

PENTECOST:



INTERNATIONAL REPORT

A Communications Service of the International Pentecostal Press Association

Times Square prayer impacts Big Apple

Ministry teams share the gospel across New York City as prayer ministry reaches nation

Responding within 24 hours to an unprecedented opportunity, the Assemblies of God advertised the God Gives Hope prayer hotline message on Times Square in Manhattan during the 2006 Thanksgiving season.

"It's the first time we have ever done something like this, and it just dropped into our lap," Communications Director Juleen Turnage says of the offer to advertise for a greatly reduced rate. "It snowballed into a massive effort in evangelism and prayer."

The 15-second video message flashed across the News Astrovision electronic billboard (formerly the NBC Jumbotron) 480 times from November 13-26. The giant screen sits high above the street on Times Square, home of the New Year's Eve ball drop. Millions in the viewing audience eyed extra showings during the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade.

The video ad displayed a trio of eye-catching spots on addiction, terminal illness and marital conflict. Each faded into the tagline "Life is never hopeless, call 1-800-4-PRAYER" linking callers to the AG National Prayer Center (NPC) and offering information about www.Godgiveshope.org.

NPC Director John T. Maempa reports that nearly 130 satellite prayer centers took part in the outreach. This included 28 congregations plus more than 100 volunteers in homes who joined the special prayer effort. An average of 1,000 calls came in daily to the prayer lines during the two-week period.

"I came here because my heart is evangelism. I want people to know Jesus as Messiah."

— Robert Specter

"The majority of callers got through the first time," Maempa says. The NPC hotline gained a new level of national recognition, and 10 new churches have asked to remain on the satellite response system, Maempa says.

Maempa notes this is the first time in NPC's 12-year history that phone lines were staffed around the clock. "Callers were able to pray with volunteers all hours of the day and night," Maempa is encouraged that congregations plan to stay engaged at satellite prayer centers and says maintaining 24/7 coverage is a vital goal of the NPC.

Teams of U.S. missionaries, 100 Master's Commission International Network (MCIN) students from seven states, and more than 500 AG pastors and church members from New York, New Jersey and Connecticut shared the gospel in Times Square and throughout New York City's five boroughs. The outreach team distributed 90,600 *Stories of Hope*. New York City's largest Christian Radio station, WMCA-AM, aired testimonies in a live broadcast.

Robert Specter, an AG U.S. missionary, handed out the 20-page *Stories of Hope's* life-changing testimonies to a flood of pedestrians spilling onto Columbus Circle in Manhattan. A man standing nearby collecting donations for the homeless accepted a Bible like a piece of gold.

Specter is president of Rock of Israel ministries and traveled from Cincinnati to minister. "I came here because my heart is evangelism," Specter said. "I want people to know Jesus as Messiah."

Enthusiastic MCIN students evangelized passers-by and distributed thousands of booklets.

please see Times Square next page

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“Young people want to be part of something big,” says MCIN President Eric Hunsberger. “We want to do anything we can to help the Fellowship.”

During an outreach near a high school in the South Bronx, an area known for violence and crime, an MCIN team ministered to a gathering crowd of students. They led several teenagers to make salvation decisions.

“Inner-city kids need to know about the love of Jesus,” said team member Phillip Hall of Evansville, Ind.

Master’s Commission team member Madison Nedreberg confronted one teenage boy. Asking, “Do you know Jesus as your personal Savior?” she led him to the Lord. The boy’s mother arrived

and began to cry when she heard what had happened.

Near Times Square, another MCIN team met a homeless man sitting by a building. After sharing the hope of Christ, they bought him two slices of pizza and prayed for him. They also witnessed to a fashion model who requested prayer. A homeless woman contemplating suicide prayed to receive Christ as Savior.

Not everyone responded so favorably. Several people jeered and cursed.

Initially, AG Intercultural Ministries Director Scott Temple ordered 50,000 copies of *Stories of Hope* for the outreach.

“I made a big step of faith printing so many,” Temple says.

