

A NEW BIRTH

by Pastor Irving Penberthy

It all began in about 1970 . That was when my ministry started at First Baptist Church of Los Gatos. Our location was poor. It was down a dead-end street...difficult to find...and there were other problems involved with the location.

But the small determined group of people who remained with the church voted to sell the buildings, find a new location and get on with the job of evangelism.

An exhaustive, time-consuming search began for new property in the Los Gatos area. The search was fruitless.

But now there was a new turn of events. The Los Gatos Christian Church had been denied permission to build additional buildings on their four acre property, and now planned to sell and move to a new location several miles away. Their near new church facility was just what we needed!

There were adequate offices, beautiful educational buildings, a spacious auditorium, lighted paved parking, all landscaped, and located on a moderately traveled street, facing the magnificent Santa Cruz mountains. This 22,000 square foot plant was for sale!

Upon learning of this facility, I placed a phone call to the church, but was told that the church was sold...to the Religious Science of Mind, but that they would accept a "back up offer." This meant that we would be "next in line," should the first buyer default. Our congregation voted to place a deposit with the realtor, and trust the Lord. It seemed so impossible. The price was \$365,000. We only had \$8,000. As matters turned out, the Science of Mind group failed to meet their purchase conditions, so now, the Los Gatos Christian Church was negotiating with the First Baptist Church of Los Gatos! Could the Lord possibly have these buildings - so ideally built and located for our needs - reserved for us? Many, from both churches, were praying! After a series of meetings with the realtor, I met with the pastor and officials of the Los Gatos Christian Church. They were most gracious and helpful. However, we as a buyer had a series of problems:

1. A small amount of cash for a down payment.
2. We had no buyer for our present location.
3. We couldn't buy the new property without getting our equity out of our existing location.
4. Our growing congregation could not accept an additional monthly obligation.

But an agreement was reached, which was a genuine step of faith. The major points included:

1. Purchase price - \$365,000.
2. \$10,000 down payment.
3. \$17,000 additional in 90 days.
4. One year escrow (to allow us time to sell the old location).
5. \$1,000 per month rent for six months, and
6. \$1,500 per month rent for the last six month period.

What a challenge! But the church voted to proceed! The Los Gatos Christian Church accepted our offer. We paid the \$10,000 as a down payment and moved into a facility twice the size we had. What excitement! What happened?

1. We sold the parsonage and paid the \$17,000 due in 90 days.
2. Though paying \$1,000 to \$1,500 per month rent, plus additional operating costs, offerings were increased to meet all needs!

In June of 1974, escrow closed on the sale of our old church property for \$210,000 cash! All but \$27,000 was equity. The Lord has honored faith of His people.

In November of 1974 financing was arranged and we paid our obligation to the seller. We now occupy and own this beautiful church facility - an answer to the step of faith of God's people. During the first year of time over 80 have come into the church, a youth-music director was added to the staff, and an AWANA program started, and to meet the needs, the offerings were up \$18,00 over the previous year.

TO GOD BE THE GLORY!