

## *Strategic Leadership Team*

### **2012 Strategic Plan Annual Conference Presentation PowerPoint Script**

#### **Slide 1:** (Beth F-M)

Members and friends of the FL Conference, this afternoon we are excited to share the story of the work that has taken place over the past 2 years, and the foundation that has been laid regarding the structure and processes related to the FLUMC. For a number of reasons, the time is right to take significant steps to move this work forward. To begin let me introduce the members of the SLT team who were

#### **Slide 2:** (Beth F-M)

selected in the summer of 2010 by Bishop Whitaker:

Bob Bushong, lead pastor at First UMC, Winter Park  
Arlinda Burks, one of the pastors at St. Andrew's, Brandon  
Gretchen Hastings, lay, director of Connectional Relations  
Rini Hernandez, District Superintendent of the Southwest District  
Beth Knowles, banker, active leader at FUMC, St. Petersburg  
Beth Fogle-Miller, Director of Connectional Ministry  
Russ Graves, retired Air Force, and nominee for Conference lay leader  
Dale Locke, founding pastor of Community of Hope, Loxahatchee  
Chuck Mallue, active leader at St. Luke's, Orlando; works with Org'l Dev't at Disney  
Annette Stiles Pendergrass, District Superintendent, North Central District  
Jeff Stiggins, Director of Congregational Excellence  
Alice Williams, lay leader of the East Central district, works with HR at Disney and Bishop Timothy Whitaker.

These folks have given about a day a month for 8 months a year, beginning in September of 2010. They all are busy people, with many commitments, so this has been a tremendous commitment of their time and a statement to their belief that this work is this important. Thanks to each of you on the team, and thanks to you who are members of the Annual Conference for entrusting us with this responsibility.

In a moment, Chuck Mallue will give us some context for the work we have done and the recommendations we are making. You might want to turn in your workbook to page 31 and following for the printed report.

Let me say that this isn't your standard report that you can approve and then hand off for someone else to take care of. No, if we are to become the church that I think we hunger and hope to be, we each, personally, will need to commit to new behaviors, new habits, even new attitudes.

Friends, both locally and connectionally, we face what is known as an "adaptive challenge." An adaptive challenge describes a situation where there is no clear, known solution. It differs from a "technical problem", where there really is a solution, an answer that someone, an authority, knows and can provide.

Here's a familiar example. You have a sore throat and go to the doctor, who diagnoses it as strep, prescribes the right antibiotic, and you have the answer in your hands. In an adaptive situation, you go to the doctor, who recognizes a pre-diabetic condition, perhaps a heart problem, and says that the best response will take lifestyle changes including diet and exercise changes. The route to better health does lie within your grasp, but not in the same way. No, an adaptive challenge requires the person in the situation to learn which current habits contribute to health and which do not, and then making the appropriate changes.

So if we are each to embody the vision of being changed in Christ, so that we can lead the necessary changes in our churches, communities, and connection, then we each will need to embrace this and live into it, or ... well, if we keep on doing what we have been doing, we will get what we are getting. We believe that God's work of transformation and redemption is better than that!

Now, to Chuck Mallue...

### **Slide 3: The SLT's Charge (2010) Chuck Mallue**

- Thanks Beth.
- We are here today to present a plan to you and the Bishop that clarifies the vision of the AC, ensures that it gets accomplished, and in doing so aligns resources and ministries with the vision
- That probably sounds straight forward enough...
- A great teacher of mine recently reminded me that "context is everything," so allow me to give you a little context on this charge before we dive into the details

You see the year 2010 in the headline and in November and December of that year an external consultant conducted an assessment of the effectiveness of the AC that included Cabinet members, Conference staff, pastors and laity - and here is what he told us...

### **Slide 4: "128 People..."**

- We got feedback from 128 people in that assessment, perhaps many of you in this room participated...
- (Read bullets)
- Not what you would call a stellar report.

But clearly a call to action, so we set out to understand the data, learn more about what was really going on, and decide what we might recommend to do about it

### **Slide 5: "What you are about to see..."**

- What you are about to see is the result of our work in the form of three key aspects:

- *Missional Outcomes* – statements of what success would look like over the next four years
- *Goals* – specific initiatives, processes or strategies to create the outcome, and..
- *Action Items* – the initial steps to take to reach the goal
- I want to emphasis “initial” here, and you will see why as we discuss each one, but while this plan moves us closer to achieving our Vision...

