

**Gulf Cove United Methodist Church**  
*Helping Everyone Meet, Know, and Serve Jesus*  
**Church Council Meeting**  
**May 23, 2016 – 7:00 PM**

**Attendees:**

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

Mary Hilton  
Emmett Leonard  
Gretchen Leppla  
John McGuire  
Skip Messenger  
Joan Priest  
Ken Priest  
Jeanne Shrout

Jerry Spurgeon  
Judy Spurgeon  
Linda Starck  
Rick Starck  
Holly Tozer  
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:** The recording secretary was not notified of any necessary corrections to the minutes of the April meeting.

**NURTURE**

**Education:** Gretchen anticipates several changes when Rev. Mike arrives. She thanked Rick and Joan for their assistance observing Pentecost Sunday. The children had helium-filled balloons with paper doves hanging off the string and released them to rise to the sanctuary ceiling during the 9:30 service. The children loved it! It was mentioned that during that evening, Scott was holding worship services with our ECHO youth, and the Holy Spirit landed on him when the balloons started falling. The children are also excited about their new donation goal which will result in purchasing a bicycle(s) for Cuba. Gretchen anticipates that the same number of children will be in Sunday School this fall after the new school year starts – with the likely addition of Myleigh and Karlie Weaver. Gretchen will be gone all of June and July.

Holly plans to sample a few prepared programs over the summer. One program is called “Orange,” for which she has a months’ worth of sample lessons. Another program is called “World” and follows the lectionary; it may be closer to what we are doing now (i.e., lessons prepared by us, based on what Rev. Bill will be preaching each Sunday).

Holly emphasized that we still need Vacation Bible School volunteers for our Wednesdays-only program which will run from July 6 through August 3 (6:00-8:30pm). Currently there are only 18 individuals signed up to help, only a few of whom can be here all five Wednesdays. This compares poorly to last year when we had 47 volunteers. She asked that the word be passed because without volunteers, we can’t offer VBS. She plans to put a donation board up by June 5. Gretchen advised that the Pinterest website has a lot of ideas for our Egypt VBS program; they can be pulled up on Gretchen’s Pinterest board.

Rick said he established an Education team group on Slack. In addition, he added two things to our website which relate to the child protection program. The first is the downloadable form which needs to be filled out and given to Dawn Tesauro for a background check. The other item is a list of our members who have received the background check, along with the date it was

done. The screenings are good for seven years, and there are a number of us who have not had a check performed for well over that time period.

**Small Groups**: Sandy passed around a brochure which Rev. Bill picked up from Woodland Community Church in Bradenton. It contains the name of each small group, whom the group was meant to serve (women, men, couples, singles, sewing, etc.), and the name and phone number of the group's leader or contact. The brochure refers to "life" groups instead of "small" groups. Sandy is planning to start some Summer Life Groups, which will hopefully continue beyond the summer months. The format of our small group webpage has been changed, and it now puts the onus on the small group to keep it updated.

### **OUTREACH**

**Team Cuba**: No new information to report.

**Scouts**: Alfred advised that the Boy Scouts' trailer has received its new wrap. Impressive!



He was recently asked if the church could pay for the \$250 registration which the Girl Scouts have to pay. After discussion, it was suggested that since the Men's Group paid for the Boy Scouts' registration or charter, possibly another group could pay for the Girl Scouts' registration. John said that Finance would check into what is currently available for the Girl Scouts.

Betty reminded all that the Boy Scouts are having a Quarter Auction on this Wednesday, May 25, at the American Legion in Rotonda West. Doors open at 6pm, and the auction starts at 7pm.

**Elementary Schools**: Holly reported that the Charlotte County office that reviews our Myakka and Vineland flyers has approved the current flyer for VBS. It will be printed, cut, and delivered to the two elementary schools in the near future. Alfred suggested that someone who is involved with our children and youth programs take over responsibility for obtaining approval of the flyers for our adopted schools. That person could provide more information about the various children and youth programs when questioned.

**Kairos Weekend**: Two of our men (Phill Kolbe and Ray Dunfee) attended this event at the Desoto Correctional Institution in mid-May. Sandy reported that Phill said the weekend was fantastic. Rev. Bill said that there is a "reunion" shortly after the Kairos weekend, and monthly meetings thereafter. Our purpose of being there is not to bring Jesus to them; it is to support

the church that the inmates run inside the prison. Loretta Barche was involved with the recent Kairos Outside Weekend, which is conducted for women who have incarcerated loved ones, or who were previously in prison themselves. It, too, was a great success.

### **WITNESS**

**Worship:** Donna asked for a list of people or “groups” who fall under worship; such as ushers, greeters, liturgists, acolytes, hospitality, etc. Rev. Bill quickly compiled a list and gave it to Doreen. She will type it up and give it to Donna and Betty, who will be serving in Donna’s absence. Donna will be out of state from June 14 until August 5, but she will be available for emergency phone calls.

Donna has spoken with Rev. Mike Weaver, who will be our new pastor effectively July 1. He has already requested that he (instead of another individual) read the scripture on his first Sunday, July 3. Jeanne informed us that his sermon title is, “Hello! My Name Is...” – a teaser for all of us to attend that day!

With regard to this Sunday’s sermon, Rev. Bill advised that “vindication” is when you are accused of something, but you believe you are right, and you are eventually *proven* to be right. “Justification” is when you are wrong, but you are *made* right. “Grace” is what we don’t deserve.

Since Kim Fisackerly will no longer be here to make our communion bread, Helen Boyce has agreed that the Crafty Ladies will make sure it is timely purchased and available – weekly for the 9:30 service and on the first Sunday for the 8:00 and 11:00 services. {*We need to encourage Kim to FedEx her bread pudding down for Food for the Soul every Wednesday...*}

Doreen said that the Praise Team is talking about holding a farewell concert, but the date has not yet been finalized. Holly asked that someone be sure to let her know when, as she was planning a meeting for Saturday, June 18.

### **SUPPORT**

**Finance:** John advised that Finance’s green light is the Reserve Fund balance. There is just over \$36,200 in this account – the highest amount ever. When initially established, the goal was to have one month’s expenses in reserve. The \$36,200 exceeds that initial required amount, but is still a little short of the current monthly budget of \$39,762, which is based on our 2016 annual budget of \$477,147. So, we’ve reached our initial goal, but still need more.

Finance’s yellow is the summer income level. Our drop in donations has already been considerable, and we might have to tap the Reserve Fund within the next month or two.

The red item includes financing the parsonage renovations and re-siding the portables. This issue is discussed further in the Trustee’s section, below. The family currently renting the parsonage should be out by May 28; the Weavers will arrive in the area on June 28. Jerry said the current parsonage renovation guesstimate of \$48,000 is on the high side, but for financing purposes, is a good figure with which to proceed. He suggested that if possible, the Foundation consider a “not to exceed” loan for \$48,000 instead of a firm amount. Portable #201 might not

make it through the summer. Re-siding the portables is estimated at \$4,000 each, for a total of \$16,000. The grand total we need is \$64,000. Amounts currently available include:

\$15,917	Facility Up Keep, account 320.028
\$ 2,600	Parsonage Maintenance/Repair, account 320.033
\$ 3,500	Just under half of Trustee Fund, account 320.039
\$ 1,000	Received from the Men's Club
<u>\$ 1,000</u>	Received from the Crafty Ladies
\$24,017	Currently available

While discussing the options available for obtaining the balance needed (just under \$40,000), the following was mentioned:

- The church has to be cautious because (1) we are losing the \$950 in parsonage rental income which was being received, most of which was used for routine maintenance; and (2) we will be taking on a new loan for which we need to make monthly payments that are not included in our current budget.
- If we try to borrow direct from the Florida United Methodist Foundation at 3.5%, the funds will probably not be available for several months, possibly delaying renovations to the parsonage.
- One family has offered to loan up to \$40,000 at 1.5%. However, the funds need to be repaid to the lenders fairly quickly, so a rather fast payoff would be required.
- A second family has offered to loan the entire amount at 0% until such time as the Foundation finalizes a loan to us, with a longer payoff time.
- We need to have some fundraisers to help pay the loan.
- We need to be aware of the possibility, however unlikely, that approval of any loan might be delayed or even denied.

