeavors. Another subsequent person was hired for the position, but they resigned for personal reasons after a short time. The Music Committee is currently in a search for a new person to fill that role (the Music Committee Report elaborates further). In the meantime, Organist Jodi Bohr has graciously taken on all the work of both her position and Music Director. SPRC is deeply appreciative of Jodi's work and commitment.

A new position of Technical Assistant was created to provide leadership and support to the faithful volunteers who have been making sure that the Sunday services are live streamed and archived. This has also become a very hard position to fill. We found a candidate, but the time

commitment was not possible for them so now we continue to search for a part time person to fill this extremely important role.

The regular work of the SPRC includes mutually evaluating clergy and creating goals for the coming year. These documents and the resulting covenants were successfully completed and submitted to the Conference.

SPRC requested and received generous gifts from the Congregation that were given to each staff member as a Christmas gift.

SPRC is planning to celebrate the ministry of Reverend Bob Coombe on June 19, which will be his final day in the pulpit. We are all deeply grateful for the years of faithful service Bob has given us, this Conference and the greater Church. Reverend Wailoo will join FUMCOG in early July. We are thankful that the steady presence of Reverend Lopez will assure a successful transition.

*Submitted for the SPRC by Clarita Krall and Celeste Zappala, Co-chairs*