

Gulf Cove United Methodist Church

Experience – Embrace – Engage

Leadership Board Meeting

February 16, 2021 – 7:00pm

Attendees:

Joan Priest (Chair), Pastor Mike Weaver, Jim Brown, Alfred Current, Dave Devilbiss, John Furtado, Carol McGuire, Jeanne Shrout, Rick Starck, Pastor Becky Stephenson, Sarah Taylor, Dawn Tesauo, Dana Hanson

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

Corrections to Previous Minutes: The recording secretary was notified of the following: The attachment to the 1/18/2021 minutes indicates that Sandy Doty was trying to re-establish a group to replace the former group Friends to Friends which met on Tuesday afternoons. Sandy has advised there was a misunderstanding, as she is not involved with re-establishing that group. To her knowledge, no one was trying to re-establish that group. However, Sandy has agreed to be the temporary leader of the Wayfinders singles group.

Opening Comments: Joan mentioned that while the positivity rate of COVID in our area is decreasing, deaths continue. It is still mandatory that we follow the guidelines we have already instituted. When more people become vaccinated, hopefully things will get better and eventually we can return somewhat to more normal.

With regard to Re-Imagining our Mission, Pastor Mike advised of a couple developments. It was suggested that during the traditional services, instead of moving straight into the offering after announcements, we have a hymn prior to the offering. Derek Hughes is still tweaking the AV booth equipment. We now have an IP address assigned to each of our sanctuary ceiling lights, which will make it much easier to identify which lights need repair or adjustment.

Staff Parish Relations: Pastor Mike advised that there are a couple personnel issues which SPR is working to resolve, but did not go into detail.

Several people mentioned that they have heard quite a few negative comments on Sunday mornings about the music at both the traditional and contemporary services. It was mentioned that the two most important aspects of a worship service are the sermon and the music. If half of those requirements are missing, the whole service is at risk. Some of the comments made by the congregation are as follows:

When is Roy returning to lead the traditional services? It has been a year since we last saw him; and we re-opened on September 20 (not counting 3 weeks in June). All other paid employees have returned to their normal in-person schedule, or close to it. They are tired of watching a recording. They have missed the live music. A few folks have mentioned this as a reason to seek another church.

The only person many hear singing at the contemporary service is Joe. They would like to hear more people in the Praise Band singing, including different individuals as the featured singer. The contemporary music is all one tempo, and it feels like it is dragging. They miss the upbeat songs. It seems like some of the faster songs are slowed down.

A “resolution” was voiced that SPR strongly consider Roy’s return to worship two weeks after his second COVID vaccination. SPR will also be considering the requested variety of music at the contemporary service. These topics elicited intense, passionate debate which indicates the need for timely consideration and response to the Leadership Board. (An email was later sent to Doreen Alvarez as SPR chair with specific points of our discussion. She has responded and SPR will address issues.)

Finance: Alfred advised that we received word from Centennial Bank that the first PPP loan was forgiven as of February 5, 2021: \$55,993.80 in principal, and \$420.34 in interest. **Alfred thanked Rick and Dawn for their work in getting the original PPP loan.** The criteria to be eligible for the second PPP loan are different from those for the first PPP loan. Alfred and Dawn are trying to determine if we qualify for a second PPP loan.

A question was posed whether we should close the account at Centennial Bank. It was felt, however, that we should keep that account open until a determination is made as to whether we qualify for, and obtain, the second PPP loan. In the meantime, we could move some of the funds to our primary checking account at Englewood Bank, leaving enough in the Centennial account to keep it open. No action was taken on this, however.

Spendable income received for 2021 year-to-date is \$70,500, but that is \$41,000 less than last year at this time. On the other hand, 2021 expenses year-to-date are \$50,655, as compared to \$76,816 last year. Based on our 2021 budget of \$517,637, the average amount needed each month is \$43,136, and the amount needed each week is \$9,955. This still presents a deficit of which we need to be aware.

Dawn, Pastor Mike, and Alfred have discussed whether any of the designated fund account line items that are being maintained on the books can be eliminated and the funds placed in other accounts or a combined account. Comments made regarding these accounts include the following:

- The Wish List Funds of \$574 were received not necessarily from an identified person, but from many toward a future item that the church might want. Since we no longer use wish lists, those funds could be put into the general fund.
- The Parsonage Deposit contains \$624 that Mike Lackney paid when he moved into Oaks Cove. These funds could be transferred to the trustees.
- There is \$429 in the Small Groups account.
- The Bereavement Fund of \$250 was meant to cover expenses (such as for the organist) when the family of the deceased did not or could not pay. It was mentioned that these types of expenses could be handled with the Discretionary Fund.
- There is \$162 in the Nursery Fund.
- There is \$605 in the VBS Fund, but since VBS is usually a repeating event, it was felt the money should stay in that account.
- The Thanksgiving Dinner fund could have funds over and above the starter amount moved to a different account (starter of \$1,900 would remain, and \$833 transferred).
- General Memorials of \$3,090 were made but never designated for any specific purpose. That amount is just sitting there.

- The Nelson Memorial has \$1,000. The spouse could be contacted to see where they would like the funds used. If attempts to contact that person prove unsuccessful, then the money could be transferred to the general fund.
- The Storm Recovery fund has \$1,182. This account was set up by us for a rainy day, or to offset storms after Hurricane Charley. This is a prime example of funds which could be transferred to the trustees.
- Each of the above identified accounts can easily be “covered” by another, more general fund.
- If the *church* creates a fund and receives donations toward that account, those funds can ultimately be redesignated by the church. However, if a person makes an unsolicited designated donation, then those funds must be used for that designated purpose. If designated money is not spent after several years, there are procedures that can be followed which would allow for the funds to be moved.
- Pastor Becky mentioned that it is possible for us to attach an end-date when we create an account and request funds. For example, if we ask for donations for a specific purpose and say that all funds must be spent by the end of 2021, if the money is not all spent by that date, then the funds will roll over into the general fund. This would also apply if not enough money was received to make the intended purchase. The congregation would have to be informed when the funds are initially requested, that the intent is to spend by x-date, but if not spent by then, the funds may be transferred to the general fund. Several indicated they liked this approach.
- Dana said that the Inglenook ALF fund (330.005) currently has \$14.31. Replenishment of this fund was a topic of discussion at our 1/21/2020 meeting, and at that time it had been felt that the small, yearly requirement could come out of another account. Dana is the current leader of this ministry, and she suggested this evening that account 330.005 be closed, and the funds be transferred to the general Outreach account (possibly 330.009). In the future, reimbursement of amounts spent for the small prizes and gifts for this Inglenook ministry could be paid out of the Outreach account.
- Dawn said that the Emmaus account might be handled in the same way as the Inglenook account. That account had most recently been used to assist pilgrims on their weekend walk.

Alfred suggested that his group meet and go over all the designated accounts to determine which could be closed and/or folded into another account. All present felt that would be a good idea.

Dawn asked if everyone received notice about the Bella Williams Memorial Fund. Dawn's information was conveyed in an email dated 2/9/2021 from Dana to the Leadership Board. It advised that the Bella Williams memorial account #340.002 had a 12/31/2020 balance of \$60,375.09. During January 2021, \$15,261.17 was transferred to the Trustee Fund #320.039 to reimburse it for the purchase of the sanctuary chairs, and the balance of \$45,113.92 was transferred to the Facility Expansion Account #320.026 as per her wishes. As of 1/31/2021, the Bella Williams memorial account had a balance of \$0.00. *We thank you, Bella, for your generous bequest toward the future of your church!*

Rick said that there are seven funds set up to specifically handle endowments, and each fund represents a different designated purpose. If a donor wants to designate a purpose other than those seven accounts, then there is a minimum amount that must be donated, just to open up the new account. The seven, already established accounts are:

- General Endowment Fund (no restrictions)
- Faith Sharing Ministries
- Children & Youth Ministries
- Needs Ministries (Closet of Hope, Habitat for Humanity, etc.)
- Education Ministries
- Capital Building & Improvements, Building Maintenance, Land Acquisition
- Capital Equipment & Unbudgeted Equipment Repair

Rick said that they would like to put together 15 to 20 short videos, each addressing one specific topic, such as, what giving to an endowment is about; what is an endowment; how you can give to an endowment through insurance, wills, etc.; giving to an endowment program is giving from assets. Rick said the ideas are already in motion and as videos are completed, they will be rolled out. They would also like to prepare some handouts and/or mailers. The Florida United Methodist Foundation has offered to provide speakers who can explain endowments. Those FUMF individuals will also sit down with a person who wishes to make a significant donation and explain all the different options available to them.

