

Gulf Breezes

Monthly Newsletter of Gulf Cove United Methodist Church

Helping Everyone

EXPERIENCE EMBRACE ENGAGE

Jesus & Community

From the Pastor:

Dear Church Family,

As the aroma of turkey and pumpkin pie fades from our homes (and possibly still lingers in some fridges), we pause to give heartfelt thanks for the overwhelming joy of our Community Thanksgiving Dinner! What a blessing it was to gather with neighbors, friends, and even a few strangers who quickly became family as we shared food, fellowship, and the love of Christ.

This year, we served hundreds of meals—each bite seasoned not only with spices but also with generosity and grace. Thank you to the countless hands that cooked, set up tables, delivered meals, greeted guests, washed dishes, and prayed over this event. Whether you stirred a pot, sliced a pie, whipped a tater, or simply showed up with a warm smile, you were an instrument of God's love. We couldn't have done it without you.

But as we pack away the cornucopias and pumpkin-themed napkins, we turn our hearts toward Advent, a season of preparation. Advent reminds us to keep “the main thing the main thing,” which, let's be honest, isn't perfectly timed Christmas lights or finding that trending toy for your kid. It's about the birth of Jesus—Immanuel, God with us—the greatest gift of all. Immanuel means that God chose to dwell among us, to enter into our messy world with all its shopping chaos, family squabbles, and burned cookies. As reflections of God's presence, we are called to shine His light—not like the flashing, slightly overwhelming inflatables in some yards, but as steady beacons of love, hope, and peace. Let's be real: the holiday season can bring out the best and worst in us. Whether it's the traffic on the way to the mall or that family member who brings up politics at dinner, it's easy to get caught up in frustration. But this year, let's choose differently. Let's reflect the love of the Christ Child.

- Instead of impatience, let's show grace.
- Instead of hostility, let's show kindness.
- Instead of arguing over whether eggnog is delicious or disgusting (it's okay, we're all entitled to be wrong sometimes), let's find common ground in the joy of Christmas.

As we move from gratitude to anticipation, may our hearts be filled with the wonder of God's love. Let's keep the focus on Jesus—born to bring light into darkness, peace into chaos, and hope into every heart.

So hang those stockings, light the Advent candles, and crank up the carols (even if they've been playing since Halloween). But above all, let's prepare room in our hearts for the One who came to dwell with us and through us.

Merry Christmas Season, Church Family! May your days be merry, your hearts be light, and your cookies unburned.

With gratitude and joy,

Pastor Mike

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

8am	Traditional Worship Service
9:30am	Contemporary Worship Service AND Kids Church (PK-5) #109
9:30am	Adult Sunday School #D
11am	Traditional Worship Service
4-6pm	Youth Group (gr 6-12) #D

WEDNESDAYS AT GULF COVE

Midweek Boost ~ meets with Pastor Mike at 12pm.

Pastor's Bible Study ~ meets at 4:30pm.

Jesus Rocks ~ Grades K-5 meet from 6-7:30pm.

Youth ~ Grades 6-12 meet from 6-7:30pm.

DECEMBER SERMON SERIES

The Lights of Christmas

December 1

**Jingle Bells at a Funeral
1 Thessalonians 5:12-28**

December 8

**Christmas is a God-Thing
Luke 1:26-38**

December 15

Christmas Cantata

December 22

**The Light of Christmas
Luke 2:1-7**

December 29

**ONE BLENDED SERVICE
10 AM**

**Thank you for Coming
Hebrews 1:1-4**





Hurricane Ian Update December 2024

Yes! It's been over 26 months, and 2 hurricane seasons that we've been working through the very lengthy reimbursement processes with our insurance company and FEMA. Discussions continue with both parties to finalize accurate reimbursement. FEMA's process splits the eligible buildings into two projects. The portables are one project, and the Sanctuary/Education/Kitchen building is the other. Since the Portables Project has been finalized by FEMA and insurance, they will be repaired prior to our Sanctuary building. Let's review where we are at present:

Repairs completed:

- All 7 buildings on our campus have been reroofed.
- All 3 portables have been upgraded with spray foam insulation under roofs
- Gutters/downspouts/fascia/soffits have been repaired/replaced on sanctuary/education building.
- New air handler/compressor installed in the Administrative area
- New video camera and accessories installed to provide better live-streaming of services
- New lighting will be installed in the sanctuary before the end of December.

