

CharisMatters

‘Torch Rallies’ Prepare Way For ‘The Call’ In Washington

A June gathering of some 2,000 youth on Long Island, N.Y., may have awakened a sleeping spiritual giant in this New York City metro area.

The youth met at Upper Room

Ministries in Dix Hills, N.Y., for two days of worship, consecration and training in evangelism as one of several Torch Rally events hosted by youth minister Bob Weiner.

The Long Island event drew youth, ages 13-21, from 75 area churches. Weiner plans to host 31 Torch Rallies within a 400-mile radius of Washington, D.C., during the year.

His goal is to train 100,000 youth to make 10 converts who will then do the same.

The rallies will climax with The Call, a national event in Washington on Sept. 2 in which as many as 400,000 youth are expected at the Capitol Mall to pray and fast for their generation.

“By God’s grace alone, we are believing for 1 million new Christians by the end of the year 2000,” Weiner said.

“The situation with America’s youth is desperate. I believe if there’s not a revolutionary revival among our youth, we’re going to lose

this generation.”

During the Long Island altar call, more than 1,000 youth dedicated their lives to Christ. Other sessions tackled the topics of growing in faith, dying to self and developing a compassion for the lost. Practical teaching on sharing one’s faith also was offered, and hundreds responded positively to a call for

those who would
consider pursuing
full-time ministry or world missions.

In addition to the Long Island rally, other Torch Rally events have been held in Littleton, Colo.;
Baltimore; Washington; and Silver Spring, attracting between 1,000 and 2,000 attendants. Rallies in New York City and Boston are also scheduled.

Torch Rally is so named for “having youth take the torch of Cassie Bernall and Rachel Scott, as well as other youth who have died for their faith, back into their schools and lighting a revival,” Weiner said.

—Annemarie McLean
in Long Island, N.Y.

Aussie Magazine Says It’s Hip To Be a Pentecostal

The April 11 edition of a well-respected secular magazine in Australia featured a

positive cover story about Pentecostal church growth in the

land Down Under, with cover art sporting the happy and smiling faces of pastors Bobbie and Brian Houston of Hills Christian Life Centre, an Assemblies of God church in northwest Sydney that draws 7,000 worshipers on Sundays.

Max Walsh, editor-in-chief of The Bulletin, notes in an issue preamble the publication's reasoning behind presenting a cover story on religion in a magazine whose readership lives in a nation that is "probably the most secular of all the democracies" of the world. And it's mostly the exploding growth of Pentecostal churches in Australia that got the editor's attention.

"I'm referring here to a mass political was surprised when senior writer Diana Bagnall told me more Australians attend Pentecostal services than Anglican churches," Walsh wrote. "This is a major, fast-growing religious force."

Bagnall noted that the movement is a "big, vigorous and potentially powerful" movement.

Before Jesus, After Jesus

The Day Jesus Visited San Quentin

When Dennis Whitman went to prison for killing his brother, it was his second trip to the slammer. He had already done time for peddling LSD.

The Californian took acid to escape the pain of a home dominated by alcoholism. But fantasy turned to tragedy after his brother gave him some angel dust. While hallucinating, Whitman went into a rage and stomped his brother to death.

When sober, he reported the crime but refused to believe he was responsible. A jury found him guilty.

Inside San Quentin prison, a friend from his previous prison stay came to his cell. The inmate told Whitman he wasn't the same man anymore. He had met Jesus, the Son of God.

"I knew he wasn't faking it," Whitman recalled. "I could see the peace in his eyes."

Taking a New

Testament from his friend, he read it continuously for three days. When the man returned, Whitman affirmed that he was ready to ask Christ to be his Savior.

Today, as director of Teen Challenge in Turlock, Calif., he has seen lives changed by the gospel, including that of a hit man for the Mexican mafia.

His pastor, Glen Berteau of Calvary Temple in Modesto, Calif., says Whitman is "probably one of the most committed men I have seen. He has an intensity about him, to help rescue lives that have been broken and destroyed."

"God took someone possessed by evil

and made me a new man,” Whitman adds. “Best of all, I have freedom from the past.”

–Ken Walker

Well-Known Gospel Singer James Moore Dies in Memphis

Gospel music lovers were saddened by the death of one of the most

talented singers in the industry.

Rev. James Moore, a Grammy-nominated artist, died June 7 in Memphis, Tenn., due to complications from pneumonia.

Moore, 44, received rave reviews in 1991 when *Billboard* ranked his popular *Live With Mississippi Mass Choir* the No. 1

gospel disc in the country. He went on to release popular CDs such as *Live in Detroit* and *I Will Trust in the Lord*. Moore, a member of Bailey Cathedral Church of God in Christ (COGIC), was buried in his hometown of Detroit.

The Church of God in Christ is also mourning the death of Bishop William M. James of Toledo, Ohio. James, 71, who died June 11 after a brief illness, was a member of COGIC’s 12-member general board.

Pastor of St. James Holiness Church in Toledo and James Temple COGIC in Cincinnati, James was noted for his fiery Latter Rain conference, which drew thousands to Christ. He is survived by his wife, Annette Marie, and five adult sons.

–Valerie G. Lowe

THE AUGUST LIST

No. 1 Christian hardback: Fresh Faith, Jim Cymbala and Dean Merrill (Zondervan)

No. 1 paperback: The Power of a Praying Wife, Stormie Omartian (Harvest House)

No. 1 fiction book: Left Behind, Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins (Tyndale)

No. 1 CD: God Is Working–Live, Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir (Word)