



Our Heritage. Our Future.



Ephesians 3:20-21

*The Lakefront Legacy Begins!*

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH • VENICE, FLORIDA

"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen."  
—EPHESIANS 3:20-21

# "We Have Obtained an Inheritance in Christ"

EPHESIANS 1:11

**F**irst Baptist Church of Venice was founded November 18, 1934. Our earliest church members established a rich heritage of faith as they set out to glorify God and bring souls to Him through ministry. This young congregation gave their all to grow the Lord's kingdom in the beautiful vineyard of Venice, FL.

Today, we enjoy bountiful blessings brought through their vision and sacrifice.

And now, it's our turn to become an integral part of this heritage. Just as the early Saints laid the cornerstone of what has evolved into the bustling downtown campus at First Baptist Church of Venice, you too can become part of this inspired legacy as we plant and grow The Lakefront Property.

*Join us in this exciting journey!*



## HERITAGE (her-i-tij):

1. NOUN: something that is handed down from the past, as a tradition: a heritage of honor, pride, and courage.
2. ADJ: noting or relating to a product, place, etc., that evokes a nostalgic sense of tradition or history



# The Future Is Now!



**W**E ARE LIVING in very exciting times here in Venice, FL. Our community is enjoying unprecedented growth, and with that growth springs abundant evangelical opportunities to reach people for Jesus Christ.

**From our founding, evangelism has always been at the very heart of our ministry and continues to inspire, motivate and direct our paths.**

Today, we are blessed indeed to be embraced in a wonderful legacy that has always been grounded in a rock-solid heritage of faith. Our charter members organized the very first church in Venice back in 1934. Through the tireless work, effort and sacrificial contributions of this small group of faithful saints, our first church was dedicated and situated in a humble storefront, providing a safe haven where members could gather together and worship God.

In their second year of operation, the fledgling young church held a revival service that featured a very special guest. Here - the upcoming evangelist Billy Graham, then a

student at the Florida Bible Institute - came and powerfully preached his very first church sermon to a crowd of more than 100. History reveals that 32 souls were saved that day and received Jesus Christ into their hearts! What a spiritual heritage we claim!

Over the years, church membership has continued to grow, as have our blessings as a congregation. Under the direction of the Holy Spirit and with the full support of our membership, First Baptist Church of Venice has expanded its church facilities and footprint to accommodate the evolving needs of our members and our community at large.

In keeping with that ever present evangelical focus, a leadership team from First Baptist Church of Venice presented a three-phase strategic vision to the membership on December 12, 2010, which was aptly themed, "Our Heritage. Our Future." That vision as presented included the purchase and development of our new Lakefront Property along with the renovation of existing facilities on Miami Avenue. The membership approved the strategic vision and plan on March 13, 2011, including the goal to raise \$3M for the 21.4 acre lakefront parcel of property near Jacaranda Boulevard and I-75, with the balance of funds to be used to renovate the Miami Avenue campus, as well as to provide for the preliminary site development of the new property.

This lakefront property is very near and dear to my heart. When Tassie and I first toured the area in 1992 as a prospective new pastor, we both felt the whispering of the Holy Spirit that this specific land would some day become part of First Baptist.



**There is no doubt that the Lord had a plan for this place ... and through a series of inspired circumstances orchestrated by the Lord, it was delivered to us. The lakefront is now part of our heritage and our future, and its legacy has begun!**

I invite YOU and your family to become part of the lakefront legacy.



Like those earliest church members who had a vision and gave much so that we could enjoy the great blessings of their sacrifices, we too have the opportunity to build upon our heritage and contribute to a great evangelical effort that I firmly believe God has ordained.

While we will continue to meet at and maximize our beloved Miami Avenue campus and facilities, The Lakefront provides a refreshing new retreat for spiritual nourishment and recreation for our members and community alike.

I encourage you to visit The Lakefront property and to catch the vision for what lies ahead. As you breathe in its natural beauty, join me in just imagining how God will use this place for His glory!

Thank YOU for being part of the First Baptist Church Venice family. And, thank you for being part of our heritage ... and prayerfully, our future!

In His Grasp,

*Pastor Tom*

Tom Hodge  
Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church of Venice

# Life at the Lakefront Begins...

Discover 21.4 glorious acres of beautiful, natural unspoiled land. Here we will build a 1250-seat multi-purpose sanctuary for worship and small group connection classes. All along the property are winding trails that hug the lakefront, perfect for relaxing walks or jogs, quiet prayer and spiritual contemplation.



...Progress on property development began in 2012 and continues today.





# The Lakefront is a Special Place for Worship & Recreation

Youth and adults alike will enjoy participating in team play on dedicated ball fields (far left) that will be humming with activity. All along the property are opportunities for fun and fellowship including special events, worship services, music, fishing, food and more!



# You Are Invited to Become Part of the Lakefront Legacy and Evangelical Mission!

DEAREST BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

*W*e Need YOU!

In order to achieve the Lord's vision, we need each and every member of First Baptist Church to become actively engaged in this great evangelical mission.

**1** And may we stress FIRST and FOREMOST, is PRAYER. A work of this magnitude only succeeds with prayer. Please pray for the Lord's will to be manifest as we work together to bring about His vision. Please pray for how the Lord can use YOU to be part of this important endeavor.

**2** We ask members 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.

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Our pastor and our ministry team 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.

**3** Please consider a personal reflection about your part in this important lakefront Capital Campaign. This is truly all about "faithfulness" (Hebrews 11).

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?*

Any member of our pastoral team is happy to assist you or to answer any questions about how you can join our campaign through gifts and/or ongoing pledges.

**4** 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!*





# First Baptist

VENICE



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