Repairs underway:

- New A/C units for all 3 portables
- Mold remediation from 1st floor of the Oaks Cove building
- Considering newer waterproofing methods of replacing walls on 1st floor of Oaks Cove
- Getting General Contractor bids for finishing the work on all 3 portables. (continued)

Work yet to be done:

Finish all walls/ceilings/floors/doors/windows in the main sanctuary building

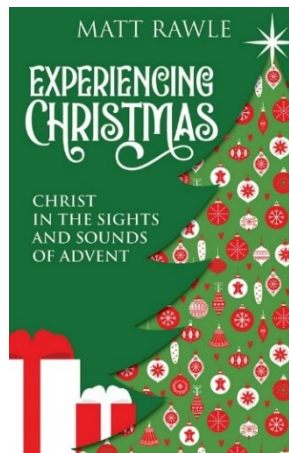
Thanks to your donations for hurricane repairs along with a grant and monies received, thus far from FEMA and our Insurance, we can complete "Repairs Underway" section above. The anticipated FEMA assistance and remaining insurance reimbursement will hopefully cover a good amount of work yet to be done.

"We know that God helps those people who love him. He uses everything that happens to them to bring something good. He does this for the people that he has chosen to serve him."
-Romans 8:28 EASY

May we continue in prayer to follow God's will for the people in our community through the words and works of Gulf Cove UMC.

In Christ's Service,

Joan Priest, Chair of Leadership Board



ADVENT STUDY

Experiencing Christmas: Christ in the Sights and Sounds of Advent by Matt Rawle. It began **Tuesday, November 26th and ends Tuesday, December 17th.** We will meet at **4:00 pm** in the sanctuary. During our four weeks together,

we will discover how everything changed when God was born.

Questions? Patty Frick 520.232.4939

PARENTS Night Out



Do you need some kid-free time to go Christmas shopping, or a date night or just down time? FREE of charge - with a party for children age 4 through grade 5. Reserve a spot, email Holly at GCUMCKids@gmail.com or call the number below. Deadline to register is 5:00pm on Thursday, Dec. 19.

Limited to the first 50

Activities for Kids:

- ✓ Light Pizza Dinner
- ✓ Christmas Games
- ✓ Crafts
- ✓ Short Movie

**Saturday
DEC 21, 2024
5:00PM - 8:00PM**

Gulf Cove
United Methodist Church
1100 S. McCall Road
Port Charlotte, FL 33981

CALL NOW

Made with PosterMy 941.979.9927

www.gulfcovechurch.com

Fellowship



Ladies Who Lunch will meet on

December 15 at 12:15pm at the church. Call Nancy Spaulding for details at 386.868.8600.

Ladies Who Lunch
Christmas Party
Sunday
December 15
12:15pm
Soup and Salad Potluck &
White Elephant Gift Exchange
\$10 limit
Be creative - Be fun!

RSVP to
Nancy Spaulding
386.868.8600



Dinner for Six Our Dinner for Six small groups are going strong. Our next round will begin in January, and signup is open. If you would like to participate, contact Kathy

Mortensen at 530.210.6149.

MahJongg With Friends ~ Meets Mondays at



church from 10am – 12:30pm, room 108. All are welcome. If you haven't played in a while or ever, come and learn. Contact Linda Edwards for more details. 253.350.7264.



Interested in starting a new group? Call the office and we will help you get started. Groups can be anything you like, from prayer groups, Bible Studies, games, coffee time – it's up to you.



The Closet of Hope at Gulf Cove United



Methodist Church offers free clothing for children and adults of all ages. The Closet is open the first and third Saturdays of the month (except holidays), from 10am until 1pm.

Donations can be brought to the Closet on Thursday mornings at 10am or when they are open on Saturdays.



Mothers Helping Mothers is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that provides basic necessities, baby items, and resources free of

charge to families in Charlotte, Sarasota, Manatee, and surrounding counties. GCUMC hours: 2nd & 4th Saturdays, 10am-1pm.



We are collecting money for Residing Hope Children's birthdays during the month of December. Be on the lookout for the donation box and more information.



Englewood Helping Hand needs the following: bar soap, toilet paper, shelf stable or powdered milk, condiments, instant mashed

potatoes, ramen noodles, rice, tuna, canned chicken, canned beans (kidney, black, refried, baked), canned pasta, canned chili, soups, peanut butter, cereal, or any shelf stable foods.

Donations can be placed in the EHH bin in the Narthex entry. Please be sure items have not expired.

CLASSIFIED ADS:

FREE FOR SOMEONE IN NEED: Hoyer lift with 2 slings, and air mattress for bedridden. Please call the office at 941.697.1747 if interested.



COMFORT CREATIONS meets at 9:30 on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. The next meeting is **December 11, 9:30am**, room #101.

Comfort Creations is a group of people who create knitted or crocheted blankets and shawls to give away to people who need to feel God's comfort. If this sounds like something you would like to do, please contact Sandy Doty. 941.875.4199.



CRAFTY LADIES

The ladies have been meeting on Thursday mornings in room 101, to work on projects. They will be selling their wares in the

chapel on Thursdays from 10am – 12pm.

Contact: Kathy Grawcock. 260.226.0240.

HELP WANTED!



