

Gulf Cove United Methodist Church
Helping Everyone Meet, Know, and Serve Jesus
Church Council Meeting
July 24, 2017 – 7:00 PM

Attendees:

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

Judy Boyer
Alfred Current
Carol McGuire
John McGuire

Rick Starck
Dana Hanson
Visitor: Larry Davis, Boy
Scout Liaison

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 5/22/2017 meeting. There was no meeting in June.

TEAM CONCERNS

Outreach:

Boy Scouts: Larry Davis led the discussion about the possibility of starting a Cub Scout pack at GCUMC, as a feeder pack to Boy Scout Troop 776. A feeder pack is one which, when the Cub Scouts become Boy Scouts, they stay with the group with which they are already affiliated, instead of looking for a whole new group of boys. Cub Scouts range from 1st grade up to age 11 (regardless of grade), at which time they cross over from Cub Scouts to Boy Scouts. Right now Troop 776 recruits from wherever they can. Larry envisions Cub Scout Pack 776 meeting initially on Monday evenings jointly with Boy Scout Troop 776, and then they breaking up into two separate groups.

The GCUMC Men's Group has been paying the annual Boy Scout re-charter fee of \$700. With regard to a Cub Scout Pack, Larry thinks their annual fee is \$25 per boy. Larry hopes to have any fee waived for at least a year for any new Cub Scouts. One concern is that a second location in the church would be required for when the two groups break up during their weekly meeting.

Larry indicated he would like approval from the church to start the Cub Scout Pack before pursuing the next steps with his district personnel. Everyone agreed it would be great if it could happen.

Girl Scouts: They have inquired as to the possibility of establishing another Girl Scout Troop or Daisy Group at the church. They have scheduled a Girl Scout Recruitment Event on Saturday, August 26, at 9am, here at the church

Englewood Helping Hand: A welcome is extended to Kim Bruemleve as the new co-coordinator to help April Chattinger and Bob Rohrbaugh with their EHH duties. Kim is replacing Dana Hanson, who is stepping down from that position.

Elementary School Outreach: Several topics of discussion related to our elementary school outreach:

1. **School Supplies:** Doreen contacted the assistant principal at Myakka River Elementary, who advised that "any and all school supplies" would be greatly appreciated. This year, teachers report on August 4, and school starts on August 10. After discussion, all agreed

that we should help with this need. The initial batch of supplies could be taken to the school on August 4, with later donations being taken over when they are received. Alfred indicated he would discuss school supplies with the Vineland Elementary principal on Tuesday morning. Doreen suggested perhaps Sarah Taylor (our new Youth Director) could talk with someone from L.A. Ainger Middle School, and take charge of supplies for that school; their school supplies may be different from those of an elementary school.

In addition, it is believed that Charlotte County provides little or no funds for many school supplies, including photocopy paper and construction paper which is used by the teachers. Doreen said that last year at her school, their only source of supplies was what was provided by the PTO (a case of copy paper, dry erase markers, and a little money to spend on supplies). She said if the County provided any money, it was used for other purposes at her school. It was suggested that perhaps we could give a ream of copy paper to each teacher on August 4, along with his or her breakfast.

It was decided instead of putting together complete backpacks as we have done in the past, we will simply collect the school supplies and deliver them to the schools. To advise our congregation, a bulletin insert will be prepared that can be included with the bulletin for July 30, since the supplies would be delivered the following Friday. For those who would like a head start on the supplies, go to this link http://www.edline.net/pages/Charlotte_County_SD/Schools to see what supplies are required.

2. Elementary School Reading Program: Alfred advised that Myakka and other elementary schools need adult readers who go to the schools during the day for an hour or so, and either read to the children, or help them read. He said this is an excellent opportunity for many in our congregation to get involved, and it is a great way to bring young people into our church – by going where they are and interacting with them. Doreen, speaking as a teacher, agreed that there is a great need for adults to read to children. Pastor Mike indicated a preference for us to become involved in this reading program as opposed to the Good News Club, discussed next.

3. Good News Club: Englewood UMC handles the Good News Clubs at Myakka River and Vineland Elementary Schools. The club is an after-school program which allows children to share and grow in their Christian faith. Englewood UMC has been doing half a year at Vineland and half a year at Myakka because they don't have enough volunteers. Since we are so close to Myakka, they wondered if we would like to take over for that school. There is an initial \$1,100 outlay for the curriculum. It would need someone from our congregation to take charge who can be there every week.

4. Teacher Breakfasts: Pastor Mike indicated that we will prepare and deliver a special breakfast for the approximately 65 Myakka teachers on Friday, August 4, at 7:30am. Subsequent to our meeting, it was determined that we will also provide breakfast for the approximately 75 Vineland teachers on Monday, August 7, at 8am.

Harry Chapin Food Bank Mobile Pantry: The HCFB and Health Department visits will coincide on the *first* Tuesday of each month. Health Dept. visits occur from 1-4pm, and the HCFB mobile pantry will distribute goods from 3-5pm. Pastor Mike was told that it is okay for our volunteers to simply show up on that first day. (The Health Dept. is at GCUMC also on the third Tuesday.)

