



Pilgrim Paths

Chipping Norton Deanery

Hook Norton Circular Walk

2 Miles

A pilgrimage is a spiritual journey to a sacred place

This leaflet offers Bible passages and reflections to accompany your journey, with suggestions of places to pause. Please allow much more time than you would usually spend on a walk to be able to pause and take in the suggested ideas and activities. We would think you need 1½ hours or maybe longer.

The circular walk includes some road walking through the village, footpaths through fields and negotiating some stiles.

St. Peter's Church - Hook Norton

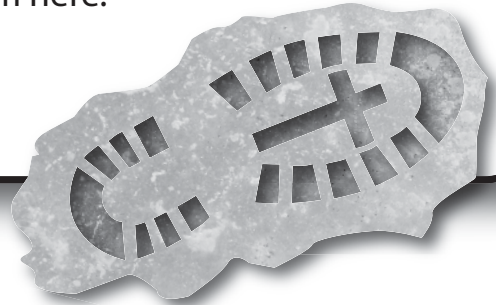
Preparing : Inside the Church

St. Peter's church was first recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle of 922 AD. The current building includes a chancel dating back to the 12th century.

The 11th century font is a stunning example of early carving - worth a look.

While you are there take time to think of all the people who will have started out on their Christian life of faith from their baptism here.

Baptism is seen as the start of a life-long journey.



Here are the words that are sometimes used as a sending out prayer.

In baptism God invites you on a life-long journey.

*Together with all God's people
you will explore the way of Jesus
and grow in friendship with God,
in love for his people,
and in serving others.*

*With us you will listen to the word of God
and receive the gifts of God.*



You might like to think about this pilgrim path as being a chance to explore what it means for you to take up God's invitation to grow in friendship with him.

Take a moment to be silent and still. Be aware of this place, yourself and the thoughts that come to mind. Give this to God

As a sign of readiness to receive from God, open your hands.

Lord God, be with us in our going and in our journeying and at our arrival.

Amen

Starting Out: At The Church Porch

We follow in a long tradition of pilgrimage. Notice the pilgrim crosses carved into the stone surrounding the porch door. They are thought to date back to early pilgrims, leaving home to travel to the Holy Land.



Starting out on a pilgrimage gives us the chance to try something new. We can choose how we do this. It may be about enjoying different sights and sounds. It may be about altering our pace. It may be about switching off thinking about some issue, or about thinking about it differently.

We talk about singing to a different tune or changing one's tune when we look at something from a different point of view.



Psalm 96 takes the idea of singing a new song. It also talks about singing that song to God. It may help you to remember his presence with you as you travel.

Psalm 96

- 1 Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.*
- 2 Sing to the Lord, praise his name;
proclaim his salvation day after day.*
- 3 Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvellous deeds among all peoples.*



A Prayer For Beginning

Father God,
We give you our eyes to see as you do
We give you our feet to go your way
We give you our minds that you may think in us
We give you our tongues to sing a new song. Amen

Leaving The Church

On leaving the church porch, turn left along the main street, passing the village shop on your left. Follow the street as it continues to bear left to the point where Down End drops away on your right. Taking this turn, walk down the lane, past a small triangular green, to a further green at the bottom where you will see the village cemetery in front of you.

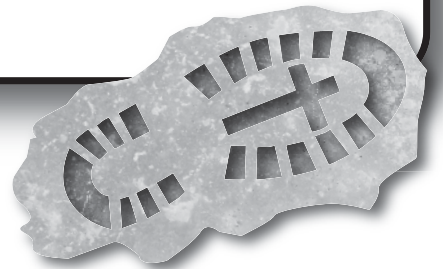
Turn Right

Turn Right to climb up Park Hill. So far the walk has been downhill, but what goes down has then to go up!

You might like to reflect as you walk up this hill on something that has been worth the uphill climb in your life.

Or play a word association game with those you are walking with...

For example, choose a synonym for "uphill" (such as arduous or hard) then your companion says the first word that comes into their head and they try to explain the connection! This makes for interesting and funny stories!



As soon as the road takes you sharp right into Park Road, turn left onto a path called Ashburton Lane. This eventually becomes a vehicular lane and bears round to the right. At the end of the lane, turn left into Rope Way which has a lovely view past pretty, thatched cottages to the other side of the valley. At the crossroads, look back to see the great stone piers of the former railway viaduct.



Sometimes when we see the amazing structures and inventions that have been made by human ingenuity, we need to be reminded of how much more astounding is the God who created the universe.

Psalm 96 continues to remind us of the awesome power of God.

4 For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise;

he is to be feared above all gods.

5 For all the gods of the nations are idols,

but the Lord made the heavens.

6 Splendour and majesty are before him;

strength and glory are in his sanctuary.



Crossing into Southrop Road, bear right in front of a fine double-gabled house with an impressive display of leaded 'cross' windows, and continue as the lane bears left at a point where there is a delightful glimpse of the church tower in the distance.



Pause Here

Glimpses of things that bring us joy are often missed when our heads are down or we are looking in the opposite direction.



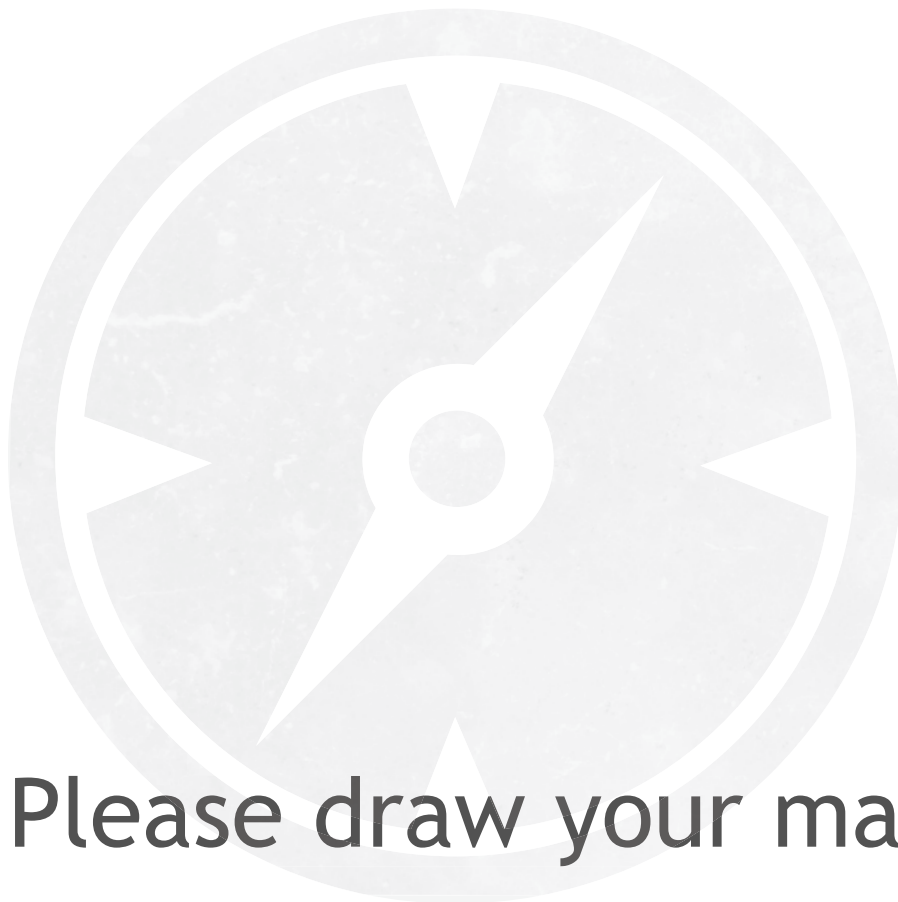
Psalm 96 continues by encouraging us to sing a different song among the nations:

*7 Ascribe to the Lord, all you families of nations,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.*

*8 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due to his name;
bring an offering and come into his courts.*

*9 Worship the Lord in the splendour of his holiness;
tremble before him, all the earth.*

*10 Say among the nations, 'The Lord reigns.'
The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity.*



Please draw your map here . .

