

Gulf Cove United Methodist Church
Helping Everyone Meet, Know, and Serve Jesus
Church Council Meeting
September 28, 2015 – 7:00 PM

Attendees:

Doreen Alvarez (Church Council Chairman)	Alfred Current Sandy Doty	Mary Hilton Gretchen Leppla	Jeanne Shroul Rick Starck
Rev. Dr. Bill Fisackerly Vic Costello	Scott Folsom John Furtado	Joan Priest Ken Priest	Donna Wallace Dana Hanson

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

Corrections to Previous Minutes: The recording secretary was not notified of any necessary corrections to the minutes of the August 24, 2015 meeting.

NURTURE

Education: Gretchen has requested that a bulletin board and a tack-strip (for projects) be put on the wall in the Education wing. This would replace the picture frames that are currently there.

Small Groups: Sandy reported that the leaders have met three times. They have discussed what each small group does, and whether they have room for new members. Another meeting is being scheduled for October.

Stephen Ministry: Ken advised that we have a new candidate for Stephen Leader Training. Marsha Bunyon will be going to that training in Orlando in January.

OUTREACH

Team Cuba: Jeanne reported that they are Super Green! There will be a huge push in October for items which will be taken to Cuba by Rick & Linda Starck when they go in November. Announcements will be placed in the weekly bulletins. A few items they need are reading glasses (\$1 each at Dollar Tree), toothpaste, deodorant, and children & adult chewable vitamins (no gummies). At this point, they will be taking a keyboard, Christmas cards, 2 blood pressure kits, 20 hand-crank LED flashlights which do not need batteries or lightbulbs, the Cuba sister-church banner made by Mary Costello, and prayer bracelets.

During the meeting, Scott received an email from Dan Christopherson, the Southwest District Cuba Coordinator, on the topic "Clean Water for Cuba." Some of the information in his email is summarized here:

He talked about one of his trips during which the church had a tanker of water beside it. The Americans were given bottled water to drink, and the tanker water was being provided for the Americans for showering, because the local water was so polluted. Water which came from their kitchen faucet looked like it could have come from the ditch outside, but the Cubans

had no choice but to use it for everything. Yes, people got sick and there were small outbreaks of cholera. In July 2015, a water-system supplier was finally approved: Water Solutions/Water One in Fort Myers. Dan and others met twice with Michael M. Barlow, Executive Director, and Kenn Visser, Vice President, of Water One Company. The group came to the conclusion it is *not* a "one system fix all project." We are invited to see a couple of systems and meet and hear Kenn Visser at one of two meetings:

- October 15 at 6:30pm at Christ Venice UMC, 1475 Center Road, Venice; or
- October 22 at 6:30pm at First Fort Myers UMC, 2466 First Street, Fort Myers.

Dan provided a link to a video of a unit that was delivered to the Dominican Republic thru their sister church, Sanibel Community Church, <http://vimeo.com/84317747>.

Alfred advised that he and Kenn Visser are in the same Rotary Club. In fact, Rotary has a world-wide, clean-water initiative which you can read about on their [website](#).

Scott reminded us that Pastor Jose from the Sancti Spiritus District will make a presentation on Tuesday, October 13, at 2pm at Englewood UMC.

Trunk or Treat: Rev. Bill advised that it will be held on Saturday, October 31, from 5-6pm. They plan to conduct the Bible Trivia/Scavenger Hunt which was a huge success (and a lot of fun) last year.

Family Fall Festival: It will be held on Saturday, November 7, from 11am-2pm. A planning meeting is scheduled for Sunday, October 11, at 12:15pm.

Barn & Crafts Sale: It is scheduled for Friday & Saturday, November 13-14. Jeanne advised that no group has stepped up to coordinate the lunch aspects of the two days. It is hoped that Don Teague will do the actual cooking, like he did last year. John Furtado said he would bring it up at the Men's breakfast on October 6. Scott Folsom said the youth can handle the soda sales.

Thanksgiving Dinner: Jeanne advised that she spoke to Don Teague a couple months ago about being the *coordinator* (not necessarily the cook) for this free community dinner.

Myakka River Elementary: Alfred advised of a request from the PTO asking for cooks and soda for their Fall Festival which will be held on Friday, October 23, from 5-7pm. Several individuals have already responded that they would help. Rev. Bill added that *going there* is what Outreach is all about. It's not just about purchasing things or getting people to come to church – it's about getting the church people to go outside our walls. Alfred is also still selling Tervis Tumblers with the school's logo on them. Flyers regarding the Trunk or Treat, Family Fall Festival, and Thanksgiving Dinner are being prepared; they will be taken to Myakka for distribution to the children shortly before each respective event.

