

The PASADENA Citizen

 HOUSTON
COMMUNITY
NEWSPAPERS

04/16/2008

New chapter in church history

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Randy McCoy is a new member of Richey Street Baptist Church and likes its direction.

"Every Sunday I come and the church just gets bigger and bigger," he said.

Richie Street Baptist Church was one of the first responders on the scene after a fire raged through a portion of the Compton Court apartment complex in Pasadena.

Providing food and support to tenants and lending its building as a Red Cross station for outreach service, the church's ministry was at full speed.

"Whatever we can do to help, we'll help," said Michael Thomas, the church's pastor. "This is what we've called to do and we feel it's our mission right now."

The church was established in 1951, but Thomas, a chaplain for the Pasadena Police Department, has only been its pastor for 10 weeks.

A former associate pastor at Golden Acres was warned by associates to be prepared for a struggle to build, but the church, he said, has built itself.

"Twelve weeks ago, we had 40 members to start with and in 10 weeks, our church is already up to 60 members," said Thomas. "In 10 weeks, we've doubled our membership."

The aftermath of the fire at Compton Court has bonded the church to its community.

"This has come about and we're not doing this for membership, we're doing this because we feel that God has called us to be a light in this community," he said. "This happened in the shadow of our steeple and this is what churches are called on to do — that's why we've stepped forward."

The church community should be a real presence in the neighborhood community, said Thomas.



Michael Thomas is the new pastor of Richey Street Baptists Church on 1010 Richey and the chaplain for the Pasadena Police Department: "He is what this church needs right now," said church member Bonnie Moore.

"We want to see how we can minister together in the community and not be just one church doing one thing in the community," he said

Bonnie Moore has been a church member for 12 years and believes Thomas came to the right place at the right time.

"He is compassionate, he's understanding and is working so hard to build our church of," she said. "He is exactly what we need right now."

Randy Mcroy was one of the volunteers who were distributing donations to tenants of Compton Court.

"I think this is more of what it's really about, helping people by any means, not just going to church every Sunday," he said.

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