



Main entry, southeast view



Lakefront view, north

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – FAQ

## FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF VENICE – LAKEFRONT PROPERTY – JAN 2018

### **Q** What is the “Our Heritage. Our Future.” campaign all about?

**A** On December 12, 2010, the First Baptist Church of Venice family was presented with a three-phase strategic vision that was aptly themed, “Our Heritage. Our Future.”

This vision included:

1. The purchase of new property
2. Renovation of existing facilities (Miami Avenue Campus)
3. Development of purchased property

On March 13, 2011, the membership approved the strategic vision and plan, and also approved raising \$3M for the purchase of a 21.4 acre parcel of property located near Jacaranda Boulevard and I-75 with the balance of the funds to be used to renovate the current Miami Avenue Campus, as well as to provide for the preliminary site development of the new property.

### **Phase 1**

In 2011, funds of \$1,200,000 were successfully raised for the acquisition of the Lakefront Property and other acquisition expenses as recorded on January 13, 2012. This completed Phase One of the strategic plan.

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## Phase 2

During 2012-2017, Phase Two was implemented. Members contributed and donated \$850,000 for capital projects approved for the Miami Avenue Campus. In addition, \$250,000 was committed from Budget and Operating Reserve Funds by the membership at the Oct. 15, 2017 Quarterly Business Meeting for additional needed improvements for a total of \$1,100,000 in capital improvements.

### *These projects included:*

1. Renovation of the Fellowship Hall including kitchen facilities, restroom facilities, and media equipment
2. Development of a new front main entrance providing safer traffic flow, drop-off and fellowship area
3. New landscaping
4. Installation of 21 new windows (donated)
5. Painting and enhanced creative design of children's area
6. Audio visual equipment project (commitment)
7. Parking lot paving project (commitment)
8. Building B roofing project (commitment)

In addition to the financial contributions of many members, hundreds of staff and member volunteer hours were generously invested to complete these upgrades.

## Initial Phase 3

Initial Phase Three work at the Lakefront Property began in 2011. Since the original property acquisition, more than \$670,000 has been contributed to the Initial Phase Three work of the strategic plan. Approximately \$470,000 of those contributed funds have been expended, with \$200,000 remaining available for use. Of these remaining funds, approximately \$90,000 has been committed for building architectural fees, capital campaign expenditures, and additional property work. In addition to the \$470,000 expended

from contributions for the Initial Phase Three work, \$75,000 was expended from annual budgets in 2015 and 2016, for a total of \$545,000.

### *Work accomplished in this Initial Phase Three included:*

1. Initial and revised site plans for usage of the 21.4 acres were developed, submitted and approved by Sarasota County to include an athletic field complex, plus two buildings for classrooms and a church sanctuary.
2. A Gazebo was added and constructed in 2016
3. Wells were drilled for irrigation
4. Picnic tables were constructed and placed on the property
5. Fill dirt was acquired to raise the land for use and construction
6. Irrigation was installed
7. Seed was planted
8. Parking areas were developed
9. Electricity was added to the property
10. Maintenance facility was built

Much of the work was accomplished through the combined efforts of many dedicated volunteers, including the contribution of required equipment necessary to complete these tasks.

Over this period of time, the Lakefront Property has been used for tent services, children's events, as a gathering place for First Baptist Church of Venice, and a wedding. Truly, the property is a beautiful sight to behold.

## Phase 3 Final Stage

"Our Heritage. Our Future," has been the driving theme for great progress in keeping with our original vision. And now, we are prepared to move full swing into the Phase 3 Final Stage of our original strategic plan. As such, we have established a tagline to accompany our motto that captures and represents

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this exciting new phase of our vision: "The Lakefront Legacy Begins."

### **Q How has this Phase Three Final Stage been initiated and what is the current status?**

**A** In September, 2016, a "Consultant Advisory and Capital Fund Raising Team" was organized, with its mission to lead the church in a capital fund raising endeavor. The initial focus was to plan for the Lakefront Property development, and to determine whether or not to use an outside consultant or company in this effort.

