

Chesterfield Seventh-Day Adventist Church Prayer Meeting 2023

Theme: Seeking Revival

12 April 2023 - SEEKING REVIVAL TOGETHER

(reading taken from "10 Days of Prayer 2021")

"Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the Lord of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6).

What's Next? Three Steps for a Spiritual Restart

Would you like to experience spiritual renewal together with your church family? Here's one suggested plan that has led to spiritual awakening and hope for churches in Germany, Switzerland, England, Tajikistan, and the United States. Revival can happen anywhere, even in secular countries, when people continually surrender themselves to Jesus and ask for the blessing of the Holy Spirit.

Pray about how your church or family or prayer group can experience a spiritual "restart" this year. Make a plan, seek input from others, and set a date to begin. You'll want to adapt your ideas depending on your culture, your community, and the needs of your group.

We want to share the example of just one church in Decatur, Alabama, USA:

1. Restart

Take several weeks or months to pray intently for the Holy Spirit, along with studying Scripture and possibly a short devotional book.

In preparation for an evangelistic series, members of the Decatur church began praying together at church for 30 minutes every Sabbath morning. They shared pointers in the church bulletin to promote prayer, revival, and the work of the Holy Spirit. They also held a video seminar about the Holy Spirit on two Sabbath evenings. After the seminar, they distributed a short book about spiritual revival and asked members to read it over the next six weeks. (They chose the book *Steps to Personal Revival*. Other options include *Steps to Christ* or a Bible study guide about revival.) Later, during Ten Days of Prayer, they prayed for revival and the Holy Spirit and celebrated a Sabbath of prayer and praise.

2. Relationship Care

Begin intercessory prayer for five unreached people, then contact them and maintain a friendship in a way that is sincere and tactful. During this time you may want to study another book about prayer or revival. Consider studying in pairs for support and deeper understanding.

During this second phase, members of the Decatur church started studying the book *40 Days: Prayers and Devotions to Prepare for the Second Coming* in groups of two. As a result, their joy in telling others about Jesus grew. As suggested in the book, members also started praying for five unreached people in their lives. Then they got in touch with these acquaintances or former church members and maintained the contact over time. This resulted in baptisms and blessings for both the new members and those who had prayed for them.

Think about it: if 10 church members each pray for and maintain contact with five people, that would be 50 people, and it would grow from there. At the end of the 40 days, you might invite the people you prayed for to a special visitor Sabbath. Next, invite each person to join a small group (Bible study, healthy cooking, exercise, social activities, whatever is appropriate for the person's interests). You can also invite them to upcoming evangelistic meetings. Remember to attend the meetings with your friends and help them feel welcome.

3. Sharing

Each member can invite the people they've been praying for to attend evangelistic meetings, small-group Bible studies, or a one-on-one Bible study. (If some of your prayer contacts aren't ready for Bible studies, invite them to a small group focused on an area of interest, such as exercise, healthy cooking, hobbies, or social activities.)

When the Decatur church held an evangelistic series, the members experienced revival and a deeper relationship with Jesus. The Holy Spirit worked on the hearts of invited guests, and 10 people gave their lives to Jesus through baptism (with five more joining later). The results are a testimony to the power of prayer! (Decatur story is adapted from a report by Elida Meneses in *Southern Tidings*.)

What Can Your Church Do?

Pray together and make a plan for your church today. "All heaven is in activity, and the angels of God are waiting to cooperate with all who will devise plans whereby souls for whom Christ died may hear the glad tidings of salvation. Angels who minister to those that shall be heirs of salvation, are saying to every true saint: 'There is work for you to do.' 'Go, stand and speak . . . to the people all the words of this life' (Acts 5:20)" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 433, 434).

God sends you out to the world with this promise: "What you are planning will neither succeed by the might of an army nor by human strength; rather, my Spirit will accomplish it! I, the Lord God Almighty, promise this" (Zechariah 4:6, translated from the German *Hoffnung fuer Alle* version).

Praying God's Word

The Holy Spirit will accomplish it.

"What you are planning will neither succeed by the might of an army nor by human strength; rather, my Spirit will accomplish it! I, the Lord God Almighty, promise this" (Zechariah 4:6, translated from the German *Hoffnung fuer Alle* version).

Dear Father, You tell us that success does not come from human effort. Please forgive us for our lack of Holy Spirit power. Revive us so we are not lukewarm like Laodicea. Awaken us for our own salvation and that of our neighbors. And thank You for the eternal joy You have promised.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

Our Church: Ask God to bless the efforts of our local, regional, and world church.

Local Requests: Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God's voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: Bringing in the Sheaves (#369); Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus (#618); I Love to Tell the Story (#457); When We All Get to Heaven (#633). *Other Songs:* Pass It On; People Need the Lord; We Are His Hands.