

Building Hope: Step by Step

The Mission and Vision of Hope Lutheran Church is to carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith. Hope Lutheran has always been focused on expanding our opportunities in the local Villages community and surrounding areas to "To Know Christ and to Make Christ Known".

In recent years the expansive growth of the southern portion of The Villages has placed Hope Lutheran in a position to embrace this growth and spread the Word of God and the message of Jesus Christ. We, as members of Hope Lutheran, are messengers of our Mission and Vision to others in sharing our faith.

Because of this great potential, in 2016 Hope Lutheran began discussions with The Villages about purchasing a parcel of vacant land in the southern portion of The Villages to enable Hope Lutheran to expand its ministry with the vision of building a permanent church campus. These discussions were comprehensive and involved many possible alternatives. In 2014 Hope Lutheran purchased a 28-acre parcel of land located south of CR44 and north of the Florida Turnpike in the Wildwood, Florida area from Youth Challenge of America and was the landlord to City of Hope International, Inc, a not-for-profit corporation, known as House of Hope. The Villages decided that it wanted to obtain this property and offered to transfer a prime 8.25-acre parcel of land in its southern expansion area to Hope Lutheran in exchange for the 28-acre parcel owned by Hope Lutheran.

After extensive negotiations, Hope Lutheran and The Villages executed an Exchange Agreement in January 2019 through which the House of Hope property would be transferred to The Villages and an 8.25 parcel of vacant land in the new southern area of the Villages would be transferred to Hope Lutheran. The value of each of the exchanged properties was two million dollars.

The transaction was finalized on July 31, 2019, at which time Hope Lutheran became the legal owner of the 8.25-acre parcel, the South Campus property. At the time of this closing, a Post Closing Agreement was executed between the parties in which The Villages agreed to complete certain improvements for the benefit of Hope Lutheran, including the constructing of Meggison Road, extending the golf cart path to the property line, and connecting utilities to the property.

In March 2021 all the obligations of The Villages to Hope Lutheran under the Post Closing Agreement were completed, giving Hope Lutheran full access to the 8.25-acre South Campus site.

As part of the Exchange Agreement, Hope Lutheran was given the right to use Villages Recreation Centers for conducting worship services. Hope Lutheran first started holding worship services at Rohan Recreation Center; subsequently, The Villages permitted Hope Lutheran to conduct worship services at the Everglades Recreation Center when it opened. Hope Lutheran will continue to hold services there until its new church building is constructed. The Everglades Recreation Center is near Hope's South Campus site.

In June 2020 the Church Council approved the formation of the Building Committee to execute the Mission and Vision of Hope Lutheran for the South Campus as directed by the Church Council. It also

approved \$25,000 for the initial expenses anticipated to be incurred by the Building Committee for the South Campus (marketing materials, equipment, maintenance, signage, gates and architectural fees for preliminary designs).

The Building Committee interviewed several architectural firms for this purpose and received proposals from these firms in November 2020. Dickerson Architects from Leesburg, Florida was selected as the firm for this preliminary design phase based on its past experience in designing church facilities similar in scope with Hope Lutheran's projected plans. Judd Dickerson and his firm has established relationships with local contractors and engineers and a favorable performance record in working with The Villages and with The Villages Architectural Review Board.

In January 2021 the Church Council approved a Preliminary Site Plan Proposal submitted by Judd Dickerson of Dickerson Architects. In May 2021 Dickerson Architects developed preliminary design renderings (illustration or conceptual visualization of the architectural design) based on the project scope of work provided by the Building Committee. These two design schemes were the same in approximate size and cost. The total project was approximately 37,000 sf, a sanctuary seating capacity of 600, a building construction cost of \$7.5-8 million, and a total building cost of approximately \$12 million. Additional costs included in the \$12 million figure would typically include site development costs, parking, landscaping, audio-visual systems, furniture/fixtures, and soft costs such as architectural/engineering fees, permit fees, legal fees, and other administrative fees.

Subsequently, the Church Council reviewed these preliminary design renderings received from Dickerson Architects and determined that the proposed design schemes were not realistic from a size and cost perspective. The Building Committee was asked to develop some additional guidelines for a project smaller in size and scope than the initial project scope.

In July 2021 the Church Council, after interviewing several firms, approved the proposal from GSB Fund Raising Group to conduct a Feasibility Study for the South Campus Building Project. Mike Ward, a Lutheran pastor of GBS had worked with and is still working with Hope Lutheran relative to the Stewardship campaign fundraising activities and therefore Hope Lutheran was familiar with his firm's services and quality of work. The purpose of a Feasibility Study is to evaluate the potential financial support for the project. Some initial Feasibility Study work was begun in September, and it is anticipated that the major portion of the Feasibility Study will be conducted in Spring 2022.

