

SPOTLIGHT



UP IN FLAMES: Senior Pastor Albert Cortez of Family Life Assembly of God celebrates after burning the mortgage on the church after paying it off in only four years.

Katy church pays off \$840K mortgage in only 4 years

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The new building project at the Family Life Assembly of God (FLAG) church was baptized by fire Sunday, Dec. 11, as a mortgage-burning ceremony was held to celebrate an \$840,000 note that was paid in full in a little more than four years.

The impromptu ceremony held after the weekly sermon will ready the church to begin work on a proposed \$3.2 million facility to be built on the Roesner Road property. Construction on the new building will be done in stages. Some of the cost has been raised and the construction will continue to be paid for in advance. The building and 1.6 acres of land at 1210 Mason Road now being used by members will be placed on the market.

Parishioners were ex-

pecting to receive a report about the remaining balance due on the mortgage

for the church's 8-acre property in south Katy. They were instead puzzled to see church member Ken

Chappell, who is also Houston Department Fire Department firefighter, dressed in full firefighter gear at the rear of the sanctuary in preparation for the ceremony.

Senior Pastor Albert Cortez was also caught by surprise, but quickly rallied to call current and past board members, pastoral staff members, and Building Steering Committee members to join him and his wife, Rebekah, on the platform. Children from the Children's Church, as well as the Casa de Vida congregation, also joined the rest of the FLAG family in the sanctuary.

After a special prayer of

thanksgiving, Pastor Cortez set copies of the Roesner Road mortgage alight; his action was greeted with singing, shouts in celebration and and praise.

The event was also preceded by the 40-voice Christmas Choir and a powerful message entitled, "Immanuel: God With Us".

The Family Life Assembly of God was founded in 1987 by a handful of families who met in a members' home. In 1991, church services have been held in a former car dealership that was renovated into a church when a sanctuary was built.

Faced with increasing growth in membership, the first steps towards acquiring the land were taken in mid-2008, when church members overwhelmingly voted to approve a plan by the board of directors to buy the land. The new building is expected to seat up to 400 people.