

Central Prays at All Five Campuses

Extended 10 days this year, Central's 24-7 Prayer Event moved to all five Central campuses and drew 780 members and friends to pray for at least an hour through passages taken from 1 Peter brought alive in interactive stations. This year again, the 24-7 Prayer event also reached many who were able to participate online.

Organized yearly by the Prayer Ministry at Central, led by Prayer Pastor Paul Covert and Associate Prayer Pastor, Cathy Cryer, this year the 24-7 team included more than 200 people. Those helping designed stations for the Prayer Room, served as hosts around the clock, provided security from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m., and helped people sign up to pray.

Leaders included Sharon Bostic, George Randolph, Brad Dahlman, Tony and Jamie Ackerman, Mike Fleming, Viviane Campbell, and Don Walker.

Station designers included several teens, Alishia, Nick, and Cole, working with Rick and Linda Safriet, Shawnee and John Ziegler and their life group, Dennis Taylor and his life group, Leah Schrader and her life group, Rachel Harmon and her life group, Rita Vehon and Susan Gentry, Dani Protz and her team, Jerry Burke and Brad Dahlman, Mark and Dora Striemer, Mike Fleming. Every campus was represented on the design team!

The Spirit was definitely moving as the team prayerfully considered how to convey verses from this year's theme based on 1 Peter. Together, they creatively designed and set up stations with scenery and props that had everything from winding roads depicted to lead to God, to a giant foam likeness of a hand to represent God's hand over us. Station after station reflected God's glory and 1st Peter came alive as each station reminded us *to claim our inheritance, to love each other, to get rid of all malice and deceit, hypocrisy, envy and slander, to be ready to give an answer, to have humility toward one another, to cast all our cares upon Him, to serve others, to endure suffering, and to be living stones.*

People who experienced 24/7 Prayer live or online were able to blog about their experiences afterwards and as Cathy Cryer put it "This is why we do it!"

"Awesome to be intimate with the Lord and other believers. I feel covered by the blood of Jesus and love redemption. So grateful for the high school girls that came out to pray with us. I feel blessed to be part of the family of God and see Him moving. Thank you for meeting us here Lord. I want to come back less distracted."

“Thank you for the expressive conduits that sparked consideration about my sin, reminders of His incredible love and gave opportunities to confess and be moved by His Spirit. I loved the Humility; Experiencing Suffering stations.”

“What an incredible time of quiet communication with my Heavenly Father. This has opened a fresh avenue in which to approach my Savior. It was refreshing and convicting at the same time. I KNOW that I need to do this in my own home OFTEN.”

“This was an amazing experience. I'm overwhelmed with emotions on how close I feel to our Lord. Thank you for this opportunity.”

“Yet again another terrific 24/7 prayer set up. Thank you for all those who took the time and effort to make it possible. Thank you always to Paul and Cathy and Jasmine, God Bless you all. It is a privilege and a pleasure to be a part of this wonderful church we have been given. I pray the work done here reaches out into the community and the country. My hope is that we make a difference, that we set an example and that we follow God's word and do his will.”

“This was one of the best prayer times I have ever had. I'm so grateful that I was brought here to all of this prayer, confession, forgiveness etc. I will hopefully come back to this with a change in my sins. But over all this was a fantastic experience to be here. Next time I will bring a friend with me and we will share this wonderful weight lifted for our chests together.

“Thank you for guiding us through areas that we might not have the courage to think about in our normal prayer time. I was consistently challenged and moved to examine myself purely from what is written in Scripture. I had a great evening and believe some things that were revealed to me here will be a catalyst that God will use to help refine me. Thanks for the effort and intentionality!”

People often don't know what to expect as they enter each station. As one couple who experienced it for the first time put it “We both were so blessed by the different stations of prayer and felt that the hour went so quickly! It was a wonderful experience!!!!” Often times the thought of praying for an hour seems daunting to some, but as someone else put it “I prayed for over an hour without even realizing it!”

This year we saw so many more life groups participate. They came together to experience 24/7 and support one another in prayer. We also saw families sign-up and Junior High kids participate through the Junior High ministry at Central. According to Cathy “the place was a buzz with Junior High kids...all going through the stations.”

24/7 affected people in many different ways. Our hosts and security team were able to see firsthand how people were moved as they came out of the stations and witnessed some precious moments such as the lady in the wheelchair who was helped by some boys to move through the stations, and one man who was moved to tears so much that a host held his hand and said a prayer for him. Some hosts and security even took on more shifts to make sure all the slots were covered. What a dedicated team of servant ministers we have!

Thanks so much to the countless numbers of people that contributed their time to making 24/7 successful. God's house "is" a house of prayer (Mark 11:17). If 24/7 gives you any clue of the amazing work that God can do through prayer, discover the power of prayer yourself and diligently seek Him.