



# Pilgrim Paths

## Chipping Norton Deanery

Little Compton, Chastleton Circular Walk 4 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 two hours or maybe longer.

The circular walk includes some road walking, footpaths through fields and up hills. There are stiles to negotiate.

Note: Cars may be parked on the road by the churchyard, notwithstanding the notices forbidding students of Reed College to do so.

# St. Denis Church, Little Compton.

## Preparing : Inside the Church

The present building has 12th century origins and the saddleback tower built in the 14th Century is of particular interest.

### William Juxton

During the Civil War, which ended in 1648, the deposed Bishop of London, William Juxon, lived in his family home, the Manor, next to the Church. He often used to walk the mile or so across the fields to St. Mary's Church, Chastleton. You will be walking in his footsteps. When, during the Civil War, the King was executed, Bishop Juxon, who had also been Lord Treasurer of England, was the priest who accompanied him to the scaffold. The scenes of the execution are now represented in a beautiful stained glass window in the Lady Chapel of the Church. The Bible used by Bishop Juxon at the execution is on display at nearby Chastleton House, now owned by the National Trust. As you will be walking to Chastleton, you may wish to check out the N.T. website for opening times and details for tickets.

After the restoration of the Monarchy in 1660, Juxon was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury, by Charles II. He died in 1663 and is buried in St John's College, Oxford.

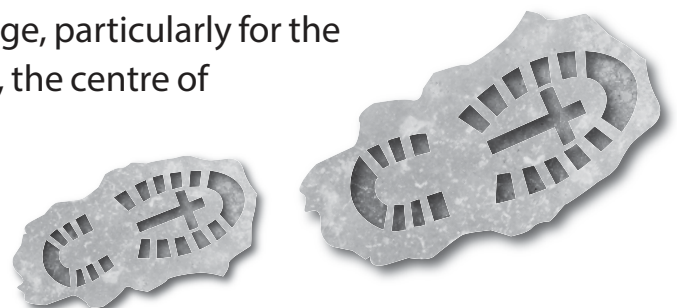


### Before we start

We are going to use the words of a Psalm as we walk.

A Psalm is one of the ancient songs of worship to God, and they are found in both the Jewish and Christian scriptures.

Many of the Psalms were written for pilgrimage, particularly for the Jewish people as they travelled to Jerusalem, the centre of their religion.





## Starting out

### Psalm 23

*1 The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.  
2 He makes me lie down in green pastures,  
he leads me beside quiet waters,  
3 He refreshes my soul.  
He guides me along the right paths  
for his name's sake.*



### A Prayer

As our feet follow the path, lead us forward safely.  
As our eyes look for the way, guide our thoughts.  
As we pause to rest, refresh us with new possibilities.  
Amen

### Turn Left

From the churchyard gate, **turn left** (north) and follow the road just round the **right-hand** bend. **Turn left** onto a track, which is a signed footpath. Proceed through the gate and **turn left** again, going westwards and enjoying the lovely views of the Manor House and gardens to your **left** across the stream.



## Continue

The path continues between farm buildings, in the same direction, now with a field on your **right-hand** side. At the end of the second field turn **left again** (south), joining a track and then a road that comes out on the main village street next to the Red Lion pub.



## Follow

Following the pavement round to the **left**, cross the road and join a footpath beside a row of poplars. It goes around a paddock and brings you to the **A44 main road**, almost opposite The Old School B&B. Carefully **crossing** the **A44**, proceed along the road opposite towards **Chastleton village**. There are a few houses along the road for the first quarter of a mile. After the last one on the right (Hogg's Barn), there's a footpath on the **left-hand** side. Climb the stile and, taking a bearing from the footpath sign, head diagonally across the ridge- and-furrow field towards a tall solitary tree (oak) beyond the hedge (SW).

