

Gulf Cove United Methodist Church
Helping Everyone Meet, Know, and Serve Jesus
Church Council Meeting
January 25, 2016 – 7:00 PM

Attending: Doreen Alvarez, Jeanne Shrout, Mary Hilton, Scott Folsom, Alfred Current, Rick Starck, John Furtado, Rev. Dr. Bill Fisackerly, Donna Wallace, Sandy Doty, Joan Priest, Ken Priest, Betty Hansell.

The meeting was opened with the lighting of the Christ candle and a prayer by Doreen.

Before the reports from each area, Doreen announced that anyone with an income of under \$60,000 can get their taxes done for free by United Way at the Cultural Center in Port Charlotte.

NURTURE

Education: Doreen felt the "Donkey in the Living Room" series went well during Advent. She is aware that Gretchen wants to re-decorate the hallway in the Education wing.

Small Groups: Rev. Bill intends to select a Lenten study and wants to encourage more small groups to participate in this seasonal study. Ken mentioned that his group has ordered "Near the Cross," a study for Lent available from Cokesbury. Doreen pointed out that a daily devotion ("Picture Lent") is featured at the Life Enrichment Center on the UMC website.

OUTREACH

Team Cuba: Rev. Bill talked about his recent email from Pastor Reinaldo, who expressed his appreciation for our support. Rev. Bill is looking forward to his trip to Cuba in February and meeting with the pastor of our sister church. Jeanne said that following the Starcks' presentation, numerous people were touched and indicated an interest in contributing to this mission. She feels that donations to this ministry will continue. Joan added that even in the 3rd thru 5th grade Sunday School class, there was a lot of interest and questions after the presentation. Betty noted that Phill Kolbe now wants to join Team Cuba.

Thanksgiving Dinner: The final tally was 700 for the number of dinners served.

Salvation Army Bell Ringers: Sandy reported that our district was top in the state for per hour giving. There were 117 volunteers who participated, which included 8 to 10 folks from the Village of Holiday Lakes. There will be an appreciation luncheon on February 12 at the Cultural Center (reservations must be made by February 4). She noted that 82% of the money collected goes to support the Salvation Army programs.

Arts and Crafts Fair: We had a good turnout, despite the wet and windy weather. Rev. Bill liked that Mary was there at the prayer table.

Pig Pickin': Alfred stated that some of the proceeds will be allocated for a new stove for the kitchen. Other monies will be donated to fund a wrap for the Boy Scout's trailer, and some identification for the outside of the church van. He will contact Joanie Scott to see if she will agree to be in charge of the cookie dash. [Mary Hilton subsequently agreed to this job.] We will provide lunch for the Myakka [and Vineland] staff during the Pig Pickin' as we did last year.

Elementary Schools: Alfred will continue to stay in touch with the Myakka staff but will also be reaching out to Vineland Elementary. He plans to "make some new friends" at their "Leadership Day" event.

Scouts: John said that the Boy Scout troop volunteered at the Habitat site on January 23. He added that the Men's Group paid the troop's recharter fee. Alfred commented that the troop added one more member. They may be expanding their membership because the troop to which they initially belonged has not been rechartered. Rev. Bill noted that there are visitors who attend GCUMC services because we sponsor a scout troop.

Cancer Support: Ken Priest gave an update on fundraising for cancer treatment and research. In the past, our volunteers have aligned with Relay for Life campaigns. However, starting this year, we will support Gateway for Cancer Research (www.GatewayCR.org), which focuses on phases 1 and 2 trials. He stated that \$0.99 of every dollar goes to fund those trials and research, and the organization is currently funding 120 different trials. Although most of the fundraising efforts will be online, he and Alfred are organizing a pancake breakfast fundraiser scheduled for April 2.

The Reach of Our Outreach: Regarding end of the year reports, Rev. Bill indicated that 8,400 people benefitted from our outreach efforts!

WITNESS

Worship: Rev. Bill said the Blue Christmas service was meaningful for those attending. Donna reported that plans for Lent begin with Ash Wednesday, February 10. There will be a Lenten service at noon, followed by a traditional soup and bread lunch served at 12:30. An additional Ash Wednesday service will be held at 6:15, after a soup and bread dinner. A noon service (but no lunch) will continue through the Lenten season.

Donna reported that the worship committee would like to have a continental breakfast served outside in the breezeway on Easter Sunday. Pastries and coffee would be

available; tables and chairs would be set up to encourage fellowship between services. Discussion followed regarding parking availability, and it was suggested that we use the golf cart to convey people from outer areas.

Rev. Bill noted that a drama will be presented on Maundy Thursday, and that Kim will prepare for the Mary drama on Good Friday. Donna asked that an extra hook be placed on the wall so that the Stephen Ministers banner can be hung. Doreen will complete a work order for that to be done.

SUPPORT

Finance: John submitted a report which summarizes the church's income, expenses, budget, etc., from 2006 thru 2013. During those years, our income and expenses were fairly stable. The reserve fund has been utilized to meet the monthly deficits; in 2015, we only used \$6,000. With the 2016 budget set at \$477,147, it will be difficult to set aside \$1,500 into the Facilities Expansion fund. The Reserve Fund is currently around \$29,000.

Trustees: A dehumidifier was installed in the Closet of Hope, which made a nice improvement to the air quality there. Materials have been purchased to put tread down on the portable decking. Doreen said that a window in #201 is slightly open and won't close; she will put in a work order for Mike to take care of that problem. Apparently, FPL caused considerable damage to our property by driving large trucks over parts of the property after the last severe thunderstorms; Ken has called FPL to lodge a complaint but has not heard back from them yet.

Staff Parish: Joan reported that the committee had the unfortunate task of letting our A/V tech go. Doreen has worked on revising the job description for the position, and it has been posted online.

Nominations: Rev. Bill clarified the difference between the Nurture Team and the Caring Ministry.

Nurture Team: We have one group of people who check attendance, and if an individual misses two weeks in a row, they are contacted. Joyce Furtado compiles the list of people who have missed worship services. Bella Williams and Virginia Bathurst then call to check on those folks to see if they are ill, etc.

Caring Ministry: These individuals visit those who are homebound, in the hospital, etc. Ron & Carol Stein and Frank & Mary Marzucco are co-chairs of this ministry.

OLD BUSINESS

Facility Expansion: Those present are concerned that there has been no activity regarding plans for expansion. Rev. Bill said that Vic Costello, Helen Boyce, and Carol McGuire had agreed to be part of that committee, and he will talk to them about proceeding with plans.

NEW BUSINESS

Training: Doreen reminded us of the Vision Retreat on Saturday, February 13, at 9am, at the Placida Harbour Club (11000 Placida Road), and also the Thrive District Leadership Training on Saturday, January 30, at Punta Gorda UMC.

Visitors: Follow-up with visitors needs attention. Ken told about a visitor who came to GCUMC several times and even helped with the Thanksgiving dinner, but nobody invited him to become a new member. He is now a member of Edgewater UMC, because the first time he visited, he was invited to become a member.

Flocking: Scott gave an update on flocking. This has been the most successful fundraiser he has ever had. Many people want to see it continue. He had planned to only have it through the end of February. Joan suggested that he stop it for a few months and then start it up again, not just keep it going until people get tired of it.

ADJOURNING

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm with the serving of Communion.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Hansell
Recording Secretary