

News Release

For immediate release

Rev. Shawn R. Thornton, senior pastor of Bible Center Church in Charleston, WV resigned his position on Sunday morning, August 17, 2008. In a prepared statement read to the congregation, Pastor Thornton announced that he had accepted an offer to be senior pastor at Calvary Community Church in Westlake Village, California.

According to Thornton, "While always intending to retire right here and never thinking God would ever call me to any other ministry, during the month of May God began to work on my heart in terms of where and how He wanted to use me in His kingdom."

Thornton began his role at Bible Center in November of 1997. Under his leadership the church has grown from an average Sunday morning worship attendance of about 750 to over 2,000. In 2001 the church on Oakhurst Drive expanded from 40,000 to 50,000 square feet and underwent a 1.9 million dollar renovation. In February of 2004 the congregation purchased 96 acres of property in the Southridge Business Development Park, near the Yorktowne residential subdivision. In April of 2006 the church broke ground for a three-phase development project eventually to include more than 60 million dollars of construction. In March of this year the Church opened the first phase which constituted a 17.5 million dollar land and building project including a facility with 66,500 square feet and 675 parking spaces. Phase I includes a 1,200 seat worship center, large lobby with a 59 foot high fire place, and a themed children's floor including a production theater.

The church currently employs nine other full time pastors who will continue the ministry while the Elder Board of the church conducts a pastoral search in accord with its constitution. Thornton was but the fourth senior pastor in the church's 65 year history. Details of the timing and transition have yet to be announced.

Additional information regarding Thornton's departure is available on the church website, www.biblecenterchurch.com.