

Gulf Cove United Methodist Church
Helping Everyone Meet, Know, and Serve Jesus
Charge Conference
Sunday, November 1, 2015 – 3:00pm

Presiding Elder: Rev. Victoria Guthrie

Attendees:

Rev. Bill Fisackerly	Diane Grafe	Gayla Pentz
Doreen Alvarez	Harold Grafe	Joan Priest
Kim Fisackerly	Betty Hansell	Ken Priest
Scott Folsom	Carol McGuire	Jeanne Shrout
John Furtado	John McGuire	Rick Starck
Joyce Furtado	David Pentz	

The 2015 cluster conference was held at Edgewater UMC in Port Charlotte. It started with worship at 3:00pm, with the sermon being delivered by our District Superintendent Rev. Dr. Rini Hernandez. The churches then separated into breakout groups to handle issues specific to each church. GCUMC's breakout meeting was opened with a prayer by Rev. Victoria.

Recording Secretary: The vote was unanimous in approving Betty Hansell as the Recording Secretary for today's meeting.

STATE OF THE CHURCH

Verbal Report: Rev. Bill stated that he continues to feel strongly about three areas that need improvement:

1. encouraging more people to be part of a small group;
2. being more consistent in visiting those who are in the hospital, homebound, or just not attending; and
3. getting outside the church walls.

He feels that if we work on those three things, we will jump start the next 32 years.

Membership: Rev. Bill read the names of those to be removed from the church rolls on the second-year list. He said that we have tried to contact those listed; some have requested their names be taken off, but others have not responded. All present approved removing the members indicated on the second-year list.

Missional Vital Signs: John Furtado pointed out that we had set some high goals, and Rev. Bill agreed, saying that we probably need to adjust those numbers which were set several years ago. He also stressed that the numbers do represent something, and the conference has reasons for requesting the information. John McGuire felt the report does not reflect where we need to go. Doreen said that some of the areas are not adequately measured and some are not easily measurable.

There was extensive discussion about Radical Hospitality. Several expressed the opinion that many of our congregants did not understand why the numbers were so low when we are such a hospitable church. Rev. Bill explained that it reflects the number of people making professions of faith and people restored. We may be very hospitable to those who are already members of a church, but we are not necessarily reaching non-believers.

Rev. Bill feels it may be helpful to spend some time studying the missional vital signs, getting a better understanding of why the "numbers" are important, and determining how they reflect the health of our church.

Regarding Salty Service, it was opined that many people are afraid to put in a tag, feeling that they are being boastful and that doing so is contrary to the Word. Rev. Vickie indicated that reporting the numbers is important to gauge the health of the congregation and the community. Doreen said that with the many activities we already do (such as conducting the veterans ministry, going into the schools, assisting at Englewood Helping Hand, sending our youth groups out to do mission trips, and starting this year ringing the Salvation Army bells), there is a question as to whether all these individuals are reporting their donations of time. In addition, all these activities involve us leaving the building. She recommended having a short study (not during Church Council time) of the book that was mentioned by Rev. Rini earlier in the day.

Finances of the Church: *Clergy Compensation:* Staff Parish Chairman Joan Priest reported that the pastor's salary for 2016 will be \$77,808, his accountable reimbursement will be \$2,500, and his continuing education allowance will be \$500. The pastor's compensation was unanimously approved by the attendees.

Connectional Giving: Finance Chairman John Furtado stated that our 2016 Apportionment is set at \$41,902. He noted that we will again be paying 100% of the amount apportioned for 2015.

The Ministers of the Church: *Election of Lay Leadership:* The list of leaders was presented and approved unanimously. Doreen asked that a correction be made in her email address.

Ministry Recommendations: Rev. Bill explained that Shirley Smith is now the pastor of Cleveland UMC, but we should continue to approve her as a candidate for ordained ministry. Regarding Lay Servants, Sandy Doty and Doreen Alvarez were added to the list of continuing lay servants, which includes Gayla Pentz, David Pentz, Joan Priest, and Phillip Kolbe; all those present voted to approve and support the continuing Lay Servants.

Rev. Bill offered a prayer at the close of the conference, followed by John McGuire's prayer for all those on the lists of names for removal from the church rolls.

Respectfully submitted by
Betty Hansell
Recording Secretary