

CHURCH BECOMES "PURPOSE-DRIVEN" IN LESS THAN 40 DAYS!

by Horace Pook, Fall 2004

In an effort to bring quicker spiritual transformation to their congregation, New Suburbia Community Church recently finished Rick Warren's "40 Days of Purpose" in a record-breaking 30 days, according to church administrator Marla Shoop. "Our congregation lives in a fast-paced culture, and they just don't have the time to commit 40 days to finding their purpose," Shoop explained. "We knew we had to cut some fat from this incredible movement of God."

Streamlining the original program involved a coordinated effort by Senior Pastor Biff Donahue and his staff to cut out redundant scripture references that might bog down the study. "No offense to Rick, but his book is over 320 pages long," Donahue said. "So we contacted the good folks down at Reader's Digest and got some real good pointers."

Members Josh and Tiffany Hampton were thrilled with the result because it gave them more free time to cope with their hectic lifestyle. "Warren's original program went a long way in helping us avoid time-consuming Bible reading, but with Pastor Biff's edited version we were able to gain the extra time necessary to fill our SUV with gas without cutting into Tiffany's tanning bed time," Josh explained. Added Tiffany, "After the 30 days, we found that it was just part of our God-given personalities to be so shallow."

The abbreviated Purpose-Driven program hasn't come without its critics, however. One member, who wished to remain anonymous, questioned the shortened study. "After 30 days I found out my 'SHAPE' is to be a volunteer church janitor? I'm pretty sure ten more days of transformation would've landed me a better purpose."

Undaunted by these dissenters, New Suburbia is planning on introducing Rick Warren's newest program, "40 Days of Community," sometime next year. Says Shoop confidently, "We think we can crank out that puppy in 20."