

Gulf Cove United Methodist Church
Helping Everyone Meet, Know, and Serve Jesus
DNA Meeting
February 24, 2014 – 7:10 PM

Attendees:

Rev. Dr. Don Nations (via Skype)	Rev. Dr. Bill Fisackerly Scott Folsom	John McGuire Bea Penski	Ken Priest Linda Starck
Rick Starck (Ad Council Chairman)	Carol McGuire	Joan Priest	Dana Hanson

The meeting was opened with prayer by Rick Starck. The candle representing Jesus Christ had been lit prior to the short Ad Council meeting which preceded this meeting.

Rick explained how we would like “meeting Jesus” to be our focus for this year. At our Vision Retreat held on February 15, brainstorming whittled our focus down to two areas:

- Hold worship services on non-Sundays and/or hold services off campus
- Streaming services over the internet

The intent is to develop these ideas further and develop concrete plans for going forward.

STREAMING/RECORDING SERVICES

Dr. Nations advised of his experience with streaming services:

North Naples UMC Streaming

- While they have pretty slick technology, they do *not* have a cutting-edge, contemporary service, so they are not reaching an entire group of new people.
- They invested well over \$100,000 on technology, a creative team, an on-line campus coordinator, his work overseeing the project, Facebook advertising, and Google ads.
- They average 50-60 unique IP connections per week.
- They average 1,500+ individuals at worship services.
- Since their streaming started late August 2013, they have yet to determine whether a spike will occur after the northerners leave. Their numbers have been fairly consistent since August.

Suncoast Community Church Streaming

- They *do* have a cutting-edge contemporary service.
- They average 1,800 at worship services
- They average 300 unique IP connections per week.

Church of the Resurrection Streaming

- Over 10,000 attend many different worship services each week.
- Average 3,000 unique IP connections per week.

Streaming In General

- The number of churches broadcasting traditional to quasi-boomer contemporary services to reach new people is probably pretty low.
- If you just set up a camera and stream it, it is unlikely you will receive a big audience.
- If you put the technology into it, a 3 or 4 camera system, the lighting, the paid or volunteer staff time to run it, you will still face the issue of whether you will receive more than 20 to 40 hits.
- Groups who look at streaming services do not tend to donate to the church unless they are already in or moving to the area.
- Packages can be purchased from Ustream or Livestream based on your needs and planned audience.
- Streaming platforms are similar enough that often a platform is provided by the company (Ustream, Livestream, etc.).
- Each quality camera cost at least \$5,000, plus controllers, plus a dedicated expensive high-end MAC to process it.

Recording Services

- Here, the worship service would be recorded and placed on-line, but not streaming.
- This is a viable option if you don't have a ton of money to invest. The only thing you really need to concern yourself with is whether you have the right lighting.
- The recording could be placed on YouTube (free) or Vimeo (free or small cost).
- Some put the recording on the church's website.
- Many use a YouTube channel or Vimeo channel and provide just the sermon. By putting just the sermon on-line, they avoid potential problems with licensing issues when it comes to music.
- Recorded services can be edited to eliminate portions of the service, such as announcements.
- What you put on-line depends on who your target audience is (northerners, homebound, new people, etc.).
- A podcast (just audio) or video file could be used.
- An individual who retrieves a podcast or video receives the signal from your website but is hitting their service provider hard for bandwidth to download it.
- A 20GB upload speed is sufficient for a recording without a lot of HD material embedded. That is what GCUMC has available.
- Recording services generally does not qualify for "meeting Jesus."

GCUMC WEBSITE

- GCUMC is *not* listed on the first three pages of results for a search under "Port Charlotte Church." [Dana Hanson checked later and notes that we *are* listed on the *first* page under searches for "Gulf Cove Church" and "Englewood Methodist Church," on the *second* page of

searches for “North Port FL Methodist Church,” and on the third page of searches for “Englewood FL Church.” We are *not* listed on the first three pages for “Englewood Church” or “North Port FL Church.”]

- Our website is currently designed for in-house, with insider materials.
- Rick pointed out that the initial goal was for insiders, with expansion later to outsiders. He thinks mobile apps are more appropriate for youth.
- Other churches which have a growing membership have exposure through Facebook advertising, website content, first-page results in search engines, some direct mail (often oversized postcards).

NON-SUNDAY/OFF-SITE SERVICES

In General

- If a church has attendance equal to 1% of the population within a 5-mile radius, it is considered to be doing pretty well. If 2%, it is considered pretty amazing. If 3%, it is considered to be going like gangbusters.
- Assuming the population within 5 miles of GCUMC totals 35,000, then we are doing well since our yearly average attendance is 357.

