

Weekly 'Prayer on the Square' for America in Newton County, Missouri, Hits One-Year Mark

Monday marks one year since a weekly prayer meeting was first held on the courthouse steps in Newton County, Missouri, calling believers to prayer for our nation. Despite the abrupt change brought on the world by the pandemic, back in the summer of 2020, my spirit sensed dark clouds developing over America. A decay in society that began to accelerate as the election drew nearer convicted me that God wanted to use our radio station in this effort.

I believe prayer changes things. I hope our experience will inspire others.

To understand what happened, it's helpful to know that my journey into the world of radio was not intentional on my part. But I can understand now that what took place over 36 years ago was an assignment "for such a time as this" (see Esther 1:14).

God gave me a voice in the public arena those many years ago, and the 2020 election seemed to be that moment where this platform would be used to awaken the sleeping Christians to the serious trouble looming on the horizon if we did not unite in prayer humbly before the Lord.

In July 2020, I met with the Newton County, Missouri, commissioners to get permission to meet on the Newton County Courthouse lawn each Monday evening prior to the November elections.

With their gracious approval, we held our very first "Prayer on the Square" event Aug. 3 in Neosho, Missouri, with roughly 40 eager believers joining me under the gazebo on the corner

of the courthouse lawn. Each Monday, the numbers varied, some of the faces changed—many were always there, but many new ones would come and pray for a good outcome in the election for our nation.

Then what we had prayed for in earnest did not happen. The election went a different direction, and all I could do afterward was drive to that same little corner of the courthouse lawn and humbly seek the Lord.

To my surprise, dozens of people also showed up to pray because we didn't know what else to do.

I have learned that this assignment, which began with my position at what was once the smallest Christian radio station in Southwest Missouri, now in the top 10 stations in its market, did not get there by my effort but by hitting my knees in trust that He would sustain it for His glory—which He has and more!

I sought Him and knew that He is faithful, and we must remain so as well.

Since that first prayer meeting in August 2020, we have continued each Monday night since to lift our nation humbly before the Lord, seeking His guidance, wisdom and mercy in a time almost foreign to these generations.

The people come from across the four-state area: young, elderly, some with walkers, some with babies in strollers—no matter the rain, the cold or the heat, they come. Some who pray are veterans grieving for the nation that they served and sacrificed so much for in their lives.

One 90-year-old woman sat in the back of a truck bed in a lawn chair; someone pointed to her and said, "Now she is a real prayer warrior, right there!"

I went to her and asked if she would like to pray, and she

replied, "If you need me to."

I asked two men to stand on either side of her to hold her up, and she prayed with the heart of someone who had seen the works of the Lord, knew Him to be true and faithful from her childhood. It was marvelous and humbling.

The next person to pray was a 12-year-old boy from Seneca, Missouri, who had a mohawk haircut and prayed for his school and his fellow students.

They come from all denominations and all walks of life to that little gazebo on the square. Many are afraid for the nation that they love, but we all know that prayer is the greatest weapon we have in our arsenal, a direct line to our Creator God.

One night, I felt convicted to tell the group gathered outside that forgiveness is critical to the Lord hearing us. I reminded them of the terrible murder of a man in Portland, Oregon, shot for wearing a Make America Great Again hat. Then I introduced a woman standing next to me, the sister of the man who had been killed, and she prayed for the shooter, forgiving him, and then she prayed for that man's family. Despite her own grief, she lifted them up in prayer.

I realize I am only to show up in obedience because God is in charge. We continue to pray each Monday night until He makes it clear what path He directs us down, either national healing or rescuing His sheep from the wilderness. {eoa}

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