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**A  
HANDBOOK  
FOR  
UK  
COUNTIES  
PRAYERWALKING**

John & Yvonne Pressdee

This is a very basic booklet about walking and praying, based on nearly 20 years of prayerwalking in 16 countries, across Europe and into Asia. The Lord has asked us to do some strange things at times, but no stranger than things that He has asked His people to do over the centuries. Prayerwalking is a holy adventure, a pilgrimage, an opportunity to take our love for God, out of the churches and back on to the streets; often using history as a backcloth.

We have wept down the WW1 Western Front and in Ireland; we have stood with Germans as they spoke out words of apology for atrocities committed against the Poles and Russians; we have stood in synagogues and mosques and spoken out words of repentance for the treatment they have received at the hands of those who called themselves Christians, and we have seen people who have personally been hurt, speaking out words of forgiveness and reconciliation. We have broken bread in wounded places and spoken of the power of the cross to cleanse and heal. As 2 Chronicles 7.14 says, 'If my people, who are called by My name, humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways - then will I hear from heaven, forgive their sin and heal their land.'

Our nation needs prayer as it has never done before and the Lord is releasing people to pray and work in new ways. Our young people are realising the need to pray and 24/7 prayer rooms are being set up everywhere. There is a groundswell of ordinary grassroots people who are taking a new responsibility for their area with Street Pastors and Chaplaincy teams and in many churches the prayer meeting is no longer the most boring meeting that everyone tries to avoid - there is a new sense of excitement and desire to pray and to see God at work. God's people are beginning to get back on to the streets that they have vacated and take them back.

Now, we are just putting a few notes down on paper, to help those who want to go prayer walking, but don't know where to start. We hope that you will find this booklet helpful and that the Holy Spirit will stir your sanctified imagination, as you see things, even where you live, that you have never seen before; and begin to pray with new insight and vigour.

God bless you as you step out for Him

John & Yvonne Pressdee

#### **A QUICK BIOGRAPHY**

John & Yvonne were, for many years, leaders in Ichthus Christian Fellowship. John was involved in the original vision for March For Jesus and was then called to walk and pray from John O'Groats to Land's End. After 17 years of prayer walking through Europe, they are now pastors of Green Street Green Baptist Church in Kent and have 3 sons, one daughter and 6 - nearly 7 beautiful grandchildren!

## **WHAT IS PRAYER WALKING?**

Walking and praying - taking our love for God on to the streets.

### **CAN ANYONE DO IT?**

If you can talk to God, you can do it. Elderly people can walk, right where they live, wheelchair users and children can join in too.

### **PRAYING IN YOUR STREET**

Walk in your street and pray for your neighbours, even if you don't know them. If you want to be more adventurous ask their names and say that you are going to pray for them - ask them if there is anything specific they would like you to pray for. Be careful about asking names of children as some parents may not like that. Pray for any particularly troubled homes that you are aware of.

### **LARGER GROUPS**

It's generally best to walk in twos. If you are on country roads, walk on the right, so that you can see approaching traffic. Wear bright clothing or fluorescent jackets. If you are walking through crowded towns, walk separately on pavements, unless you are in a planned procession.

If you are a large group, in town, on main roads, or on country roads, you need to inform the police, who can't stop you walking and will probably escort you. If you show them that you are well organised, prepared and happy to be advised by them, they will generally be very helpful. Walk on pavements or footpaths where possible. It is helpful to have at least one support vehicle with the team.

If you are a very large group, walking country roads, it can be a good idea to have a car with it's hazard lights flashing, in front and behind.

Maps need to be planned carefully, so that vehicles can keep contact with walkers.

### **SOME IDEAS FOR PRAYERWALKING YOUR TOWN OR AREA**

Walk for a while praying on your own, then stop and pray in twos or small groups.

Walk and pray quietly together or speak prayer out together loudly.

Sometimes just relax, chat and hear from Heaven!

Read/pray words of scripture, one can read, others repeat.

Walk in silence, asking the Holy Spirit to speak to you, then stop and share what you feel the Lord is saying - often you will find that as you share, you get revelation.

Get a 'feel' for the area - what is the Lord saying as you walk through it.

Allow the area to give you thoughts for prayer, eg. If you are walking through fields of wheat, you could pray that God will send labourers to take in the harvest.

Stop and pray at specific places such as war memorials, police stations, hospitals, historic sites, places of crime or trauma .....