Pilgrim Paths



Immediately after the last house on your right, climb over two stiles that lead to a field path dropping down to where a line of beech trees meets the stream. At the bottom.



Pause Here

The following words, in response to Psalm 96, are from the text of Bishop Steven's sermon, given at his welcome service in the diocese of Oxford in 2016.

When the world is being shaken, we must sing a new song of hope.

When the world is hurting, we must sing the new song of healing and salvation.

When the world grieves, we sing new songs of resurrection.

When the world grows more unfair, we must sing God's new song of justice.

To those who are enslaved and prisoners, we teach new songs of freedom.

To those who are afraid, we share our songs of courage.

To those who are dragged down by sin, we sing of God's forgiveness.

To those who are confused we sing God's clear new song of truth.

In this divided world, our songs reach out to strangers, to welcome and build bridges.

In this restless world, our songs tell of God's peace and our final rest in heaven.

In this polluted world, we sing a new song of care for God's creation.

In this world of vanity and pride, we sing songs of humility and meekness.

In a world which lives for itself, we sing of love of God and neighbour.

Rt. Rev. Dr. Steven Croft, Bishop of Oxford



As you continue you may wish to think about how you can sing a new song.



Go Over..

another stile and through a kissing gate and follow the path alongside the stream

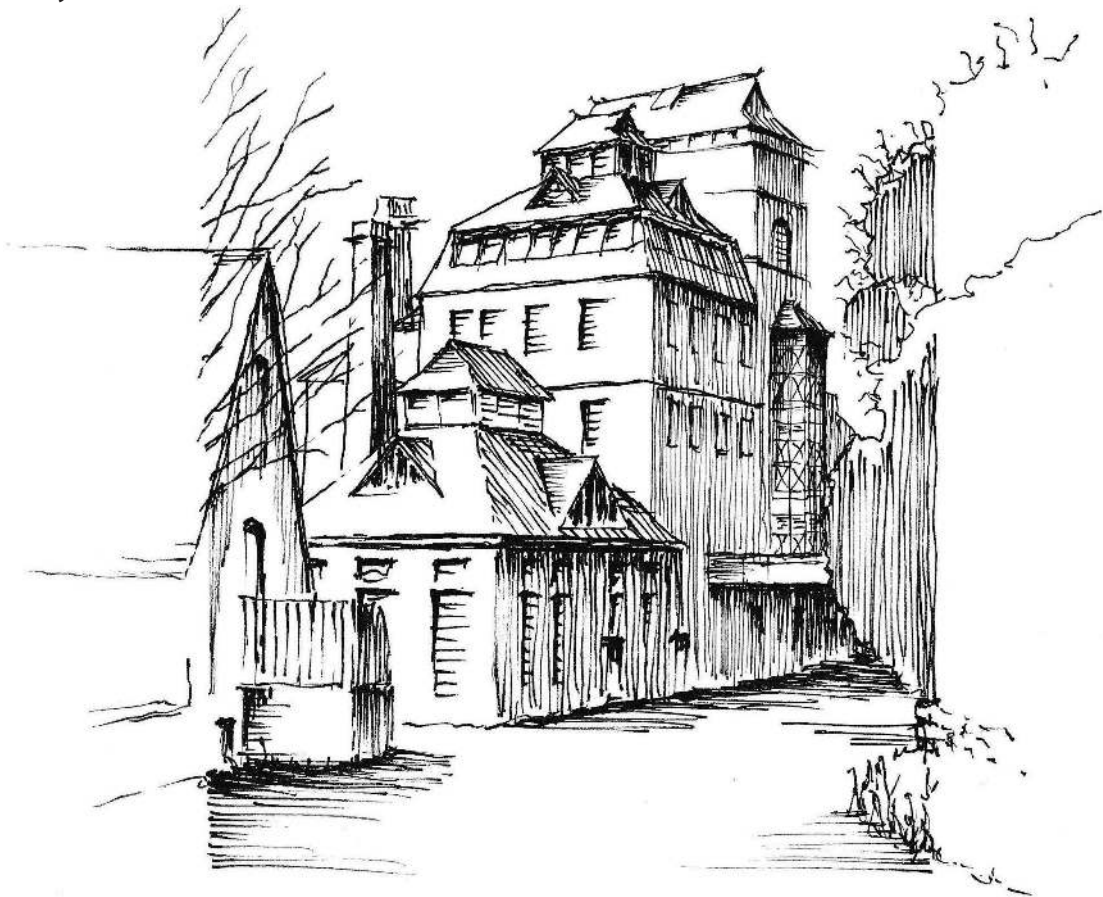


Turn Right

Where the path finally meets the Chipping Norton Road, turn right, cross the road bridge and, by the wooden signpost, cross the street to the grass triangle and then continue in front of the Pear Tree Inn to Brewery Lane.

Walk right up the lane, past the magnificent Victorian brewery buildings on your left. Take the footpath through the kissing gate at the end.

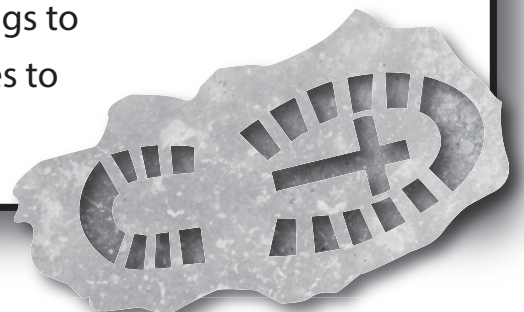
From this field you may see some of the magnificent shire horses that still pull the brewery drays.



We hope you have enjoyed the changing scenery on your walk.

In Bishop Steven's words

"One of the wonders of being alive is that life never stands still. Our lives are constantly changing. Each day there are new blessings to appreciate, new wonders to discover, new adventures to be had. There is nearly always a new song to sing."



Follow

