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## Christian men renew Promise Keepers' pledge

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By Kristi Moore  
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Jim Tush (center), 60, of Pennsylvania, sat on the Mall yesterday, praying as part of a gathering of about 20,000 Christian men rededicating themselves to their faith.

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Thousands of Christian men from across the country came to the District yesterday to renew their faith in God in a day of moving ceremonies and events on the Mall.

An estimated 20,000 men attended the Stand in the Gap 2007 event at the foot of the Washington Monument, including many who danced, shouted, prayed and wept.

"This is for every man, from every church [and] every decade," said event chairman Marty Granger. "We need to tap into the roots of masculinity ... by masculine songs and lyrics."

Mr. Granger, founder and president of the Northern Virginia-based Faith in the Family International, said the event was to bring together men of all ages, races, denominations and backgrounds. He also hoped the event attracted and changed the hearts of non-Christians who might have unexpectedly been drawn by the activities.

The event marked the 10th anniversary of the landmark Promise Keepers assembly in the District that attracted an estimated 1 million men.

The gathering by the Denver-based Promise Keepers, founded in 1990, is considered one of the largest assemblies of Christian men in modern U.S. history.

The theme of the event yesterday was "Return, Remember, Renew and Rebuild" — return to the place the Promise Keepers held their gathering, remember God's attributes and character, renew one's resolve to live according to the word of God, and rebuild the Christian church.

"Society tries to push things away, but when you come to these things, you remember how strong He is," said Larry Glidewell, who flew in from Indiana with his 11-year-old son, Sam.

His son said: "I've been drawn to Christ today, and [the event] has inspired me to draw my friends to Christ."

The name of the event comes from a passage in the Book of Ezekiel in which God says, "I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so that I would not have to destroy it."

Those in attendance hoped to fill in the gap that they believe has been created in the United States.

"We are here to build walls of honor, protection and honor in God's name," Mr. Granger said.

He was among about 20 speakers, including Bishop Joseph Garlington, senior pastor of the Covenant Church of Pittsburgh, and Bishop Larry Jackson, a Promise Keeper and founding pastor of Bethel Outreach International Church in Charlotte, N.C.

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