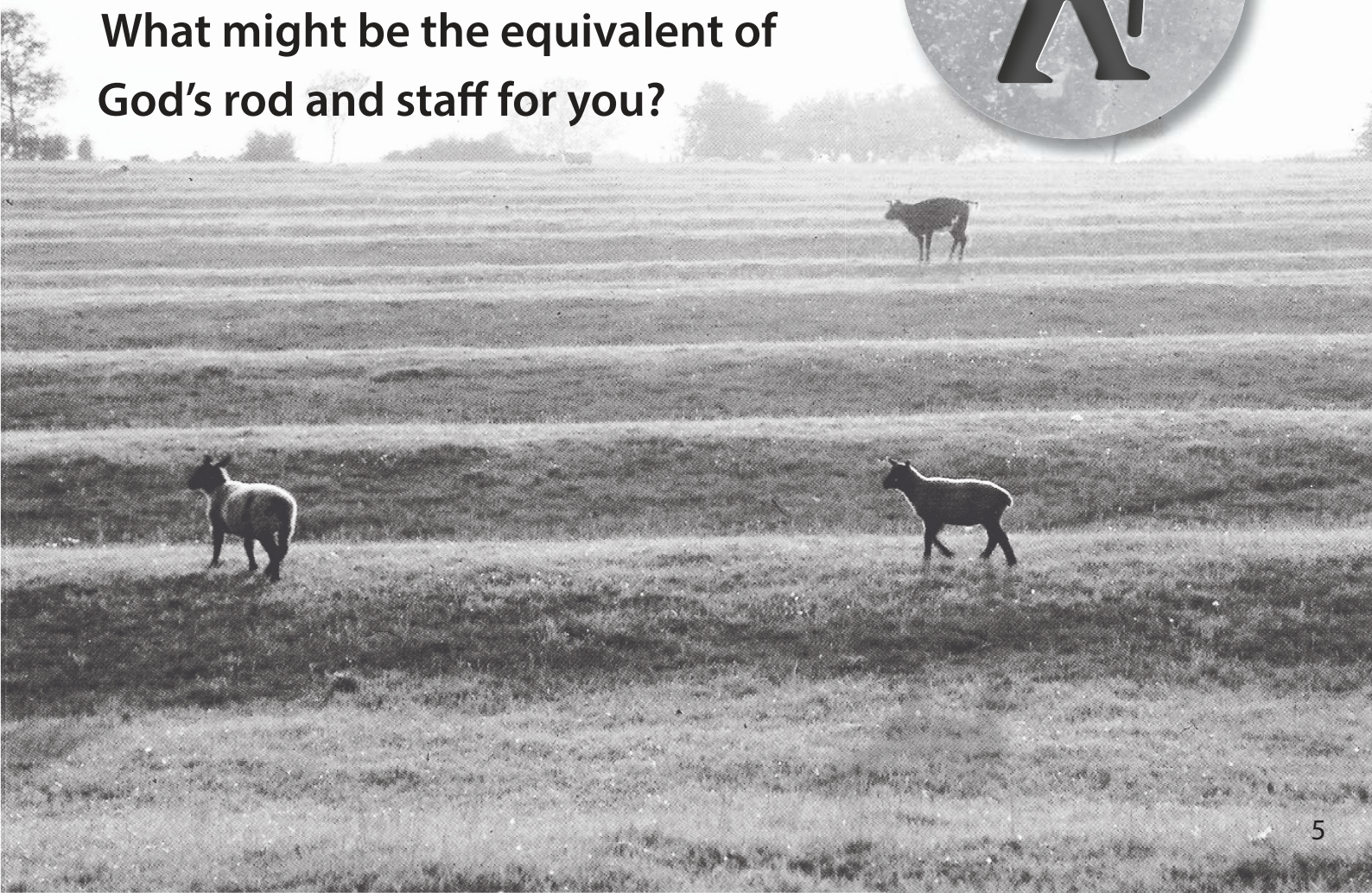
These ridges and furrows are the remains of the early system of farming in Medieval times. They can be a thousand or more years old. The dips were the boundaries of thin strips formed by the single-blade plough turning the soil over towards the centre as it was drawn in a clockwise direction.

They now cause some effort to climb up and over, as you walk across them. It may not be as dramatic as the psalm, as it describes dealing with dark valleys of fear, but it can bring to mind the ups and downs of life and having to keep going when times are hard.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,  
I will fear no evil,  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff,  
they comfort me.



**What might be the equivalent of  
God's rod and staff for you?**



Stile . .

Climb over the double stile (it may be a tight squeeze!).



## Pause by the old oak tree

to enjoy the view towards Ilmington Down in the far distance. You will get an even better view from a higher vantage point later in the walk.



Listen

How many different sounds can you hear?  
Horses hooves, birds singing, traffic, sheep, an aeroplane,  
insects buzzing?.





## Sound



*Sound is such an important way of sensing*

Sound is such an important way of sensing, but it is interesting that some musicians continue to 'feel' rhythm and harmonies even when profoundly deaf. **Read these words of Jesus:**

'The sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.'

John 10:4



Jesus speaks of us being able to know the voice of God, while Psalm 23 assures us that God is with us as we have just read:

**'For you are with me.'**

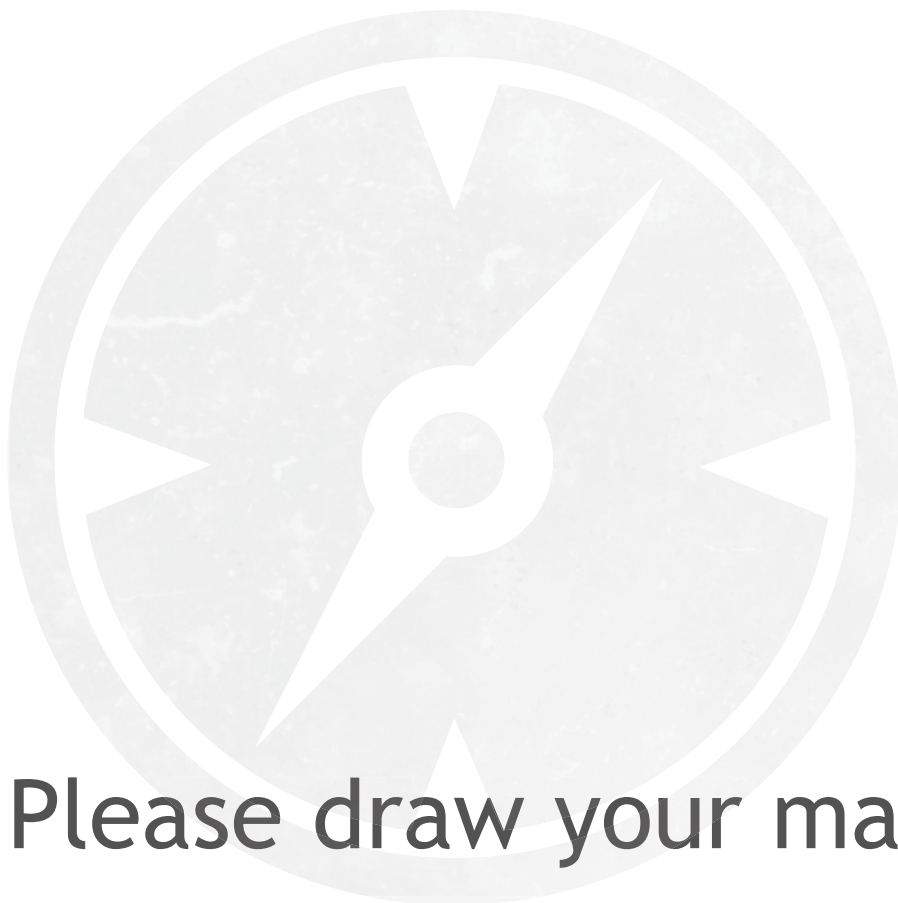
We may sense the presence of God as we continue to listen.

## Cross

Cross the next field, heading towards the next solitary oak – you will by now be able to see Chastleton House to the left of it.



On the far side of the field, go through the gate to the **right** of the metal tractor shed. Follow the field boundary on your **right-hand** side which bends to the **left**. When you reach the point where it veers off to the **right**, you will be able to see St Mary's church and churchyard wall. Enjoying the splendid view of **Chastleton House** as you go, head to the **left** of the churchyard, to a stile beside a wide metal gate leading onto the lane. Enter the churchyard from the lane. If it's a summer afternoon on Wednesday-Saturday you may be able to get a cup of tea and slice of cake in the church.



Please draw your map here . .

# Pilgrim Paths



# Inside The Church

Look for the old Medieval floor tiles in the South Aisle. Can you find these?



## Window

In the window of remnants of Medieval glass, collected by a former rector, look for: St. Peter's keys, a bishop's mitre and lamb, and a piece inscribed,

**"In hoc signo vinces"**

which translates **"In this sign you will conquer."**

The Roman emperor Constantine suddenly saw a bright cross of light emblazoned against the noonday sky and upon it, this inscription. He became the first emperor to embrace Christianity, so ending the severe persecution of the early church.





## Continuing

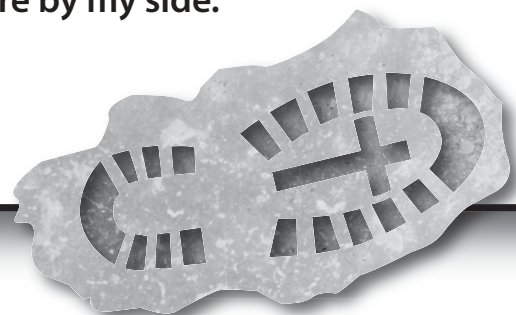
Leaving the churchyard, **turn right** on the lane – taking time to admire the frontage of **Chastleton House** (National Trust) - and continue on the road for about 100 metres until you see space for staff parking on the **left**. Go through the parking space and the gates on the far side, and keep going (SSW) under an avenue of mature trees. On reaching the corner of a wood, **turn left** just before the gate and walk along a bridleway following its near edge. After a short while it reaches a gate and continues **east**, going more uphill, into the woods. On reaching a kissing gate near a sharp bend in a road, **turn right** and go through a second kissing gate. The way forward now turns **left** (SE) parallel with the road, either on the footpath through the woodland belt, or through the field just beyond its **right-hand** side where an extensive view opens up to **Stow-on-the-Wold** and even **Broadway Tower** (for the eagle-eyed).



