

The Response: 'The Only Name That Mattered Was Jesus'

While many recognizable faces took the stage Saturday for The Response in Orlando, the only name lifted up was that of Jesus. And the focus on Christ alone made His manifest presence that much stronger during the five-plus hours of worship and intercessory prayer.

Several state politicians including Florida Governor Rick Scott joined the crowd of nearly 4,000 gathered for the event at the Orange County Convention Center. With no names mentioned, many led in short prayers for reformation and restoration of God's kingdom as well as for personal and corporate (church) repentance, reconciliation, revival and refreshing.

Without any fanfare, renowned Latina gospel singer Ingrid Rosario, who heads up the worship team at Lakewood Spanish Church in Houston (a branch of Joel Osteen's Lakewood Church); recording artist Laura Hackett Park, part of the worship team at the International House of Prayer in Kansas City; and Christian gospel group Forever Jones all helped lead Saturday's worship during The Response. None of the artists were pre-promoted for their participation.

"There were no egos and there were no logos. The only name that mattered was the name of Jesus," said event coordinator Doug Stringer, founder of Somebody Cares International in Houston. "And that's the way we wanted it—a humble posture with the focus completely on Jesus.

"We've held events like this previously, but it seemed as if the presence of the Lord was stronger than it ever was before. It was a real holy moment."

Many pastors and spiritual leaders, including Florida Church

of God Administrative Bishop Keith Ivester, also took part in the deliverance of prayer.

No offering was taken. No merchandise was sold. As Stringer put it, "an authentic Joel 2 moment" manifested itself with God's children turning their eyes and their hearts back to Him. In Joel 2, God desired fasting, weeping and mourning from his people. He also desires that from a morally decaying America that has come to a spiritual crossroad.

Scott, who was introduced only as the governor of Florida, shared the testimony of his humble upbringing in a large household. Raised in a Methodist background with a mother of strong faith, Scott boldly proclaimed, "My faith is who I am."

"Growing up, my mother taught me the importance of prayer and going to church," Scott said. "I am honored to have been asked to pray for our state and for our country."

The Florida event is the second of four scheduled for The Response USA. Charlotte, North Carolina, hosted the first in late September. Others are planned soon in Alabama and Mississippi.