



PRAYER FOR GROWTH AND RENEWAL

What is prayer walking?

Prayer walking is strategically dividing your parish or benefice into sections which can be walked by individuals or groups in around an hour.

- First divide the parish into large key areas to cover in each section and then break that down into groups of streets for different groups to cover. Use Google maps to help!
- Create a plan of where you are going to prayer walk and when. For example, you might decide to commit to an hour one weekday morning for a set period of weeks or months or you could try and cover all the parish or benefice in a set time span like during Thy Kingdom Come, throughout Lent or Advent or over the summer. Different groups can pray for different areas during your set time.

Prayer walking is then simply going for a walk in pairs or threes with Jesus around those streets. It's a great way to get to know the community and area, looking at a place with God and asking him to reveal things to us. We are strategically asking God to bless his land, his place, his kingdom. We want to invite God's presence to overwhelm and bless our parishes and for the Holy Spirit to fall upon people who do not yet know him. We want to notice things about our local area that we wouldn't notice if we were just praying inside our church building or in a home.

Ideas for prayer walking.

G - Gather everyone at a set place and pray together before you divide up into pairs or threes to cover different areas. You may find the following headings helpful for praying. These are taken and adapted from the 24-7 Prayer website:

W - Worship As you set off walking begin with your eyes on Jesus. Say the name of Jesus; recite a Psalm; hum a worship song; basically anything that helps declare the Lordship of Jesus over the streets you walk on.

A - Ask Flowing from your worship begin asking God for His Spirit to fall on the streets you walk on, the homes, businesses, schools and other churches you walk past. Begin to get

specific and pray for people and situations, the 'people of peace' you know God has brought you into contact with, who are opening up doors of opportunity for the gospel within your community.

PRAY THE POSITIVE

P - Pray blessings on the area. Focus on God's plan, purpose and destiny for the place and the people that live there. "Your Kingdom come, your will be done..." is an excellent start.

L - Listen As you worship and pray, leave space to listen to what God might want to say to you - then pray that back.

K - Know your Land Get (and keep) yourself informed around the area you are prayer-walking; research some of its history; some of its ongoing problems; so you can pray for breakthrough. Get to know some of the current situations that require persevering prayer and also celebrate the particular graces that rest on the area, asking God to make your area a blessing beyond its borders.

Cards: we have cards which have lists of streets on that people take with them as they are prayer walking. On the back is also the above information to guide people as they pray. Sometimes if we can't get all of the streets in a certain area covered on the day we were doing it, people happily take another card home and prayer walk it at another time.

Litter Pick: recently we have started litter picking as we prayer walk. You cover less ground but are making a real tangible difference. This has led to some excellent conversations and interactions and positive publicity for the churches and Jesus.

Silence or noise: some people will be confident praying out loud as they are walking, and others will want to pray in their heads. Both is absolutely fine, and a mixture is great. Try to encourage people not to just chat about general life but if they must talk to talk about what they are seeing and noticing, what are they wondering about for example: why are there so many cars parked on drives on a Monday morning? What is God up to in our community? Who are the people of peace or of influence in these streets? Where have we seen good and godly connections lately?

Safety & things to consider

Try not to prayer walk alone, go in twos or threes. Consider what time of day you are going; early evening is good for people who work during the day, but you need to ensure you are in well-lit areas if it is dark. If it is something you are going to commit to regularly investing in some high vis jackets with the church logo printed on is a great way for people to notice you and talk when they see you.

Ensure someone in each pair or small group has a fully charged mobile phone with them in case of emergency. Also ensure everyone knows where they are going!

Stories of prayer walking.

We've been prayer walking our parishes regularly for three years now. In that time we've had people walk in to church off the street looking for Jesus, we've had people stop and talk to us about what we're doing and why. In new housing estates where we have very few connections, we've seen people coming for baptism and attending our events and activities. We've been on the local councillors Facebook page, we've seen attendance at outreach events really increase, we've had Christians move into our parishes and more and so we keep on praying and walking.