



INTERCESSORS FOR AMERICA

APRIL 2019

THE CONNECTER

CONNECTING HEARTS OF PRAYER FOR
THE NATION TO GOD AND EACH OTHER!

God Is Alive and Well in Hollywood



*By Karen Covell,
Founding Director of
The Hollywood Prayer Network*



I have had the honor of being a producer in Hollywood for the past 30 years. My husband is a composer, and we have both lived through miracles, divine appointments, and personal encounters with God, all along the way!

There has been a prominent belief in American Christianity that Hollywood is an evil place, full of immoral people and inappropriate projects, and good people need to stay away and turn off their TVs. I learned early on in my career that this is a lie from the devil. It turns out that Hollywood is the world's most influential mission field and the enemy doesn't want Christians here. The entertainment that comes out of Hollywood shapes culture all across the globe.

Satan's best moment was in the early 1900's when Christians decided that films were becoming too risqué and it was time for us to "flee from evil." So we did. As the Church, we not only physically left Hollywood, but we told others to stay away. We turned our backs on one of the most influ-

ential industries on the planet, and on some of the most passionate, creative, and loving people God has created.

So what happened? The content of our entertainment got more risqué, darker, and there was no one here to bring God's love, hope, and salvation to the people creating our world's entertainment.

But, in 1980, God decided it was time to bring us back. Christians started showing up on sets, in production companies, and at the studios. Other ministries started popping up and a community of believers blossomed. Today, we know of over 10,000 Christian professionals in Hollywood, with 20 vital ministries and over 100 solid churches. God is active and moving in the hearts and lives of people all throughout the Hollywood entertainment industry and there's a real spiritual renewal here!

We want you to join us in praying for God to continue to strengthen those of us who believe and lovingly draw in those who don't yet know Him. Don't believe the lie. God is alive and well in Hollywood. Check out www.hollywoodprayernetwork.org. ♦

FIRST FRIDAY PRAYER

April 5, 2019

We invite you to join us on the First Friday of April to pray about U.S. economic policy with our guest, New York Times best-selling author Kevin Freeman, economics expert and host of Economic War Room. Call details are on page 4.



U.S. ECONOMY

Pray for a healthy national economy. Intercede for economic productivity, for available work and willing workers. Pray for creative economic initiatives that will serve the common good.

DIPLOMACY

Pray for American diplomacy. Pray that our leaders will demonstrate diplomatic effectiveness in international relations that will ensure our sovereignty and freedom. Intercede for economic freedom all over the world.

WISDOM

Pray for American leaders to exercise wisdom and discernment in dealing with foreign governments that have hostile economic policies. Pray that our leaders will be shrewd in negotiations and relationships with foreign powers.

To see God's purposes for America fulfilled through sustained prayer and Spirit-led obedience

Hollywood: A Mirror of Culture



By David Kubal,
IFA President/
CEO

Although many people believe that the entertainment industry reflects our culture, in fact Hollywood leads the culture by strategically normalizing ideologies on a regular and consistent basis. Where are they leading us? Let's just look at LGBTQ and abortion.

Adults, teens, and children are all targeted, as evidenced in the reports from organizations such as GLAAD, which track and promote increasing gay representation in all media—including children's shows. The population of Americans identifying as LGBTQ is 4.5% according to Gallup, but in television shows alone, the percentage of openly LGBTQ characters is nearly double. The percentage of movies with an openly gay character is almost 13%. GLAAD lobbies for these numbers to rise and reach all demographics, even children.

Abortion, believe it or not, was first featured in a major television show when the

title character of the show "Maude" got an abortion back in 1972—before *Roe v. Wade*. There have been an ever-increasing number of shows and movies that have depicted abortion positively. In fact, this is tracked by abortion proponents. Recently, the hit show "Scandal" featured the main character getting an abortion onscreen, at Christmas, while "Silent Night" plays. In 2018 alone, there were 18 plotlines on television that featured abortion.

But, there is good news. A growing number of Christians in Hollywood are producing entertainment with messages of truth, redemption, hope, and other biblical values. And while they are vastly outnumbered, and in many cases underfunded and facing production challenges, a thriving community of Christians is committed to serving in this mission field and using their creative abilities for Christ.

It takes prayer, funding, and support from the Christian community and ticket sales for these studios and creatives to continue to make these projects. I hope believers will support these

projects in prayer and in ticket/video sales. At a recent conference, I met the producers of the film *Gosnell*, Phelim McAleer and Ann McElhinney. Their movie exposed the horrific story of Dr. Kermit Gosnell and the inhumane practices of late-term abortion. They shared the uphill battle of promoting the film—many theatres resorted to dirty practices to assure that customers would not be able to see the film. Today, their film is on video and available On Demand on many cable platforms. Also, on March 29, 2019 the film *Unplanned* opens in theaters. These stories need to continue to be told. Your support of projects like these in the theater and on video keeps these studios alive and able to continue telling the truth on film. You can read more about Phelim and Ann and their film *Gosnell* in our Intercessors for America Special Report on Hollywood.

So, where is Hollywood leading us? Today, it is leading culture toward unbiblical ideas. But our hope is that this issue of *The Connector* will inform and encourage you in praying so that one day Hollywood will be leading our culture toward Christ. ♦

Creativity Is God's Gift



By Steve Lindsey
Center for Faith
and Work
Los Angeles

We call those who work in the arts, media, and entertainment "creatives." All human beings are created in the image of God and one of the primary ways we give expression to our divine image-bearing is by being creative (Gen. 1:27-28).

