

Citywide Prayer and Unity Movements with Don Rayno

Starting in 1984, a nuclear chemist named Don Rayno joined with a few friends in Raleigh, North Carolina for a monthly prayer gathering they called “Concerts of Prayer.” The group of thirty intercessors quickly dwindled down to three. A mere ten years later, they would be gathering over 1,000 believers for a prayer rally at the local concert hall but Raleigh-Area Concerts of Prayer was not an overnight success.

Rayno was inspired by an article written by Jonathan Edwards that called for concerted prayer in cities. Edwards encouraged pastors to gather for monthly prayer meetings for seven years, regardless of the size or success, and then evaluate if they should continue. With this long-term perspective, the small concerts of prayer continued in Raleigh for years—even if it was only two or three people at a time.

“For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them” (Matt. 18:20, NKJV).

During those early years, Rayno and his faithful friends began to build relationships with local pastors and talk to them about the power of prayer and unity. The pastors eventually agreed to come together for a citywide prayer rally and they were able to bring together over 1,000 believers of various races, ages and denominations to pray. This united effort catalyzed momentum for Raleigh-Area Concerts of Prayer, which has now continued for over 35 years!

In the following decades, the relationships between churches and pastors continued to flourish. They set aside their theological and cultural differences to focus solely on Christ and prayer. This Jesus-centered emphasis has allowed over 120 churches to participate in their annual prayer rally (which,

before COVID-19, was gathering over 2,000 people every year).

The unbelievable unity through prayer in the Raleigh-Durham region may be one of the greatest sustained expressions of interdenominational citywide prayer in America. With over 35 years of hosting united prayer gatherings, what is the most important lesson that Don Rayno has learned along the way? Tune in to the podcast to find out! {eo}

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