

Pastor launches courthouse prayer movement

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HOUSTON—A Houston Baptist pastor envisions Christians gathering to pray once a week outside every county courthouse in Texas.

With two inaugural [Prayers Across Texas](#) rallies on June 6, another two on June 13, and 15 more scheduled, that leaves 235 counties for Johnny Teague to contact.



Johnny Teague “Look at the state of our nation. Think about what has happened in Ferguson, Mo., and in Baltimore and most recently in McKinney,” said Teague, pastor of [Church at the Cross](#) in Houston. “We need a great awakening. And if national revival is going to happen, it’s got to begin at the level of local churches in every county.”

Teague observed two earlier spiritual great awakenings in the United States started with Christians meeting for outdoor prayer services in public settings. The promises in 2 Chronicles 7:14 for national healing begin with God’s people humbling themselves and praying, he noted.

“It’s not the whole nation. It’s God’s people praying,” he said.

So, he began contacting county judges in the Texas Panhandle—areas with

relatively small populations but a strong base of Christian churches—to talk about scheduling prayer events outside courthouses.

“I met 19 county judges personally,” he said. “We talked about what is going on in this country. ... I compared it to the situation in (the Old Testament book of) Judges, where ‘everyone did what was right in his own eyes.’ Every judge agreed something has to be done. Some of them wept as we talked about it.”

Intercession

Teague led the first two prayer meetings outside the courthouses in Donley and Hartley counties June 6. He presented a devotional message based on Deuteronomy 28, talking about the blessings of obedience to God and the curses of disobedience. After a time of silent prayer, Teague offered an open invitation for anyone to pray publically.

“We had people on their faces on the courthouse lawn, interceding for our nation,” he said.

He ended the prayer meetings with a challenge: “Come back here every Saturday to pray for our nation and its leaders.”

The second two sets of prayer meetings were scheduled June 13 at the courthouses in Moore and Oldham counties.

“In Moore County, the judge invited us to lead off their Dogie Days parade with the prayer meeting,” Teague said, noting the annual event was expected to draw about 1,000 participants.

Urgent need

Originally, Teague had planned to launch Prayers Across Texas in September to provide what he considered adequate time to plan and promote the prayer events.

“But the county judges were eager to go ahead,” he said. “They saw it as urgent and didn’t want to wait.”

Reaching all 254 Texas counties at a rate of two counties per week will take about two and a half years. But Teague sees benefit in a gradual roll-out, because Christians in each county will continue meeting for prayer each week.

“We expect to see this snowball,” he said.

Drawing inspiration from key figures in earlier spiritual awakenings, he added: “I don’t know where the next D.L. Moody or George Whitefield will come from, or where the next great awakening will begin. But we’re doing our part to set the table.”