

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF GERMANTOWN

2021-2022 Annual Report

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Submitted by Andrea Barsevick, President Board of Trustees

Members

Andrea Barsevick (President), John Davis (Vice president), Maggie Beaumont, Zachary Bosco-Dwornik, Sarah Frazier, Dev Howerton, Lee Meinicke, Sharon Mafuru, Amy Birge-Caracappa

Who will be the chair of this committee in the coming year? Lee Meinicke

Mission - The Board of Trustees is responsible for providing vision and strategic direction for the future, creating and maintaining policies, and maintaining oversight of the ministries and finances of the Unitarian Society of Germantown.

Goals for Past Year

- Plan for the “future of worship” and the “new normal” for carrying out our mission as pandemic restrictions evolve
- Renew the Board commitment to change our USG systems and processes based on our study of the UUA Report, Widening the Circle of Concern
- Continue our review of financial policies to ensure that USG is on a firm footing to live out our mission

Significant Accomplishments of Past Year

The Future of Worship & the New Normal:

- The Board is grateful to Jenn Leiby (chair) and members of the Interim Minister Search Committee and to Lois Murphy (chair) and members of the Music Search Committee for their diligence in searching for an interim minister and a music director, respectively.
- The Board strongly endorses the work of the Moving Ahead Steering Committee (MASC), the Ministerial Executive Team (MET), and the Covid Medical Task Force to mandate covid vaccination for all USG employees and covenant with members/friends that all will be vaccinated who attend services in person.
- We are grateful to Ms. Latifah Griffin-Rogers for agreeing to remain with us as our acting Director of Spiritual Development during this time of transition.

Widening the Circle of Concern

- The Board has continued to participate in the study of the UUA Report, Widening the Circle of Concern, through monthly sessions of the working group and proposed actions to dismantle racism and other oppressions in our USG community. Thanks to Lisa Dutton, Treva Burger, and Andrea Barsevick for their leadership of this effort.
- The Board began work on proposed changes to the USG Bylaws focused on the election of Board officers by the congregation rather than the Board and updating the language of the document to include gender neutral pronouns. This work is ongoing. Once completed, these changes will be presented to the congregation for approval. Thanks to Dev Howerton for her leadership of this effort.
- In response to a request from members of the congregation, the Board approved a White Anti-racist Discussion Group for individuals who identify as white. Based on continuing interest, more sessions will be held in the fall of 2022. Thanks to Shobhi Kanal and Andrea Barsevick for their leadership of this effort.

- The Board made a commitment to engage in anti-oppression training. Most of the Board participated in an anti-racism program entitled, “Transforming White Organizational Culture” that was offered by the Center for the Study of White American Culture. Thanks to John Davis for his diligence in researching this training. Several Board members also participated in the Trans-inclusion Workshop offered by the USG Adult Spiritual Development Program. Thanks to Ryan Hurd and Jesse Frechette for leading this effort.

Financial Issues

- The Board congratulates the MET and the leaders of the 2021-22 Annual Stewardship Campaign (Rick Rodes and Eric Foster) for successfully raising \$380,000 for the operating budget to fund our mission.
- The Board is grateful to Phil Bullard for taking the reins as USG Treasurer.
- The Board revised the USG Finance Policy and appointed a new Investment Fund Committee to oversee the Consolidated Investment Fund (CIF). We appreciate the efforts of Eric Foster (chair) and members of the Investment Fund Committee for their commitment to oversee the long-term financial health of this congregation.
- The Board is grateful to Eric Foster, Rick Rodes, and Rev. Kent Matthies for their leadership of a new capital campaign, “Foundations for the Future,” to fund many necessary infrastructure projects. The campaign will be launched after the annual pledge campaign. Pre-campaign pledges have totaled over \$100,000.
- The Board appreciates the efforts of Bill Blasdel (chair) and members of the Building and Grounds Committee to maintain and improve our indoor and outdoor spaces for the spiritual uplift and enjoyment of all who come to USG.

Goals for 2022-2023 Church Year

- Provide support for committees, groups, and initiatives to implement changes to USG systems and processes consistent with goals from Widening the Circle of Concern report.
- Support the new staff and liaise with the congregation during the transition with a new interim minister, music director, and DSD.
- Support and encourage programs and practices that will help people to come back to USG and participate fully in the life of the congregation, both in-person and remotely.
- Continue to review and revise policies and procedures as appropriate as well as governance and ministry structure, to ensure USG is on a firm footing to live out our mission.

MINISTRY EXECUTIVE TEAM (MET)

Submitted by Janet Haas, MET Representative

Members: Reverend Kent Matthies, Church Administrator Celeste Lamb, and lay leaders Eric Foster, Janet Haas and Jody Hill as of 11/2021, with Gale Gibbons thru 10/2021

Mission of Committee

The Ministry Executive Team (MET) manages the day-to-day operations of the church. MET works closely with committees such as Building and Grounds, Stewardship, Worship Arts, Welcoming, Ending Racism Committee, Adult and Child Spiritual Development and the Social

Justice Council to help ensure they meet their goals. In addition, MET is responsible for preparing and maintaining an operating budget.

As the Covid pandemic has been ongoing and seemingly ever changing, MET has continued to focus and work with the Covid Task Force and MASC to implement ways to safely transition back to in person Sunday services, and effectively keep offering multi-platform services and committee meetings and events. It has also been an ongoing year of personal transitions that has required MET to be flexible, open-minded, and creative in addressing the need for a new Music Director, an Interim Minister, and a new Director of Spiritual Development.

During the past year, as it manages daily operations, MET has worked to address the need for updated sound and light technology in the Sanctuary and more tech volunteers on Sunday, which has resulted in meaningful spiritual services for those in person and on Zoom. MET continues to encourage those attending the Black Lives Matter and now the Stand with Ukraine vigils; has implemented a second monthly Share the Plate offering that supports the National Services Council's work with refugees; has ensured that USG remains a polling site for the city's November Municipal and the May primary elections; helped the Social Justice Council hold a second successful virtual MLK Day of Service, and continues to support that committee's work in reshaping its mission and structure; supported Celeste as she did the primary work to ensure success of another virtual auction; authorized purchase of two environmentally-conscious picnic tables to replace the broken, unsafe ones now in the Grove.

We are fortunate and remain grateful for the strong leadership of Reverend Kent Matthies and Board President Andrea Barsevick in supporting MET's work.

Transitions

Janet Haas joined the MET in July, replacing Andre Stormont. MET experienced some happy and bittersweet moments this year. Our committee fondly said goodbye to Gale in October. Her hard work, strategic thinking and kindness was so appreciated. And then we happily welcomed Jody Hill at the start of November.

Mark Daugherty's retirement after 32 years as Music Director, followed by the announcements from Rev Kent Matthies and Ryan Hurd, our DSD, that each is leaving in June were beyond sad. But we have been blessed to know them and have their leadership. As a result, MET has spent a good part of the past year helping to implement and support the search committees needed to fill the three positions and creating best practices ideas for transitioning the next 2 years.

Intern Minister

And on a wonderful high note, our Intern Minister will now become our Interim Director of Spiritual Development for the next year. MET diligently worked with UUA and the Board in order to obtain an exemption for this to happen in June, when Latifah Griffin-Rogers finishes her internship.

Financials

MET is working on the budget for the coming year, with some unknowns and limitations at present due to the transition process. We remain mindful of the Board's priorities and guidelines.

Phillip Bullard started in November as USG's new Treasurer.

Capital Campaign

MET, with Board approval, supported a *Foundations for the Future* Capital Campaign to raise money for big ticket items such as: electronic locks, Lincoln Drive sign, lighting/sound upgrades

in the Sanctuary, upgrade of the ventilation system, tree pruning/removal and a survey to clarify property lines, and a guest shower facility. The letter campaign to designated members has been successful in generating \$140,000 in donations to-date, with a planned rollout to the congregation as a whole in late summer. A thank you to Eric for his hard work on this needed campaign.

CSD and ASD

See Ryan's report for details. The ongoing changes that need to be made due to Covid remain challenging for the CSD program in particular. Ryan and the CSD Committee continue to develop creative ways to support our families and children primarily with in person, outside classes and special programs for youth. ASD had new offerings this year with good participation. The Mindfulness Center continues to work well virtually for the most part. MET looks forward to supporting and working with Latifah in her new role as Interim DSD.

Volunteerism and Empty Chairs

MET has been addressing the low volunteerism rate at USG. Key committees, such as Welcoming, Social Justice Council, Small Group Ministry, B&G, and Auction need chairs. Input was obtained from the Nominating Committee and requests have been made to various people. We are hopeful that some, if not all, of these committees will have chairs soon.

