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What If Every Church Became a House of Prayer?

Don Jacobsen
Andrews University

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What If Every Church Became a House of Prayer?

“And foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord to minister to Him, to love the name of the Lord, and to be His servants, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant — these I will bring to My holy mountain and give them joy in My house of prayer . . . for My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations”
(Isaiah 56:6,7 NIV).

A while ago I was on a prayer call with several of the prayer leaders in one of our conferences. As is often the case, the president was on the call with us. It was an intense time of intercession but, when the president began to pray, it caused an instant lump in all of our throats. With a passion I don't think I'd ever heard from him, he cried out, “Oh, God, please show us how to make every church in our field a house of prayer!”

According to Jesus' words (see Matthew 21:12), it is His will that this should be our name, our identity. As important as preaching is, He never called His church a house of preaching. As essential as music is, He never called His church a house of music. But Jesus Himself said, *My house shall be called a house of prayer.*

The president's words hung in the air as we prayed. We could sense a rise in the intensity of our prayer time. We perceived God wanted to say something of importance, that a dream was birthing, a vision was coming to light . . . Every Church a House of Prayer. What if . . .

What if, as people drove by our church building on a Wednesday evening, they had the distinct sense that something of eternal significance was happening inside?

What if, when a neighbor was facing a crisis, one of us knocked on their door and asked if we could come in and pray?

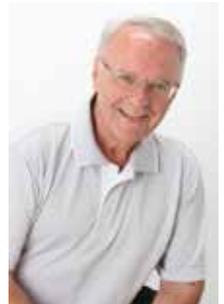
What if, when a new school term was beginning, we invited parents from our community — and their teachers — to a special Sabbath (or Sunday?) morning time of prayer for our public schools?

What if, when the church board met, they decided they would spend as much time praying as they did in discussion of the business agenda?

What if the mid-week service became prayer meeting night again, and there was such a strong awareness of God's presence you had trouble finding a place to sit?

What if there were victories and healings and marriages repaired and kids reclaimed and sinners turned heavenward? What if . . .

We believe God would be honored. That's why, as we move forward, you will see much about HOPE Heals. HOPE is an acronym for Houses Of Prayer Everywhere. We urge you to ask God to show you what that would look like where you worship. ■



▲ Don Jacobsen

Don Jacobsen is a retired pastor, seminary professor, conference president and former president of Adventist World Radio who writes for HOPE: Houses of Prayer Everywhere, a Prayer ministry service of the North American Division.