

Churches Reach Community With Healing Services, Health Care

Ministries in Missouri and Michigan offer healing prayer and medical care at unique new outreach facilities

Churches in Kansas City, Mo., and Lansing, Mich., have opened health and healing centers to treat body and soul.

World Revival Church, home of the Smithton Outpouring, celebrated its seventh year by opening the House of Hope and Healing, a lodge-style retreat where people suffering from illness can relax and receive healing prayer.

“It’s a place of dignity and understanding, and it’s free and open 24 hours a day,” pastor Steve Gray said. “It’s about helping people get free of the circumstances or diseases that hold them hostage. We counterbalance the clinical feeling you get in a doctor’s office with an atmosphere of warmth, where people can experience the healing power of God.”

The house is the next step for this revival church, which seven years ago experienced a move of the Holy Spirit that has drawn hundreds of thousands of visitors. The church moved to Kansas City in 2000 and is adding community service to its mission.

“Our church was transformed by the power of God, but I’ve always had in mind the sick, hurting, frightened people in our community,” Gray said. “They get an X-ray or a bad diagnosis and ask, ‘Where do I go now?’ We want to be the place they come to.

“This is a season of teaming up with our neighbors to make this city a better place. ... Yes, our revival services are still exciting and life-changing, but we have to take what’s in our hearts and bring it to the community. There are times

to blow in with the power of God, but there are also times to build bridges.”

In Lansing, the multimillion-dollar Gilead Healing Center has a similar approach. “We want greater Lansing to be the healthiest, happiest place on Earth,” said Dave Williams, pastor of 4,000-member Mount Hope Church Assembly of God.

The healing center has a two-pronged method: One half of the large facility is given to prayer, counseling and casting out demons. The other side is a medical center with \$2 million in medical and dental equipment, and a full-time doctor.

“The center is not a substitute for regular medical care, but a supplement to it,” Williams said. “It provides a faith-filled atmosphere to encourage healing in the entire man.”

Mount Hope launched Gilead in part because of a rash of adverse drug reactions that resulted in several deaths in their church. “I thought, there’s got to be a way to keep God’s people healthy,” Williams said. “So many ministers don’t believe it’s God’s will to heal anymore. You can’t minister in faith like that.”

The church studied the ministries of Kathryn Kuhlman, Aimee Semple McPherson, Maria Woodworth Etter and John G. Lake, who pioneered the concept of healing rooms.

“The first approach is always ministering in prayer and faith,” Williams said. “The second approach is alternative medicine and natural therapies that are gentler to people than some of the medications that can cause more harm than good. The third approach is conventional medical care.”

The clinic offers free workshops on exercise, nutrition and divine healing. Doctors and nurses volunteer, and one doctor will have her practice on site. There are healing and counseling rooms, nine medical examination rooms, an X-ray room and a fully equipped dental room.

In Kansas City, the House of Hope and Healing overlooks a wooded hillside on the church's forested spread of land. An impressive lobby opens up to a 38-foot limestone fireplace and a cozy sitting room with pine cabinets. Living room-style prayer rooms ring the lobby.

At the grand opening, the church hosted hundreds of guests, a state senator and former Kansas City mayor, a city councilman and the chaplain from a local hospital. Soon after the ceremony, the house was already in use as a woman prayed with two volunteers.

Gray and Williams are convinced God wants to heal people through prayer and practical lifestyle changes. "Healing happens when God and man work together to make people better, which is why we're adding lifestyle ministries here—cholesterol screenings and fitness instruction," Gray said.

But the main ingredient at both places is hope in the power and love of God. "Healing, helping power is here," Gray said. "And everyone is invited to come and experience it."

Joel Kilpatrick in Kansas City, Mo.