For all your blessings, Heavenly Father, known to me, and for all unknown, accept my thanks.

Whatever happens, help me to believe in Your own unfailing care and to know that in the valley of the shadow You are by my side.

**Amen**





## Reaching the top of the hill

Either way, on reaching the top of the hill you need to find the gate onto the road. If you stuck to the woodland footpath it will be on your **left**; if you've been walking in the field you will need to double back onto the woodland path from the top, and the gate will then be on your **right** after a short distance. Ahead, on the **opposite** side of the road, is the drive to **Barrow House**, which is also a footpath. Follow it until there's an equestrian gate in the fence on your **left**. At this point you might like to divert from the route to visit **Chastleton Barrow** camp, a Bronze Age/Iron Age hillfort with an impressive circular defensive rampart, which you can see in the clump of trees to your **right**. Access is via the **bridleway** which goes through the **left-hand** of the two metal gates.



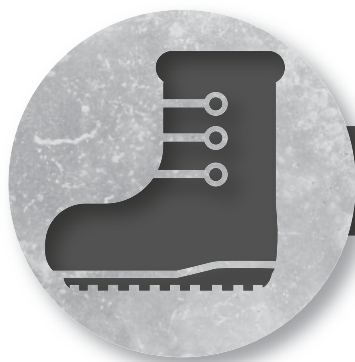
The psalm suggests that it is possible to find a place of harmony, peace and wholeness, even when surrounded by enemies.

### Psalm 23

*5 You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies.  
You anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows..*

The Hebrew word for this is Shalom.  
As you continue to walk, you  
might think about what  
would be a way for you to  
find this Shalom?





## Continuing

To continue on the pilgrimage route, proceed **straight** on towards **Barrow House**, following the footpath **right** and **left** through the farm buildings and two gates. The path then bends **left** and follows the track **downhill** (north).



## Pause to take in the glorious view and a downward path

These last lines of the psalm suggest a confidence that we don't always feel. The word here translated 'follow' means something more like the word 'pursue.' It is as if, even in turmoil and chaos, the psalmist believes that goodness and love will chase after us, to eventually bring us to a place of refuge and stillness.

*Surely your goodness and love will follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

The footpath crosses an unfenced road and continues downhill to **Hill Farm**. It is clearly marked through the farm and into a field below the farm itself. Turning sharp **right** in this field (NE), go down the slope to a footbridge/stile at the bottom, and then bear **half left** to a nearby second **footbridge**. Continue **uphill** on the exact line of the second **footbridge** to a **stile** in a wire fence that you can see on the skyline. Keeping to the same line, go on up the hill and then down to a **stile** leading into the bottom of the garden of **Hillside**, part of **Kitebrook School**.



## Returning . . . .

There is still a little way to go, but we are well on the way back now. This can be the hardest part as you feel the end should be in sight, but it isn't!

As you go, it might be useful to decide on things to look out for: different tree leaves? Interesting shaped stones? A variety of things beginning with the initial of your name? You choose ... and then at the end, see what you have found.



### The Garden

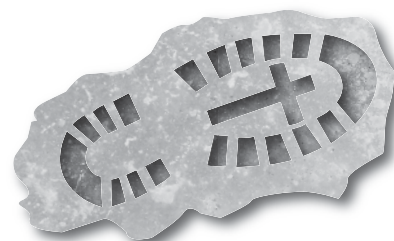
Once in the garden, your way lies between the vegetable plots and behind the shed, out on to the **A44**.

**Cross the A44** carefully again, turn **left** along the far verge and proceed **downhill** (north) for about 100m. Keep your eyes open for the **footpath sign** on your **right** and the **stile** leading through the hedge into a **rough field**.

**Cross** this field, keeping the hedge on your **right**, and proceed into the next one, watching out for a deep ditch that may be hidden by long grass! **Bear left** near the far side of the second field and join a **bridleway** leading into **Little Compton**.

### Turn left

Turn left onto the main village street and follow it until you reach **Church Lane** again. For anyone with more energy, there's a playground just here!



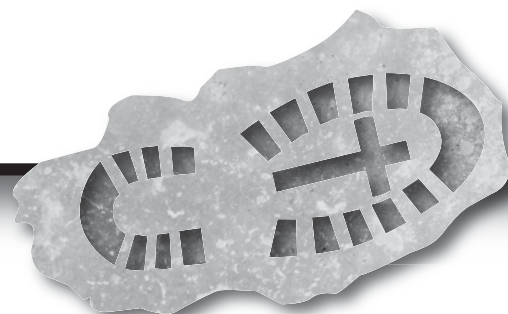
## A Prayer

*May God be a bright flame before you,  
be a guiding star above you,  
be a smooth path below you,  
be a kindly shepherd behind you,  
today, tomorrow and for ever.*

**Amen**



# Notes



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