**Slide 6:** It still needs: work; involvement; prayer.

**Slide 7: “How is this different...?”**

- I am sure some of you must be wondering how this is different from any other kind of plan or vision that might have been proposed in the past. One of my key principles about effective change is not to indict the past, but to consider where we are today, and look towards the future
- There are some things that are different about this plan that I hope you will look for as we go through it...and there are some things that will stay the same
- (Read bullets)

Part of effective change is knowing what to change and what to build on and these five practices are embedded in our approach

**Slide 8: Worship attendance graph**

- I want to close with two graphs that illustrate where we are today and what we might see in the future.

**Slide 9** The first line is average worship attendance. It projects the trend if we keep on doing what we are doing now.

**Slide 10** The second line is the totals of the local goals that were set last year by all our churches. You can see there is some distance between our current reality and our hopes for the future.

The question this raises is what will we do differently in order to get a different result?

**Slide 11: Professions and Reaffirmations graph**

- Similarly, Professions and Reaffirmations of Faith are headed south, not north.
- We have been previewing the entire presentation you are seeing here today at District Orientation Sessions across the conference all month, and one question that has come up several times is “If I vote for this proposal, what I am voting against?”

To me the answer is simple. You are voting for the green line and against the red line.

I'll be back at the conclusion of our report to highlight some other questions we have heard, but now it is time for Russ Graves to tell us more about Missional Outcomes. Russ...

### **Slide 12: "Outcomes equation" Russ Graves**

Let's start by talking about *missional outcomes*. Missional outcomes describe what we want to see happening in the next four years, if we really live into our mission well. These are the results we want to see for everything we do. Missional outcomes define what success will look like for us over the next four years.

If we take people (including their talents and energy, their faith and efforts) and you take our facilities (including all the resources for ministry in them) and you take the financial resources (that support and enable ministries to happen) and you put them together, we have the resources that make ministry possible. They are the raw materials of ministry.

With all these resources we do worship, Sunday School, small groups, youth groups, VBS, men's ministry, UMW, mission trips, Disciple Bible studies, child care ministries, feeding ministries, camping ministries, campus ministries, justice ministries – the list goes on and on. These are all the programs and activities that happen in and through congregations and our conference. This is what we do with the people, facilities and money resources.

The point isn't just to have these events and to do these activities. The point is to do them SO THAT there are Christ-changed lives and Christ-changed communities. Missional outcomes describe what the change will be if the ministry programs and activities are effective.

If we don't know what sort of transformational outcome we are shooting at, we don't know if our ministries are fruitful. And if we don't know how to define fruitfulness, we resort to counting resources: how many people were involved and how much money was spent? Or activities: how many meetings we have and how busy we are. All this begs the question: has this been a worthwhile investment of our time and money? Or, did our ministries accomplish what they were meant to accomplish?

### **Slide 13: Four outcomes icons – Russ Graves**

The Strategic Leadership Team interviewed leaders around the conference. We held focus groups. We met with key leaders from every major ministry department in the conference. Through all of these conversations ran a consistent theme of what needs to happen if we are going to fulfill God's plan for our connection. These are the missional outcomes that we believe need to be the focus and result of all that we do, especially in the next four years.

If we are to fulfill our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, then we need especially to focus on these outcomes:

- **Disciples who are becoming more like Jesus**
- **Congregations where all people find welcome**
- **Communities being blessed with Kingdom impact, and**
- **Conference Structures centered on fulfilling our mission.**

Under each of these missional outcomes, there are several specific goals and in many cases specific action items, (which are listed in your workbook.)

Let's look at the four missional outcomes one at a time, beginning with the last one.

Annette Pendergrass will walk us through that section.

**Slide 14: Conference structures icon** - Annette Pendergrass

Conference structures centered on fulfilling our mission.

We are beginning our presentation on our desired missional outcomes with Conference Structures Centered on Fulfilling Our Mission, which is found in your workbooks as

**Slide 15** the 4th outcome is on page 34 line 22, "Conference structures centered on fulfilling our mission."

Since the printing of our workbooks the SLT has wrestled with that age old question, which comes first, the chicken or the egg. In thinking about how to best communicate these missional outcomes and goals for the annual conference, we realized that in some respects it doesn't really matter what order we use to address each outcome. However we decided to begin here as a way being clear that we recognize that the primary role of the annual conference is to support, resource and empower vital ministry in the local church and our other conference ministries. We are very clear that all conference structures, committees, policies, staff and resources need to be in aligned in the service of local congregations and those larger ministries that we do best together. While our current structures, etc do many good things already, we are aware that there is much work to be done in bringing greater clarity, focus, alignment, evaluation and accountability to our conference and district level structures and ministries so that we will see real, measurable increases in disciples, congregation, and communities.

