

Gulf Cove United Methodist Church
Helping Everyone Meet, Know, and Serve Jesus
Church Council Meeting
(Formerly known as Administrative Council)
October 27, 2014 – 7:00 PM

Attendees:

Rick Starck (Church Council Chairman)	Sandy Doty Scott Folsom	Irv Hopkins Jo Ann Hopkins	Joan Priest Jeanne Shrout
Rev. Dr. Bill Fisackerly	Betty Hansell	Carol McGuire	Linda Starck
Alfred Current	Mary Hilton	John McGuire	Dana Hanson

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 corrections to the September 22, 2014, minutes:

1. The first sentence in the third paragraph under TOPIC #007 – FARMER’S MARKET should be changed to read as follows: *Betty Hansell and Sandy Doty suggested that upcoming events could be advertised during the market -- such as a CPR class, computer class, scam presentation, or an Alpha class.*
2. The one-sentence paragraph under TOPIC #006: TEAM CUBA RESOLUTION regarding donations to that ministry (at the bottom of printed page 3) should be changed to read as follows: *People can donate to the ministry by designating on their check or on their giving envelope “Cuba Sister Church” and an amount.*
3. The paragraph near the end of the minutes regarding SECRET PRAYER PARTNERS should be changed to read as follows: *This program was suggested by MaryEllen Eisele. Rick indicated he would send out an email regarding this activity.*

Trunk or Treat: This will be held this Friday, October 31, from 6-7pm. It was explained that the event was cut back to one hour because during past events, after the first hour, attendance dropped drastically but the mosquitoes made their presence known. Rick said he’s heard a couple comments indicating that it has been cut back too much, and he is concerned that it is too limiting as an outreach. Jo Ann pointed out that people who don’t get home from work until 6pm can’t get their children ready and to the church before we’re almost finished. When it was mentioned that we are not selling food or drinks this year, Jo Ann reminded us that the hotdogs and hamburgers were dinner for some individuals. It was suggested that we change the outside sign to reflect Trunk or Treat from 6:00 to 7:30, even though the Myakka flyers have already been printed and delivered to the school. Rev. Bill reminded everybody that, although we shouldn’t be second-guessing committee decisions if we’re not on the committee, several good thoughts have been expressed for consideration in the future. As it was pointed out, if the children are still arriving at 7pm, we’ll still be here.

Family Fall Festival: This will be held on Saturday, November 15, from 11am-2pm. Scott explained that it is hoped it will truly be a family affair, not just for the children or youth. Proceeds from the food sales and pie sales will be split between the children and youth ministries. Individuals are still needed to help with some of the activities. One table will be set up to sell tickets for the food and the baptismal font game (dunk tank), but the small group that will be selling the pies will handle their own money. Flyers for the festival will be handed out during Trunk or Treat, and they will be delivered to Myakka Elementary about a week before the festival.

Myakka Elementary: Several GCUMC members plus some from the new Boy Scout troop assisted with Myakka's fall festival last Friday. Several Myakka administrators thanked our members for their help. When Alfred delivered the Trunk or Treat flyers to Myakka this morning, he was immediately recognized by several individuals. Marsha Oakley started assisting with a kindergarten class one day a week for 2-1/2 hours. Anyone interested in assisting in a classroom or in their reading program should contact Marsha or the school. An application form must be completed and your driver's license presented when you apply to help.

Nominations Committee: Rev. Bill reported that the committee members have been talking with several individuals about lay leadership positions for 2015. The committee is having a meeting later this week. All nominations should be finalized by the end of the year.

Imagine No Malaria: Rev. Bill reminded the group of the Nothing But Nets program which the UMC promoted for a few years, along with the National Basketball Association. Although somewhat successful, that program had some limitations. The UMC is continuing the mission with the Imagine No Malaria program. It has been learned that when Africans go to the hospital, they are immediately treated for malaria since it is so widespread. Only if an individual doesn't respond to the malaria treatment do they check for other problems such as Ebola or dengue fever. However, malaria is 100% preventable and 100% treatable. Whenever it is eliminated from a region, deaths from all other causes also decrease, because hospitals immediately look for problems other than malaria. Conference is asking all churches to consider ways they can help impact this program. Kylie Foley, the coordinator for the program who conducts the training sessions, will probably be at our Church Conference on November 9. To date, the program has raised just over \$62M of the \$75M which was pledged.