Finance cannot make the decision alone. Church Council and/or a Charge Conference must approve any financing that is arranged. A special meeting will have to be called at the appropriate time. This will be discussed with our District Superintendent on Thursday. For now, it was agreed that the 0% loan option be pursued simultaneously with steps to obtain a loan from the Foundation.

Jeanne and Joan both spoke with Rev. Mike this week. His parents live in Fort Myers, and they prefer to stay with them until the parsonage is ready – not in a temporary rental property. Neither he nor Kelly mind the commute. He has done it before and is familiar with it. Kelly will be working in Punta Gorda and at Bayfront Hospital in Port Charlotte. However, since the incoming church pays for the incoming pastor's moving expenses, if the parsonage is not ready fairly quickly, it could be costly for GCUMC as we will be paying for storage fees of their furniture. It is hoped that, if Rev. Mike and his family have to stay with his parents, the stay will be as short as possible.

**Trustees:** Skip said the back walls on two of the portables are rotting. If they are not repaired soon, they will likely be severely damaged on the inside during the upcoming rainy season. It is no longer a choice – it has turned into a necessity.

Jerry said that the current guesstimate of \$48,000 to renovate the parsonage is definitely on the high side and is based on his company and subcontractors doing everything that needs to be done. All *improvements* will be done by Jerry and his men. But if our congregation is able to perform any of the *demolition* work, it could substantially lower the overall cost. The congregation could do things such as removing cabinets, taking up carpeting, removing wallpaper, and removing inside doors. Other work which needs to be done, none of which requires a permit, includes:

- Texturing all the walls, spraying and painting
- Tile looks good, but might need some special cleaning
- Every lock will be replaced
- Bathroom tile to be sprayed (not replaced) by a subcontractor which will make them look new
- Replace all bathroom and kitchen cabinets and sinks
- New plumbing fixtures
- New electrical fixtures
- New appliances (a reminder for them to be energy efficient since GCUMC pays for the parsonage utilities)

As was said in the Finance minutes: *If anyone reading these minutes would like to make a donation toward renovating the parsonage and re-siding the portables, your check made payable to GCUMC noting "Facility Upkeep" would be most welcome!*

**Staff Parish:** Joan advised us of the following:

- Zak Alvarez will be the new Audio-Visual Technician, effective June 1.  
*Welcome Aboard, Zak!*
- Liza McDaniel will be the new Worship Leader of the Contemporary Service, effective July 1. She will be working closely with Kim over the next month.  
*Congratulations, Liza!*

Joan reminded all of us that Shirley Spiers' last day as our organist will be September 30, or earlier if an individual is hired prior to then. SPR and Roy Engler have several individuals in mind already with whom they would like to speak. An interview team has been established, and Roy is putting together a packet of music.

Rev. Bill's and Kim's farewell pot luck lunch is planned for Sunday, June 12. Joan said possibly the Praise Team concert could be incorporated into the events of that day.

After discussion, it was agreed that a small coffee-hour welcome would be scheduled for Rev. Mike's first Sunday. Joan said SPR and Betty and/or Donna would get together to plan a larger, more formal, welcome celebration after he has been here a little while. *Can you say Alfred's Pig Pickin'?*

**Lay Nominations:** Filling vacant lay positions is on hold for now. Rev. Bill asked everyone to pray for that committee -- that they will be able to discern what God's vision is for GCUMC as conveyed through Rev. Mike. Doreen said we definitely do not want to drop our plans for an Evangelism Coordinator because we were making headway toward our Fresh Expressions, Evangelism, and Discipleship Plans through that pathway. We want to wait and see where Rev. Mike will take us.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**Facilities Expansion:** Rick said the committee has finished the initial phase of this major project. They need direction as to which way they should now go. The two major ideas being proposed are (1) building another, bigger sanctuary, and expanding the narthex; and (2) replacing all four of the portables with an education building. He believes they need to start interviewing designers to obtain a basic, simple idea of buildings and costs. Several questioned whether the District or Conference had any employees who had this type of experience. Doreen said it seems that regardless of the ultimate path we take, our current building will need renovation – be it to expand the narthex if the sanctuary remains a sanctuary; or to create classrooms if we build a new sanctuary. Rick pointed out we also need additional parking; we need either to purchase nearby property or to expand more eastward with what we have. When we have the January/February Arts & Crafts Fair, we run out of parking spaces. If we erect more buildings, we will lose more parking area. Currently the church owns 10 acres, but is using only a small fraction of it.

