

Thousands Flock to Alabama Revival Meetings

✖ Former Brownsville Revival leader John Kilpatrick says the blind are seeing, the lame walking and the deaf hearing at what he believes may become another long-running revival.

Since mid-August, he said, thousands have been flocking to revival services being held four nights a week at the convention center in Mobile, Ala., where Kilpatrick now leads Church of His Presence.

Kilpatrick said a spiritual outpouring began July 23 during an annual church conference. Visiting British evangelist Nathan Morris preached, and "we basically had another Father's Day," Kilpatrick said, referring to the day in 1995 when a five-year revival broke out at his former church, Brownsville Assembly of God in Pensacola, Fla.

"It was the same kind of outpouring," he said of what is being called the Bay of the Holy Spirit Revival, a reference to its location near Mobile Bay. "It was spontaneous; it was totally unplanned. The power of God came down in such a way."

Morris was supposed to leave the following day to minister in Hawaii but decided to stay because he and Kilpatrick believed something was stirring.

In many ways the services in Mobile are "like déjà vu all over again," Kilpatrick said. Hundreds have come to Christ, which also was a hallmark of the Brownsville Revival, but he said the miracles are more numerous.

"We saw signs and wonders and miracles in Brownsville also, but not to this frequency," he said. "It's much, much more frequent here."

Last week, wheelchair-bound gospel singer Delia Knox stood up and took steps around the platform for the first time in more than 20 years. A video of the event received more than 70,000 hits on YouTube in less than a week.

Kilpatrick said the congregation Knox and her husband pastor, Living World Christian Center in Mobile, went wild when they saw the 13-minute clip Tuesday night. He said that night Knox decided to try walking again.

"She didn't rise up out of the wheelchair, she jumped up out of the wheelchair," he said. "We had to grab her."

Kilpatrick said she is still regaining the strength in her muscles. But he said her doctors reportedly said what she's done so far is "absolutely a miracle," noting that she had been unable to feel her legs before last week.

Rebekah Barberree said she had been unable to rotate her neck and could barely raise her hands after a car accident in 2003 led to back surgery in 2006. But while attending a revival meeting Aug. 3, the Crestview, Fla., resident said she suddenly realized she was looking up and stretching her arms in worship. "I've been able to do everything I wasn't able to do before," she said.

Carrie Thomas of Picayune, Miss., said doctors told her there was nothing else they could do for her stepson, Caleb Petty. The 10-year-old had been suffering from two malignant brain tumors, one of which was large and inoperable.

During a revival service on Aug. 19, Thomas said Morris announced that God was shriveling up a brain tumor. "I just knew it was Caleb," she said.

When doctors took X-rays the following day during an appointment that had been scheduled three months before, they reportedly found no sign of the tumor.

"I was so shocked," Thomas said. "The fullness of what God has done for him, I don't think it's fully sunk in because it was just a few days ago that we realized, hey, he can actually play sports, we won't be having to make all these trips back and forth to the doctor. It's like every day God brings more of the realization of what He's done, and it's truly awesome."

Ralph Casebolt, pastor of Oasis of Life in Kansas City, Mo., said doctors sent his wife, Debbie, home to die after breast cancer spread to her skin and lungs. Her lung function was so poor she had become dependent on an oxygen machine. Still, he drove her to the Mobile revival because the couple had long believed God was going to heal her.

They spent two weeks attending revival services. After the first week, Debbie Casebolt said she stopped using her wheelchair because she felt strong enough to walk on her own. "I sat in the chair, but I never would stand for very long periods of time because it would make a pain go through my body," she said.

Then last Saturday night, she noticed that she was singing along in worship, holding long notes and not stopping to catch her breath. When she removed her oxygen, she says she was able to breathe deeply on her own.

"It was so awesome just to be able to breathe," she said. "Just to be able to walk forward with no oxygen was a miracle in itself."

When she returned to her doctor this week, she says he told her the X-rays showed significant improvement in her lung function. She says she has gained strength, and though the cancer is still there, she believes God will remove it.

"We're just standing on what God is saying and what He's doing," she said. "[Although] ... He hasn't finished it completely, we're just walking with the Lord through this."

Kilpatrick believes this is a season when God is going to begin to pour out His healing presence, and he's praying that revival will spread.

"I don't believe it's just going to happen here; I believe it's going to start happening all over," he said.

He said many Americans are worried-about health care, the economy and the future. "And I think one of the things the Lord is doing-not the only thing-but I think one of the things the Lord is doing is He's showing the American people, 'I can take care of you. I can heal you. I can be your physician.'"

"He took care of Israel and ... God's going to take care of the church," he added. "He's going to take care of His people."