

Every Lundi-Gras in New Orleans we hear of the Mayor of New Orleans giving over the “keys to the city” to Rex, the “king of Carnival.” Although that gesture is simply a part of the whole Carnival agenda, it is symbolic of the fact that in a spiritual sense our city and region is turned over to the revelers and the rebellious.

Tonight at 7 pm (Wednesday, February 25), we want to start taking back our city and region in the spiritual realm. Therefore, I am asking you to join us at our Central Campus on Transcontinental Drive for a special “praise and prayer” service. In this service we will spend time praising the Lord for His goodness and greatness, and praying for Him to bring spiritual transformation to our city and region.

Also during this special church-wide service, we will be recognizing and praying for two groups of our teens: 1) Those who have completed a year of “dating only the Lord”, and 2) Those who are committing to “dating only the Lord” for the next year. This special annual emphasis in our Youth ministry encourages teens to prioritize the Lord in their lives, and to keep from engaging in the highly dysfunctional dating relationships that a great percentage of teens in America find themselves in during their early to mid teen years.

So make a special effort to join us for this special “praise and prayer” service at our Transcontinental Campus. You will be encouraged greatly in doing so, and you will be contributing to the work the Lord is doing in transforming our city and region.

This coming weekend (February 28 – March 1), we begin a new series of messages entitled, *Elevate Your Game*. During this series we will be learning from some of the “hardest sayings of Jesus” found in Luke’s Gospel. I believe this series will really challenge our understanding of what it takes to be a fully devoted follower of Jesus while at the same time encouraging us to rise to a “new level” of faith and faithfulness to the Lord.

Also during this upcoming month, we will be updating you concerning what has been happening with our A CITY TRANSFORMED: INVESTING IN ETERNITY projects (including the rebuild of our Airline Campus), and encouraging everyone to join us in accomplishing the projects the Lord has set before us.

This past weekend I had the opportunity to visit with some of our former members, who were displaced to other cities and states by Hurricane Katrina. They shared with me how blessed they were to be in our worship services, and how much they miss worshiping and fellowshiping with the Celebration Congregation. They expressed how amazed they are by what God has done in rebuilding and revitalizing our church these past three and one half years. Thirdly, they stated that they are praying and planning to move back to our region because the economy in the New Orleans area is better than the economies elsewhere around our nation, and because there is no other church like Celebration Church.

Hearing the words of these former Celebration members reminded me of how blessed we are to have the church family we have, and how remarkably God has positioned us to not only make a difference in our city and region, but make an impact in our world. I urge you to join us this coming weekend as we celebrate who the Lord is to us and what the Lord has done for us, and as always, be sure to bring others with you.

I love you all and pray for God’s best for you and your family members.

Pastor Dennis

P.S. We had to postpone our February Mexico Mission Trip due to violence from drug cartels in the area that we were planning to send a team to. Please be praying for the people who live in the border areas in Mexico (especially Reynosa) that the violence around them will dissipate and the Lord will turn their tragedy into a great victory in the coming days.