Goals for Upcoming Year

- Commit to supporting and assisting our Interim Minister and our Interim DSD to our fullest extent
- Commit to supporting and assisting the Music Director search committee in its work of finding the best practices in music for USG
- Continue to work with the Board to implement projects being funded by the *Foundations for the Future* Capital Campaign
- Continue to create prudent budgets adhering to the guidelines and limitations provided by the Board
- Manage the day to day operations of the church consistent with Board guidelines and policies
- Provide support for the Widening the Circle Initiative

MINISTER

Submitted by Rev. Kent Matthies, Senior Minister

Moving into the second full year of pandemic life created challenges and changes, as well as resilience and joy.

We spent the summer of 2021 preparing to return to in-person worship for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic. With excitement, we approached our launch date of August 21, 21. Then we saw Covid numbers rising in our country and region from the Omicron variant. In response, we shifted gears and intensively worked rent a tent for 3 months. This large tent was professionally assembled and established in our back parking lot.

For three months, we met outside for worship and children's programs. The staff and volunteer effort were so gracious, generous and impressive.

With excellent leadership from the Moving Ahead Steering Committee and the Covid Task Force we were able to re-enter the building in November. Being together in our sacred space was highly rewarding. We also continued the new normal of provided worship for both in person and virtual attendance. This likely will continue indefinitely into the future. Although some folks attend worship via zoom and some attend worship in person, we are one community in spirit.

After 38 years of service to USG, Music Director, Mark Daugherty retired from his position as Music Director. For close to four decades Mark provided outstanding musical skill on the piano, an extraordinary capacity to teach, inspire and lead the choir, include excellent instrumentalists and fill the spirits of congregants and the wider community. In November we honored Mark with a worship service showing video highlights of Mark and the choir over the decades along with testimonials from choir and Minister. During the luncheon afterwards we experienced smiles, hugs and tears.

We also give deep thanks for the many years of musical leadership and love given by Beverly Gross Spencer and Robert Hefe. Bev and Bob were section leaders in the choir under Mark's time and brought a spirit of excellence and to the choir and the worship services at large. They both decided to leave the choir at the end of Mark's time and their legacies are cherished in our church community.

We were fortunate to find an Interim Music Coordinator with talent and grace in Barbara Brown. Choral music is one of the more challenging aspects of Covid life. However, an assortment of singers has joined Barbara in regaling us with singing and joy.

We established a Music Search Committee that has worked for months in listening to church members and assessing opportunities to meet the needs and wants of the church and wider community in the coming years. There is excitement and commitment about growing into the next chapters of USG life. We are committed to explicitly connecting future music efforts with our Widening the Circle and Children's spirituality programs and efforts.

In January 2022, I shared with the USG community that after serious discernment I have decided this will be my last year serving as Minister at USG. I will end my ministry here in June, 2022. The 20 year ministry at USG has been one of the best things ever to happen in my life. Being with you, working with you, and celebrating life with you has been rich, meaningful and rewarding. Kristin, Micah, Ellis and I will always have a huge place for this congregation in our hearts.

As I write this, the last of my 20 annual minister's reports, the nation and the world are wracked with many intense problems. Climate change, intensive attacks on democracies, grueling war in Ukraine, and gun violence in the US and the announced end of women's right to abortion in the United States all overwhelm our hearts and minds.

Yet this church not only works tirelessly but joyously with UUJusticePA (Pennsylvania UU justice network), POWER, the city and state interfaith justice coalition, and so many other powerful sister organizations to make a difference any way we can.

In our worship service we celebrate life, explore the connection between science and spirituality,

raise our children with incredible programs of nurturing curiosity teaching the 8 principles of UU'ism, and how to bend the arc of the universe towards justice.

We are working evermore to be good stewards of our sacred 6 acres of land and Mother Earth as a whole.

We engage mindfulness activities, learn and proclaim our UU history, and raise our children with UU values in beloved community.

Thus, I say, more than ever does Philadelphia- and the world for that matter- need the Unitarian Society of Germantown. Building on its 157 year history - with resilience and strength - this church moves forward through the ages in deep commitment to matters of ultimate importance.

In Faith,
Rev. Kent

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Submitted by Celeste Lamb, Business Administrator

My third year here at USG has been eventful as we transitioned back to in-person services, first outdoors under the tent, and then into the Sanctuary. We pivoted, pivoted, and pivoted some more, based on our ever updating Covid protocols.

In the coming year I look forward to our expanding of in person activities and events. I hope to increase revenue through grants and rental income. I look forward to overseeing the new bookkeeping firm. I also look forward to assisting our tech team with livestreaming our Services from the Sanctuary and multiplatform services and events.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Assisted with website updating, creating new pages and troubleshooting when necessary
- Updated signs and website with Covid notices and protocols
- Created congregation wide emails using Mailchimp CRM
- Used Canva software for making attractive advertising for events and internal communications
- Continued use of Instagram and Facebook
- Promoted Standing in Solidarity Vigil via social media
- Promoted meditation events via social media
- Started implementing use of QR codes that should reduce our use of paper

TECH

- Assisted and instructed employees and members on uses of software, troubleshooting issues with emails, Zoom, Breeze and USG website logins
- Recorded Zoom Services, edited to be copyright law compliant and uploaded those and other videos to Youtube and the USG website

- Coordinated system to allow Zoom access for Memorial services and helped prepare for Memorial Services and recruited Zoom tech volunteers
- Assisted Service Auction Committee by setting up of online auction website, entered data, coordinated raffle drawings and
- Continued to schedule Zoom meetings for groups and committees

BOOKKEEPING

- Hired and onboarded TrueUp Financial Solutions to help with day to day financial recording
- Paid bills, including necessary taxes
- Processed staff and lay reimbursements
- Recorded expenses and income in QuickBooks
- Continued working as de-facto bookkeeper for the Philadelphia Interfaith Peace Walk
- Filed necessary tax forms
- Applied for and received forgiveness of second PPP loan in the amount of \$66,000

PERSONNEL

- Processed payroll and related filings
- Provided new employees with all required hiring forms
- Maintained records of employee proof of vaccination

ETC.

- Worked with Ministry Executive Team to manage practical functioning of USG
- Worked as member of both Moving Ahead Steering Committee and COVID -19 Task Force that created policies and made decisions on Church policies and use of building by other groups, as well as protocols for use of building and in-person attendance
- Completed required forms for insurance companies and licensing entities
- Facilitated USG as a polling place, coordinating with Philadelphia Board of Elections and coordinating USG volunteers
- Worked as MET representative to B&G as well as helping coordinate building access to contractors, hounded alarm company to resolve false fire alarms and responded to false alarms when they occurred
- Maintained presence in building, fielding phone calls, drop bys, and requests for building access, and item drop off or pick up
- Attended AUUA Pro-Days and GA sessions and programming
- Attended online courses and seminars in video production, worship tech, copyright law, and grant writing
- Maintained Nest thermostat timing and scheduling
- Oversaw work of wonderful Assistant Administrator and Sexton
- Worked with Scott Smith to develop plans for livestreaming from the tent and Sanctuary
- Assisted with planning and logistics of transitions to outdoor worship and then indoor worship

DIRECTOR OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT (DSD)

Submitted by Ryan Hurd, Director of Spiritual Development

Serving as DSD during this last time period, May 2021 - May 2022, has been an honor. There has never been a dull moment, and this stage of the pandemic has kept us all flexible as conditions (and policies) keep changing. Last May (2021), in my speech during the Annual Report, I expressed optimism that we were going to “land the plane” this year. I feel a sense of accomplishment that we did land the plane, and returned to in-person worship service and church life — not once, but twice! (Thanks to Omicron).

As keeping with my strategy from the year prior, this year I spent more time on pastoral and community building than in previous years. However, we still managed some very successful programs as well. I do not review these in this report — please view the Children’s Spiritual Development and Adult Spiritual Development reports for those details.

Thematically, building partnerships is how CSD really kept going over the last 18 months. Partnering with my regional religious education body DSAREC, and the congregations UU Restoration and UU Susquehanna Valley allowed us to serve children and families at a time in which volunteers were hard to come by. Also, bringing in paid childcare workers to assist in CSD programming was successful, providing both work for our part-time employees and a steady, caring presence for USG children.

A similar pattern has occurred with Adult Spiritual Development, in which programs took a back seat to community building. Zoom-based gatherings provided a small group intimacy that some people have preferred to, say, the loud and raucous Dining Hall after worship service. I feel like I got to know people better during the zoom days of the pandemic, as I was able to just listen and commune with folks. As our mindfulness teacher Jesse Frechette often said this year, “You are enough.” Our ASD programs were successful, and again it is the partnerships with the larger community that have given us some growth, including new levels of collaboration with Springboard Sangha, Delaware Valley Institute and the Mt. Airy based conscious dance group ROOT. These partnerships are poised to continue in the years ahead.

