

Ministry Seeks to Plant Houses of Prayer at Every U.S. College

✖ An international ministry that has mobilized 24-7 prayer in 100 nations is turning its attention to U.S. college campuses.

On Jan. 1, Britain-based 24-7 Prayer begins its Campus America initiative. The group aims to start prayer rooms on all 2,614 college and universities in the nation in hopes of seeing a year of unbroken prayer on America's campuses.

"What we're dreaming of is in a single year, giving an opportunity to every student in America to encounter the life-changing presence of God," said Pete Greig, founder of the 24-7 Prayer network, which marks its tenth anniversary in 2010.

"We believe God is calling us to put tabernacles on the campuses of America," he added.

With 74 percent fewer confessing Christians on college campuses than in the general population, Campus America leaders see universities as key in shaping the nation's spiritual trajectory.

"We feel like God wants to show up on these college campuses," said Robert Jobe, a board member of 24-7 Prayer USA.

He notes that in his book, *God on Campus*, author Trent Sheppard writes of a pattern of God showing up in a significant way on college campuses every 100 years.

Sheppard references the 1806 Haystack Revival that began at Williams College in Massachusetts and is said to have sparked the American foreign missions movement. A century later, the

1910 World Missions Conference was held in Edinburgh, Scotland. Many say the initiative launched the modern Protestant movement.

"We believe the significance of the timing is in tandem with what God is wanting to do, as prayer always prepares the way for something God wants to do on the earth," said David Blackwell, a national leader for 24-7 Prayer USA and a director of the Campus America project. "We hope to look back after 2010, maybe five years from now, and see a huge wave of students having been sent to the nations as well as to be effective in their place [in the marketplace]."

Blackwell said God spoke to him and Greig five years ago about calling the campuses of America to pray. They began providing resources for prayer efforts already under way on colleges, but sensed God's leading to begin the Campus America initiative in 2010.

"The idea of seeing these prayer rooms multiply on every campus in the U.S. seems thrilling and terrifying," Greig said. "Exciting because we have reason to believe it could impact the nation. Terrifying because this thing is utterly impossible unless God makes it happen."

Blackwell said they hope to see students on each campus commit to at least 72 hours of nonstop prayer, signing up in one-hour shifts.

"It would raise their level of faith, press some of their own comforts and boundaries and give extended time to what God would do through prayer," Blackwell said of the commitment to unbroken prayer.

Several campuses have signed up, but Campus America is hoping the initiative will spread virally, much like the 24-7 Prayer movement has done.

Since it launched its first year of unbroken prayer in 2000,

the 24-7 Prayer network has spread largely by word of mouth. Intercessors pray in one-hour shifts for local and global concerns, as well as requests sent to the 24-7 Prayer Web site. Groups meet in places as diverse as a brewery in Missouri, the U.S. Naval Academy, the British Parliament and a punk festival in Germany.