

Charlbury with Shorthampton

'Journey Makers'

A Pilgrimage Through Lent



Welcome to this series of leaflets inviting you to turn your walk into a pilgrimage during the weeks of Lent. A pilgrimage is a spiritual journey to a sacred place, and you might want to begin or end your journey at a church, or visit one on the way. You can use this leaflet for any walk, although you will find a suggestion for a route on the back page.

Week by week we will explore the story of Easter, looking at different aspects to the last few weeks of Jesus' life, death and resurrection and what they can teach us.



Week Six: Loving

Beginning with prayer:

Find a quiet place and stand still for a moment.

Dedicate your journey today to God, asking him to speak to you as you read, pray and walk.

Pilgrim God,
You are our origin and destination.
Travel with us, we pray,
in every pilgrimage of faith
and every journey of the heart.
Give us the courage to set off,
the nourishment we need to travel well
and the welcome we long for at journey's end.
So may we grow in grace and love of you
and in the service of others,
through Jesus Christ. Amen.



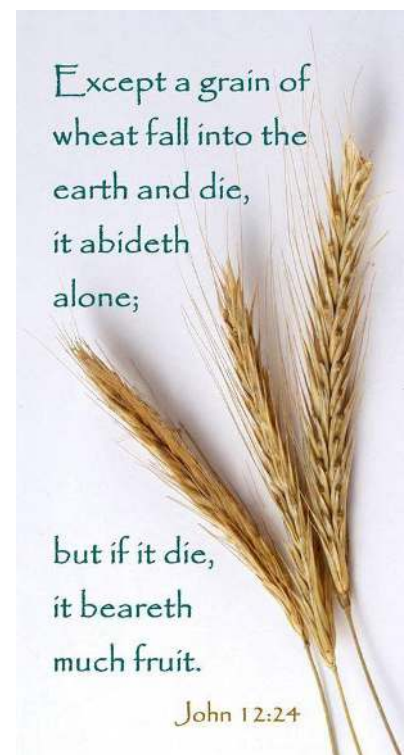
Week 6: Loving

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.’

But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous.

For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have?....

Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect. (Matthew 5:43-45,48)



Reflect:

It seems like a tall order - we are asked to be perfect in our love, to extend our love to those most unworthy in our eyes, most undeserving, most difficult and demanding. We are asked to love without ceasing, to love without counting the cost, regardless of where this takes us or what effort it requires.

Through becoming human himself, Jesus taught us what true humanity looks like - and it involves love!

He looks at each one of us and sees in us all that we are able to become and how each one of us can change our own part of the world through the simple act of loving.

And in return we are promised the companionship of Christ, an engagement with all that is best and most precious and most profound in the world, a glimpse of the Kingdom and an opportunity to share in that Kingdom by sharing it with others.

Question:

Who are you going to love today?

Prayer

If we pray for those we do not love, we may or may not change them – that is up to God. What is certain is that we will change.....pray today for the gift of love and the opportunity to practice it.

A photograph of a sunset over a body of water. The sky is a mix of orange, pink, and purple, with dark clouds. The water in the foreground is dark and reflects the colors of the sky. The quote is overlaid in white text.

**Darkness cannot drive out darkness;
only light can do that. Hate cannot
drive out hate; only love can do that.**

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Shorthampton

Route Suggestion: approx. 5 miles



From St Mary's Church along Church Lane and onto Forest Road. Left past the station and up the hill to the Walcot turn. Follow the footpath, crossing the Chadlington road and taking the sign to Shorthampton Church. Past the church, taking the field footpath on the right, emerging just by the railway bridge. Turn left down the hill before turning right onto the Oxfordshire Way. Follow this, turning right skirting Dean Grove, before turning left through fields, returning to Charlbury by Watery Lane. Walk back up Thames Street to Dyers Hill and Church Lane. Copyright Open Street Map. Not to scale.

'God writes the Gospel not in the Bible alone, but on trees and flowers and clouds and stars' (Martin Luther)

Evidence that God's love extends throughout his creation is found in the entire Bible, rejoicing in the capacity of nature to reveal not only God's love for the world and those who inhabit it, but His endless creativity and imagination.

Jesus constantly uses examples taken from nature to illustrate aspects of God's kingdom and our own behaviour within it. We are taught to appreciate landscape; to learn from the details of flowers and the behaviour of birds.

As you journey today, let your senses be filled with wonder at your surroundings, so that you learn from and rejoice in the gifts of the natural world.

Warning: The map is intended to give an overview only. Parts of the walk are on roads. Many parts are very muddy and slippery – care needed!