

# Church Adoption and Multisite FAQ

The following are the twenty most commonly asked questions during a church adoption process. As we adopt and rebirth Wellspring United Methodist Church as a campus of Bay Hope Church, this document provides overall vision and clarity.

## How did this adoption/rebirth idea come about?

The mission of Bay Hope Church is clear: ***“We connect people to a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.”*** God has given us a challenge to fulfill our mission through a **3M** Vision:

**MAXIMIZE:** We will maximize our original campus to it’s fullest potential for reaching people in our surrounding community, connecting them to a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.

**MULTIPLY:** We will multiply campuses of Bay Hope Church to reach people in every community of Tampa Bay, connecting them to a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ.

**MOBILIZE:** We will mobilize 30,000 disciples of Jesus Christ in Tampa Bay by the year 2030 for the transformation of the world. #30by30

In the summer of 2017, the pastor of Bay Hope Church, Matthew Hartsfield, was contacted by the District Superintendent of the Gulf Central District of the Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church, Candace Lewis, regarding a discussion about the future of Wellspring. Pastor Matthew and some of Bay Hope’s Executive Staff met with Pastor Keith Harcombe of Wellspring, and Candace and Conference and District Staff to listen and discern together. The goal of this entire process was to determine if this adoption was 1) Possible, 2) Feasible, and 3) Desirable. Over the course of initial meetings it was determined the adoption of Wellspring was possible, feasible, and desirable.

## Why did Wellspring consider being adopted by Bay Hope Church?

Pastor Keith and the members of Wellspring Church have a huge heart for making the love of Jesus real in the lives of people in their church, community, and beyond. For over 20 years Wellspring has offered selfless ministry to share that love – a legacy to cherish. The people of Wellspring Church have a deep desire for continued ministry impact. However, Wellspring reached a point in its lifecycle where that ministry was not able to continue with the type of vitality and impact desired by the congregation. Because of the selfless and kingdom-oriented hearts of Wellspring, they saw a future of hope in being adopted by Bay Hope Church. They understand this is about the kingdom of God and the souls of people, more than any individual congregation.

## What are the benefits of this proposed adoption?

Becoming a campus of Bay Hope Church will reignite, repurpose, and resource the call of God to reach people in the communities surrounding the new campus location. The resources and vitality of Bay Hope Church, combining with the property, facilities, and disciples of Wellspring will create a win-win for the kingdom of God and the lives of people surrounding the church.

## What is a multisite church?

A multisite church is simply one church in multiple locations. The success of multisite churches around the country lies in their ability to leverage resources and unite people around a common set of mission/vision/values to accomplish kingdom goals across a wide scope of communities in a geographical region.

## What is the name of the church?

We are all one, united family of believers called, “**Bay Hope Church.**” The new campus will have a geographically specific campus name: **Bay Hope Church – Westchase Campus.**

## Who will be the Westchase campus pastor?

The Lead Pastor of Bay Hope is Matthew Hartsfield. The Campus Pastor of our Westchase Campus will be David Wildes, our current Director of GroupLife and Community Ministry.

## **What will happen to the pastor and staff of Wellspring Church?**

Bay Hope Church is grateful to the pastor and staff of Wellspring Church. They have served sacrificially, with their eyes on mission and ministry. Bay Hope desires to honor them and be sensitive to them. Pastor Keith serves under the appointment of Bishop Ken Carter and the Rev. Dr. Candace Lewis, the District Superintendent of the Gulf Central District. The Bishop and Candace have assured Pastor Keith he will be honored and will have a future of pastoral ministry appointment within the Florida Annual Conference. In regard to the staff of Wellspring, Bay Hope will enter into a period of discernment with them regarding their future. They will have the opportunity to interview for positions at Bay Hope Church. Each existing staff person will have the opportunity to see if they are a fit for the future of Bay Hope and if they have a desire to serve on the staff of Bay Hope. If their future is not to be on the staff of Bay Hope, they will be treated with respect and given a release package that will help them transition to new employment elsewhere.

## **What will happen to the governing boards and committees of Wellspring?**

There will be one Bay Hope Church Council and leadership structure (central governance overseeing all campuses). The governance structure of Wellspring will no longer exist in its current form. However, for Wellspring members who assimilate into Bay Hope membership, they will have the same opportunity as any other Bay Hope member to be considered for elected and non-elected leadership positions at Bay Hope Church. **We will be one church family.**

## **What will happen to the Wellspring facilities and property?**

The current property of Wellspring will continue to serve as the site of this campus of Bay Hope Church. The facilities will be renovated and rebranded for a fresh start in the community as a campus of Bay Hope Church.

## **What will the worship services be like on this new campus of Bay Hope Church?**

The current worship style of Bay Hope Church will be replicated on the Westchase Campus – a contemporary, relevant, and authentic expression of worship, produced with excellence and passion. The worship music, announcements, and every component of the service, exclusive of the sermon, will be in-person at the campus. The majority of the messages will be broadcast live from the central broadcasting campus – Lakeshore Campus. This will be done via the most excellent and cutting edge production capabilities. Pastor Matthew is the primary teacher of Bay Hope Church, along with other teachers who comprise the Bay Hope Teaching Team. At appointed times, the Campus Pastor will preach live and in person at his/her campus. This model is being used with a high degree of success across the country and in our own Tampa Bay area by other multisite churches.