However, in just the first two days more than 20,000 had been

given away, prompting Temple to call for a rush shipment of 65,000 additional copies from Gospel Publishing House.

“It says a lot about the receptivity of the people on the streets of New York,” Temple says.

AG U.S. missionaries Steve Kulish and Jeremy Sweeten coordinated community outreaches with AG churches. Veteran U.S. missionary Phil Goble, who coordinated the literature evangelism, said he had never seen such responsiveness in 27 years of New York street ministry. Don Geraci, U.S. missionary to the Jewish community in Brooklyn, prayed with local AG church members for two weeks from his post at Times Square Church.

Peter K. Johnson in New York for Today’s Pentecostal Evangel

Christian publishers learn the business in Ukraine

You have saved our publication from extinction!” They were dramatic words, but apparently the situation of the Christian magazine in a town on the edge of Siberia had been dramatic — which explains why the young woman responsible for the survival of the magazine was willing to travel two days by train to reach the conference in Kiev, Ukraine, organized by Magazine Training International (MTI).

Her magazine was one of 13 represented at the Advanced Business of Magazine Publishing Seminar held Oct. 16-20. The

advanced seminar built on knowledge gained at the basic Business of Magazine Publishing course, which has been offered by MTI in six countries since 1999.

Most of the magazines represented at the advanced course had sent staff to the first course, and although not all of the 25 participants from those magazines had attended the first course, they were required to read the first business manual and complete a preconference assignment.

The seminar was all about practice, not theory, participants found, as they listened to lec-

tures, conferred with trainers, and worked on practical assignments addressing the publishing business concerns of their own magazines.

The trainers were publishing professionals from the United States and Germany. Kent Wilson, publisher of NavPress, designed both the basic business course and the advanced course. He has taught business in seven MTI courses and conferences in Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Hungary, and Hong Kong.

Ditmar Mittelstädt, publisher of *Lydia Verlag* in Germany, had previously taught business with

MTI in Ukraine and Slovakia. *Lydia* magazine is published in Germany, Romania, and Hungary.

The third trainer was Paul Westervelt, director of periodicals at NavPress, where he is responsible for *Discipleship Journal* and *Pray!* magazine.

The Advanced Business of Magazine Publishing seminar was offered for the first time in Slovakia in 2004. Only magazines

which have sent staff to the first course are eligible to send staff to the advanced course.

A 38-page *Advanced Business of Magazine Publishing* manual was available in Russian and English. The seminar was interpreted in Russian.

The mission of Magazine Training International (formerly Magazine Training Institute) is to encourage, strengthen, and pro-

vide resources to Christian magazines as they seek to build the church and reach their societies for Christ. Over the last 18 years, MTI has offered more than 50 conferences, courses, and seminars in East/Central Europe and Asia. MTI offers print, electronic, and audio resources and a Web site (www.magazinetraining.com) with hundreds of pages of publishing resources and information.

Making holidays happily holy

I love the Holidays! All of them! I unabashedly feast on Thanksgiving Day and scream cheers at the TV during the New Year's Bowl games. As for Christmas, everything brings excitement and joy! After decades of celebrating the holidays, I've learned that celebration is not only fulfilling, it also brings life, faith and health to my family and congregation.

Unfortunately, it's not easy to get some Christians to rejoice. Inhibitions abound. Preoccupying burdens of duty dampen souls and tempt a Scrooge-like "humberg," even from many saints. But I consider helping my flock to release the spirit of rejoicing to be one of my primary callings at holiday time.

"Rejoice!" Paul commanded the Philippians, and then he immediately repeated himself: "And again I say, rejoice!" I've often thought that while dictating those words, the apostle mused, *If*

I only say it once, those dear ones in Philippi will fly on by it and miss taking action. Then, turning to the amanuensis to whom he was dictating the epistle in a Roman cell, he said, "Write that again: Rejoice!"

This isn't hype, it's hope, anchored in the permanent ground of God's fulfilled promise, not in cheap promotionalism or fancy

"I can't imagine anything more likely to open hearts to Christ than being exposed to the joy of Jesus."

