

Reaching (and Praying for) the Stars

“Engaging Hollywood on Our Knees”: That was the theme that brought together more than 70 denominational and parachurch ministry prayer leaders for a week of springtime meetings at the First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood, Calif.

Karen Covell, producer and director of the Hollywood Prayer Network, a nondenominational Christian ministry that prays for the people, projects and powerful influence of the entertainment industry, coordinated the Hollywood focus.

“Just like a tribe in a foreign country, Hollywood is its own tribe,” says Covell, noting that members have their own gods and places of worship—namely the Oscars, Emmys and award ceremonies, respectively. “They’re wired for worship but have the wrong focus.”

The Denominational Prayer Leaders Network (DPLN) and National Prayer Committee (NPC) were at the center of the meetings. In all, prayer leaders from 16 church organizations were represented.

The challenge for the church in Hollywood is not really about making Christian movies, but reaching more people for Christ within the industry, Covell says. As she sees it, the content of films and the work of the creative community will change when hearts change. However, many in Hollywood circles believe Christians are interested only in criticizing and condemning people in the entertainment industry.

“They need to experience the genuine love of Christ,” Covell urges. “We make a difference when we are a loving community.”

Martha Williamson, executive producer of *Touched By an Angel*, which ran for nine years on CBS, emphasized that people who

want to relate to the Hollywood culture need to be educated about the film industry so they know what to pray for—and they must not be judgmental. “Anyone who chooses Hollywood as a mission field is entering a battle for the hearts and minds of people and families,” Williamson says.

John Maempa, director of the Assemblies of God Office of Prayer and Spiritual Care, says it was the most strategically significant meeting of the DPLN/NPC that he’s attended during his five years in the post. “Given its culture-shaping influence, the strategic importance of praying for Hollywood—and particularly for Christians working in the entertainment industry—cannot be overestimated,” Maempa says. “I pray that many people across our fellowship will intercede regularly for this vital part of our nation and world.”