

SPIRITUAL LIBERTY PROCLAIMED ACROSS NEW YORK CITY THROUGH FIRST-EVER 'PRAY NEW YORK!' PRAYER WALK

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Jesus came down and glory filled the city! That is how it felt on Saturday, June 5, 2004 when 5,000 Christians took to the streets in prayer. During the Pray New York! prayer walk, thousands of intercessors went out onto the sidewalks, down into the subways, out into the parks, into the precincts, surrounding the schools, invading the gambling parlors and bars, proclaiming liberty over New York City.

Five thousand people praying for eight million people may not seem like great odds, but when you add the Holy Spirit, they are overwhelming odds! This prayer walk is unprecedented – and it is just the beginning. As testimonies began to flow in, it was evident that participants did not view the June 5th prayer walk as a one-time only event. Most of the 250 churches that were involved are already planning weekly, monthly or quarterly prayer walks in their neighborhoods.

Dr. Mac Pier and the Board of Directors of Concerts of Prayer Greater New York, had a vision for a prayer walk that would cover every street in New York City. We believe that vision will be fulfilled in the months to come. On June 5th over 95% of the 233 zip codes in New York City were covered in prayer. Most of the five boroughs had prayer walkers in every single zip code in the borough!

Pray New York! was a collaborative effort of Concerts of Prayer Greater New York, World Vision New York, the New York March for Jesus, New Hope New York, and the Nationally Broadcast Concert of Prayer. Five pastors and lay prayer leaders were responsible for coordinating efforts in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, Bronx and Staten Island. Each coordinator worked and prayed tirelessly to insure maximum participation and maximum impact of Pray New York! They worked hard at recruiting churches and intercessors to participate.

Although God gave Dr. Pier a vision, and other organizations lent their support, Pray New York! was truly 'a God thing.' There is no other way to explain the phenomenal response of the people who willingly came out to trainings, and came out to pray. Yes, we had absolutely wonderful coordinators in each of the five boroughs. Yes, we had promotional materials and got the word out through the media. But it was not man's efforts that accomplished an 'increase in the spiritual temperature' of our city. It was a God thing!

Praying Locally

As the Word of God states in Leviticus 25:10, the thousands of prayer walkers went out to "... *proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants.*" The statistics in New York City are staggering: more than 2 million people live below the poverty line of \$16,500 annually for a family of four; up to 90% of children in immigrant churches are leaving the church; more than 100,000 residents have died of AIDS in the past 17 years; and another 100,000 are homeless. The residents of our great city are held captive by poverty, despair, homelessness, drug addiction, and hopelessness. We believe Christ is the answer to all of these problems, and as we walked and prayed, God began to meet people right then and there.

As Steve Hawthorne states in [Seek God for the City](#), "Prayerwalking is praying in the very places we expect God to bring forth His answers. It's usually being on the scene without making one." Prayerwalkers gathered in churches on Saturday morning, June 5th, and dedicated the day to God. Then they went out two by two, to cover designated streets and

institutions in the neighborhood surrounding their church. Some teams went into the subways, some went into parks, some covered city hall and government offices. Some elderly teams chose to prayer-drive – praying as they drove their cars through the neighborhood.

How many people were involved?

Manhattan – 230 people from 25 churches
Brooklyn – 2050 people from 103 churches
Staten Island – 500 people from 27 churches
Bronx – 1500 people from 45 churches
Queens – 872 people from 56 churches

Some churches had a handful of people prayerwalking, and other churches sent 100-200 people out to pray through the neighborhood. But invariably, all the teams strongly sensed the presence of God in our city in a new and profound way. Statistics tell only part of the story. Here are some of the firsthand testimonies from Pray New York! intercessors:

Reports...

From Manhattan:

"How refreshing it was to go walking around the city. We intend to do a prayerwalk once a week together"

"There was a serenity about walking in prayer that was particularly clear that morning . . . realizing that we were interceding for this city that God so loves . . ."

"We had several divine appointments with individuals. One was with a man from Tibet with whom we were able to share Christ. We prayed for him and his wife."

From Queens:

"We had people from three other churches – 73 in all. We had a glorious time!"

From Staten Island:

"People were open, curious and receptive. We asked if they had prayer needs and were able to pray and share with many of them."

"A next step for us is to spiritually map the area we prayerwalked."

"We started with prayer and encouragement from our pastor, and concluded with multiple generations (from 6 years old to 60 years old) lifting holy hands over the map of Staten Island and praying."

From Brooklyn:

"Onlookers commented that this was a wonderful thing we were doing. One particular woman high on drugs started to cry and asked us to pray for her. We did and referred her to Anchor House (local Christian drug rehab). We were all very moved by this encounter."

"We were truly overwhelmed with the presence of God and the unity of all those who participated. The Holy Spirit showed up powerfully as we prayed by the school and businesses."

From Bronx:

"There was a clear sense of God's anointing on this event. There was a great sense of unity among churches."

"Many people expressed how privileged they were to be able to prayerwalk in the whole neighborhood of 11211. They saw the great needs and prayed with zeal!"

And the stories continue! On June 12th, New Hope Fellowship in Brooklyn, led by Pastor Roger McPhail (PNY! Brooklyn Coordinator), set up a prayer station on 86th Street and 4th Avenue. Before they had finished erecting the prayer booth, a line of people began to form – they were ready for prayer. Testimonies from that day include a wheelchair-bound Jewish woman who took her first steps in 17 years; an alcoholic asked *"what do I have to do to be saved today?"*; and a bartender and several of her customers came out to the prayer booth for prayer. People from every walk of life approached the booth asking for prayer. Those that worked the prayer booth are convinced that Pray New York! made a difference in the spiritual climate of Brooklyn. We believe that the spiritual climate of our city is changing, and God's glory will be manifest in our city in our lifetime!

Acting Globally

In addition to praying locally through Pray New York!, we also encouraged participants to act globally. The HIV/AIDS pandemic is claiming 8,000 precious lives daily, leaving thousands orphaned and widowed. In cooperation with World Vision New York, over a dozen churches held a "Hope Sunday," presenting an opportunity to congregants to sponsor a needy child in East Africa. Through this effort hundreds of children, their families and their communities, were positively impacted through the generosity of New York Christians. Many more churches will hold Hope Sundays in the coming months, which spells HOPE for hundreds more children and families.

Our theme was "Pray New York!, A Day to Change the World." We prayed, and God showed up. June 5th was truly a Day to Change the World. But the work is not finished. By God's grace, and if the Lord tarries, we will coordinate another city-wide prayerwalk in 2005. We pray that prayer leaders in cities across our country will catch the vision for what God can do through a united, concerted, citywide prayer walk, seeking the peace, liberty and redemption of their cities.