

Near and far, crowds gathered to pray

It was not about politics. The crowd, young and old, black and white gathered at the flagpole at the YMCA last Saturday morning to pray.

They prayed for peace. They prayed for a spiritual reckoning.

They gathered locally, as thousands began to assemble at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC.

Corey Wilson, Assistant Pastor at Liberty Baptist Church, who was one of the seven pastors represented at the prayer at the pole event, had just commented to his fellow pastor about the National Prayer March when the office phone rang, he said.

While Wilson envisioned various local prayer gatherings, Janet Snyder, was working to put together a prayer event at the YMCA.

Janet told me one early morning as I was getting ready to exercise at the Y, that during one of her devotions, she had asked God for a project. She had recently become aware of Franklin Graham's movement to pray at the Lincoln Memorial on Saturday, Sept. 26.

Janet said God had placed on her heart the need to have a local prayer gathering. While Janet said she had not done one before, she felt since God



A SLICE OF LIFE

Linda Wilk



was directing her to do this, God would also provide her with the skills needed to accomplish the task.

As people gathered this past Saturday morning, it was clear that once again God was faithful. It was a testament to not only Janet's belief in God, it was a testament to how much prayer is needed right now for our country.

The crowd that numbered at least 200, came together and prayed for peace. We prayed for law enforcement and all men and women in uniform.

We prayed for our country and its leaders, who whether we agreed with their political views, we were reminded that God is in control of all things and we need to turn to God for

guidance.

Lemmie Sanders, the pastor at Immanuel Temple said he has lived through racism and prejudice and does not want to live through that again. He encouraged all to educate those who are behind violent riots to put down the stones and pick up their Bibles, get on their knees and pray.

"We need to find hope," Sanders said. "And we find hope in Jesus. Our warfare is not with each other."

Other leaders who joined Sanders at the microphone were: Pastor Brad Wright, LaFontaine Christian Church, Jeffrey Horsman, Marion General Hospital Chaplain; Ronald Morrell, Youth for Christ; Pastor Rob Barton, Mount Olive United Methodist, Pastor Curtis Banker, Hanfield United Methodist Church and Dr. Cindy Tyner, Taylor University Professor.

There were various scripture passages shared, reminding each in attendance of God's promise to those who asked, as well as the importance of truly relinquishing our needs to God.

We were reminded that even Covid 19 is not too big for God to heal.

"It is our responsibility to be the light," Morrell

said. "We have a hope that we need to share with others." Morrell, Youth for Christ Campus Life Director for Marion Intermediate Schools.

Pastor Barton shared the story from the Bible about the Good Samaritan whose affiliation would have pitted him against the injured he saw along his journey. Yet, despite that, the man stopped while others passed by and he helped the beaten man, taking him to refuge, ensuring that he would be healed.

Again, reminding all

that no matter who someone is, we as Christians need to seek out those who need help and assist them, pray for them and show the love of Jesus, no matter what.

Before the crowd was dispersed, local businessman Jim Sutter came to the microphone and thanked the crowd for coming, along with Janet for organizing the event. Sutter then led the group in a unified vocalization of the Lord's Prayer, reminding all we are one with God.

For anyone who would like to continue to come together to pray for our community and our nation, I would encourage you to consider coming to Marion City Hall at 301 S. Branson St. every Monday morning at 7:30 a.m. for 15 minutes of prayer. Those attending must wear a mask and have their temperature taken. As a regular attendee of the prayer group, it is a great way to start your week, lifting others in prayer and remembering why we are placed on this Earth.



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