



The participants in the prayer walk prepare for the journey with a prayer before they start.

# 'God belongs in my city,' Christians declare as they walk downtown



Artist and prayer walk participant Jeff Prince said it's great to have an event like this in the city where people can come together

BY TIMOTHY RAMSEY  
THE CHRONICLE

The "God belongs in my city" prayer walk started in New York City years ago when young people there spotted "a million people are fine without God, aren't you" written on the subway walls. As a response youth, groups from around the city gathered in Manhattan and started the walk. People from all denominations were included.

The movement has gone from city to city across the nation and this is the second year it has been held here in Winston-Salem. Rob Hardin, prayer walk organizer, says the walk is a declaration because of all the unrest that is tearing our cities apart.

"We are different races and different ethnicities but we are all under the same umbrella and that's Christ," said Hardin. "God belongs in my city" is a movement in our city and we are not falling victim to what the world is doing but we are standing up for what we believe in and that's Christ. Christ deserves to be in our city and in everything we do."

The prayer walk started at the Winston-Salem Rescue Mission on North Trade Street. The route included stops at the bus station downtown, where the walk participants stopped, prayed and witnessed to any who was willing to listen. They continued downtown to the jail, where they stopped and prayed once again. According to Norman Damon, the prisoners in the jail were tapping on the window to acknowledge their presence.

Immediately following the walk, there was a concert featuring contemporary and hip hop Christian artists. Instead of a traditional concert style where everyone goes up individually, they decided to perform a collaborative concert where two or more artists were on stage simultaneously.

Jeff Prince, a performer in the concert, said events like the prayer walk show what you see in the media doesn't define what is really happening.

"I think every last one of us here are struggling with something but at the end of the day happiness is temporary, but joy in Christ is forever," said Prince. "We want to let people know you find real joy in Christ no matter what you are going through."

Damon added he thinks this walk is important because of the status of the youth in the country right now. He says he knows a walk is somewhat old fashioned but with the concert concluding the walk he hopes more youth will be enticed to come out.

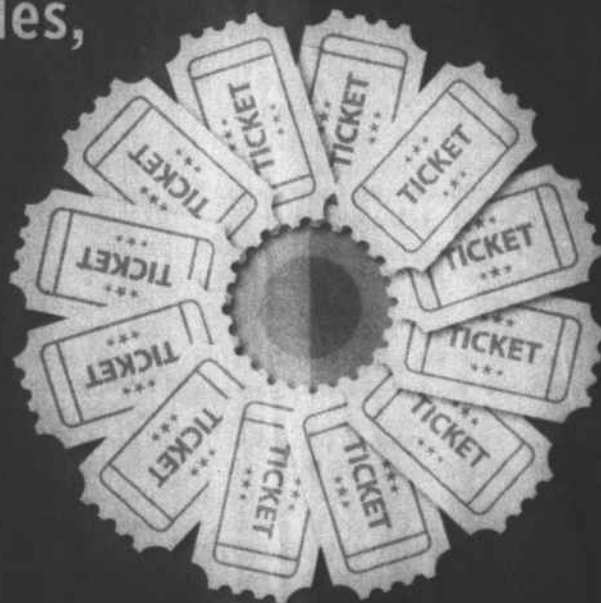


The crowd was full of young people who sang right along with the artist on stage.

Photos by Timothy Ramsey

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