

## BUILDING HOPE: OUR HISTORY

Sixteen years ago, the leadership and membership of AFT (at that time) knew that the ministry had out grown the current worship facility and that the building was aging (built in 1885). We solicited assistance from a local community agency to try to obtain restoration funds for the building. The effort was not successful because the facility was being currently occupied by a religious fellowship. The question at that time was to move or not to move? And where would our small fellowship get the money to purchase another facility? The congregation and leadership overwhelmingly voted to move and noted that we would work hard to raise the funds from within. At that point a decision was made to look for warehouse space within the City of St. Paul. We started having fundraisers (i.e. faith walks, bake sales, selling candy, first fruit giving the first Sunday of the new-year and started a building fund) with that vision in mind. After 3 1/2 years of looking and raising funds it became apparent that we were not going to find any affordable warehouse space to convert into worship space in the City of St. Paul. After the 3 ½ years of fundraising our congregation experienced fundraising fatigue and did not conduct any fundraising for the next year and a half. In one sense the congregation and leadership had become discouraged.

Thanks, be to GOD the discouragement did not last very long, in September of 2004 Suffragan Bishop AZ Jones Sr. saw a small for sale sign in front of a partially burned building on Pierce Butler Route and forwarded the contact information to the then assistant pastor District Elder AZ Jones Jr. The assistant pastor called and set up an appointment with the owner the next day. The pastor along with two Board members met with the owner to discuss the particulars of a potential sale. It was at this meeting that they were informed that the building was going to be demolished and that the 2.4 acre parcel of land was for sale. The owner agreed to sell to the property to AFT and another meeting was scheduled for November of 2004. The three AFT representatives left that meeting with a very good feeling that God was opening a door for the church.

In the interim the three representatives from AFT presented the information and sell price to the membership and a great wave of joy fell upon the congregation. In that moment, the fundraising fatigue was overwhelmed by excitement and was quietly escorted out of the fellowship.

However, since we had been looking for a building the question was asked if we were prepared to build. The congregation overwhelmingly expressed their desire to build. With the congregations blessing the three representatives met with the owner for a

third time with the check book in hand (expecting a miracle) and before leaving the meeting wrote out a check for the earnest money on the property. Once the news was announced at the next Sunday morning service the whole congregation erupted in jubilation for what GOD had done.

The church knew that it did not have the giving units or assets to qualify for a conventional loan on the land and worked out a “contract for deed” agreement with the owner with a closing date of February 12, 2005. It was a win –win, if we defaulted on the payments the owner retained ownership, and it was our best option for acquiring property to build a new worship facility in the City of St. Paul. We were trusting GOD for the provision for the vision. The membership started digging deep in their giving along with small fundraisers, personal equity loans on their homes and second mortgages on their properties and we were able to meet the large down payment for the February closing. The church paid the large payments and interest for 5 years at which time the Lord opened the door for the church to convert to a conventional loan through Sunrise Bank (a God send).

Thirteen of years have passed and many lessons have been learned and unforeseen sacrifices have been made. Apostolic Faith Temple has evolved into Piercing Faith Church and the vision of a worship facility has blossomed into a family life center. The church has weathered many financial challenges, highs and lows of membership, an economic recession, two eminent domain attempts and a loss and reinstatement of tax exemption on the property. Through it all God has shown himself to be a provider allowing PFC to meet all its financial obligations without fail.

To build or not to build; that was the question AFT leadership asked the membership 13 years ago. Time has passed and PFC has answered the initial question with a unified voice “we shall build”. Not because we are large or have the necessary resources, not because we are politically connected or the most financially savvy. It is because we believe the vision for PFC to build is of a God, and we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

PFC is in the business of reaching souls by “building hope one unique individual at time”. We will build a family life center at 733 Pierce Butler Route in St. Paul, Minnesota. We are now only \$115,000.00 away from paying off the land in full. Please consider partnering with us to bring the vision to pass.