With my remaining time at USG, I am planning on meeting often with Latifah Griffin-Rogers as well as providing her with all the documents and other administrative tools to set her up for success in this next year as the Interim. DSD.

Thank you for the privilege of having me as USG’s Director of Spiritual Development. It is with a tender heart that I submit these words as my last DSD report. I leave you with this blessing for the days ahead: May you sleep well and dream big!

INTERN MINISTER

I am nearing the end of my internship and I am extremely grateful to the USG congregation. One of the interesting things to come from this internship is the fact that I will be staying with USG for an additional year. Due to the pandemic, I (along with many others) felt a bit cheated out of my experience. Learning church while not physically being in the church was a tough learning curve for me. The USG congregation recognized this as well and were eager to help make sure my experience was worthwhile. Due to Ryan (and Kent's) departure at the end of the church year, we requested and received an exemption from the Ministerial Fellowship Committee for me to continue at USG for one additional year to serve as the Interim Director of Spiritual Development. This has a dual purpose, I will be able to mend the gaps in my field learning and USG will have a familiar person as we navigate difficult transitions this upcoming church year.

MUSIC DIRECTOR

In November of 2021, Mark Daugherty resigned as Music Director after serving this congregation for 38 years. Since December of 2021, Barbara Browne has acted as an interim "Visiting Music Coordinator," but as her position is part-time only, USG has not asked her to submit a report. A search committee for a new Music Director is chaired by Lois Murphy and is actively engaged in finding a new Music Director.

ADULT SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Submitted by Ryan Hurd (Interim Chair)

Members

Ryan Hurd (Director of Spiritual Development), Jerry Caruso, Jennifer Leiby, Vanessa Lowe, Janet Haas (MET representative/Chair as of March '22) with regular attendance from program leaders Elaine Hill, Susan Bockius, Carolyn Cotton, and Justy DeForest.

Who will be the chair of this committee in the coming year? Janet Haas

Mission of Committee ^[1]_[SEP]To provide programs, events and communal gatherings that support members and friends of the Unitarian Society of Germantown in finding spiritual paths that are meaningful and relevant to their individual journeys as well as to the community as it moves forward compassionately in defining, refining and strengthening our diverse Beloved Community

Goals Established for Past Year

- Continue to support our community virtually during a time of uncertainty, and be open to hybrid transitions to in-person so those who cannot meet in person may still participate from home.
- Hold a Trans Inclusion in Congregations by Transforming Hearts Collective, in small groups, virtually and in-person.

- Pilot new faith development workshops. Some ideas include: UU history (basically UU 201), training in community investment/reparations, ethical personal finance, and Building your own theology.
- For the Center for Mindfulness: A regional LGBTQ mindfulness event, and pursue working with organizations that support BIPOC spaces. Also Meditation 101 offered several times a year to bring in new folks to the mindfulness community.
- Research and invest in outdoors programming readiness such as purchase of canopy, and installing additional lighting for after dark outdoors in the Grove and the labyrinth area. Purchase and implement tech to allow for hybrid participation, when possible. Also, consider a virtual liaison volunteer at events (shared goal with Children’s Spiritual Development).
- Bring back Community Day! Changing the date may be needed to make it better for outdoors and add a rain date. September / October.
- More promotion of UUA and GA content/workshops/offerings
- Ware Lecture Sat June 26th 2021? 7PM -- outdoor viewing if possible -- needs review of tech, staff support and copyright rights.
- Revisit ASD Committee’s mission and mission statement throughout next year, especially in regard to the shared grounds of spirituality and social justice.

Significant Accomplishments of Past Year

ASD was successful in meeting most of our goals. Exceptions include Goal #4: which will be carried over for next year, Goal #9 (not possible due to copyright limitations) and Goal #10 which has not been implemented and it may be best to put a hold until a new Director of Spiritual Development is hired.

- Adult Spiritual Development can be seen to support programs that fall into three categories: faith formation, community building and spiritual practices (including mindfulness).

Faith Formation:

- UU 101 seminars once a month, led by Eric Foster and Charles Gabriel, is considered part of ASD but is independently organized.
- Susan Bockius led a program on the divine feminine, based on an updated curriculum based on Cakes for the Queen of Heaven, until its final session in January 2022.
- “Images of the Divine,” facilitated by Gerry Whelan, met once or twice a month through Winter 2021, giving a platform for individuals to share their own personal relationships to the divine, however they conceive it.

Community Building

- The Beloved Hearts Collective course “Trans Inclusion in Congregations” was held for 6 sessions from February thru April 2022. It was facilitated by Ryan Hurd, Vanessa Lowe, and Jesse Frechette and supported by the Trans Inclusion Task Force. Course was well attended with an average of 12 people at each session.
- Elderhood met once a week on Zoom until hosting an in person holiday meeting on 12/10. Taking the month of January off, it has resumed meeting monthly since February. It is currently led by Elaine Hills, with Ryan Hurd assisting with logistics.
- Elderhood also sponsored a 2-part book discussion on Falling Upward, a study in spirituality for seniors, which was led by Kent in March and April. Kent also used the book as a basis for a Sunday sermon.
- Death Café, facilitated by Maggie Beaumont and hosted by Ryan Hurd, held on October 28, 2021, created a safe place to talk about death.

- A successful outside Community Day was held after service on Sunday 11/21/21. The event included: 13 information tables set up by various committees; activities such as a tarot reading by Earth Spirit Circle, and a drumming circle with Karen Smith; and a food table offering individually wrapped snacks.
- Two tents were purchased in early Summer 2021 which have been used for holding outdoor events for both ASD and CSD. Outdoor lights were also strung in the Labyrinth and Grove areas, making them both safe and inviting at night. Multiplatform technology is now in place and has been used for some events, such as the Feminine Divine series.
- A new caring initiative was started by Ryan following a Covid outbreak in late December among our children. It has since been taken over by two ASD committee members who make and deliver care packages to all with Covid, as well as send cards to those adults with non-Covid illness, or recovering from surgery. Project has grown to include sending cards to those with happy news and thank you cards to teachers. It is a simple, yet effective way to show care to all within the congregation.
- A collaborative effort on May Day by ASD, Earth Spirit Circle and Mary Kalyna resulted in the planting of a Sunflower garden next to the driveway as you come into the parking lot. It is a beautiful reminder of our care and hope for peace for the people of Ukraine.

Center for Mindfulness (CFM) at USG

- CFM serves 15 adults a week on average.
- The Sunday evening program Breathe included Deborah Cooper, Mary Kalyna, Jesse Frechette, and Pamela Freeman, with Rev. Kent Matthies leading on 5th Sundays ran until December 2021. It is undetermined when the Sunday night Breathe sessions will return due to a loss in leaders' availability and waning interest in zoom programming in general.
- Starting in early March, Deborah Cooper hosted, in conjunction with Delaware Valley Insight Institute, a 4-session themed program that focuses on the body.
- The following programs will continue unchanged: Deb Cooper's Wednesday program, Jesse Freschette's Thursday program, and collaboration with Delaware Valley Insight Institute. <https://www.dvinsight.org/>
- Yoga with Esther Wyss Flamm, has stayed steady in attendance on Zoom. Esther's current yoga classes on Tuesday and Friday mornings remain on Zoom. She plans to reassess in the summer and hopefully return in person for the following sessions.
- Yoga with Deborah Lynn (outdoors in the grove) was offered twice a week throughout Summer - Fall 2022.
- Qigong with Margaret Kinnevy through the spring/summer of 2021, outdoors.
- The weekly Mindfulness Newsletter with a current email list of over 300 people is formatted by volunteer Abbey Porter and supported by USG Communications team.
- Led well attended one day online retreats by Esther Wyss Flamm, and seasonal offerings with Suvaco Hanson (July 17th, 2021, October 9th, 2021, April 9th, 2022).
- Zoom hosting of mindfulness teachers by USG has been made possible by Jerry Caruso, Javier Ramos, Abbey Porter and Ryan Hurd.
- Co-sponsorship with Springboard Sangha continues. USG co-hosted a community multiplatform event with them on Sunday morning prior to service on 4/24/22.

- Co-sponsorship with Delaware Valley Institute is official: with planned in-person events in September and December 2022, as well as a possible BIPOC meditation group, date DBT. Contact here is Pamela Freeman.

Additional Spiritual Practices-based programs

- Drumming by Karen Smith, outdoors and in person, Fall 2021 at Community Day
- Conscious Dance with Michelle and Mariama has returned again to USG, outdoors throughout 2021, until Winter when they went to Summit Presbyterian. They are hopeful of doing an outdoors Saturday afternoon program with our Mindfulness groups in June 2022.
- EarthSpirit Circle, our UU pagan group, is now considered part of ASD but remains largely independent. Organized by Justy DeForest, it continued the year mostly on Zoom for meetings and seasonal events. However, ESC sponsored a successful in person return of the in-person Winter Solstice Ceremony in the Labyrinth area, including the Firewheel in the parking lot (thanks to Will Stanforth and Ben Manes) on 12/18 which was attended by the greater congregation.

