

Gulf Cove United Methodist Church
Helping Everyone Meet, Know, and Serve Jesus
Church Council Meeting
November 24, 2014 – 7:00 PM

Attendees:

Rick Starck (Church Council Chairman)	Sandy Doty Tom Eisele	Mary Hilton Irv Hopkins	Ken Priest Jeanne Shrout
Rev. Dr. Bill Fisackerly	Scott Folsom	Jo Ann Hopkins	Don Teague
Doreen Alvarez	John Furtado	Carol McGuire	Dana Hanson
Alfred Current	Betty Hansell	John McGuire	

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 not notified of any necessary corrections to the minutes of the October 27, 2014, Church Council meeting or the November 9, 2014, Church Conference.

Trunk or Treat: This year's event was held on Friday, October 31, from 6pm to 7pm. The following comments and suggestions were submitted for consideration for next year's event:

- Everybody loved the trivia game. In fact, it was also used on the hayride at the Family Fall Festival two weeks later.
- A central table was set up where children provided their name and contact information, a small craft was available, and children could pick a prize.
- Children who completed the form received a phone call from Mary Hilton, offering them three free tickets if they came to the Family Fall Festival. It was felt that probably half of those called by Mary came to the Family Fall Festival, and maybe half of those who came were from GCUMC. Thanks, Mary, for making the calls.
- The office received phone calls from the parents of children who received the flyers which were taken to, and distributed by, Myakka River Elementary School.
- Dearborn Street's Trick or Treat runs from 5-7pm. Because last year we stopped at 7:30pm, there were many children who went to Dearborn Street who later came to GCUMC. This year, however, we also stopped at 7pm, and there was a noticeable drop in the number of children.
- Jo Ann Hopkins said that, based on the number of children who stopped at her vehicle, she counted 48 children who came to Trunk or Treat.
- Children thoroughly enjoyed the craft.
- The mosquitoes didn't start to come out until 7pm, right when we were stopping.
- Should we have a costume judging contest, encouraging people to stay until the time the winner was selected? Although some felt it was a cute idea, they quickly admitted they would not want to be a judge. Plus, it would be very difficult to keep people there when the children want to go to other locations.
- Was the food that was served last year missed this year? Yes by some, not by others. Parents who had to work until 5pm or 6pm would be in a rush to get here, and might appreciate having a hotdog or hamburger. Although offering food has previously been

considered a fundraiser for youth, little, if any, proceeds were realized in the past. No one heard any visitors mention that they missed the food.

- Since many probably went trick or treating elsewhere, it is unlikely that we would be able to get them to linger at GCUMC after the children made the rounds.
- If we really want more kids to attend, we need to stay open later, after Dearborn Street closes.
- Should we move our Trunk or Treat to Dearborn Street, thus enabling us to possibly have more ministry time? This is a big intangible. Thousands (not hundreds) attend Dearborn. We would be reaching outside our immediate community. Since it would be hard to get spots together which would hold all of our cars from GCUMC, we would probably have to set up only a table.
- Flyers for the Family Fall Festival were handed out at Trunk or Treat.
- Regarding extending the time from 1 to 1-1/2 or 2 hours, it was felt that 1 hour was good. During the times we have stayed longer, less and less children came the later we stayed. We ended up mingling amongst ourselves.
- Although we could start earlier, many parents work until 5pm, and it was felt that not that many children would arrive much earlier.

