

following January, with residents moving in by mid-2010. As that projected occupancy date arrived, the tower still sat vacant and unrepaired. The York County Council found MorningStar “in default” of their agreement and since that time “the county and MorningStar have been going back and forth in legal battles,” according to a WBTV Channel 3 local television news report.

Fort Mill residents are now hoping that a loophole in a county ordinance will be the key to bringing down the curtain on Joyner’s failed project. The ordinance says that unfit dwellings are unlawful if found in dilapidation or are unsafe to residents of the county. Once this designation is made, and if the owner is unable to repair the property, the county is allowed to demolish it. Residents have filed a petition to this end. This new plan, however, could result in years of legal wrangling.

Joyner is part of a movement of modern-day prophets and apostles and associates with other self-appointed prophets such as Mike Bickle, Paul Cain, and Todd Bentley.

—MKG

HOWARD-BROWNE ACCUSED OF MORMON-BASHING

Some people think politics and religion are two subjects better left unspoken. But when the two are united and expressed, conflict and contempt are sure to ensue.

Pentecostal pastor Rodney Howard-Browne received some negative press when, following a political event for Republican presidential candidate Newt Gingrich, he expressed to reporters “grave reservations” about rival candidate Mitt Romney and his Mormon faith. “Mormonism is a cult and that’s the problem,” Howard-Browne was reported to have said according to an online article by *The Daily Mail*, a British publication. The article further cited Howard-Browne as saying, “Mormonism, if you study the whole history of it, and I’m not trying to create a problem, but they had death squads that would go around kill[ing] everybody that wasn’t a Mormon.”

Another online article reporting Howard-Browne’s statements prefaced its story by saying, “At least he’s being creative. The latest anti-Mormon comments from a pastor backing one of Mitt Romney’s primary opponents.”

The rally for Gingrich was held on the grounds of Howard-Browne’s The River at Tampa Bay church on Jan. 23.

Howard-Browne’s comments did not create a stir comparable to one created last fall by prominent Baptist minister, Dr. Robert Jeffress. Jeffress, senior pastor of

First Baptist Church of Dallas, stated that Mormonism was a non-Christian cult and that evangelical voters “ought to give preference to a Christian instead of someone who doesn’t embrace historical Christianity.”

Other news outlets have offered a more shrewd response to the negative comments about Mitt Romney and Mormonism. At the same time Howard-Browne’s comments were being reported, *The Salt Lake City Tribune* intoned that “True Christians don’t demonize Mormons.” The article stated, “Mark DeMoss has a message for his fellow evangelicals: You can’t attack and demean Mormons or President Barack Obama and still consider yourself a follower of Jesus Christ.” DeMoss made his remarks during a devotional given at Brigham Young University.

DeMoss heads up a faith-based public-relations firm in Atlanta and has, for the past five years, been an unpaid adviser to Romney’s presidential campaign. He also told the *Tribune* in a telephone interview that he “believes that any question about whether Mormons are Christians is ‘irrelevant to me in the context of choosing a president.’”

In the 1990s, Howard-Browne rose as a major celebrity within Charismatic “signs and wonders” circles promoting the “laughing in the Spirit” phenomenon. He labeled himself a “Holy Ghost bartender” and “laughing evangelist.” As the laughing spectacle ran its course and the novelty waned, Howard-Browne settled into the role as a Tampa pastor.

—MKG

ROBERTS ARRESTED ON DUI, SPEEDING CHARGES

Televangelist Richard Roberts has attracted the attention of the national media, but not for a reason he would like. In January, the former president of Oral Roberts University in Tulsa and son of late faith healer Oral Roberts was arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence of alcohol and speeding. The arrest report, complete with a mug shot, was picked up not only by Tulsa-area television and newspapers, but also by national outlets including CNN and CBN News.

The arrest report stated that Roberts, 63, was pulled over in his Mercedes-Benz sedan just after midnight on Jan. 24 by an Oklahoma Highway Patrol after the trooper “checked the vehicle’s speed at 93 MPH in a 65 MPH zone.” The report also stated that upon contact with Roberts, the police officer “immediately detected the strong odor of an alcoholic beverage about Roberts’ breath and person.”

According to a *Tulsa News* article, “Roberts was unable to complete two field sobriety tests and was taken to the Jenks Police Department to determine his blood-alcohol