

Gulf Cove United Methodist Church
Helping Everyone Meet, Know, and Serve Jesus
Church Council Meeting
(Formerly known as Administrative Council)
September 22, 2014 – 7:00 PM

Attendees:

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| Rick Starck (Church Council Chairman) | Sandy Doty John Furtado | Jo Ann Hopkins Carol McGuire | Ken Priest Jeanne Shrout |
| Rev. Dr. Bill Fisackerly | Betty Hansell | John McGuire | Shirley Smith |
| Vic Costello | Mary Hilton | Rev. Bill Oakley | |
| Alfred Current | Irv Hopkins | Marsha Oakley | |

The meeting was opened with the lighting of the candle representing Jesus Christ, followed by a prayer by Rick Starck.

Corrections To Previous Minutes – The recording secretary was notified of a correction to the minutes of the May 27, 2014, meeting. On printed page 3, in the paragraph just above the first list of bulleted items, the second sentence should read: “The purpose is to ensure that the individual is from Charlotte County or south Sarasota [NOT Desoto] County.”

Topic #003: Scouting Announcement

Submitted by: Rick Starck on 9-20-2014

The Book of Discipline provides for the advocacy, cooperation and relationship building with scouting organizations.

Please welcome Boy Scout Troop 776 to our church campus. The Boy Scouts require a sponsorship for each new troop and Gulf Cove UMC is now the proud sponsor of Troop 776. The cost is approximately \$100 per year. The scouts will provide a copy of their \$1,000,000 liability insurance and a “Hold Harmless” certificate.

Alfred Current, Randy Moore, Rev. Bill and Irv Hopkins along with Mr. Whitting were instrumental in bringing Troop 776 to our campus. Mr. Whitting, a Charlotte County Dep. Sheriff, will be the troop leader along with two other retired deputies. The troop will be starting with six boys and will meet in portable Rm#201 on Monday evenings. The troop has many plans including visiting the church in uniform and even participating in a Sunday service.

Alfred Current has advised when troops are associated with a church it is not uncommon to see their families joining the church. Additionally, we need to consider adding Cub Scout packs as feeder organizations for the Boy Scouts.

Scouting (both boys and girls) promotes a healthy education for our youth and in partnership with our church is bound to exert a positive influence on our community.

Irv Hopkins explained that he was contacted by a Boy Scout leader who was looking for a sponsor for a new Boy Scout troop. After discussions, they are now meeting at 7:00pm on Monday evenings in #201, currently with six Boy Scouts. Alfred Current said they expect to establish a feeder program for young boys who graduate from the Cub Scout program.

Rick said the cost to sponsor a troop is about \$100 a year. Jo Ann Hopkins advised that \$300 will be included in next year’s budget for all scouting activities. Alfred indicated a committee could be formed, ideally of former scouts, to find out what the scouts need and to lead us in the right direction.

Rev. Bill advised that the Nominating Committee nominates Alfred Current as the Boy Scout Liaison between the Boy Scout troops and the church. All approved the nomination. Congratulations, Alfred!

Myakka River Elementary School: Alfred approached the Myakka River Elementary School in late spring and in August about ways in which GCUMC could assist the school. They recently asked him back to confer in more detail. The school indicated they could use additional avenues for their usual fundraising activities; they need adults who can act as proctors during tests (just to ensure that children are not exchanging answers); and they need adults who can assist with the reading program. They agreed they could promote Trunk or Treat, the Thanksgiving dinner (including deliveries for shut-ins), Christmas activities (to include adding a few children to our Angel Tree program), and the Easter Egg Hunt. The Outreach Committee will address the interface between Myakka River Elementary School and GCUMC.

Finances & SPR 2015 Budget Update: Rick reported on behalf of Joan Priest (SPR chairman). Preliminarily, SPR has determined, based on a nation-wide study, that most of GCUMC's paid positions are being paid in the "reasonable" range. However, two positions are grossly underpaid and we must start making adjustments, probably over a three- to five-year period. SPR is also considering a part-time audio-video position at about \$12,000 a year.

John Furtado reported that through August, spendable income has reached \$268,000. In July, \$5,000 was transferred from the Reserve Fund to pay expenses, which currently contains about \$25,000. Although nothing from the Reserve fund was used in August, he anticipates \$10,000 to \$12,000 being needed to cover September expenses.

After the mortgage was paid off, the plan was to put an amount equal to the monthly mortgage payment into the Reserve Fund until it was fully funded (\$37,000), and then into a separate account for future needs. That has not been done, however, because all funds received have been used to pay current expenses. John is hopeful that once the northern folks return, the monthly mortgage amount can be set aside.