The initial team included pastors Tom Hodge and Tom Dixon and members of the congregation. The group researched possible consultants, narrowed the list to two candidates, and then conducted interviews. Team member Bob Knight was also able to access strategic marketing materials and a project plan used for a successful campaign elsewhere.

Following a thorough analysis of the investment requirements for hiring an external consultant and giving consideration to having direct access to proven content from a highly successful campaign used elsewhere, the team recommended to manage the Lakefront Property Phase Three capital campaign internally, and to tap external resources only where needed. This decision saved the church approximately \$60,000 in the consultant's fee (standard fee of 5% of the church's annual budget).

In order to move the plan forward using internal resources, a steering team was formed and a project plan was drafted. The team agreed that a capital campaign launch would be initiated in early 2018. Seven distinctive operating teams with specific areas of focus were organized.

Bob Knight was elected team captain for the steering team. Members of First Baptist were appointed to serve as team captains, with responsibility to recruit

members to serve with them (captains and member list available upon request). The first meeting of the steering team captains was held in April 2017. Meetings are held monthly to report ongoing progress in all areas of development (meeting minutes are available for review upon request).

## **THE LAKEFRONT PROPERTY**

### **Q What led to the original purchase of the Lakefront Property?**

**A** In 1992, when Pastor Tom Hodge and his wife Tassie were viewing Venice with the Pastor Selection Team, God spoke into the hearts of Pastor Tom and Tassie, independently, that He would plant a church in the location of Venice Avenue, Jacaranda and I-75.

Eight years later following his appointment, Pastor Tom met with the owner of the aforementioned land, and asked if he might be willing to sell some of his property for a church. He refused.

The economic crisis of 2008 – 2009 caused the landowner to lose his entire property to foreclosure. The mortgage bank was contacted by a team from First Baptist with a low offer and proposal that would allow First Baptist Church of Venice a one-year period to raise the required funds.

As a direct answer to prayer, the financial institution agreed to the terms. In less than the stipulated year, the church raised more than \$1,200,000 for purchase and related costs. God blessed First Baptist Church and delivered 21.4 pristine acres in January 2012.

### **Q What is the vision of the Lakefront Property?**

**A** The vision for our Lakefront Property is to provide ministry in the eastern part of the city of Venice, southern Sarasota County, and northern Charlotte County.

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These areas are experiencing rapid growth with more development planned in the near future.

The southern region of the county and eastern part of the city (north of our property) are undergoing rapid development with projected construction of some 5,000 new residences within five miles of our property. There are also plans for building several hundred affordable housing units in the area north of I-75. In addition, approximately 40,000 new residences in south Sarasota County and northern Charlotte County are being constructed or planned. These developments are accessible to our property within 15-20 minutes via I-75.

First Baptist believes this is a prime opportunity to expand our church into this fast-growth region that will embrace new residents of this area.

The vision for ministry includes a new multi-purpose worship center. Additionally, we foresee this property offering and facilitating small group studies, plus providing a dynamic new hub for indoor and outdoor recreational activities including athletic fields that will attract families and youth.

### **Q Why should First Baptist develop a church in this area?**

**A** Obviously, there are other churches that could consider developing a presence in this area. First Baptist, however, has both the vision and the staff willing to devote the necessary time and effort for this enterprise. We desire to establish a Bible-believing church to minister in Northeast Venice.

### **Q What impact do you believe this new lakefront church will have on the Miami Avenue church?**

**A** First Baptist Church of Venice is an exceptionally strong congregation with a solid support base of both year 'round and seasonal residents. The traditional congregation is fully expected to remain

healthy and vibrant, and with continued development in and around the island and neighboring communities and with the constant influx of Baby Boomers, it should continue to grow and flourish.

### **Q Will the Lakefront Property eventually replace the Miami Avenue church?**

**A** No. There are many successful churches throughout the country and in our region operating multi-campus ministries.

### **Q What are the future plans for the Miami Avenue church?**

**A** We fully intend to continue operating and worshipping here as we have for the past 80 years. Our plans call for our faithful congregation to continue enjoying and worshipping at this facility well into the foreseeable future.

Our growth constraint impacting Miami Avenue includes the limitations associated with seating for 550 per service, on-site parking accommodations for 120 and space for outdoor activities. With more activity and attendance at the downtown church, we could possibly open a third Sunday service during "season."

### **Q How will ongoing support of the downtown campus be ensured?**

**A** First Baptist Church of Venice will continue its commitment to maintain and invest in the downtown Miami Avenue campus and worship center facilities, as it has done since its founding in 1937.

### **Q How will the two campus sites operate?**

**A** We are one church with two campus locations. Our current staff will provide leadership to all of the ministries that take place in both locations. As First Baptist grows, staff additions will be brought forward.

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NOTE: A Pro Forma Financial Statement is available for review that projects future growth at the Lakefront Property, and associated staffing and program needs.

As a point of reference, there are several churches in our region that have multiple locations. Some of these are Next Level Church and Summit in Ft. Myers, The Crossing Church in Brandon, Real Life Christian Church in Orlando, Bayside Community Church in Bradenton and Family Church in West Palm Beach, among others.

### **Q What church governance is planned for the next 10 years, and how does that look under a two-campus church?**

**A** First and foremost, with the development of the Lakefront Property, FBC-V will remain one church / one ministry under single governance and administration.

At the start-up, current staff (and where and when needed, additional staff) will provide leadership to all of the ministries that take place in both locations. As the attendance of the Lakefront Property worship center grows, additional staffing will be added.

### **Q Will the services and musical styles differ between the two locations?**

**A** The gospel message and biblical foundation will remain the same at both locations.

The Miami Avenue church offers an option for both traditional and/or more contemporary music facilitated by two separate service times.

The new Lakefront Property is likely to feature a more contemporary Christian musical format, but that will be better defined and determined as the actual membership develops there.

### **Q How do you plan to develop and grow a congregation at the lakefront location?**

**A** Evangelism is certainly top on the list, but we will also develop a highly targeted, integrated marketing, advertising and public relations plan to introduce, invite and welcome residents to become part of this exciting new church family. Sports and outdoor activities will also serve as a beacon.

### **Q From what areas do you expect to attract new members to the Lakefront Property?**

**A** We expect to draw from the greater South Sarasota County population. There are plans in place and current construction underway for significant residential development within a five mile radius. No doubt, such an influx of new residents within minutes of our new lakefront location bodes well for growth and may ultimately impact the resulting demographic profile of our future members.

### **Q Has a master plan for the entire campus been developed ... and is it available to review?**

**A** The vision was identified in 2011-2012 in the specific development of a site plan, a capital campaign for the Lakefront Property and investment in the Miami Avenue Worship Center.

Since then, FBC-V is implementing the next phase of developing the Lakefront Property which includes fundraising in order to build a worship center.

### **Q What is included in the overall property development ... and what are the projected construction costs and fundraising goals?**

**A** The original site plan submission for proposed property development includes an approximate 33,000 sq ft sanctuary building and a 19,000 sq ft multi-purpose building; an athletic field complex; and all the required infrastructure to accommodate this plan.

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The Building Design Team, formed in September 2016 as part of the Phase Three Final Stage planning process, is now looking at a multi-purpose worship center serving both as a sanctuary and an indoor activities center to include sporting activities to support the Lakefront Property ministry. The outdoor athletic fields complex will complement this building.

Based on our research and comparatives, the capital investment required for this build-out is projected at an estimated \$7 million, including infrastructure costs.

First Baptist Church of Venice is committed to not borrow in order to build. We will only build at the pace that funds are raised and available. As with any building project, the longer it takes us to raise the funds, the higher the costs due to inflation.

### **Q What research has been done to evidence this congregation has the capacity/margin for a \$7M project?**

**A** First, we invite and encourage you to take a few moments to reflect upon our recent history, and then to consider your giving according to the will of God as seen through the eyes of faith.

In 2011 the congregation launched the “Our Heritage Our Future” capital campaign at a period of time when our country and the entire world were in the midst of “The Great Recession.” Many would agree this period of time represented the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

Despite these challenging economic conditions, our pastoral leadership and congregation recognized that God had provided FBC-V with not only a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to purchase the Lakefront Property, but He provided our congregation with the necessary funds to achieve His goal in a debt free position. His hand led us as we worked together to raise the required funds.

As always, our congregation placed its faith and trust in the Lord, by being obedient to Him and His will. He

touched the hearts and minds of the members of our congregation and we have been blessed immensely for our obedience in following His will regarding the inspired vision for the Lakefront Property.

We not only believe -- but we know -- that the Lord manifested His will through the miraculous acquisition of the Lakefront Property.

As He has always done, He will once again provide the way and means for our congregation to build a worship center on the Lakefront Property. This is His plan and we have full confidence that He will provide the way to accomplish this end.

Secondly, we have analyzed FBC-V's giving over a recent 12-month period and obtained additional information as a result of our outside consultant search.

Third, our capital campaign over 2011-2017 provided valuable experience as to the fund-raising capability of our congregation.

Fourth, multiple church capital campaigns were researched and studied, including a comprehensive review of best practices.

The clear will of God to build a worship center on the Lakefront Property, together with the accumulated information, data and knowledge generated, provide comfort and confidence that a capital campaign to fully fund a place a worship center on the Lakefront Property will be successful.

### **Q What is the timeline for the new Lakefront Property design approvals, construction and eventual operation?**

**A** A preliminary layout and elevation renderings by the architect for the initial multipurpose worship center was presented in late 2017, with a second draft updated in January, 2018. If the required funding is raised as anticipated, we would project the actual building construction to begin in late 2018 or

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early 2019. Also, required associated site work must be completed, including access entries, roadways, drives, parking, walkways, lighting, utilities (water, sewer, cable/phone, electrical), storm water management system, water retention areas, irrigation, landscaping and signage.

### **Q How will the multipurpose worship center be used?**

**A** It will accommodate up to 1,250 moveable seats for worship services, plus accommodate small group meetings and connection classes. When chairs are stored, the space converts into a gymnasium for indoor activities.

The building space use plan and construction cost estimates also provides for nursery and kitchen facilities, including required furniture and fixtures.

### **Q What period of time will the capital campaign cover for member pledges and donations?**

**A** To answer this question, we must first consider our own history and recognize that every campaign before us required serious prayer, vision and sacrifice on the part of church members. We wouldn't enjoy the beautiful facilities we have today without the shared vision and sacrificial giving of those who came before us and prayerfully made it possible.

Our plan is to launch our campaign the first quarter of 2018 and to prayerfully work together to raise the necessary funds as efficiently and as quickly as possible, according to the ability of our members to sacrifice and contribute. We are praying to raise enough funds in the first year to launch initial phase building so we can minimize added costs of inflation, while providing early access to the multi-purpose worship center.

The capital campaign will last three (3) years. The campaign will be launched on "Commitment

Sunday" March 4, 2018 at the Lakefront Property.

As has been our position since the initial launch of the original campaign, FBC-V is committed to remain debt free.

### **Q Define the governance that will provide the funding as we go forward. Will there be votes and at what stages?**

**A** First Baptist Church is congregationally governed. In keeping with our organizational status, as funds are raised and detailed construction proposals are developed, approvals for expenditures will be taken to the congregation.

