

# weimar\_63003

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## Weimar church wheels and deals for new space

**By Jenny Hartgraves**

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WEIMAR-The term spiritual "tune-up" has taken on new meaning at Calvary Baptist Church of Weimar.

As the only Baptist church in Weimar, the congregation of 70 has cruised into something larger and more permanent-the local Ford dealership.

However, this trade-in wasn't easy for the church. It took some divine planning to organize the move.



Before (top)  
and after  
photos of  
Calvary  
Baptist  
Church's  
building show  
its  
transformation  
from an  
abandoned car  
dealership to a  
place of  
worship. The  
service bays  
became a  
sanctuary, and  
the new-car  
showroom  
became Bible  
study  
classrooms.  
The employee  
lounge was  
transformed  
into the  
church  
kitchen.

Calvary Baptist Church started seven years ago in the living room of Bill Fluker after First Baptist Church of Weimar decided no longer to be Baptist. With the help and initiative of James and Faye Stansberry, a small

Baptist Bible study soon grew to include guest speakers, sermons and worship music.

Fluker, who now is chairman of deacons, never expected the kind of growth God planned for this congregation. It wasn't long before the church moved to new property, which included one small meeting room and a house on an acre of land.

After being landlocked there for five years, the stunted church began to experience spiritual claustrophobia, Fluker said. "When you see a certain stage of fullness in your church, you become stymied, and there is no more growth."

As chairman of the building committee, Fluker began to seek new locations for the church. When the Ford dealership, which had been vacant for a long time, was put on the market, he met with the owners to negotiate a price. When the owners realized the building was to be used for a church, they agreed to help finance it.

"As a human, I worry a lot about the finances of it all, but God has been faithful, and he continues to provide the money for us," Fluker said.

With a new location secured, the church knew it needed strong labor to complete the reconstruction. They turned to the help of Texas Baptist Men Retiree Church Builders, a group of men and their wives who travel throughout Texas to build facilities for churches that otherwise could not pay the labor costs. Twenty trailers of men and equipment unloaded in Weimar June 4, where the volunteers spent two weeks turning concrete and metal into a house of worship. Church members provided meals and support to these hard-working volunteers.

Now, metal and grease of the old service bays have been replaced by pews and hymnals in the newly constructed worship center, and the glass showcases that once displayed the newest car models now are classrooms

to develop new-model Christians.

With the population of Weimar, located about halfway between Houston and San Antonio, near 2,000 people, Calvary's new location at the intersection of Interstate 10 and Highway 155 is highly visible, and "it reminds the community that we are a viable and active church," said Pastor Johnny Teague.

"I've seen God move in big ways," Fluker said. "People are getting involved, helping the church and becoming a part of it all. When you're building a new church, people have to be willing to become part of the foundation."

Overall, the entire community has supported Calvary Baptist Church and its endeavor to expand. The church now looks forward to establishing a new youth program to coincide with the current Bible study and marriage courses. They also will expand their Sunday School classes from four to 10.

With growing pains relieved, Calvary Baptist Church hopes to rev up its impact in the Weimar community.

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Texas Baptist churches, in the BGCT, the Southern Baptist Convention ( SBC ) and around the world.