

Buzz

A Time to Shout

Phillips, Craig and Dean say it's time for Christians to make themselves heard.

The contemporary Christian trio Phillips, Craig and Dean—comprised of Pentecostal pastors Randy Phillips, Shawn Craig and Dan Dean—have a message for the church: It's time to shout. "The world does not need any more silent-majority Christians," Phillips says. "We need people to stand up—at school, in universities, in politics, in pulpits. Wherever God has called you to be, stand up and proclaim the gospel at the top of your lungs." That theme inspired the title cut of their latest release, *Top of My Lungs*. "It's the perfect time ... for the people of God to stand up and be the light," Phillips says. "And that light is ... a hopeful message, that in the middle of crisis and uncertainty, 'This is the way, walk ye in it.' "

Adrienne S. Gaines

Prayer Point

As voters across the United States head to the polls this month for the midterm elections, we are reminded of the call to intercede for those in authority (see 1 Tim. 2:1-3). This month we encourage you to:

1. Pray that Christians will become informed and vote for candidates who stand for godly principles
2. Pray that there will be record-breaking voter turnout

3. Pray that the elected officials will have wisdom and make God-honoring decisions.

What's in a Name?

Nearly a quarter of the 14 percent of Americans who claim to be unaffiliated with a religion actually attend religious services, according to a recent Baylor University survey. Only 10.8 percent of the nation—or about 10 million people—are truly unaffiliated. Considered the most comprehensive religion study to date, American Piety in the 21st Century also found that fewer than half the nation's evangelicals want to be labeled as such. Only 15 percent of Americans preferred to identify themselves with the term “evangelical”; more chose “Bible-believing” (47.2 percent) and “born again” (28.5 percent).

UNSUNG HEROES

Not Forgotten

Florida ministry reaches out to Ukraine's outcast children

A little girl named Natasha would have eventually gone blind if it weren't for Teresa Fillmon. A Ukrainian orphan, Natasha suffered from Treacher Collins syndrome, a rare inherited disorder characterized by abnormalities on the head and face. People with this condition often go blind because they typically lack cheekbones to support their eye sockets.

Natasha, however, was brought to the U.S., where Fillmon arranged to have the illness treated. Natasha neither lost her sight nor lives with significant facial abnormalities.

As director of His Kids, Too! (.org), a Tallahassee, nonprofit organization, Fillmon helps care for poor, neglected kids. Since she launched the ministry in 1983, Fillmon has partnered with missionaries around the world to send food, clothes and other supplies to nations such as Haiti, Cuba, Nigeria, Italy and Bosnia.

She first traveled to Ukraine in 1998 and now serves more than 3,800 children in 14 facilities across the nation. Fillmon brings as many children as she can to the U.S. by assisting American families with the international adoption process.

Owning three businesses helps Fillmon and her husband, Rich, provide for their five children, including two they adopted from Ukraine. When they retire, the couple hope to work as full-time missionaries in Ukraine.

“God calls us to action,” Fillmon says. “There are so many Scriptures that call on us to show love and mercy to the poor, the weak, the orphans and widows.”

Domini Hedderman

MINISTRY PROFILE

Living a Legacy

Barbara Allen, the sixth-generation great-granddaughter of abolitionist Sojourner Truth, hopes to continue her ancestor’s legacy of faith-based empowerment with the launch of Seek the Kingdom, a Kalamazoo, outreach that will help the unemployed develop job-readiness skills.

“We’re going to teach people how to write a résumé, how to interview successfully and computer skills,” Allen, 42, says. “We’ll also have tutoring available after school for students who need help with math or reading. I’ve always felt this mission since I was a little girl to help the underprivileged in my community in some way, just like my ancestor Sojourner.”

Born around 1797, Truth escaped slavery in New York and eventually became a prominent abolitionist and women’s rights advocate. Allen says her outreach will serve young, disadvantaged African-Americans, who often aren’t prepared to enter the workforce. A grand opening in August drew several civic leaders, including City Commissioner Mary Balkema. “She’s going to fill in the gaps in the community that other organizations aren’t serving,” Balkema says. “She’s keeping the flame alive that Sojourner Truth started.”

Leilani haywood

EVANGELISM

Leading Prayer on Times Square

Ad campaign targets passers-by in America’s busiest city

“God Gives Hope” will flash across the NBC Jumbotron electronic billboard on New York’s Times Square 120 times Nov. 13-26, including during the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day parade. Sponsored by the Assemblies of God (AG), the message will reach an estimated audience of 21 million. The giant digital screen sits high above the street on One Times Square, site of the New Year’s Eve ball drop.

The 30-second ads focus on addiction, terminal illness and

marital conflict. Each spot fades into the tagline "life is never hopeless," and offers information for the AG national prayer center and the Web site. The prayer center is arranging extra lines to handle the deluge of expected prayer requests.

