

Gulf Cove United Methodist Church
Helping Everyone Meet, Know, and Serve Jesus
Church Council Meeting
October 24, 2016 – 7:00 PM

Attendees:

Doreen Alvarez (Church
Council Chairman)
Carol Ankeney

Sandy Doty
John Furtado
Jeanne Shrout

Linda Starck
Rick Starck
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 August 22, 2016 meeting.

No September Meeting: After the August meeting, we learned about a Florida Conference event with Bishop Ken Carter at Grace Church in Cape Coral. The event was scheduled for the same evening as the September Council meeting. By majority vote, it was decided that leadership should attend the Bishop Carter event instead of holding a September Council meeting.

TEAM CONCERNS

Nurture: No minutes or report was submitted.

Outreach: No minutes or report was submitted.

Witness: Doreen advised that Worship met in August. They discussed the fact that Christmas falls on a Sunday this year. Although not yet official, it is tentatively planned that there will be only one service that Sunday, at 10:00am. Worship has a meeting scheduled in November. There are no yellows or reds.

SUPPORT

Finance: John reported that the proposed budget is prepared. The total 2016 budget is \$477,147, but that figure is shown as \$474,147 in the proposed 2017 budget. The difference is because we had included \$3,000 for child care, but it was not needed, so Dawn removed it. The proposed 2017 budget is an \$11,306 increase over the 2016 budget, and the majority of the increase is due to cost of living expenses. Dawn has not yet received the property insurance figures for next year from Conference, so she added 10% to the current premium. It will be adjusted when we receive the final figures.

Finance has not officially approved the budget yet, but should do so at their next meeting. It should be finalized by the end of the year. John plans to talk with Dawn about adding a "Moving Expense" account to cover the next time a pastor moves here. If we set aside \$20-\$50 a month, we shouldn't have the surprise expense we did this time when our new pastor arrived.

It was asked what amount was included in the budget for the Trustees for next year. The amount of \$28,000 was budgeted; it is up to the congregation to fund it as it is not currently available.

With regard to paying the parsonage renovations, John advised that the \$45,412 was paid as follows:

\$12,807.96	from Facility Expansion, account 320.026
\$15,917.83	from Facility Up Keep, account 320.028
\$11,211.95	from Parsonage Maintenance/Repair, account 320.033
\$ 5,474.33	from Trustee Fund, account 320.039

With this action, these accounts have been, or are close to being, completely depleted. Dawn has already reimbursed the Trustee Fund with \$5,474.33 from the Reserve Fund. Account 320.028 (Facility Up Keep) is the account into which \$1,500 is put during months when we can afford it (typically January-April); we started setting this aside when we paid off the prior mortgage.

Because of unexpected personal reasons, the family which was going to donate the funds to pay for the renovations is not currently in a position to make their planned donation. If the donation is not received by early 2017, Finance plans to borrow the money to pay back the first three accounts listed above.

Trustees: Carol, as interim Trustee Chairman, advised about several things, the major items being as follows:

They think they have come up with on a solution for the portables, but now they don't have enough funds. There were discussions of using T1-11 or switching to vinyl siding. John said that the back side of the Closet of Hope was repaired with T1-11 about seven years ago; that portable would give a good indication of how long T1-11 should hold up. Jeanne pointed out that we have already paid for the T1-11 that is in the Barn. Doreen said that under the previous Trustee Chairman, it had been decided that the T1-11 is too heavy and we don't have the manpower to install it. As a result, they determined it best to switch to vinyl and hire a contractor. Carol said there is a company which provides the manpower if *you* provide all supplies. Rick said he has also spoken with Jerry Spurgeon, and Jerry is of the opinion that we shouldn't put any more money into a portable "until a wall falls off." The Trustees will be revisiting this issue.

A reclaimed water contract has been received from the county and the trustees are reviewing it. There are numerous do's, don'ts, and restrictions to which we must agree. Except for installation of the irrigation lines, this project is close to being completed.

With regard to a new outside electronic sign, the trustees have decided that they would like a black background with yellow lettering because it is easiest to read and the cheapest. The sign would be 15' tall and 12' wide. The amount of \$32,000 is available for this project. The company with which they have been talking is quoting a cost of \$26,300 (not including installation). It will run on Wi-Fi instead of underground wires, and the company will provide training. It is believed that the office will take care of "changing" the sign as needed.

Regarding the new shed project, John advised that there is a good chance that we will be getting rid of all of the old pink chairs which we are no longer using. If that happens, he thinks there might be enough room for all the excess chairs in the current shed, and a second shed might not be needed. The trustees will re-analyze the shed issue after the Barn Sale.

Regarding conference room cabinets, Jerry Spurgeon is having them made and will put them on the wall for free.

The dehumidifiers in the sanctuary are filling up at least every other day and then turning off. They are being checked to determine if the pumps are going bad or if there is a clog in the tubing. Carol has set them to 60% humidity and it is helping a little.

Rick asked about the approval process for the Trustees. John said the Trustee Fund is available to them, regardless of dollar amount. They also are able to pull out of the Facility Up Keep account (320.028), but there is nothing available until it is replenished as mentioned above.

