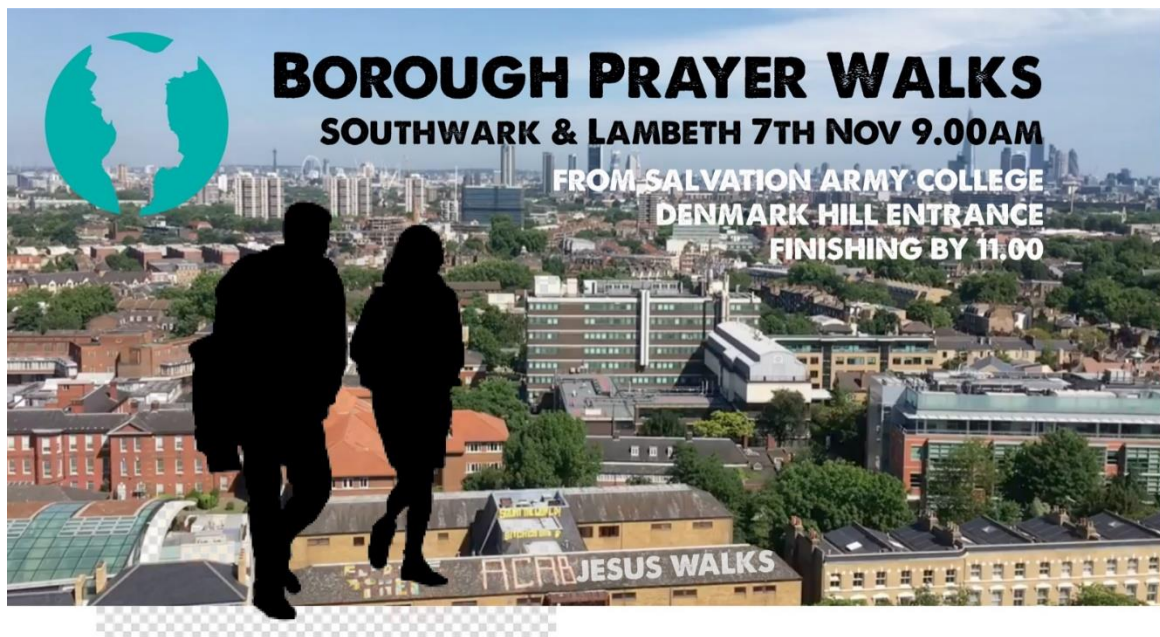


Love Lambeth/ Southwark for Jesus Prayer walk to bless our communities



7th November 2020

What is a prayer walk and why is it a good thing to do? (This guide is taken from Neighbourhood Prayer Network)

“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the messenger bringing good news, breaking the news that all's well, proclaiming good times, announcing salvation, telling Zion, "Your God reigns!"(Isaiah 52:7 The Message)

A prayer walk is exactly what it sounds like: a walk filled with prayer. Prayer walking has been woven through the history of the British church for centuries. People would walk from Cathedral city to Cathedral city on pilgrimage, and these pilgrimages were all about prayer. Still today, many Anglican churches mark Rogation Sunday with a prayer walk around their parish boundaries. This tradition is called ‘beating the bounds’ and is an act of claiming the ground for God in prayer. Prayer walking simply involves walking around your community (either alone or in a group), praying for the places and people you see around you. You may plan to stop at specific locations, or you may just walk and see where the Spirit leads – either way, it’s an exciting and engaging way to pray.

God told Joshua: “I will give you every place where you set your foot” (Joshua 1:3 NIV), and there is something powerful and significant about making our prayers physical: expressing our longings for places by going and standing there to pray.

Blessed to be a blessing: “Because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs —heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.” (Romans 8:15-17 NIV 1984; see also Ephesians 1:3-14)

We are truly blessed. It is this amazing privilege of blessing which we want to invite you to use as you walk your community. This walk isn’t about praying complicated prayers, tackling spiritual forces or solving social problems, it’s about blessing your community with God’s life, love and power. It’s standing in your identity as a child of God and speaking the good things of your Father’s Kingdom into being in your local

neighbourhood. From the very earliest stories of God's interaction with humankind we see a particular pattern of blessing emerging. God blessed Abram in order that he might give that blessing away to others:

"Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing." (Genesis 12:1-2)

Having blessed his people Israel, God expected them to extend his blessings to the foreigners in their midst:

"And if a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him. The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God." (Leviticus 19:33-34)

Jesus continued that same mandate of blessing: no sooner had he won salvation and freedom for his disciples on the cross than he sent them out to carry this ultimate blessing to the very ends of the earth:

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.'" (Acts 1:8; see also Matthew 28:18-20)

The moment we open our hands to receive blessing from God, we are nudged by the Holy Spirit to go out and give it away. This business of blessing is not just some well-intentioned positive thinking though. God's blessings are powerful and life-changing. They can unlock the strangle-hold of death in desert places, and cause life to spring up:

"Instead of the thornbush will grow the juniper, and instead of briers the myrtle will grow. This will be for the Lord's renown, for an everlasting sign, that will endure forever." (Isaiah 55:13 NIV)

God's words can reverse the effects of sickness:

"The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that you should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed." (Matthew 8:8)

God's words can bring impossible peace in the midst of impossible pain:

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” (John 14:27 NIV)

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:7)

When God speaks in blessing, the world is changed. And we, his children, are given the privilege of accessing those same blessings. We get to experience them in our own lives, but we’re also given the privilege of speaking them into being for the people and places around us. Jesus gave his disciples authority to reverse the works of the enemy, and to cause life to spring up:

“I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.” (Luke 10:19 NIV; see also Mark 16:17-18)

He intended us not only to be present where there is pain and sin, but to speak out the blessings which will turn those situations around. As we walk the streets of our communities, whether on our own or on a church prayer walk, let’s resolve to be good news... to be those who carry the blessings of God in our thoughts, words and actions.

Before you go on your prayer walk:

Since this is a walk of blessing, it is crucial to take time to receive God’s blessing in your own life before you start walking. We all put barriers up from time to time, not allowing ourselves to truly absorb God’s blessings into our own lives, but before we can truly bless others, we need to remove those barriers.

If you are walking with another person pray ‘Aaron’s Blessing’ over each other: ‘The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.’ (Numbers 6:24-26 NIV)

If you are walking alone turn this blessing into a prayer for yourself.

Consciously welcome into your life all that this ancient blessing contains.

Invite God's cleansing and empowering in your own life before you go out, and put on the full armour of God:

“Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”
(Ephesians 6:14-17 NIV)

Be sensitive on the walk – not trespassing, not standing where you will cause an obstruction, and being considerate to those around and in the way you pray.

Be COVID aware and secure. Follow Government Guidelines and legal requirements for public places.

Pray with open eyes and ears. Graham Kendrick said that prayer walking is ‘praying on site with insight’. The fact of walking or standing in a particular place brings an immediacy to our prayers. We’re not just imagining that place from the comfort of our prayer room, we’re actually there, seeing it, hearing it, experiencing it, and that means God can speak to us through the things we see and hear there. Make sure you take a Bible or handout of Bible verses. Our prayers should be informed by our surroundings but rooted in the word. This is a walk of blessing, but we don’t want to just make up the blessings we speak over our communities, we find them in God’s Word. For example:

“The Lord is your Shepherd, Champion Grove, you shall not be in want’ (based on Psalm 23); or

‘I speak over this hospital and say blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted’ (based on Matthew 5).

Other useful Scriptures for this would be: Deuteronomy 28, Ephesians 1:3-14, 3:14-20, Psalm 103. (For more prayers of blessings please visit our website neighbourhood prayer). It’s vital to be attentive to the Spirit: God is lavish in his blessing, but he is also strategic. He knows which particular blessing is needed in each place. So, listen to him as you walk, praying the prayers of blessing which he is prompting you to pray.