AG officials decided within 24 hours to accept the rare opportunity of reaching a secular audience when another advertiser quit the time slot unexpectedly. "It's the first time we have ever done something like this, and it just dropped into our lap," says Juleen Turnage, public relations director of the denomination. "It's a God-thing now that has taken on a life of its own."

During the showings teams from the Master's Commission outreach, U.S. missionaries and local churches will participate in prayer watches and distribute thousands of prayer hotline refrigerator magnets and testimony booklets.

Local Christians are invited to join intercessory prayer groups on Nov. 13. "This is another indicator of God initiating prayer opportunities for the people, the churches and the city of New York," says Duane Durst, superintendent of the AG's New York District. "I believe that when God moves in New York City it's going to affect the rest of our nation."

Peter K. Johnson

Changed Lives

James Sizemore started drinking at age 12, and eventually began abusing drugs. By age 19, he had been in jail several times and was facing a long prison term for armed robbery. Although he had been to church, he says he had never experienced the power of the gospel—until March 1981.

Tired and desperate for change, he cried out to Jesus on the floor of his prison cell. “I vowed that if He would set me free, I would follow Him the rest of my life,” he says. “That simple prayer released the Holy Spirit into the cell, even though at that time I had never heard of the Holy Spirit. My broken life came in contact with the power of God, and I was instantly delivered from drug addiction. I didn’t understand all that happened, but I was determined to spend my life following this Savior.”

Sentenced to 17 years, Sizemore spent his free time attending chapel services, studying the Bible and evangelizing in the prison. He continued ministering after his release in 1989 and five years later founded Joyful Life Ministries in Philadelphia with his wife, Esther. Today he is pursuing a doctoral degree at Oral Roberts University.

“I never imagined when Jesus delivered me at 19 years of age from drug addiction that my life would be so blessed today,” he says. “I have been fortunate to see Luke 4:18 fulfilled in people’s lives. My advice to everyone is to ‘taste and see that the Lord is good.’”

FAITH & CULTURE

A Night With the King

Tommy Tenney’s popular novel about Queen Esther has sold thousands of copies and has struck a chord among readers seeking deeper intimacy with God. On Oct. 13 that message was taken to the silver screen in One Night With the King, a lavish \$20 million production filmed in India.

“Everyone wants to know that their life has purpose,” says

Matthew Crouch, president of Gener8xion Entertainment, which produced the film. "We want audiences to feel the touch of destiny, which is just God simply touching someone and saying, 'I want you to know that I'm real.'"

Starring Tiffany Dupont, Luke Goss, John Noble, John Rhys-Davies, Peter O'Toole and Omar Sharif, the film was to release on 1,000 screens nationally and on DVD in March. "I'm not a Hollywood insider, but I think that God opening the doors for this to become a movie will open the doors for anybody that has a legitimate God idea, a good idea, to walk through those same doors," Tenney says.

Pastors nationwide mobilized their congregations to see the movie, and some planned to take foster and inner-city children to see the film, hoping they would be inspired by its themes of purpose and destiny. Yet Orlando, Fla., pastor Mark Chironna believes the film's impact may be broader than inspiring individuals.

"We are seeing a repeat of many of the ancient strongholds rising up to seek to undermine the purpose of God in our generation," he says, referring to calls from Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to destroy Israel. "I really feel God is wanting to make us aware of how significant the times are that we're living in. No matter what our individual destiny and purpose is, our purpose together is greater.

... There's something a lot bigger going on. And just maybe He's brought us to the kingdom for such a time as this."

Adrienne S. Gaines

Evon G. Horton has been named senior pastor of Brownsville Assembly of God in Pensacola, Fla. Former president of Master's College and Seminary in Toronto, Horton previously served as pastor of Mississauga Gospel Temple in Ontario. In addition to leading Brownsville, Horton serves on the U.S. board of Benny Hinn Ministries and on the board of directors of Willow Creek Canada.

Church of God of Prophecy Bishop Fred S. Fisher Sr. announced his retirement as general overseer during the group's 94th annual General Assembly in August. Elected in 2000, Fisher has seen the denomination nearly double its membership internationally. His successor, Randall E. Howard, the denomination's former global outreach director, was selected Aug. 23. Howard was to begin his term Oct. 1. During the convention, delegates also voted to allow women to serve as deaconesses and clarified the church's stance on divorce and remarriage. Pastors can now determine on a case-by-case basis whether those who remarry after divorce are in an adulterous situation.

Episcopal evangelist Lee Buck died Sept. 5 in his Atlanta home after suffering from a heart condition. He was 83. Before leaving the Episcopal Church USA, Buck had become one of the denomination's most prominent lay evangelists, the conservative Anglican newsletter VirtueOnline reported. After working as a senior executive in the insurance industry for several years, he joined the ministry of charismatic preacher Terry Fullam in Connecticut, where Buck was baptized in the Holy Spirit and launched his evangelistic ministry. A funeral service was held Sept. 9 in Atlanta. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Audrey; four daughters; 11 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren..