Ministry Makes Move to Plant New Church in Beaver County

BEAVER FALLS, Pa. (Nov. 30, 2010) – Twenty years ago, Pastor Larry Bettencourt left New Orleans and made his move to reach the youth of Beaver County. Next April, Pastor Larry is making his move to connect with all generations of Beaver County residents at the Blackhawk High School auditorium.

Beginning on April 17, 2011, the former associate pastor of Victory Family Church in Cranberry Township will launch an alternative to the traditional church experience.

“Our goal is to provide information that makes sense in today’s complex and confusing environment,” Bettencourt said. “Any person who has any level of desire to find out who God is and what He can mean to them is who we want to connect with.”

Bettencourt also said that the true reality is that everyone has a champion life hidden somewhere inside of them and that the goal of Champion Life Church is to use God’s principals to break through barriers all people face.

Last week, the Blackhawk Area School Board approved the request made by Champion Life Church to use the High School auditorium on Sunday mornings.

“The application was flawlessly completed and approval by our board was quick and unanimous,” Blackhawk School Board President Frank DeLegrosso said.

The board’s critical action cleared the way for Bettencourt and his core leadership team to put their plans into motion.

The newly formed church will offer a family oriented atmosphere, and Bettencourt believes that the key component to serving and attracting families is an effective student ministry. Leading the way for the youth of Champion Life will be long-time Bettencourt protégé and friend, Douglas “Bubba” Smith.

“Bubba is a critical member of the Champion Life team,” Bettencourt said.

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Smith and Bettencourt have worked together for over seven years while both serving at Victory Family Church.

“Having an opportunity to do this start-up with Pastor Larry is the chance of a lifetime,” Smith said. “We are counting on God to work in huge ways.”

Smith also said he cannot wait to meet with the Champion Life launch team to kick off the long planning process. He will be responsible for all ministry events and activities for students in grades 5-12.

Along-side Bettencourt is his wife and ministry partner of over 17 years, Kim.

“Having watched the work Larry has done over the years, I know that people will be extremely excited about being a significant part of the Champion Life” experience,” she said.

The Bettencourt’s have four daughters ranging from nine to 16-years-old.

Bettencourt said that a big part of their decision to launch this new ministry resulted from the challenges they’ve experienced from raising their daughters in today’s mixed up world.

“Anything I can do to help others benefit from what I’ve learned professionally and personally is exactly where I want to serve,” he said. “There is no doubt that there are enough churches; what we need are churches that create relevant environments which meet the needs of today’s generation.”

The Blackhawk auditorium is expected to provide an outstanding venue for Sunday morning worship services. The auditorium seats over 750 people. The room has a tiered floor plan that is fully carpeted and is coupled with a very large, wide stage. The Blackhawk auditorium is also designed to produce brilliant sound quality which Bettencourt says is very important to Champion Life.

“Having such great sound will place a high priority on providing excellent and meaningful music,” he said.

Each week, classrooms in the school will be creatively set up to enhance each student’s learning experience. Champion Life will focus on teaching every child three things: God made them, God loves them, and Jesus wants to be their friend forever. Bettencourt plans to do this through a variety of engaging methods including activities, large group worship, and small group time.

Bettencourt and Smith believe that life for students at the elementary school age moves very quickly. Champion Life will emphasize that no matter how fast life gets, we all have a God who's really big.
“To help students keep God as a priority as they grow, the Champion Life program will emphasize three things: wisdom, trust and friendship,” Smith said.

Smith said that the middle and high school programs will be a fun and creative space where students will have the opportunity to discover what it means to experience and ultimately prioritize their relationship with Jesus Christ.

“Overall, Champion Life has a plan and a purpose that uniquely meets the needs of today’s entire family,” Bettencourt said. “We welcome anyone who shares our vision to turn this world upside-down for the cause of Christ.”