News 21 November 2026 | English article

First Baptist Hogansville Sees 60 Professions of Faith as Recovery Ministry Transforms Lives

A true story of faith under pressure. Read the first half below, then continue online.

KEY SPIRITUAL TAKEAWAY

"Every day, we're calling people. Every day, we're going to see folks,"

(Transliterated from the original Hindi.)

They had gathered only to pray. When prayer itself becomes the target, faith is proved not by words but by staying.

The Story - Part One

First Baptist Church Hogansville has witnessed more than 60 professions of faith and baptisms in the past year, growth Pastor Greg Morris attributes to an aggressive soul-winning effort built on personal outreach, discipleship and prayer. The church holds two Sunday services and averages about 165 people in attendance, sometimes reaching more than 200. Attendance was 66 when Morris arrived nine years ago.

Seven people were saved on a single Sunday a few weeks ago. It was not a special event or a visiting evangelist. It was an ordinary Sunday in a small Georgia town, and seven people walked forward anyway.

That is the pattern at Hogansville. The growth has not come from a program or a personality. It has come from a church that decided to go looking for the people nobody else was looking for, and then refused to let them go.

Helping drive the increase in salvations and baptisms are a thriving Celebrate Recovery ministry, extensive discipleship and consistent outreach built on faith and prayer. The recovery ministry began more than a decade ago and has been strengthened under Morris' leadership, drawing 40 to 60 attendees each week.

About 10 people are picked up weekly from LaGrange, 13 miles away, and 25 Celebrate Recovery attendees also attend regular Sunday services. A group of 10 volunteers makes personal contact to show love and care for the people in the program, and the church's follow-up is relentless in the best sense of the word.

"Every day, we're calling people. Every day, we're going to see folks," Morris said.

"We say down here, 'You spell love T-I-M-E.'"

Each person struggling with addiction knows someone else struggling with addiction, so church volunteers reach out to those individuals as well. If somebody needs to enter rehabilitation, volunteers take them there. In the past month, five people have been placed in rehabilitation programs.

If a person misses a meeting, contact is made to determine their current situation.

"If push comes to shove, we'll send somebody to their house," Morris said.

The Turning Point - What Happens Next

The story reaches a life-changing moment that changes everything -- and what seemed like the end is only the middle. Two reports disagree on the numbers, and one question is left unanswered: will the CCTV footage ever come out? Read the full story to find out what happens next.

PERSONAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When gathering to pray carries a real cost, what keeps a community coming together anyway -- and what would keep you coming?

2. The pastor's sister shielded him with her own body and fainted under the blows. What does costly, self-giving love look like in your own family or church?

3. When justice is delayed and a complaint is withdrawn under threat, how do believers hold on to truth without giving in to fear -- or to hatred?

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