

# In 40 days, Church Raises \$1 Million

*Living Hope needed 'faith and a fight' to hold on to its former Kmart campus*



**Despite high-profile** ministry bankruptcies in the past year, Living Hope Church is proving God is still faithful by raising more than \$1 million in just 40 days to maintain possession of its Vancouver, Wash., campus, a former Kmart retail store.

Of course, no one said the miracle came without faith and a fight.

Not only did the 6,000-member church have its challenges, senior pastor John Bishop personally felt the impact of principalities and powers that opposed his gospel mission. Bishop suffered health problems even as his son battled with drugs.

After defeating these giants—and raising the \$5 million it needed to pay off the building owners by the deadline—the church is stronger than ever.

“This is a church that has learned what it means to be a church—to sacrifice, put the needs of others first, to learn what it means about the vision of Jesus more than our own comfort,” Bishop, author of *Dangerous Church*, says.

Living Hope’s victory shows that God still works through people to perform miracles. In order to raise the money, about 20 people donated diamond rings, several gave their cars, one person gave a motorcycle and another gave the church a duplex, which sold for \$100,000 in seven days. One generous family gave up the money it had been saving to go to Disneyland, and a struggling church wrote Living Hope a \$5,000 check.

In all, the megachurch raised \$5.3 million before the deadline. With the excess funds, Living Hope held a megaoutreach to the homeless. The church stormed the city with 20 buses to gather homeless people and bring them back to the church facility. They provided sleeping bags, socks, backpacks full of essentials and more. Church staff even dressed up in formal wear and served the homeless dinner.

With his fundraising campaign, Bishop put his neck on the line by calling the building the church's "promised land" and assuring the congregation God would provide. The pastor planned to resign if they did not raise the money to pay off the building owners by the deadline.

"Christians, intrinsically, we're wired to be risk-adverse," Bishop says. "But God wants us to step out in faith. It's faith that moved the mountains. Without faith you can't please God."

"I know in my heart if this didn't happen I would have to resign. How could I lead a church and say this is our promised land and it didn't happen? Either I wasn't listening to God or something went terribly wrong."