Team Cuba: John reported that there is an ongoing effort to get the water purification system to the Frank Pais church. It is expected to be sent with an Agape Flight in September. The cost for each flight has risen to \$3 a pound. Doreen reported that a man named Connor has been collecting prom and wedding dresses to be taken to Cuba this summer; Liset, Pastor Isel's wife, is helping with this project. Three of our church members (Phill Kolbe, and Ray & Barbie Dunfee) have already arranged to visit Cuba in January or February 2018.

Nurture:

Pastor Mike mentioned that the office has received several calls lately from people who would like to come to church, but do not drive and have no other way to get here. He would like to establish a van route to pick up those individuals. People would have to call ahead of time to make arrangements.

Support:

With regard to Finance, John McGuire advised that our financial records were recently audited. No problems were found, and no recommendations were made. However, this year's giving is down about \$15,000 when compared to the same period last year. The Reserve Fund currently has about \$33,400, but it is expected that we will have to begin drawing from it this month.

With regard to Trustees, Rick Starck advised us of several items:

- The Trustees have decided that as little additional money as possible will be put into the portables and that area of the campus, pending a decision on what we are going to do as far as constructing additional buildings.
- A portion of the fence behind the portables, next to Conway Road, has fallen down. No one at the recent Trustee meeting (or this Council meeting) could remember exactly why the fence was put up, but the Trustees decided that it is no longer needed. As a result, the entire fence will be torn down.
- The trustees are checking into a new electronic security system for the outside door next to the office. A suggestion was made to include an intercom so the office could communicate with the person at the door. If a keypad was used, up to 500 codes could be issued (and deleted when a person left).
- Our insurance company will be inspecting our property and coming up with a valuation. This should be done the end of August or early September.
- As fluorescent tubes burn out or ballasts go bad, they will be replaced with LED bulbs. They will start replacements in the hallways and in portable 201.
- A member of the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office met with Pastor Mike and Rick about using a room in which Neighborhood Watch meetings could be held. It was determined that they could use our facilities. Their first meeting will be on Tuesday, August 15, at 6:30pm in #201. As of now, only the first meeting is scheduled.

With regard to Staff Parish, Pastor Mike advised that Sarah Taylor officially started as our new Youth Director earlier that day. Sunday evening (July 23), the youth, Sarah, and others, went black-light golfing at Kid Star and had pizza afterward. Pastor Mike was very pleased to see how quickly some of the youth seemed to bond with Sarah. He said she has some great ideas for the youth.

OLD BUSINESS

VBS: VBS was held June 12-16. We had 48 registered kids, with attendance of 31 to 36 every evening. (There were 9 additional kids who registered, but never came.) We had 43 volunteers, with 30 to 38 people helping each evening. The VBS mission this year was to benefit Englewood Helping Hands. By the end of the week, \$152.32 in monetary donations had been collected plus 94 cans of food!

Charge Conference: Rick advised that we are on the list for a cell tower; i.e., if a company is looking for a cell tower in our location, we will be contacted. Renting church land for this purpose requires a church or charge conference, but that issue will be tabled for now until we are contacted. A conference is currently required, however, for us to sell the Matecumbe property in South Gulf Cove. Assuming our District approves the proposed sale, a charge conference will be scheduled.

Facility Expansion: There has been no real activity on this action since last August, primarily because of the change in our church leadership and the need for us to decide on how we want to proceed as a church. Information was considered earlier by the Facility Expansion team on a company that could perform a feasibility study (the why, how, where, and when). Doreen noted that many of our discussions in Council meetings and at the Vision Retreat have indicated a clear need for a community room and/or gymnasium (also known as a fellowship hall or multi-purpose room), as well as more classrooms or meeting spaces. Doreen feels that during this fall's round of Lay Nominations, we should also consider rebuilding our Facility Expansion team. Rick told us of something District Superintendent Rini Hernandez said during a meeting not long ago: the rule used to be "if you build it, they will come," but Rini cautioned that is no longer the case; he said he would rather see us put money into ministries instead of buildings. Pastor Mike reminded us that any building we consider should be a result of our needs, not our wants. Our four portable buildings are all used extensively, and none of them would survive a hurricane. If they were demolished, we would be without that meeting space until something else could be arranged. A suggestion was made that if we built a multi-purpose facility, it did not have to be on this campus; it could be elsewhere, such as near an elementary school that does not have a gymnasium (and no elementary school in Charlotte County has a gym).

Vision Retreat Follow-Up:

Experience, Embrace, & Engage: The agenda poses three questions:

- Are we just using the three words, Experience, Embrace, & Engage?
- Or are we changing our mission statement to, "Helping Everyone Experience, Embrace, and Engage Jesus"?
- Or do we need to completely rewrite the mission statement focusing on the new three words?