**'The earth is the Lords' - it doesn't belong to the devil**

## IDEAS FOR A PRAYERWALK

This booklet is for those who are planning a prayer walk across an area, eg. a county, or further in the UK. There is a section at the back for those planning a walk abroad between different countries, or across a continent.

There is no special way of doing prayerwalking, it is simply taking your love for God and your desire to see Him do something, out onto the streets. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where, what and how you should pray. There are no rules, or 'right ways to do it' – to echo the Prayerweek team, **'Prayer walking is what you make it!** The Holy Spirit will guide you as you go. Be flexible - always listening to the voice of God.

Some may like to take 2-3 or more days to walk, some will do a short distance and hand over to another group, some will walk between towns and some between churches. Disabled people can come in wheelchairs, elderly people and those who can't walk, can either pray at home, or meet at various points en route. Churches may like to provide coffee or lunch and some may like to have a prayer time.

### **CROSS COUNTIES PRAYER**

The walks could be done in many ways:

- 1. Crosswalks** – down and across the county.
- 2. Boundaries** – walk and pray around sections (or the whole) of the county boundary, possibly joining with those from a neighbouring county for a section.
- 3. Prayer knots** – meet to pray with people from the next county on the border.
- 4. Church with church** – walk from one church to the next, stopping to pray at significant points and/or having a prayer time at each church.
- 5. Town with town/city with city** – walk from one village, town or city, to the next – again stopping at significant points, historic places, government offices etc.
- 6. Prayer rings** – around towns, on ring roads, or footpaths, again stopping at churches for coffee, lunch and prayer.
- 7. Prayer spokes** – have various teams, either walking into or out of the county centre, or the county town. These could be done on different days.
- 8. Streetwalks** – simply walk and pray your own road, praying for each house, or building as you go.
- 9. Site walks** – pray around the outside of significant buildings, eg the local football stadium, government offices.
- 10. Prayer concerts** – people getting together in one place to worship and pray for the local area and the nation. (More about organising these on the back page)

**'You have astonishing authority when you pray in the  
Name of Jesus'**

## **PLANNING A PRAYERWALK (1)**

**VISION** - What do you want to achieve?

**ROUTE** - Where are you going to walk? How will you divide the route up?

**DATES** - When are you going to do it? Warmer weather is better and less muddy!

**TIMING** - How long will it take? Allow time to stop and pray along the route.

### **PLANNING YOUR ROUTE**

Get a good Ordnance Survey map of the area and decide on the route you will take. In some places you will need to walk on roads, in others footpaths. Plan to walk between 15 and 20 miles a day, depending on the age and experience of your team. Most people walk between 3 and 3.5 miles an hour. However, if you plan to stop and pray at certain points, you will need to allow time for that. It is obviously better to start and finish in big towns, as it is easier for people to get transport to join you or return home from there.

Contact churches along the route, to see if they can help you with accommodation and/or meals; and if they would like to host a prayer time.

### **ACCOMMODATION**

If the walk is going to take several days, you will need accommodation. Use homes, church halls, Youth hostels, Christian organizations - avoid camping if possible as moving on each day needs a lot of extra work and also transport for equipment.

### **BACK-UP TEAM**

It is a good idea to have at least one vehicle with you to carry luggage and to provide coffee breaks and lunch.

### **TEAM**

To recruit your team, contact local churches and Christian organisations, also national prayer initiatives such as Lydia, to get addresses of local groups. We have always asked for references from team member's ministers or church leaders, as prayer walking can be fairly tough spiritually as well as emotionally.

### **FINANCE**

We ask team members or their churches to help support the walks financially, as part of sharing in the vision; though we realize that those who can take the time to join the prayer walking team are often unemployed or retired, so may not have funds and we have never stopped anyone coming because they hadn't got funding.

## **PLANNING A PRAYERWALK (2)**

### **PLAN YOUR ROUTE**

Good planning will save time and trouble on the actual walk

We suggest that if possible, you walk or drive the route beforehand to:

- check distances accurately so you know how far a day's walk is
- check road conditions.
- check places where walking may be dangerous or impossible.
- see if there are any places where you need to stop and pray.

If possible plan to walk from one night's accommodation to the next night's to save time arranging lifts at the end of the day.

See if there any churches on or near the route, where you could stop to pray or be given drinks or lunch. Some churches may like to plan a prayer time, while you are there. Some people may like to walk on to the next church with you.

