

**Friendship United Methodist Church**  
**2020 Annual Report to the Church Conference by Church Council**  
Submitted by: *Ayodeji Sanyaolu*

The Church Council met every month except January because of the Corona Virus -19. We conducted seven (7) meetings during 2020 so far; We met in February, March, April, May, June, July, August, and September. We concentrated our efforts in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our congregation during this pandemic. We prepared plans to conduct Sunday services through ZOOM and Facebook which are very successful. In addition, we formed ReTurn team to prepare plan for congregation's return back to face-to-face, in person worship, following Illinois Governor recommendations.

The Corona Virus prevent us from intensifying our Adult Faith Formation effort to provide opportunities for church members and new attendees to grow in their faith lives through a process of study and service. However, we formed JEDI, Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion team to focus our attention on current important Racial, injustice, and brutality in the country. The desired outcome is to call attention to and take actions to eradicate or minimize the impact of these issues in our church and community. We intend to create, nurture, and strengthen discipleship for Christ by our example of loving our neighbors as our self. In addition, we developed Shepherding Ministry to get connected through weekly phone calls or email to all members of the congregation.

The Church Council have developed the template for the **Annual Ministry Calendar** whereby each committee annotates their planned activities for the year, and the calendar will be transparent to the congregation by posting it in Friendship Center.

Staff Parish have developed and we continue to use **Friendship Core Values** (*Love, Grow, Serve*) to evaluate all Church events. This will encourage members to experience togetherness and unity, in addition to sharing their talents and joys. Event Planning Worksheet is already in place.

FUMC formed a Task Force for Full Inclusion in response to United Methodist adoption of the Traditional Plan that was approved by the February 2019 General Conference. We created the task force to help us prepare and navigate through the turbulent and uncertain time ahead. FUMC intention and goal is to learn the Biblical and Theological perspective of human sexuality; Reach out to our community (including LGBT persons) but not limited to churches; Insure that FUMC is inclusive of all God's children and this will be evident in all church printed materials; Articulate our stories as a way of witnessing our faith; and build solidarity with other community organizations and churches, that support building and inclusive community. We transited from Full Inclusion to JEDI to expand our scope.

Outreach: FUMC is still actively involved in our community through Giving Tree Ministry, and involvement at Valley View School District. Our members are involved with the food pantry. The Caregivers Support Group led by Mary Steinwandt still provides devotional materials. We also continue to focus our efforts on and participate in Daybreak Shelter. In addition, the STEM after School Program that was established at FUMC last fall for 8 grades through 12 Grades ran smoothly.

United Methodist Women (UMW) at FUMC has been vocal and they are active participants in immigration issues. They hosted several workshops to help immigrants trying to become USA citizens.

Team Quest is working diligently to develop the direction for the new Leadership Structure at FUMC. Simplified Structure of the administrative functions of the church is being investigated and other churches that have implemented the process were contacted to determine the best practices.

Congregation Assessment Tool (**CAT**) was conducted at FUMC. The result will give us the snapshot of our culture, priorities, health, and vitality of our church. We intend to use the result to rejuvenates, strengthen, and improve our congregation.

**Study and small groups:**

Congregational Development study group completed Disciple I, which lasted 34 weeks using Immerging Bible (becoming Disciples through Bible Study). Disciple II. Is scheduled for late September or early October.

Senior Bible Study and luncheon

Finances: COVID-19 epidemic is affecting the offerings. However, our focus is to continue to increase our Apportionment giving each year, because we haven't made it to 100%. Our mortgage situation is looking better than ever, and we have less than one (1) years left on our mortgage!

Ahead for 2021: A new dynamic, energetic, Spiritual and prayerful congregation at FUMC