

Christians Make History With Worship Event at New Mexico State Capitol

For the first time in the history of the New Mexico State Capitol, Christians gathered for a historic worship service this past Sunday, March 5, 2017. People slowly filled the marble-clad rotunda as a worship team made up of members from three churches played softly in the background. Instead of attending their own churches, these Christians had come from Santa Fe, Albuquerque and as far as Ruidoso to attend this special service organized by New Mexico Prays. New Mexico Prays is a movement of 52 churches in 16 cities covering New Mexico in 24/7 prayer.

By 9 a.m., 250 Christians had filled the rotunda's first level and part of its second level. Legislators, pastors, leaders, mothers, fathers, grandparents and little children lifted their voices to worship Jesus and welcome the Holy Spirit into the Capitol. David Gallegos, a New Mexico state representative, said of the service, "This last Sunday, here at the New Mexico State Capitol, we were blessed to be a part of the first ever non-denominational service. We had over 250 people come to the capitol for an awesome service. We made history, allowing God to have control of our Capitol and our State."

This gathering, however, was not just your regular church service. We had gathered to worship, to call upon God on behalf of the unborn and respond to Democrat legislators who late Friday afternoon, in an attempt to reduce support for two pro-life bills, had moved the hearings to Sunday morning at 10 a.m., when most pro-life supporters would be at church. Pro-choice supporters would surely show up in force, and the hope was that Christians would stay within the four walls of

their churches while matters of life and death were discussed on the floor of the House of Representatives. Not this time. Not a chance.

The bills to be heard were HB220, which sought to end partial and late-term abortion in New Mexico; and HB221, a bill that would require medical personnel to notify parents when their minor children seek to have an abortion. Starting Friday evening, we made hundreds of calls, sent as many emails and rallied pastors and leaders to help me mobilize Christians across the state to show up for this important moment in our legislative session.

I had the distinct privilege to deliver that morning's message, and in the end, 10 people gave their lives to Christ. That alone made our efforts count for eternity. But we won yet another important victory on Sunday morning. No, it was not that the bills we supported passed in the House Representatives. In fact, they died in committee an hour or two later, as Democrats voted against them once again. Our victory was of another kind.

Vince Torres, Executive Pastor at the Blaze Christian Fellowship, explains it this way, "What happened Sunday was nothing short of historic. Watching Catholics and Protestants come together in worship and prayer to our God was so powerful and unlike anything I have ever witnessed at our state capitol. The gathering served as proof that the gospel message of Jesus Christ has the power to transcend denominations and even politics. It was such an honor to be part of it. To God be all the glory."

What we won that morning was the realization that the church in New Mexico is awake and ready to answer the call to unite in prayer and action. If 250 of us could gather to fight for life in a matter of 36 hours, just imagine what we can do in the next two to four years, as we pray, work together and get out the vote for pro-life candidates who can swiftly pass

life-giving legislation. Like Christine Caine so poignantly once said, "It is one thing to be awakened to injustice and quite another to be willing to be inconvenienced and interrupted to do something about it." We are awake, Lord. We are willing. Let the future in New Mexico begin. {eoa}

Brian Alarid is the lead pastor of *Passion Church* in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He is the co-chairman of *New Mexico Prays*. You can write to him at brian@ or follow him on Twitter [@BrianAlarid](https://twitter.com/BrianAlarid).