Goals for Upcoming Church Year 2022-23

- Thank and celebrate Ryan as he leaves us at the end of June to embrace his love of teaching. We wish him and his family the very best and we are grateful to have had them with us these past 4 years.
- Welcome Latifah Griffin-Rogers as our Interim Director of Spiritual Development. The ASD committee is dedicated to fully supporting her in this new position
- Continue to support the community virtually during a time of uncertainty, and be open to multi-platform transitions to in-person so those who cannot meet in person may still participate from home.
- Pilot new faith development workshops. Some ideas include: UU history (basically UU 201: Daniel Gregoire's curriculum in "Harper Academy" is perfect), training in community investment/reparations, ethical personal finance, Building your own theology, and End of Life planning by a life counselor.
- Run "Trans Inclusion" again, perhaps in partnership with Welcoming Committee and Worship Arts, for the training of ushers as well as board members and other USG leaders.
- For the Center for Mindfulness: A regional LGBTQ mindfulness event, perhaps led by Jesse Frechette, and continue working with organizations that support BIPOC spaces such as Delaware Valley Institute.
- Continue to look for ways to hold ASD events in coordination with other groups, such as CSD, Earth Spirit Circle and the Social Justice Council.
- Continue holding Community Day with whichever model works during Covid uncertainty, as we have seen it can be done successfully.
- More promotion of UUA and GA content/workshops/offerings.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Submitted by Bill Blasdel, Co-Chair

Members

Co-chairs: Bill Blasdel & Kurt Ahrens. Active members: Lynne Kalish, Carolyn Cotton, Scott Smith, Howard Silver, Ron Ross, George Buckmann and Celeste Lamb (MET). New members this year: Ron Ross and George Buckmann. Past members resigned this year: Andre Stormont and August Anderson

Who will be the chair of this committee in the coming year?

co-chairs Bill Blasdel & Kurt Ahrens

Mission of Committee

Operate, repair, maintain and continually improve our historic, beautiful property, working within constraints according to the following priorities:

- Assure a safe facility, including Covid mitigation.
- Preserve & protect the property from degradation (biggest threat – water leaks)
- Reduce/control operating costs (including utilities)
- Enhance the property for members' use, accessibility, and for rental income
- General cosmetic improvements and refurbish one space each year.

Goals Established for Past Year

Stay within approved FY 21-22 budget and eliminate “cuts of convenience” from the B&G budget to balance the overall USG budget.

- Re-affirm priority statement and develop a prioritized list of repairs, and improvement projects for the fiscal year, and execute them accordingly.
- Formulate, propose and negotiate budget for FY 22-23.

Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

- Install short term Covid mitigation ventilation system in the building.
- Develop a long term Covid mitigation ventilation system for the building
- Renovation of the stream bed near the playground
- Repair kitchen glass block window and replace the main window over the sink
- Finish restoration of Sanctuary windows of the stream side transept window and restoration of 1 of the 3 windows facing the parking lot, all of them from the Germantown original building.
- Replacement of the Bristol Room level doors leading to Lincoln Drive.
- Repair and painting of both rest room floors.
- Replace the courtyard bushes.
- Start long term project for rehabilitation of the ageing limestone surfaces & between the stones.
- Close off the unsafe “bridge” near the Youth Lodge with fencing at both ends.

Goals for Upcoming Church Year

- Take whatever action is needed to fulfill the primary mission to *Assure a safe facility* during re-opening the building from the COVID shutdown.

- Stay within approved FY 21-22 budget and eliminate “cuts of convenience” from the B&G budget to balance the overall USG budget.
- Re-affirm priority statement and develop a prioritized list of repairs and improvement projects for the fiscal year and execute them accordingly.
- Formulate, Propose and negotiate budget for FY 19-20.

CARING SYSTEM

Submitted by Linda Bernstein, Co-Chair

Members

The entire USG community comprises the Caring Committee. The Caring Committee Steering Team consists of Rev. Kent Matthies (departing), Intern Minister Latifah Griffin-Rogers, Sarah West, and Chair Linda Bernstein

Who will be the chair of this committee in the coming year? Linda Bernstein

Mission of Committee

To provide comfort to USG members in distress, through cards, phone calls, visits and assistance with meals, rides, etc. To alert the congregation to members’ joys and sorrows, illnesses, births and deaths, so that members may reach out to each other.

Goals Established for Past Year

To normalize seeking and receiving help. To encourage members to ask for or accept help when they encounter obstacles. To encourage members to be unconventional in thinking about ways to help and be helped.

Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

USG has a decades-long tradition of reaching out and caring for members in time of need. Even before a formal system was created, members would arrive on the doorstep with a casserole or plate of cookies. Now caring outreach is systematized with the Caring News in the weekly Communicator and special dedicated emails for families in need.

Goals for Upcoming Church Year

We are very grateful for all the meals and rides that have been provided during the pandemic. More recently, we have noticed that there is a falling off of responses particularly for people who are new or may not be very well known to the congregation. This also occurs for people who live farther away from USG. Many of the most reliable caring volunteers are themselves getting up in years. We urge members of the congregation to consider their ability to respond to requests, especially for meals. We hope members will respond as generously and frequently as their own schedules would allow.

CHILD SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT (CSD)

Respectfully submitted by Ryan Hurd, Director of CSD

Members

Ryan Hurd (DSD), Janet Haas (MET liaison and member), Becky Horner, Avery Hamill (youth rep.), Sharon Mafuru, and Kristin Shipler. Jess Stanforth also served as CSD Chair until April 2022, and Latifah Griffin-Rogers attended some meetings in her capacity as Intern Minister.

Who will be the chair of this committee in the coming year?

Latifah Griffin-Rogers (Interim Director of Spiritual Development)

Mission of Committee

- Provide developmentally appropriate education that supports the lifelong process of learning to cultivate goodness, compassion, empathy, and love for oneself and others.
- Offer safe and caring spaces for introspective work, connecting to nature, and building right-relationships in community across generations.
- Put into practice hands-on, experiential education for children, facilitators and parents that cultivates respect, stewardship, service, mindfulness, responsibility, justice, and the search for truth and beauty.
- To welcome young people into the UU community, help them find their way into becoming active members, and provide opportunities to learn the rich history and guiding principles of Unitarian Universalism.

Goals Established for Past Year

Once we physically return to the building, continue our long-term project of making the Sullivan wing more CSD-friendly with cleaning-out of cabinets and adding storage (carried over from last year's goals). Commentary: This goal is being met now in May 2022, with help from the Archives Committee who are assisting in the preservation of outdated curriculum and recycling duplicate material. Ryan also moved a cabinet into the Elevator Annex to house the CSD Children's Library; additional storage space is in the lower section of the cabinet.

- Whether virtually or in-person, continue to use and expand our curricula to be inclusive of mindfulness, social justice issues, racial justice, all aspects of diversity-equity- inclusion (DEI) work, exploration of nature, physical activity, and music. Our goal is a well-rounded program that speaks to all age levels and utilizes adult talent within the congregation (carried over from last year). Commentary: this goal was met well on all accounts except for more music; we will carry that element forward with enthusiasm now that there is an ongoing search for a new Music Director.
- Hold Town Hall meeting(s) with parents about their needs and concerns about the ever-evolving timeline of "re-opening" in conjunction with guidance from the CDC, Philadelphia public health, and local community experts and the USG Security Team (carried over from last year). Commentary: We did not do this, and instead opted for CSD committee reach out to individual families for support.
- Seasonal teacher trainings to include anti-racism and inclusion workshop opportunities for teachers and church leaders. Including Trans Inclusion. Partner with local org such as The Race Institute or CHOP. <http://www.raceinstitute.org> Commentary: Due to pandemic life and a small volunteer base, we did not hold any teacher trainings (the next one is in June 2022). However, we did have good CSD representation in the Spring 2022 workshop on Trans Inclusion.

