

# LAKEVIEW STRATEGIC PLAN

Updated January 13-14, 2006

Revised 9/2006

**Mission or Purpose** (the purpose is the reason for the organization's existence, it is a calling or driving force):

**Transforming lives by the experience of God's love in a unique environment**

Visions flowing from core values:

- Fulfill the mission of the church...make disciples of Jesus Christ
- Retain the best of traditions, yet be cutting edge
- Offer great facilities and have adequate funding
- Make sure Lakeview is not a burden to the Church or those who follow in our footsteps
- Make Lakeview a center for strategic planning for churches
- Make Lakeview a center for youth and a place for "wholesome first experiences"
- Lakeview is stable, not characterized by crisis, vacillation or whimsy
- Lakeview is well-known and utilized year-round
- Lakeview embraces and is supported by the latest cost-effective technology
- Lakeview's plan and approach is multifaceted and comprehensive including: financial, programs, and facilities
- Every youth in the Conference should be able to attend Lakeview at little or no cost
- Lakeview's leaders have the foresight to change with the times and be flexible

**Objectives** (objectives are the desired end results of the organization):

1. Be a catalyst for making disciples of Jesus Christ/live and convey image of discipling

Implementation strategies (tactics to achieve the end results) – "Within the church":

- a. Develop new partnerships between Lakeview and parties in the conference
- b. Engage in discussions with the Bishop and express desire to be supportive of her objectives
- c. Congregational development
- d. Re-create the covenant relationship with the clergy; reverse decline between colleagues (faith community regeneration)...it was noted that the ideal ones to accomplish this are among us!
- e. Stay connected to the Conference, but.....

Implementation Strategies – "Outside the traditional church":

- a. Offer specific new programs to impact people's lives
  1. Hire a spiritual director (chaplain) to innovate and implement programs

- a. Function both as a resource to churches and...
- b. For programs initiated at lakeview as well as...
- c. Mobile – go to them

Implementation Strategies – General

- a. Be more adaptive to change
- b. work toward continuous improvement – be one of the best places to go for spiritual change/growth
- c. back-up performance with programs and facilities

2. Have the facilities and maintenance capacities (both quantity and quality) to support existing and new programs

Implementation strategies:

- a. Double motel-style housing
- a. Rehab Wesley
- b. Replace Windham dorm
- c. Rehab existing motel

Establish a task force to address priorities and funding:

- -replace pool #2
  - -additional covered gym/pavilion
  - -technology/internet capacity
  - -water/sewer capacity
  - -meeting rooms in conjunction with added motel space
  - -rehabilitating roads
- d) Investigate attracting birders as customers
  - e) Long-term...possibly look into retirement housing or assisted care living

3. Have the resources (funding, talent, staff and partnerships/relationships) to meet immediate and future needs

Implementation strategies:

- a. Hire development/image officer/(UM Foundation?) will have dual duties for fund raising and marketing
- b. Promote and grow endowment
- c. Diversify sources of income
- d. Seek new sources for development of programs (i.e. grants at St. Luke's and Moody)
- e. Capital goal of \$7.5 to \$10 million
- f. Convert old infirmary to a gift shop? (better located than existing)
- g. Be effective at marketing what we offer
  1. keep Lakeview's web page attractive and up to date
  2. make sure our brochures are attractive and up to date
  3. focus on radical hospitality/customer satisfaction
    - a. make Lakeview positive and memorable
    - b. less confusing directions/signage
    - c. first and last impressions last; make sure they are the ones we want people to remember.
  4. develop new user/customer groups

How do we define success for Lakeview; what are the measures: 1) Attendance  
2) Levels of spiritual experience (possibly life professions of faith per 100 who attend camp or programs)

How to implement:

1. Conference funded or self-supporting
2. Contact the Bishop and engage her

3. Look at the Episcopal model (Camp Allen)
4. Initially Lakeview will have to bear the full cost of implementation
5. Emphasize spiritual formation and pluses of being outside of Houston

### Consensus:

When redistricting, redraw lines to fill all camps

Keep youth camp program viable

Augment new base of customers from any and all sources in motel settings.

Eliminate committees – instead use “attainment groups”, “achievement groups”, “task forces” or “work teams” ...committee carries negative non-achievement connotations to most people today!

### Next Steps

- Get this plan to the bishop
- Present this plan to board of directors
- Send copy of this plan to all committee members
- Get the group back together after presented to the Bishop (within 6 weeks?)

