

Church Opening Gets Help From Above

Santa Cruz Bible Church to Dedicate New Worship Center on Fredrick Street

by Michelle Chambliss

For years, the fellowship of the Santa Cruz Bible Church has been growing. This month, Bible Church congregational members are adding to their blessings with the opening and dedication of their new high tech worship center on Frederick Street in Santa Cruz.

The worship center was built on the property adjacent to where the smaller and older chapel sits and is the largest church building of its size to be built in Santa Cruz in 20 years.

"After all the years of planning and praying, God gave us miracle after miracle to make it happen,"
said Clifford.

The Church's beginnings can be traced back to 1896 as the First Christian Church of Santa Cruz and the Christian Church Movement of the early 1800s. Various denominations labeled themselves as 'Christian', declaring that the Bible would be their guide and standard.

The congregation at the Santa Cruz Bible Church has grown from 86 members at conception, to a recent count of more than 2,100 attendees.

Santa Cruz Bible Church Pastor Steve Clifford is elated about people joining the church and attributes it to the almighty Creator himself.

"People sense that God is doing something here and they come," said Clifford.

Although, according to

Clifford, the approach of the church is more contemporary, promoting a modern and enjoyable worship environment that attracts younger members.

"We apply the bible to issues pertaining to people on a daily basis, such as relationships and moral decisions," said Clifford.

That approach, according to Clifford is what makes the Santa Cruz Bible Church special.

The Church needed a larger space to accommodate the growing number of people so a 'Pierce the Darkness' build-

The brand new 32,000 square foot building is a immense sight and will be large enough to hold over one thousand people in its worship room which is designed as a facility for various groups and services.

The worship center also has a video room for any overflow of people. Names of members are picked to decide who will attend the service in the extra room. But Pastor Clifford says that everyone takes turns attending service in the video room to be fair. Singers will also perform in the room so nobody will feel left out.

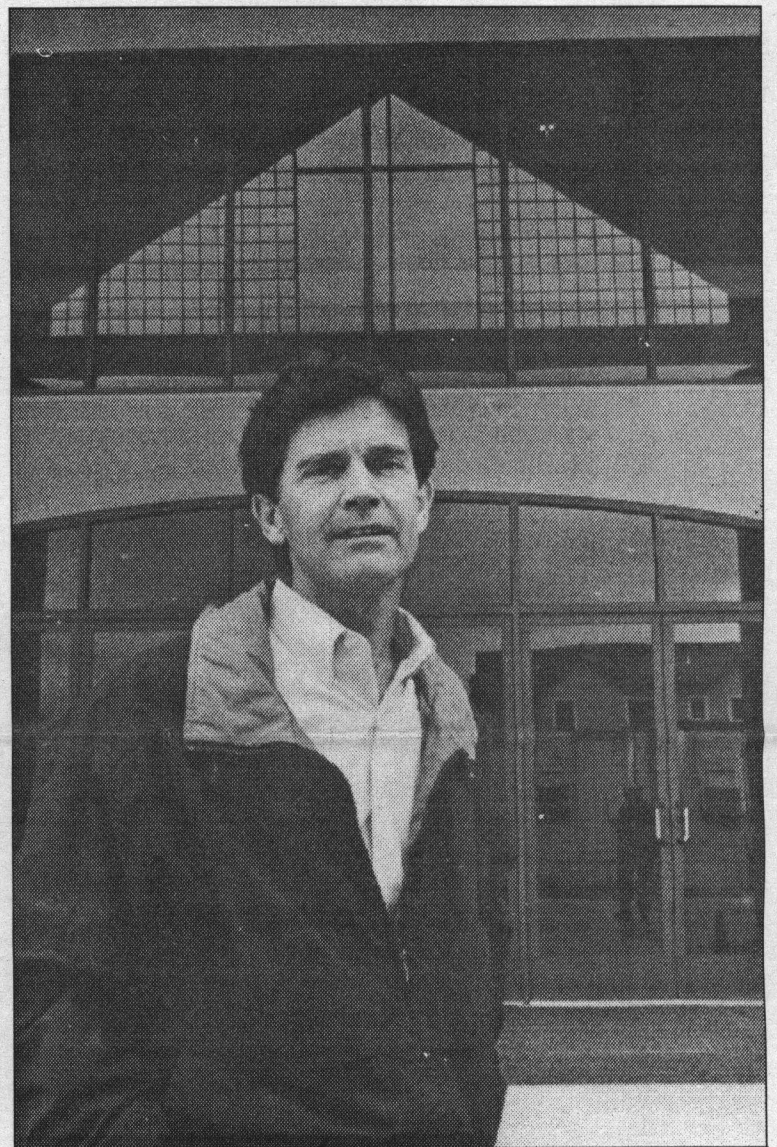
The brand new center also has a library, a resource center, eight classrooms, a nursery decorated with teddy bears, a baptismal, two regulation volleyball courts, a regulation basketball court, a full industrial size kitchen, and a banquet room holding a capacity crowd up to 500 people.

Second story rooms facing the multipurpose worship facility house state of the art sound and video equipment, not to mention the professional lighting hanging from the ceiling to spotlight the huge stage and curtains.

Extra rooms with sound proof windows are also provided for women with nursing babies for privacy and also to provide a barrier to any loud crying during a service.

Although the Santa Cruz Bible Church is not affiliated with any denomination and acts autonomously, they describe themselves as Evangelical Christians who have a strong conviction for the scripture of the Bible and believe that the Bible is the written word of God.

"Our congregation is a mixture of people from all different denominations who gen-



Senior Pastor Chip Ingram is one of the leaders of a congregation over 2,100 strong.

uinely try to live as God would have them live, sacrificially to help others," said Clifford.

The philosophy of the church is the recognition that Jesus Christ was who he said he was, and died for the sins of the people.

Emphasis of the church is also to help people with whatever they are dealing with and meeting their needs.

According to Steve Clifford, God's standard is righteousness and to follow that path is too difficult to do independently, so one needs the help of God. Forgiveness for sins is ushered in when

one acknowledges Jesus as their savior.

The new worship center will provide a space for much more than worship. Classes will be held along with programs for children, sport leagues, library resources, mid-week meals for 300, and much more.

"We are really pleased at what God had done here," said Clifford. The new worship center opened on March 2. Services are held on Saturday evenings at 6:00 p.m. and Sundays at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. and all are welcome. The address is 440 Frederick Street in Santa Cruz. □