**Slide 16:** Conference structures centered on...

- Missionally align our organizational structures and resources

First goal under conference structures: "Assess and evaluate the needs, in preparation for streamlining and aligning our organizational structures and resources to achieve our purpose and mission". Some initial action steps are listed on p. 34. Question that must be answered: are we organized in ways that enable us to serve the vision and mission of the conference? While we can't say at this point what the end result will be it is a conversation that we must have, has actually already begun and it will no doubt mean some organizational changes at the conference and or district level.

**Slide 17**

- Assess the sustainability of our mission and chartered congregations

Second goal: The slt will “develop a cross functional team to assess the viability of current practices related to the long term long term financial sustainability of missions and chartered congregations.” No action item is listed as the goal itself implies the first action step. The point is that we must develop consistent, transparent policies and actions regarding congregations that are unable to meet their financial obligations. This must be done with an understanding of our missional imperative to serve the diverse population of Florida in a multitude of contexts while at the same time being clear about the financial realities facing our conference. This will not be an easy goal to live into but we must deal with this issue in proactive and intentional way and no longer avoid the issue. Fortunately, we worship a God who loves to lead us in making possible that which at first glance appears impossible.

### **Slide 18**

- Assess our return on investments for conference ministries and programs

Third goal: “Assess the return on investments in each of following areas: clergy excellence, congregational excellence, bd of higher education and campus ministry, new church development, conference and districts”. Again, the initial action step is inherent in the goal. The key question that needs to be answered "is the staffing and activities of these areas bringing us the results worthy of our investment as a conference?" We realize that answering this and other questions related to these areas may lead us to re-envision and reorganize the ways we seek to carry out these ministries.

### **Slide 19**

- Develop communication strategies that serve our mission

Fourth goal:” Develop a strategy for communication that serves the purpose and mission”. There are three actions steps related to this goal listed on page 34. In short, all of our communication should help clarify, support and point towards our mission and purpose as a conference.

Accountability question:

A question you may be asking yourself is, "This sounds great, but who will be responsible for accomplishing these goals? Where is the accountability in all this?"

This is a question that pertains not just to this particular missional outcome but to all of the recommendations contained in this report. First, the slt is charged with overseeing the process of prioritization, implementation, and monitoring progress. The work of the slt is really just beginning. But accountability for accomplishing these goals also rests with other conference leaders, district superintendents, local church pastors and lay leaders. In short, there must be a mutual accountability that runs through every part of our conference. The slt may hold the plan, but it will take each and every one of us working together to live into God's vision for our annual conference.

Dale Locke will focus our attention on the next outcome.

**Slide 20: Disciples becoming more like Jesus** - Dale Locke –  
Intentional discipleship icon

The first Missional Outcome is:

"Disciples who are becoming more like Jesus."

Take a look at a video that features a church in our Annual Conference that is doing this extremely well..."

**Slide 21: blank for transition to video of St. Andrew's, Titusville**

**Slide 22:** Disciples becoming more like Jesus (leave this one while he does intro)

Most of us know that the United Methodist church did not begin in the heart of its founder, John Wesley as a new denomination. John Wesley died an Anglican Priest.

It began as a movement...and more specifically, a renewal movement.

In fact, near the end of his life, John Wesley said...

"I am not afraid that the people called Methodists should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America. But I am afraid lest they should only exist as a dead sect, having the form of religion without the power. And this undoubtedly will be the case unless they hold fast both the doctrine, spirit, and discipline with which they first set out."

And whereas denominations have, over time, become synonymous with beaurocracy, and structure, and polity...

Spiritual Movements, on the other hand are characterized by words and phrases like:

organic and fluid...

...spiritually nimble organisms - able to adapt and adjust in ways that make it able to keep its original vibrancy, while at the same time being increasingly relevant to its surrounding culture.

Study the original Methodist movement, and you'll discover what others have...a spiritual movement where its founder was so transformed by his own heart warming experience, he burned from within with a passion that every other human being on the globe might somehow, someday, experience the same "heart warming" encounter he had...

And so, he coined a phrase in order to succinctly characterize what should remain at the heartbeat of this renewal movement called Methodism.

Wesley said: The Methodist movement should always and forever be identified with what he called "Vital Piety, and Social Holiness."