Keep a record and share what you've heard God saying and use it in your future prayers. Please do send a message to Catherine.smith@salvationarmy.org.uk who will collate all our prayers and share them on the relevant websites www.southwarkforjesus.org.uk

Camberwell to London Bridge Route:

- 1) Turn left out of William Booth college. Cross over at the first set of traffic lights and continue to the end of the road. Turn right. As you walk down Denmark hill you can walk into the car park of the Maudsley Hospital. Spend some moments praying for health care in Southwark and Lambeth.

Some words from scripture:

'Have compassion on me, LORD, for I am weak. Heal me, LORD, for my bones are in agony.' (Psalm 6:2)

'He heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds.' (Psalm 147:3)

'Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body.' (Nehemiah 6:9)

Pray for those who you know who need healing. Pray also for the patients in Kings and Maudsley, for their families and for those who work to make them better. Are there any other health issues that you would like to pray for?

- 2) Continue down Denmark hill towards Camberwell Green. As you go notice the independent cafés and businesses. Pray for strategies and creativity to weather these difficult days. Keep walking until you get to Camberwell Green. Whilst on the Green you might want to take time to pray for transport connections, street drinkers, libraries, children’s play areas, Peabody housing, GP surgeries, Remembrance Day commemorations. Allow God to direct your prayers.



- 3) Continue down Camberwell Road towards Burgess Park. Pray for estates on the way and House of Praise on the left. Keep going until you get to Burgess Park. Bless this area and all who use Burgess Park.



- 4) Continue down the Walworth Road. Pray for Walworth Methodist and the many ministries they have. What do you notice as you walk? What scriptures do you find yourself praying for this area? You might want to ‘bless’ a local business and buy a drink to carry with you! When you get to Liverpool Grove you might want to take a couple of minutes to stop at St Peter’s/Inspire and pray for Walworth, local schools, East Street market, Aylesbury estate



5) Back on the Walworth Road, head towards Elephant and Castle. Praying for businesses and people that catch your eye as you go. When you reach the new Elephant Park estate, after crossing Heygate Street, stop and spend some time praying for the ever-changing area that is Elephant and Castle – for new residents and those who have had to move out. Thank God for creativity. Pray against corruption and discrimination. Thank God for the different communities that call this home and make their living here. Regeneration has many forms. Ask God to give wisdom and revelation in this area.

6) Move on through Elephant and Castle. You will notice the Metropolitan Tabernacle, London College of Communications, tube stations, buses and great intersections. You might want to stop in the middle of the pedestrianised area to pray for safety, peace, amazing communications, students, South Bank University, Leisure centre, fitness, Christian witness, traders



7) Head down Newington Causeway. The building behind the tube station is NHS England admin block. Pray blessing, resource and wisdom. You will see the Territorial Headquarters of the Salvation Army on the right. On the left, down Gaunt street is Ministry of Sounds – pray for London’s nightlife. Then on the right is Southwark Playhouse – pray for theatres and performers. As you move along Newington Causeway you may smell *Mercato Metropolitano* as they prepare wonderful food. They do some great outreach to local families. On the right, you might want to find a place to stop and pray for the Inner London Crown Court.



8. The penultimate leg of the prayer walk is full of fascinating history and vital buildings that serve a multiplicity of people. Allow God to guide your prayers and blessings as you walk towards Borough. When you arrive at St George the Martyr find a convenient space to stop and pray for their food ministry to the neighbourhood.



9. As you walk towards Southwark Cathedral decide whether you want to go through Borough Market or up to London Bridge and down the side steps to the cathedral. We are welcome to join Southwark Cathedral's prayers at 11am where they will mention our walk as a part of their short service.



Reflect on all that you have experienced and written on your walk. Seek God's direction about how to keep praying for this part of the city.

"God Of This City" Chris Tomlin

You're the God of this city, You're the king of these people
You're the lord of this nation, You are

You're the light in this darkness, You're the hope to the hopeless
You're the peace to the restless, You are

There is no one like our God, There is no one like our God

For greater things have yet to come
And greater things are still to be done in this city
Greater things have yet to come
And greater things are still to be done in this city

(Repeat the above)

Greater things have yet to come
And greater things are still to be done in this city
Greater things have yet to come
And greater things are still to be done here