

Recent Prayer Efforts Target Hollywood

Christians are praying for the film capital in hopes that it will become known as 'Holywood'

Christians converged in Southern California in February to pray for the entertainment capital of the world—in hopes that Hollywood would become known as “Holywood.”

The desire to bring a sea change in Tinseltown was evident Feb. 22 as 30,000 people gathered for prayer at the Rose Bowl for The Call Los Angeles. Many of the participants spent the day fasting and were encouraged to begin a 40-day fast that would end April 5 with another Call event in San Francisco.

“This was really God working,” said Karen Covell, director of prayer for Hollywood Prayer Network, a grass-roots ministry for and by Hollywood professionals. “It was so amazing to see so many people [at The Call], especially kids, in intercessory prayer.

“I really believe that if we commit to prayer and let God do the work, then we can rid the industry of pornography, and Hollywood can be an influence by sending out good messages to youngsters,” Covell added.

Meanwhile, a smaller band of intercessors assembled in nearby Santa Monica to conduct strategic prayer during the American Film Market’s annual event, said to be the largest gathering of industry power-brokers in the world. Some 7,000 media executives attended the weeklong event to screen more than 600 films and decide which ones to purchase and market around the

world.

“Christians can affect the films that go into the world by affecting the atmosphere over the American Film Market,” said Don Paul, a prophetic minister and head of Santa Monica-based Mission Hollywood.

Paul, who organized the Santa Monica prayer effort, and his team of intercessors conducted what they call “prophetic assault worship” as an attempt to change the spiritual atmosphere in the region. He believes last year’s similar prayer effort resulted in the release of more family-oriented films.

The Call focused on bringing cultural transformation while mandating repentance, reconciliation, revival and revolution. Earlier on the day of the event, a magnitude 5.4 earthquake shook Southern California. Ché Ahn, a co-founder of The Call and the pastor of Harvest Rock Church in Pasadena, said the temblor was symbolic of what God wanted to do through prayer.

“We believe God is shaking the heavens and the earth,” Ahn said. “We want to see God bring a new move of His Spirit here in California.”

Though the Los Angeles event was smaller than the first Call in Washington, D.C., which drew 400,000 participants in 2000, Ahn said he was touched to see so many attendees stay the entire day.

“I’ve never seen anything like it,” he said. “Personally, I’ve never wept as much at a Call event. It really touched me.

There was a very diverse group of people there.

“What’s even more amazing is that we didn’t advertise or say who the speakers were going to be, yet 30,000 people showed up, and many of them stayed. To me that was a miracle.”

Hollywood and the entertainment industry have been hot areas for prayer for many years. Actress Jamie-Lyn Bauer hosts a prayer group in her home, and many other teams have conducted prayer walks at several key sites in the region. In April, Los Angeles-based Sunset Ministries planned to host televangelist Benny Hinn as part of a three-day prayer and worship event aimed at proclaiming Jesus Lord over Hollywood.

Paul hoped the prayer efforts in Hollywood would be ongoing, particularly in Santa Monica, which he believes is a spiritually significant area. He said Hollywood is not merely an unincorporated town in Los Angeles; it is an organization.

“When you look at the government, it’s not all located in Washington, D.C.,” Paul said. “The government is everywhere. Hollywood is the same way.”

Some of the largest studios are based outside of Hollywood, including 20th Century Fox and HBO, which are located to the west in Century City. MTV and Fox-TV are headquartered in Santa Monica. Warner Bros., Disney and NBC are north in Burbank. Sony Pictures is located south in Culver City.

In addition to prayer, Christians familiar with the film industry say developing relationships with media leaders is critical to bringing change in the region. “One of the things you don’t see in Hollywood is healthy relationships,” Paul

said. "You have to get people to like you first, instead of getting in their faces. You have to learn how to speak their language."

Covell said the Hollywood Prayer Network, which has been praying for the entertainment industry for years, has seen many actors and studio executives "come out of the closet" and accept Jesus. She added that she didn't believe there was a conflict in holding The Call and intercession for the American Film Market at the same time.

"There is something going on in Hollywood every weekend," she said. "It's the Grammys one week and the Oscars the next. I think it's great that there were enough people to be at two different events with the same goal of praying for Hollywood."

Call co-founder Lou Engle believes Los Angeles and San Francisco are two of the most important cities in the country.

"When you look at Los Angeles and San Francisco," Engle said, "what you're looking at are two of the most influential cities in the United States, if not the whole world. [The Los Angeles area] is the entertainment, communications and porno capital, and San Francisco is one of the trendiest cities in the world.

"We are praying for a revival like never before," he added. "We believe that God wants to influence Hollywood for His kingdom."

During The Call, Engle noted that 37 percent of U.S. pastors struggle with online pornography and called this lust perverted worship. In one of his many speeches, he called on attendees to declare the San Fernando Valley—considered the

pornography capital of the world—as a city of worship and not lust.

Engle believes the power of prayer will influence the way things are run in Hollywood, but those changes may not come as quickly as some may hope.

“We may not see results until 10 to 15 years down the line,” Engle said. “Or we may see them immediately. Right now it’s too hard to tell.”

Kevin Hunter in Los Angeles