Carol said she has come across paperwork which indicates that a church inventory should be done during October. She will talk with Dawn about it, but it might have to wait until a new Trustee Chairman is elected next year. Al Crosby said he'd take care of inventorying the Barn.

Staff Parish: Doreen advised that with regard to the vacant youth director position (Scott Folsom resigned about two weeks ago), Pastor Mike has been in contact with Steve Schneeberger of the Youth Ministry Institute of the Florida Conference. Steve will help us determine the type of person needed for our position, which might entail a change of title and duties. He also has a large number of resumes which he can narrow down to the best candidates for our church as defined by our needs. SPR can then take over for the interview process. Pastor Mike is filling in as our youth director in the meantime.

OLD BUSINESS

Facility Expansion: Rick said that he has been speaking with certain individuals about what our church's long-term direction is. The answer to that question will guide the Facility Expansion Team as to what a new building design should be. Rick said that Rev. Bill, Ken Priest, and Rick met with Rini Hernandez earlier this year. One topic of discussion involved our overall financial picture and the long-term building planning that we are trying to do. Rini indicated the Methodist Church used to think the building would draw in people; but now we know better. He'd rather see the money go to ministry. One problem, however, is that during season, we are at capacity.

Fresh Expressions: Doreen informed us that Spark Day is Saturday, November 5, from 9am to 3pm, at First UMC in Cape Coral, at a cost of \$10. She said the day will be geared to helping us understand what Fresh Expressions is all about and might point us in the direction we need to go as far as expansion is concerned; i.e., whether we need an expanded narthex or a new sanctuary or more classrooms, or a combination thereof.

NEW BUSINESS

Lay Nominations: Pastor Mike asked Doreen to pass along that Lay Nominations will be gathering a Discipleship Committee/Team. He indicated the focus would be gathering, developing, and creating a track to help people move from visitors meeting Jesus, to members

knowing Jesus, and finally to disciples serving Jesus. He indicated it would be a subcommittee, but we will have to ask him “a sub- of what,” or does he envision it standing alone?

Church Council Membership: Doreen advised that technically the Education Chair, Worship Chair, and Outreach Chair are not official members of Church Council and, therefore, have no voting rights. However, we generally ask them to attend Council meetings and look for their input. According to Discipline ¶252.5, they are not named members of Council, but members other than those identified maybe added. Those present agreed that all three positions are vital parts of our church. ***It was agreed by all that, from now on, the Education Chair, Worship Chair, and Outreach Chair should be considered official members of Gulf Cove UMC’s Church Council with full voting rights.***

With regard to the to-be-created position of Evangelism Coordinator, Doreen envisions the Evangelism Coordinator/Chair overseeing the Discipleship Committee. However, Pastor Mike would like to speak with other churches to ascertain how they handle the Evangelism position. As a result, the Evangelism position should not be included as a Church Council member at this point in time.

A reminder: Attendance at Church Council meetings, as well as most other meetings, is open to all. The only two meetings which are “closed” (i.e., attended only by the members of those two committees) are Staff-Parish Relations and Lay Nominations; this is due primarily because of the sensitive and personal nature of their discussions.

Apostles Build: Jerry Spurgeon spoke with Pastor Mike about whether GCUMC would like to be part of Habitat for Humanity’s Apostles Build 2017. Each participating church is expected to provide \$4,000 to \$5,000 plus some manpower to help construct the home. It was pointed out that we still have \$1,489 in the Habitat 2012 account. Everyone agreed that we should support and participate in Habitat’s Apostle Build next year.

Trunk -R- Treat: This year’s event is for the whole family and will be held this Saturday. Flyers have already been delivered to Myakka River Elementary & Vineland Elementary. In addition, there was a direct mailing to all residential homes within a one-mile radius of the church, roughly 2,300 homes. The postage was about \$320. This expense represents not just marketing for homes with kids, but also for brand recognition (read “church recognition”).

Church Tax Assessments: With regard to the meeting with Bill Bigelow (a retired banker) and Bob Starr (former county commissioner) on Tuesday, November 15, at 7pm, John advised that this meeting is open to all, not just the church leadership. The meeting will likely be held in the sanctuary. A third individual involved is a newly-elected representative to Tallahassee from this area. All three individuals support the proposed changes. The discussions will revolve around Charlotte County’s special tax assessments against churches within the county, except those falling within the city limits of Punta Gorda. Bill Bigelow sent a package to John about the issues. One page involves statistics from 2009, but indicates that churches in Charlotte County paid the highest amount of special assessments in the state – an average of \$330. The second highest average paid by a county was \$182. The overall state average was \$42. The package John received is reproduced as an attachment to the September Finance minutes.

ADJOURNING

Next Meeting: After discussion, it was decided that there would be NO Council meeting on November 28 (the Monday after Thanksgiving) and NO Council meeting on December 26 (the day after Christmas). Instead, our next Church Council meeting will be held on Monday, December 5, at 7:00pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05pm with a prayer by Rick.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Hanson
Recording Secretary