

Canadian Youth Convene in Ottawa For Massive Prayer Effort

Some 10,000 people converged on the capital's Parliament complex in August to pray for national revival

A six-hour prayer and worship extravaganza called The CRY drew more than 10,000 Canadians to the Parliament buildings in the national capital of Ottawa Aug. 24 in what some report was the largest youth prayer rally in Canada's history.

Young people from almost every denomination joined together to cry out for God's revival in a nation that has taken what they described as liberal turns in politics and ungodly turns in moral standards for society.

The CRY—which stands for Canadian Revived Youth—united young Canadians in a land often fragmented by regional ethnic and cultural differences. Although affiliated with The Call, the American youth-prayer movement, the event was organized by Canadian adults.

"The youth of today are a spiritual generation, and we believe their prayers can change the entire atmosphere of Canada," said Greg Gill, an organizer of the event. "I believe this meeting will bring to youth more of a spiritual awareness and passion for prayer than ever before."

"I came to Ottawa because I want to see Canada saved," said Jenna Robson, 14, of Brampton, Ontario. "I know God will do it if we ask Him to."

At one moment midway through the event, when the crowd gathered at Parliament Hill was worshiping God with the song "Holy Is the Lord," youth pastor and event co-organizer Steve Osmond took the microphone and stated: "You have the attention of the Father. His ear is attuned to your cries. You have an open heaven. Jesus Christ is Lord and ruler of Canada. Canada shall be saved!"

The event included encouragement and prayer from David Mainse, founder of the Christian TV program 100 Huntley Street and CEO of the 24-hour Canadian Christian TV station CTS; and Brian Warren, a former Canadian Football League (CFL) player and founder of the Canadian Prayer Assembly.

In addition, Ron Luce, founder of Acquire the Fire youth ministries offered encouragement, as did several impassioned youth from across the country. The bands Surreal, Tehillah Monday, Tehillah Toronto and Sheryl Stacey led powerful, lively worship. The reading of a different key line from the Lord's Prayer prefaced each hour of the meeting.

In March 2001, Osmond met with Gill—a worship leader and pastor of First Assembly Pentecostal in Calgary, Alberta, where Osmond also attends—to discuss the idea of a national prayer meeting for Canadian youth. Two other key leaders also attended—ex-CFL player Warren and prominent Canadian revivalist Wes Campbell.

"We felt something needed to happen for Canadian youth that would come from the grassroots level," said Gill, also one of the founders of the Tehillah movement, a Monday night worship-and-prayer meeting held in various cities across Canada. "We'd built up such momentum with Tehillah and various conferences around the country that we needed to go to the nation with

this prayer meeting.”

Dan King, head of the Canadian arm of 24-7 Prayer—a British prayer network—told the crowd they want to launch round-the-clock prayer across Canada next year. He said there already are several of the network’s prayer groups operating in Canada.

At the same time as The CRY, 20,000 youth in Germany were praying for revival in their own country. Osmond said another CRY meeting is in the works but has not been scheduled.

Josie Newman in Ottawa, Ontario