- Tracking curriculum and sourcing of stories, practices and traditions in CSD in conjunction with the Widening the Circle platform. (8th principle integration). Commentary: this project was initiated but has stalled due to volunteer availability. We will add it to our goals for the coming year.
- More utilization and development of our outdoor spaces. Goal: once a month outdoor events for families (such as hiking in the Wissahickon), as well as Sunday RE. Commentary: CSD was largely outdoors for Fall 2022, with family events utilizing the Labyrinth Education circle, the Grove for movie night, as well as off-site on Wissahickon trails. CSD also purchased two small tents (10x20, and 10x10) for outdoor events.
- Purchase and implement tech to allow for multi-platform participation, when possible. Also, consider virtual liaison volunteers at events (shared goal with Adult Spiritual Development). Commentary: we have the tech, but not the volunteers. Added to next year's suggested goal.
- Youth programming: OWL and/or Coming of Age if possible. Outdoor hiking and campfires events in person, given parental permissions. Commentary: We were able to train one OWL instructor and run OWL with 4 total instructors. 17 youth participated! Other youth programming included Dungeons and Dragons, and monthly Youth Group which incorporated a campfire in the Labyrinth area. These programs served 4-9 youth at a time.
- Revisit our mission statement this summer 2021 in planning meetings, with hopes to re-establish a curricular flow (scope and sequence) for CSD with the questions: how do our goals align with our mission, and how do our curricula and activities achieve these goals? Commentary: we did not complete this goal due to volunteer availability. To be reconsidered for 2022-2023 with the interim DSD. We do have a document that lists the last 10 years of curricula on the DSD Dropbox: program files 2021-2022..

Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

- As last year, our accomplishments and ever-evolving strategies must be seen in the context of heavily reduced volunteerism, limitations on physical gatherings, and ongoing trauma and stress for families, children and youth. Our approach has been both providing children's programming as well as a heightened focus on family reach-out/pastoral care and all-family participation:
- Over the summer 2021, we continued with the online UU Explorers program which began in the Spring until August 2021, which at that time had reduced in attendance to a small but consistent group of kids. This program was shared between Ryan and Sara Kelley, who serves as the religious educator at Unitarian Church in Susquehanna Valley.
- Jenn Bright came back as a childcare worker, working alongside CSD since the nursery was technically not open, and giving some parents a chance to enjoy Sunday service. For community building, we continued to run monthly programs outside, including outdoors movie night, campfire circles and hiking trips.
- When USG came back in person outdoors with the big tent on Labor Day 2021, CSD launched in-person simultaneously. We focused on a trauma-informed pedagogy that centers games and community building, with anchors of UU rituals. The kids really liked the program, which incorporated emergent outdoor-based curriculum with focused crafts and icebreaker games. The program went inside in November 2021, for a month, until Omicron shut us down again in January 2022.
- Ryan piloted a "Family Worship room" in the Dining Room for in-person folks who wanted more room to wiggle while watching from a TV-projected zoom account, with Jenn Bright providing crafts and games in the back of the room. An interesting concept to use again when there's a worry about exceeding sanctuary in -person limits.

- The breakout hit of the year has got to be OWL, which began serving 17 youth with a full staff of 4 OWL teachers.
- Dungeons and Dragons also has been popular for 7th - 10th graders, which has met either once or twice a month since Fall 2021, and is led by Gamemaster Ryan Rose. This cohort of youth that were not otherwise being served has truly bonded and also attended the Youth Group which I opened up to 6th - 12th grade, with the help of volunteers Heather Hill and Ryan Rose.
- Christmas Eve Service was a hit, serving 11 participating families in person, just as the Omicron wave was hitting Philadelphia. The children grew in new ways taking on spoken roles and growing their stage presence, and the play was watchable and entertaining.
- When we went back online in January, we jumped back online for a Moral Tales curriculum with Sara Kelley, serving 3-4 families. The committee spent time in pastoral mode, making phone calls, and checking in over email with parents and CSD community leaders. Ryan also drove care packages to families who were quarantining with covid, providing a reminder that USG is still here, and caring for them.
- Jenn Leiby and Janet Haas expanded Ryan's care package project to keep in touch with families and those sick and quarantining, or simply needing a boost, such as members who are professional teachers.
- Ryan is currently drafting a CSD Archives Policy to ensure that our current printed material is not lost to the digital abyss. Outdated CSD programs and notes from the last 40 years have been collected from around the building and are now housed in the DSD office.
- Thematically, building partnerships is how CSD really kept going over the last 18 months. Partnering with DSAREC (Delaware and Susquehanna Area Religious Education Cluster), UU Restoration, and especially UU Susquehanna Valley allowed us to serve children and families at a time when volunteers were hard to come by. Also, bringing in paid childcare workers as a bridge was successful, providing both work to our part-time employees and a steady, caring presence for USG children.

Goals for Upcoming Church Year

Programming Goals

- Whether virtually or in-person, continue to define and refine our curricula to be inclusive of mindfulness, social justice issues, racial justice, all aspects of diversity-equity-inclusion (DEI) work, exploration of nature, physical activity, and music. Our goal is a well-rounded program that speaks to all age levels and utilizes adult talent within the congregation (carried over from last year).
 - Youth programming for 2022-2023: Coming of Age and Youth Group. Outdoor hiking and campfires events in person, given parental permissions.
 - More children participating in worship: work with Worship Arts and Music Director to coordinate.
 - Tracking curriculum and sourcing of stories, practices and traditions in CSD in conjunction with the Widening the Circle platform. (8th principle integration)
- ### **Administrative Goals**
- Continue our long-term project of making the Sullivan wing more CSD-friendly with cleaning-out of cabinets and adding storage (carried over from last year's goals), partnering with the Archives Committee to collect valuable historic documents. Digitally catalog and grow the collection of the Children's Library so parents can check out books on Sundays for the week, partnering with Ending Racism Committee.

- Develop and implement an intentional marketing strategy to increase family and children’s attendance at USG, partnering with Worship Arts.
- Define a model to increase levels of CSD support, such as moving back to a parent co-op model for volunteerism, reintroducing Social Justice Sunday with special guests, and/or expanding paid CSD teachers/child care workers.

Education/Training Goals

- Seasonal teacher trainings to include anti-racism and inclusion workshop opportunities for teachers and church leaders, and youth. Including Trans Inclusion. Partner with local org such as The Race Institute or CHOP. Could be coordinated with help of ASD committee.
- Teacher Training in Fall 2022 for Safe Congregation Policy and Mandatory Reporting as well as community building. Consider pairing with a mindfulness or DEI workshop (goal 9).
- Continue the use and development of our outdoor spaces, as well as train teachers in outdoor education principles. Wendy Furry will be giving an outdoors 101 workshop in June 2022 to this aim.

COVID 19 TASK FORCE AND MOVING AHEAD STEERING COMMITTEE

Submitted by Andrea Parry, Chair of MASC (Moving Ahead Steering Committee)

Members

COVID TF: Bill Dowdall, chair; Carla Campbell, Jody Hill, Jeff Jaeger, Mary Schuler, Ryan Hurd, Celeste Lamb, Kent Matthies

MASC (Moving Ahead Steering Committee): Andrea Parry, chair; Dev Howerton, Celeste Lamb, Kent Matthies. MASC has had the advice and support of a number of other individuals who served as touchpoints for various areas of church life (e.g. Child Spiritual Development, Welcoming, Worship, Building & Grounds, etc.)

Who will be the chair of this committee in the coming year?

COVID TF: Bill Dowdall

MASC: Andrea Parry

Mission of Committee

The USG Board and MET created two different groups during the COVID pandemic to advise on how USG should move forward. The COVID TF, comprised of staff and lay church leaders and healthcare professional volunteers, was formed in early 2020, as the pandemic emerged in the US. They provided guidance as USG quickly shut down in-person operations and went virtual. In late spring 2021, the Moving Ahead Task Force was formed to help guide USG on new ways of being together as the COVID situation continued to change. A steering committee, known as the Moving Ahead Steering Committee (MASC), led the effort, supported by a wider group who served as consultants in various areas (e.g. Worship, Membership, Child Spiritual Development, Building & Grounds, and others).

The job of the COVID TF is to advise on safety and medical issues. They review CDC guidelines and the guidelines and regulations of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and the federal

government, as applicable to USG, along with any other medical or scientific sources of their choosing. The MASC presents the COVID TF issues as to which safety advice is requested, and the COVID TF provides that advice based on their review of authorities and their medical expertise.

It is up to the MASC to take the medical and safety advice provided by the COVID TF, factor in USG mission and priorities, and develop protocols for given situations and ways of moving forward. To do this, MASC must stay current on CDC and public health guidelines and requirements, and obtain advice from varied sources within, and sometimes outside, USG. MASC also considers UUA recommendations. The Board has instructed MASC that operations must be consistent with Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and CDC guidelines. In some cases, the USG guidelines may be more conservative.

In other words, the question for the COVID TF is, “is it safe.” The question for the MASC is, “if the COVID TF said it was safe, should we do it, or what should we do instead that is at least as safe.”

Goals Established for Past Year

Fulfill the mission of the two groups as stated above.