## **What will ongoing ministry, mission, and discipleship look like at the new campus?**

Since we will be one church in multiple locations, the ministry, mission and discipleship process will be as it currently exists at Bay Hope Church. However, Bay Hope will be mindful of specific opportunities presented by the people, talent, and resources of the current Wellspring members, as well as the needs of the surrounding community. Many things will be common and constant across all campuses, while being open to the unique context of each campus.

## **How will the budget and finances be managed?**

There will be one budget, managed and overseen by the staff and lay governance of Bay Hope Church. The Financial Oversight Committee of Bay Hope Church operates with the highest standards, and there is an annual full audit of Bay Hope finances and financial procedures.

## **Will the current Wellspring membership be recognized by Bay Hope?**

Any member in good standing at Wellspring United Methodist Church who desires to transfer their membership to Bay Hope United Methodist Church will be welcomed automatically. However, if they desire to be a part of the new church family, these “new” members will be highly encouraged (though not required) to participate in a Bay Hope membership class so they can best understand and feel at home in their new church family – knowing now how to continue to serve, give, and pray with joy and integrity.

## **What will happen to the supported missionaries and other mission partnerships of Wellspring?**

The Director of Missions and the Mission Advisory Council of Bay Hope, along with the Executive Directors of Bay Hope staff will enter into a period of discernment to prayerfully consider the future of any current mission partnerships and projects of Wellspring. The goal is always a kingdom goal of making disciples and bringing the love of Jesus to our community and our world in the most effective and strategic manner.

## **What will this adoption cost and who will pay for it?**

The upfront cost of the adoption will be the renovation and rebranding of the property and facilities of the Westchase Campus. The ongoing costs will be determined by the Operational Budget needs of each campus and become part of the Central Operating Budget. Since we will all be one church (in multiple locations) we will all together be supporting all of these costs as part of one church family. The Florida Conference is also partnering with us financially for the launch of this and each successive campus of Bay Hope Church as a part of the missional, disciple-making strategy of the Florida Conference. The current assets of each congregation, along with the giving potential of each congregation, make this opportunity possible, feasible, and desirable.

## **What was the process of officially recognizing and approving this adoption/rebirth?**

A healthy process of discernment, prayer, and strategic collaboration has taken place among the following parties: Bay Hope Church leadership, Wellspring Church leadership, The Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church, and the Gulf Central District of the United Methodist Church. As a result of this process, the membership of Wellspring voted overwhelmingly (September 17, 2017) to become adopted and rebirthed as a campus of Bay Hope Church. The adoption has the blessing of Candace Lewis, our Gulf Central District Superintendent, and the Florida Conference Bishop, Ken Carter. The Church Conference of Bay Hope Church voted unanimously on September 18th to officially adopt and rebirth the Wellspring United Methodist Church as a campus of Bay Hope.

## What is the timeline for this proposed adoption?

Wellspring will have its final service as a church body on Sunday October 1, 2017. During October and November, everyone will be worshipping at the Lakeshore Campus of Bay Hope Church to help create unity and better identify with the Bay Hope culture of mission and ministry. This will also allow time for renovations to take place on the Westchase Campus. During November and December of 2017 the new Bay Hope members (previously Wellspring members) will team up with existing members of Bay Hope who desire to be a part of the launch team for the new campus. This one, unified launch team will build relationships and share a vision together for the exciting launch of the new campus! The launch team will begin worshipping at the Westchase Campus starting January of 2018 during a “soft opening” phase. The Grand Opening of the Westchase Campus of Bay Hope Church will happen on Super Bowl Sunday, February 4<sup>th</sup> 2018.

## What are my next steps?

1. **PRAY.** We hope everyone at Wellspring, as well as Bay Hope, will be praying right now for God’s wisdom, guidance, and provision for this exciting new kingdom adventure.
2. **PARTICIPATE** if you feel called by God, or are curious, you can check out what it means to join the launch team for the new campus. You will make a year long commitment as a launch team member. At the end of that year’s adventure, launch team members will probably want to stay at the new campus, but will certainly be welcomed if they want to return to the Lakeshore campus.
3. **PROMOTE** the ministry and mission of the new campus with infectious enthusiasm regardless of which campus of Bay Hope you attend.

## Who can I contact for more info?

If you have any questions, or need for clarification, please contact either our Senior Director of Multisite Ministry, Bill Hoopes at [BHoopes@bayhope.com](mailto:BHoopes@bayhope.com) or our Westchase Campus Pastor, David Wildes at [DWildes@bayhope.com](mailto:DWildes@bayhope.com)

## Why?

It is important to ask and answer all of the above Who, What, When, and Where questions. However, the most important question of all is, “**Why?**” Why bother? Why invest all the time, effort, and energy into a successful adoption and multi-site ministry? There’s a simple answer: **People!** People matter to God and therefore they matter to us! Approximately 80% of the people surrounding the

Wellspring church do not have a growing relationship with Jesus Christ, nor do they experience the life-giving vitality of a local church home. Thousands of kids, families, and single adults need to experience the power of the Holy Spirit through a local church that is soul-saving, life-changing, disciple-making, and world-transforming. **People need Jesus. That's our big "Why?"**

**REMEMBER: One church in multiple locations:**

*For there is one body and one Spirit,*

*Just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future.*

*There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all,  
who is over all, in all, and living through all.*

Ephesians 4:4-5