EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Not Burnt, but Refined

On the eve of the Nehemiah Alliance's Global Sacred Assembly on the National Mall, California National Director Melanie Cox talks a 52-day prayer movement, the Jubilee at America's 250th, rescuing horses from the slaughter pipeline, and the mindset of a CEO who refuses to "live in lack."

Interview by Paul Salfen · AMFM Magazine

The occasion is Saturday, October 31: the Nehemiah Alliance's Global Sacred Assembly. Organizers say it is the culmination of a nationwide 52-day prayer and repentance movement. They are expecting more than seven million participants worldwide, gathered at the Sylvan Theater on the National Mall and watching a livestream that reaches more than 100 nations and all 50 states. Cox is the movement's National Director for California. She is also a CEO, a mother of five, a horse rescuer and the first-time author of *You Have to Know*. As she told Salfen at the end of the call, she agreed to the interview with about fifteen minutes' notice.

"JESUS"

Salfen pointed out that most of the media's attention this weekend is on Halloween. "This is so much better," he said. "You gotta be so excited about the 7 million people in the National Mall. How in the world did this come together?"

Cox answered in one word. "Jesus."

Then she told the longer version. "So I'm the National Director for California," she said, "and all of a sudden, this woman calls me, where she said, 'I just had a dream.' And she really believes that we are not in a cultural war, but we're in a spiritual war."

That woman is Barbara Ann Jeter, the founder of the Nehemiah Alliance. According to the movement's publicists at TruthPR, Jeter felt called during last year's Days of Awe and Day of Atonement to mobilize America around spiritual renewal, and she took her blueprint from the biblical Nehemiah, who rebuilt Jerusalem's walls in 52 days. As Cox remembers the call, Jeter's plan was simple: "I'm gonna start praying, and oh, if people would follow me, if we could come together, if we could get people to come, then I know that our Dad would come back."

> *She really believes that we are not in a cultural war, but we're in a spiritual war. — Melanie Cox*

Cox said the vision matched scriptures she already loved. "I talked to her for a long time, and I just said, you know, I love the book of Nehemiah," she said. "And I really love the story of Jehoshaphat. I love that when the

walls came down, and when things were crumbled, and when the nation had gone, they didn't go and grab a hammer, and Jehoshaphat didn't go and grab war weapons. They got on their knees and they prayed."

In 2 Chronicles 20, King Jehoshaphat answers an invading army by calling Judah to fast and pray before any battle begins. That idea of prayer before weapons runs through everything Cox says about the assembly. "I said, so if we could do that, if we could really move in that direction, God would come back."

The movement grew from there. "She just started this incredible movement," Cox said, "and it was just like one person has come on to another, to another, and we're creating an army. And we're really believing for something amazing."

"And so this would be the Nehemiah Alliance?" Salfen asked.

"Correct," she said. "From the book of Nehemiah."

THE YEAR OF JUBILEE

Salfen said what a lot of people seem to feel. "We're in such a strange time in the world, and in this country," he said, "and I think there's not a better time to do this right now, right?"

"Well, there's not a better time," Cox agreed. "We're in the year of Jubilee."

She gave a short Bible lesson. "So every 50 years in the Bible, in the book of Leviticus, they would blow these trumpets, and everything would come back to what belonged to God," she said. "The land was released, and the slaves were released, and everything came back."

The calendar is a big part of why the timing feels important to her. America turns 250 in 2026, which is five cycles of fifty years. "So 250 years, we are in a five-year cycle of 50," she said. "There has not been a Jubilee like this, ever."

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She explained what's at stake with her usual enthusiasm. "If you can get it right, God either comes back and gives you a blessing, or He doesn't," she said. "So we're like, no, you know, I want to be blessed. God, come back. No, I like my liberty, and I like my land, and oh, I like all of it! God, come back and bless the country. Bless me!"

The organizers also picked the date on purpose. October 31 is Reformation Day, the anniversary of Martin Luther posting his ninety-five theses in 1517, and TruthPR calls it "a declaration that light shines in darkness."

A DOLLAR AND A CUP OF COFFEE

Salfen had done his homework. "Your horses," he said. "I've heard about this. Tell me about this horse rescue, while we're talking about our land."

"Yes!" Cox said. "I am an animal lover, and that's kind of a story on its own."

It began with a deal that fell through. "I'm a CEO, and I had a business deal that fell through, and I wasn't sad," she said, "because I knew that God was like, well, Melanie, do you believe I am who I say I am? Well, of course you are, God. Well, then: give me this or give me better. That's your prayer. Okay, God, that's your prayer."

