

Billy Graham Outreach Targets New York City

The number is staggering—3.3 million.

That's the total number of people, collectively, who have attended Billy Graham Crusades in New York City through the years and heard the message of hope Graham faithfully preached each time. It's a staggering figure, even in a city whose population exceeds 8 million.

Throughout Billy Graham's more than 60 years of ministry, New York City has held a special place in the record books: the longest running Crusade (in 1957: 16 weeks, 110 days, 100 services); his first domestic all-Spanish Crusade (in 1960); the largest audience he ever addressed in North America (the one-day Central Park rally in 1991); and, of course, his last public Crusade in 2005.

"God has done amazing things through Billy Graham in New York City," said Preston Parrish, vice president of the My Hope America evangelistic campaign. "But, since his last visit in 2005, Billy Graham has still had in his heart to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ once again across this nation."

In 2005, more than 1,400 churches came together in a united effort to proclaim the Gospel across the city, and nearly 10,000 committed their lives to Christ. Many of those same churches who were integral in the 2005 Crusade are now turning their attention to a new evangelism effort in their city, My Hope America with Billy Graham.

Starting June 10, pastors and individuals will gather in churches across the city to learn more about this historic effort and how they can best maximize it. The organizing effort is underway in all five boroughs. From Staten Island to Brooklyn and Manhattan to the Bronx, there's excitement in the

air about what God is going to do in New York and across the nation in 2013.

Coming out of Billy Graham's passion to proclaim the Gospel, My Hope America is a nationwide effort to reach people across the United States using the power of personal relationships. This grass-roots effort is taking hold in the Big Apple, as hundreds of churches across the city have already become involved.

"When Mr. Graham was in New York in 2005, for all anybody knew, that was his last public proclamation of the Gospel," Parrish added. "He has been with Franklin Graham in a couple of cities since that time, but in terms of undertaking a great widespread effort, this is the first time since then."

And, a widespread effort it is. The focus of My Hope America, just like Billy Graham's historic Crusades, is the local church. My Hope regional coordinators have been canvassing the nation – all 50 states – visiting churches, meeting with pastors and association leaders, holding regional meetings like the ones taking place in New York City this week, and, in general, encouraging involvement in this unprecedented movement.

In addition to the more than 13,000 churches who have registered their congregations, thousands of individuals have registered online to personally become involved in the project. These individuals will prepare to open their homes this November to share the Gospel message with friends, family, colleagues, and neighbors using one of several new evangelistic video programs featuring life-changing testimonies and powerful messages from Billy Graham.

"It's really very exciting to think that as Billy Graham has been praying and seeking God in these latter days of his life he will be sharing with America via this specially prepared program the unique message and burden God has put on his heart

for this time,” said Parrish. “We think people are going to be very interested in what he has to say.”

Have you registered for My Hope America? If not, you can do so online or by attending a My Hope America event near you.