

# Together 2016 Brings Thousands to D.C.

Despite extreme heat, heightened national racial tensions, and worldwide terrorist activities, hundreds of thousands of people gathered in Washington, D.C., on July 16, 2016, for a day of prayer, worship, and lifting up Jesus.



The event, called Together 2016, was billed as a “generation-defining moment” for the Next Generation. It was a call for younger generations to gather with older generations—across denominational and racial lines—to demonstrate the unity that Jesus prayed for in John 17. Led by nationally known artists and speakers, the crowd worshiped, spent multiple times in prayer, and even got on their knees, asking God for healing of divisions and a “reset” of the nation to Jesus.

The scheduled 12-hour event was cut short by five hours due to extreme heat, but the crowd remained enthusiastic as a new generation was commissioned and given a charge to go out from the National Mall to the nation and the world. According to organizer Nick Hall, “The event was never about going to the National Mall—it was always about sending a generation out from the Mall to share Jesus.”

Together 2016 had a significant presence on social media. During the event, the hashtag #JesusChangesEverything was trending nationally and globally. Potential impressions on Twitter were more than 70 million. The event was also live streamed around the world. The narrative in national media was that Together 2016 focused on prayer, reconciliation, and unity during an extremely painful time in the U.S.

Susan Harris, director of communications for Together, notes

the timely nature of the event—immediately following several shootings around the nation and terrorist killings in France and other places around the world. “In a time [when] people are divided, there’s so much pain, there’s so much hate and fear; we just see there’s a need now more than ever to come together in unity to pray together for healing,” she says.

Dave Butts, chairperson of America’s National Prayer Committee, served in a prayer tent backstage with other national prayer leaders, interceding for the event. He observes, “Only heaven will reveal the breadth of what occurred Saturday and how it will impact our nation. Now we all get to keep praying and watch and see what the Holy Spirit does with Together 2016.”

Jason Hershey, director of the nearby David’s Tent (24/7 worship in D.C.), wrote about his gratitude to event organizers: “Thank you to the Pulse team and all that came to, quite sacrificially, lift up Jesus in D.C., for Together 2016. In spite of the early ending, I think all that attended would agree that it was a huge win for the Jesus Team and a catalytic day in our generation.”