

Lifeway selling Nashville headquarters, 'embracing remote work as the norm'

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (Special) – Lifeway Christian Resources has entered into a contract for the sale of their practically new headquarters in downtown Nashville. The purchaser and contract terms, including the sale price, were not disclosed.

Lifeway dedicated the 277,429 square foot building, which sits on 2.53 acres in the Capital View development, on November 27, 2017.



Mandrell

"Lifeway is moving forward, building fresh vision, and getting prepared for a new season of ministry to churches," said Ben Mandrell, Lifeway's president and CEO. "This has led us to think strategically about selling our large building downtown, fully embracing remote work as the norm, and moving into a new era of creative and collaborative work."

Mandrell said he and other Lifeway leaders have been looking at options for the headquarters since the summer of 2019, when he was selected by trustees to succeed Thom Rainer.

"One of the first questions I asked when I took this role was, 'What should we do with this building?' A study completed last year showed we were using the building at only 60% occupancy on a daily basis," Mandrell said.

Lifeway began a feasibility study in April 2020. The study explored multiple options including leasing several floors to external occupants, selling the building and leasing back office space, or moving to another location.

Based on the positive results of that feasibility study, Lifeway's board of trustees approved a resolution authorizing the organization's executive team to pursue viable options for the sale of its corporate headquarters.

The action taken by trustees in October 2020 allowed the entity's leaders to move forward with a sale of the property without further board approval. Lifeway has not announced a timeline for closing on the current building or for moving to a new facility.

"We want to be wise stewards, so it makes sense for us to do all we can to make the best use of our resources, including our corporate office building," Mandrell explained. "The decision to sell our building is a strategic one."

Lifeway will continue to occupy a portion of the building over the near term until it determines a location for its new, scaled-down headquarters.

"We're definitely moving to a new work environment," Mandrell said. "Our new space will be designed specifically around a healthy blend of strategic meetings and team collaboration, as well as the flexibility of working from home. Like other companies are doing as a result of COVID, we're re-imagining the corporate office for the future of work."

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Ben Mandrell, Lifeway president and CEO

"We are moving away from the idea of a 'headquarters' to a fully mobile and agile workforce that intentionally gathers to

build strong relationships, celebrate what God is doing, and share ideas.”

In March 2020, Lifeway’s Nashville-based employees moved to fully remote work as the city implemented a number of restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mandrell said employees will continue to work remotely the majority of the time and will come to the building for strategic meetings. The new work environment will offer a mix of conference rooms, casual meeting spaces, and drop-in work stations.

Lifeway last month finalized the sale of 1,200-acre Ridgecrest Conference Center and Summer Camps in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, which hosted its first gathering in 1909. The sale price was not disclosed. The foundation that purchased the property has pledged to continue its Christian mission.

Lifeway’s other assembly, 2400-acre Glorieta Conference Center 15 miles southwest of Santa Fe, N.M., was sold for one dollar in 2013 to Glorieta 2.0, a non-profit group of Texas businessmen who run a Christian summer camp in the Texas Hill Country.

Formally organized in 1891, Lifeway Christian Resources has operated under several names and is presently one of the leading providers of Christian resources including Bibles, books, Bible studies, Vacation Bible School materials, Christian music and movies, and church supplies, as well as camps and events for all ages.

Lifeway receives no denominational funding and operates as a self-supporting non-profit.