... in a larger sense, we can not dedicate - we can not consecrate - we can not hallow - this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract.

President Abraham Lincoln
Gettysburg,
Nov. 19, 1863

Reflection

Remembering September 11, 2001

Tony Romeo is a life-long resident of New York City. He is the pastor of the Manhattan Church in Greenwich Village, and the Chapel in Union Square. He’s also the senior pastor of Reach NYC.

I was on my regular commute to Grand Central that gorgeous fall morning. Someone in my train car said, “A small plane just hit one of the Twin Towers."

We arrived at the terminal to the news that two large commercial planes had flown into the Twin Towers. The public address announcement at the station kept repeating “Exit the station immediately.” I remember one woman whose whole body was literally shaking with fear. Others were crying uncontrollably.

As I made my way to the office of the advertising agency I worked for on Madison Avenue, I repeated Bible verses just to keep myself focused and remain calm. I spent the next hour in the office of the president, where we watched the towers fall, weeping as we thought of all those who had been in them. Then we heard that a plane had hit the Pentagon. The Pentagon? I thought the world was coming to an end.

I remember seeing stunned Wall Street executives walking miles aimlessly uptown, their shoes and hair covered with ash and debris. Construction guys in hard hats spewing words that can’t be mentioned here-but who could blame them?

That night I received phone calls about friends and neighbors who had been murdered. One was a firefighter with four boys who lived in our town, just a mile or so down the road.
The call that chills me to this day was about my friend Michael. A young elder of one of our churches on the Upper East Side, he’d died within minutes of starting his new job that morning in one of the towers. I remember the standing-room-only crowd at his memorial service. His young wife and two children will never leave my thoughts.

Ten years later, as I walk the streets of my city, ghostly images of that day remain in memory. I see people mulling around Union Square Park with the names of missing loved ones. Walls plastered with handmade posters displaying smiling portraits from happier times, begging for information about where these loved ones might be.

Now armed soldiers patrol Grand Central Terminal. Police have gas masks secured to their belts, just in case. Each day we’re warned “If you see something, say something,” reminding us that terror still lingers. New Yorkers will never look at an unattended parcel the same way: the innocent-looking box dropped on a sidewalk just might be full of hate. We’ll never look at a fellow passenger at an airport exactly the same way, either.

Yet life goes on. There are still happy families with children. University students with hope for the future. Rushing commuters, clinging to their cups of coffee. New York City remains a town full of promise and good people from every nation and faith tradition.

This is still America, changed, yet somehow the same. But we remember.

Comment on this article on our Facebook page.

Resources

How Your Church Can Remember 9/11
by Rajkumar Dixit, Associate Pastor, New Hope Adventist church

The 10th anniversary of the September 11 attacks is a great opportunity to be relevant in your community, and invite people to church. Here are some ideas you may be able to do.

1. Place a full-page ad in your local paper, saying something like, "We Will Not Forget. God Bless America." Remember to add your church website address.

2. Invite your local fire and police department to your church for a special Sabbath recognition. When my church does this, we always provide a grand breakfast for these hardworking men and women. Last year the police chief told me that he wished his own church would honor the work his company does for the community. With tears in his eyes, he thanked me for recognizing their contribution.

3. Hold a candlelight vigil on Saturday night (September 10) or Sunday (9/11). Invite prominent leaders from your community to participate.

4. Hold a "Cross and the Towers" church movie event for the community. This powerful documentary is being released in a special commemorative edition as we approach the 10-year anniversary. The story follows the firsthand accounts of seven individuals whose lives were changed forever - not only by the devastation of 9/11, but by the stunning symbol of hope they found at Ground Zero. Sermon Spice is offering this movie for a special rate of $74.99.

5. Take time in your service to remember this special occasion, through the prayer time, poetry reading, and moment of silence. Here are some resources:

   I Believe - A 9/11 Tribute (Length 4.14)
   When the World Stopped Turning (Length 4:55)
   World Trade Tribute
   Blood of Heroes
   Poetry Readings

6. Have members in your congregation share testimonies on how God eased their pain after 9/11. This national event caused great turbulence in people’s lives, even for those who were not directly affected. Click here to view the 9/11 story New Hope Adventist Church will be sharing this weekend.

Discuss these ideas on our Facebook page.

News from NAD Ministerial
The Five 'F's' of Ministry
by Ivan Williams, Director NAD Ministerial

Faith. Pastors are called to serve others concerning their personal faith issues.

Family. The sacred circle of the minister's family is paramount to any and all ministry fulfillment.

Finances. Focusing on and support for the pastor's finances is an outgrowth of the recognition God places on those whom He calls.

Fitness. Focusing on pastoral fitness is a relevant, meaningful way to support professional practitioners who serve on the front lines of ministry.

Fellowship. Fellowship with others is as essential in the journey of pastoral ministry, as is our fellowship with God.

Discuss this article on our Facebook page.

Media

Downloadable 911 Video Resources

Americans remember 911 this weekend and it would be a travesty if Adventist congregations didn't include the experience in their worship services this weekend. We've included two videos to choose from that you can download from Vimeo and play directly from your computer. There is no charge to sign up for the regular Vimeo membership.

Short Video "September 11 Remembered" (RT 5:00)
This video tells the first person account of a member of the New Hope Seventh-day Adventist church who survived the Pentagon attack and how she has grown over the last ten years. "Georgina Straw began working at the Pentagon in Washington DC a couple weeks prior to 9/11. Little did she know, that a suicide bomber would fly a commercial jet into what is considered to be 'one of the safest' buildings in America." A special thanks to New Hope Church and Dixit Media Group for sharing this video.

Long Video "Always Remember" (RT 10:30)
This video is a devotional message given by Dan Jackson, president of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists. Elder Jackson leads his viewers back to recall the tragedy, remember the victims, and offers hope for a future where terrorism and tragedies are replaced by the peaceful loving reign of Jesus Christ.

To the Point

"The attacks of September 11th were intended to break our spirit. Instead we have emerged stronger and more unified. We feel renewed devotion to the principles of political, economic and religious freedom, the rule of law and respect for human life. We are more determined than ever to live our lives in freedom"
- Rudolph W. Giuliani

"Our enemies have made the mistake that America's enemies always make. They saw liberty and thought they saw weakness."
- President George W. Bush

"Today, we gather to be reassured that God hears the lamenting and bitter weeping of Mother America because so many of her children are no more. Let us now seek that assurance in prayer for the healing of our grief stricken hearts, for the souls and sacred memory of those who have been lost. Let us also pray for divine wisdom as our leaders consider the necessary actions for national security, wisdom of the grace of God that as we act, we not become the evil we deplore."
- Rev. Nathan Baxter, Dean of Washington National Cathedral

"The hero is commonly the simplest and obscurest of men."
- Henry David Thoreau

"There is no question what the roll of honor in America is. The roll of honor consists of the names of men who have squared their conduct by ideals of duty."
- President Woodrow T. Wilson
"Now, we have inscribed a new memory alongside those others. It's a memory of tragedy and shock, of loss and mourning. But not only of loss and mourning. It's also a memory of bravery and self-sacrifice, and the love that lays down its life for a friend—even a friend whose name it never knew."
- President George W. Bush

"Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, to assure the survival and success of liberty."
- President John F. Kennedy

"Are you guys ready? Let's roll!"
- Flight 93 passenger Todd Beamer, apparently as a signal to other passengers to attack the hijackers, Sept. 11.

"This mass terrorism is the new evil in our world today. It is perpetrated by fanatics who are utterly indifferent to the sanctity of human life, and we the democracies of this world are going to have to come together and fight it together."
- British Prime Minister Tony Blair

"There is no medicine to cure hatred."
- Publius Syrus

News, Ideas & Reminders

- Previous resource links:
  - Andrews Study Bible
  - The Hope of Survivors, ministry to victims of pastoral sexual abuse
  - iFollow website
  - NAD NewsPoints (formerly Friday Fax): by email, or on a webpage.
  - Clouzet - Standish presentation on creation and evolution
  - Back issues of REACH North America News
  - Federal Regulation Forces Crib Replacements in Church Nurseries
  - Special creation-evolution edition of REACH North America News
  - Tony Morgan's free e-book on big churches getting bigger
  - Adventist Parenting e-newsletter
  - Exposing Harry Potter
  - The one Project
  - Facts with Hope, evidence-based health messages for bulletins
  - NAD Volunteer Screening Guidelines and Screening Form
  - Dr. Matthew Gamble at 2011 GODenounters

Got a tool, resource, site, article, idea or seminar that you like a lot? Share it with us at BestPractices@ameritech.net.

Upcoming NAD Events

Do you have an event you’d like to invite NAD pastors to? Send details to BestPractices@Ameritech.net.

- Men's Ministries Day of Prayer. Sep 3, 2011, North American Division. Across the North American Division churches rally their men to pray for their families and churches. For more information, email: mlabrador@carolinasda.com


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