

Gulf Cove United Methodist Church

Experience – Embrace – Engage

Leadership Board Meeting

February 18, 2020 – 7:00pm

Attendees:

Chuck Russell (Board Chair), Pastor Mike Weaver, Doreen Alvarez, Alfred Current, John Furtado, Mary Hilton, Irv Hopkins, Jo Ann Hopkins, Jeanne Shrout, Jerry Spurgeon, Linda Starck, Rick Starck, Sarah Taylor, Dana Hanson

The meeting was opened with the lighting of the candle representing Jesus Christ, followed by a prayer by Doreen.

LEADERSHIP BOARD OPENING

Corrections to Previous Minutes: The recording secretary was not notified of any corrections to the minutes of the 1/21/2020 meeting.

Welcome! Carol McGuire, welcome to the Leadership Board.

FINANCE

In General: Alfred reported that month-to-date, we have received around \$31,000 spendable income, with an additional amount received Sunday of \$6,500. Monthly expenses to date are around \$16,000, with most bills coming in toward the end of the month. Dana advised that during January, actual expenses were \$34,400, while budgeted expenses were \$41,400. (Based on a total 2020 budget of \$522,253, the *average* spendable income needed each month is \$43,521.)

Thanksgiving Proceeds: Dawn in a recent email asked what we should do with the \$4,556 in proceeds from our Thanksgiving Dinner. After discussion, it was decided to allocate the proceeds as follows:

\$4,556	Total proceeds to be allocated
-456	10% tithe to church
-1,800	Thanksgiving starter fund for Nov. 2020
-1,000	Dinner Church, our new ministry at MRE
-500	Habitat
-800	A/V recent expenditures
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TRUSTEES

Sanctuary & Other Chairs: Rick said he believed the 35 new sled-based chairs (including a storage cart for easy moving) should be delivered this week. They will be used primarily for sitting around the tables. The other sanctuary chairs should be delivered in April. A couple churches have each expressed an interest in 100 of the old chairs (200 total). One of the churches cannot take any chairs until mid-March. In addition to quite a few chairs being stored in the side shed, the shed also is used for storage of items from the kitchen and pantry that are

seldom used. Rick said he hopes to get rid of some items that we do not anticipate even using any more. They will probably give the items to the Barn Sale.

Chuck spoke with Jessica Anderson of the Boys & Girls Club and mentioned that new chairs were being purchased. Jessica said that the B&GC has a lot of plastic chairs that could be used for when their children eat in the sanctuary. It was pointed out that since the sled-based chairs are not cloth, we should not have a problem with stains from dropped food. Chuck will revisit the offer with Jessica.

Jeanne said that Pastor Becky Stephenson has also asked for new chairs in 101 for the two classes she is teaching in that room.

Security: Rick said that with regard to the sanctuary side doors, people will be allowed to use them between services. However, during services, they will be locked, and a sign will direct individuals to the Narthex doors for entrance.

Trustee Finances: With all the spending that has been going on, the Trustees are running low on funds.

Education Wing/#103 Flooring: On hold due to lack of finances.

Kitchen: Rick said it is pretty much done except for some touch-up painting that needs to be finished. **Thank you, Linda, for your painting skills!!!**

AV Panel: The necessary equipment has been purchased. The AV account has \$4,300 in it right now, and the total bill for the new equipment was \$4,600. However, the deficit is covered with the \$800 from the Thanksgiving dinner proceeds, mentioned above. Pastor Mike said that Derek Hughes triaged what was “needed” versus “wanted” when deciding what to purchase, and did the labor himself. **Thank you, Derek, for saving us \$5,000 in labor costs!!!** Derek has already signed up for the two-day class that the company offers to learn about the equipment.

Lightning Rod & Surge Protector: Rick has requested bids for obtaining a lightning rod and a whole-building surge protector. Jeanne said that the individual providing the bid was here last week to review our needs. Rick pointed out that everything on the chancel already runs through a UPS (uninterruptable power source), and the new sound board is also on a UPS. The UPS devices will protect against surges over the electrical lines, but not against a direct lightning hit. It was believed that our insurance will cover losses from lightning strike, but no one present was sure.

