

GOOD NEWS

From Beulah (Englewood)—the city God loves (Isaiah 62:4)

Issue 2

God Is Calling His People Out of Slumber

He calls His people to awaken—pastors, teachers, and the whole body of Christ!

It was the worst crisis to hit the nation of Uganda yet. Dictator after brutal dictator had launched their reigns of terror and wars had ravaged the land, but the AIDS epidemic of the 1980s threatened to wipe out the whole population. The church knew that God was judging the sins of the nation and went to its knees. As one group of pastors gathered to pray, one of them had a vision. John Mulinde saw a net spread over the land, and the Lord told him to mobilize believers to create a prayer network over all Uganda. Only this way could they defeat the dark spiritual forces controlling the country. Mulinde took this message to pastors and ministry leaders nation wide. Many responded. They started prayer altars as individuals and then expanded to family altars and to church and ministry altars. They started prayer groups in their workplaces, schools, police stations, fire stations, businesses, and government offices at all levels. Over a period of years transforming revival came to Uganda: dictators lost their power, AIDS decreased radically (the only African nation where this happened), the government declared Uganda a Christian nation, business and the economy recovered, and the church rose to a place of authority and influence.

As the work of the Holy Spirit touched all of Ugandan society, God asked Mulinde to take this message to other nations. Pastor Mulinde began to travel the globe. As a result churches in UK, Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, Latin America, and the United States have awakened to the awareness of God's impending judgment, and they have embraced the Holy Spirit's call to repent and to pray for revival.

Several years ago Pastor John Mulinde came to Chicago's Englewood community and gave a word from the Lord—that if believers rebuild prayer altars here, God will visit it with His presence. As people began praying,



Members of Englewood's Harper High School prayer altar with Mark Hopson of Chicago Opportunity (second from left)

God showed them His heart for the neighborhood. He doesn't see it as a place of boarded-up houses, gang turf, gunfights, drug lords, broken lives, and broken dreams. He sees it as what He created it to be, what He can make it to be—part of the beautiful Bride of Christ.

In Englewood fire now burns on altars in homes, at places such as a police station, a cafe, churches, and schools. Intercessors laid down a foundation of prayer for five months at Harper High School and then last winter saw dozens of students come to Christ. Christian clubs formed to disciple the new believers. Again this September as the new school term began, students in similar numbers decided to follow Jesus. Spiritual darkness has been pushed back, and the heavens are open over this school for God's Word to be proclaimed and for hearts to hear and to believe. Various staff members describe a new peace in the building, a decrease in violence. God is doing His beautiful work here. His Kingdom is rising on the prayers of His people.

But Englewood has only a few of the many prayer altars in Chicagoland. Last May Pastor Mulinde again came to this area, this time to speak to pastors and lay leaders. He brought the message God has given him for the nations: God is calling a weak, slumbering church to awaken and stand in the gap as watchmen on the walls for our country, which is ripe for judgment. Many there heard what was on God's heart and caught the vision. Churches from Chicago and other cities in Illinois committed to seek a visitation from God in their communities and the nation. But the net of prayer God wants raised up over the area still has many gaps. Individuals

and groups of believers who long for God's visitation are isolated, not connected to one another. We need to work together. As corporate prayer increases, so does God's power and authority in us to accomplish His purposes. God is building the net; each knot represents the strength of unity in a net of prayer to be cast over our region. This net will gather the reward of Jesus Christ, bringing the greatest harvest we've ever seen. Won't you come and bring your piece to the net.

(For more information please call Pastor Louis Reeves at 773-298-1224 or email: Louis_Reeves@Familyfocuscc.org.)

One Pastor's Response

By Pastor Glen McCarthy

When I came to the pastors' conference in Englewood in May, I knew the scene in many churches today—pastors and ministry leaders tired of doing “church as usual,” of programs and religious services that accomplish nothing, of church politics. I hoped to find something that would revitalize me as a church leader. What I found has far surpassed my expectations—an encounter with the living God that is transforming not only me but also my wife and my church.

I took home from the conference the CDs of Pastor John Mulinde's teachings and the book *Prayer Altars: A Strategy That Is Changing Nations*. Through these God began to change my thinking in important ways. I had tended to approach God according to my concept of Him. I realized I needed to think about how God sees me. He has made us to be priests to establish holy altars in our lives, homes, and churches, where we offer ourselves as a sacrifice to Him and lift up our worship.

As I began building these altars, the Lord started showing me sources of spiritual resistance to my ministry. I recognized idols in my life and dependence on worldly methods in my church. To launch a church plant in Chicago's south loop area, I had hired a worship band, and I had people in key positions who were not faithful in church attendance, Bible study, and giving.