Family Fall Festival: This year's event was held on Saturday, November 15, from 11am-2pm. The following comments and suggestions were submitted for consideration for next year's event:

- Everybody seemed to have a great time.
- Most parents came with their children, accompanied them around the area, and left with their children.
- There were very few young adults who helped with the Festival. Most volunteers were over 55. While in the mid-1990's most children were from two-parent homes, many are now with only one parent or with some other relative. We have to remember that "the way we did/do" is not the ending of our mission statement -- "Helping everyone meet, know, and serve, Jesus." It seems like many of the people who help at the church now on a daily basis are different from those who were helping seven to ten years ago.
- The big hits were: hayride, bounce house, pie eating contests (for both adults and kids), hanging donut eating, face painting, bowling, dunk booth, family 3-legged race, and family towel race.
- Many parents indicated surprise that all of the activities (except the dunk booth) were free. They were told that we love Jesus and simply want to give the children a good time.
- Regarding the dunk booth: Should we require that tickets be purchased for the dunk booth? Many of our youth volunteered to sit under the balloon. Many youth and children purchased more tickets when Scott was in the booth. ☺
- The craft table was slow at first, but then more children became interested.
- A debate arose as to when chalk drawing in the patio areas was held, but no one could remember for sure. The kids seemed to like that, and the adults enjoyed seeing their artwork the following Sunday.

- Most felt that more Myakka school children attended the Festival than attended Trunk or Treat.

Boy Scouts: They have been active in church activities, even giving away apple cider during the Festival and receiving \$100 in donations while doing so. Over the Festival weekend, Boy Scout Troop 776 and Webelos (grades 4 & 5) camped on our grounds. It seems like there were almost as many adults as there were boys who camped that weekend.

Hanging of the Greens: It went well, with lots of great food. We want to extend a special “thank you” to Charles and Bob Hilton for cooking the chicken. It was suggested that some decorations (especially garlands) be stored in boxes which are marked as to where in the sanctuary they should be placed. This year it was held at 12:30pm, and only about half the usual turnout was there. Previously, it usually started at 5pm.

Some opined that they would like to see more children involved. Unfortunately, since there is nothing for children to do from 10:30am through noon, parents leave. It was suggested that if there was something for the children, more parents might stay for adult Sunday School. However, for that to happen, we need more teachers for the children.

Thanksgiving: Don Teague reported that everything is going well! A lot is happening on Tuesday and Wednesday. Many volunteers have signed up, including a number who do not attend GCUMC. Informational flyers will be placed on all tables. Don reported that the last few years, Publix has given us the sales price when purchasing the turkeys. This year, however, the clerk found the smallest turkey and charged that amount 25 times, for a total of only \$274. It was suggested that a thank you card be sent to Publix.

Nicaro: Scott Folsom received an email from Lilly, the translator who travels around Cuba with Dan Christopherson, the Southwest District’s Cuba Coordinator. They recently met with Pastor Reinaldo, the pastor of our sister church. Lilly emailed to Scott the names and ages of the children in our sister church (about 10 children, aged 3-12). The Crafty Ladies had asked for this information so they could make something for each child. Pastor Reinaldo thanked us for the money he received, because the church was finally able to buy the washing machine the community needed.

Finance: John Furtado advised that the Finance committee still has questions regarding the proposed 2015 budget -- specifically, in the Trustee’s proposed budget, the \$12,000 maintenance item and the \$3,168 cleaning service item. A more detailed explanation can be found in the minutes of the Finance meeting held on on 11/17/2014. As it stands right now, the proposed budget for 2015 contains increases of \$23,952 to \$41,952 over 2014. The following table reflects the increases:

\$23,952	Increase as reflected in the 2015 Presentation Budget dated 10/7/2014
<u>+18,000</u>	Monthly mortgage payment (\$1,500 x 12), discussed later
\$41,952	First Revised increase
<u>- 12,000</u>	\$12,000 maintenance item, mentioned earlier
\$29,952	Second Revised total increase for 2015

Looking at the increases in a different way, the \$23,952 increase represents a 5.4% increase over this year's budget. The \$41,952 increase represents a 9.5% increase over this year's budget.

John pointed out that the Book of Discipline ¶ 812 states the first item to be paid is a church's Apportionments. After that, our priority should be to pay salaries and day-to-day operating expenses. At GCUMC, we pay these with the General Fund and with the Reserve Fund. As stated in the recent Finance minutes, while John Furtado wholly agrees with setting aside \$1,500 each month (in lieu of the prior mortgage payment) into the Capital Improvement Fund, he is greatly concerned about what will happen come April or May when (using past years as our guide) our spendable receipts drop so much that, if we put \$1,500 into the Capital Improvement Fund, we will be short-funded and unable to pay other bills such as for utilities or salaries. The Finance Committee believes that the issue should be revisited in April or May.