Plan where you will stop for breaks and also note places like petrol stations and pubs, for bathroom stops! Failing that - a fairly wooded area with bushes! Also picnic areas or somewhere with seats for lunch and coffee breaks.

### **PUBLICITY**

Get publicity done and sent out to all churches, pray-ers etc. as early as possible.

### **RESEARCH INTO AREA**

Get local information for prayer from church leaders & historians; visit the local library to get historical information and talk to people who live there. See more about this on Page 10.

### **PRAYER DIARIES**

In the past, we have produced Prayer Diaries showing our schedule and prayer points for each place we pass through. We send them to all our prayer supporters and we ask team member to have at least 3 people who commit themselves to praying for them, before, during and after the walk. This means that there is a real concentration of prayer for each place that we pass through and also for each team member.

### **TRAINING**

If the walk is longer than a week, we suggest that team members train by doing a walk each day, for some weeks before the walk, gradually building up the distance. If walkers have not trained, we suggest walking 2-3 miles of each section on the first day, then taking a break and gradually building up the distance. Practise walking in clothes and footwear that will be worn on the walk, to make sure they are comfortable. Toe nails should be cut regularly and feet kept soft with creams.

## **HELPFUL HINTS**

You may think that some things are not necessary but to keep a group happy, safe and healthy needs a lot of preparation and care.

### **WALKING**

Always walk on the right hand side of the road with traffic coming towards you.

Wear fluorescent jackets so you can be seen.

One person stays at the front all the time, to set the pace gradually.

Walk in pairs, except in crowded shopping areas, or where pavement is narrow.

One stays at the back to keep everyone together and wait for anyone taking a bathroom break. We have a basic rule, for walkers and drivers, that if you lose the group, you go back to the last place where you saw someone and stay there.

Everyone should have the address of the overnight stop.

If the distance is too much, send a small team on in a car to make up the mileage.

The support vehicle stays with the team, in a kind of 'leap frog' pattern, so the driver can pick up anyone who is tired. The driver can also go ahead to prepare coffee breaks and lunch.

Allow drink and lunch breaks (good for team building as well as rest times)

Water is vital, even when it's cold, but if you are walking on a very hot day, do stop regularly for drinks and make sure everyone carries (and drinks) water.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Mobile phones and texting have made communication much easier. In the past, we used hand held radios for the team and the vehicles had radios with aerials, however if you use them, you need to get a CB license, which now takes some time.

### **BASIC EQUIPMENT - TEAM**

Oil, wine, salt, bread, bottle opener for communion

Tea, coffee, sugar, milk, biscuits, savoury biscuits, cups, plates, dishes, knives, forks, spoons, bread knife and board, vegetable knife, tin opener, kitchen roll, plastic trays, matches, washing up bowl, washing up liquid, bread knife, chopping board, vegetable knife, small plastic bags, cling film camping cooker, saucepans, flasks of hot water can be refilled at each stop, camping table, First Aid kit, carrier bags for rubbish.

### **BACK - UP VEHICLE**

The back-up vehicle should carry water, toilet rolls, first aid box, suntan cream.

The size and number of back-up vehicles will depend on the size of your team and also what is available. Some churches will lend or hire out minibuses.

**'I will give you every place where you set your foot.'**

Joshua 1.3

## **EQUIPMENT - PERSONAL**

**Trainers or walking shoes** - not new! Get whatever suits you personally.

Sorbothene inserts or trainers with a heel bubble help - your heel strike rate when you walk is one and a half times your body weight - different to running or sport.

**Clothing** - light, loose and layered, not thick sweaters; so you can remove layer by layer when you get too warm. Natural fibres 'breathe' so are better.

**Wet gear** - If you plan to do a lot of walking, it's worth investing in some good waterproofs; top and trousers, that breathe. It is however, very expensive.

**Socks** - again what suits you. Some people wear woollen walking socks, some prefer thin cotton socks. Experts say both, cotton inside wool.

**Trousers** - Jeans are OK but not when they get wet! Light trousers are better.

Small rucksack, water bottle, first aid kit, \*needles, hat/scarf for protection from sun, Toiletries, towel, tissues, Vaseline for oiling sore bits, plastic bags for wet clothes.

\*(**Blisters** - prick blisters twice with a clean needle, flatten and cover with plaster)

## **OTHER ITEMS WHICH YOU MAY NEED:**

Sleeping bag, air mattress and pump or thermal mat.

## **BUDGET**

When planning your budget, you need to include things like:

Administration costs, advertising, postage, telephone, printing, prayer diaries, maps, petrol, hire of vehicles, insurance, accommodation, equipment and food, clothing - fluorescent jackets, printed tee shirts - if you have them.

## **DAILY PROGRAMME**

Exercise before you start walking to loosen up and then again when you stop.

(Stretch arms and legs; sideways bends, hands over head; lean forward on to one leg, while stretching the other behind, so that you can feel the back of your legs tighten.)

Start walking around 9am, coffee around 11am, lunch around 1pm, tea at 4pm (well this is England!) finish walking by 5.30pm, otherwise people get too tired.

Stop by any specific places, where you need to pray, or anywhere else where you feel you should pray. (If you have a long distance to walk, let some stay behind to pray, while some walk on - also if anyone wants to do any evangelism, or is asked what you are doing - the back-up car can catch them up to the team) Be flexible!

If you have any major places of historic interest, where you need to pray; give yourselves plenty of time. You may feel that God is asking you to do some prophetic act in some places. (see page 9)

In the evening, churches may like to hold a prayer concert, so the team will need time to have a shower and a meal before that. (see the back page)

## **COMMUNION AND PROPHETIC ACTS**

We have left stones, planted seeds, laid on the ground, wept, shouted, worshipped God, lifted up the cross and done all kinds of things as we felt that God has called us to do. We have thrown salt on water, as a symbol of healing. We have also broken bread and poured out wine, as a way of 'putting the cross down' in places and we have seen changes happen.

### **SOME EXAMPLES:**

In our own town of **Orpington**, we broke bread outside the local drug dealer's flat, and left a piece of bread in the ground, claiming it for Jesus, praying that the dealer would be stopped. Within a week, the police had raided the flat and closed it.

In **Northern Ireland**, a large cache of arms was discovered within a few days after we prayed, very close to the place where we had broken bread.

A particular place in **Verdun**, France was the scene of great devastation during the First World War and it was said in the guide books that 'no-one goes there alone and no-one build houses there. In 1999, we broke bread there at the highest point and waved a large red banner over the area speaking out new life and renewal, over the area. Two years later, one of our team saw an article in a national newspaper saying, 'New life comes to Verdun - Mayor says, "Renewal is in the air," young families are moving into Verdun, building homes.'

In another place in **France** there was a mission base, with a house that no-one liked living in. People got sick and had nightmares there. We discovered that it had been a Gestapo base in the second World War. John suggested that the leaders broke bread there and put wine over the doors and windows, symbolically speaking the power of the blood of Jesus over the place, to heal. There was no more problem.

In **Turkey**, there was only one town where the whole team were able to break bread together. The year after we prayed there, that town had 80% of it's building destroyed in an earthquake, but not one life was lost.

Some of the things we suggest may be new to you and may seem crazy, but the Lord is stirring up His people to new spiritual adventures, which may mean stepping out in new ways, as you follow the Good Shepherd and listen to His voice. There were many prophetic acts done in the Old Testament and also by the Lord Jesus. When we have done these things, it has been in obedience to what we, or our team members have heard from God, and we have seen results. We have always been careful not to do anything which is contrary to what Jesus taught.

**'Live up to your calling, not down to your expectations'**

## **RESEARCH**

Find out as much as you can about the area you are walking through and get hold of local history books, so that you know how to pray:

**History:** Have there been any important historic events in the area, any traumatic events or crimes? What was the original use of the land? Can land be wounded? Take the example of the place near Liverpool, where two small boys ritually murdered 2 year old Jamie Bulger – a crime which shocked the nation. We have been told that this place is known locally as ‘the dumping ground.’ Historically it was the place where the refugees from the Irish Potato Famine and the Napoleonic prisoners of war were dumped. It was also the place where the African slaves were taken from the ships in Liverpool docks. Could it be that those two boys – their minds filled with violent sadistic films – played into the sadness or possibly the spirit of death that had been permitted to invade the area through past injustice? We have found that the enemy has a right to be in some places, because of what has happened there, and as has been said, ‘People move on, but the ground retains it’s corporate memory.’ As we have walked and prayed, we have realised that although we can’t change the facts of the past, we **can** change the way that they affect the present.

**Present time:** Investigate - what is the main industry, Are there problems with employment, population, age groups, poverty, young people, crime, drugs, alcohol. Very affluent areas can have real problems with loneliness and isolation.

