

Faith

SPIRIT OF LIFE BIBLE CHURCH

Living the Spirit of life with passion

BY QIN TANG

Special to the Woodbury Bulletin

Anyone who visits Spirit of Life Bible Church in Woodbury and hears Pastor Frank Sander's messages is most likely impressed by what he or she sees and hears. Pastor Sanders is a man of stature, and more importantly, he is a man of passion.

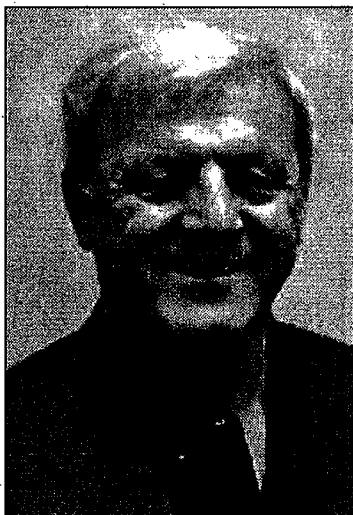
At least that is how I feel as a former Chinese atheist, now a Christian and a new member of Spirit of Life.

I went to Spirit of Life in September, 2004 because the church was offering an 8-week study on "The 40 Days of Purpose." I stayed with Spirit of Life because of Pastor Sanders. As a seeker of many years, I had visited quite a few churches in my life before I came to Spirit of Life, but no other pastors have ever made a more powerful impression on me.

At 6 feet, 3 inches, Pastor Sanders is a tall man. He had a career as a professional hockey player and played hockey for over 20 years. His athletic talent, his passion, and hard work led him to the pinnacle of his dreams as an athlete on the 1972 USA hockey team when it captured the Olympic Silver Medal in Sapporo, Japan. He played one year professionally with the Minnesota Fighting Saints.

Yet the success in his professional life didn't bring the fulfillment and happiness he was looking for. Even though he reached the mountaintop and experienced great success, he still felt emptiness in his life. What he had achieved was not satisfying. He walked away from the worldly pursuit of success and happiness, and turned his life in a new direction.

At the age of 25, he committed his life to serve the Lord. He went



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Pastor Frank Sanders

to seminary and became a youth pastor. He worked with young people for almost 20 years and was an associate minister for several years after that. Then another change happened that brought his faith and passion for Christ to a new level.

In 2001, Sanders and 13 other people started Spirit of Life Bible Church in Woodbury. It was a big step of faith for him and all the members, but their strong faith in God helped them take the risk and face the challenge.

Sander's teaching and messages are always based on the truth from the Bible. They are practical and challenging. One thing is for sure. People do not feel bored when listening to his messages. His passion and excitement for God will infect, inspire and impress everyone around him.

His passion for Christ shows especially during his Sunday sermons. Psalm 100 says to "Shout for joy to the Lord" and that's the way Sanders preaches. He literally makes a lot of joyful noises when he preaches. He can be as excited

and passionate about Jesus as a sport fan is excited about watching his favorite team winning the Olympics.

A major focus of the church's activities is the children's program that includes the weekly Sunday school classes and fun activities throughout the year, monthly children's church services, Cub Scouts, vacation Bible school, an annual picnic, Fall Harvest party and Christmas program.

My two children love to go to Sunday school at Spirit of Life. They love the small class size and the dedicated Sunday school teachers.

In the four plus years since the church started, God has blessed it tremendously and membership has grown exponentially. The current church facility at Wooddale Drive is getting too small. With the big population growth in Woodbury, the congregation saw the need for a bigger church facility to accommodate the growth.

"There is a hunger for God in this community. We see a big opportunity and a huge responsibility ahead of us," Sanders said. "Moving into a new facility is another big step of faith, but we know that God will supply our needs. We are doing this for God's glory. He will bless us again as He did over the last few years."

The new church facility at 690 Commerce Drive in Woodbury is near Sam's Club. The first service will take place at 10 a.m., Sunday, Sept. 3. Everyone is welcome. For more information and to request a DVD about the church, visit www.SpiritOfLifeBibleChurch.org or call (651)731-1900.

Qin Tang is a Woodbury resident.