Doreen summarized where we are with the following statements: We don't have to say that we know we want an education building, or we know we want a new sanctuary. We don't have to have that plan in place. The designers who would be hired make those recommendations based on our current needs and what we hope to have. Vic added that that is precisely why the first phase of the expansion program deals with demographics.

All felt that Rev. Mike needs to be part of this process.

**Gateway for Cancer Research:** This is our new annual outreach organization which takes 99¢ of every dollar donated and uses it to fund Phase 1 and Phase 2 cancer clinical trials. Ken reported the \$5,450 that was donated recently from GCUMC was the result of the pancake breakfast, individual donations, online giving, and communion offerings. Earlier today, Gateway made an exciting announcement which can be read [here](#).

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Night of Joy:** Scott expanded on Disney's Night of Joy which will be held on September 9, 10, & 11 (Friday, Saturday, & Sunday). The amounts listed below include:

- ✚ Premium seating at the concert events on both Friday & Saturday. The concerts will be held at a new venue, ESPN's Wide World of Sports, which is more conducive to Christian music festivals.
- ✚ A one-day pass to one of Disney's four theme parks.
- ✚ Two nights of hotel lodging on Disney property.

- ✦ If there are ten tickets purchased, each ticket will include a day at one of two water parks: either Typhoon Lagoon or Blizzard Beach. This benefit is valid only from September 6 through 12.

Ticket pricing is based on two nights:

- ✓ 1 person to a room \$333 each person
- ✓ 2 persons to a room \$236 each person
- ✓ 3 persons to a room \$225 each person
- ✓ 4 persons to a room \$200 each person

This cost does not include food or transportation to/from the park. Full payment is due no later than Sunday, July 3, 2016. Checks should be made payable to Gulf Cove UMC and note on the memo line, "Night of Joy 2016." Please let Scott know if you plan to go and also if you need a magic band.

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

**Fresh Expressions:** When asked, Doreen offered the following explanation as to what Fresh Expressions means: It involves new ways of sharing Jesus, and different ways to do things. Instead of drawing people into the church, we need to be outside the church walls. One type of event previously mentioned was "Bibles & Burritos" and things like that. It is where churches are meeting outside of the church walls – in tattoo parlors, in public spaces, in the mall where mall walkers are walking. Holding a small group session where others can be invited to join you. Just being out there in public, sharing the love of Jesus amongst each other, and having other people saying "Hey, I want what they have."

Rev. Bill added that most people think of evangelism as getting people to come to church – thinking, if we could have the best organist, or best praise team, or best preacher, people will come to church and get saved. That was a very popular concept in the 1950's and was known as the "attraction model." However, it has not worked since 1983. People will not come to church for those reasons, unless someone invites them. The most effective way for building disciples is for the church to go OUT to where the people are. "Fresh expressions" is the current term they are using to say, "let's get outside of the church and go to where people are and be disciples out there with them."

### **ADJOURNING**

Doreen reminded all that a special meeting might need to be called about the loan to renovate the parsonage and repair the portables.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm with communion and a prayer by Rev. Bill.

It was agreed that there will be no Council meeting in June. The next Church Council meeting will be held on Monday, July 25, at 7:00pm, after Rev. Mike has been here almost a month.

Church Council  
May 23, 2016

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Thank you, Rev. Bill, for a great 10 years of Church Council and other committee meetings!  
May we never forget your visions and how you reached them! *Wait ... there goes a bird!*

Respectfully submitted,  
Dana Hanson  
Recording Secretary