We have been notified that our Apportionments will increase from \$39,365 being paid in 2014 to \$40,631 being due in 2015. Rick reported that overall, we will have to do fundraising outreach activities to meet anticipated expenses for 2015.

Topic #006: Team Cuba Resolution

Submitted by: Rick Starck on September 22, 2014

RESOLUTION: The Church Council of the Gulf Cove United Methodist Church on recommendation of the Nicaro sister church steering committee and by consensus of the members present hereby creates and authorizes the operation of a new permanent Cuba Missions Committee to be known as **Team Cuba**. The Nicaro sister church steering committee is hereby dissolved.

PURPOSE: The goal of the **Team Cuba** is to make disciples of Jesus Christ in Cuba. **Team Cuba** shall seek to guide, inform and prayerfully engage our church members in light of this purpose statement.

MEETINGS: *Team Cuba* shall meet at least quarterly. The Pastor or the chairperson may call special meetings.

MEMBERSHIP: The initial members of *Team Cuba* shall be the members serving on the Nicaro steering committee: Betty Hansell as chairperson, Rick Starck, Linda Starck, John McGuire, Carol McGuire, Vic Costello, Alfred Current, Karen Current, Ken Priest, Joan Priest, Harold Grafe, Dee Grafe, John Furtado, Scott Folsom, Jeanne Shroust and Mary Hilton. Each member shall serve a term of two years. After the initial term the Committee on Nominations and Leadership Development shall propose to the Church Council replacement members with terms ranging from one to three years following the guidelines of three class membership set forth in the Book of Discipline. In the event a member is unable or unwilling to serve his full term the Church Council will appoint a replacement for the remainder of his term.

QUORUM: The members present and voting at any duly announced meeting shall constitute a quorum.

FINANCE: *Team Cuba* shall seek to finance its mission through donations or fund raising efforts outside the general budget of Gulf Cove United Methodist Church. Dawn Tesauro as Treasurer of GCUMC will establish accounting system line items to accommodate any new fund raising and expenditures. The intent is for Team Cuba to use its best judgment in the application of the funds as it is difficult to determine in advance what the needs are of our sister church. Expenditures from the special mission funds will be recommended by *Team Cuba* for approval by the Church Council.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. **Prayer.** Encourage the congregation to participate in continual prayer for our sister church, its members and community.
2. **Education.** Create publicity to educate our membership and community of the missions supported by our church.
3. **Budget.** Prepare a budget to be presented to the Church Council for approval and oversee its implementation throughout the year.
4. **Material.** Prepare, maintain and publish a list of the material needs of our Nicaro sister so that our members may contribute as the Spirit moves them.
5. **Evaluation.** Review the effectiveness of support programs making adjustments as needed.
6. **Listen.** Receive and consider input from church members making program adjustments as necessary.

Jeanne Shroust advised that after last week's Finance meeting, she sent out a letter to most individuals who had made contributions to our sister church in Nicaro, Cuba. Initially funds were sought for either the pastor's salary or a food program for the Nicaro church. In the letter, contributors were asked if they objected to a broader use of the money. For instance, when Scott Folsom took our first donation to the church in July, we had thought they would use it for food. However, they advised that it would be used to purchase a community washing machine. We learned very quickly that their actual needs are different from what we thought they would be. We must let them decide how to best use the money they receive. Everybody (except three individuals who have not yet responded) agreed with the proposal in Jeanne's letter, that the funds may be used in any manner.

People can donate to the ministry by designating on their check or on their giving envelope "Team Cuba" and an amount.

The inclusion of preparing a “budget” as a responsibility (item #3) of Team Cuba was questioned. Rick explained that the Church Council should have enough oversight to understand what is happening with funds which are donated for a sister church. Team Cuba, however, will interface with Nicaro and Dan Christopherson in ascertaining how the funds will be used. As explained by Rev. Bill, we want to give Team Cuba the authority to spend money in a manner which is best for that ministry; how the donations are spent or distributed is still accountable under church procedures; we do not know exactly how much will be available every year because it is made up entirely of designated donations; it is not a “budget line item.” Several suggested rewording it to “accountability of expenditures” or a similar phrase. After extensive discussion, Rick indicated he will reword the “budget” paragraph (#3).

Team Cuba has already announced in the October Newsletter that designs are being sought for a banner that symbolizes the relationship between GCUMC and our sister church. It asks that a rough drawing of any idea be submitted to the office by October 15. It is anticipated the banner will be hung in our sanctuary, and a duplicate banner presented to the Nicaro church in November 2015, when about six of our members will accompany Dan Christopherson to Cuba.

