

Christian Leaders Plan 9/11 Memorial Prayer Despite Bloomberg Ban

Flying in the face of Mayor Bloomberg's 9/11 memorial prayer ban, faith leaders and clergy are planning a public prayer service at Ground Zero on Saturday.

Christians will gather in front of St. Paul's Chapel, 209 Broadway, at 10 a.m. and walk over to Ground Zero. The group feels it's vital to have a public prayer witness at Ground Zero seeking God during the 9/11 Memorial Weekend.

The organizers of the prayer service are deeply troubled that Mayor Bloomberg has banned all prayer, public expressions of faith and clergy at the Sunday 9/11 Memorial Service.

Patrick Mahoney, director of the Christian Defense Coalition, has contacted New York City Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly through his attorney to help facilitate the permit process.

"In the dark days after 9/11, millions of Americans turned to God in prayer for strength, comfort, guidance and assurance. This was especially true for those who lost loved ones," Mahoney says. "During the past 10 years, it has only been faith in God and prayer that has enabled so many to move forward and rebuild their lives and protected America from another major terrorist attack."

With that in mind, Mahoney says it is "extremely troubling" for Bloomberg to exclude public prayer and expressions of faith from the 9/11 Memorial Service. During this organized prayer time at Ground Zero, Mahoney says faith leaders will seek God for His continued protection, pray for those who lost loved ones, pray for our leaders and elected officials and turn to God in repentance recognizing only He can bring

healing and restoration to our nation.

“On Sept. 11, 2001, millions of Americans did the most important and natural thing in the face of such an enormous tragedy, they prayed. In the days following, they went to church to pray, to remember, to grieve to cry,” says Rob Schenck, president of the National Clergy Council.

“Pastors around the nation spent countless hours comforting the bereaved, assuring their flocks, engaging in acts of compassion and speaking words of hope. The absence of both at this weeks 9/11 Memorial at Ground Zero may seem like a reasonable situation to some, but it will only compound the pain and loss for some many others.”

Chris Slattery, founder of Expectant Mother Care, is among the faith leaders planning to attend the Saturday prayer. As she sees it, to exclude prayer and public expressions of faith from the 9/11 Memorial Service is to exclude one of the most important factors in helping millions of Americans get through the shock and grief of that brutal attack.

“Prayer and gracious acts of compassion and kindness by so many priests, ministers and churches played a critical role in helping our nation heal and rebuild after 9/11,” Slattery says. “We are going to pray at Ground Zero because it is essential that we honor God and continue to look to Him for strength and protection.”