

David Wilkerson's Spiritual Heir Offers Biblical Solution to Nation's Dire Drug Crisis

The national drug crisis is a massive problem that has been addressed by lawmakers, community leaders and medical professionals. But the church is part of the solution, too.

Times Square Church in Manhattan, an interdenominational congregation with over 10,000 people in attendance who represent 100 different nationalities, has longstanding ties with addiction recovery efforts. The church's founding pastor, David Wilkerson, also launched Teen Challenge, which today is one of the most well-known faith-based substance abuse recovery programs in the nation.

Now, Times Square Church is led by pastor and author Carter Conlon, who was specially sought out by Wilkerson to lead the congregation in 1994. Conlon is the author of the new book, *It's Time to Pray*, released by GPC Books, an imprint of Times Square Church's partnership with Charisma House.

Nationally syndicated host Eric Metaxas, who wrote the foreword to *It's Time to Pray*, was a new Christian when he began attending Times Square Church in the early 1990s, with Wilkerson still at the helm. Upon the urging of a friend, Metaxas read Wilkerson's best-selling book, *The Cross and the Switchblade*, which told the story of how the young pastor reached out to gang members on the most dangerous streets of New York City with the message of Jesus. He began making the drive from Connecticut to attend Wilkerson's church.

"I'd never seen anything like it" Metaxas wrote. "The church was filled with over 1,500 people of every nationality and color and background—including a liberal sprinkling of street people and former drug addicts—and everyone was singing and

shouting and leaping and laughing. And in the pulpit to preach as fiery a message as I had ever heard was none other than David Wilkerson. When it was all over and I walked out onto the streets of Manhattan, I felt palpably different about the whole city. It couldn't be the same city anymore—not after what I had experienced. If all that was going on in a theater in the middle of Times Square, New York was simply not the same and never again could be. God was in New York.”

Years later and now under Conlon's leadership, Times Square Church has the same commitment to reaching the lost from every walk of life.

“Jesus has come to preach deliverance to the captives; that includes every sexually addicted person, every drug addict, every alcoholic, every immoral person and everyone captivated by something of the flesh and of the mind,” Conlon writes in *It's Time to Pray*. “The Lord has said, ‘I've come to put a stop to these things that have dominated your life. I've come to give sight to those who are spiritually blind—to open your eyes to the reality that God has come and that His mercy is now yours.’ The Good News means that the freedom of Christ can be obtained by faith, that we can be saved from your sin and the curse of death.

“Jesus has come to show us a way out and to stop the things that have governed our lives so that He Himself reigns over every detail of our journey—both on earth and in heaven,” Conlon continued. “God has not called us to just survive in this life—He has called us to be a wonder to our generations. Jesus has called us to live abundantly through Him—to enjoy His victory, no matter what our outward circumstances are, and to be a witness of His power to all whom we meet. He wants us so intertwined with Him that when people look at us, they acknowledge that God is alive in us!”

Conlon continues to be a voice for God far beyond the pulpit of Times Square Church by speaking at numerous conferences

across the country and around the world. His weekly radio spots air on 1010 WINS, the nation's longest-running all-news station, and his one-minute devotionals, "It's Time to Pray" and 30-minute program, "A Call to the Nation," are currently syndicated on over 350 Christian radio stations worldwide. He is the author of several books, including *The 180 Degree Christian*, *Fear Not* and *Unshakable*.

For more information on "It's Time to Pray," visit .