

# **One Nation Under God - Walk Across America**

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I believe that a successful prayer walk has three components. The first is praise and worship. Second is the prayer walk. Finally, we need to express thanks to God for the victory that is ours, purchased with the blood of Jesus at Calvary. This would be the strategy for prayer walk with Keyser Assembly of God in Keyser, West Virginia. This also would be a departure from the normal prayer walk along the American Discovery Trail. Keyser A/G had invited us to lead a prayer walk with members of their congregation along the streets of Keyser.

Last year the Lord led Nadine and I to begin attending Praise Fellowship Church in Downingtown, PA. There we met Cathy Miscianga. Besides creating our web site, she is a talented Christian songwriter, musician and singer. Nadine and I asked Cathy if she would like to join us and share worship leadership duties with their worship leader in Keyser. She said yes. Her husband, Matt, and 17 month-old son, Dominic, would be joining us.

During preparation for the walk at Keyser, I prayed for guidance. The Holy Spirit convinced me to make a radical change to my concept of prayer walking. During 30 months of prayer walking across our nation, I noticed my focus of prayer time had shifted from praying for America to praying for individual Americans that we have encountered along our journeys. Also most of my prayer times during the walk have been transferred to prayers after the walk. "Lord, let me see what you see. Lord, let me hear what you hear," is a short prayer that I use before prayer walking. Most of my time spent walking is observing and listening. Now what if we would stroll up to total strangers and ask if they need prayer. Would they reject us or ask for prayer? We would know that answer on April 16th in Keyser, but before that time I received another burden from our Lord.

There is a word that is very seldom spoken in Christian churches. If it is addressed, it is generally after the fact, when it is too late to help the victim. That word is suicide, a word that also carries guilt with those who were associated with the victim. Several weeks ago at Prayer for the Lost, I prayed against the spirit of suicide with hope that pastors would address it in their churches. Several days later, Steve Herrell from Keyser Assembly of God told me that the day before a lady, whom he never saw before asked him, "Why do I have to commit suicide today?" He witnessed to her. The result is unknown. That would not be the last time I heard the word, suicide. On April 14<sup>th</sup>, Rev. Jean Burns spoke at Praise Fellowship on the subject of suicide. Areas that are isolated have a higher suicide rate than others. From my own research, the availability of guns; poverty; boredom; alcohol and drug abuse; and the erosion of traditional values are other factors. The areas in the United States with the highest rate of suicide are the small Alaska Native villages. Jeannie Sparks, a guidance counselor at Wasilla High School, said that every suicide affects people the same way. "They deal with shame. In villages where this has happened, there is a sense of loss and hopelessness. They need time to heal, and before they have time to heal, another one happens."

Christian leaders need to know how to recognize suicide warning signs and what to do if there is someone, whom they think is at risk.

Praise Fellowship Church prayed for us twice before our home mission trip to West Virginia. Since Nadine's car is slightly larger than my car, we decided to use it. Would we, including Cathy, who is now five months pregnant, be comfortable for a five-hour drive to West Virginia? Would Dominic cry all the way? Would we be on time? Would too many people attend and the walk become unmanageable? Why was I concerned about all these things? *Which of you by being anxious can add one inch to his stature?* (Matthew 6:27)

Once we started, all concerns vanished. While stopping at the Blue Mountain Rest Area on the PA Turnpike, we met a group from Chapel Christian Academy in Limerick, PA. They were traveling to a drama and singing competition. I told them that we would pray for their success. We arrived at Keyser A/G only to find that their worship leader was in the hospital the night before because of food poisoning and could not attend. Pastor Eric Stromski and his wife, Amy, had to frantically type the worship songs into a PowerPoint presentation. The last song, *Let the River Flow*, was on a CD as a PowerPoint show, which I had with me. Then I heard that my friend, Steve Herrell, could not come because he sprained his back the day before, but from that point on the Holy Spirit took control. Cathy led worship with two songs before I spoke about some types of people, with whom we may meet and pray that day; the elderly person, who lives alone; the teenage girl, who just learned that she is pregnant; and the discouraged person, who is thinking about suicide. I was hoping that they would get a burden by praying for needy people where they live, not at church. Cathy sang the last song before Pastor Eric asked the intercessors to divide into three groups, each led by a man. Three areas of Keyser were to be walked.

Joining with two men, three women and two small girls on a bright sunny spring day, I realized that we passed through Keyser many times in the last 13 months, but this was the first time that I would walk any of the streets in Keyser. Pastor Eric had told me that he spoke about suicide the previous Sunday, because of two suicides in Keyser. What would we find? Although our area appeared to be very nice, we would soon find that this was not 'almost heaven'. There were many people outside enjoying the pleasant weather as each of the intercessors started asking if someone needed prayer. One man wanted a new home, but most said that they did not want any prayers. Then I noticed one of the women was chatting with a lady, who was working in her flower garden. Soon most of our group was in her yard. The intercessors recognized that the lady had occasionally attended their church, but they did not really know her. She was very disturbed about the drug use on her street and the fighting that often takes place in the neighborhood. The worst part was that a neighboring teenage girl had overdosed on drugs and was in the hospital. Prior to joining hands and praying, the lady glanced at me and said, "I heard you preach." Thirteen months previous, she attended the church service at which Nadine and I spoke for five minutes. Then I was told that people do not easily forget our unusual ministry. She then reached for my hand and we prayed in her yard, oblivious to some of the neighbors, who had been observing us. Sometimes we sow seeds and sometimes we come back to water them. We pray that someone will be there to reap the harvest.

After Sunday service, which Pastor Eric gave a sermon on the power of the Holy Spirit, we all joined Steve and Jeannie Herrell for lunch at a restaurant,

named Polish Pines. Dominic was all smiles since he was getting a lot of attention from the waitresses in the restaurant. Even young children can also minister to people. Since children are a blessing from God, consider taking them along on prayer walks and other ministries, just as the two girls, who were on our prayer walk in Keyser.

*Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6*

Next time we should reach Grafton, West Virginia, birthplace of the first Mother's Day service in 1908.

To learn more about the One Nation Under God –Walk Across America, go to our web site, [www.walkacrossamerica.info](http://www.walkacrossamerica.info).

God bless,  
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Total miles walked of the American Discovery Trail	- 463 miles
Number of walkers	- 43 walkers
Number of people praying for America	- 36,690 prayer warriors