

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

Attendees:

Doreen Alvarez (Church Council Chairman)	Scott Folsom	Gretchen Leppla
Rev. Dr. Bill Fisackerly	Betty Hansell	Jeanne Shrout
Alfred Current	Charles Hilton	Rick Starck
Sandy Doty	Mary Hilton	Donna Wallace
	Emmett Leonard	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: The recording secretary was not notified of any necessary corrections to the minutes of the March 28, 2016, meeting.

NURTURE

Education: Gretchen informed us of several things, including highlights from the Education & Sunday school meeting that was recently held:

- The schedule for May, June & July is prepared and has been sent to all the teachers.
- They are going to try to get additional people involved in the Sunday school programs.
- Everybody needs a background check, and only Joyce and Holly have taken the yearly class.
- All agreed it would be beneficial to create a new small group comprised of individuals who work with our children.
- During their meeting, one of the participants sat in a wheelchair which was wheeled around the building. Notes were made of numerous areas/things which need attention. It was noted, again, that storage is needed everywhere, especially in 109.
- The TV in 109 belongs to Sean Priest. He is loaning it to the church until a new one can be purchased. Gretchen would like to see the new TV installed higher on the wall so that everyone in the room can see it.
- Everyone at their meeting said they preferred the designed Sunday curricula (instead of the purchased programs). Since the designed curricula are based on the same sermon which Rev. Bill delivers that day, parents and their children are able to discuss the sermon topic.
- The curriculum needs to be developed with touching and feeling in mind so that the special needs children will also be engaged.
- Fidget toys were introduced at their meeting.
- They held a large discussion about whether we should have the children read from the Bible. The teachers' experiences show that when the children have to struggle to read big words, their comprehension often falls by the wayside. They agreed that paraphrasing was a better method for the children through grade 5.
- If a teacher must be absent, he/she is responsible for finding his/her own replacement.
- Gretchen, Rev. Bill, and Scott are working on a confirmation program.
- Becky Moss is interested in looking into using a van or bus to transport children who cannot attend functions here. Gretchen advised that she has dealt with this type of program before, and it requires that many criteria be met.

With regard to the van the church currently owns, Scott said that a vehicle with 15 or less passengers requires only a regular driver's license. Anyone who wants to use the church van should contact Dawn Tesauro and provide her with necessary information. To reserve the van contact Dawn as far in advance as possible. Gretchen said many things have to be considered, including liability insurance, first aid, & CPR, and substitute drivers must always be available. She feels that starting such a program should be considered at a much higher level than the Sunday school teachers. Doreen suggested that Becky might consider starting a ministry in this regard, as the topic of transportation has come up several times in the past, for more than just our children.

Gretchen would like a list of all volunteer positions which need to be filled. She will add them to the bulletin board in the Education Wing.

Gretchen will be gone all of June and July, returning early August. Someone will have to step forward and create the Sunday school curricula.

Small Groups: Sandy said there is nothing new to report.

OUTREACH

Team Cuba: Rick reported that Pastor Reinaldo in Nicaro has advised that they are out of money to continue building the expansion of the temple in their new, more centralized location. Pastor Jose Ramon is the District Superintendent of the Sanctus Spiritus District in Cuba. He was in Punta Gorda last Thursday, and agreed to take \$5,000 from our church back to Cuba for delivery to Pastor Reinaldo. This is money that our congregation continues to donate for our sister church.

Betty said that they will be asking for more OTC medication and possibly some sports equipment (especially for baseball and soccer). These items will be taken to Cuba by Scott in mid-July.

Last Friday, Pastor Jose and Dan Christopherson (Southwest Florida Cuba Coordinator) traveled to Atlanta to meet with individuals from the congregation of Glenn Memorial UMC (on the campus of Emory University). They are trying to expand the Cuba sister-churches relationship beyond the boundaries of Florida.

Elementary Schools: Alfred thanked the seven or eight individuals who assisted at the Myakka Spring Festival on April 8. He also thanked Gretchen and Scott for attending Myakka's Rising Stars program this morning.

On Monday, May 2, Myakka is celebrating Teacher Appreciation Week. It was agreed we will provide salad-makings for the 65 teachers and staff at Myakka. A question was posed as to whether we should use Publix (another business-partner of the Myakka school), instead of Sam's Club, to purchase the items. Doreen suggested we ask our congregation to bring in cookies or brownies on Sunday morning to deliver to the school with the salads; Dana agreed to send out an email in that regard, with a reminder that we only need to supply cookies for 65 people, not enough for another Cookie Dash....

Alfred said we have a growing relationship with Myakka. They are to the point where people are recognizing each other and are on a first-name basis. Now all we have to do is morph the relationships into our Education program!

Scouts: Alfred advised that the Boy Scouts are ready for their Second Annual Mother's Day Brunch on Saturday, May 7, from 7am to 1pm. The SUN paper will include an article in the Let's Go section on May 4, using pictures from last year's brunch.

Rev. Bill also advised that within the next couple of months, two of the Boy Scouts will be looking for Eagle Scout Projects.

Gateway for Cancer Research: Doreen advised that our pancake breakfast on Saturday, April 2, raised \$5,100 for this organization. Earlier today, Ken Priest posted a picture on Facebook of him and Joan presenting the check to a representative of the company.

WITNESS

Worship: Donna said the Worship committee is resting before Mother's Day. She will be gone from June 14 thru August 7.

Betty was advised to schedule the Liturgists as usual during our transition from Rev. Bill to Rev. Mike Weaver.

SUPPORT

Finance: In John Furtado's absence, Alfred informed us that John would like to conduct another Financial Peace University session (Dave Ramsey's program). In addition, Alfred would like to conduct a Charitable Giving Seminar. These will probably be done in the fall.

Doreen and Jeanne reported that donations of spendable income for the month of April totaled \$37,071, and the Reserve Fund balance has now reached \$35,826.

Trustees: It is anticipated that a significant amount (possibly \$45,000) will have to be spent to update the parsonage, which has had no major work done since it was built. There is only about \$15,000 currently available for those expenditures. The current tenants are looking for a new place and hope to be out within the next few weeks.

Rick and Jerry Spurgeon walked through the parsonage last week, and Jerry is compiling a list for the trustees of what should be done for the renovation. It is possible that all renovations will not be completed before Rev. Mike and his family move here. Work items include updating the kitchen and bathroom, replacing carpeting, replacing appliances, and repainting the whole house.

Staff Parish: Doreen reported on behalf of Joan Priest that Liza McDaniel has expressed an interest in becoming the new Contemporary Worship Leader after Kim leaves. Two candidates are being considered for the AV position. Rev. Bill advised that our organist, Shirley Spiers, is

beginning to have problems with her hands. She has agreed to stay on until a new organist is located, but will step down no later than the beginning of September.

OLD BUSINESS

Facility Expansion: There is no news to report.

Nominations: Rev. Bill is pleased to announce that Mary Hilton will take over as our Children's Home Coordinator.

Regarding the Evangelism Coordinator volunteer position (see the 3/28/2016 minutes), because this is a new direction for the church, Rev. Bill would like to delay further action on this position until after Rev. Mike starts on July 1st so that his input can be obtained. As a result, seeking an individual for this position is on hold until then.

NEW BUSINESS

Website Updates: We recently asked everyone to submit minutes of all scheduled meetings. These minutes should be reviewed by everyone on Church Council so that Council's meeting time can be freed up for other things. Right now, minutes of meetings of the Trustees, Finance committee, Church Council, and Team Cuba are posted on our website on their respective pages. The question was posed whether we also want to post the other minutes online which might not already have a page on our website. During the ensuing discussion the following points were made:

- Posting them online is good for church communication.
- Individuals who do not attend GCUMC might say, "Whoa! Look at all those meetings."
- Copies of all minutes are distributed by email to leaders and other individuals in the church who have asked to receive them. [Currently, they are sent to 70 different email addresses.]
- Although our website contains links to minutes, people who visit the site do not have to read them.
- We might consider dividing our website into two portions: one for the public, and the second for our congregation. The minutes would be available only to the congregation.
- All minutes could be included on just one page instead of on several different pages.
- Our current sight is not very friendly when it comes to information about activities available for children. The information is there, but is scattered throughout the website. One individual told Mary that she learned about our Easter Festival by looking at our calendar; she did not see it anywhere else.
- Special terms could be defined somewhere on the website, and those explanations would direct individuals to the proper location on the website.

Although the initial question about posting ALL minutes on the website was not directly answered, the conversation was leaning toward posting online only those minutes that are already being posted.

Creation Care: Rev. Bill reminded us that with regard to the Creation Care program, the first job assigned to Adam and Eve was to care for the garden, which entails a lot more than just

hugging trees. One thing we could encourage involves taking home all recyclables, since there is no recycling program available at the church. We could also use regular plates and utensils instead of disposable ones, especially since we have a dishwasher; but this means Charles Hilton would need additional help in the kitchen. We could resume bringing rinsed aluminum cans to the church for Donna Wallace to take to her community; they sell the cans and with the proceeds purchase bicycles for those who need them.

What Conference wanted to accomplish last summer has finally been done, and their information was just recently posted online. Dee Grafe and Jim Choate have expressed an interest in coordinating the Creation Care program, and it is hoped they can now jump into this ministry.

It was suggested that possibly as an Eagle Scout project, the boys could help prepare a community garden on church property. Many in our congregation used to have a garden up north, but were forced to give it up when they moved to Florida due to lack of space. Doreen saw an elevated garden which was built for the elderly individuals at a nursing home since they could not bend over any more.

ECHO: Scott informed us of a few upcoming events:

- The Peace River Canoe Trip, although cancelled for April 30, will be offered again, probably in November.
- On May 7, Bea Penszki will be graduating from Florida Southern College in Lakeland, and Jackie Guerin will be graduating from Stetson University in Deland.
- Scheduling a day, when they can all be present, to honor our graduates is turning out to be very difficult.
- On Sunday, May 15, Colton McVety will preach at all three services.
- On May 27, a one-night lock-in will be held for youth in grades 6-12 and college, and their friends.
- On May 30, Memorial Day, Captain Rick has agreed once again to host their annual boat trip.

EVANGELISM, FRESH EXPRESSIONS, & DISCIPLESIP

As mentioned above, these topics will be put on hold until Rev. Mike arrives. As a reminder, and as stated in the 3/28/2016 minutes:

Evangelism: Outreach is being the hands and feet of Christ, whereas an Evangelism Coordinator helps others to become the hands and feet of Christ. 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.

New member classes are scheduled for the first three Wednesdays in May.

ADJOURNING

Rev. Bill encouraged us to reach out to the Weaver family, and reminded all of us that pastors *are* a gift from God.

Rev. Bill also informed us that on May 6, he will celebrate the 30th anniversary of his ordination in 1986.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm with communion. The next Church Council meeting will be held on Monday, May 23, 2016 at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Hanson
Recording Secretary