Boy Scouts: Alfred said they had great success at selling popcorn at Winn-Dixie and Super Day Express. Nine Tiger Cubs (first grade) are in a position to eventually join "our" Troop 776.

At Ease Ministry: Vic reported that the group has been going to the Port Charlotte American Legion monthly, with little or no participation yet. He thinks it is because the leadership there is not really on base with us. However, Phill Kolbe has had a lot of success at the Rotonda West American Legion. The program there has the obvious support of the Service Officer, the Commander, and the Adjutant. If someone needs follow-up and care, it comes through the Service Officer.

The At Ease Team would like to hold a special event to commemorate Veterans Day, with hotdogs and hamburgers. They were hoping to hold it on a weekend, instead of on Wednesday, November 11, which is the actual Veterans Day. It was noted that the Family Fall Festival is already scheduled for Saturday, November 7, from 11am-2pm, which means people will be inside and out from about 8am until 3pm or 4pm.

WITNESS

Worship: Donna advised that working with the Dream Team is exciting. The Life is a Beach series for October is ready to roll. Advent plans are already under way. This year they are planning a live nativity program which will be incorporated into a dinner. Those who purchase tickets to attend the dinner are the guests at the inn who are having dinner, but the dinner keeps getting interrupted by a homeless man and his very pregnant wife, by wise men, etc.

SUPPORT

Finance: John advised that spendable income received during September totaled \$23,849, and the balance in the Reserve Fund rose to a little over \$23,500. Our expenses for the month are exceeding our income by about \$1,500.

Proposed Budget for 2016: John advised that Finance reviewed the initial proposed budget dated 9/22/2015 last week, and necessary changes were made. The proposed budget under review this evening is dated 9/28/2015. As it currently stands, the total 2016 budget is \$470,724.

Some of the comments made during the ensuing discussion were as follows:

- John said we have not yet received the final amount due for property insurance next year. As a result, that amount is estimated at \$17,000.
- Rev. Bill's health insurance is going up, but we don't know how much. Again, an estimate of \$14,088 is used.
- In response to Alfred's question as to how much money is currently in the Outreach dedicated fund, Dana advised that \$6,783.37 was in that account as of 8/31/2015.
- The fee the Boy Scouts must pay to the national organization will be going up, because the amount due is based on the number of boys. The amount is estimated at \$700, but may need to go higher.

- While the general budget line-item (509.160) for Stephen Ministry was reduced to \$1,000, Stephen Ministry has a dedicated account (320.032) which contains \$1,567.

The only item which must be approved this evening is the pastor's salary, because Conference is to be advised of the final figure by October 1. SPR recommends the pastor's package as reflected in the proposed budget, and Finance agrees with that recommendation, subject to the final figures for health insurance. *Vic Costello moved, seconded by Mary Hilton, that the Church Council accept the recommendation of SPR and Finance, and adopt the Pastor Expense budget lines 502.100 thru 502.130 totaling \$106,568. Since no one had any questions or comments, a consensus was reached.*

Finance has not had an opportunity to review this proposed budget dated 9/28/2015. Finance will review the proposed budget again at its meeting on October 19, and the Church Council will be able to review it a second time on October 26. The entire budget must be finalized before the Church Conference on November 1.

Trustees: John noted that there is an outdoor light at the Barn which is burnt out. Doreen said she knows the Trustees have been working hard at keeping everything running smoothly. She reminded all that if something needs attention, a work order form should be completed and placed in the Trustees mail slot in room 114. The forms are in 114 as well as in the Education Hall. The Trustees will decide if the custodian can handle it, or if it should be contracted out.

Staff Parish: Joan advised that SPR completed the assessment of ministerial effectiveness and goal setting. She will make a short presentation about this to each service.

Lay Nominations: Rev. Bill discussed the Lay Nominations for next year. We could still use a few more Trustees, and there is a great need for a Caring Ministry Coordinator. This list of Lay Nominations will be voted on by the Church Conference on November 1.