### **Q What is my part in this Capital Campaign?**

**A** First: and may we stress FIRST and FOREMOST, is PRAYER. A work of this magnitude only succeeds with prayer.

Second: We ask you and your family to give serious consideration to the powerful impact of this mission ministry on future generations to come. We ask all to consider those faithful people who came before us and sacrificed so that we might enjoy our current place of worship today. Many of our early members were blessed to see their efforts play out, but many did not.

Our senior pastor had a vision for this expansion, and through tireless effort and faithful obedience, he recognizes that God has brought us here. Our pastor has a true heart for the current and future residents of the greater Venice community, with a strong desire to create a place of worship where people can hear a compelling message of the love that Jesus Christ has for them.

Third: Please consider a personal reflection about your family's part in this Capital Campaign. This is truly all about "faithfulness" (Hebrews 11).

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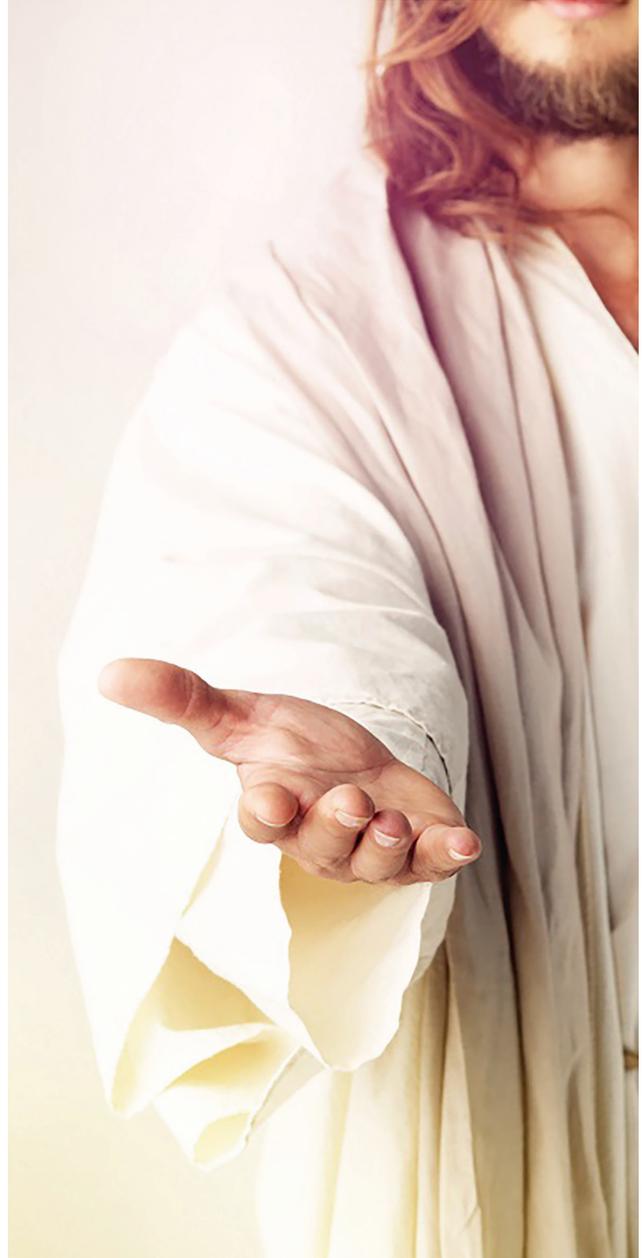
We pray that each person touched by or exposed to this work would consider their part. EQUAL SACRIFICE – NOT EQUAL GIFTS. Ask yourself: What part can I play? What am I willing to give up to see this vision become reality?

Fourth: Share with your neighbors, friends and family and invite them to become involved in this Missional Ministry.

## One day, a few years from now...

*many of us will stand on this beautiful Lakefront Property with overwhelming joy in our hearts, giving thanks to our God for what He has brought about in our community. Hopefully, you will be part of the dedicated ministry of sacrificial givers who will make this vision a reality.*

*May our Lord bless you abundantly as you, in turn, bless the lives of future generations to come. Thank you for your prayerful consideration.*



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