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November 22, 2009 in Idaho Voices

Their dream home

New building, 5-acre campus fulfill Clark Fork congregation's prayers, plans

Patty Hutchens pattyhutchens@yahoo.com

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Pastor Scott Douglas stands outside Cabinet Mountain Calvary Chapel in Clark Fork. Courtesy of Patty Hutchens (Full-size photo)

Good things come to those who wait. Just ask the people of Cabinet Mountain Calvary Chapel in Clark Fork.

For the past seven years the congregation has held its Sunday worship services in Hope Elementary School, with Pastor Scott Douglas working out of a 700-square-foot space the remainder of the week.

"I would have to leave when (church) groups needed to use the space," Douglas said.

But now Douglas does not have to leave his office when members of his congregation hold meetings or classes.

On Sept. 20 Cabinet Mountain Calvary Chapel celebrated its 10th anniversary in a big way. The congregation held the first service in its new 11,000-square-foot church, which sits on five acres in Clark Fork right off Highway 200. The church has a bookstore, an education wing, a large sanctuary with a state-of-the-art sound system, an office and fellowship hall.

The sanctuary holds approximately 300 people – about two-thirds the population of Clark Fork.

"There've been up to 210 to 220 people in here on a Sunday," Douglas said.

About four years ago, the members of Cabinet Mountain Calvary Chapel began to consider building a new church. Frustrated when they were not able to locate anything that met their needs and budget, they were ready to give up. "It was almost as if God said he's going to let us try it on our own. We were ready to give up and then someone said they had 5 acres they would donate," said Douglas, adding that the donor wishes to remain anonymous.

Because the land sits 5 feet below the flood plain, acquiring permits took about a year and a half, Douglas said.

In anticipation of purchasing land, the congregation had saved more than \$300,000.

"Don't ask me how we did that. It was a God thing," Douglas said. The congregation used the money for a down payment on the new building.

The church's mortgage is about \$470,000 – but not for long. A man who recently died willed his

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Clark Fork vacation home to the church. The church will own the home – valued at approximately \$1 million – free and clear by next year. When the home is sold, the church will pay off the mortgage and have money left over.

“We’ll be able to make good use of that money and fund our overseas mission programs and also help our local community,” Douglas said.

Those overseas missions are many. The Clark Fork church owns an orphanage in Siberia, which is set to open soon and will be home to 30 children. Douglas said the church hopes to reach the nation by reaching the kids through the orphanage.

“Kids are prone to faith,” he said. “Kids believe things that don’t make sense. Our job is to teach them why it does make sense.”

The church also recently purchased a building in Siberia that it will use as a rural pastor training center.

“We will train Russians and equip them for the ministry,” Douglas said.

The church also sponsors missions in Peru and Mexico.

It is faith that has led Douglas to where he is today. He worked as a grocery store manager in Phoenix until 1999. Knowing he was called to serve God, Douglas and his wife, Valerie, planned to attend Bible college in California. They moved to Clark Fork in 1999 after spending time with relatives in Heron, Mont., knowing they had found their home. Douglas canceled his Bible college plans and started Cabinet Mountain Calvary Chapel.

“It’s been on-the-job training ever since,” Douglas said.

He and Valerie have three grown children, ages 35, 32 and 31. About five years ago they also adopted three siblings who are now 5, 6 and 7.

One of the congregation’s next goals is to open a Christian school in the new building, for kindergarten through sixth grade, by next September.

“Everything is such a blessing,” Douglas said. “There is no limit to what God can do with anyone and in any place.”

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
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