

# The Virgin Islands Consortium

## Seeking God Through Prayer For A Territory's Spiritual Awakening, And Revival For The Church

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ST. CROIX -- As various church denominations gathered at the Sunny Isle Amphitheater on Thursday night for the Territorial Day of Prayer (the event coincides with the National Day of Prayer), several key areas were honed in on: Family, church, media/culture, education, health and social services, business, military and government.

Forming small groups, the attendees, all Christians, petitioned God for change, protection, favor, his grace and, as Pastor Beltane Harrigan puts it, spiritual awakening of the territory to once again recognize the importance of God, who Mr. Harrigan says is ever present, but who won't remain silent for too long.

The event traditionally marks the importance of prayer to America. It also inadvertently highlights the dominant role of Christianity in the U.S. Virgin Islands, as there appeared to be no representation of other faiths at the event.

Speaking on behalf of Governor Kenneth Mapp, Samuel Carrion, the administration's liaison to faith-based groups, spoke of Mr. Mapp as being a man of faith who knows the power of prayer, and who constantly asks to be lifted through intercession.

"The governor is a man of faith; he's a Christian man, so he's very committed and understands the power of prayer," Mr. Carrion said. "He's always asking the community to lift him, the government and the lieutenant governor in prayer -- and the island in general, because he understands that we need God's help and wisdom. So he's very supportive of the pastors, this initiative that we have to today, and we could see that in his proclamation. Even if there was a national proclamation, the governor went ahead and established a territorial proclamation, inviting everyone within our territory to join him in prayer."

Mr. Harrigan, the St. Croix coordinator of the Territory Day of Prayer for the past three years, quoted scripture to bolster the event's viability: "If God's people who are called by his name will humble themselves and pray and seek his face, then will he hear from heaven, and he'll forgive our sins and heal our lands," he said, paraphrasing 2 Corinthians 7:14.

And suggesting that the territory needed to once again make God an ineradicable part of its fabric, Mr. Harrigan said the islands needed a spiritual awakening. "For the community, there's a need for spiritual awakening, that God would just touch down in this community. He's here; he's a silent observer, but he's not going to keep silent forever. And we're just trusting God through our praying and our interceding that God's timing would come and we'd have this visitation from God," he said.

Mr. Harrigan also had some words for the local Church, stating that it needed a "heaven-sent revival."

There were events happening in tandem on St. Thomas and St. John to mark the Territorial Day of Prayer. In his proclamation, Mr. Mapp noted prayer as part of the nation's foundation, as well as a proud mark of freedom or religion.

"Leaders, citizens and residents of our nation and territory are afforded the privilege of prayer, affirming our spiritual heritage and the principles upon which our nation was founded," he wrote. "We unite with fellow residents of our nation and our territory to exercise the freedom we have to gather in prayer with thankfulness while seeking guidance, provision, protection and purpose for the benefit of every individual and our nation and the territory as a whole. We are grateful for those who defend our freedoms and ask for peace throughout our territory, nation and world."

Sincerity and passion were two evident factors in last night's prayer session, as well as the worship. And though various denominations were present, the gathering operated as one people with the sole purpose of reaching God's heart on behalf of an entire territory.