Topic #004: 2015 Boat Races

Submitted by: Rick Starck on 9/20/14

According to the Englewood Sun Charlotte County will be hosting the 2nd Annual Super Boat Race on one of two weekends after Easter. No dates have been determined.

As you might recall we approved a budget of \$5000 for a vendor application, tent and equipment rental and other setup costs for the 1st boat race. We had anticipated a concession of Alfred’s famous BBQ pork combined with an outreach opportunity by having one of the few shady spots on the beach. Things got a little complicated last year so we ended up dropping our plans.

Alfred and Karen were able to scout the vendors and beach area and concluded we could have a successful beach entry for 2015 if we signed up early.

I believe when we have an opportunity of combining outreach with fund raising we should take a good look at it. Our expenses for 2015 are likely to be considerably higher than 2014. I would like to see a special group established to review the 2015 vendor rules and recommend a course of action.

Assuming we join in this event next spring, Rick anticipates a large tent on the beach, inviting people in and explaining who we are, as well as selling sandwiches or BBQ. Several comments were made which impact on the potential outreach:

- At this type of activity where beer flows so freely, it might not be an appropriate outreach for GCUMC, unless it was looked at solely as a fundraiser.
- Many people who attended that day were from out-of-town and would not be here again.
- Many people were drunk.
- Many local businesses reported that they were negatively impacted.
- The county, which already obligated itself to hold the event again, has indicated that next year it will be held after Easter.

- One of the local Rotary Clubs was expecting to make around \$10,000, but only made \$2,000. However, many admitted the event was not handled correctly from a logistics standpoint.
- GCUMC is already involved in, and planning to hold, several other activities that perhaps we should pass on the boat races which would entail a lot of planning and a substantial outlay of cash for a two-day event.

With our limited number of volunteers available, the decision was made to pursue the Farmer's Market, the Scouts, and School programs, and forego the 2015 Boat Races.

Topic #007: Farmer's Market

Submitted by: Rick Starck 9/20/14

The Board of Trustees listened to a proposal by Shawna Lange, who manages Boca Grande Farmers Market (<http://bocagrandefarmersmarket.com>). Shawna is interested in starting a farmers market in our area in January 2015. We are currently exploring the possibility of using our front lawn as a site. The Farmer's Market would typically run one day a week for 26 weeks during the peak season (Oct. – Mar.). To avoid competitive market days in other areas only Monday or Tuesday can be considered. The market would be open 4 hours (either morning or afternoon) and the grounds would be cleaned afterwards by a cleaning company. No inside booths would be offered. Booth space would be sold for \$25 to \$35. Gulf Cove would retain a small portion of this fee. The vendors could be limited to farmers only or could include arts and crafts. It is anticipated that there would be 35 to 50 vendors the initial year with more growth afterward.

There are numerous outreach opportunities possible with a farmer's market. The most obvious is the exposure of our church to thousands of new people. Other possibilities include:

- A Gulf Cove booth/tent with handout materials for various ministries
- Crafty Ladies booth (possibly in rotation with our other ministries)
- Closet of Hope
- A Gulf Cove concession stand (this could be an important fund raiser)

There is a lot to be considered and we are asking for your comments and ideas. Please contact the church office 941-697-1747 or gulfcoveumc@centurylink.net.

Establishing a Farmer's Market would be a 26-week endeavor from October through March. A charge would be levied for booth space outside the church building. The market would be held on a Monday or Tuesday for four hours. The inside of the church would be available primarily for toilet facilities, but short tours thru the building could also be made. It was anticipated that GCUMC would sell sandwiches during market hours. A couple other questions involve insurance requirements and the contracts to be signed. Rev. Bill is in favor of the project only if church volunteers are present every time the market is open. Rick would like to obtain Church Council approval now so we will be ready by January 1. [Note that there is a lot of information available on the Boca Grande website listed above.]

One concern involves GCUMC's 501(c)(3) exempt organization status. One limitation is if you sell something on a regular basis, then you are considered to be a for-profit organization. It might require an entity being created by the church for that purpose.

Betty Hansell and Sandy Doty suggested that a short “topic of interest” could be presented during the market – such as a CPR class, computer class, scam presentation, or an Alpha class. In addition, it was suggested that each of the church’s ministries set up a booth during one week.

Jo Ann Hopkins moved, seconded by John Furtado, that the church pursues establishing a relationship with the Farmers Market. None opposed the motion.