Those who are especially gifted at utilizing creative expression deserve our praise and support. In fact, the first people described as being filled with the Spirit of God are Bezalel and Oholiab—artistic designers for the temple of God (Exod. 35:30-35).

But when Christians think of Hollywood as an industry, the last thing that comes to mind for many is a group of "divine image-bearers wonderfully expressing their cre-

ative giftedness for God's glory." We are in need of a renewed and insider's perspective on the work of our creatives.

God is at work in every sector, even Hollywood. He desires thoughtful Christian leaders with positions of influence to collaborate for His glory and human flourishing.

There are almost 30 active entertainment-focused ministries in Los Angeles. There are small workplace Bible studies, large vocational-training organizations, and groups

—Continued on page 3

Creativity Is God's Gift

—Continued from page 2

that labor to provide strategic placement within the heart of working production companies, businesses, and professional organizations. Many executive positions at major studios as well as dedicated actors, producers, writers, and animators are currently filled by caring and highly-skilled believers.

Christians are making a difference in Hollywood. There are many examples of top quality works celebrating the spiritually rich, enduring, and timeless stories. These come to us by God's grace and the endless labors of thousands of talented people, both Christians and non-Christians. But much of the best offerings are the product of believers embedded in the industry and striving towards common good excellence with a Kingdom impact.

We are in need of a renewed and insider's perspective on the work of our creatives.

Hollywood is remarkably similar to many of the cultural centers and cities the apostle Paul went to precisely for the promise of great impact of the Gospel. Whether it was Ephesus as a religious center, Athens as a thought and cultural center, Corinth as an international trade and economic hub, or Rome as the seat of power in the western world, the book of Acts unfolds God's strategic plan (through Paul and others) to engage the places and people that could leverage the gospel message with the most reach for renewed lives and God's mission in the world.

Those working in LA's entertainment industry need, and often want, prayer. Many are open to spirituality and generally appreciate offers to be prayed over.

Professionals in the entertainment and media sector are the third most likely profession to commit suicide. In the midst of this great need, thousands have found hope in Christ and continue, as one leader has said, to move from the desire to be a "star" to instead become a "light" in their workplace.

We all need our creatives, who cultivate important capabilities for human flourishing such as empathy and imagination. Empathy results when an actor draws us out of ourselves and into the experience of other human beings. Faith, prayer, and hope all depend on a developed use of imagination—we see the unseen to live a life of faith (Heb. 11:1-3). Imagination is cultivated through the arts.

This explains why God's Word is story, poetry, song, epic drama, and parables. He knows we are wired to respond wholeheartedly when we experience the creative and varied forms of communication, which engage us emotionally, relationally, and dramatically—not just through information exchange.

So let's value the creatives in Hollywood, both believers and unbelievers, who serve as God's cultural *guardians of imagination and faith*. And let's support and pray for the Christian community's ongoing engagement and impact for God's good work in their midst. ♦



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TOP 10 Most Influential Christians in Hollywood



Merlinda Balmas
Warner Brothers/
Bible study leader



Dean Batali
TV show runner/Mentor of
young TV staff writers



Justin Bieber
Singer



Mark Burnett & Roma Downey
Producer & Actress



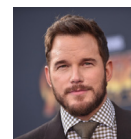
Justin Chang
LA Times Film Critic



DeVon Franklin
Producer/Preacher/
Author of Christian non-fiction books



Lori McCreary
Producer of films and TV/
Bold believer



Chris Pratt
Actor



Denzel Washington
Actor/Humanitarian



Tyler Perry
Actor/Producer/
Entrepreneur

PRAYERS FOR HOLLYWOOD

Pray that the 10,000+ Christian professionals working in Hollywood will be strong in their faith, share Jesus with their friends and co-workers, pray for others, and consider themselves ambassadors of Christ wherever they go.

Pray for solid believers to hold decision-making positions in the industry.

Pray for the pre-Christians in Hollywood to have a hunger for God and for more Christians in entertainment.

Pray for the culture of Hollywood to become more kind, truthful and full of integrity as the Lord touches and influences the people's hearts who live and work there.



For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Eph 2:10)

Intercessors For America
800-USA-PRAY (872-7729)

INTERCESSORS FOR AMERICA

What's New?



HEADLINE PRAYER:
News Christians Need to Pray About Everyday

Set up a desktop or mobile shortcut to IFA's HEADLINE PRAYER today!

Visit IFApray.org/blog

What Are People Saying?

We have to pray; but we need to put shoe leather to those prayers.

—Kathy

Keep praying church. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in pulling down strongholds.

—Robin

Father, hear the cries of Your people as we seek Your face and Your way to run our country in a way that is God-fearing and just.

—Betty

Lord, we thank You for raising up intercession for our nation in these perilous times. We plead the blood of Jesus over all who are in government for a softening of hearts of those who oppose Your will and for a strengthening of resolve and courage for those who embrace Your will. Be Thou glorified in our nation.

—J9



WHAT SHE SAW CHANGED EVERYTHING
IN THEATERS MARCH 29th

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FIRST FRIDAY PRAYER CONFERENCE CALL

Please plan on setting these important 30 minutes aside to join with hundreds across the U.S. in praying for America, its leaders, and its citizens on **April 5, 2019 from 12:15 to 12:45 p.m. (ET)**
Call: (712) 775-7430