

Can I get an Amen?!

Written by Story and photos by Andy Gibbons III Sun Correspondent
Friday, 16 September 2016 08:05



Local pastors resume their weekly meeting to pray for a united community

If you were raised within an extended family of differing church backgrounds, you may have been told not to talk about religion during holidays and reunions. This, however, is not the case for Christian pastors and ministry leaders in the Gallup area.

With summer break officially over, local pastors resumed their weekly “Pastor’s Prayer Meeting” on Aug. 30 at Grace Bible Church at 222 Boulder Dr.

Christian clergy of all backgrounds and denominations are encouraged to attend the prayer meeting Tuesdays at noon.

John Luginbuhl, pastor of Grace Bible Church, has been a regular at the meetings since their inception over a decade ago.

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"The Pastor's Prayer Group started over 15 years ago in Gallup for the purpose of getting the pastors of the town together to pray for the people and needs of our community as well as the surrounding areas," Luginbuhl said in an email to the Sun. "We all want to see people transformed by a personal relationship with Jesus Christ!"

Pastors and nonprofit organization leaders take turns hosting the gathering at their respective locations. The most recent meetings took place on Sept. 6 at Gallup Christian Church at 501 South Cliff Dr. and on Sept. 13 at the Lighthouse International Ministries Church at 2045 Westview St.

All local pastors and ministry leaders in the area are welcome to attend, and occasionally, even missionaries from around the world join in on the prayers for Gallup.

At the Sept. 6 meeting, both a pastor from South Africa and a missionary from a restricted nation in Asia were in attendance.

Restricted nations are "countries where government policy or practice prevents Christians from obtaining Bibles or other Christian literature," according to Christian organization The Voice of the Martyrs. "Also included are countries where government-sanctioned circumstances or anti-Christian laws lead to Christians being harassed, imprisoned, killed or deprived of possessions or liberties because of their witness."

The South African pastor, Bill Bennot, has family ties to Gallup, and the missionary to Asia is from Gallup and a surrounding reservation. Both will be in the area for less than a year. During that time, they'll share what they've been doing and raise support for their overseas work.

Bennot, who is friends with Pastor Bill Overton at the Lighthouse Church, was asked if he had heard about the prayer meeting from Overton or another source.

"Well, there were no angelic visitations, although Pastor Overton can be angelic at times," Bennot said.

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“It is really special to connect with other Christian leaders in the broader body of Christ,” Bennot said about the prayer meeting.

He’s involved in a similar prayer meeting in Cape Town, South Africa, where many Christian pastors and leaders also attend.

At the most recent prayer gathering on Sept. 13, Bennot helped host the meeting with his wife Consuelo Bennot at their partner ministry, Lighthouse Church.

Spreading the word about the meeting to long-standing and new pastors in the area is a continuous endeavor. Rev. Adrienne Coleman, of First United Methodist Church at 1800 Red Rock Dr., began attending the meetings this summer. She’s the newest pastor invited by Luginbuhl.

“Having lived and ministered in Shiprock/Farmington/Bloomfield for 40 years, I feel I can connect with the ministry and community issues and possibilities here,” Coleman said when asked what she enjoys about ministry work in Gallup.

Dennis Gallegos, pastor of Joshua Generation Church at 1375 Elva Dr., texts reminders to local pastors — he’s done this every week for years.

“I hope all can make it,” he said to pastors in a text about the meeting. “It is good to restart what God has done though the years for the city of Gallup and the surrounding areas.”

The pastors and nonprofit ministry leaders at the meeting would like the public to know they’re united in praying for the community, regardless of religious background.

Disclaimer: I, Andy Gibbons, the author of this article, am a pastor at Gallup Christian Church.

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