Rev. Bill feels there are three things that our church needs to improve:

- First, we need to take better care of our people who are in the hospital or when they get home. Some people have been unable to come to church for several months, and no one has called them. The pastor cannot visit everyone; he needs assistance. The church has divided our congregation into nine geographical zones so that one person does not have to go all over Charlotte County. This is one reason why filling the Caring Ministry Coordinator position is so important – to divvy up the necessary activities and keep tabs on who is where.
- Second, we need more people in small groups and we need more small-group leaders. People who are in small groups tend to help take care of each other.
- Third, we need to get serious about reaching our millennials. This is a separate topic which will be addressed this evening by Vic.

With regard to the Caring Ministry Coordinator, it was mentioned that one area we need to address deals with removing people from the prayer list. We receive notice of a problem or situation, add them to our prayer list, and then six months later learn they long ago left the hospital or solved the problem. Rev. Bill said this would be a prime example of something the Caring Ministry Coordinator could do.

OLD BUSINESS

Coffee House: Shirley Smith's small group was handling this potential outreach. With Shirley receiving her ministerial appointment to Cleveland UMC in Punta Gorda, it would be up to someone else in that small group to take the reins on this project. It was decided to table the project at this time unless and until someone else in her small group comes to us.

Creation Care Team: Doreen reminded us that this new ministry stems from this year's Annual Conference. The Conference is supposed to create a position that will support the local church in forming these teams. Dee Grafe and Jim Choate have both expressed an interest in joining the team. Doreen feels that, although we don't yet have any "official" guidance, there is no reason why we can't start something here. For instance, there could be a push to have people bring their own Tervis Tumblers (or other non-disposable cups) instead of using the Styrofoam cups provided by the church – "Bring Your Own Cup, We've Got the Coffee!" Initiate a new recycling program, similar to what was done in the past. Stop using disposable plates and bowls; but this would mean people would have to step up and agree to wash what is used. Rev. Bill said that millennials care about our earth would likely respond very favorably to these steps.

Danielle Jumisko Recycling Program: This ministry involves recycling aluminum cans; this was one of Danielle's passions. The cans are taken to Allied Recycling down near the bridge which crosses the Peace River. This is the only place that *pays* for the aluminum. When this ministry started, we received 60¢ or more for each pound, but over the years it has dropped to less than 19¢ a pound. Scott reported that last week Randy Moore totally filled his pickup truck with cans, but the *total* he received for that truckload was just \$10.77. Those present felt that this amount is definitely not worth all the effort involved by the congregation and Randy, even though it goes into the Youth coffers. It was decided that Scott should take this issue to the Youth Council where it should be addressed.

Some points made during the general discussion on recycling which followed:

- We can continue recycling, especially during large events such as the crafts shows and barn sale.
- The county's recycling locations off Gulfstream and Kenilworth are under new policies effective October 1, 2015. As before, they are for use only by residences, not businesses. Residences will be limited to 6 visits a year, with a cumulative yearly limit of 18 cubic yards. The new policies can be found at <http://www.charlottecountyfl.com/PublicWorks/SolidWaste/Policy.pdf>.

- Recycling materials are picked up by Waste Management as part of their contract ONLY from residences, not from commercial businesses or churches.
- Waste Management will, however, collect recycled materials from businesses or churches for a fee. Jeanne said they charge \$90 a month for a small hopper.
- We should encourage the congregation to recycle their own materials at home.
- For some time now all Waste Management residences in Charlotte County have been issued two garbage cans – one for garbage and one for recycling. The recycling does not have to be separated any longer, and Waste Management will accept any plastic with a triangle on it (not just certain numbers.) The newspaper a few months ago said that recycling has increased dramatically since the 2-cans-per-household program was instituted.

Fair Trade Show: Sandy has not had a chance yet to check into fair trade companies (other than Trades of Hope) which might be interested in being a vendor at a fair trade show. However, she did question whether we could ask the congregation to start flattening cereal boxes (and ONLY cereal boxes) and bring them to the church. The Trades of Hope artisans use them to make beads for various pieces of jewelry. Each cereal box can earn a woman as much as \$40.

Slack: Rick has been asked by several individual to conduct a training class on using the application Slack, which was a topic of discussion at our June 22 meeting. A portion of those minutes is copied here:

GCUMC.SLACK.COM: This is a general application which can be used for communication of church business by posting comments and files. Slack advertises itself as a “messaging app for teams.” It is available for iPhones, iPads, Android devices, Windows (7 or newer), and Mac OSX (10.7 or newer). Rick has already established the GCUMC Slack domain, and created the channels (groups) of teamcuba, praiseteam, Myakka-river, boyscouts, and vbs. You can upload pictures, files, and other things. Church members who wish to join the Slack communications should email Rick Starck.