What came next happened on a bike ride. "I was bike riding with my brother up in Santa Barbara," she said, "and I meet this woman, and her husband developed a pacemaker, and she's like, oh, I'm old, and I'm gonna sell this land."

They found plenty in common. "I pray over her, and I'm like, well, I'm a vegetable grower. She's like, I am too," Cox said. "And then we just start, like, Rain Man-ing on apples," she added, laughing. "Hours go by. And I say, you know, I really have a heart. Man, if I had a piece of land like this, I would save everything I could possibly save."

The next morning she had an email. "For the same price that I was gonna do the job up in L.A. for," Cox said, "she's like, I will sell you this land for this, plus a dollar, because you owe me a cup of coffee. And it was hundreds of thousands of dollars less than what it should be."

> *Give me this or give me better. That's your prayer. — Melanie Cox*

She now uses that land for rescue. "We go up once a month," Cox said. She described a truck where Amish sellers unload horses they've used for transportation. "They're not really animals" to them, she said, but more like vehicles. "And it's sad, because some of them are missing eyeballs, or they've been hit by cars. And they sell them per pound, just to be made glue."

"So we catch them on the way to Mexico," she said, "and then we save as many as we can."

She lit up describing where they end up. "It's just these group of old ladies and old men that just run these hills," she said. "They're barely walking, but man, they are free. They live on a little over 4,000 acres, just kind of roaming."

"It's beautiful," Salfen said. "How great is that?"

A LINE SHE DOESN'T CROSS

Salfen pointed out how much else Cox runs. "You've got funding, you've got real estate, you've got property management," he said. Her companies include Cox Family Funding, EMC Property Management and Monarch Real Estate Holdings. Salfen asked how she keeps her faith at the center of all that business.

"That's a tough balance," Cox said. "It's always a tough balance to honor God, and to be palatable to man. And, man, it's a line that I don't cross, because I feel like if I'm not honoring God, then it all goes away."

That means sometimes saying no. "In business, there's a lot of deals that go in," she said. "I'm like, I don't care. It's not for me then. Good. And God always brings something better and bigger."

She admitted she enjoys the follow-up. "And I like to call them back and be like, see, you should have taken it. It was a good deal. You really missed out," she said with a grin. "Missed out on a lot of blessing from Jesus."

THE WHOLE STAIRCASE

Salfen asked what she'd tell someone who hears her and thinks, *I want to do good in the world and do good in business, too.*

She took a moment before answering. "You know, I have been through more fires than most people should have," she said, "and I am not burnt, but I'm refined."

> *I have been through more fires than most people should have, and I am not burnt, but I'm refined. — Melanie Cox*

"The thing that I have learned time and time again is we have this need to see the whole staircase," she went on. "We're like, I really need to see where I'm going. I need to see the direction. I need to see it complete, to the fruition of what it's supposed to be. But God says, absolutely not. You're called to walk one step at a time."

Her advice is to give up control. "If you would truly surrender your life and say, you know what, God? You open doors that man can't open, and you shut them that I shouldn't walk through," she said. "If you would really live in that principle, I promise you, God will start putting things on your heart. I have done projects where I'm like, in the world, this does not make sense. No way this is coming through. And they have come out so good."

Then she put it in her own blunt way. "I would suggest that you shut your mouth, and you shut your eyes, and you put out your little hand, and you say: Oh, lead me. I'll go wherever you take me. It's gonna be good," she said. "And it is."

A HAIL MARY ON THE OCEAN

Salfen co-hosts a radio show with Dallas Cowboys Hall of Famer Drew Pearson, who caught the original "Hail Mary" pass, and he asks most guests about their own Hail Mary moment. Cox said she's had plenty.

"I've had so many of them," she said. "That's the one thing that I tell my kids and the people that work for me: if you yourself don't believe it's for you, then you're correct."

She compared it to the twelve spies Moses sent into Canaan in the Book of Numbers. "Ten come back, and I'm like, no way we can take it, we're locusts," she said, mixing up the spies' actual line (they said they looked like grasshoppers next to the giants). "And then two are like, of course it's for us. You yourself have to believe it before anyone else will."

And she's in the middle of one right now. "I picked a chunk of land right on the ocean," she said, "and I'm like, I don't even know how I'm gonna close escrow on it. But God, I know you're gonna provide, because I feel it in my spirit that it's for me. And you know what? I'm gonna wake up every day, and I'm gonna hit the pavement, and I'll work for it, and that is gonna be for me."

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She can't stand the words *wish* and *hope*. "'I wish I had that. If I only had the funding, I sure wish I could do that.' Or, 'I hope it's gonna work out,'" she said. "The second you put your mindset in that lack, that's all you get."

Her alternative: "You wake up every day and say, today's a good day, it's for me. It's all for me. Because I'm worthy, I'm good enough, I'm gonna work for it. It's mine, it's mine, it's mine. And you walk towards it, and I will tell you, it is."

A LINE IN THE SAND

When Salfen asked what keeps her on the right path, Cox answered with an identity statement. "I know who I am in God," she said. "I'm a child of God. I'm the daughter of the Most High. I walk with authority and power. You do not tell me who I am. I know exactly who I am."

That sense of purpose carries into the Nehemiah work. "The Nehemiah Alliance, oh my goodness, I love it," she said. "God, I'm built to stand the line. No, Satan, you will not have this country. I draw a line in the sand, and I stand. You don't move me an inch! I won't even give you a toe."

> *I draw a line in the sand, and I stand. You don't move me an inch! I won't even give you a toe. — Melanie Cox*

She knows the doubts that come up. "It's the enemy who's like, oh, that's too big, Melanie. You can't do that," she said. "'You guys are really gonna turn the United States around, one nation under God? That's not for you.' It's like, oh, excuse me? No, it is for me."

"I am a steam train coming through," she said. "Your whole life is honestly about your mindset."

HOW TO JOIN

Salfen asked about her book, and Cox was ready. *You Have to Know* is on Amazon. "They're biblical truths that you have to know, that God wants you to know, to live your best, most fruitful, most powerful life possible," she said. She also made an offer: "If you find me on Instagram, it's Melanie Cox, I will send you a digital copy for free."

Then he asked how people can take part this weekend. "We're gonna be on the National Mall," she said. "And man, there are some powerhouses." She also had a speaking slot of her own in Washington the night before.

TruthPR's speaker list backs that up: Michael W. Smith, Nick Vujicic, Lou Engle, Dr. Alveda King, R.T. Kendall, Sam and Kevin Sorbo, Pastor Tony Suarez and Cindy Jacobs, representing evangelical, charismatic and traditional traditions on one stage.

"Come and pray with us. Come and stand. Come and give your voice," Cox said. "If you believe in this country... one nation under God, I want to bring that back. Then come and stand with us." Her paraphrase of 2

Chronicles 7:14 was: "It starts with us, the children of God."

People who can't be in Washington can still take part. "They're live streaming it on Daystar, CTN—Christian Television Network—TBN, as well as NA52.org on YouTube," she said. "It'll be streamed live all day long. And if you can't be here in person, pray for us! Pick a spot, pray for us tomorrow." And she added, "Guys, don't be so lazy. This is your nation, for goodness' sake."

JUST STAND

Before they wrapped, Salfen gave her room for a final word. Cox admitted the whole thing had come together at the last minute. "Usually I prepare better," she said. "I actually just got a phone call 15 minutes ago, and they're like, will you do it? And I'm like, okay, I'll do it."

"And I'm so glad you did," Salfen said.

Her parting advice came down to two words. "Just stand," she said. "That's just your advice for life: stand. Don't cower. Don't live in shame, don't live in the past, don't live in lack, don't live in doubt. Live in who you're created to be. You are handcrafted on the potter's wheel—your eye color, your skin color, your temperament, everything made purposely. Live in that purpose. It's your best life."

> *Just stand. That's just your advice for life: stand. — Melanie Cox*

FIND THE GLOBAL SACRED ASSEMBLY

Event: The Nehemiah Alliance Global Sacred Assembly, culmination of the 52-day prayer and repentance movement

When: Saturday, October 31, 2026 (Reformation Day), 6 a.m.–9 p.m. ET (per organizers)

Where: Sylvan Theater, National Mall, Washington, D.C.

Founder: Barbara Ann Jeter

Announced Speakers: Michael W. Smith, Nick Vujicic, Lou Engle, Dr. Alveda King, R.T. Kendall, Sam and Kevin Sorbo, Pastor Tony Suarez, Cindy Jacobs

Watch Live: Daystar, CTN (Christian Television Network), TBN, and NA52.org on YouTube

Info & Registration: na52.org

Melanie Cox: National Director for California, The Nehemiah Alliance; CEO of Cox Family Funding, EMC Property Management and Monarch Real Estate Holdings; author of *You Have to Know* (Amazon). Instagram: Melanie Cox

Interview conducted by Paul Salfen for AMFM Magazine, October 30, 2026.

Paul Salfen is Managing Editor of AMFM Magazine and a veteran interviewer of film, television, music, and sports figures. He is the author of Going For It!, a collection of Hail Mary moments from the artists and athletes he has spent two decades putting on the record.