

Love Your City



When my wife and I moved to Indiana 14 years ago, we settled in the country between Terre Haute, a fair-sized city of 70,000, and Brazil, a small town of 6,000. Our work was in Terre Haute, and our heart was in Brazil.

Even though we left a major city to move here, our hearts very quickly developed a fondness, then a love for Brazil. We settled in a church in Brazil. We started frequenting the businesses and restaurants in Brazil, though far more limited than the options of the larger city. Our growing love caused us to even be willing to pay more at small town businesses in Brazil than we might pay at larger chain stores in Terre Haute.

Though we weren't in exile, and we certainly we not forced to gravitate to Brazil over the often more convenient Terre Haute, we took to heart Jeremiah's charge "Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper" (29:7). We prayed for the community and supported it however we could.

I found myself often moved toward prayer as I drove through town. Beyond our church, my wife and I have developed a relationship with a ministry in town, which we try to bless physically and financially as we can.

God loves cities! Jesus wept over Jerusalem. There is a spiritual dynamic to each community and often intercessors who spend time praying for their communities will research the

history in order to discern that spiritual dynamic.

God's City Prayer Movement Plan

Recently I have been fascinated by what appears to be a growing move of God where He is raising up city-wide prayer movements across the country. In multiple locations, communities of varying size, often without any knowledge of God's similar movement in other communities, are starting to see the same things happen. Churches are starting to pray together for their city.

Bellingham, Washington, Altoona, Pennsylvania, Nashville, Tennessee, and Austin, Texas are a few of these places where unique city prayer movements are either stirring or in full swing.

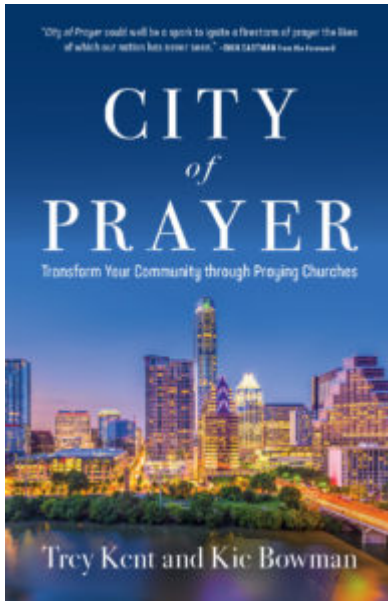
I had the privilege a few years ago to attend a national prayer leaders gathering in Austin, and the one night we were able to participate in one of the monthly all-city prayer meetings. More than 1,000 people showed up that night for a highly focused, dynamic, prayer meeting where people cried out for revival in Austin churches and a spiritual awakening in their city.

After the event, I was at an after glow dinner with the pastor-leaders of this movement. Tremendous unity, humility and love was displayed in that room between Baptist, Pentecostal, and other pastors from various streams of the church.

It inspired me so much, I soon started pursuing two leaders, Trey Kent and Kie Bowman, to write a book that would both tell about the 10-year journey of the Austin movement and show pastors how this could happen in any city.

Your city!

Maybe Brazil, Indiana!



The result is *City of Prayer: Transform Your Community through Praying Churches*. This powerful book tells the ongoing story of the citywide prayer movement in Austin, Texas, and shows how easily and practically this could happen in any community. We are praying that God uses it to fuel the hearts of pastors and prayer leaders across this nation. Be sure to get a copy. Or get two and share one with your pastor!

Let's love our communities through prayer.

—Jonathan Graf is the publisher of Prayer Connect magazine and the president of the Church Prayer Leaders Network.