Topic #005: Alpha

Submitted by: Rick Starck on 9/20/14

Alpha is a series of interactive sessions designed to explore life and the basics of Christian faith in a friendly no pressure atmosphere. Both Christians and non-Christians, eighteen to eighty freely ask the big questions of life and death and are encouraged to debate their meaning.

Alpha began in central London and is now offered in 169 countries in 112 languages. Typically Alpha consists of about ten to fifteen sessions and includes food, a short video followed by a discussion period. Settings range from: churches to bars, work places to residences.

Bringing things down to our local level, Sandy Doty, a new member of Gulf Cove UMC, has been trained in Alpha and will be introducing the course to our congregation. The plan is to first offer the course to our members so that we can see what Alpha is all about. Hopefully during this introductory period we will be able to identify some facilitators and fill some other needed positions. Alpha provides training materials and session guidelines.

The second phase would be offering sessions to the community at large. This is best done by direct invitation. We do NOT try to sign up new Christians. Alpha is about explaining basic Christianity and holding friendly discussions. The observed results show some participants continuing their quest and becoming involved.

This is outreach at its best.

The first training session was held on September 10 and the final will be on September 24. If you missed the first one it’s not too late. Just show up after the Wednesday dinner.

From these two training sessions we will proceed to the initial course offering to our congregation. The weekly sessions start October 1 and run through December 10. Sessions start at 5:30 (meal) – 8:15 p.m. No session on November 26.

See our website: [Alpha Information](#)

Sandy Doty advised that the second training session will be on Wednesday September 24. Then from October 1 through December 10, the Alpha course will be offered to our congregation. A third training session will occur in mid-November, and a celebration dinner will be held after December 10. The plan is to start offering Alpha to the community beginning in January. It is possible that an upcoming ten-week session could be offered as a day or afternoon course.

Sandy stated that on Sunday morning, September 28, Debbie Herrington will come from Punta Gorda and explain to all three services what Alpha has meant in her personal life. Debbie was a leader of the program last year. Preview night will be held for GCUMC parishioners for one hour on Monday September 29. (No dinner, but maybe dessert.) Sandy pointed out that the Disciple programs are considered to be Bible studies. Alpha, on the other hand, is NOT a Bible study. It is a program which addresses the big questions, and leads to Bible studies.

Disciple Fast-Track: Rick informed the group about the Disciple Fast-Track program. The basic Disciple program is offered over a 32- or 34-week period, with meetings of 2-1/2 hours each week. Under the Fast-Track program, it is offered over 24 weeks, with 75-minute meetings each week. Information on the shortened program can be found at <http://www.disciplefasttrack.com/>.

Non-Sunday / Off-Site Worship Service Leadership Team: This team was established on 3/24/2014 at our Vision Retreat. No meetings have been held, but GCUMC has been involved in many other outreach programs.

Live-Streaming On-Line, YouTube, etc., Leadership Team: This team was established on 3/24/2014 at our Vision Retreat. It has been determined that live streaming would be very expensive. However, once the expansion of our sound booth is finished, some alternate opportunities may become available.

Closet of Hope: Shirley Smith posed the idea of converting the Closet of Hope into a thrift store, similar to what numerous other churches have. The cost for clothing could still be free for those who are in need, but a minimal charge could be asked from those who are able to pay. Instead of charging per item, clothing could be charged per bag.

Her vision expands into a coffee house which could be operated simultaneously with the thrift store. She felt opening the store on Wednesday evenings (in addition to Saturday mornings) would bring in more people for dinner. Shirley's small group would likely be participants in these ministries.

Jeanne Shroul advised that people come to our Closet *to make donations* from as far as Sarasota and Naples, and they always verify that our clothes are *given away* without charge and that our volunteers do not cherry-pick through what is received. In addition, Englewood UMC members often bring over men's clothing.

Small Group Bowling: Vic Costello advised that our small groups are growing. The new bowling group is not a small group in the traditional sense, but allows for a form of outreach. The bowling group averages 20-21 bowlers each Sunday evening, and so far has been comprised of different people each week. The people who attend range from 6 years old to 81 years old, and represent all three services.

Faith Sharing: Vic Costello submitted a letter this evening in which he is resigning as chairman of this committee. With his venturing into Stephen Ministry, he feels he is being called in a slightly different direction. However, he has discussed with Sandy Doty the possibility of her taking over as chairman of Faith Sharing, and she has agreed – subject to the Nominations Committee's and Church Council's approval. Rev. Bill will make the necessary contacts with the Nominations Committee members, and will further advise the Church Council at its next

meeting. All those present agreed to temporarily grant the position to Sandy. Congratulations and Thank you, Sandy!

