

# Mayor Godfrey leads faithful in National Day of Prayer observance

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OGDEN -- More than 50 people came to talk to God on the steps of the Ogden Municipal Building on Thursday as part of the National Day of Prayer.

Religious leaders from the community offered public prayers on such topics as education, government and family, while those attending were encouraged to say their own prayers or participate in the ones offered. "I feel like it's important for the community of faith to connect together," said Karl Dumas, pastor of First Baptist Church. "God already knows what's in our hearts, but he still likes us to pray about it."

The National Day of Prayer organization is currently locked in a court battle with U.S. District Court Judge Barbara Crabb's ruling that the day violates a prohibition on a government endorsement of religion. The U.S. Department of Justice appealed the decision.

The only hint of the controversy came as Ogden Mayor Matthew Godfrey opened the event by reading the city's joint proclamation declaring Thursday a community day of prayer.

Godfrey said he and many others had received a letter saying the day was unconstitutional and to stop government support or a lawsuit could be filed.

"That will not happen while I stand in this office," he said to enthusiastic cheers.

Robert Guiller, pastor of Crossroads Christian Fellowship, said he was glad to participate. He said God has placed people in positions of authority and he has an obligation to pray for their guidance and wisdom.

"Prayer, at the end of the day, is one of the most powerful things we have," he said.

Godfrey said the National Day of Prayer and the city's participation are a way to honor the religious diversity in Ogden and he was glad to see so many people attending despite the cold weather.

Lee Kane, of Ogden, said he attends every year no matter the weather, because his pastor coordinates the event and he feels it's important to support it.

It's important to come to events that are available before complaining about not having things, said Connie Scott, an Evanston, Wyo., resident who visits Ogden often.

"If we can't support the ones that are already in existence, it's hard to ask for more things and expect God to honor it," she said. Supporting the day of prayer makes good common sense and good "God sense," she said.

Layton resident Joani Peterson said the day is an important reminder of how the country began and where it needs to continue to go.