

**Gulf Cove United Methodist Church**  
*Helping Everyone Meet, Know, and Serve Jesus*  
**Church Council Meeting**  
**January 23, 2017 – 7:00 PM**

**Attendees:**

Doreen Alvarez (Church  
Council Chairman)  
Pastor Mike Weaver  
Loretta Barche  
Judy Boyer

Alfred Current  
Ray Dunfee  
John Furtado  
JoAnn Hopkins  
Ken Priest

Jeanne Shrout  
Linda Starck  
Rick Starck  
Bob Wollmacher  
Dana Hanson

The meeting was opened with the lighting of the candle representing Jesus Christ, followed by a reading of Ephesians 4:1-16, and a prayer by Doreen:

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. <sup>2</sup> Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. <sup>3</sup> Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. <sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism; <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. <sup>7</sup> But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. <sup>8</sup> This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people." <sup>9</sup> (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? <sup>10</sup> He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) <sup>11</sup> So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up <sup>13</sup> until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. <sup>14</sup> Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. <sup>15</sup> Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. <sup>16</sup> From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

**Corrections to Previous Minutes:** There were no changes proposed to the minutes of our 12/5/2016 meeting.

**TEAM CONCERNS**

**Nurture:** No report.

**Outreach:** Alfred advised that plans and preparations for this Friday's Pig Pickin' are well under way. A flyer prepared by Pastor Mike has been mailed to residences within a one-mile radius of the church to remind the community that they are part of us and we are part of them, and inviting them to the Pig Pickin'. We will be providing 68 lunches for Myakka River Elementary teachers and 90 lunches for Vineland Elementary teachers. Myakka River has also invited us to assist at their Spring Carnival on April 7.

Boy Scout Troop 776 has one young man attaining Eagle Scout rank which will be awarded soon and a couple other boys on their way to that rank. Doreen said if the Scouts want to use the sanctuary for the award ceremony, to let the office know so there is no conflict.

Ken said that for the record, he wants to officially thank Boy Scout Troop 776 for their assistance in cleaning up Rewey Garden on the other side of the pond.

**Worship:** Pastor Mike advised that a new element will be added to our Ash Wednesday program – an early morning drive-thru to receive the sign of the cross in ashes on the forehead or on the wrist. We will also offer coffee. This has been done by other churches in our area. The Worship Team is also developing a stage-type design for the front of the sanctuary.

**Support:** With regard to *Finance*, John reported that all was green. We were informed that with our new 2017 budget which totals \$488,453, the average spendable income we need each month is \$40,704, or \$9,393 each week.

With regard to *Trustees*, Rick advised that we were denied a permit to install our new, outside, digital sign (which was received last week) because we are located in a residential area, and residential areas are not allowed electrical signs. However, we received two permits in the past for our current sign – one when it was initially installed, and a second one to move it when Route 776 was widened. Installation will be delayed until it is straightened out. Randy Moore is working on this problem. (Thanks, Randy!) Rick also said that there are a couple dead trees which need to be removed, one of which is in the playground. Rick thanked Jerry Spurgeon for the great work he did on the new cabinet which is in the narthex.

Regarding *Staff Parish*, Bob advised that the Youth Ministry Institute has been hired to assist in locating our new Youth Director. A focus group meeting was held on January 12 at which we advised Steve Schneeberger (YMI's executive director) who we are and for what we are looking. From that information, YMI will post the position and vet the resumes that are received, locating the individuals that best fit with GCUMC. In addition, YMI offers training (three years at \$5,000 each year), something we might want to consider based on the level of experience of the candidate. Doreen pointed out that training of this sort is also considered to be professional development for staff members which is embedded in their positions.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**Facility Expansion:** This is still on hold, based in large part on what we want as a church. This would be a good topic of discussion at our Vision Retreat.

**Health Department Request:** It has been determined that the Florida Dept. of Health, Charlotte County, will use our facilities every Tuesday from 1-4pm for their health outreach (blood pressure, prevention and rapid testing of HIV/AIDS and Hep-C, etc.).

**Lay Nominations:** Gretchen Leppla has advised that she doesn't feel led to be the Education Chairman in the future. This situation brought up the question whether we need an Education Chairman and/or a Sunday School Supervisor. The Sunday School Supervisor handles just Sunday School, while the Education Chair handles education of all kinds (Alzheimer's Support, Friend to Friend, adult groups, etc.). Because of these concerns, it was felt this might be a good topic for our Vision Retreat.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Use of Our Facilities by Outside Groups:** Rick queried whether the County's Health Department has the \$1 million liability insurance policy suggested by Conference before they can use our facilities. Pastor Mike advised that the County has that policy and should be providing us with a copy. Rick mentioned that neither AA nor Al-Anon has that insurance policy, and asked whether they should be asked to obtain the insurance. Jo Ann pointed out that this exact issue was addressed in the past. In the 5/29/2012 minutes is the following motion and results:

*Any third-party group wanting to use church facilities will be asked to provide a copy of their certificate of insurance reflecting the recommended \$1 million in coverage. If they do not have such a policy, the Trustees have the authority to decide whether the third-party group may use church facilities. If for some reason the Trustees are unsure what the proper decision should be, they can bring the problem to Ad Council for resolution. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.*

For a more detailed discussion leading up to this motion, see the attachments to these minutes (excerpts from Council minutes on 4/23/2012, 5/29/2012, and 10/22/2012). The "results," of course, can be re-visited if it is deemed appropriate.