Vision Retreat, Training, & Emmaus: Rev. Bill advised that the District will be offering training for members of the board of trustees, SPR, and finance committee on Saturday, February 21. In addition, he believes that January 22 and January 29 are Emmaus weekends. Although no one from GCUMC has yet applied to attend one of the Emmaus weekends, both Rev. Bill and Kim have been asked to assist. Our Vision Retreat will be held on Saturday, February 28, 2015.

The Valentine's Day Ball: Shirley Smith indicated that plans are being made for a ball on Saturday, February 14. It is planned to hold it in the evening, and a band will be brought in to provide music.

Pig Pickin': The Second Annual Pig Pickin' will be held on Friday, February 6, 2015.

Thanksgiving Day Dinner: It will be held on Thursday, November 27. Don Teague and Charles Hilton have agreed to take charge of the Thanksgiving Dinner which will be provided free-of-charge to the community. Volunteers will be needed all week to prepare the food and the sanctuary for Thursday's gala event.

Building/Campus Enhancement Team: Rick suggested that this committee be formed in the near future to consider what GCUMC wants to do. Some studies have shown that if you build a church to hold 100 people, once 65 people attend regularly, people stop coming -- because they don't like to sit elbow-to-elbow. During the summer, we don't have a problem, but during the winter, our services are full. The Closet of Hope is jammed; we need more meeting rooms; if we get more scouting troops, we have no places for them; our portables are in need of replacement. Jeanne Shroust advised that a starting point already exists, in that many years ago, Terry TenBrink headed a team that looked into the logistics in detail, but nothing was ever done with the team's recommendations. Vic pointed out that a professional planner should be hired to help determine what our needs assessment is, and break it down into 5-year, 10-year, and 20-year segments. Perhaps someone at the Conference level is available to assist in this regard. Ideally individuals on this committee would cover all age ranges.

Air Conditioner at Oak's Cove: Irv Hopkins advised that the capacitor was replaced in the air conditioner, and it is now working fine. It does not have to be replaced, which would have cost \$4,000.

Real Ideas Conference: This event will occur during the first weekend in March (Friday & Saturday) in Tampa. Rev. Bill believes it is comparable in price to the Willow Creek programs, and Conference has indicated it would pay up to \$50 per person. While Willow Creek

deals more with big ideas and getting people focused, Real Ideas is about practical, hands-on concepts.

Chick-fil-A Summit: This event will occur in early May. A location in Port Charlotte hosts it every year. Cost is \$85 per person.

Sound Booth Expansion: The Council wants to extend a special Thank You to Sean Priest for all the hours and work that he is putting in on this project. Sean and the man who is helping him both have full-time jobs, and on occasion can be found at GCUMC until midnight working on the sound booth. Irv Hopkins moved, seconded by numerous other individuals, that a \$100 gift certificate should be given to Sean as a thank you. (Don't tell Sean after you read this. We want it to be a surprise!)

Harvest Festival: Scott Folsom and Holly Woods have started brainstorming on this event, which they would like to hold on Saturday, November 15, from 11am-2pm. They would like for different ministries to present a booth or help with an activity. Shirley Smith's small group will be hosting a pie-eating contest. Other ideas Scott and Holly came up with involve pumpkin bowling, powdered donut bobbing, a corn hole game, a simple craft for the kids, sliced apples with a side of caramel and/or peanut butter, hot dogs, and popcorn. Anyone who would like to help should contact Scott or Holly.

Secret Prayer Partners: This program was suggested by Jeanne Shroust and MaryEllen Eisele. Rick indicated he would send out an email regarding this activity.

Education: Jo Ann Hopkins informed the group of actions that have occurred since our last Church Council meeting. John Furtado and Betty Hansell conducted a computer class. Rick Starck started a class on iPhones/smartphones, but postponed it until the mobile operating system version 8 was available (which has since come out). Jo Ann helped two individuals learn about on-line banking. Still needing to be offered is the scams & frauds program; it was suggested we wait until the northern folks return. One person has stepped forward to join the teacher/aide cadre. It was also mentioned that on occasion only one person is in a classroom, not two as required by Conference.

REDS? None were reported that require Church Council attention -- other than the ever-present portables

ADJOURNING

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20pm with communion and a prayer by Rev. Bill. The next meeting will be a Church Council meeting, on Monday, October 27, 2014, at 7:00pm. The main

agenda item at that meeting will involve the 2015 budget, three parts of which should be finalized prior to the Church Cluster Conference on November 9.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Hanson
Recording Secretary