Significant Accomplishments of Past Year

The COVID TF and MASC worked closely together to stay on top of the changing COVID situation and develop ways of being together, virtually and in person, to provide meaningful opportunities to stay connected as a religious community, fulfill USG’s mission, and provide support to members of the congregation as we all endured another year of an ever-changing pandemic. Protocols were developed, communicated, put into effect, and then revised repeatedly as the situation continued to change, sometimes on short notice. We have protocols covering indoor worship, singing, small group meetings indoors, use of outdoor space, outdoor worship, and vaccination. The groups also responded to incidents and issues as they arose.

Goals for Upcoming Church Year

More of the same until the pandemic is over.

ENDING RACISM COMMITTEE

Submitted by Carla Campbell, Co-Chair

Members

Carla Campbell, (Co-Chair), Treva Burger (ERC Leadership Team), Barbara McDowell (ERC Leadership Team), Tonika Berkley, (member), Parvathy Menon, Dev Howery (Secretary), Elizabeth McGoran (Librarian), Eileen Teti, Margaret Thompson, Rosita Johnson, Jim Salom, Lois Murphy, Nancy Anderson, Sarah West

Mission of Committee

ERC works toward dismantling racism in all its forms; individual, institutional, and systemic; through self-examination, education, advocacy, public witness, and service.

Goals Established for Past Year

Encourage ERC members and USG congregants to address all forms and levels of racism through self-examination, education, advocacy, public witness, and service

- Continue sharing Black Lives of Unitarian Universalists (BLUU) and Racism Book Study Group
- Continue monitoring and occasionally joining with UUA racial justice efforts via <https://www.uua.org/multiculturalism>
- Recruit and appoint a new co-chair (looking for new co-chair currently)
- Expand membership
- Increase awareness about racism within USG through the weekly ERC table lending library, recommended readings, etc.
- Invite guest speakers to USG for our quarterly Ending Racism Presents
- Support Men Who Care of Germantown in their work at Roosevelt School and MLKing High School.
- Participate with POWER in advocating for fair funding and full resources for all Philadelphia public schools
- Organize field trips
- Participate in worship planning; ERC is planning an August 2022 worship service
- Host an ERC Open House in the fall of 2022
- Expand coordination of Ending Racism activities with other Delaware Valley congregations
- Establish Northwest interfaith links with groups sharing similar goals

Significant Accomplishments of Past Year

Restructured the committee to better share the work, with a leadership team, treasurer, secretary and a librarian who is creating a catalog of ERC books to increase their accessibility to the congregation.

- Restructured ERC meetings to include quarterly "ERC Presents..." speaker series, which invites organizations and individuals working in anti-racism and anti-White supremacy work in Germantown and beyond. Recent speakers have talked about asthma in African American children in Philadelphia by a pediatrician at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, the crisis in funding education in Philadelphia and the state of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia education from an educator's perspective, and more. The ERC Presents has been providing information to the church community for years.
- Crafted a Land Acknowledgement Statement acknowledging the presence of the ancestral Indigenous residents, Leni-Lenape, and their existence in Pennsylvania and Germantown, specifically. We consulted with Sarah Frazier, who is a student of the Lenape culture and the Lenape Society of Pennsylvania in order to craft the statement which we read during ERC meetings.
- Maintain the Ending Racism page off of the main USG website, featuring ERC action and education recommendations, videos of our past speakers, and the Ending Racism Resource List and Library List.
- -Involved with monthly zoom meetings with the UUA 8th Principle originators Paula Cole Jones and Bruce Pollack-Johnson, where representatives from UUA congregations nationally share their progress leading up to votes, actions and activities after votes. USG voted to support the initiative at our 2019 Annual Meeting. A vote on adoption will be held at a future

General Assembly. ERC Leadership member Barbara McDowell Dowdall notifies interested USGers of the meetings, attends and reports back. Carla Campbell sometimes attends, as well.

- Involved with Widening the Circle of Concern Working Group, led by ERC Leadership member Treva Burger co-leads with Board President Andrea Barsevick. WICOC's Working Group's goal is to analyze the results of the UUA Commission on Institutional Change's findings and to help to oversee the enactment of the recommendations of the Commission, in order to implement policies of equity and inclusion of BIPOC-LGBTQ communities. This work will continue in the coming church year.
- Participate in the annual National Council for Teaching Education's African American Read In, where UU members read books by various Black authors during the month of February and share book reviews during our monthly ERC meeting. This is our 5th year of participation and Barbara submits our reading list to the NCTE.
- Treva is spearheading The Racism Book Study Group, which meets monthly to discuss books based on anti-racist and anti-White Supremacy subject matter. They are currently reading "The 1619 Project", a compilation of various writings by different Black authors on different aspects of racism.
- Support BLUU (Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism) programs such as BLUU Box sessions, which highlight and celebrate African American UUs in congregation and national history, as well as BLUU Havens which establishes a Black-only social space for UUs.

Goals for 2022-2023 Church Year

- Continue to participate in the Widening the Circle of Concern Working Group.
- Continue with "ERC Presents..." our quarterly speaker series and field trip offerings
- Support USG organizations such as Participatory Defense Hub/CAMI, POWER, and UU Justice PA
- Create our online library catalog to compile and track book titles for easier circulation
- Exploring ways to support the BLM Vigil
- Create more opportunities for virtual and in-person (when permitted) field trips to local, in/out of state sites of interest
- Create an outdoor or virtual open house in Fall 2022
- Developing workshops/plenaries to invite speakers to discuss topics of interest (i.e., impact of COVID on underrepresented groups)
- Participate in the 2023 NCTE African American Read In

MLK DAY OF SERVICE

Submitted by Carolyn Scott, Co-Chair

Members

Carolyn Scott (Co-chair), Tesha Nesbit (Co-chair), Latifah Griffin-Rogers, Janet Haas, Jody Hill

Who will chair the MLK DAY TEAM for the following year?

No one has been identified. By next September, we recommend that MET and those on whatever Social Justice Council committee exists ensure that chairs are identified.

Mission of Committee

The MLK Day of Service committee is responsible for identifying, planning and facilitating service projects, securing supplies and donations, recruiting and communicating with volunteers, supervising on-site logistics and developing and conducting worship for USG's annual MLK Day of Service. Our mission is to provide a day that combines meaningful service and spiritual development and honors the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In 2022, as we did in 2021, we had to adjust our projects because of the Covid pandemic to assure that many projects could be completed at home, involved mostly contactless delivery or could involve virtual participation.

Goals Established for Past Year

As in 2021, our primary goal was to create as meaningful and significant Day of Service as possible, given the ongoing pandemic and volunteer shortage. Because social justice volunteering had diminished from previous years and we currently had no Social Justice chair (as Lois Murphy is now chairing Worship Arts), we decided to rely primarily on the worthy projects created by the MLK Day 2021 Planning Team (last year's team): making care packages, making food, delivering packages, holding outdoor cleanup events and virtual programs. Although participation was down from pre-pandemic years, we achieved participation of over 200 volunteers engaged in approximately 13 service projects.

Significant Accomplishments of Past Year

We successfully adjusted to difficult circumstances and planned rewarding projects for 200 volunteers and an inspiring service in difficult circumstances, and reached out to and maintained relationships with over 10 agencies we supported. The feedback from Volunteers, Project Leaders, the Coordination Team members, and others involved in the day was overwhelmingly positive.

Goals for Upcoming Church Year (2022-2023)

The Social Justice Council, with MET assistance, needs to identify co-chairs for the 2023 MLK Day of Service Planning Committee; by early fall 2022, those MLK Day leaders will need to begin work on the following:

- Repeat co-chair approach (local people work best)
- Discuss any modifications to the overall approach to the MLK Day, including worship service, service activities, priorities, and desire to hold a protest or witness, in light of any continuing restrictions due to COVID-19 pandemic, and in light of current events including Black Lives Matter and activities surrounding criminal justice reform.
- We suggest a high priority goal of reviewing and revising some of the projects. Some 2022 Team members would like to get out into the community with more hands-on social justice projects, perhaps teaming with POWER. We suggest that holding the same MLK Day every year will create staleness. People may get tired of the same old projects.
- Consider additional ideas for hybrid and/or remote projects on behalf of USG
- Evaluate the number of projects and volunteers that can reasonably be conducted on-site at USG.
- Determine the number of people that can be safely accommodated in the sanctuary for the service and adjust volunteer numbers accordingly.
- Evaluate and implement options to streamline data management and communications with groups of volunteers.
- Accelerate the planning timeline. Co-chairs hold first planning meeting in September to review previous year's projects to highlight what went well, what needs modified if repeated this year,

solicit any new ideas. Assess where volunteers are interested in participating (projects, locations, etc.).

- Outreach to repeat nonprofits and potential new ones (in late October?) for confirmation of needs before Thanksgiving
- Final volunteer assignments by first week of December; suggested weekly meetings through MLK Day/week

SERVICE AUCTION COMMITTEE

Submitted by Celeste Lamb, Church Administrator

Members

Carolyn Cotton, Lynne Kalish, Judi Morrow, Nancy Radcliffe, Carolyn Scott, Celeste Lamb, Janet Haas.

