

LETTER OF THE PASTOR

Lakeside Church Family,

We are blessed to be entering a new chapter in the life of Lakeside Church. As you may have noticed, our congregation has quickly grown to numbers we have previously only imagined, causing our current space to be limited. We feel that is one great example of our church living out its mission: We are a bridge helping people to get from where they are to where God wants them to be.

In 2021 alone, we added 13 new believers, 30 baptisms, and over 60 new members to our congregation. In 2022, we had 35 new decisions, 41 baptisms and added 64 new members to the church. Our children's ministry (birth-5th grade) has grown from less than 50 on Sunday mornings to exceeding 100 children each week. It has been an incredible blessing to see our church go from averaging 250 people per Sunday before COVID to now averaging between 485 and 520 weekly. God is moving visibly at Lakeside, and we do not want our space to restrict our growth.

As we have grown, we shifted in order to accommodate more people to experience God through worship and fellowship at Lakeside by adding a third service. Although the third service being added met the need for a brief time, we are now exceeding our space again. We are blessed that our parking lots are full, but we are now running out of places to park. We are thankful that parents are bringing their families to worship regularly, but our seating is limited in more than one service. Our people are becoming more plugged into small groups and engaging in service opportunities within the church, which requires more space for children's ministry classrooms. Observing the bottlenecking in the parking lot, lobby, or children's check in area reveals the great need for more space for our people.

In our research, we have found a few statistics that mirror the importance of expansion. Within the first five minutes

of an initial visit, statistics show that a family will determine if they will return for a second visit. Imagine visiting Lakeside your first time and having difficulty finding a parking space or a seat within the worship service. The general rule within churches is that your church attendance will eventually plateau once you regularly hit 80% seating capacity. Thankfully, we have continued to see growth beyond this percentage. These two scenarios break our hearts and leave us with a desire to ensure we are doing our best to meet the needs of our community.

The main needs of our church are to build a new worship center and to increase the space for our children's ministry. These additions will accommodate our current needs and provide space for our church's continual growth. Also, the Lake Oconee community is rapidly growing; we do not want to be hindered from continuing our mission throughout this growth. People need a church home; we want to make sure we have space for guests and members to experience Jesus where we worship. We long for Heaven to be more full due to the existence of Lakeside Church.

We are thankful for the support of our Lakeside family thus far. Financially, we have exceeded our budgets thus allowing for our growth and transitions to date. In 2021, our budget was just over \$692,500 for the year. Our giving exceeded \$831,000. On a budget of \$765,100 for 2022, our radical generosity exceeded \$1,100,000. Thank you for your support of our church and our mission. We are excited to continue our growth by expanding our building, community, and the Kingdom.

We ask that you please join us in praying for this new chapter for Lakeside Church. We look forward to being better together by investing in the next generation and growth of our community. Through this growth, we anticipate serving more people, reaching lost people, and truly embodying being a bridge to help people get from where they are to where God wants them to be.



Kevin Magness