



## 2021 – THE YEAR OF PILGRIMAGE – 2021

**Epiphany, 6th January to St Andrew's Day, 30th November**

The Scottish Episcopal Church is inviting all its congregations and members to make 2021 a Year of Pilgrimage, in which as many as possible will join in making a holy journey of some kind, in the company of others.

There are many ways to make a Pilgrimage. Planning yours could include:

- walking a pilgrim route, ancient or new, or visiting a holy place
- congregations travelling together to visit another church in their Diocese or in the Province.
- joining in one of the organised Diocesan or Provincial Pilgrimages.
- helping those who may want to make a spiritual 'journey of heart and mind' in their own home.

A pilgrimage is a journey with a spiritual purpose, often to a place of spiritual significance, sometimes as an act of prayer on behalf of someone or something.

It may help us to step away from everyday life for a time, see our lives in a different way, make new connections with others and with creation, and, by making a physical journey, continue our spiritual journey toward God.

There are many ways of making such a Pilgrimage. It can be over a long or short distance; it can be by walking, or other means of transport; it can be at home for those whose circumstances make travel difficult. It can take several days, or even weeks, or it can take a single day, or times that are set aside each day.

People make Pilgrimage journeys for many reasons. Some may want to make space in their own busy lives or do something 'different' by connecting with places and people in an unfamiliar environment, others to make a journey as an act of intercession on behalf of someone else. We hope that many will want to go on Pilgrimage to reaffirm their Christian faith, place it in a new context, and re-discover the spiritual heritage of their own local community.

**The Province** is organising several Pilgrimages:

- A Holy Land Pilgrimage, for 11 days, 10–21 April.
- St Magnus Way in Orkney, for 7 days, 16–22 May (pilgrims arrange own accommodation)
- Iona Youth Pilgrimage
- Taizé Your People's Pilgrimage
- On-line Pilgrimage resources for those unable to undertake a physical journey.

**The Diocese** is also hoping to organise some Pilgrimages:

- St Andrews Pilgrimage, using both the Fife Pilgrim Way (Culross to St Andrews) and the Three Saints Way (Killin to St Andrews).
- To Trondheim, Norway, connecting Dunfermline and Trondheim (which are Twinned Towns) and the pilgrimage shrines of St Margaret and St Olaf, and celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Porvöo Communion between Lutherans and Anglicans.
- Rochester to Canterbury Pilgrimage to complete the journey of St William of Perth, a pilgrim who died at Rochester in 1201 on the way to Canterbury, and whose holiness was remarked by people at home, on his journey, and after his death.
- Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, a seven-day journey to visit the Holy Places of Galilee and Jerusalem, and to meet Israeli and Palestinian people who are working for peace in that land today.

**Congregations** are also now invited to plan their own Pilgrimage, such as:

- using one of the pilgrim routes now available.
- making local journeys linked to a period of quiet reflection and prayer.
- in partnership with another congregation in the Diocese, from one church to the other.
- from their own church to other local churches or places of spiritual significance.
- around the church grounds or inside the building.
- opening the church to welcome visiting pilgrims, especially along the pilgrim routes.

**Publicity and Sharing Information** – During 2020, as Diocesan and Congregational pilgrimage plans take shape, we will use the Provincial and Diocesan website to publicise Year of Pilgrimage activities for everyone.

**The Environment** – we should try to use this Year to make a strong connection between our own spiritual wellbeing and the global environmental crisis. We should try to ensure that all our organised pilgrimage activities will minimise their environmental impact through the most sustainable use of transport and resources, following the principles established by the European Green Pilgrimage Network. Congregations planning pilgrimages could join Eco-Congregation and the Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum, which provide additional learning and information sharing opportunities.

For further ideas and resources, see:

<https://www.greenpilgrimageeurope.net/>

<http://www.sprf.org.uk/>

<https://fifecoastandcountrysidetrust.co.uk/walks/fife-pilgrim-way/>

<http://threesaintsaway.org/>

<https://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/>