Mission of Committee

To raise greatest amount of funds possible to assist USG in meeting its overall goals. To build fellowship and encourage community across all age levels within USG.

Goals Established for Past Year

- Discuss overall auction planning, fundraising challenges, volunteer engagement, and target audiences with the goal of exceeding the funds raised at previous year's auction
- Decide upon a fresh, fun auction theme that would appeal to all ages, as well as be family-friendly
- Evaluate new fundraising methods to insure we meet our goal for 2022
- Increase comfort with using Auctria online Auction software and Auction website
- look for ways to maximize its use
- Raise \$12,000

Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

- Our theme was Roots and Wings – taken from the words of *Spirit of Life* and significant as we move through this time of change
- Enhanced fun of online auction by offering gift card drawing for donors and coffee drawing for bidders
- Met and even exceeded \$12,000 fundraising goal over 10 days of bidding and sales.

Goals for Upcoming Church Year

- A long-term goal is still the discussion with the Ministry, Board and Met about various ways to increase fundraising efforts that are not totally dependent upon the auction committee.
- Encourage members of the congregation to join the committee with new ideas and techniques.
- The committee looks forward to the spring of 2023 and the realization of another live auction, hopefully using the theme of “The Wizard of Oz, which has been on ice since 2020.”

SHARE THE PLATE TASK FORCE

Submitted by Eric Foster, Chair

Mission of Committee

From the website, the Share the Plate tradition at USG aims to:

- Connect to something larger than just our community.
- Acknowledge our interdependence with each other.
- Focus our congregational outlook on abundance rather than scarcity.
- Strengthen our ties with our neighbors.
- Show our community that we are the church “of the loving heart, open mind and helping hands” in a tangible way.

New organizations are nominated, discussed, and/or reviewed for open months (there are usually only 3 or 4 open months, the rest being dedicated to “permanent” recipient organizations). When possible, awards are coordinated with monthly social justice themes.

Awards and Recipients

The 2021-22 year continued lower receipts due to the covid pandemic, but as the Sanctuary reopened in 2022, STP plates did pick up.

July did not include an STP recipient due to lack of nominations. Rebuilding Philadelphia, a regular on the STP docket, was reinstated, although turnout was low for the actual event. The plate was low (\$635) about half the historical collection. Christmas Eve services saw an unusually low attendance (again, pandemic related), so that the plate (\$1,240) was also about half the historical collection for our plate partner, PIHN. The MLK Day service collection was for Men Who Care, which has been supported before by STP and also the Covid Relief Fund we conducted in 2020. This collection was strong, \$2,485. And There was one new recipient this year, the Souls Shot Portrait Project, which came in at \$641. Others were repeat (and virtually “permanent”) recipients.

Overall, STP collections for the year are rebounding from the pandemic slump. The total to date (as of mid-May) is \$10,774, not unusual for a pre-pandemic year, and considerably more than last year’s total of \$5,835 for the same period.

The awards for the 2021-22 year are:

Month	Recipient	Award
April	New Sanctuary Movement	685
May	Starr King School for Ministry	165
June		0
July		0
August	Haiti (UUSC)	261
September	Lingelbach/Henry	545
October	Rebuilding Philly	635
November	HIAS - PA	1,810
December	PIHN	1,240
January	Men Who Care	2,485
February	POWER	1,297
March	UUSC - Ukraine	1,652
	Total trailing 12 months	10,774

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY FACILITATORS

Submitted by Jody Hill, Chair

Members

Jody Hill and Kent Matthies, co-chairs, Mark Bangela, Anne Bower, Treva Burger, Carolyn Cotton, Maryann Helferty, Shobhi Kanal, Nicole Miller, Latifah Griffin-Rogers, Andrea Parry, Prashant Rushti, Eileen Whelan, Adrienne Wolkenberg

Who will be the chair of this committee in the coming year?

Jody Hill and new person to be decided

Mission of Committee

To continue to provide a relevant and vibrant program of small group meetings that nourishes our souls. To continue to assure that these forums provide space for deep listening and discussion of assigned monthly spiritual themes. To carry this work out into the larger community of service. To continue to grow the program and draw in new members. To assist new facilitators in their roles.

Goals Established for Past Year

- To continue to extend outreach for inclusion in SGM of all interested church members and friends of the church.
- To continue to provide a sharp focus on content related to multiculturalism and freedom from oppression and to solicit input about relevant content.
- To work to match new members with groups that meet their time constraints and to be flexible with movement among groups if this is desired.
- To continue to meet as facilitators every 2-3 months to connect and to share issues that may arise and to assess if assistance is needed by group leaders

Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

- In spite of pandemic restrictions which kept nearly all groups meeting on ZOOM, the SGM program numbers around 100 participants.
- Latifah began leading the Young Adult group successfully.
- Treva's Racial Healing Group thrived and grew.
- Some groups were able to meet again in person, usually masked, when COVID restrictions changed, and some navigated the trickiness of hybrid meetings both in person and on ZOOM.
- Many members expressed much gratitude that this program helped and sustained them through the dark isolated times of the pandemic.

Goals for Upcoming Church Year

- To transition to (we hope) a post-pandemic environment in which we can again meet face to face and increase our connection and support for one another.
- To continue to provide ZOOM/hybrid option for those who cannot attend in person.
- To include our new interim minister in the program after Kent leaves (big sad sigh here).
- To re-establish a face to face welcoming presence when Fellowship Hour starts again to inform and recruit new members.
- To re-introduce service projects that may be completed as a group when restrictions are lifted.
- To continue to meet every 2-3 months as facilitators.

SHAPING JUSTICE Effort to find a new SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATING TEAM

Submitted by Carolyn Scott, Co-Chair of the Shaping Justice effort to find a new team

Members of the Shaping Justice group attempting to re-shape a new team and/or organization

Latifah Griffin-Rogers (co-chair), Carolyn Scott (co-chair), Jody Hill, Tesha Nesbit, Vanessa Lowe, Marilyn Dyson, Carla Campbell, Devery Howerton, and Janet Haas. (Other USG members participate from meeting to meeting, including Barbara Dowdall and Julie Morrison).

Who will lead this group in the upcoming church year? Vanessa Lowe and Jody Hill will be co-chairs of the Social Justice Council (or whatever name the new group chooses).

Mission of the Shaping Justice at USG Group

We have not yet created a mission statement. Please see the goals of this group below.

Goals of the Shaping Justice group

Our superb Social Justice Council coordinator from the past three years, Lois Murphy, stepped down from that position in summer of 2021 to assume chair of Worship Arts. With the challenge of the pandemic, USG has experienced some volunteer burn-out. The people who step forward as leaders are now assuming more roles and often have no time left to take on yet more tasks.

Thus, under the guidance of intern minister Latifah Griffin-Rogers, those people interested in Social Justice work (aside from the work of separate, smaller USG groups such as ERC) decided in the fall of 2021 to focus efforts from September 2021 until February 2022 just on creating a good MLK Day experience until after MLK DAY 2022 was over.

Then, beginning in late winter of 2022, a Shaping Justice discussion began among interested people (see above) with the goals of

- identifying leadership
- identifying what projects and efforts would be viable in our current situations of pandemic, changing ministerial leadership, and lower rate of volunteerism

Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

- Please note that USG's traditional social justice efforts were followed as much as possible during this second year of pandemic, although primarily because of someone's "institutional memory" or because of the commitment of a smaller social justice committee: the Rebuilding Together Philly USG Team, monthly SHARE THE PLATE donations, Holiday Angel Tree and Mitten Tree donations to PIHN, and the Annual Coat Drive.
- Other Social Justice groups at USG whose work was steady and ongoing included the Ending Racism Committee and the Racism Book Study Group.
- Successful MLK Day of Service, which had to be reinvented due to COVID-19 restrictions to be virtual and no contact, at which over 200 volunteers participated in 13 projects; coordinated with an MLK day worship service and activities for all ages.
- USG members, led by Mary Kalyna, have engaged in sustained public witness in support of Black Lives Matter and in 2022 in support of the Ukrainian people.

Goals for Upcoming Church Year

The goals for the next year are to continue to enhance communication and collaboration and to increase awareness and participation in social justice activities by members and friends of the congregation.

