Planning a Pilgrimage to Canterbury… and other longer routes

Here are some ideas, prompts and resources to contribute to your pilgrimage planning….

**Things to think about before setting off**

**Why are you going on this journey?**

What are your hopes? How will you focus on listening for God’s direction in renewal and mission?

Do you have a special, mission focused intention for your journey today?

**How will you go?**

What’s the route? The distance? The accessibility? Will you travel by foot / cycle / car / bus?

**How might you meet up with other pilgrims?**

Will people join in as you reach each stopping place? If you are going as a large group what health and safety concerns might there be? Who will do a risk assessment to help you plan your day?

**Who else might you meet along the way?**

How might you engage with your local community? What might you say or do?

Could you share something with them? What will you say to the stranger on the way?

**What might you do when you pause along the way?**

At each point, allow people space to be quiet, to share experiences/ thoughts, to pray as God directs in that moment and, perhaps mark their pilgrim passport* or tie their prayer string if they have them.

**What will you do when you get to the Cathedral?**

Take a look at the programme and opportunities on the Cathedral section here [https://www.canterburydiocese.org/dayofprayer/](https://www.canterburydiocese.org/dayofprayer/)
Choosing a route - Which one will you choose?

Route 1. Dover to Canterbury, Via Francigena

This route is at the start of the North Downs Way (NDW) and follows the North Downs Way to Canterbury.

The route: Start anywhere along the NDW and perhaps make a detour along Sun Lane, Canterbury to St Martins church and then to St Augustine’s Abbey and on to our Cathedral.

Possible Prayer Stops: Dover Harbour, Shepherdswell, Womenswold, Patrixbourne, St Martins Church Canterbury, St Augustines Abbey Canterbury – pray outside where there are entrance fees or if churches are closed. You might like to let churches know that you will be visiting them.

Accessible sections include: Dover Harbour, Barton Court Canterbury to the Cathedral

Parking: Dover public car parks, Canterbury public car parks

Transport: Trains to Dover, Shepherdswell, Bekesbourne. Buses Canterbury to Dover, Bridge

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<tr>
<th>Distance in Miles</th>
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More Information:
- North Downs Way Colin Saunders
- North Downs Way AZ Adventure
- [https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/north-downs-way](https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/north-downs-way)
Route 2. Ramsgate to Canterbury, Augustine Camino

The Augustine Camino is a long distant path which links the two cathedral towns of Rochester and Canterbury. During the walk you will pass churches, minsters and other holy places.

The route: Augustine Camino from Ramsgate to Canterbury.

Possible Prayer Stops: St Augustines Abbey Ramsgate, St Augustines Cross, Minster Abbey, St Andrews Wickhambreaux, Fordwich, St Augustines Abbey Canterbury – pray outside where there are entrance fees or if churches are closed. You might like to let churches know that you will be visiting them.

Accessible: Canterbury Northgate Community Centre to Canterbury Cathedral

Parking: Canterbury public car parks, Canterbury City Council offices

Transport: Trains to Ramsgate, Minster, Sturry, Canterbury

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More Information:
Augustine Camino Andrew and Paula Kelley, available from Canterbury Cathedral shop
Stour Valley Walk
This route takes you from the furthest reaches of the Canterbury Diocease to the heart of the Anglican communion, Canterbury Cathedral. For most of the route it parallels or follows the Pilgrims Way. This is the route that pilgrims would have followed from Winchester to Canterbury.

The route: North Downs Way from Boxley to Chilham Church, Stour Valley Way to Chartham Church, Canterbury Cycle Path to Westgate Gardens

Possible Prayer Stops: Detling Church, Lenham Pilgrims Memorial Cross, Charing Archbishops Palace and church, Eastwell Church, Boughton Aluph Church, Chilham Church, Chartham Church, Westgate Gardens

Canterbury - pray outside where there are entrance fees or if churches are closed. You might like to let churches know that you will be visiting them

Accessible: Chartham Church to Westgate Gardens pushchair friendly

Parking: Canterbury public car parks, Canterbury City Council offices

Transport:

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<th>Distances In miles</th>
<th>Boxley Church</th>
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More Information:

North Downs Way Colin Saunders
The Pilgrims Way – fact and fiction Derek Bright
North Downs Way AZ Adventure
https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/north-downs-way
Stour Valley Walk
**Route 4. The beauty of Romney Marsh.**

If you feel that the previous routes may be too arduous, then a pilgrimage through Romney Marsh may suit you. There are fourteen churches in this beautiful area of Kent. They range from the splendid isolation of St Thomas Becket, Fairfield to the Cathedral of the Marsh, Lydd.

**The Route:** As most of the churches on the Marsh are widely spread, this may have to be a car or bike routes in this area.