So fast forward with me to 2012, and the Florida Annual Conference gathering in Lakeland, Florida -- and the Strategic Leadership Team of the Annual Conference wants to establish a goal that strengthens this Annual Conference around the original vision of its leader...

And so, instead of saying it in Wesley's language..."vital piety and social holiness," we'll say in in our day - in our way:

We want to call every disciple, both laity and clergy alike to strive towards being...

...spiritual leaders who are becoming more like Jesus.

In fact, I believe...and I know others who share my belief -- that there can be no "social holiness" no transformative outward expression or ministry, or community impact without first an inner transforming experience with Jesus Christ.

And so we set before you a goal -- which I personally believe -- all the other goals we speak of today emanate from...

On page 34 in your Conference Workbook you will see that this important Missional Outcome carries with it three goals:

**Slide 23**

- 1. That congregations, campus ministries and campus ministries will identify and implement clear discipling processes.

And while we know that this is already taking place in some churches, and Districts

**Slide 24**

- 2. Secondly, we want to state as a goal that all clergy will identify and implement a process for their own lifelong spiritual as well as professional growth.

As spiritual leaders, we must remember, or remember again that we cannot take people to a place spiritually where we ourselves are unwilling to go.

We cannot speak compellingly of an experience we have

not had...

We cannot bear witness relevantly to an encounter with Christ through the lens of an encounter with Christ that has grown cold and distant over time.

It must itself be new, and fresh, and ever expanding.

It was Paul the Apostle who reminded Timothy, his protegee to "take the time and trouble to keep himself spiritually fit."  
Example of process in NC district

### **Slide25**

- 3. And then thirdly, we establish the goal that Laity and Clergy will partner to expand and strengthen the "ministry of the laity."

Our hopeful action here is to create a cross-functional team that will help us accomplish this goal to increase the collective excellence of the ministry of our Conference state wide.

This concludes my portion of the presentation...

**Slide 26:** Congregations where all people find welcome - Rini Hernandez – Radical Hospitality icon

The next expected missional outcome for every congregation in our FL Annual Conference is: Congregations where all people find welcome.

Let me show you a short video from one of the churches in my District that does this extremely well...

**Slide 27:** blank slide for transition to the video of Grace Church

**Slide 28:** (bullet points for Radical Hospitality goal of "Congregations where all...")

Under this Radical Hospitality missional outcome of congregations where all people find welcome there are three goals.

By now you should have probably recognized the Radical Hospitality logo. What we are trying to communicate here / is that we need to give particular attention to this practice. This represents a continuation of the emphasis / that we have already had during the past four years.

What is new here / is the emphasis that our connection needs to reflect / both theologically and practically / the diversity of persons in Florida / if we really want to be faithful and fruitful to the mission Christ is calling us.

The first goal is to increase the multi-cultural / multi-ethnic involvement in congregations.

The story of the early church in the Book of Acts / is the story of the Holy Spirit bulldozing down / every cultural wall / that kept different groups of people / comfortably separated from one another.

As we read in Galatians 3:28, in the church “There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for [we] are all one in Christ Jesus.”

Maybe you have noticed that Florida has become / one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse states / in a country that never before in history / has been so culturally and ethnically diverse.

What does it mean that Whites are 59% of people in Florida / and 92% of the people in the Florida Conference?

What does it mean / that we Hispanics are 22% of the Florida population / and only 2% of people in our connection?

What does it mean that Blacks are 15% of people in Florida / and 3% of Florida United Methodists?

It means that / as a whole, our congregations are not reflecting the diversity of people in this state. And that has to change!

The second goal is to increase the multi-generational involvement in congregations, especially focusing on 18-30 year olds.

Not only are our congregations mostly White. More and more of our congregations / have become largely mono-generational.

The median age of people in the United States is 35; and do you have any idea what is the median age of United Methodists in this country? 59. Many congregations have few children or youth / and haven't had a confirmation class in years.

There are more deaths in many of our congregations / than there are professions of faith.

So I need to ask you a question: My friends, what Church will we leave for our children and grandchildren / if we are not intentionally making disciples of Jesus Christ / out of the younger generations? Do you care / about the future of the church? Then, this has to change!

The third goal is to strategically plant new congregations / where there is the highest possibility for growth / and long term sustainability.

Florida has the best record / of starting new congregations / of any Conference in the United States.

