

**Gulf Cove United Methodist Church**  
*Helping Everyone Meet, Know, and Serve Jesus*  
**Charge Conference Annual Meeting**  
**Sunday, November 3, 2013 – 3:00 PM**

**Presiding Elder:** Rinaldo Hernandez, District Superintendent

**Attendees:**

Rev. Dr. Bill Fisackerly	Tippy Burgess	Carol McGuire	Ken Priest
Rick Starck	Marilyn Calladine	John McGuire	Jeanne Shrout
Doreen Alvarez	Ralph Calladine	David Pentz	Bob Wollmacher
Zachery Alvarez	Scott Folsom	Gayla Pentz	Dana Hanson
Maxine Burgess	Charles Hilton	Joan Priest	

This cluster charge conference opened with a joint worship session at Edgewater United Methodist Church, after which the various churches broke into separate groups to handle church-specific issues.

Recording Secretary: The vote was unanimous in approving Dana Hanson as Recording Secretary for the next year.

State of the Church: Rev. Bill feels that the church is uncomfortable right now and, as a result, is taking part in a DNA program led by the Rev. Dr. Don Nations. The number of individuals who attend the DNA meetings has grown from 11 when the program started two years ago to 30+ now. When Rev. Nations recently read what he believes is our current DNA, most individuals cringed, but also agreed. Instead of just sitting around talking, we want to start going out into the community, but that is also where it gets most uncomfortable. Our questions are: who are the dispossessed; who are the lost in our community; how are we best able to reach them? Rev. Bill is encouraged by the faith and willingness of many to step out and assist in this developing endeavor. Rev. Hernandez interjected that he feels Gulf Cove UMC will accomplish many things with Rev. Bill (and Kim) at the helm – two individuals who have a passion for Christ.

Membership: Rev. Hernandez asked if we felt there was a particular reason that our average attendance dropped from 373 to 354, when comparing January-September 2013 to January-September 2012. The response was that going through the DNA process should help us answer that question.

Rev. Hernandez advised that the process under which individuals are removed from the church's rolls has been slightly streamlined. Now they may be removed after two years of non-activity, as opposed to three years as in the past. Even if individuals are still in the area, if they do not respond to our queries, they may be removed. Our current Second-Year-List contains the names of 16 individuals. After discussion, the voting was unanimous to remove the 16 names from our rolls, effective today.

Missional Vital Signs: Rev. Bill reported that the listed goals were established three or four years ago. However, after review, it appears it would be best for us to reevaluate our goals.

- Our *Radical Hospitality* figures include those who make first-time professions of faith, not just transfers to the church. Our goal for the year 2013 was 15 individuals, and 16 have already made first-time professions so far this year.
- Our *Salty Service* goal was an average of 64 service acts each week, as evidenced by the number of Salty Service cards being placed into the offering plates. Our actual average is quite low, only 29 cards on any given week. It was mentioned that our actual average is, in reality, probably at least twice what is being reported. We are aware that many individuals do not like to “advertise” that they performed a “God-act” during the week – they prefer to remain anonymous. Rev. Hernandez responded that many churches have this problem. He suggested that (1) we should not stop collecting the cards; and (2) individuals could look upon it as offering “a gift to God” (“Lord, I thank you because I was able this week to serve a person by ...”).
- The *Intentional Discipling* goal of 345 represents the number of individuals we would like to see in small groups. However, the reported number of 92 is the actual number of individuals who regularly attend a small group. Rev. Hernandez commented that in other churches, when the number of individuals in small groups increases, many other things increase within the church.
- The *Extravagant Generosity* year-to-date figure is down considerably from the yearly goal. In addition, our Reserve Fund (used for emergencies and to get us through the summer months) is now almost completely depleted. The reduction in donations is following our reduced attendance. However, although attendance has gone down, our giving is up slightly as compared to this same time last year; this would indicate that many individuals are giving at least a little more.

Rev. Hernandez agreed that re-setting our goals could prove beneficial to the church. The goals are simply to help us think about moving from here-to-there. We want goals that we can achieve. Rev. Bill reminded us of a statement made by Rev. Nations at our last DNA meeting: within ten years, many elderly in our congregation will be gone, and retired individuals are our major givers. If those individuals are not replaced in the future, donations to the church will decrease substantially. We are not about finances, but you still need money to keep the church going.

Pastor’s Compensation: Ralph Calladine advised that Staff Parish recommended giving paid employees a 1.7% cost-of-living raise next year. However, the figures listed for Rev. Bill’s salary reflect substantially more than 1.7%. This is because as part of last year’s compensation package, he received a monthly amount for a utilities allowance. Subsequently, Conference said that was not permissible, and as a result, the allowance was converted to, and added to, his salary. The \$74,060 salary figure for 2014 is based on the 2013 stated salary plus the converted allowance. In addition, the compensation package includes an Accountable Reimbursement for 2014 of \$6,060. The pastor’s compensation package was unanimously approved by those present. [During the preparation of these minutes, it was noticed that both the first paragraph of

the Accountable Reimbursement Policy and the total reflected on the Accountable Reimbursement Policy Worksheet are \$6,160.]

Connectional Giving: In John Furtado's absence, John McGuire advised that the Finance Committee has accepted that the church's Apportionments for 2014 will be \$39,365. When asked by Rev. Hernandez if the church expects to pay all of its 2013 Apportionments, John acknowledged that it is likely the church will pay the full amount, even though we are struggling financially at the moment. When the documents were prepared for this Conference, the amount of \$8,906.06 remained to be paid. It was pointed out that, in all of Gulf Cove UMC's history, we have always paid 100% of our Apportionments.

2014 Leadership: Rev. Bill outlined changes in leadership positions for 2014:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Individual(s)</u>
Lay Leader	Ken Priest
Outreach	Shirley Smith
Caring Ministry	Pastors Art & Dolores Bliese (retired Lutheran ministers), Elizabeth Orcutt
Higher Education	Michelle Finley
Children's Home Rep.	Susie Cramer Von Clausbruch
Ad Council At Large	Mary Hilton, Bonnie Wollmacher
Trustees	Alfred Current, Irv Hopkins, Randy Moore, Al Crosby
Staff Parish	Joan Priest (Chairman), Pat Roettger, Carol Ankeney, Bob Wollmacher (2 or 3 more are needed)
Lay Nominations	Jeanne Shroul (3 more are needed)
Finance	Karen Current, Ilene Sokolich

Individuals agreeing to extend their current positions beyond the normal 3-year limit are Rick Starck (Ad Council Chairman), John Furtado (Finance Chairman), and Carol McGuire (Trustee Member). The vote was unanimous to accept the above-named individuals in leadership positions for 2014.

Ministry Recommendations: Rev. Hernandez explained that there are some new procedures for ministry candidates. The Board of Ministry of the Florida Conference and Rev. Hernandez as Superintendent of the Southwest District appoint two pastors from the Southwest District to be the candidate's mentors. The mentor appointments are renewed every six months; i.e., two pastors from January through June, and two different pastors from July to December. The local church is not required to actively support the candidate other than through prayer. Rev. Bill indicated the church has paid some of Shirley's course expenses. Rev. Hernandez indicated he would like to offer Shirley his assistance and that of his office in her pursuit, and asked that she contact his office. The vote was unanimous to continue to support Shirley Smith in her pursuit as a candidate for ordained ministry.

Lay Servants: The vote was unanimous for Doreen Alvarez and David Pentz to continue as Lay Servants for Gulf Cove UMC.

### Additional Comments

Rick Starck believes the numbers that are reported do not measure what is actually happening in the church. The leadership has been getting stronger over the past three years. The committees are manned by people who are making a difference. He believes the church is definitely moving in the right direction. For the most part, the leadership and much of the congregation understand that it is all about the Great Commission. The “how” is the current obstacle.

John McGuire has been encouraged by the increase in the number of individuals who attend the DNA meetings.

Scott Folsom pointed out he has been with GCUMC only since January this year. He found it so refreshing when he arrived to not only see the various ministries, but to see how Jesus interacts with each and every one of us to bring us into a closer relationship with Him. This is done by many individuals in the congregation, not just the pastor. What he finds most encouraging, is that the people of this church recognize that there is a missional statement that defines us, and that we are developing the life of our church.

Joan Priest thinks that a long-range calendar of events could be posted in several locations throughout our church (even on the back-side of the bathroom stall doors).

Small Groups: David Pentz stated that while Vic Costello does an exceptional job as the leader in forming new small groups. A major problem is that someone needs to take over as leader of Vic’s current small group so he can form a new small group. Rev. Hernandez indicated that in some other churches, individuals who are passionate about Christ have been asked to take over as leaders of small groups. Also, current leaders should mentor at least one other individual in the group to become a group leader. He, like Rev. Bill, believes small groups are extremely important for growth of a church. Several voiced concerns about long-standing small groups that don’t want to split up to form new groups. Ken Priest commented that their small group has been comprised of the same individuals for the past three years. Ken indicated that each member could easily be a leader of a new group, but taking that step to leave a group is very difficult. Rev. Bill said that he and Vic have discussed having a small group leader meeting once a month. Ken opined that every couple years the members of several small groups could be mixed up, creating new small groups. Jeanne ShROUT suggested that each individual in a current group could start his or her own new small group, but the original small group could continue. Doreen commented that we need to step outside our doors – outside of our comfort zones. Rev. Hernandez indicated that the times of attracting people to the church are probably over; instead, we need to go out into the community to reach others where they are – a very important shift in the life of the church.

**ADJOURNING**

The meeting was adjourned about 4:50pm with a prayer by Rev. Hernandez.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dana Hanson