**Possible Prayer Stations:** Any of the Marsh churches. Fairfield would be good to use, but it’s not normally open. If churches are closed, you might like to let churches know that you will be visiting them.

**Parking:** Difficult at some of the churches.

**More Information:** Loads of excellent information here [https://theromneymarsh.net/historicchurches](https://theromneymarsh.net/historicchurches).

Romney Marsh Pilgrimage Walk Revd. John Merrill [https://www.johnmerrillwalkguides.co.uk/](https://www.johnmerrillwalkguides.co.uk/)

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**Route 5. St Damian and St Cosmos.**

This route follows the Crab and Winkle Line from Whitstable to Canterbury. It passes the beautiful medieval church dedicated to St Damian and St Cosmas. They were two early Christian martyrs.


**Possible Prayer Stations:** Whitstable Harbour, St Damian and St Cosmos Blean, St Dunstans Canterbury, Westgate Gardens Canterbury, St Stephens Canterbury

**Accessible:** Canterbury University to Canterbury Cathedral, passable with care as it is very steep in places.

**Parking:** Canterbury public car parks, Canterbury Park and Ride

**Transport:** Trains to Whitstable via Faversham, buses Canterbury to Whitstable
| **Preparing to travel** | **What will you do before you set out?** | **A pilgrimage tradition is that you take something with you to leave at your destination or somewhere along the way e.g.**  
A pebble – a symbol of what distracts you from being closer to God…. to hold and to place at the place of completion? What will you do with all the pebbles?  
A length of cord and tie a simple knot at each stopping place along the way…and then join all the prayer strings together at the end of the pilgrimage?  
A simple pilgrim passport* that could be stamped at each prayer stop along the way?  
How might you prepare hearts and minds, so all are ready for what they might experience and encounter on this journey?  
At your starting point take some time preparing your heart and mind to listen, experience and encounter something new and special on the journey.  
Prayerfully place all those you love and all that keeps you busy in God’s hand, so you don’t need to think or worry about it on your pilgrimage.  
|---|---|---|
| **Setting off ... Taking the first steps** | **Pilgrims travel light ... only take what is needed for the journey.** | **Sing a hymn together as you leave or pray this prayer...**  
*Be by my side O God, with every step I take.*  
*Be before me, Be behind me,*  
*Be in my thoughts, Be in what I see and hear,*  
*Be by my side O God, with every step I take.* |
| Praying / reflecting on the way | As you journey, look around you - what you can see, hear or feel?  
Here is an example of a prayer stop - what might you do for other prayer moments on the way?  
Mark your passport – or tie your prayer string – or do something to mark this place and space. | Notice the rhythm of your breathing. How are feeling about this journey?  
What do you notice as you look around?  
What can you see that makes you smile?  
Share with those around you. What can they see?  
It is important to rest along the way to give people time to pause and reflect on the journey so far.  
Think of something that has blessed you on the way…  
Begin to think about what God might be saying to you on this journey…  
Share some thoughts with those around you – pray and maybe sing and listen to God’s Word? Micah 6:8?  
_God of adventure, thank you for the beauty and diversity of your world.  
Open our eyes afresh to the wonders you have created, surprise us again with everyday miracles, and equip us for exploration._  
_Amen_ |
| Arriving at your destination | See CATHEDRAL SECTION | https://www.canterburydiocese.org/dayofprayer/ |
Included to aid your planning… all the resources are in Word format so that you can adapt them for your community.

* templates

[1] Pilgrim Passport - Pilgrims sometimes carry a pilgrim’s passport in recognition of the places they have visited along their pilgrimage route. You might like to do this for the stopping at points along the way in your church. A stamp or sticker is needed for each stop. Pilgrims could then take the passport home to remember their journey – and place it in their Bible, prayer space or windowsill… If you have a photo of your church you could pop it on the front of the passport.

[2] Shell and Footprint outlines – adapt these and use to support the prayer moments of the day… print on card for prayer trees or prayer boards – or to make prayer cards / bookmarks for people to take home

[3] Reflection Postcards - photocopy and place around your arrival destination inviting people to share moments of God’s grace and revelation, their thoughts or observations.

[4] Simple bookmark for pilgrims to take home – with room to add your own image at the centre… or change the Scripture verse as appropriate for your church community. Encourage people to continue to pray for us all as we journey together as disciples in mission.
As they talked and discussed, Jesus himself drew near and walked along with them.

Luke 24:15
Diocesan Day of Prayer and Pilgrimage - JUNE 2019
What might God have been saying to you today?
What would you like to say to God now?

What might God have been saying to you today?
What would you like to say to God now?

What might God have been saying to you today?
What would you like to say to God now?

What might God have been saying to you today?
What would you like to say to God now?
Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road…

Luke 24:32