This goal expresses two concerns:

(1) First, most of our new congregations / need to be started in places and in ways / where they will most likely grow / to become self-sustaining, chartered congregations

(2) And the second concern is that / when for missional reasons / we need to plant faith communities / and continue financially supporting them long-term, that we start them with a clear plan / for how we are going to do that

What we mean is / that as a Conference / we need to balance our current district-driven practice / by adding a conference strategy / identifying those places / where new communities of faith are most needed.

Trying to be realistic / many of the places where new congregations are most needed / are located in districts / with little or no funds to do that.

So the point we are trying to make is: How can we share resources across districts lines /so that they go where there is the greatest need?

We are also recognizing / that we have an increasing number of missions / that are focused on ministry with the poor / and have little chance / of chartering them in the foreseeable future.

Also there is often no clear plan / for the long-term financial support / of these congregations.

And the financial implications can be significant, often meaning we need to provide for salary support, pension, health insurance, programming, property & casualty insurance / and sometimes even mortgage support.

We need to have an “eyes wide open” financial support plan / when we are starting missions / not expected to become self-sufficient / within several years. We need to know / what will be the costs / and how we will be able to cover them.

And now, I will invite Bob Bushong to lead us through the next outcome.

**Slide 32** Bob Bushong - Communities being blessed with Kingdom impact  
Salty Service icon

The third expected missional outcome for every congregation in our annual conference is: Communities being blessed with Kingdom Impact.

You may recognize the icon from the Salty Service logo. That is because the SLT is saying that we need to give particular attention to this practice, too. So there is nothing new here, in many ways. It is a continuation of an emphasis that we have had over the last four years. When we included the Salty Service metric in our Missional Vital Signs several years ago, this was a new expectation for many congregational leaders: every congregation is expected to be a blessing to the community in which they are located. In fact, every congregation is started by the Conference as a strategy for reaching the people of a particular community and having a Kingdom impact there.

This missional outcome spotlights the expectation of every congregation to be in ministry to their community in ways that intentionally and regularly meet needs and build relationships with those not in their congregation.

Take a look at one way a congregation has reached out to children...

### **Slide 33: blank for the video of East Lake UMC Toymakers**

The third expected missional outcome for each congregation in our annual conference is, Communities being blessed with Kingdom Impact.

You probably recognize the icon from the Salty Service logo – that’s because the Strategic Leadership Team feels very strongly that we need to give particular attention to this practice.

Nothing new here, really. Rather, it’s an affirmation and continuation of an emphasis that we have had for the last four years. When the Salty Service metric was included in our Missional Vital Signs several years ago, this was a new expectation for many clergy and lay leaders in local congregations: every congregation is expected to be a blessing to the community in which it is located.

The fact is that every congregation started by the Conference is a strategy for reaching people of a particular community and being intentional about having a Kingdom impact right there.

This missional outcome spotlights the expectation for every congregation to be in ministry in and to and with their community in ways that intentionally and regularly meet specific needs and build relationships with those not a part of that congregation.

Take a look with us at one way creative way that one of our congregation is doing this:

### **Slide 33: blank for the video of East Lake UMC Toymakers**

**Slide 34:** Communities being blessed - Bob Bushong

There are three goals under this missional outcome of communities being blessed with Kingdom impact. You can find them on page 34 in your *Conference Workbook*:

**Slide 35**

- The first is to develop resources to assist congregations in increasing their outward focus, both locally and globally

**Slide 36**

- The second goal involves tracking the outward focus of congregations through Missional Vital Signs and stories that point to life change. Along with reporting numbers we need to do a better job of sharing with one another stories about what's happening as we interact with intentionality in serving those in need local. We want to remember especially our emphasis on children and poverty.

**Slide 37**

- Finally we see it as essential to increase the involvement of congregations in global missions. Of course this includes opportunities for congregations to engage through overseas missions relationships offered through the Florida Conference and through United Methodist Volunteers in Mission, but certainly is not limited to these means. Many congregations throughout our conference have developed their own missions partnerships, and in some cases the opportunity is there for other congregations to join in those opportunities.

(now back to Chuck Mallue)

**Slide 38: slide with icons of all four outcomes Chuck Mallue**

- Thanks Bob.  
So, those are the four outcomes... in the order we presented them today
  - *Conference structures centered on fulfilling our mission*
  - *Disciples who are becoming more like Jesus*
  - *Congregations where all people are welcome*
  - *Communities being blessed with Kingdom impact*

**Slide 39 - Questions slide – Chuck Mallue**

- Discussion