Charlotte Harbor Super Boat Grand Prix

- Current ideas for this outreach/fundraiser activity stemmed from the success of our first Pig Pickin’.
- The event is being held off Manasota Key (Englewood) on April 11, 12, & 13 (Palm Sunday).
- Physical Attributes: 20x40 tents (two, side-by-side), pulled pork, tables at which to sit & eat or get out of the shade
- Worship Service on the beach, possibly Saturday at sunset or Palm Sunday morning.
- Dr. Nations suggested we also consider having sunscreen available and holding a drawing for \$100 gift cards. The drawing would provide information for follow-up with local individuals.
- We would have hosts and hostesses available to speak with individuals and provide hospitality.
- We do not know if we can sell sodas or water (even the small size).
- Because of the \$20 per person entry fee, you would not expect a lot of very young children to attend.
- On Friday late afternoon, a parade will be held in Punta Gorda. Vendors use Friday to set up on Englewood Beach.
- Current information seems to indicate that everything will wind down by 7pm on both Saturday and Sunday. The actual boat races are scheduled for 12pm and 2pm on Sunday. [A check of the website at www.chsbgp.com indicates the “festival site” is open from 9am-5pm on Saturday. For Sunday, the last-listed item is the awards ceremony at 5pm.]
- [This topic was discussed further after Dr. Nations signed off of Skype.]

One-Shot Events

- Dr. Nations likes the idea of a one-shot event several times a year. This would be much easier to handle than a weekly service requiring more time, more people, more advertising, more bands, and a different venue to sustain the effort.
- Other one-shot events could include, 4th of July parade, boat races, Christmas parade, community Thanksgiving something.
- A once-a-month lecture series could be developed to attract adults, with an elementary program for children and a nursery provided as necessary.

Vacation Bible School

- At our recent Education meeting, it was decided that VBS this year would be held on one evening a week for five consecutive weeks, instead of the usual all-sessions-in-one-week format.
- Our target audience is unchurched elementary children and their parents/guardians.
- We would be offering some type of program for the parents (parenting classes, Dave Ramsey on financial matters, guest speakers, dealing with stress, Facebook 101, Bible 101, etc.).
- Possibly our Food for the Soul dinner could be offered to VBS children and their parents. It would entail moving the dinner from 5:30 to 5:00, since VBS will be starting at 5:30.
- Currently, we have 40-50 people who attend dinner and sessions on Wednesday evenings.
- Involving people socially may be a prerequisite to inviting them to attend worship services.
- An elementary teacher in our church might be able to suggest practical one-night seminars that would be good for the parents.

Dr. Nations signed off of Skype at 8:10pm. Several topics of discussion continued after that.

ON-LINE STREAMING

Ken Priest reported that at the recent technology seminar he attended, the head videographer for Joel Osteen made one of the presentations. He made it clear that for a good live-streaming program, you have to treat it as a production facility and have a huge budget for it. Their church building was set up like a studio. Ken said most of GCUMC's lighting is at a bare-minimum level. Most quality lights cost \$5,000 to \$20,000 each, and several banks of 8 lights are needed. It would be much more economical to record just the sermon and possibly one or two other sections of a service, edit the video, and upload it to YouTube.

NON-SUNDAY SERVICES

- In order to achieve a quality worship service off-site on a weekly basis, a second worship team would be needed.

- An off-campus facility was established by a northern church in a less affluent area. It was able to provide meals and other services in addition to worship services.
- Two unrelated northern churches jointly revamped a bar into a coffee shop. Two ministers were there to sit and talk, pray, and hold services if requested. They were reaching unchurched people in a non-threatening environment. They outgrew the facility.
- Storefronts can be obtained and services held there. This would also be a great venue for lay speakers and testimonials.
- An amphitheater could hold monthly or quarterly concerts, but during the summer months, it might come close to being unbearable.
- In San Diego, a church purchased a five-building warehouse complex. Each warehouse was redesigned for a specific purpose. One looked like and held traditional services. Another held children's activities. Another building appealed to the Gen-X generation. On Saturday evenings, the sermon is recorded. Then on Sunday mornings, while each service is held in its respective building, the minister provides a live sermon in one building, while the pre-recorded sermon is played at the others.

BOAT RACE AND VBS

- We should seriously consider putting all our energy into the boat race event on April 11-13 (which is less than 7 weeks away), before we start considering adult programs for VBS (which will not start until 6 or 7 weeks after the boat race weekend).
- On the other hand, ideally we would have the next 6 months to year of major events outlined on flyers which can be handed out at the boat race.
- We should not offer just one class, but several from which parents/guardians at VBS can choose.
- This year, the list of VBS topics should be advertised at the boat race, along with other future events.
- It is best to let Alfred Current handle the Pig Pickin' meal at the boat race.
- We should have individuals present who can clean tables and carry on conversations with people at the same time.
- We should have a theme for our tent space which will coincide with the boat show:
 - "Rest Under the Blue Roof"
 - "Courtesy of the Church With the Blue Roof"
 - "Pin the Tail on the Pig" with an apple in its mouth
 - Banners with our name with the blue roof logo at the top
 - Blue tarps
- We need to be careful of what type of things we hand out, because we are responsible for trash receptacles and the trash we generate.
- A game could be provided for the children, such as a corn-toss.
- Perhaps the Sawdust Boys could create small wooden games for the tables.

RELAY FOR LIFE FUNDRAISER

Ken informed the group that a fish fry and candlelight luminary service will be held on Saturday, March 22. The meals will be served between 4:30 and 6:00, at a cost of \$15 each; only 200 tickets will be available. Luminaries will be available for \$10 each, or 3 or more at \$5 each. Luminaries will be lit inside the darkened sanctuary, and will be taken to the Relay for Life on April 4. Although there will be no outside publicity, it is open to our congregation and friends whom they invite. All thought it was a great idea.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50pm with communion and a prayer by Rev. Bill.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Hanson