Significant initiatives for the upcoming year will include:

- Encourage USG members and friends to become more active in our partner groups:
 - POWER Interfaith working groups including environmental justice, criminal justice reform, education justice, economic justice, and voter engagement
 - UUJustice PA and collaboration with other Interfaith partners
 - PIHN
 - New Sanctuary Movement
 - Rebuilding Philly (Liaisons George Buckmann & Barbara Ginn)
- Develop templates, social justice area liaisons, and scheduling tools (incl. a common calendar) to facilitate communication within the committee and across USG, such as:
 - Template for requesting activity posting to USG communication vehicles
 - Instructions and guidance to the full church about the communication vehicles and the activities
- Review and reimagine opportunities for Martin Luther King Day of Service volunteer activities in
- January 2023
- Support USG's SHARE THE PLATE committee, nominees and efforts
- Plan and execute an annual Social Justice Sunday

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Submitted by Rick Rodes, Chair

Members

Rick Rodes, Chair; Eric Foster; Kent Matthies, Kay Weiser, George Buckmann, Jody Hill

Mission of Committee

To foster financial and congressional ownership among our members.

Goals Established for Past Year

The financial goal for last year's Pledge Campaign was \$400,000.

Significant Accomplishments of Church Year

April 10, 2021 launched Pledge Campaign through Sunday Service sermon/testimonials, mail, email, and OOS/eCommunicator announcements. -Received \$392,442 in pledges from 152 of 207 household solicitations. This was largest pledge amount in USG history. -Sent out thank you notes in timely manner.

Goals for Upcoming Church Year

Pledge campaign goal for 2022-2023 is \$400,000. Campaign theme is: in this year of USG leadership transition, pledge to your capacity to empower a strong USG future. As of May 12, 2022 we've received about 50 pledges totaling about \$150,000.

WELCOMING COMMUNITY TEAM

Submitted by Lisa Dutton, Former Chair

Members

Lisa Dutton (former Chair term ended Dec 2021), Treva Burger, Deb Kish-Silver, Elaine Hills, Eric Foster (MET rep), Margaret Thompson, Brandi Kirksey (as of April 2022), Stephen Conrad (was involved as the liaison to Ushers)

Mission of Committee

To welcome all and foster continued engagement with USG.

Goals Established for Past Year

- Offer a membership information session and/or question and answer session with the minister at least twice during the year.
- Adapt welcoming practices as needed when in person services resume (welcome table, supporting fellowship socializing – for whatever is allowed, mobilize greeters).
- Develop goals and implement processes appropriate to the needs of hybrid (in person and virtual) services.
- Expand the number of Welcoming Committee members – goal, add 1-2 people.
- Offer a UU102 session for newer members (and any members interested) to answer questions about USG, help people engage, and provide an overview of the USG databases. (not done so far)
- With CSD, provide information to bridging high school seniors about UUism where ever they are going and also online in early summer. (not done so far)
- Send holiday cards to congregants (will most likely go back to the former practice of just sending to those we haven't seen or those with Caring challenges over the last year).
- Continue to represent Welcoming needs on the Widening the Circle working meetings. Implement changes identified.

Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

- Offered new member meet and greet with the minister for new members to have the opportunity to talk with Rev. Kent and other leadership. This was held in person under the tent.
- Updated materials and processes to staff the Welcoming table when services were held outside from September to November 2021. Since some people were not yet attending face to face, meeting the staffing needs was a significant challenge. Welcoming trained several new people, some of whom then volunteered to be ushers.
- Conducted multiple UU101 sessions for people interested, most of whom were on the path to new membership.
- Trained additional volunteers to staff the Welcome table indoors starting in February 2022. (Many who used to volunteer in the past are not available to assist indoors)
- Welcomed a total of eight new people into membership in sessions held in November and April. Provided the necessary information and orientation sessions to prepare them for membership.
- Added two new members to the Welcoming Committee (one in August, one in April)
- Designed and sent holiday card to key congregants for outreach.
- Modified a UUA offering, Widening the Welcome, and offered it to USG congregants at no charge. There were two sessions.

- Continued to attend and co-lead the Widening the Circle review.

Who will be Chair of this committee in the upcoming Church year?

No one had been identified.

Goals for 2022-2023 Church Year

To be determined by/with new Chair.

WIDENING THE CIRCLE

Submitted by Treva Burger, Co-Chair

Members

Chairs: Andrea Barsevick, Treva Burger, Lisa Dutton

Members:

Nancy Anderson, Linda Bernstein, Carla Campbell, Barbara Dowdall, Eric Foster, Sarah Frazier, Latifah Griffin-Rogers, Janet Haas, Elaine Hills, Dev Howerton, Ryan Hurd, Shobhi Kanal, Kent Matthies, Lee Meinicke, Lois Murphy, Andrea Parry, Jim Salom, Margaret Thompson, Gerry Whelan.

Who will be the chair of this committee in the coming year? Andrea Barsevick, Treva Burger, Lisa Dutton

Mission of this committee

Our mission is well stated by the proposed 8th Principle: “Journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse and multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.” Specifically, we are using the Widening the Circle of Concern report from the UUA’s Commission on Institutional Change to identify USG specific anti oppression goals and actions, and develop plans to put them into action and remain accountable to them.

Goals Established for Past Year

- Develop goals and actions based on the recommendations in each chapter.
- Identify which USG entity to ask to take responsibility for each goal and action.
- Create a process for bringing the goals and actions to the identified entities to solicit their participation.
- Create a process for following up with identified entities to determine progress toward goals.
- Keep the congregation at large updated on our progress.

Significant Accomplishments of Past Year

A large group which included Board, MET and staff members and several committee chairs met most months to review each chapter and create goals and actions.

- Q&As; were held each month while we were 100% remote to share our process.
- Two sessions were held with a subset of the group to review process and make plans for soliciting committee support.
- A very well received Widening the Circle worship service was held in February, 2022.

- The Board added a budget line item for leadership anti oppression training and 8 USG members attended a workshop offered by the Center for the Study of White American Culture in April 2022.
- Seven members of the WtC group attended the Trans Inclusion workshop offered by USG in spring 2022.
- A Board sub-committee was created to look at updating the Covenant of Right Relations to consider having it address microaggressions and to develop practices that increase accountability to it.
- The Board voted to ensure that USG compensates staff according to the UUA Fair Compensation Guidelines.
- Widening the Circle has helped to inform the searches for a new Music Director and an Interim Minister and in the formulation of the Board's priorities for the 2022-23 church year.

Goals for 2022-2023 Church Year

- Using the Goals and Actions agreed upon by the group, begin to connect with relevant committees/staff members at USG to share how they can help to work toward the goals.
- Follow up with groups/individuals who agree to put actions into practice to determine progress.
- Identify ways the WtC group and the larger congregation can learn more about the need to and value of "widening our circle", by becoming an explicitly anti-oppressive congregation.
- Achieve some of the many goals and actions proposed. The current version of our goals and actions is found in this google doc: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1cKptuFcwx7-zbQJL_q_16SzskL04YDTuO7JNksuNHQM/edit

WORSHIP ARTS

Submitted by Lois Murphy, Chair

Members of Committee -

Minister, Intern Minister, DSD director, Music Director, Margaret Thompson (representing Welcoming) and Steve Conrad (representing Ushers)

Who will be the chair of this committee in the coming year?

Lois Murphy

Mission of Committee

The Worship Arts Committee (WAC) meets on the first Thursday of each month. Each month we review the previous months' Services, and address issues related to worship and CSD, Ushers, Music. Our mission is to plan and present uplifting and spiritually relevant worship services that meet the needs and feed the souls of the community and contribute to our mission of Building Beloved Community with compassion, service and empowerment. The committee is responsible for scheduling Worship Associates and filling in guest speakers when the minister is not in the pulpit. Further, it is the responsibility of the WAC Chair to track the development of Service during the week when the minister is not involved in building a Sunday Service

Goals Established for Past Year

Goals include strengthening each component of our Sunday Services, including: • Full review of the UUA Widening the Circle Report • Installation of cameras in the Sanctuary for hybrid Services • Explore having a member of a local Lenape Nation addressing the congregation continuing to improve our in- person celebration of life as in person services resume

Significant Accomplishments of Past Year

The continuing pandemic created numerous challenges, opportunities and accomplishments for worship arts including: -- Adjusting to changing periods with needs for Zoom Services, in person services in the tent, and multi-platform services -- Welcoming people back to in person services in the sanctuary, with COVID restrictions -- Engaging substitute musicians and a visiting music coordinator to replace the retiring Music Director -- presenting several worship services with multiple guest speakers from within the congregation, including on the topic of widening the circle, and on engaging in service -- incorporating a Land Acknowledgment into the service on the first Sunday of every month

Goals for 2022-2023 Church Year

Continuing to implement innovations such to widen the circle -- Continuing to improve our tech capacities to continue to present multi-platform services effectively -- Building our connection to musicians in the community to incorporate a wide variety of musicians and musical genres -- inviting more families and members to participate in readings and in chalice lighting, and in other ways -- exploring more interactive elements into the service, such as joys and sorrows and other actions -- increasing our efforts to include attendees who are participating remotely.