We are always in need of Greeters and Ushers. We ask that you sign up for a month at a

time, but if you can only do 2 or 3 Sundays, we still want you. Just make a note of when you will be gone during that month. All help is welcome!



It's that time of year again! Bell Ringing season has begun. Shifts are 2 hours long, and begin at 9am, continuing until 7pm, when the last shift ends. Sandy Doty will be at the rear of the sanctuary on Sunday mornings to help you choose your shifts, or you may call or text her at 941.875.4199.



CAROL SING ~ Join us as we head to Vizcaya Lakes to sing carols on **Sunday, December 8, at 12:30pm.** Because parking at Vizcaya is limited, we'll meet at the church and carpool from there.

All are welcome, including our Jesus Rocks Kids & our Youth and their families!

CHRISTMAS CANTATA - SING NOEL! ~ The cantata will be performed on **Sunday, December 15, at 8am & 11am.**

CHRISTMAS WORD AND WORSHIP ~ **Sunday, December 15, at 9:30am.** Songs of the season with scripture from prophecy and the birth of the Savior.



**5:00pm – Family Contemporary
Candlelight / Glowstick Service**

**7:00pm – Traditional Candlelight /
Glowstick Service**

**11:30pm – Communion Candlelight /
Glowstick Service**





Friday, December 20, 6pm

For when the Season isn't always Jolly



Youth Fundraiser Flamingo Flocking

The Youth and Jackie Guerin, our Youth Director, are bringing back this youth fundraiser. The “rules” are as follows:

- ▶ Flamingo Flocking will occur twice a month, and continue through at least June 2025.
- ▶ Flocks will be placed on Sunday evening and picked up on Wednesday evening. The flamingos will be in the flockee’s yard for 3 days.
- ▶ To have someone flocked, the donation is \$45.
- ▶ There is no fee for flocking-pick-up. However, for an other-than-Wednesday-evening removal, the donation is \$15, to be paid, of course, by the flockee.
- ▶ Specialty Flocking: The flockor selects the non-Sunday flocking date and how long the flock remains standing at the flockee’s home, along with any sign they would like the youth to create. The donation for a specialty flocking is \$100.
- ▶ Anti-flocking insurance may be obtained by anyone who does not want their yard flocked for a \$45 donation. The insurance will be good through June 2025.

Contact Jackie Guerin, our Youth Director, to flock someone you love! Call or Text: 941.661.6821

Email: youthgcumc@gmail.com

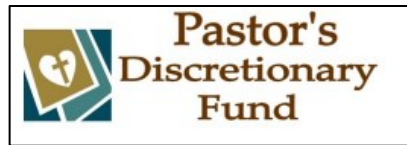


Stewardship

is heart work



DECEMBER COMMUNION OFFERING



Is dedicated for our Pastor’s Discretionary Fund. If you

wish to give above and beyond your normal gift or tithe and donate to this fund, look for the specially marked envelopes in your 1st Sunday bulletins.

SECOND SUNDAY ~ SECOND MILE



GIVING is another opportunity to go above and beyond

your normal giving to support the church. This collection always goes to our reserve fund, so that we may pay our bills when gifts and tithes will not cover our regular monthly expenses.

John Furtado started his report by reminding us that our monthly, budgetary requirement is \$42,920. He reported that the indicated amounts as of the end of October were as follows.

	OCTOBER	YTD
Total Spendable Income Received	26,649	362,165
Operating Expenses	41,790	414,581
Surplus/Deficit	(15,141)	(52,416)
Reserve Money Used	15,000	15,000
Designated Funds Received	3,944	81,323



Nancy Spaulding	12/01
Jean Pepper	12/02
Mary Robinson	12/02
Lola Timberman	12/03
Erin Gray	12/03
Barbara Comeyne	12/03
Doreen Alvarez	12/04
Bonnie Mackenzie	12/04
Bonnie Rich	12/07
Bonnie Plummer	12/07
Shirley Smith	12/09
Vernette Crosby	12/11
Bev Smith	12/11
Brian Beckwith	12/15
Mark Freer	12/15
Joshua Stenseth	12/15
Anna Welch	12/18
Jim Wilkin	12/20
Roger Behrens	12/21
Sue Betz	12/21
David Pepper	12/22
Deb Howell	12/24
Scott Furto	12/27
Rosemary Litsky	12/27
Bob Steneck	12/27
Mike Charbonneau	12/27
Judy Boyer	12/27
Hazel Charbonneau	12/30
Renee Baumgartner	12/31
Jackie Guerin	12/31
Myleigh Weaver	12/31



John & Lu Ann Zink	12/02
Jack & Becky Stephenson	12/05
Wally & Julie Whitford	12/06
Bob & Cathy Rohrbaugh	12/06
Jim & Joanie Marshall	12/08
Stacey & Liana Corn	12/19
Brian Beckwith & Susan Haring	12/29