Anticipating increased project activity, complexity, and involvement, in August 2021 the Church Council approved a new committee structure to supervise the South Campus Building Project. A Hope Strategic Planning Committee was formed, consisting of an Executive Team that reports to the Church Council, five primary committees consisting of the Publicity Committee, the Finance Committee, the Growth/Program Committee, the Fundraising Committee, and the Design/Construction Committee. The Chair of each of these 5 committees comprises the Steering Committee and this Steering Committee reports to the Executive Team. All the committees in this new structure are now actively operating.

In September 2021 Dale Fiet, Chair of the Design/Construction Committee presented a revised conceptual preliminary plan for the South Campus Building Project, which involves 2 initial building phases. The first phase (Phase 1 Building Project) consists of the construction of a small building of approximately 1500 sf called the Activity Center. This Activity Center would be a permanent multi-phase building establishing a visible presence for Hope Lutheran on the narrow northern end of the South Campus. This Activity Center would be a place to conduct some church activities that cannot be conducted at the Everglades Recreation Center. The Church Council approved up to \$30,000 for design fees and other related expenses for the schematic design of the Activity Center. The second phase (Phase 2 Major Church Building Project) is a reduction in size and cost of the original scope of the preliminary renderings completed by Dickerson Architects in May 2021. This proposal consists of a church building of approximately 25,000 sf, a sanctuary seating capacity of 400-450, a projected building cost of \$5 million, and a total project cost of \$8 million. The tentative "estimated timeline" for each project is the completion of the Activity Center by the end of 2022 and the completion of the Major Church Building Project by the end of 2024. The Church Council agreed that the Phase 1 and Phase 2 Building Projects should be discussed and investigated in further detail.

In October 2021 the Church Council authorized Dickerson Architects to prepare preliminary design plans for the 1500 sf Activity Center with a building cost not to exceed \$300,000., infrastructure and other related costs not to exceed \$100,000, for a total project cost not to exceed \$400,000. A proposal from Dickerson Architects for these services was signed in November 2022. In addition, the Church Council authorized the Design/Building Committee to obtain a proposal from Dickerson Architects for conceptual preliminary drawings for the Phase 2 Major Church Building Project.

To provide Dickerson Architects input as to the design, structure, operations, and functions of the Phase 2 Major Church Building, the Church Council approved the formation of subcommittees to obtain subject matter content about this building project. The following initial subcommittees have been formed to facilitate this effort: Worship/Music; Administrative/Education; Fellowship/Recreation; and Outside/Maintenance. These subcommittees report to the Executive Team. These 4 subcommittees completed their initial task of providing information and recommendations to the Executive Team in January 2022. Based upon this information/ recommendations, the Executive Committee submitted its recommendations on behalf of the Strategic Planning Committee to the Church Council in January, 2022.

In December 2021 the Church Council reviewed an updated informational booklet about the Activity Center (Phase 1 Building Project) as revised by Dale Fiet. This information will be used to inform and educate the members of Hope Lutheran about the details of this proposed Activity Center and the possible uses of the Activity Center for meetings, entertainment, music, education classes, food activities, and miscellaneous other purposes.

In January 2022 the Church Council approved the recommendation of the Strategic Planning Committee for the Phase 2 Church Building Project as described in the Hope Lutheran Church South Building Program revised by Dale Fiet on January 24, 2022. The Church Council also authorized Dickerson Architects to prepare preliminary design plans based on these recommendations.

On March 20, 2022 the Church Council conducted a Town Hall Meeting at the Hope Central Campus where the preliminary plans for the Building Hope Building Project were presented to the members of the congregation.

From April 3-11, 2022 GSB Fundraising Consultants Mike Ward and Paul Marsh conducted the Feasibility Study for the Hope South Campus building project. Over 118 households participated and provided a solid foundation for proceeding forward with the project.

In May, 2022 the Church Council received the completed Feasibility Study dated May 2, 2022 from GSB Fundraising Consultants. In June, 2022 a summary of the recommendations from the Feasibility Study was sent to the members of the congregation and thereafter the Feasibility Study was posted on Hope's Webpage under the Hope South Campus Building Project.

A land dedication ceremony for the Building Hope Building Project was performed at the Hope South Campus on May 15, 2022 with approximately 150 congregation members in attendance.

In May, 2022 the Church Council approved moving forward with (a) the revised plan for the Activity Center which included increasing the seating capacity in the meeting room to 50 and (b) the basic preliminary plans and site plans as previously presented to the congregation at the Town Hall Meeting.

At the end of May, 2022, GBS Fundraising, the firm which conducted the Feasibility Study, was hired to run the Capital Campaign. The Soft Phase of the Campaign will start in the Fall, 2022 and the public phase will occur January-March, 2023.

In June, 2022 the Church Council approved the concept of moving the Worship Center building back 75-80 feet to provide additional parking spaces in front of the Worship Center. Judd Dickerson will revise the plans to add these parking spaces. Also the Church Council approved the AIA contract with Dickerson Architects for architectural services for the Activity Center (\$35,000) and authorized Judd Dickerson to enter into contracts with CFB for civil engineering services (\$20,125) and Pape Landscaping (\$13,800).