Endowment: Rick plans to use an email campaign to remind everyone that an endowment program is available for those wishing to donate to the church in this manner. The email could also include other ways to donate, such as including the bequest in a will, or directing that your mandatory distribution out of a 401(k) or IRA go directly from the financial institution to the church. He thinks the email could go out once a month or once a quarter.

Campus Expansion: Rick said that the team has been meeting weekly (until last week when many on the team were literally out of the country). One of the next steps that needs to be taken is to determine what we can do with the campus that we have. For example, if we construct a building, its square footage will take away land into which water can soak into the ground and will cause more runoff; when that happens, is our current pond sufficient to handle that runoff? This means we have to get engineers and others involved who can conduct surveys to determine the answer of what our land can handle. Surveys will consider things such as boundaries, topological features, and trees. Rick has received two bids, one for \$6,000 and one for \$7,500, and a third bid is expected. Other bids were received for site planning and for engineering. These bids will give us *preliminary* information on whether it is even feasible to go forward with a building.

If we go forward, we need to spend a minimum of \$11,000 just to find out what size building our property can handle. Rick said these surveys and reports would be good for a limited amount of time. If we didn't start construction by then, they would have to be redone or refreshed. He said that when the plans for this property were originally drawn up in the 1970's or 1980's, the plan was to construct a formal sanctuary in the area where the frontage road is. The pond was put in place to cover that additional runoff and plans were drawn up under the county code in effect at that time.

Rick's question to the Leadership Board is, do we want to spend \$11,000 just to find out what is feasible? The answers from the investment should be pretty firm indicators of what is possible here. The companies would interface with the county and would figure out all the surveying that will be needed if we go forward. This is just the preliminary, but necessary, step and does not include the architect and further planning that will be required.

With regard to which accounts contain the \$11,000 needed, it was pointed out that account 320.026, Facility Expansion, contained \$24,531 as of the end of January. These expenses could be paid out of this account. (There is also account 320.018, New Sanctuary Fund, which contains \$170. It was suggested that, if possible, this amount be moved into 320.026.)

The consensus was unanimous, no objections, that we should go forward with spending \$11,000 for the preliminary reports as outlined by Rick.

Oak's Cove: Rick reported that our current custodian should be moved out of Oak's Cove by the end of March. As for moving a group, such as the Youth, into it permanently, it was pointed out that it is not handicap accessible. It could be used for storage.

Rick said that he did hear someone talk about using it for the homeless -- it does have three bedrooms -- a project that could be handled jointly with the county. The county has a program where temporary housing for a few months is supplied for individuals until they get on their feet. They are trained on how to get a job. A question was posed whether any problem or concern would be raised with the Boys & Girls Club and our own children being present.

Pastor Mike said that helping the homeless in this manner would be an ideal project for a task force to research. He feels it would be a beautiful use of the facility, while remembering that Crafty Ladies meet downstairs.

Alfred pointed out that the New Paradigm of Catholic Charities (Diocese of Venice) is an established ministry for the homeless, and the Diocese looks for property that they can use. They would provide all the administrative requirements, and we would provide the facility. He said it is not uncommon to house a single mother and child who need a hand-up, not a hand-out. After discussion, Alfred agreed to inquire further with the Diocese about joining them in this ministry. For more information, go to <https://catholiccharitiesdov.org/charities/new-paradigm/>.

EXPERIENCE. EMBRACE. ENGAGE.

Pig Pickin': This major event is finally here, this Friday and Saturday. Alfred said so far about 425 tickets have been sold, but advertising this year has been extensive, and we have no real idea how that will impact our number of visitors. He believes we will have enough groceries to serve around 1,300 people. If we run out, that means we will have sold about 500 more plates than last year. Check back next week....

Alfred said that when New Hope Community Church in North Port provided more than 4,000 Thanksgiving dinners, he sent his smoker over for them to use. In return, they will be providing us with a smoker to use for our chicken dinners this Friday.

When asked about it, Jeanne said she will double-check to be sure that our campus is sprayed for mosquitoes before Friday.

