

**Gulf Cove United Methodist Church**  
*Helping Everyone Meet, Know, and Serve Jesus*  
**Church Council Meeting**  
**March 28, 2016 – 7:00 PM**

**Attendees:**

Doreen Alvarez (Church  
Council Chairman)  
Rev. Dr. Bill Fisackerly  
Alfred Current  
Scott Folsom  
Betty Hansell

Mary Hilton  
Emmett Leonard  
Gretchen Leppla  
Carol McGuire  
John McGuire  
Joan Priest

Ken Priest  
Jeanne Shrout  
Rick Starck  
Donna Wallace  
Dana Hanson

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

**Corrections to Previous Minutes:** A correction is necessary to the last section of the 2/22/2016 minutes which indicates that communion was served. However, it was not served that evening because Rev. Bill was in Cuba.

**NURTURE**

**Education:** Gretchen reported that an Education meeting is scheduled for Saturday, April 9, from 9am to noon. Some agenda items include creating a teaching team, creating a GCUMC Children's Church Culture, creating a curriculum for pre-K thru grade 5, and connecting programs. Some areas about which we should be concerned were reiterated at recently-attended District meetings include:

- We lack signage which directs individuals to where they want to go.
- New families with children are not consistently welcomed and taken under someone's wing.
- Although the program is established in the nursery, there is no check-in or check-out for children in any other grades.
- When people visit a new church, they look around. Is it welcoming? Is it clean? Is it organized? Does it look like a storage room?
- The most important question a new family asks is, *will my children be safe here?*

Gretchen would like to make the Education hallway bulletin board located between the 109 and 110 doorways more interactive; i.e., inviting enough that both children and adults will notice it.

**Small Groups:** No discussion.

**OUTREACH**

**Team Cuba:** Betty inquired as to the authority of Team Cuba as it relates to expenditures from the Cuba-designated accounts. The only mention of financial authority granted to Team Cuba is contained in the 9/22/2014 Council minutes:

**Topic #006: Team Cuba Resolution**

**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 Shrout 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.

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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).

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Betty pointed out that Team Cuba expenditures vary because they don't know in advance what needs will arise in Nicaro which the Team would like to address. For instance, Team Cuba had voted to send \$5,000 to Nicaro to enable them to expand their new location by adding a church sanctuary. In the meantime, the water systems project is coming to fruition. Ken Visser of Water One in Fort Myers and Agape Flights in Venice (<http://www.agapeflights.com/>) are working together to deliver the first water systems to Cuba in May or June. Each Agape flight costs \$4,500 to \$5,000, and the Nicaro water system was estimated at \$4,000 to \$4,500. Betty queried Dan Christopherson (the SW District Cuba Coordinator) whether he would suggest going forward with the sanctuary plan, or waiting to use the money for the water system.

Dan responded that the cost of the first Agape flight is being paid by a donor. He anticipates that the Nicaro water system will be on the first flight; this would eliminate our responsibility for paying for a portion of the flight itself. Dan also advised that Ken Visser recently told him that it is possible that the Nicaro equipment for which we are paying might cost \$1,000 less than initially estimated.

Betty reminded us about Pastor Isel's visit a couple weeks ago; he is the District Superintendent of the district in which Nicaro is located. During his presentation, he mentioned that their district has 100 missionaries who do not receive a salary, but travel to rural areas to speak to groups. He wanted to purchase bicycles for them, but they cost \$110 each. Because of a lack of funds, they were only able to purchase three bicycles. So after his presentation that evening, Betty asked if we could help purchase more bicycles. As a result of people reaching into their pockets right then and there, the 54 people who were in attendance raised \$617, enough for five more bikes.

With regard to Betty's initial question, Rev. Bill opined that all funds received by Team Cuba are designated funds to be used to benefit our Cuban sister church. Further, a formal resolution was passed creating Team Cuba. Therefore, as the lead member of the Nominating Committee:

*Rev. Bill asked Rick Starck if he would be willing to act as the liaison between Team Cuba and the Church Council; further, that he would ensure that the team would follow the guidelines that the Team and Council set up; and that he would report back to Council. Doreen added that Team Cuba be granted the authority to make whatever decisions and expenditures they deem appropriate as long as there is a benefit to Cuba specifically and directly. All major events will be reported to the congregation (such as directly on Sunday mornings, and in the Newsletter, Bulletins, and mid-week email, as*

*appropriate). -- [It is noted that these instructions modify the original resolution passed on 9/22/2014, in that Church Council approval for expenditures is no longer required.]*

After discussion, all indicated agreement with those resolutions, and Rick accepted the liaison position. Jeanne reminded all that anyone who wishes to donate to our Cuba ministry should submit a check to GCUMC with the notation line stating "Cuba," "Nicaro," "sister-church" or some similar notation.

**Easter Festival:** It was noted that there were only two or three GCUMC children who came to the festival. Everyone was asked to put their child's name & contact information on a piece of paper, and a winner was drawn for a huge Praying Rabbit. Of the approximately 42 children, Mary said 20 families indicated they were not affiliated with any church, a few did not answer the question, and the rest indicated they already attended elsewhere. Mary Hilton will shortly be contacting all unaffiliated attendees after the Easter season. They were not asked what school the child attended, so there is no way to ascertain if our invitations to Myakka and Vineland Elementary Schools resulted in any of those children coming.

**Elementary Schools:** Rev. Bill said he received a letter from one of the Myakka teachers. She thanked us for the Pig-Pickin' lunch. Rick said he was thanked profusely when he delivered the lunches to Vineland. It was suggested that we consider sending volunteers to stay with the children while the teachers enjoyed a truly child-free lunch; however, Doreen said that Florida requires a certified teacher be supervising at all times.

Alfred informed us that Myakka will be having another Spring Festival on Friday, April 8. The school has asked if we can provide volunteers to assist with cooking and serving. Volunteers are asked to arrive by 4:15.

**Scouts:** Alfred advised that the Boy Scouts are taking their trailer to Monarch Printing to be measured. They are working on a graphic design and estimate that the cost will be around \$2,400. Finance advised that there was \$4,600 available from the Pig Pickin' & Cookie Dash. A couple of the boys are working on their Eagle Scout badge. Alfred believes that the scouts are planning on conducting their 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Mother's Day Breakfast on May 7.

### **WITNESS**

**Worship:** Donna reported that about 125 people took advantage of the sit-down continental breakfast on the porch Easter Sunday. She plans to make pizza bagels for the youth with some of the left over bagels. She thanked the few people who stayed afterwards to help her with clean-up. All felt the Easter weekend was fantastic!

Rev. Bill said that 758 attended the four Easter Sunday morning services, and another 212 attended Holy Thursday and Good Friday programs. He wants to thank Ray Dunfee for his baseball analogy: Many people come to church only on Christmas and Easter, but if a person is a sports fan, does he go to only the first and last games of the season?

## SUPPORT

**Finance:** John reported that our spendable income for the first two months of 2016 is the highest we have ever had. Our Reserve Fund has already reached a new high, over \$30,000 as of the end of February. John then brought up the new sanctuary chairs; this topic is addressed under “Old Business,” below.

**Staff Parish:** Joan advised that reports under the Child and Youth Protection Policy are due at Conference by the end of March. Scott said that the current policies were last updated in 2009. The youth directors have fully reviewed those policies and determined that they are now “old school.” However, they are telling the churches to follow those policies until new ones are issued this fall. The new guidelines will be updated to current standards, not only those required by the church, but also with educational practices.

Joan and Rev. Bill said we now have two individuals who have expressed an interest in the vacant audio-visual technician position.

**Lay Nominations:** This section summarizes nomination needs from elsewhere in these and other recent minutes.

- ✚ Lay Nominations will seek a new Volunteer Coordinator.
- ✚ Lay Nominations will seek a new Children’s Home Representative.
- ✚ Lay Nominations will seek a new Evangelism Coordinator. (The duties as stated in last month’s minutes have been expanded. See the discussion below under Evangelism.)  
The duties will include:
  - Develop Fresh Expression plans to go out to where the unchurched are.
  - Coordinate acknowledgment of first-time guests.
  - Coordinate pew captains.
  - Organize visitation of first-time guests.

## OLD BUSINESS

**New-to-Us Sanctuary Chairs:** John advised that as before, the new sanctuary chairs will have to be removed from the sanctuary when we prepare for large events. Although they stack, they are larger and take up much more storage space. John Furtado has suggested that we purchase another storage shed, because the current shed is too small. Skip Messenger, the chairman of the Trustees, was at the recent Finance meeting, but has not yet had an opportunity to bring the issue before the rest of the trustees.

Mary mentioned that the Finance minutes suggest selling or donating the old sanctuary chairs. However, she asked if the older chairs are sold, which chairs would then be used during Thanksgiving and other meals; the new chairs are lighter in color and could very quickly be stained. John agreed that the new chairs should not be used for meals, so he suggested that enough of the old chairs be kept to use for the dinners. But again, this puts even greater emphasis on the need for a new storage shed. Although our storage needs will be considered by the new Facilities Expansion team, until their decisions come to fruition, we have an immediate need for more storage space.

Regarding the new chairs, Gretchen asked if some of the old sanctuary chairs could be kept in 109, as they are much more comfortable than the folding chairs currently being used in that room.

Ken reported that somewhere between 60 and 70 of the old sanctuary chairs will be given to Kairos Outside for their weekends. We will keep probably between 200-250 chairs.

*All agreed that a new shed should be purchased as a temporary fix to our storage problems.*

Note that after the Church Council meeting, on 3/30/2016 John Furtado sent an email which addresses the chairs and their storage. He states his belief that we will need two more storage sheds, not just one. His email is attached at the end of these minutes. In addition, an area church purchased 30 of the old chairs for their sanctuary and picked them up on 3/31/2016.

**Facility Expansion:** Doreen advised that many files have been uploaded to the Slack computer application. Anyone interested in reading the information and finding out where the team stands can obtain the Slack app and join the group. The team is still in the fact-finding stages, and not yet ready to make any suggestions or plans. The District and the Discipline have guidelines and recommendations which can be used during these types of considerations.

With regard to demographics, Doreen noted that some of the reports indicate that the area median income is around \$50,000. However, the schools in our area have an extremely high free or reduced lunch rate, which would indicate a much lower income. In fact, next school year there are three or four Charlotte County schools which will receive free breakfasts and free lunches every day for 100% of their students. For children in families who live with extended family members, if they are living in that arrangement because the parent/guardian cannot find or provide housing, the children are considered homeless, but the parents are not. One explanation for the difference between the "median" income and the number of impoverished as represented in our schools might be that families with young children are much more impoverished than the senior families who live in our communities.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Volunteer Coordinator:** Staff Parish is currently working on volunteer positions and their job descriptions. Joan believes that once those are finalized, SPR should provide oversight only for a new Volunteer Coordinator position. We need a volunteer apparatus so that people know how to become volunteers.

**Logos:** The office has come up with a new logo which they have already started implementing. They have created four versions: blue, black, color (blue, red, & black), and color with a QR code.

### **EVANGELISM, FRESH EXPRESSIONS, & DISCIPLESHIP**

Expanding on last month's minutes, we need to find a coordinator for these programs.

**Evangelism:** Outreach is being the hands and feet of Christ, whereas an Evangelism Coordinator helps others to become the hands and feet of Chris. Hence this position would be

separate from Outreach. The Lay Nominations committee will seek an Evangelism Coordinator, whose duties should include:

- Develop Fresh Expression plans to go out to where the unchurched are.
- Coordinate acknowledgment of first-time guests.
- Coordinate pew captains.
- Organize visitation of first-time guests.