### Supplemental Information to the plan:

#### Planning Environment:

- Values of those coming to Lakeview have changed as have their expectations...many expect the “cushy” lifestyle
- Many users prefer motel-style rooms
- We now have a change minded Bishop...embraces change
- Attention spans are shorter (especially the kids/campers)
- Most expect entertainment not training
- The leadership of the Conference has changed
- Users demand more high technology
- The lack of cohesiveness in the Methodist church is a factor to deal with
- Who has authority is a serious question to consider
- Time is the commodity of most value to most people...affects how far they are willing to drive and length of programs as well as volunteerism
- Trying to fit a wide variety of groups; who do we target?
- Lakeview is highly dependent on effectiveness of local church and their programs here at the facilities...we are judged to a great extent on criteria we do not control
- Have to consider how we are to minister to diverse groups simultaneously
- There is little or no brand name loyalty or traditional bonds to Lakeview on the part of many users
- Many people go to where they are happiest not where they necessarily grow spiritually
- Not marketing ourselves to the conference enough
- It is more important than ever to define our desired role/relationship with the conference
- For some Lakeview is truly a “high” and life changing experience
- We are still appealing to people to come to Lakeview who are Methodists

#### Target groups/customers:

- TX Annual Conference and its churches
- TAMU
- Other denominations
- Educational organizations/schools
- Local businesses
- Professional associations
- Families
- Service organizations
- Senior adult groups
- Hobby groups
- Chamber of commerce groups
- Schools (especially outdoor education)
- Recreational vehicle users and clubs

#### Overarching Issues:

- We provide the environment for building relationships with each other and with God...most bring their environment with them (i.e. cell phones, I-Pods, etc.)
- Our chief task is to enable discipleship as a possibility and provide the relationships that fosters discipleship building
- Need to move toward program influence or control, not just providing the setting or environment
- We are not effectively marketing ourselves to the Conference
- Need to ask to what extent we can effectively initiate programs?
- Need to reach out...along the lines of the Second Curve...adapt to the new model and at the same time not completely lose sight of what still works in the transition to the new
- How do we minister to diverse groups?
- Should Lakeview be the facilitator for spiritual searchers?
- Fulfilling the "Great Commission" by making disciples of Jesus Christ remains forever the focus
- Find ways for being a catalyst for change in the Methodist Church
- Determine the type, quantity and quality of programs
- Emphasize the importance of communication, connectivity and relationships
- Be better at marketing and building our image
- Become more responsive and adaptive to change
- Tackle the challenge of ministering to more diverse groups
- Having the facilities to do all of the above

#### Scenarios:

##### The "Things are Worse" Scenario:

- Lakeview continues to lose attendance and programs within UMM, UMW, no singles, etc.

- Clergy leadership has melted away; they are not present, engaged or involved.
- Model of lay ministry has changed dramatically
- There is less, perhaps even little or no connection to Lakeview
- Clergy are still connected to summer camp programs
- Communications within the Conference is lacking and leads to misunderstandings
- More non-Methodists are involved
- Continued escalation of entitlement among Conference and churches...they do not want to pay to cover true out-of-pocket costs
- Even more emphasis on rights vs. responsibility culture
- Loyalty to Lakeview and programs become non-existent
- Inverted yield curve...possible harbinger of an impending economic recession
- As revenues fall, forced to cut staff due to decreased attendance which in turn exacerbates the downward spiral by decreasing income from fewer attractive programs and services
- The Church is in denial about "success" and it's own decline
- Part of the church leadership and laity is not connected technologically
- Technology is vulnerable to disruption
- Image of Lakeview is tied to success/failure of programs done by Conference and/or churches over which we have little or no control
- "Connectedness" is gone in the United Methodist Church

#### The "Different but Better" Scenario:

- We are proactive and are re-evaluating constantly for improvement and adjusting
- Have made some significant improvements
- Different sense of ownership of the process is in place; moving from maintenance to proactive and anticipatory
- There are very real opportunities in reaching outside the church; the needs of society are greater than ever
- Lakeview and it people can be a catalyst for change within our own church
- Opportunity for "middle of the week" spiritual growth
- We can capitalize on re-energizing efforts in the church; share best practices
- Add development officer for new avenues of income and support & to become less dependent upon past revenue sources
- Growth of endowments gives Lakeview some flexibility
- There are opportunities to promote and grow endowment
- Develop new partnership between Lakeview and parties within the Conference
- The "rights ones" to do this are among us. (strongly related to relationship building)
- We can develop trust-based relationships and collegiality