

Megachurch Files Plans to Build Hotel, Apartments on Property

Florida congregation Calvary Orlando, an Assemblies of God church, filed plans to build a hotel and apartment units, according to the *Orlando Sentinel*. A developer is interested in purchasing the property. The church filed plans under their name, but they are not the ones building the development.

“Our soul focus is to share the reality of Christ with Orlando, central-Florida and the surrounding world,” Pastor Ed Garvin says. “We are not in the development business.”

The move is part of a revitalization process the congregation began a few months ago.

The *Sentinel* reports plans filed with the city call for a full-service, 250-room hotel and 400 apartment units.

But the church isn’t moving. While the assembly struggled a few years back, it now thrives.

Pastor Ed Garvin spoke to *Charisma* CEO Steve Strang about the details:

Nationwide, 70 percent of churches are static or declining. Many of them need the kind of turnaround that Calvary is experiencing. A couple of years ago, there were rumors that Calvary’s 5,000-seat auditorium and large campus area were for sale. In fact, I did a Strang Report about it and the previous pastor put that rumor to rest.

Under Pastor Garvin’s leadership, he told the church that they needed to take the resources they had and have “open hands” toward the Lord unto what He wanted them to do with it. They seriously considered relocating and building a

1,600-seat auditorium. They even had an offer of \$49 million cash for their facility.

Pastor Garvin told me that in the natural it seemed the thing to do, but “the Lord said no” and that He had them at that location in Orlando for a reason.

Furthermore:

Pastor Garvin shared with me that he found some “toxicity” in the church when he arrived. It involved certain leaders being in positions that were not their gifting. But he also found a culture where the church was led by the board and the paid staff and the congregants didn’t always feel a level of trust for leadership.

He has tried to rebuild all that.

Pastor Garvin has done this before. This is his fourth “revitalization.” In the process, he has learned that what John Maxwell said—“Everything rises and falls based on leadership”—is true. In fact, when he encourages other pastors, he tells them that the first thing that they have to do is lead. They are not there to be popular. They are not there to be a buddy or a bully, but they have to lead.

He also says that leaders cannot do God’s job. He’s the one that will “build My church.” And of course the Scripture says that unless the Lord builds the house they labor in vain who build it. The church needs to be healthy, and if it is healthy, it will naturally grow.

The third thing he tells pastors who are turning around a church is they can’t do Satan’s job, which is being an accuser of the brethren. Garvin said Satan, since the fall of man, has always used questions such as “What about this?” and “What about that?” He says pastors should never do that.

I was encouraged to talk to pastor Garvin to sense his spirit and to hear about the encouraging things that are happening at Calvary. There aren’t many leaders who would turn down a \$49 million offer to relocate with millions of dollars left in reserve.

As of August 3, the building plans were designated for an unused parking lot.

[Click here](#) to hear Garvin tell Calvary's story in his own words.