Thanksgiving Day Dinner Plans: Don Teague and Charles Hilton are in charge of this year's free dinner. For those who wish to help, the November newsletter says that sign-up sheets will be posted on November 2. A flyer is being created to deliver to Myakka Elementary about a week before Thanksgiving.

Cuba Sister Church: Rick and Bill Oakley have come up with revised language for the Team Cuba Resolution. Copies of the proposed revision were circulated among those present.

Any concerns should be directed to a member of Team Cuba; Betty Hansell is its leader. Jeanne advised that currently there are two funds being used for Cuba: a sister-church fund and a travel fund. She explained the second fund is being used to help pay for extra charges imposed by the airlines for excess poundage when our members travel to Cuba. Rick opined that the travel fund was not needed, because it is all part-and-parcel of getting gifts (Bibles, OTC drugs, toiletries, etc.) to our sister church. Betty advised that anyone who travels to Cuba is responsible for their own airfare.

The next amount which GCUMC sends to Cuba will have two parts. First, an amount will be given to the Nicaro pastor with the suggestion that it be used for the balance of the purchase price of a washing machine that they wish to buy, for laundry detergent, and for a Christmas dinner; the ultimate use of the funds, however, will be determined by the pastor and his church. Second, the amount representing the pastor's salary will be given to the District Superintendent who doles out the appropriate amount every month.

A banner design has been chosen to represent the relationship between GCUMC and our sister church in Nicaro. It is hoped that someone from our congregation will volunteer to produce one banner for us and a duplicate for our sister church, to be delivered to them in November 2015. Congratulations to Mary Hilton for submitting the winning design!

Farmers Market: Rick has an appointment scheduled with Attorney Lori Emery to review the contracts, to find out what licensing we might need, to discuss county regulations and requirements, and to determine whether we need to set up a separate entity to keep us protected as far as 501(c)(3) requirements are concerned. Shauna Lange (the person who brought this activity to our attention) was invited to attend the meeting, but is unable to do so because of a prior commitment.

Rick visited the Dearborn Street farmers market. They have 50 vendors on one side of the street and 30 competing vendors on the other side. Booths are 10x10, with some replications of produce since they are competing vendors. Some vendors use more than one booth. If we don't get at least 35 vendors, our market will not start.

Shauna indicated that most vendors bring their own power source, although we do have a few outlets available outside should they be needed. Shauna's company vets all the vendors to make sure they have all required permits, licenses, and insurance; enforces all procedures that are set out in the vendors' contracts; collects penalties for no-show vendors; and cleans up the outside area after the vendors leave. Since we will have ministry and food booths present, we are also covered by Conference's insurance.

Rev. Bill pointed out that, if we have 1,000 individuals coming to the market every Monday or Tuesday morning, it will be necessary for at least 10 to 12 GCUMC volunteers be present. It was suggested that instead of volunteers committing for the entire time the market is open

(9:30am-1:30pm), they commit to only one- or two-hour periods. However, we were reminded of the years that our former youth director tried to sell pumpkins for a week or two before Halloween. Although a few people volunteered to help, the youth director found herself outside with the pumpkins for long periods of time each day; sales occurred from around 8am until dark.

It is anticipated that individuals who need to use the restroom would be limited to the bathrooms in the narthex. It would require both additional supplies and additional cleanings. Mike Lackney estimates that that it would cost the church around \$30-\$40 each week the market was held, not including lights or A/C.

Regarding parking, it was thought that signs would lead visitors to the back lot of the church, where people park for the January Arts & Crafts Fair. The parking spots next to the office would be reserved for church business.

