

Morning Rundown: Whatever Happened to Old-Time Prayer Meetings?

Here's a quick rundown of the top stories on :

Whatever Happened to Old-Time Prayer Meetings?

Last weekend I was invited to join a prayer gathering at a local church in Hopelawn, New Jersey—a community so close to New York City that you can see the Big Apple's skyline in the distance. In recent weeks, Abe Rolon, the pastor of Life Mission Worship Center, has urged members of his church to gather on Friday nights at 9:30 p.m. to pray for the United States and the upcoming presidential election.

When I arrived I was so encouraged to see more than 50 people—mostly young adults in their 20s—gathered at the front of the church for prayer. They were all passionately engaged in worship; when it was time to intercede, they eagerly took the microphone and cried out to God.

They asked God to have His way in the Nov. 5 elections. They prayed that Jesus would deliver America from the evil entrenched in our media, in the entertainment industry, in politics and in our educational institutions. Before the night was over, we also prayed that God would stop the spread of communist dictatorship in Latin America.

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When Israel Strikes Iran, Everything Will Change

At this moment, we are still waiting for the other shoe to drop. On Oct. 1, Iran launched approximately 200 missiles at Israel, and many of them hit their targets. Since that time,

Israeli officials have been promising that there will be a very strong military response. Could that military response include a strike on Iran's nuclear program? That is what former prime minister Naftali Bennett wants, and he is the most popular politician in Israel right now. There has also been speculation that Iran's oil fields could be hit. But earlier this week it seemed like that was out of the question, because CNN was reporting that the coming Israeli strike on Iran would be "limited to military targets" only.

Israeli officials, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, have assured the U.S. that a counterstrike on Iran will be limited to military targets rather than oil or nuclear facilities, according to a source.

Other media outlets were reporting the same thing, and many of us trusted those reports.

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Witchcraft Murder in Kentucky: Pagan Rituals and the Rise of the Occult

In recent years, there has been an increase in the popularity of paganism, Wicca and other occult practices.

The Pew Research Center's 2014 Religious Landscape Study found that approximately 1.3 million people in the U.S. subscribe to "New Age" religions, a number that continues to grow. While many practitioners claim their beliefs are harmless, there is a darker side to paganism that can lead to dangerous behaviors. Historically, human sacrifice and other violent rituals were often associated with paganism, practices that diminished as Christianity became the dominant faith in the West.

Proving this point, a Kentucky woman accused of dismembering and cooking her mother's body is said to have been engaging in witchcraft before the crime was discovered, as reported by The Christian Post. The case, which unfolded in Mount Olivet, Kentucky, highlights the growing concern over the rise of paganism and its practices in the U.S. and the associated dangers, both spiritual and physical.

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