Nominations: Pastor Mike notified us that Ken Baus will fill the vacancy on the Finance Team, and Cindy Gettle is joining SPR.

Trustees: Dave reported that he met yesterday (Monday, February 15) with an individual about repairing all our double-glass doors. He hopes the job will be completed soon. Other projects are ongoing. The next major project he plans to attack involves replumbing and replacing parts in the three back sinks in the kitchen.

Jeanne mentioned that the sanctuary light switch next to the serving room was not working. Dave said he believes it is a ballast problem, and asked that a work-request form be prepared and placed in the trustee mail slot.

EEE Experience: In the absence of Sue Betz, John reported that our average in-person worship attendance during January was 158, and the average online attendance was 516.

EEE Embrace: Sarah said they are still trying to decide whether to hold Vacation Bible School this summer. The youth had been separated into two groups, middle schoolers and high schoolers, but she decided it was best that they recombine into one group again. The youth are considering service opportunities and/or care packages for a local assisted living facility. The kids helped to plant some of the plants in the newly-landscaped Education door entry area.

EEE Engage: Pastor Mike said that tomorrow, Ash Wednesday, will find our drive-thru, Ashes-To-Go ministry and free coffee at the front of the church between 7am and 9am. He is always

surprised by the people who have come; some have even reactivated their membership with their church up north. The traditional Ash Wednesday service will be held at 6pm.

The Easter Egg Hunt is scheduled for 10am-12pm on Saturday, March 27. All of it will be held outside, with no time spent inside. It is hoped they can offer hot dogs to-go after the egg hunt.

The Boy Scouts were hoping to have their spaghetti dinner also on March 27. Pastor Mike told them that he feels there would be enough lag time after the Easter Egg Hunt that they could still hold the spaghetti dinner that evening. They will decide on a date in the near future.

Alfred reported there are two new adult leaders who will be joining Boy Scout Troop 776. Also, six Cub Scouts from Pack 26 have "crossed the bridge" and will also be joining Troop 776 here at GCUMC. There is a possibility that one of the adult leaders of Pack 26 will also move to Troop 776. Alfred advised that Troop 776 received a few outside donations which fully paid for this year's charter fees. As a result, we will not have to pay for that as was decided at our last Leadership Board meeting. Pastor Mike pointed out that they are "part" of GCUMC, and he felt we should go ahead and give the troop the \$1,000 anyway. This is especially important last year and this year because of the pandemic. They are not able to conduct the fundraisers as they have in the past. ***After a short discussion, the consensus was reached that we should give them \$1,000 out of the Outreach fund.***

With regard to Pig Pickin', Alfred said he had thought it could be held on March 12. However, over the past few weeks, his schedule has substantially filled in for the next two months. As a result, he is thinking he may not be able to conduct the BBQ until after Easter (which falls on April 4). Unfortunately, by that time, many of our northern residents may have returned north already. On the other hand, perhaps the COVID vaccine will have become more available and people will be more likely to come out.

Dave advised that the initial First Monday Supper was a large success. A total of 93 meals were served, and \$334 in donations were received. The March 1st menu will be chicken and dumplings.

Expansion Team: Joan reported that the team will be meeting on Thursday afternoon. Dave has been asked to become part of the team since he, as the Trustee Chairman, will be signing the contracts. They have gone through the pre-application approval process with Charlotte County, but the Conway Road boundary still needs to be finalized. The next Site Development Plan will be more detailed, and Joan believes it will show more of the usage of buildings, electric, water, etc. They are in the information-gathering phase of the next step -- hiring the right people for the next stage. The Special Exemption still needs to be modified. Both people being considered became known through the Boys & Girls Club. The team is meeting almost weekly. We also need to go in front of the Southwest District Leadership Committee to keep them informed, including as the expansion relates to the Boys & Girls Club.

Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20pm with a prayer by Pastor Mike. The next Leadership Board meeting will be held on Monday, March 15, 2021, at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Hanson
Recording Secretary