

2,000 gather at large crosses statewide to pray for revival

*By Lindsey Williams
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On Nov. 3, approximately 30 locations across Mississippi participated in the “At the Cross” event, where about 2,000 people gathered to pray for revival. The initiative was led by Rick Blythe, director of the Stewardship/Prayer Ministry department at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), who said the event was inspired by Terry Long’s book, *100 Days at the Cross*.

In his book, Long described erecting a 14-foot cross at a busy intersection, where he interacted with people who stopped by, leading to moments of prayer and salvation. This inspired Blythe to envision a day of unified prayer at various crosses along the Interstate 55 corridor, coinciding with National Election Day.



A group of men gather for prayer in Greenwood.

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Blythe also introduced the booklet *Concentric Circles of Prayer*, which compares prayer to a stone thrown into water, creating concentric ripples. "The center of this prayer focus needs to be the church," Blythe said. "This booklet offers guidelines for praying for your church, spreading out from your church, praying for your community and city, then spreading out farther, praying for your county and the country. The outermost circle then focuses on praying for the nations and the world. I developed *Concentric Circles of Prayer* with the 'At the Cross' event in mind, with the church being at the very center, because revival is not going to come through the White House or the person who occupies the Oval Office; revival is going to come through the church."

In areas without large crosses, AMS leaders took creative initiatives. In Jasper County, for example, a 50-foot cross was constructed, where more than 60 people gathered for prayer. Additionally, some counties developed countywide prayer groups to encourage widespread participation.

Participation numbers reported by various associations included:

- Benton/Tippah: 150
- Calhoun: 40+
- Golden Triangle: 50
- Jasper: 62
- Lafayette and Marshall Baptists: 500
- Lincoln: 217+
- Mid-Delta: 60
- Montgomery: 80

- North Central: 53
- Rankin: 400
- Tishomingo: 200
- Webster: 120
- Branch Baptist Church: 55

Many churches use these crosses for other events, such as Easter services and the National Day of Prayer. Blythe highlighted the importance of these gatherings as reminders of God's love and humanity's accountability to Him. He urged congregations to unite and recognize the power of collective prayer.

"The church can do more than pray after they pray, but they will never do more until they have prayed," Blythe said. "God's people must continually recognize the power of prayer."

For a free PDF download of *Concentric Circles of Prayer* and other prayer ministry resources, visit mbcb.org. Contributions to the Cooperative Program support the work of AMS leaders as they help local churches serve the Lord together.