Follow the fence on your right to a further kissing gate; then turn right, keeping the fence on your right again, cross a stile by a metal gate and continue into a shady green lane.



Pause Here

to read these last verses of **Psalm 96**.

11 Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;

let the sea resound, and all that is in it.

12 Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them;

let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.

13 Let all creation rejoice before the Lord, for he comes,

he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his faithfulness.



Junction

At the junction with Clay Bank, turn right and cross the road to enter The Bourne. Proceed until you reach the surgery on your left, and then turn right down a lane. At the end, take a path on your left which, passing houses on the left, crosses a close and then continues as a path again, dropping down alongside a metal handrail to Watery Lane.

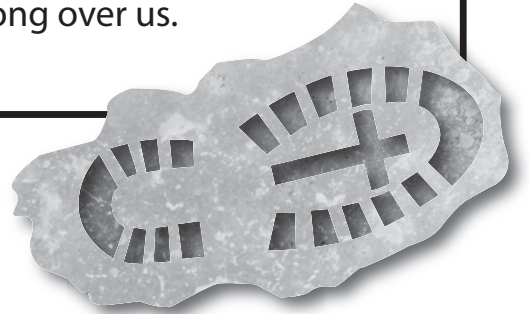
Turn right, and then left on another path that climbs up a bank to pass a playground on your left. If you have brought children along, you may wish to take advantage of this pleasant facility before re-entering the churchyard a little way further on your right.

Returning

As you return to the church, you may like to read the words of this hymn

It echoes verse 9 of psalm 96 and many other passages in the Bible that use the same phrase.

This reminds us how to find a new song to sing, even in times of sorrow and care, for the song comes from the beauty of God's song over us.



*O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!
Bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him: the Lord is his Name!*

*Low at his feet lay thy burden of carefulness,
high on his heart he will bear it for thee,
and comfort thy sorrows, and answer thy prayerfulness,
guiding thy steps as may best for thee be.*

*Fear not to enter his courts in the slenderness
of the poor wealth thou wouldst reckon as thine;
for truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness,
these are the offerings to lay on his shrine.*



*These, though we bring them in trembling and fearfulness,
he will accept for the Name that is dear;
mornings of joy give for evenings of tearfulness,
trust for our trembling and hope for our fear.*

*O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!
bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him: the Lord is his Name!*

