

Gulf Cove United Methodist Church

Experience – Embrace – Engage

Church Council Meeting

September 24, 2018 – 7:05pm

Attendees:

Chuck Russell (Council Chair)	Jo Ann Hopkins	Rick Starck
Pastor Mike Weaver	Carol McGuire	Donna Wallace
Alfred Current	John McGuire	Dana Hanson
John Furtado	Jeanne Shrout	
Irv Hopkins	Linda Starck	

The Church Council meeting started immediately after the Charge Conference adjourned at 7:05pm.

OLD BUSINESS

Sale of Matecumbe Lot: The sale of this vacant property was the subject of the Charge Conference held earlier this evening. The Presiding Elder was Pastor Matthew Williams, from Boca Grande Lighthouse Church. At that Conference, Rick moved that the vacant lot at 8350 Matecumbe, South Gulf Cove, Port Charlotte, be sold and that the proceeds be used for our church expansion project. Rick's motion was seconded by Chuck. The vote was unanimous in favor of Rick's motion.

WIG for 2017-2018: Our current Wildly Important Goal is to increase worship attendance by 10%. Chuck asked if there was any way we could analyze our attendance numbers to determine the numbers of youth and young adults – the future of our church.

John Furtado brought some attendance records to the meeting, he said there is a definite increase in both children (grade 5 and below) and youth (grades 6-12) who attend their various activities. Sarah Taylor and Holly Tozer could provide more definitive information. Chuck indicated he would check with them. John said there is also a significant increase in the number of people who have attended other non-worship activities. A significant part of that bump are the classes that Pastor Becky Stephenson has led (the 10-week Journey in Faith which has been offered twice, and the 6-week summer dinner, movie, & discussion series). Her third Journey in Faith session will start this Thursday, 9/27/18.

Jeanne said we have a problem with attendance numbers because some people, especially at the 9:30 service, do not sign the attendance pad. The actual count which is taken each Sunday almost never matches the number of those who sign in. Further, although many people have provided their birthdate for church records, some have not. Jeanne said she can pull up some database information; we just need to remember that the results are affected by her previous comments.

It was suggested that the ushers who take the actual count make an educated guess as to the number of youth (college age down) and the number of young adults.

What's Right and What's Wrong: This was not discussed at the meeting but is repeated here so that all who read these minutes can think about the topic and address their thoughts to Chuck. As stated in the 3/26/18 minutes:

- "... Chuck is asking all of us to send him an email which indicates what we see in our church ministries that is going right, so that we can do more of that. Also tell him what we see that is not so right, what needs help – not meaning to be critical of any of our current programs, but what can be changed to better the ministry. We need to avoid reinventing the wheel. Chuck Russell's email address is crussell340@gmail.com. Let him know what is going right; what can use more attention; what do you see in the community; what are the changes in the youth; how can we reach the younger generations?"

Campus Expansion: Rick reported that the Steering Committee is in place. He hopes that they will meet weekly, or every other week at a minimum. The committee's first step was to identify companies who could provide us with a range of services that need to be addressed, such as design, architecture, finance, and capital campaign. Six companies have been contacted and four have responded. As he mentioned in the Finance meeting, there will likely be an initial outlay simply to hire the company we choose.

The Steering Committee is also creating teams which will study and work on the different issues that surround adding a new building. The Steering Committee will appoint team leaders, who will then select up to six other individuals to be on their team. Teams would deal with things such as components, finances, and communication.

One team would identify what the components are and then prioritize all the possible needs. This would involve things such as determining what is needed by each of our ministries, and what space is required for their activity.

A second team would deal with the finances and what is involved with options that are available. Rick estimates that it could take three years to raise enough money simply for a down payment. He said we should be able to borrow three to four times our annual income. That results in a potential mortgage of \$1.5 to \$2 million. However, that computes to a monthly mortgage payment of pushing \$10,000 – something we cannot afford. Irv pointed out that we need to bring in more people who can share in the cost of this major expansion.

A third team involves communicating with the congregation. It is important to make sure that everybody is aware of what is happening so that rumors are squelched before they get started. Some ideas for disseminating the information were: including information in the monthly newsletter; providing a suggestion box; making sure that the name and phone number of a person who can answer any questions (or forward the question to the appropriate individual) are available to everyone.

A few things that need to be considered include:

- Do we want to replace the portables with one large building? Filling in the areas between the buildings would result in 7 or 8 large rooms.
- Would we need additional parking?
- What happens to Oaks Cove? It currently has a septic system with roots growing into the leach field.

YELLOWS, REDS, & UPDATES

Trustee Matters: Chuck asked what the trustees' plans are for the portables until they are replaced. Rick recommends that we invest as little as we can in them. They will be needed for at least three years, if not more, and they must remain usable during that time. The decks, on the other hand, are bad; we must be sure that no one is seriously hurt.

John Furtado mentioned that the ramp into the small shed right next to the church also needs repair.

Donna said she had heard that wood that can be used to repair the portables is in the barn. John Furtado said, yes, there is some in the barn. He thinks it was purchased before Hurricane Charley in 2004 with the intention of building hurricane shutters, which was never done. Since then, carpenter ants have attacked it. He explained that some of it that was salvageable was used recently to repair #201.

Finance Matters: It was asked whether we are putting aside the \$1,500 that was previously paid on our mortgage. John Furtado explained that while some amounts have been put aside, it is not being done on a regular basis. The problem is that those funds are needed every month to pay bills. If we put it aside, then we would have to be pulling out of the Reserve Fund much more often than we do.

EXPERIENCE. EMBRACE. ENGAGE.

Embrace: Jo Ann reported on recent developments in the Emmaus community. As stated on the [Emmaus website](#), the mission of Emmaus is to empower leaders in the church to be the hands and feet of Christ. A person who has already taken his or her Walk sponsors an individual who exhibits leadership qualities. A minimum of 20 women or 20 men is required to hold a Walk. In recent years, they have been scheduling a Walk and then hoping to have enough applicants to fill it. This has finally resulted in the need to postpone the Walks which were scheduled for October 2018 due to the small number of individuals who applied. Instead, the Men's Walk will be held February 7-10, and the Women's Walk will be held February 14-17.

The Emmaus Board of Directors has decided that in the future a Walk will not be scheduled until enough applications are received to fill it. Therefore, people should not wait to submit applications. Applications will be held until the minimum of 20 is received, and then dates for a Walk will be determined. Any excess applications will be held over until the following Walk.

Engage: Alfred advised that the 6th Annual Pig Pickin' & Cookie Dash will be held on Friday, February 1, 2019. Based on feedback, he has decided that chicken will return to the menu. The proceeds we've raised have done marvelous things – holding back to school breakfasts for teachers; the mailing of flyers of special events; purchasing the Boy Scout trailer.

When we help at a school, we make relationships. We are already known as Myakka River Elementary's "church" – the people who are always there to help when the school needs them. Myakka River Elementary is holding their Fall Festival on Friday, October 12, from 5-7pm. We

have been asked to help in various ways (but not with cooking). In addition, individuals can sign up for Cove in the Classroom, GCUMC's name for our help-at-Myakka ministry.

As in all things Outreach, Alfred pointed out that, instead of "we need to think outside the box," we need to think that there IS NO BOX!

Alfred questioned whether we might consider re-starting our Friday Night Dinners. He said he knows several individuals who like to cook -- whether it is eaten or not. He pointed out that these types of activities bring all three worship services together, and outsiders see the camaraderie. Jeanne added that occasionally someone will ask if we've started our monthly dinners back up. If the Boy Scouts are willing to assist with table set up, that would be fantastic and a great help! Nobody objected to a suggestion that we set up the sanctuary with round tables on a permanent basis.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNING

The meeting was adjourned at 7:57pm with a prayer by Pastor Mike. The next Church Council meeting will be held on Monday, October 22, 2018 at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Hanson
Recording Secretary