Pastor Mike indicated that LaNita Battles (Director of Ministry Protection) would be contacted regarding this issue.

**Vision Retreat:** The following comments and suggestions were made with regard to our Vision Retreat:

- The point of Church Council is to drive the vision of the church.
- Doreen has a lot of information on Fresh Expressions (i.e., what God does in a new environment, ways of doing church outside the physical structure) which could be a topic of the retreat. We are already reaching outside our building – local schools (thanks, Alfred, for getting us there), our veterans outreach.
- We really need to discuss our long-term building plan, be it here or elsewhere.
- Instead of focusing on something new, analyze what is working and what isn't working. Then decide if we need to try to grow the former, grow the latter, or eliminate the latter.
- Our vision statement is "helping everyone meet, know, and serve Jesus." Our motto is "reaching up and out for God;" this was also our former vision. The Book of Discipline defines the Methodist mission statement as, "¶ 120. **The Mission** - The mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Local churches provide the most significant arena through which disciple-making occurs."
- Check into the book "Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action" by Simon Sinek. An [18-minute video summary](#) of the book is available on YouTube, and a much shorter [3-minute version](#) is also available. Instead of beginning with what we want and then determining how and why, we should start with why. If everyone initially agrees as to what your "why" is, then your "what" and "how" will fall into place later.
- In analyzing our church database (which admittedly does not have all the information needed), Rick discovered that the average age of the 8:00 service is 79, of the 9:30 service is 59, and of the 11:00 service is 64. While attendance at the 8:00 service tends

to be slowly decreasing over time, the 9:30 service is close to capacity, and the 11:00 service is "holding its own." These numbers include only those who attend a service in the sanctuary. Those who attend or teach Children's Church and/or Sunday School are counted in other ways. With regard to the 9:30 service, we are close either to starting a second contemporary service or moving into a larger location.

- Our immediate needs are more and larger meeting and class rooms, which is part of our overall facility expansion project.
- As mentioned above, do we need an Education Chairman and/or Sunday School Superintendent.
- We might reconsider filling the proposed new positions of Evangelism Coordinator and Discipleship Team. As John Furtado discovered a while ago, the spiritual gifts survey that we have all taken has indicated that GCUMC has only a couple people who have the spiritual gift of evangelism.

**Thrive Leadership Training:** This year's training is scheduled for Saturday 2/18/2017 from 9am-3pm at Edgewater UMC. There is an opening worship session, and breakout sessions for many different topics: Church Finances; Creating Thriving Children & Youth Ministry; Discovering Your Evangelistic Strength; Expanding Your Outreach on a Shoestring; Fresh Expressions Workshop; Getting Guests to Come Back and How to Get Them Involved; How to Get More Guests and What to Do When They Show Up; Let's Talk About Families; Mission Insite; Strong Teams, Strong Churches; and Trustees Training. The cost is \$10. More information is available [online](#). Anyone who is not planning to be involved in the Arts & Crafts Fair that will be held that Friday and Saturday is encouraged to attend.

**Team Cuba:** Jeanne reported that John and Carol McGuire were our last visitors to Cuba, and they are going to give a short presentation to the church. Last year, Team Cuba agreed to pay the salary of a second Cuban pastor (\$300 a year). After John and Carol met this second pastor and his family, they are urging us to adopt a second church, Frank Pais, which is very near to Nicaro. In addition to paying the \$300 a year salary, we would also pay about \$1,500 a year for a food program, and if necessary, provide funds to expand their facility as we did with Nicaro. We could also send money for them to purchase Bibles, which in Cuba cost \$2 each. When we provided the Nicaro church with the money to move into town and purchase a new building for the pastor's family and church, their worship attendance doubled almost overnight. The Frank Pais Church is growing even faster than the church in Nicaro!

When asked if we could afford to adopt a second church, Jeanne said that Team Cuba receives between \$400 and \$600 each month in donations. It is not a question of having or obtaining the funds – the funds are there. It is a matter of formally adopting the Frank Pais Methodist Church. Another question which arose dealt with items we send to our sister church. Right now we are limited to two suitcases per traveler, and everything they contain is given to the Nicaro Church. By adopting the Frank Pais Church, would we have to give half of it to Nicaro and half of it to Frank Pais, or would we have to send four people instead of two in order to send the same amount to each church? Jeanne informed us that Agape Flights out of Venice (which delivered 26 water purification systems over the summer) is in the final stages of receiving permission to send monthly flights of freight to Cuba. Up until now, we have been prohibited from sending boxes or shipments to Cuba – everything we sent had to be taken personally by a traveler. When Agape starts their monthly flights, the shipments can be delivered directly to Pastor Isel, the Holguin Norte District Superintendent. The bottom line is that we don't want Nicaro to lose anything. Instead, we would double our efforts on this end.

After further discussion, a consensus was reached whereby a second Cuban Methodist church, Frank Pais, is being formally adopted by GCUMC!

**Walks to Emmaus:** The next Men's Walk is scheduled for April 6-9. The next Women's Walk is scheduled for April 20-23. Jo Ann informed us that unless in the very near future at least five more men apply to attend, the Men's Walk will be cancelled. The location of the Walks has been changed from Riverside Camp to the Port LaBelle Inn & Conference Center, 1563 Oxbow Drive in LaBelle.

### **ADJOURNING**

Ken thanked the Church Council and church congregation for supporting him the last three years as Lay Leader. He said he not only grew a lot in understanding the ins and outs of the church, but he also grew in his own faith. He is confident that Linda Starck and Loretta Barche will serve our church well as co-Lay Leaders.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm with a prayer by Pastor Mike. The next Church Council meeting will be held on Monday, February 27, 2017 at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dana Hanson  
Recording Secretary

### **USE OF OUR FACILITIES BY OUTSIDE GROUPS**

#### **FROM COUNCIL MINUTES 4/23/2012**

##### ***Non-Church Related Meetings – Jo Ann Hopkins***

Currently, GCUMC provides a meeting location for Overeaters Anonymous on Sunday afternoons, AA Support on Monday and Wednesday evenings, and Al Anon on Tuesday evenings; these groups have been meeting at GCUMC for many years. This year, the Girl Scouts started meeting on Thursday evenings; but it is believed they will cancel meetings over the summer. In the past, Weight Watchers and Wood Carvers also held meetings here. The Girl Scouts and Weight Watchers have national organizations and have provided the required certificates of insurance covering their meetings at GCUMC. Although Overeaters Anonymous has a national organization (see [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)), it and the other groups (which do not have national organizations) have not provided the required insurance.

A request was recently received from a second Al Anon group which would like to meet at the church on Fridays. The group advised that they do not have a liability insurance policy. An extensive discussion followed regarding the \$1 million liability insurance policy which has been advised by the Florida Conference be provided by outside groups which use church facilities. Points which were made include the following:

- GCUMC cannot “sponsor” these groups, because it would require us to sit on Board meetings and have an extent of jurisdiction over the groups.
- GCUMC could start a specific ministry with a similar underlying purpose.
- The different outside groups cannot join together to obtain a policy, but the two Al Anon groups might be able to do so.
- A 60-day notice should be provided if we ask a group to obtain the insurance policy or discontinue meetings at GCUMC.
- An inquiry as made of a local insurance agency, and the small groups which meet here would have to pay at least \$500 each a year for such a policy. With so few members, it might be difficult for them to raise the necessary funds.
- GCUMC cannot obtain an insurance policy on behalf of outside groups.
- Examples of potential problems were given: A husband causes problems at an Al Anon meeting which is attended by his wife. A parent who does not have custody tries to take a child without the other parent’s knowledge.
- Wood Carvers stopped meeting at GCUMC when asked to obtain the insurance policy in light of the severe injuries which could occur while working on their projects. Other groups which existed at the time were “grandfathered” in by allowing their groups to continue without the insurance policy.
- Any group or ministry *created* by GCUMC is covered by our insurance policy.
- Technically, the Conference owns our property.
- The church should support the types of meetings currently being held because we are supposed to be reaching out and helping people.

Although *no final decision* was reached, if the matter cannot be resolved another way, the general feeling is that all outside groups should be given 60 days within which to provide evidence of insurance or be asked to hold their meetings elsewhere. As before, we are all asked to pray about the problem and ask for guidance.

After the Ad Council meeting, Dana Hanson located information on the Florida Conference website about this matter. It is reproduced at the end of these minutes [next].

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***Re: Non-Church Related Meetings***

[AS OF 1/24/2017, THIS SITE IS NO LONGER ACTIVE]  
COPIED FROM <http://www.floridaconferenceconnection.info/blogs/detail/65> :

Ministry and Facilities - Comments and Issues Raised by Some of Our Readers.

