

Pentecost Event's Vision Compels Holy Spirit to Bring Unity and Revival Within the Body

"What would happen if the church today came together as one to pray and worship for one day a year?" Giovanni Munoz wondered as he sat in a prayer room talking to God about Pentecost Sunday.

The lead pastor of Abide Church in Brandon, Florida, wanted to see God do something new in the Tampa region. However, he recalls being frustrated with preaching and believing and not seeing the results of *what* He was praying for.

As he prayed that night in the prayer room he asked, "Lord what's missing?" He felt the Lord responded to him with, "They were all together in accord. Read it."

As he opened the Scriptures, he realized the only missing ingredient was *unity*.

"Reading through [the book of] Acts, the only thing that I found missing today was believers being in one place and one accord," Gio says. "A dream landed in my heart about how amazing it would be to have a gathering where there was no sermon, agenda or expectation except to come together as one to worship Jesus. It wasn't about a certain denomination, church or group, it was simply about us coming together and offering up this day to be together and fix our eyes on Him.

"As I was praying for what He [God] wanted to do, I sensed that He wanted to do a new thing but we were stuck in our old ways. We were asking God for a blessing that is only commanded in unity. I thought 'how amazing would it be if we offered up

the “Isaac” of our Sunday morning, like Abraham on the mountain, to see God do something greater together?’ No preaching, sermons or agenda, just Jesus being lifted high by His bride.”

He believed that, as pastors decided to put aside their agendas on this one day, they would step into something greater together than could ever be accomplished alone. The inspiration for just such an event was born.

It would be called *ToGather*, and it would be a gathering of churches from different denominations, cultures and sizes in unity with one mind and accord, to lift up Jesus and worship God together.

With an original goal of getting his church and a couple more churches to gather together, Gio and his wife Destiny stepped out in faith and obedience and began planning the event right after Easter. It gave them only six weeks to pull it together. They knew it would need to be outdoors and not hosted by any one church.

Finding a field large enough that would permit such an event was a challenge especially as more and more churches heard about it and expressed a desire to be included. The answer came in the form of a regional pastor, Pastor Len Harper of Overflow Church offering the large field adjoining his church. He came with no expectations or demands—just a willingness to help facilitate bringing unity to the body through ToGather.

Still there were challenges of breaking through the mindset of other church leaders believing there was an agenda or something was wanted from them. Gio explains, “I believe there is a spirit that is trying to keep us separate because there is power in our communities coming together. It’s not about us all being the same. On the contrary, what makes it beautiful is our different expressions coming together to receive from one another.”

In spite of any doubts and mindsets, 33 churches gathered with over 1,500 people on a field to worship God and take communion together. A total of 49 people were baptized.

As each pastor took the platform to speak, they only introduced themselves followed by the statement of "From the church of Tampa Bay," therefore taking no credit for any church.

"There were many testimonies of reconciliation and God working among us that day," Gio says.

This year, the Munoz's were challenged to go bigger for Pentecost Sunday, to think larger, to seek more unity. So, they answered the call and stepped out on faith and leased the Steinbrenner Arena, spring training home of the New York Yankees.

"We are believing for 50 churches and 5,000 people as we gather. It will be a beautiful celebration of Jesus and His body!" Giovanni says.

It may very well exceed this as many pastors in the region and even as far away as Miami are halting their Pentecost service and joining their brothers and sisters to worship God at the stadium. In fact, more than 7,000 people are expected to turn out for the event due to small churches and megachurches alike sacrificing their Sunday morning service to participate.

Caleb Hyers, lead pastor of The Resting Place, explains why his congregation will be in full attendance.

"I am deeply convicted that we have to do whatever it takes to see what Jesus prayed in John 17 come to pass," Hyers says. "That includes 'sacrificing' a Sunday morning because, like David, I believe we must refuse to offer to the Lord that which costs us nothing.

"This is one way the church of Tampa can put what we treasure

on the altar in order to see the true blessing of unity come to the body of Christ.”

David Spicher, Senior Pastor of South Bay Church is in agreement.

“I believe ToGather is a fantastic way to honor the Holy Spirit. A region can align with God’s Word and unite in a common vision to worship the Lord together. The goal and purpose is always to bring unity to the region. It truly is the Lord that we are where we are with it.”

Greg Dumas, lead pastor of The Crossing Church says, “It’s a blessing to see churches coming together at the right time for the right season. Not unlike first century believers, we face many challenges today and Pentecost provides the answers through the infilling of the Spirit’s power. When there’s a common vision among churches it’s easy to end up in the same place, where the only desire is to see the Lord magnified. ToGather could be the place where unity pulls heaven down and revival is birthed again in our nation.”

ToGather is not about a man or denomination or culture. It’s about the gathering of *the* church. It’s a representation of many cultures and different styles of worship joining as one body, one voice crying out for unity and revival.

That’s one of the reasons Pastor Sheldon Harris of Kairos Tampa and his church are participating.

“Kairos is joining ToGather because it is truly the heartbeat of God,” Harris says. “The agenda is not about a man, it is about unity which is the prayer of Jesus in John 17. I believe ToGather is creating a net for the big catch of revival in the region of Tampa!”

What *would* happen if today’s worldwide church today came together as one to pray and worship for one day a year?

Len Harper of Overflow Church says, “The last time it happened, the Holy Spirit came down and unleashed an unstoppable movement that continues to this day. Let’s do it again on June 5, ToGather on Pentecost Sunday!” {eo}

Lesa Henderson is a prophetic revivalist and author who co-pastors Salt Life Church on Merritt Island, Florida, with her husband Ken. Together they are award-winning filmmakers. You can learn more about their ministry at Cornerstone Global Ministries.

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.