Slack is designed for groups of people. Files can be uploaded, and live chats can be held. Several individuals present indicated they also would like to know how to use it.

Doreen mentioned that **Remind** is a free program similar to Slack. People sign up online through a code, and then receive a text message about a particular topic. An example of such a message would be, “Don’t forget we have a meeting tonight at 5pm. Coffee & donuts for everyone.” She said schools are using it to keep in touch with parents; such as, “Report cards are going home today; don’t forget to ask your child for it.”

Communication: Sandy reminded us that we must not forget that many in our congregation do not own a computer or a smartphone, and as a result, we must still convey information in written form.

Gretchen said that before she moved here, her school used a system called One Call. Several announcements were conveyed in a single phone call which was made to everybody who wanted to receive it. You have to subscribe to the service. Scott said the last church he was at used it, and although they paid \$250 a month for it, the cost might have gone down by now.

Vic suggested that we might consider using 3-5 minutes on a Sunday morning to convey Church Council actions to the congregation. Right now, we could encourage people either to complete a prayer card on Sunday morning or to call the office when they want to initiate a prayer request. Rev. Bill can't be expected to remember a dozen names with details from each service when he is getting ready to deliver a sermon. Ken said that since he is Lay Leader he is more than willing to handle questions instead of directing them to Rev. Bill.

Salty Service counts are still being taken. Some people feel they are bragging when they put that card into the offering plate or box. Joan has an entirely different frame of mind with regard to the Salty Service cards. She explained that it's not bragging, because when you do something like that, you're not saying something that you have done. Instead you are saying "Thank you, God, for allowing me to do your work here on earth." You are showing others that they, too, have the ability to be the hands and feet of Jesus. Doreen added that as we are giving our monetary offering, we are also offering ourselves, and thanking God for that opportunity. Maybe we need to change the wording on the Salty Service card. The suggestion was made that the Liturgist remind the congregation about the Salty Service cards.

NEW BUSINESS

Millennium Service: One evening, Vic was talking with his granddaughter and other millennials. The discussion came up about why millennials don't attend church on a regular basis. The response he got was that they are attending weekend sports events and other activities in which they could not participate during the week. In addition, they indicated that neither the traditional nor the contemporary service interests them. His granddaughter opined that the best time to reach them is Friday evening right after work. Vic's thoughts and ideas about this millennium service are reproduced at the end of these minutes. Some of the comments made during the ensuing discussion follow:

1. Our demographics have indicated that our geographical area is both a service-related community and a retirement community. Business owners represent probably less than 5% of the population. Many work on the weekends.
2. The envisioned millennium service would not be very long. It would start with music, have a short 10- to 15-minute message, and maybe offer communion. Then individuals could leave or stay to enjoy each other's fellowship in a "meet and greet."
3. With Rev. Bill having Friday as his day off, it would provide our church leadership with an opportunity to expand their horizons. Later we could link up with students from local colleges or seminaries to provide them with service time.

4. Providing after-service follow-up for those who have additional questions or needs should probably be done for our current traditional and contemporary services as well.
5. Newspaper advertising would not bring in any millennials. Most communication between them is electronic (texting, Twitter, Facebook, email, Instagram, etc.).
6. We need to be flexible enough to change something as soon as possible if it doesn't work.
7. The service would not be self-sustaining in the beginning, so it would have an impact on our budget.
8. One of the biggest concerns is not causing our current volunteers to burn out. It might eventually lead to hiring an associate pastor for our church, and could easily result in a need to expand our campus.
9. We should be prepared to address any resistance that might result from the new service. By way of example: When our current contemporary service was started about 9 or 10 years ago, many expressed their displeasure with that type of service. However, over the years, its attendance has grown and it is now our largest service.
10. This sounds like an extension of our vision retreat discussion of a couple years ago.
11. We should consider installing an electronic "swiper" or creating a smartphone application by which donations could be made. Today's young adults often don't carry cash, and depend on their smartphone, not a watch, to give them the time.
12. Today's millennials are into service opportunities, and we should consider offering both local and global possibilities/missions. It is being the Body of Jesus Christ outside the church. Maybe once a month, instead of a short service at the church on a Friday, they could go out into the community. Our current outreach to Cuba would be a draw for them.
13. Once our high schoolers graduate, we don't have anything for them.
14. A steering committee should be established to explore questions and possibilities. In addition to us old-timers, we hope that some of our current millennials, such as Bea Penski, Sean Priest, and Nick Rodriguez, would be interested in being on the steering committee.