**First-Time Guests:** We should establish a short meet-the-pastor program, and/or a welcome-to-Gulf-Cove-UMC program. At the same time, we need to immediately plug their children into the various programs available to them. We also need an immediate contact or phone call follow-up program. Comments made during the ensuing conversation included:

- GCUMC is very good at welcoming first-time guests, but then we drop the ball and don't effectively follow-up with them.
- When is the best time for a first-time gathering? Sunday mornings? Wednesday evenings? Once a month?
- Rev. Bill likes the meet-the-pastor idea.
- Rick opined that we need a team available every week to meet with first-time guests because they might not come back.
- Since different individuals would be handling the meeting after each service and even every week, a rough talking-points outline should be available.
- Possibly pictures could be taken of all first-timers.
- Fix up the chapel, the library, or especially the serving room (#103, since we already have coffee and snacks set up there) and bring first-time guests there to discuss things.
- Blue cards which are completed by first-timers, if they are turned in at all, seldom indicate a local address. It is felt that the blue cards are no longer working.
- Most people who are first-time guests are snowbirds, not full-time residents.
- Is there a way we can get contact information without a piece of paper? Can we create a QR code for an on-line entry form? Can donation QR codes be developed to include names, addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers?
- It has to be the individual's desire to come back; nothing we do can force them.
- Guest-book sign-ins might work, but we have five doors thru which individuals enter the sanctuary.
- Can pew captains be chosen from each service who can greet people who are new and sitting in their area of the sanctuary (which could be divided into fourths)? The pew captains could take them to the meet-and-greet area. The pew captains could call them in a day or two.
- Vista Print can prepare calling cards which can be handed out. We want to be sure, however, that we don't treat first-timers as if we were salesmen, and that we are not overly churchy.
- Could the choir once a month enter the sanctuary from the narthex and greet everybody who comes in while they are waiting, as they did for Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday?
- Everybody could develop the welcoming manner and mindset that Linda Starck has!
- We need to combine high-tech with high-touch.

**Discipleship:** We currently have only the new membership class which has not been updated in about ten years. Once individuals become new members, we need to have a way to plug

them in. These activities would be different from the Evangelism aspects which primarily involve individuals new to the church. Spending more time with spiritual gifts and the Volunteer Coordinator is imperative to the Discipleship path.

### ADJOURNING

Donna Wallace conveyed a special thank you to Emmett for his assistance in clean-up after the Easter services on Sunday. *Thank you, Emmett!*

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55pm with communion and a prayer by Doreen. The next Church Council meeting will be held on Monday, April 25, 2016 at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dana Hanson  
Recording Secretary

**Sent:** March 30, 2016 at 10:20 AM

**Subject:** Chairs

All,

It appears that chairs have now become a big priority.

The new green chairs are currently allocated as follows: 5 are in the chapel, 40 are in the barn and there should be 347 in the sanctuary. Someone should confirm these numbers as we (John Dorotics, myself and Sam Waters) probably miscounted them as we picked up...we were supposed to pick up 269 chairs, I paid for 271 and I thought I counted 344 in the sanctuary.

The new green chairs do/will not fit around our rectangle tables as they are about 6 inches wider which will limit the number of people we can feed at a sitting for Thanksgiving.

For Thanksgiving or any other meal that requires using the entire sanctuary, I believe we can set up a total of 19 rows of tables (3 tables per row with 18 of our old chairs per row) which consumes 342 of our old chairs.

If my memory serves me, I had about 320 chairs in the sanctuary prior to bringing the green chairs. At the same time, our existing storage shed had approximately 28 rectangular tables, 4 round tables still in boxes, 3 ladders, 3 chair movers and the cart we use to stack Bibles and hymnals. This shed is currently pretty much full. I did sell 4 chairs to Deb Howell for \$5.00. There were already 96 to 98 chairs in this shed before I started adding from those taken from the sanctuary. This would mean that we have approximately 413 old chairs excluding the 4 I sold. This should all be confirmed by actual count...remember that there are chairs stored in the barn.

Now for the summer months, we'll need to take out of the sanctuary about 120 - 140 chairs depending on attendance and if we try to keep all the chairs for the various needs we'd need 2 versus 1 more storage shed.

I know I jumped around a bit here; however, I'm trying to address several questions. Feel free to call me at 941-830-0121 if you have further questions or need clarification.

Sincerely, John Furtado