— Jack Hayford

verbiage. I encourage every saint of God to reflect the glory and resound the joy of the angels' song: "Gladness is today's news! A Savior to you today!" Let's celebrate in a way that makes Jesus' love appealing to a love-starved and joyless culture. Some sincere saints see the holidays as a time

to attempt to impose something godly on their relatives. Instead, let's simply expose them to the raw reality of unhampered happiness. Let your light shine and His love overflow in a loving and sensitive way.

Of course our celebration starts with a clear focus on the Lord. "Sanctify, give special place to the Lord in your hearts; always ready to show others the reasonableness of the hope that fills your life!" (1 Peter 3:15, paraphrased). That verse, prompting our witness to an inquiring world, is especially applicable to our traditional year-end holidays. I can't imagine anything more likely to open hearts to Christ than being exposed to the joy of Jesus in a home or congregation where people have learned to make the holidays happily holy.

— Jack W. Hayford
President, The Foursquare Church
Selected from www.foursquare.org

PCCNA elects new leader

Church of God in Christ Bishop Jerry Macklin is the new chairman of the Pentecostal Charismatic Churches of North America board, succeeding Assemblies of God Assistant Superintendent Charles T. Crabtree.

Macklin is pastor of Glad Tidings Church of God in Christ, Hayward, Calif., and a member of the Church of God in Christ Presidium and Prelate for the Northern California Metropolitan Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction.

During the PCCNA meeting, 20 delegates representing a spectrum of Pentecostal leadership discussed whether to continue the organization, which essentially has scaled back to board meetings following the 1994 "Memphis miracle" conference of racial reconciliation. Macklin urged for refocus.

"We cannot force reconciliation, but what we can do is encourage partnerships across denominational and racial lines," Macklin said. "We can encourage relationship building."

Delegates voted to seek out leaders in their 30s and 40s to take an active role in devising initiatives for the PCCNA.

"We need to intentionally address the issue of younger leaders," said Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada General Superintendent

William Morrow, elected vice chairman of the PCCNA at the meeting.

McClung elected to EFMA Executive Board

Veteran Church of God missionary Grant McClung has been elected to serve on the Executive Board of EFMA, the Evangelical Fellowship of Missions Agencies.

EFMA was founded in 1947 as a voluntary association of mission agencies and denominations. Some 100 member agencies, including Church of God World Missions, represent more than 20,000 North American cross-cultural workers worldwide. EFMA connects in the United States to the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) and internationally to the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA).

In July, McClung was elected to the International Executive Council at the Church of God General Assembly in Indianapolis.

"I'm delighted to represent my denomination beyond the borders," McClung noted, "while continuing my primary work within the Church of God."

On Course magazine launches Music Mondays

On Course magazine — the AG Youth Ministries publication for students — has launched

Music Mondays.

The free resource lets students and leaders know what CDs are releasing in the Christian market that week as well as providing music news regarding bands and artists. All of this information comes directly to the subscriber's inbox in one e-mail.

"We have worked hard to make an attractive-looking and easy-to-read resource," says Shoji McGhee, "On Course" Web producer. "The navigational bar allows the user to go directly to the content in the e-mail they want to read simply by clicking on it."

Designed for students who love music or those wanting to keep up on youth culture, the free resource has been well received.

"I love Music Mondays," one reader writes. "I really like keeping up to date on all my favorite music, so please keep it going!"

"Music is so important in the lives of students," McGhee continues. "We wanted to expand on what we were doing in the print magazine to promote the wide variety of Christian music choices."

For more information, to view the archives or to subscribe for free, visit "On Course" magazine on the Internet at <http://www.oncourse.ag.org/>.

— AG News

COMPILED BY SCOTT HARRUP, INTERNATIONAL PENTECOSTAL PRESS ASSOCIATION

Please mail news for the next issue no later than the first week of February to:

Scott Harrup, c/o *Today's Pentecostal Evangel*, 1445 N. Boonville Ave., Springfield, MO 65802-1894 U.S.A.

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