Holy Land Experience: On Thursday, November 19, Scott will be a chaperone to the Crafty Ladies when they head to the Holy Land Experience in Orlando. He was able to obtain tickets at \$40 apiece (down from \$55), and they plan to take the church van. The van would limit them to 12 people going (unless others drove their own vehicles). They hope that some of our northern Crafty Ladies will be back by then and able to go.

CHURCH CONFERENCE

This year's church conference is on Sunday, November 1, at 3pm at Edgewater UMC. We will be meeting with eight other churches. Each church will give a short report, probably by the Lay Leader or Church Council Chairman. Rev. Bill said we have been asked to focus on three questions:

- ✚ Is the primary goal of your ministry to make disciples for Jesus Christ?
- ✚ How are our programs leading people to Christ, producing professions of faith, and increasing attendance at worship services?
- ✚ Are our programs designed to go outside the church walls to find people where they are, giving them Christ and connecting them with Christians to try to become fully devoted disciples of Christ?

Rev. Bill would like to find out what percentage of our people are actively going out to reach people for Christ. Doreen responded that she believes our people are doing more than we realize, and that the Salty Service cards are not doing it justice. Perhaps we should find a way for our congregation to share their God moments with others.

ADJOURNING

Rev. Bill reviewed tonight's meeting.

1. What did we agree upon tonight? What did we decide we would do? Vic should move forward and get a team together for the Millennium Service. The pastor's salary for 2016 was approved. Lay Nominations for 2016 was approved. We need to fill the position of Caring Ministry Coordinator.
2. What topic tonight got you the most excited? The Millennium Service discussion because we are being nudged to do something. When, in light of just a \$10 return, the possibility of stopping the aluminum can recycling program was mentioned.
3. At what point in the meeting did you feel the most uncomfortable? Listening to the Millennium Service discussion because I am being asked to do something. When asking about the aluminum can program. When we talked about certain services not being recorded, because ensuring that is done is one of my responsibilities.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm with communion and a prayer by Rev. Bill. The next Church Council meeting will be held on Monday, October 26, 2015, at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Hanson
Recording Secretary

Millennium Service

Goal: To establish a church service to offer 'The Body of Jesus Christ' to the Millennial age group and to everyone in the community who prefers a weekday service or who cannot or will not attend a Sunday service because of other obligations or desires.

Focus: Offer the unchurched community an opportunity to know and commune with Jesus Christ.

Objective 1: Provide a friendly non-threatening church atmosphere where individuals and families can receive the Holy Spirit through The Word of God.

Objective 2: Provide a reasonable week night church service time convenient to the service providers in our community.

Objective 3: Provide lay support and team building to accomplish a smooth welcoming environment conducive to life changing, spiritual faith-building moments for believers and non-believers.

Objective 4: Provide day care for children during the service.

Objective 5: Provide after service follow-up for attendees who might have additional questions and/or needs.

Objective 6: Provide current communication techniques to communicate with attendees: i.e. Text, Twitter, Facebook, Email or Phone bank.

Objective 7: Provide light refreshments to encourage social bonding after service. (meet and greet)

Objective 8: Collect brief communication information to fulfill objective 6.

Bullet points of thought:

- What funding will be needed?
- Who will offer communion?
- Who will lead worship?
- Who will offer the message?
- Who will offer child care?
- Critique of service? (Steering committee)
- Who will handle media in objective 6?

- Establishment of a steering committee.

Short and long term pros and cons on establishment and maintenance of a millennial service.

Additional cost of church plant usage: i.e. Air conditioning and additional utility cost. Service will not be financially self-sustaining from the beginning.

Chance of burning-out saints already committed to other church projects and fundamental structures of current services and outreach. How to ameliorate dealing with resistance from church members, who resist change from the established traditional and contemporary church service methods.

Service could be a significant positive impact on our unchurched community: i.e. weekend workers (our service community), unchurched community who make weekend sports a priority, parents who have children in organized sports during the weekend and millennials who are searching for the Lord and are turned off by traditional and contemporary worship methods.

Long term thoughts are:

- The possibility of raising-up mature believers who might consider a pastoral life tract.
- Utilizing college students on a seminary tract to build life experience in ministry.
- Possibility of hiring an associate pastor.
- Robust positive pressure on church family to cause the need for church plant expansion.

I would like to thank the church council for allowing me the time to present this idea.

Vic Costello, member
Gulf Cove United Methodist Church