Rick sees two benefits for GCUMC from hosting the markets. First, our outreach will expand if we can get hundreds or thousands of individuals visiting our grounds and coming in to see our church. The rotating ministry booths would inform visitors of the various activities of the church. Second, as a fundraising activity, the market will help to put a dent into any budget deficit. The church receives a portion of the booth space rental, which ranges from \$25 to \$55 for each 10x10 booth. The amount charged depends on the number of weeks for which the vendor commits and whether the rent is prepaid or paid weekly. There might be an additional charge if we must provide electricity to the vendor. The church would offer for sale food and beverage which, of necessity, would be carried around; individuals would not be able to sit and eat.

2015 Apportionments: Apportionments is one of the two items which must be finalized at the Church Conference on November 9. Our Apportionments have risen from \$39,365 for 2014, to \$40,631 for 2015, an increase of \$1,266 or 3.2%. As explained in the recent Finance Committee minutes, “[A]pportionments are not based on attendance, membership, or donations. There is a specific formula that is followed in determining the amount of Apportionments. It is based on expenses from two years prior in relation to expenses paid by all other churches in our Conference.” *All present agreed the Apportionments should be approved as established by Conference.*

2015 and Staff Parish Relations: The increases to the pastor’s salary package (\$8), lay salaries (\$36,487), and related employment taxes (\$1,663) for the proposed 2015 budget is the largest increase in the budget -- as presented, a proposed total increase of \$38,158. To explain this increase, Joan Priest addressed the group.

- Before any SPR decisions were made, the members of the committee prayed heavily, discussed the church’s vision, conferred over where they believed the church was heading, and debated what the needs of the church are and will be.

- Rick provided a resource study which contains information on salary ranges, congregation size comparisons, church locations, and job descriptions. It is not limited to just the Methodist Church. Overall, the study validates what we are paying, except for two positions which are badly under-paid.
- Because of the time and expertise required to fulfill our current Audio-Visual needs and the vision of an on-line service, it was considered prudent and necessary to establish a paid, part-time position. A job description was written up and appropriate salary researched. SPR decided the job should be advertised at \$12,000 for the year, but not broken down into an hourly figure. The AV person will coordinate everything relating to the audio-visual aspects of the church, including leadership over the volunteers who assist in the AV booth during functions where AV is required.
- It is not known how long the Fisackerlys will remain with GCUMC. If and when they leave, we will lose the leader of our largest service – our Contemporary Worship Leader.
- There are two lay salaries that need to be increased substantially to bring them in line with those salaries paid by other churches of similar standing. Should the need arise to hire individuals for these two positions, we would likely be unable to hire anyone at their current salaries. The plan to increase these two salaries has been in place for a while, but has not yet been implemented. It was decided that, since the church's finances seemed to be a little more stable during the current year, 2015 would be the right year to start these raises.
- The salaries for the Youth Director and Contemporary Worship Leader were both bumped up. Hopefully, we will be able to bring these salaries into line little by little over the next several years. The salaries of the Administrative Assistant, Receptionist, Children's Director, Music Director, and Organist were largely in line with the study.
- The amount paid for each individual, in addition to salary, includes insurance, taxes, pension, etc.

2015 Overall Budget: Rick advised that as presented today, the total budget went from \$443,801 for 2014, to \$467,753 for 2015, an overall increase of \$23,953 or 5.4%. During the ensuing discussion, the following comments were made:

- It is unlikely that we will have a sufficient number of new members to cover the increase for 2015.
- Included in the budget is a reduction of mortgage expense by the total amount of \$18,250.
- Although an amount equal to the prior mortgage payment was supposed to be going into the Reserve Fund starting in August, it has not happened yet because it is being used for current expenses, as opposed to putting it into the Reserve Fund and immediately transferring it to the general budget.
- If we do not start putting the mortgage payment aside into a savings account, it will never be there when it is needed for capital improvements or expansion.
- Individuals present who have served as Trustees expressed their frustration because major things would go wrong and there was no money available to pay for the repair.