Pastor Mike indicated his belief was that the Vision Retreat consensus was to change the mission statement to: "Helping Everyone Experience, Embrace, and Engage Jesus and community [and neighbor]." Some voiced the concern that it was too long and too complex. Some indicated there was a confusion as to what the three words actually mean and how they relate to our current meet, know, and serve. One individual suggested we consider not having a mission statement at all. Another said the previous "reaching up and out for God" was that

person's preference. This needs to be addressed from the pulpit to educate the congregation and help them become comfortable with the change.

Reports:

Pastor Mike said we need to get a more involved with small groups under the Embrace element. There are a few parents who are open to gathering on Wednesday evening while their children are at our church; Kelly Weaver will be coordinating this effort. (This idea was a topic of discussion at our 5/22/2017 Council meeting; under the "Embrace" title.)

Rick said the Engage group has somewhat (for now anyway, since half their group is up north) merged with the Experience group, which is focusing on outreach. One of the programs supported by the Homeless Coalition is *Bridges Out of Poverty*, a mentoring system. Rick and a couple others met with the woman in charge of that program, and they were very impressed and excited with it. That woman has since left the Homeless Coalition and the new person in charge is not as familiar with the program. In the near future, Rick will be attending a free (he thinks) one-day class on the *Bridges Out of Poverty* program. The class is held repeatedly, but the coalition requires 10 people to be in attendance before they will offer it; the next date is unknown. Rick pointed out that we don't want to start from scratch with an idea if a good program already exists; and he feels the *Bridges Out of Poverty* is one of those programs. Loretta added that a program such as this will easily intertwine with other ministries, such as Kairos and Kairos Outside.

Pastor Mike mentioned that, although many churches with the financial means lack the mindset of how to reach out to their community, he feels like GCUMC is naturally addressing many of those issues (Closet of Hope, Englewood Helping Hand, Inglenook ALF Visitation, At Ease Veterans, Health Department, Harry Chapin Mobile Pantry, Our Journey of Hope Cancer Care).

Alfred mentioned that Jerry Spurgeon has a portable shower on his dream list. Pastor Mike said Jerry should not give up on that idea – a portable shower can be used in many different ministries.

NEW BUSINESS

Worship Attendance: The South West District's July Newsletter introduced a new WIG for 2017-2018:

The Operational Team in the SW District has decided to make our WIG (Wildly Important Goal) for 2017-2018 a 10% increase in worship attendance in our area. Increasing worship attendance would require our attention and intentionally in coming up with strategies to make it happen. A 10% increase in average worship attendance would mean that we are connecting with our surrounding community, we are making a difference in people's lives, we are helping people to come to a saving relationship with Christ as their Lord and Savior (Professions of Faith or POF's) and they will be connected to one of our worship experiences in the life of our local churches: either a mid-week, Saturday evening or Sunday morning or evening worship experience.

Doreen noted that while the goal is a 10% increase in worship attendance, an increase in professions of faith is also intimated, but not numerically, and that we need to be mindful of

these goals as we make decisions for our congregation. Pastor Mike noted that attendance includes sites which are off-campus (but not small groups); it also does not include groups such as Jesus Rocks or Bible studies. It *does* include, however, people who view a streaming or Facebook-live worship service on Sunday morning. John Dorotics has indicated an interest in possibly starting a small worship service at the retirement center where he and Elaine live.

Dinner Church Encounter: Doreen believes this event is based on information which was presented at our Vision Retreat. Further, it directly relates to the WIG mentioned above. The flyer announcing it says:

Leaders all across the country are rediscovering Jesus' dinner table theology that dominated the Apostolic Era. The present-day **Dinner Church movement** is giving leaders and churches a renewed ability to reach people who would never attend their Sunday morning gatherings. **Join us for this special event** to find out how the Dinner Church vision could impact your congregation's ministry and leave with practical insights that can enable you to begin hosting a Dinner Church in your own community. A \$20 registration fee includes light refreshments and lunch.

The whole program occurs on Saturday, September 23. Training is from 9am-4:30pm at Grace Church in Cape Coral, and the Dinner Experience is from 5-6:30pm at Suncoast Community Center in North Fort Myers. Attending the actual dinner is available only to the first 50 tickets who register with the ticket labeled "training + dinner church event." Register for the event at [this website](#).

Church Software: Rick has learned of a new church software program that is web-based (i.e., in the cloud) instead of downloaded on a local computer. He is very impressed with the program, especially the database which keeps track of many actions of the church which need to be measured. There is an ability for individuals to update their own profile, as well as a section that is accessible only by church staff. He believes the software would replace Church Windows which, from the sounds of things, is cumbersome and outdated. No one present knew whether using Church Windows is mandated by Conference.

Chamber of Commerce: The Leadership Englewood group will be doing a SimSoc (Simulated Society) at our church from 7am until around 4pm on Wednesday. There will be around 20 individuals plus a steering committee who will be introduced to GCUMC. Alfred said the program is such that it could almost be embraced by a church, and invited us to attend if we wished.

ADJOURNING

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03pm with a prayer by Pastor Mike. The next Church Council meeting will be held on Monday, August 28, 2017 at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Hanson
Recording Secretary