(continued)

As God worked Pastor Mulinde's message more deeply into my heart, I saw that God wanted me to set new standards in our church. Everyone serving in key roles must be committed to Sunday worship, Bible study, and tithing. I took a pause on music with our worship team and let our four-piece band go. Now my wife, Briana, who is a worship leader, leads with her guitar.

We lost some people as a result. We lost more people as I began teaching about sin and repentance, holiness and living in God's presence. I knew God was purging His church. Those who have remained with us are experiencing a measure of revival and breakthrough in their lives. They are reading the book *Prayer Altars*, are building personal and family altars, and are experiencing God's presence more than ever before. I have personally committed



Pastor Glen McCarthy, of Restoring All Ministries, with his wife, Briana, and their children, Cainan and Cai.

to drawing the presence of God in our sanctuary an hour prior to our start time. Members have begun to join me. Worship has become easy, and God has restored to me the joy of preaching and the joy of salvation.

The Lord opened my eyes to see that my whole focus had been on trying to

grow a church rather than on advancing the Kingdom of God in the city. I was deeply impressed that God is raising up a remnant to bring revival. He has called me to join that remnant, to build relationships with those who want renewal and who work for the unity among believers on which it depends.

As a result of God's deep work in my heart, my life has taken a major new direction. He has led me to leave my secular job and step into ministry full time. My wife also has made an important decision. She had blogged for nearly four years, and the Lord impressed upon her heart to use her influence with her blogging community, more than 15,000 women from around the world, solely for the Kingdom of God. She soon had more than 300 people praying on a 5 a.m. daily conference call. Many have also bought the *Prayer Altars* book and are building personal prayer altars. God is truly doing an amazing work in her and is using her influence for His glory.

I'm excited about what's to come in our personal lives and in our church. I feel that we're on the brink of an even greater breakthrough.

+++

Why Get Married?

By Aja McClanahan

Strong marriages and families build strong and healthy people. These people tend to contribute positively to society and live more fulfilled lives. If done correctly, marriage can groom people into wonderfully selfless human beings. The idea of sacrificing your needs and wants for the well-being of another is what is often missing from communities today. Why do we see violence and other crimes on the rise? The answer is simple: we've raised a generation of self-centered people! The number of fatherless households has risen at an alarming rate and become an epidemic. Why? The culture of honor and respect has been in constant derision and low esteem among men and women alike. People have become lovers of themselves, and self-centeredness is now the norm.

Marriage is one way of directly countering such depravity in today's world. Marriage, designed by God, is created to demonstrate the concept of love to the utmost along with other important ideals like teamwork and selflessness. I heard one person put it like this: "The goal of marriage

is not happiness, but rather holiness." God, in His goodness, made it so that we can be happy in marriage, but that is not the focus. It is not designed to meet every need but is still an enjoyable part of our lives. The real blessing in marriage is becoming a better person who is best positioned to use gifts and talents to bless the human race. The whole point is to leave earth better than we found it. Narcissists can't do that; they are too busy loving themselves and meeting their own needs, many times at the expense of others.

If you are in a relationship now that looks like marriage but is not sealed with vows and witnesses before God, think for a moment if that is the best way. While you may be living together and possibly even have kids with a partner, you aren't truly enjoying the benefits of a covenant relationship. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). Keep in mind, a marriage bond is only as strong as the couple's understanding of the power of God to help them remain in a loving, committed relationship. It is very interesting to see that many get married in a church, but they never go back to church to keep their marriage intact after the wedding is over! God created marriage, and only He can keep it working.

I encourage you not to settle for anything less than marriage. Living together and having children does not guarantee a good relationship. In fact, these activities almost always lead to disappointment and turmoil for at least one person involved, if not more. These counterfeits are poor substitutions that rob you and your family of a good quality of life. Think about all the drama we see in our communities; much of it stems from promiscuity and the lack of faithful marital relations. We can do better than that! Let's make the decision to live our best life possible. Marriage may or may not be a part of that equation, but let's determine not to tolerate its insufficient substitutions in our lives anymore!

Aja McClanahan, a long-time Englewood resident, is an entrepreneur, speaker and author who enjoys teaching business and life principles from a biblical perspective, www.principlesofincrease.com. She has been married to her high school sweetheart, Kelvin, for ten years and has two children.

awakeningchicagoland.com

WANT Ad

Sponsor Contact Manager to invite individuals, businesses, organizations, and churches that care about people living in physical and spiritual poverty to help underwrite this newsletter. Call Johnetta at (773) 298-1224 / familyfocuscc@gmail.com
Family Focus Christian Center, 1858 West 69th St., Chicago IL 60636 / (773) 298-1224
Sunday service at 10:00 a.m.

If you have a heart for people living in disadvantaged neighborhoods and would like to share in the support for this newsletter and the work of WTM-Chicago, please click here ["DONATE."](#) Small amounts are welcome. All contributions are tax deductible, and you will receive a receipt for income tax purposes.