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SBC leaders pray for revival, end of pandemic

by Staff, posted Friday, April 10, 2020 (17 days ago)

NASHVILLE (BP) -- With churches preparing for another week of online services -- this Sunday, an unprecedented Easter -- Ronnie Floyd gathered Southern Baptists from across the world on Good Friday to pray together online for the end of the COVID-19 global pandemic, and that God would use this time to call the Church to revival.

"I believe God used this time to pray with others about our great needs here in America and around the globe," Floyd, president and CEO of the SBC Executive Committee, said shortly after the conclusion of the SBC Good Friday Prayer Gathering. "God also used this time to encourage each of us about all God is doing through our churches, and the work we do together in America and the world."

Among those participating in the event, which was streamed live at sbc.net/pray and the SBC Executive Committee's Facebook page, were:

- Julio Arriola, executive director of Hispanic relations and mobilization at the SBC Executive Committee
- Marshal Ausberry, SBC first vice president
- Jacob Boss, IMB missionary, and his daughter Skye
- Paul Chitwood, president of the International Mission Board (IMB)
- Kevin Ezell, president of the North American Mission Board (NAMB), and his wife Lynette
- Steve Gaines, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn., and his wife Donna
- J.D. Greear, SBC president
- Jeremiah Lepasana, pastor of Bible Church International in Randolph, N.J.
- Ronnie Parrott, pastor of Christ Community Church in Huntersville, N.C., and his wife Marci
- Heiden Ratner, church planter and pastor of WALK Church in Las Vegas

"There is no better way for the world to see unity within the body of believers than when the church unites for prayer," said Arriola, who delivered brief remarks and prayer in both English and Spanish.

While they prayed for an end to and protection from the pandemic, as well as wisdom for governmental leaders and strength and protection for medical staff on the front lines, as well as so many other physical needs, the focus ultimately turned to greater spiritual needs.

Paul Chitwood president of the SBC's International Mission Board, spoke of the work of missionaries around the world, even as most are restricted to their homes during the pandemic. Speaking to Southern Baptists, Chitwood said:

"The world is searching for a cure to this virus, ultimately a cure for death, and your missionaries are there ... to tell the world that the cure of death has been given already, and it's been given in the cross."

Ratner asked God to move mightily during Easter services, even while they're held virtually due to stay-at-home orders.

"God, save people through screens," Ratner prayed. "I pray more people would log onto church services Sunday than ever before. ... I pray the Gospel would spread faster than [coronavirus]."

Concluding the gathering, Floyd reminded participants of the Good News celebrated on Easter weekend: "Jesus is alive today."



Ronnie Floyd, joined by his wife Jeana, hosted a Good Friday Prayer Gathering for Southern Baptists April 10. Thousands of viewers heard words of encouragement and calls to prayer from Southern Baptist leaders, pastors and missionaries around the world.

Screen capture from Facebook

Watch a video recording of the call below: