



Going out and walking the streets in which we live can help us become more aware of the people, the blessings and the challenges that surround us.

Prayer walking is about purposefully walking and talking with God, hearing and heeding His voice, seeing and sensing as He does, loving our neighbours and lifting them up in prayer, asking God to bring blessing to our community.

## Prayer walking in Kirkdale, Yorkshire

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As part of CUF's Growing Good course we started regular prayer walks around our villages. As well as taking our prayer outside of the church building and being more visible, we've also made new connections with local businesses and organisations.

We stepped out and we accepted people's generosity and hospitality, which led to new partnerships and a new sense of being in the community.

## Guidance for Prayer Walking

### BEFORE

- You can go alone, in twos and threes, or as a bigger group. Consider the practicalities and safety considerations for different group sizes. For example, choose well-lit areas or consider walking during the day rather than in the darker evenings. If you are walking alone, please consider your personal safety.
- Plan a suitable route with accessible start and finish points. Walk around the parish boundary, down the high street or some of the key spaces and buildings where people in your community gather.
- Use the term 'walking' in an inclusive way and consider accessibility for people using mobility aids. Think about how many roads you will cross, the terrain and any areas that might feel unsafe.
- Select a group leader and plan a short briefing for participants (see 'Gathering' section overleaf).

## GATHERING

- If you are walking with a group you can start by praying together before you go out: Ask to see the area with God's eyes, that you might sense what is good and pleasing in His sight as well as what things that grieve Him deeply.
- Remind everyone of the safety considerations and describe the route. Make sure everyone knows the finish point in case anyone gets separated from the group.
- Suggest things people might want to look out for and pray about as they are walking.

### Things to pray for:

- Pray for families, schools, churches, police and hospitals – whatever you find in your area.
- Pray about any local issues you know about. You can use CUF's [Look-up tool](#) to help you.
- Pray for people responsible in any position of authority – for teachers, police, local politicians and parents.
- Pray for faith leaders and faith communities in the places of worship that you pass.
- Pray for God's blessing on the houses you walk past.



## DURING

- You can pray silently as you walk, or you can stop from time to time to pray out loud with your group, in which case you might like to look as if you are having a conversation together.
- Alternatively, you might pray together at the start and then again at the end as you reflect on what you have seen.

## AFTER

- Share with others what you have experienced and prayed. Share your insights. It will encourage others – as well as yourself.
- Think about going at different times and in different weathers to reflect on how the area changes.
- Use our [Growing Good](#) presence session to help people reflect on why it's important to know your community.

# Tips and ideas for prayers walks with all ages

Bear in mind the ages of your participants when planning your walk. Older folk and children will be slower, may not be able to walk as far and might struggle on uneven or hilly terrain. You might want to build in more frequent and longer breaks, or even a pit stop for refreshments half way round at a local café, pub or community space.

If you are including children in your walk you will need to spend time checking that you have the appropriate health and safety and safeguarding procedures in place. **Children should not walk on their own.**



For children, you could keep their attention by producing a simple 'I-spy' list for them to complete. Questions could include:

- How many different types of trees can you spot? Thank God for his wonderful creation.
- How many shops do you pass? What are they selling? Thank God for the people who provide our food, clothes and everything else we need for life.
- Count how many people you see on your walk? Ask God that everyone in your community would be supported and looked after.
- How many places of worship are there? Ask God to help people work together to love their neighbours and make our community a good place to live in.
- How many schools do you pass? Thank God for the teachers and staff who work hard to teach and care for the pupils.
- Can you spot a doctor's clinic, hospital or pharmacy? Thank God for everyone who keeps us healthy and looks after us when we're sick.



Lord you have given us this community to treasure and to tend, to love and to cherish; and to proclaim your good

news through our words and works. We pray for all those who work here and live here. Help us to see more clearly the gifts and strengths in our neighbourhood, so that we may share with our community in the work that you would have us do.

**Amen**