### **Future**

If possible talk to local people, particularly Christians to find out what they want and how they would like you to pray for their area.

**NOTE:** Some people talk about ‘territorial spirits’ over areas and this may be the case, but we have always felt that we should not try to deal with them unless there are local church leaders with us, who are prepared to take responsibility. Otherwise, we just stir things up unnecessarily.

### **SUGGESTED READING ON SOME OF THESE ISSUES:**

Taking your cities for God - John Dawson  
Healing Wounded History - Russ Parker  
Healing the Land - Winkey Pratney  
Intercessory Prayer - Dutch Sheets  
Territorial Spirits - Peter Wagner  
Impacting the City - Martin Scott

**‘Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land,  
for I am giving it to you.’** Genesis 13.17

## **PRAYER WALKING ABROAD—A FEW NOTES**

**Walk** on the left hand side of the road, against the traffic

It is best to inform the police if the group is over 20 and is walking on roads.

**Mobile phones** cost a fortune - radios may be better but you need to check re licensing laws abroad.

**Vehicles** - Operation Mobilisation in Belgium, will often hire out vehicles that are basically purpose built for long distance team driving. All drivers need to take a short test before driving the vehicles.

In some countries, eg Bulgaria, Turkey; the person who has his/her passport stamped as the vehicle driver on entry, must be the one to take it out again. If a driver needs to leave without the vehicle, they will not be allowed to. It is best to use the passport of someone who will always be with the team.

In some countries, particularly in big cities, eg Paris, you may not be allowed to carry a cross. In some countries, it's best not to take a cross.

### **ACCOMMODATION:**

**France** - Formula 1 motels are cheap and take 3 to a room; however they must either be booked in advance, or someone needs to travel ahead each day, as early as possible to book them. The problem is that it's difficult to know how many places to book ahead of time. Churches are often helpful but Evangelical Churches are few.

**Germany** - Churches are usually very hospitable and often have showers. They will also generally prepare meals.

We have also stayed in homes, monasteries, Youth Hostels and New Horizons and YWAM bases. If possible it is best if the team all stay together as it saves time in getting to and from the finish and start points, but also gives time for relationships. We have occasionally had to camp but this needs much more equipment and takes time and energy. If you do need to camp, it's worth taking a special team to set up.

### **ROUTE PLANNING**

It is best to drive the route if possible, to arrange everything in advance and make contact with local ministers. Or you could ask local people to drive the route for you, book accommodation and do some research.

### **EQUIPMENT**

Get everyone's passport number and check beforehand what visas everyone needs. You will need a list of passport numbers when staying anywhere official. There are various laws in each country that you need to be aware of, eg.in Bulgaria, you may still need to get your passport stamped every night. It is worth doing some team Orientation before entering a new country.

**NOTE:** If you are walking in isolated or mountainous terrain, you will need more specialised advice on equipment etc. than we are giving here.

## **ORGANISING A PRAYER CONCERT**

There are no specific ways of doing this, but if you haven't organised a Prayer Concert or Celebration before, here are a few ideas.

1. Encourage local churches to attend and get items for prayer from them.
2. Plan a programme of worship interspersed with prayer and maybe some teaching or exhortation to encourage people to pray.
3. Get some testimonies of answered prayer, but most especially - PRAY!

## **SOME IDEAS OF THINGS TO PRAY FOR**

### **LOCAL ISSUES**

- for church and social issues such as homelessness
- for any special projects in local churches.
- for children, youth, prodigals, single people, marriages, the elderly.
- for the police, health services, education, building.
- for local politicians

### **NATIONAL & WORLD ISSUES**

- Pray for the government and the media
- Use current news items

## **WAYS TO PRAY**

Encourage people to pray as they feel happy and use different ways to pray, so that all traditions feel comfortable.

1. Pray in small groups or pairs
2. Walk around praying individually
3. All pray out loud together
4. Be silent and listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying
5. Use written prayers and say the Lord's Prayer together.

## **PRAYER EXPEDITIONS PLANNED FOR 2006**

Counties Prayer Walk 2006 (MAY 7-14)

Kent County Prayer Walk (MAY 7-14)

Kent Prayer Celebration (Saturday MAY 13)

Possible Prayer walk in Kosovo (June/July)

Kent WW2 Airbases Prayer Walk (September 9-23)

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