- The amount included in the budget for repairs (church property and building maintenance) was increased from \$23,000 to \$35,000 because the number of required repairs continues to rise.
- If it were not for the Men's Club and Crafty Ladies donating money when needed, many of the major repairs that have occurred would not exist.
- As has been questioned before, if we cannot pay our current expenses, how can we hope to pay not only increases in current salaries, but also salary for a new employee?
- In the past, the church held monthly church dinners, almost year-round. According to the 3/18/2013 Finance minutes, "Their proceeds tend to provide \$6,000 to \$8,000 a year in spendable income. The major problem we are encountering is obtaining volunteers to help."
- By way of example using the farmers market, assume we have 35 vendors who average paying \$35 a week for booth rent for 26 weeks. If GCUMC gets 10% to 15% of the booth rental, the church would receive between \$3,185 and \$4,777, not including food sales. There would still be a long way to fill the budget shortfall.
- Churches require faith that God will provide. Past experience has shown that if we do God's work, what He wants us to be doing, somehow the money shows up.
- We should rely on the congregation to fund the Reserve Fund, not the mortgage payment.
- Several indicated a belief that the full amount of the mortgage payment should be placed into a Capital Improvement Fund.
- John McGuire explained that we had a fund called Facilities Expansion Fund, designated as the name implies solely for expansion of the facilities. Amounts remaining in the Debt Reduction Fund and the 1% Club Fund were transferred into the Facilities Expansion Fund. However, at the last Finance meeting, it was felt that the purpose of that account was too limiting. The funds might be needed for paving or some other expense that is a capital improvement to the facility. It was felt a Capital Improvement Fund would be more appropriate for all such items, but not for daily repairs.
- If the Fisackerlys leave, it will be necessary to ask the renters to vacate the parsonage so that major renovations can be made. It is probable that it will once again be a parsonage, and no rental income will be received. That rental income has been used by the Trustees to pay for current repairs.
- Rev. Bill indicated that it would not be right to give the pastor a salary increase this month, and then at next month's meeting not give a comparable increase to the lay staff. Hence, all salaries included in the budget should ideally be resolved this evening.
- Small bonuses were given to the staff in mid-2014.

2015 Pastor's Compensation: At this point, all staff (Rev. Bill, Scott, and Jeanne) left the room. Joan advised that the only salary which was above the norm was Rev. Bill's, and that was just slightly above. Pastors' salaries in the study included parsonages and all benefits; in other words, the full compensation package was considered. However, what was not included in the study was the level of education achieved under the various salary levels.

Joan said that SPR is also considering the time when Rev. Bill moves on to another church. When that happens, it is likely that a totally different salary range will be in place, resulting in a less experienced pastor. She mentioned that, in reality, GCUMC also needs an Associate Pastor. Much of SPR's reasoning for the recommended increase to Rev. Bill's salary lies in how well he has been leading our congregation to where we are at this point.

As recommended by SPR, the Pastor's Qualifying Reimbursement Expense was lowered by \$3,160. This represents expenses that Rev. Bill incurs which are reimbursed based upon receipts which he submits. Some items which qualify for reimbursement include his attendance at Conference and District events, and continuing education. This reduction offsets all but \$8 of the pastor's overall increase.

Betty and Jo Ann moved, seconded by Linda and Irv, that:

- *\$1,500 be placed every month in the Capital Improvement Fund;*
- *The congregation be responsible for funding the Reserve Fund; and*
- *The recommended raises for Rev. Bill and the lay staff, including the new AV position, be approved by the Church Council.*

Rick pointed out that if this motion is approved, it means that a minimum of \$3,000 in additional income will be needed each month. We must have faith in God that we are doing His will and that He will lead us in providing for the additional funds.

All indicated agreement with the motion.

ADJOURNING

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm with communion and a prayer by Rev. Bill. The next Church Council meeting will be on Monday, November 24, 2014, at 7:00pm. There will also be a Church Council meeting on Monday, December 22, 2014, at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Hanson
Recording Secretary