

Evangelicals plan host of National Prayer Day events

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Evangelical Christians in Utah are rallying as never before for the National Day of Prayer on Thursday, says the Rev. Greg Johnson, president of Standing Together and the Utah coordinator for the National Day of Prayer Task Force.

One big reason is that Nick Vujicic (pronounced Vooy-cheech), a motivational speaker who is gaining popularity among evangelicals, will speak at three events -- a breakfast in Salt Lake City, midday at Hill Air Force Base and in the evening at the Utah State Capitol.

That last event is expected to draw a large crowd, including Gov. Jon Huntsman Jr., Johnson said.

With the nation still at war and the economy in shambles, prayer is needed now more than ever, Johnson said.

Vujicic, 27, is a native of Australia who was born without arms or legs. Three years ago, he moved his ministry, Life Without Limbs, to Westlake, Calif., because American Christians were clamoring to have him as a guest speaker.

Vujicic uses a mechanical wheelchair and, although he has learned to care for himself, travels with a companion to save time and effort.

"I basically share how the power of God's love sets me free," said Vujicic from Georgia, where he was visiting high schools last week.

Vujicic tells some of his own story -- how his parents, though his father was a lay pastor in the Apostolic Christian Church of the Nazarene, struggled against God because of his birth defect and how as a child he contemplated suicide.

Later, he saw that God wanted to use him to reach others who feel rejected. In the seven years he has been speaking internationally, Vujicic said he has found that fear is the biggest disability of all.

Prayer, he said, is the foundation of a relationship with Jesus Christ. "We thank God for whatever we have, whatever we don't have."

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