If Rev. Bill is ever reassigned to another church, we will likely need the parsonage for our new pastor. When that happens, major expenditures will need to be made to renovate the parsonage, as it has not been upgraded since 1984. The kitchen alone will probably require \$20,000 to \$30,000.

The church does not have a fixed income. Its receipts are good for six months, and not good for six months. The spendable income received in the "good" months from January 2011 through now has varied from \$33,400 up to \$39,600. The church needs to consider a capital campaign. If everybody donated just 3% to 5% of their income (as opposed to a full tithe of 10%), the church would be financially stable. In reality, the number of individuals at GCUMC who actually tithe, giving a full 10%, is believed to be very small.

We need a two-prong approach to finances. First, we need to maintain what we have and keep it functioning. Second, we need to set aside something for what we want to do in the future to expand. Our current baby steps which are in the right direction include taking the Scouts under our wings, and approaching Myakka Elementary with support.

Those present broke into small groups and brainstormed as to how to effectively present the budget to the congregation so they see and understand the need for the increase and will want to give to support it. What are good and bad ideas on how to meet the increase? The following ideas were presented:

***PLEASE NOTE THAT NOT ALL OF THE FOLLOWING IDEAS ARE SERIOUS!
SOME ARE DELIBERATELY RIDICULOUS!***

- Hold an open house and ask the congregation to tour the portables so they can see for themselves where we are hurting the most. Many people don't even know how the portables are used.
- Show videos of run-down churches so we can see what happens when you don't support your church financially.
- Offer monthly dinners.
- Offer more pig pickins.
- Buy a shingle or something for a new building, similar to what we did a few years ago for Habitat.
- Show videos of general ministry activities and meetings, such as Friend to Friend or the Trustees.
- Give testimonials about tithing, what happens when you do and don't tithe. We did this a while ago.
- Get certain individuals to join the church. If our budget is \$460,000, we could selectively recruit millionaires who earn \$4,600,000 a year and who tithe.
- Use pledge cards.
- Have people bring in their 1040 income tax return to support the fact that they are tithing.
- Get a larger congregation if we can't get the congregation to give more.
- Have a bring-a-friend-to-church Sunday – which should be every Sunday.
- Impress on the congregation that they would not, for 29 years, let their OWN house go without maintenance, without improvements, without upkeep, without paying utilities. Why should it be different for their church? A bandage here and a bandage there don't work.
- Ask for a small increase from everyone. If each person gave just a little more, it would cover the daily operating expenses, and just a little over that would help establish a fund for future expansion.
- Tell 10 strangers to visit our church.
- Help the parishioners to understand that we are trying to grow our church, and give them something to which they can look forward, such as a new sanctuary so that we do not have to tear down & set up whenever we have an event. We need to bulldoze the portables and add on to this building.
- Have an architect quickly sketch a new facility. Then show a video that says, "We are hearing from the congregation that we don't need this [put up pictures of the portables]. What we do need is this [put up the architect's sketch]." There are a lot of people in our church who look favorably upon a new sanctuary, and not having to move all the chairs.
- Have the congregation each month match the \$1,500 that is being put away. It would mean only \$3 to \$5 a month more.
- Break down the additional amount due into a per-person, per-month amount. It would be around \$10. This is a "doable" amount, not \$40,000! [Example: \$42,000 additional needed / 12 months = \$3,500 per month / 300 people = \$11.67 a month. Or \$42,000 additional needed

[/ 12 months = \$3,500 per month / 500 people = \$7.00 a month.] People would have to realize, however, that this is *over and above* their regular donation.

- Tell people why the increase is needed. Give them the information: primarily daily operating bills; a new audio-visual position; “mortgage” payment continuing; etc.
- Explain that Sean Priest does a tremendous job with our A/V needs. But the church has reached a point that we need someone who can devote more time than he does to the church. And the Lord knows how many hours Sean gives us.
- Have more sustainable events that will bring in both a decent amount of income, and new people to the campus, such as the proposed Farmer’s Market. Rick recently indicated that the Farmer’s Market is on hold, primarily because rezoning will be necessary, permitting will take several months, and the church will have to create an LLC to ensure that our 501(c)(3) status is not affected.

A REMINDER – NOT ALL OF THE ABOVE IDEAS ARE SERIOUS! SOME ARE DELIBERATELY RIDICULOUS!

Long-Term Planning Committee: It seems to be unanimous that we need one, although no one has joined the committee yet. Rev. Bill should be on it. Rick Starck and Jo Ann Hopkins indicated they would volunteer to be on it. Bill Oakley indicated he would be interested in being on the committee. The names of potential committee members should be submitted to the Lay Nominations Committee which makes a recommendation as to the proposed members. The Church Council then officially votes on the proposed members.

The District has people who can assist the committee with various matters that might arise. The Book of Discipline ¶ 2544 (2012), Planning and Financing Requirements for Local Church Buildings, has specific guidelines which must be followed during the planning and implementation stages. Joan Priest has said that neither she nor Ann Mercer have copies of the results of the previous planning committee which was established a number of years ago. Possibly Terry Ten Brink has them, as he was the chairman of the committee, and Rev. Bill said he thinks he has one or two copies in his office. The first meeting of this new committee will hopefully be held in January.

Christmas Caroling: This will be held on Wednesday, December 17, following our regular dinner. At 6:15pm, we'll go by caravan to a facility to sing carols. Afterwards, we'll gather back at the church for cookies.

Blue Christmas: This special service will be held from 5-6pm on Sunday, December 21. The holidays can be a difficult time for those who are experiencing loss and sadness. This will be a special service of remembrance and hope.

Arts & Crafts Fair: This is coming up on Friday and Saturday, January 23 and 24, hosted by the Men’s Club. They will surely need volunteers.

Pig Pickin': This is scheduled for Friday, February 6. Our first year was good, and our second year should be grand!

Expense Receipts: Jeanne reminded everyone that when we charge things with church credit cards, or pay with our own money and then seek reimbursement, we need to turn in the original receipt to Dawn for expense or reimbursement purposes and give a copy of the receipt to Jeanne to be associated with the income. This is especially important for fundraising events, which need expense receipts to be linked with the income until everything is balanced. All receipts should indicate why the items were purchased (such as Family Fall Festival, Jesus Rocks, Youth, Children's Church, Worship, etc.).

If an individual pays for something and does not seek reimbursement, a copy of the receipt reflecting the amount of the expense should still be given to Jeanne, so that calculations of actual expenses can be determined. If that person does not make the same donation next year, then we know that expenses might be higher. The individual should be sure to retain the original receipt with his or her records for income tax purposes.

2015 Leadership: A revised Leadership Roster was distributed. One pen-and-ink change involves the chairman of the Nurture Committee; although Marsha Oakley indicated she wished to help with the Nurture Committee, she did not mean that she would be the chairman. As a result, there are still vacancies for the following: Nurture Chairman, Caring Ministry Chairman, and Lay Nominations Member. All present approved the list as revised.

Doreen Alvarez will be our new Church Council Chairman. Thank you, Rick, for four wonderful and productive years!

DNA: There is still one more meeting to be held with the Rev. Dr. Don Nations. Rev. Bill, Doreen, and a few others will meet with him.

Adjourning: A lengthy Church Council meeting will not be held in December. However, a short Church Council meeting must be called prior to the end of the year to review and finalize the 2015 Budget; date to be determined. The suggestion was made that it be held after the last service one Sunday, and that the revised proposed budget be emailed to all Church Council members prior to the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm with communion and a prayer by Rev. Bill.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Hanson
Recording Secretary