

Randy White Shares Big Dreams for Without Walls Central

Without Walls' once-abandoned Lakeland, Fla., campus could become the next full-blown Christian mini-city, complete with a megachurch, restaurant, movie theater and even condos. And the lead pastor has got the backing of several megaministries behind him.

Of course, Bishop Randy White, who recently took back the reins of Without Walls after stepping away from the church to battle drug addiction, is taking it one step at a time. The first step was getting the electricity back on after nearly a year of lights out in the megachurch.

White, who leads Without Walls International Church in Tampa, Fla.—which owns the property—and a team of church members and staff cleaned up the Lakeland building last month in efforts to restore the ministry there.

“There’s been a lot of behind-the-scenes planning for over two months now of exactly what kind of direction we want to lead the church to take back the property and really impact central Florida,” White told Charisma News.

“[W]e cleaned up the facilities at Without Walls Central in Lakeland, FL,” he wrote in an email to the church on Aug. 17. “We repaired doors and windows, and I am so happy to let you know that today we turned the electric back on. I am believing for a revival to hit Central Florida!”

Bold words from a man who just a few year ago admitted to turning his back on God, became addicted to prescription drugs an attempted suicide. White resigned from Without Walls in 2009, citing ongoing health issues. Only later did he reveal his deeper crisis.

His ex-wife, Paula White, was heading the church. Paula recently accepted the senior pastor position at New Destiny Christian Center in Apopka, Fla., which was founded by the late Zachery Tims and his then-wife Riva. At that time, the Lakeland campus was still in disarray.

White told Charisma News he expects the Lakeland campus to open in the next few weeks. Construction will occur while the church is open, as crews work on repair stained glass windows, update the water fountain in the lobby and make modern-day upgrades to the—in addition to renovating the 10,500-seat sanctuary.

In the beginning stages of the reopening, White will teach at Saturday evening services in Lakeland, and Sunday services in Tampa. Without Walls Central will then transition into holding Sunday morning services, and White will appoint a lead pastor. He said the church is currently in the midst of discussions with two couples, and will decide “which ones will serve the community best.” He did not give names, but said one couple is from the East Coast and one is on the West Coast.

Although Without Walls International had previously mentioned selling the Lakeland property—which it purchased in 2005 for \$8 million—White said Evangelical Christian Credit Union “bent over backward to work with us and lowered the payment to interest-only so we can keep it.

“We do not want that property to go to a secular developer that may tear down that sanctuary,” he explained. “That sanctuary was built for the glory of God and dedicated to the glory of God. I would hate to see that used for anything other than what it was intended for, and that’s to worship God.”

In addition to remodeling the sanctuary, White said the church is also in talks with a five-star restaurant interested in opening a location at the property’s theater so Christians can enjoy a dinner theater with family-friendly

films.

The campus currently features a tower (pictured), which White said rises 80 to 100 feet in the air. The church is planning to renovate the tower. It will be used for high-end living, and the top will be turned into a 24-hour state-of-the-art prayer center. Modern technology will allow for interactive prayer, 24/7.

White also said Without Walls is in discussions with several developers, and there are talks of building condominiums or a Christian theme park on the property. Either way, the church and sanctuary would be epicenter.

"It would be like the 21st-century PTL," he explained. "That's the best way I can describe it."

White is more than optimistic about the new venture.

"Optimistic is not even the word," he said. "I'm ecstatic. I can't sleep at night. With all of these developers coming on board, I can see this being a hub for the christian community."

Of course, this is a very large undertaking. In July White said it would take \$50,000 to get the Lakeland property repaired and the electricity restored, and he estimated it would cost \$75,000 a month to operate the megachurch, the Lakeland paper *The Ledger* reports. But support has been pouring in.

"I've been in office a little under 100 days and we've accomplished more than we ever thought we would. It's been from the generous help of the Christian community," White noted.

The pastor also said the church has gotten support and donations from several high-profile Christians, such as Bishop T.D. Jakes, senior pastor of the Potter House in Dallas;

Daystar Television Network Founder and President Marcus Lamb; Perry Stone, author and director of Voice of Evangelism; and more.

“They’ve all given sacrificially to this cause and this is what the body of Christ is all about,” White said.