Bob Cameron has been handing out and posting hundreds of letters and flyers. Alfred held up several advertisements (both paid and free ads) that have been in local papers, reported that WENG radio has been announcing the event in 60-second spots, and advised that the Chamber of Commerce's weekly email went out with additional coverage to 2,000 email addresses.

Rick said that Larry Davis and C.T. Twardzik will be providing overnight security on Thursday (for the smoker) and Friday (for the crafts & tents). **Thank you, Guys!!**

Boys & Girls Club: Alfred said that we have "already outgrown this kitchen." The B&GC uses the church kitchen to prepare meals, not only for the children who come here, but also for another 100 children in Port Charlotte.

Linda reported that their recent fundraiser which was hosted by the Tampa Bay Rays at Charlotte Sports Park was well attended. We had quite a few volunteers show up to help, and everybody had a great time.

Rick advised that many members of the B&GC Board of Directors were at the Rays fundraiser. He and Alfred spoke with several of them. Rick said he and Nicolas Worden discussed our plans to expand the campus. Rick said he was wondering if the B&GC would be willing to participate in any way with construction. Nicolas said he would be very interested in sitting down with us to discuss the matter further. He also advised that the B&GC sets aside amounts from their fundraisers for a building program so that they can participate somewhere when the time is right.

Pastor Mike said he also spoke recently with Alex Shanks (Assistant to the Bishop) about having the B&GC help with any construction. Alex said if the B&GC is willing to help, the UMC will find ways to make it work. It has never been a problem.

Dinner Church: Pastor Mike reported that the team will have their final meeting this Thursday (February 20) before the first launch of this new ministry on Monday, February 24, at 6:30pm. It will be held in the Myakka River Elementary cafeteria. The menu is selected; good social-media feedback has been received; and flyers have gone out within a half-mile radius of Myakka. About 60 meals will be the limit for a while.

We will receive grants from Conference for about six months for this ministry. Until it become self-sufficient, it is anticipated that donations to keep it going will be received from both our congregation and those who attend the Dinner Church.

During the summer, Myakka Elementary is closed, so the Dinner Church will probably move back here to GCUMC during that time.

Pastor Mike said that while in Israel, he spoke with some pastors whose churches also hold Dinner Churches. Some said they were doing great, and some just okay.

[It is noted that after their Thursday meeting, posts were made on Facebook indicating that the Dinner Church will be offered on the second and fourth Mondays, instead of every Monday as originally planned.]

Boy Scouts: Alfred advised that there are 6 new boys joining the Boy Scouts. Yes, there are 9 boys rolling out, but the troop keeps going. Larry Davis has advised that, *in the whole United States*, Troop 776 has the highest percentage of Eagle Scouts to members!

Health Department: Jeanne and Pastor Mike advised that they are meeting in the chapel to provide free screenings. They have done this here before, but had to stop when the person in charge left. They are trying again. A set schedule has not yet been established.

Tai Chi: The first week Bob Cameron had 40 people come, but the second week only 18 people showed up. Unfortunately, six rows of chairs in the sanctuary have to be moved out of the way -- and set up afterwards -- to provide enough room to move about. [NOTE that due to unforeseen circumstances, the Tai Chi program was cancelled on February 23. Thanks, Bob, for two great sessions!]

Drummer: Pastor Mike said we need to pray extra hard for a drummer for the Praise Team. Derek Hughes is able to cover the position if he has to, but he still has to control the AV booth. A suggestion was made that we contact the high school to see if any drummer would be interested in helping us for community service hours.

OTHER BUSINESS

Israel & Cuba Trips: Pastor Mike said they had a great trip to Israel. He emphasized that “it was like drinking water out of a firehose!” He said it was very physical, but still a blast. He was surprised, however, by the Sea of Galilee. He had pictured it in his mind as a huge body of water, but in reality, they could easily kayak the length of it. Several people renewed their baptisms in the Jordan River.

Pastor Becky and Joan Priest just got back from Cuba yesterday, and we have not yet heard any reports.

Pastor Mike said he would like to have presentations made about both trips to the congregation.

ADJOURNING

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10pm with a prayer by Pastor Mike. The next Leadership Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 17, 2020 at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Hanson
Recording Secretary