

Voices: Pray for Fort Worth

July 11, 2023

I delivered [a longer version](#) of what follows to my congregation—Southside Community Church in Fort Worth—on July 9. It is an urgent call to prayer on behalf of our city, which I extend to all who read this.

A prayer revival brought me to the beautiful city of Fort Worth to bring comfort to those who need comfort, to bring inspiration to those who need inspiration, to bring hope to those who are hopeless, to bring healing to those who need healing and recovery to those who need recovery.

I have grown to love Fort Worth, and because I care deeply for Fort Worth, I cannot ignore the [mass shooting July 3 in the Como community](#). Eight people were shot; three people were killed.

It's hard to ignore that gun violence has frequented the east side of Fort Worth lately. It's hard to ignore the 76104 ZIP code on the south side of Fort Worth has the lowest life expectancy in the State of Texas.

There's a great need in this city all of us can meet. We have a responsibility as citizens of God's kingdom to make this world a better place. We have a responsibility as kingdom citizens to be the change we want to see in our land. If we see a need, it's on us to answer that need.

You can't call yourself a Christian if you see your fellow brothers and sisters hurting and don't respond. One response all of us can give is to pray.

God has given us a weapon in prayer, a supernatural weapon that can change systems, laws and jurisdictions, hearts and minds. There's nothing prayer can't change. There's nothing prayer can't fix or penetrate and mend.

Second Chronicles 7:14 says: “If my people, which are called by my name shall humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and forgive their sin, and heal their land.”

As children of God and kingdom citizens, our civic duty is to humble ourselves, seek God’s face and turn from our wicked ways, so God can hear our voice, our cry, our petitions, and heal our land.

It is our responsibility to pray for Como, to pray for the east side of Fort Worth, the north side and the south side.

Speaking prophetically about Fort Worth

I have learned the quest for power and control is strong in Fort Worth—including in its politics and its religion.

Christian Nationalism—people making faith about a political party—is strong here. Many pastors here seem so divided, building their own kingdoms instead of God’s kingdom, building their own platforms instead of building the community, mixing their kingdoms with politics, and stamping the name of God on them.

God is not pleased. God is not for one flag or one country. God is not for one race or ethnic group. Jesus died for us all—all nations, all creeds, people from all walks of life.

God’s kingdom is not about Democrat or Republican. It’s about saving souls, helping those in need and not forgetting the voiceless and those considered less than.

We wonder why the church doesn’t have any true power. We wonder why

God is not moving like he promised. We wonder why we are not having revival. It's because churches and denominations have made the gospel of Jesus Christ about themselves, about politics, about man-made agendas God doesn't have anything to do with.

It bothers me down to my soul to hear people say: "What is the police chief going to do? What is the city council going to do? Why ain't the mayor doing anything or saying anything?"

We have put our trust in politicians, not in God. We have put our trust in man-made systems, not in God. We have let society dictate what we can and can't do.

The question to ask is: "What are Christians going to do? What is the church going to do to make its community better?"

We as Christians are not of this world, but we are in this world, and it's our responsibility to bring heaven's agenda to Earth. We bring heaven's agenda to Earth when we work together with our brothers and sisters to make our city better.

Pray for the city

Jeremiah told the people of God in their Babylonian exile that even though they weren't where they wanted or expected to be, God sent them there (Jeremiah 29:7-11). Furthermore, they would be there a while, and God expected them to settle in.

God said through Jeremiah: "Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare" (Jeremiah 29:7).

This is an instruction, a mandate from God to pray for the city.

I am issuing an urgent call to [pray for the city](#)—our city, Fort Worth. It is our responsibility to pray for our government, the fire chief, the police chief, the city council, the mayor and all governmental officials. We are to pray for the business owners, workers, teachers and others.

Before you criticize or speak negatively of any of these people, pray for them. You can't criticize who you aren't praying for. You can't say anything negative when you aren't playing your part. What are you contributing to the very thing you criticize?

God said pray for the peace of the city. But don't pray for peace if you are not a peacemaker. As you pray for peace and the city begins to have peace, you will have peace. As the city begins to gain strength, you will gain strength. As the city begins to prosper, you will begin to prosper.

It's time for the watchmen to get back on the wall. It's time for the prayer warriors to pray like never before, because you are going to be here for a while. God is going to establish and build you up here.

Erik Vance is the pastor of Southside Community Church in Fort Worth. The views expressed are those of the author. "Pray for Ft. Worth" laptop and bumper stickers are free. To receive one, visit SouthsideCCFortWorth.org and join their mailing list by leaving a message in the "Contact" box.