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Prayer Ministry: Evangelism's Power Source

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of them was Barbara's and Jessica's. That Thursday, I made an evening visit to see how they were enjoying the meetings. Jessica came to the door with a big smile on her face. I asked how she'd been doing, and she replied that she was doing well and was really happy to see me. And before I even asked, she said she liked the "religious" meetings she'd been coming to with her mom. Barbara wasn't home from work yet, so I left two tapes and said I'd look for her and her Mom that weekend.

Sunday night I saw Jess and her mom sit down a few rows ahead of me. As the evening progressed, I thought I saw Barbara get out a tissue, but wasn't sure. Afterward, I walked to where they were sitting and sat down by Barbara. She had been crying and was blowing her nose. We embraced, and then she said she really wanted to know more about the Bible. The Holy Spirit was at work on her heart, and it was wonderful to see! Our head elder, Primod Gaikwad, was sitting behind her and had been talking with her before I arrived. In response to her desire to know more about Jesus, he suggested the three of us get together and do Bible studies.

Since that evening, Barbara and I have been meeting regularly to understand who Jesus is and what He teaches in the Bible. She is desperately wanting to know Him more and follow Him completely—whatever it takes.

What a thrill to see God change other people's lives. But perhaps even more amazing is to see how God can reignite my own heart and tired soul, and to understand that if we are willing, He is faithful to complete the good work He's begun in us.

Stephanie Wines is an Andrews University English major.

Prayer Ministry: Evangelism's Power Source

BY KAREN PEARSON

At the Village Church in Berrien Springs, we had great expectations as we prepared and prayed for our *Hope for the Homeland* meetings. As prayer ministries leader, the cry of my heart was for the Holy Spirit to descend with power and to envelope not just our church, but the entire village.

In the months leading up to the campaign, a question kept repeating in my mind: "What is the essence of evangelism; what lies at the core of sharing Christ?" If I was going to coordinate the prayer ministry, I needed to be able to answer that question.

One morning, while wrestling in prayer for answers, I found the following statement: "The followers of Christ are to labor as He did. We are to minister to the despairing, and inspire hope in the hopeless" (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 350). The words on the recently printed flyers came to mind: "Out of tragedy rises *Hope for the Homeland*." These words were being seen on billboards and flyers and heard on radio and TV stations across the nation by millions of Americans.

Before we knew it, opening night arrived. Flowers filled the front of the sanctuary. The church looked lovely. Each volunteer had been trained and knew exactly where to be, and what to do. I looked at the huge screen. It had been found in answer to prayer. The cameras, the projector, the lighting—all provided by the Lord in the most incredible 11th-hour answers to our prayers. As the music began, I slipped away to the prayer room where I joined the volunteers who had already started praying.

In the days and weeks that followed, the church witnessed amazing answers to prayer. We prayed for our entire village, and night after night people stopped by before the meeting began and shared with us how God was working in their lives and in their homes.



Karen Pearson, right, led out in the Village Church's prayer ministry during Hope for the Homeland. Harry Miller, left, was also part of the prayer group.

We prayed for victory over sin, and strength to overcome temptation. We wept over the lonely, hurting ones and rejoiced as we saw lives surrendering to Jesus. We discovered that it is impossible to bring others to Jesus, without drawing closer to Him yourself. Evangelism is not a spectator sport. I have come to believe that prayer and encouragement lies at the heart of all genuine evangelism.

The campaign is over, but as long as we are held prisoners in this sin-wracked world, there will always be a need to share the hope that is within us.

Karen Pearson is the Andrews University advancement administrative assistant.