

Mass baptisms signaling start of revival in Mississippi?

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

The much-publicized revival currently underway at a small Christian college in Kentucky may be spreading into Mississippi. Crossgates Church, Brandon, baptized 104 new Believers during a five-hour worship service on Feb. 19, and First Church, Flora, reported 57 baptisms in a three-hour worship service on the same day.



Nanney

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“With any youth event, there’s a schedule that you’re going to try to follow and I told them from the very beginning, ‘Look, if the Holy Spirit is moving within you guys, don’t worry about time. We don’t want to get in the way of what the Lord is doing,’” he said.

Disciple Now kicked off on the evening of Feb. 17. The Feb. 18 morning worship service went about 30 minutes over the scheduled time. The Feb. 18 agenda included a full day of mission projects, fun activities, and a scavenger hunt around town.

Dinner for everyone was served at the church on the evening of Feb. 18. The worship team was practicing, but when students started arriving they cut their practice time. Nanney said before the service began, he repeated to the leadership, “Don’t worry about the time. If you think we need to keep singing, keep singing.”

Isaac Pittman of Nashville was worship leader. According to Pittman’s website, he has been writing music and singing songs since he was a little boy. Music has not only been an outlet for him to create and utilize his gifting, he says on the website, but it also has created a space for him to heal, inspire, encourage, and find purpose within the pain.

“He’s been a good friend and mentor to me,” Nanney said of Pittman, who has been leading worship since the age of 18.

Pittman sensed the Lord moving during the Feb. 18 evening service, as students began to gather at the altar after a couple of songs and began to pray.

“I told the students that this was what worship is, shaping the worth of someone or something in your life,” Nanney said. “That might look like sitting down, praying with friends, kneeling and listening silently, and whatever that looks like, do that.”

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Daniels said he walked up to the stage and whispered in Pittman's ear, "We've got something we want to announce real quick." Pittman paused the music and the young man shared with the crowd that he'd just gotten saved.

"There was an uproar," Nanney recounted. "Everyone was excited. One of our college leaders, who was the Bible study leader for the senior boys, said, 'Wouldn't it be awesome if we could baptize him right now?'"

"It 'just so happened' that we were going to be baptizing Sunday anyway," Nanney said. The baptistery was already filled for the next morning. "Bro. Jon said, 'It's your call. This is your weekend.' I said, 'Let's go.'"

The group of 200 walked across the campus to the baptistery in the worship center. The student was baptized. "We had another guy get saved on the walk over there, so he got in the water, too," Nanney said.

Nanney asked the group if there was anything the Lord was telling them. "'We're here, and if the Lord is telling you to be obedient – to get saved, to get baptized, whatever that looks like for you' – we just want to facilitate the moment," he said.

"Kids wanted to rededicate their lives to Christ. That just began a chain of events. Obviously, we didn't plan for this. We had students rededicate their lives, get their baptism on the 'right' side of their salvation, getting things in the right order. We just wanted to get out of the way," Nanney said.

Brian Crawford, pastor of City Light Church, Vicksburg, served as pastor for the event. "His prayer for the weekend was that we would get out of the way so the Spirit could move," Nanney said.

"Unbeknown to him, the worship leader's prayer was that we would get out of the way. For months leading up to this, this was the prayer among us at the church. We got together Friday and realized we'd all been saying the same thing – if this was our prayer, then we needed to pay attention to what God was saying."

Daniels wrote after the close of the Disciple Now event, "The Spirit of God came down in power and glory in our midst this weekend during our D-Now weekend and our Sunday services. When all was said and done (at least for yesterday), 53 students had declared their faith in Christ and were baptized – 52 students on Saturday night and one student on Sunday morning.

"We also baptized four adults Sunday morning who were already coming for baptism. Our 11:00 service lasted for over three hours with tons of students giving testimonies of the change God had wrought in their hearts and lives.

"The theme for the D-Now was, 'Upended,' and that's exactly what the Holy Spirit did in our lives – He upended us! To God alone be the glory!"