

CHARGE CONFERENCE
Gulf Cove United Methodist Church
Experience. Embrace. Engage.
Sunday, October 22, 2017 – 3:00pm

Presiding Elder:

Rev. Dennis Lewis, Pastor at Faith UMC, Fort Myers

Attendees:

Pastor Mike Weaver	Rick Starck	John Furtado
Judy Spurgeon	Carrie Humke	Donna Wallace
Carol McGuire	Kathy Mortenson	Phill Kolbe
John McGuire	Chuck Mortenson	Doreen Alvarez
Sandy Doty	Becky Stephenson	Dawn Tesauo
Linda Starck	Jack Stephenson	

The meeting was opened with a prayer by Rev. Lewis.

Dawn Tesauo was confirmed unanimously as the Recording Secretary for this meeting.

State of the Church, by Pastor Mike: This is the first full-year charge conference since Pastor Mike transferred to GCUMC. Our attendance has dropped from 277 in September 2015 to a current attendance of 233. Since the fall of 2015, about 20 seasonal individuals and/or couples have remained north primarily due to health reasons, and no longer return to Florida. In addition, there have been a few individuals who decided to leave GCUMC because of the pastoral transition (as often happens with a change in pastors).

On the other hand, during the summer of 2017, there was a large influx of new people attending GCUMC – which means we are reaching full-time Florida residents. We have had ten baptisms and five professions of faith within the most recent nine-month period. Pastor Mike’s perception is that the congregation of GCUMC is engaged and becoming more and more like the hands and feet of Christ. Our Children and Youth programs are both growing.

John McGuire questioned whether our challenge is to get more people through the door, or if it is to get those people who come, to stay. Pastor Mike responded that he thinks our challenge is not to wait for them to come through the door, but for us to engage with people “out there” and make them want to come to GCUMC and make us their home. It used to be that a “regular church attendee” was required to be in church every Sunday in the month. That view has morphed, however, so that a “regular church attendee” is now expected to be in church only two Sundays a month.

Pastor Mike noted that because of Hurricane Irma, which passed through eastern Charlotte County on September 10, our attendance figures have been somewhat skewed. GCUMC held no services on Sunday, September 9, and the following Sunday, we held only one combined service.

Fresh Expressions: Although the following were mentioned during the ensuing discussion, admittedly, not all of the comments are true “Fresh Expressions.”

- Rev. Lewis noted that GCUMC has indicated a possibility of starting a worship service at an assisted living home. Pastor Mike added that John Dorotics is most interested in starting a church communion service where he and his wife live.

- By the end of any given Sunday, there have been 60 to 70 people who have heard over the internet Pastor Mike's sermon which he delivered that morning.
- Phill Kolbe noted that we had a "drive through" Ash Wednesday early that morning. It was attended by 35 people. He said one woman, who had not received ashes in a decade, was in tears by the time she left.
- Doreen Alvarez mentioned that another program GCUMC is developing is called All Pro Dad. Members of our church will be going to Myakka River Elementary School to lead these faith-based sessions.
- The Charlotte County Health Department provides certain screenings at GCUMC on the first and third Tuesdays of the month.
- The Harry Chapin Food Bank Mobile Pantry recently started coming to GCUMC on the first Tuesday of every month. We are already getting great feedback from individuals who come to receive food. These pantry visits were purposely scheduled to coincide with the Health Department visits.

Removal of Members: With regard to individuals on the list of members who have been inactive for at least a year, Doreen noted that Dale Martin and Dallis Walchle have attended during the past year; they may not be signing an attendance pad, but she has seen them in church. Their names will be removed from the list. All present agreed that those on the second-year list should be removed from the church membership.

Clergy Compensation, by Phill Kolbe (SPR): The pastor's salary will remain at \$70,000, per Pastor Mike's request. The increase to the pastor's health insurance supplement was mandated by Conference, and is set at \$16,000. The clergy business expense account was set at \$2,500, and the clergy continuing education account at \$500. All present agreed to the proposed clergy compensation package for 2018. A small increase was given to staff personnel.

Connectional Giving, by John Furtado (Finance): The total apportionments for 2017 was \$42,524. As of September 30, the amount of \$34,019 has been paid. It is anticipated that 100% of the 2017 amount will be paid. Total apportionments for 2018 have risen to \$45,050. John Furtado and Pastor Mike have been talking about conducting a stewardship program to inform the congregation about general church finances, as well as the specific finances of GCUMC.

Phill Kolbe pointed out that when reviewing our church budget, he noticed that the amount of apportionments we pay to the Florida Conference is roughly 10% (a tithe) of what our total budget is projected to be (assuming income equals expenses). Individuals can look at the church itself for an example of tithing. Phill's experience is that new members do not understand tithing. Rev. Lewis noted that the total apportionments paid by all churches is used for ministry locally, nationally, and internationally.

Ministers of the Church, by Pastor Mike: The vote was unanimous for the continuation of Joan Priest, Dr. Phill Kolbe, and Sandy Doty as our Lay Servant Ministers. We currently have no candidates for the ministry.

Leadership Development, by Pastor Mike:

- Doreen was removed from the Class of 2020 as a member of SPR, because of a potential conflict since her son is an employee of the church.
- Linda Starck nominated Carrie Humke as a Class of 2020 Member at Large on the Finance Committee. Carrie agreed to serve, and her name was added to the Leadership Roster.
- The names of Jerry Spurgeon and Rick Starck were added to the Board of Trustees, Class of 2019.
- It was moved and seconded that the above names be added or deleted as indicated, and the rest of the Leadership Roster, including the new members in the Class of 2020, be accepted as it. The vote was unanimous.
- The names of Al Crosby and Jim Inman were mentioned as possible members on the Board of Trustees. They will be contacted to find out if they would be willing to continue as trustees.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Hanson
Recording Secretary