Posted on Jan 29, 2009

[Some have] ... raised concerns about the Conference’s Ministry Protection department encouraging outside groups to have \$1,000,000 of liability insurance. I spoke with Mark Thomas about this and he wrote the following statement to be shared with the CT Blog audience:

“In reading the blog post about facility usage there seems to be a number of comments about groups using church facilities and Certificates of Insurance. First, I would like to express that the liability insurance coverage secured thru the Conference insurance program is intended to provide comprehensive, broad based insurance coverage for all the activities and ministries of the local church. The insurance coverage and recommendations by the Ministry Protection Department are certainly not intended to limit the wonderful ministries and outreach efforts of local churches, but rather protect the church, it’s [sic] employees and volunteers as they do these important ministries.

There are many third-party or “outside” users that use our church facilities. By “outside” I mean groups that are not officially a part of the ministry of the local church, but simply using the facility to meet or have activities. When these groups use your facility, we recommend that the local church obtain a Certificate of Insurance from the group that names the local church as an “additional insured” and evidences that the group has a minimum of \$1,000,000 in liability coverage. These are the same recommendations for contractors working at your facility.

The local church could be held liable or have to defend a claim or lawsuit for negligent acts of an “outside” user or contractor at your facility, even though the church had no participation in the activity or negligent act. While the Conference insurance program would defend and protect the church, the proper insurance company to respond should be the insurer for the “outside” user group. A Certificate of Insurance is a mechanism to transfer the liability and responsibility for the loss to the insurer for the party that caused it.

There are many gray areas related to these sometimes difficult matters. We suggest that you contact the Ministry Protection Department with any specific questions and we can assist you in protecting your ministries. [mark.thomas@flumc.org](mailto:mark.thomas@flumc.org)

Mark B. Thomas

Director of Ministry Protection, Florida Conference UMC  
1-800-282-8011 Ext. 137

As you can see from his statement, Mark’s first concern is protecting, not prohibiting ministry! Any church sponsored ministry event is automatically covered. Outside organizations like Boy Scouts have no trouble providing an insurance certificate and will not be offended by church Trustees asking for it. On the other hand, outside organizations like Alcoholics Anonymous have no resources to carry liability insurance. In these cases, the congregation’s Board of Trustees has to be their own risk managers. AA is a pretty safe group to gather in your church facility. However, if the local motorcycle riders group wants to sponsor a motorcycle jumping exhibition on your grounds, you probably need to think twice . . . and say, “Let’s not.” If you have any questions, you will find Mark a great person to help you think things through.

Blessings,

Jeff

Dr. Jeff Stiggins

Congregational Transformation

**FROM COUNCIL MINUTES 5/29/2012*****Non-Church Related Meetings***

A question was asked whether this topic, addressed at the April meeting, was ever resolved. See pages 3-4 and 9 of the April minutes. The problem dealt with the fact that Conference recommends that non-church groups provide a \$1 million certificate of insurance to perform work here or to hold meetings here; but groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Al Anon do not have such a policy, and it would be cost prohibitive for them to obtain it. Jo Ann advised that the woman who recently had asked to start a second Al Anon group at GCUMC was able to locate another church at which to hold their meetings. So although the immediate problem was solved in that they will not be meeting here, the basic question remains. Rev. Bill posed the question as, does the purpose of the organization which wants to meet at GCUMC fall within the mission of our church? After further discussion and a review of the Conference materials copied into the April minutes, Betty Hansell made the following motion, which was seconded by Doreen Alvarez:

*Any third-party group wanting to use church facilities will be asked to provide a copy of their certificate of insurance reflecting the recommended \$1 million in coverage. If they do not have such a policy, the Trustees have the authority to decide whether the third-party group may use church facilities. If for some reason the Trustees are unsure what the proper decision should be, they can bring the problem to Ad Council for resolution.*

The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

**FROM COUNCIL MINUTES 10/22/2012**

Outside Groups: Last Wednesday, a woman from the AA group which meets in room 109/110 at 8:00pm took canned hams which had been placed in the bin designated for Englewood Helping Hand. Jo Ann and Rev. Bill confronted the group about the items which had been taken. Ultimately, eight hams were returned by the woman. [During the Ad Council meeting, Vic Costello advised that he had put nine hams in the bin for EHH.] Then on Friday evening, Ron Lesinski called Jo Ann to advise that there were ashes and cigarette butts in both the men's and ladies' bathrooms. Obviously, someone had been smoking in bathrooms in violation of the Florida Clean Indoor Air Act. Jo Ann also reminded us that several months ago when personal items were being donated for the Florida United Methodist Children's Home, all the "fancy" toothbrushes had been taken from that bin.

Jo Ann advised that she would like to deliver a letter to each outside group, including the Girl Scouts, which uses GCUMC for meetings. The letter would advise that anything in the church that does not belong to that group is not to be touched. Further, there is to be no smoking anywhere inside the buildings. If anyone in the group is caught doing either one, that group will no longer be allowed to use GCUMC as a meeting location. Everyone felt delivering these letters was a good idea.