

The Thy Kingdom Come Blessings Walk

We're grateful to Liz Buck for preparing this Blessings Walk based on the Beatitudes.

If you're able, do try to take this walk during the period of Thy Kingdom Come from 13th – 23rd May



Charlton Benefice's Blessings Walk

A short cross-parish walk between St. Luke and St Thomas churches

- This short walk is based on five of the Beatitudes, the walk can be accessed from either church, depending on your preference for a starting place and it connects both churches.
- There are alternative suggestions at the end for people who live in other places or people preferring to walk further afield.
- The walk is designed to start from either church.

Start from St Luke or from St Thomas

Beatitude 1 & 2

Begin by walking around the church and reflect on the verse 'Blessed are the poor in Spirit.'

There are times when this verse is applicable to all of us and certainly for those living around our churches.

Pray for those who are struggling with spiritual direction in their lives and for ourselves when we are in a spiritually dark place.

Recall - 'for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'

Reflect on the memorials in the graveyard 'Blessed are those who mourn.'

Mourning is a powerful emotion that can be attributed to losses that are not always about the physical separation that happens at the end of life.

Begin the walk to the other parish.

Directions are marked out 'walk St T' in blue or 'walk St. L' in red whichever church is your starting point.

Reflect as you walk on the many ways in which people mourn – including personal loss, changes in relationships and loss of employment. Reflect on those parts of the World that make you sad – where there is drought, famine, changes in climate, loss of fertile land.

DIRECTION – walk St Thomas - walk out of the gate and up Woodland Terrace in the direction of Maryon Wilson Park. When you reach the top of the Park STOP. Look across at the City views and the way ahead.

Walk St Luke—walk out of the gate, into the Village and in the direction of the Co-Op. Turn into Fairfield Grove and when you reach the junction of Fairfield Grove and Charlton Lane STOP. Look towards the park and across the City.

Pray for those who mourn, those made sad by regret, for the opportunities we have missed in life to improve our own health and skills, for those stripped of opportunity.

Recall - 'for they shall be comforted'.

Beatitude 3

DIRECTION – *walk St T* – from Maryon Wilson Park, turn into the park and walk in the direction of the deer pens. At the deer pens, continue on the path uphill towards the junction between Thorntree Road, Charlton Lane and Fairfield Grove. **STOP** at the exit from the park.

Walk St L – from Fairfield Grove, cross over the road and into Maryon Wilson Park. Take the left fork path in the park that leads to the deer pens. Continue on the path past the deer pens and up the hill towards St Thomas' Church. **STOP** at the exit from the park by the bus stop.

Reflect on - 'Blessed are the meek.'

You have just walked through a beautiful green space, rich with vegetation and life. Sadly, there are fewer and fewer of these places, particularly in towns and cities. You may have listened to bird song on your way or looked around you at blossom and flowers. You may have been aware of the different shades of green and the small flowers growing in the grass. You may have seen children playing, dogs running, people chatting or walking by themselves.

Look back to see where you have walked. Permit nature to fill you with humility.

Recall - 'they shall inherit the earth.'

Pray about what 'inheriting the earth' means for you and your community.

Beatitude 4 & 5

DIRECTION – *walk St T* – from the top of the park, walk across the junction and into Fairfield Grove. Continue along Fairfield Grove to the Village and then turn in the direction of St Luke's Church. When you reach the church, cross the road and stand at the war memorial, looking towards the church. **STOP** to reflect

Walk St L – continue out of the Park and turn right. Walk down Woodland Terrace until you get to St Thomas' Church. When you reach the church, go into the churchyard and just before you get on the path leading to the Nellie Raven Room, turn on to the grass. Facing towards Maryon Grove, walk a little way across the graveyard, where to your right is a white gravestone almost under the window of the Nellie Raven Room, which is a Navy war grave. **STOP** to reflect.

Reflect on - 'Blessed are the peace-makers'.

Reflect on the ways that neighbourhoods are changed by negotiation and communities' cross boundaries to make connections.

Recall all the ways in which people respect cultural differences and encourage listening to each other.

Pray for places where difference is not respected or celebrated. Remember all those caught up in wars and conflicts, the areas of the world where disagreements and difference become hostility. Give thanks for all the peacemakers, past and present, in our own community and beyond.

Recall – 'for they shall be called the children of God.'

Walk around the church and churchyard.

Reflect on – 'Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake.'

Finally, find a place to sit. Reflect on what it means to be a member of a Christian and secular community. Remember those persecuted for their religious and political beliefs and pray for prisoners of conscience.

Recall – 'for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'

Remember this verse - 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. '

Ask for God's Blessing for your family, friends and community before leaving this place.

Blessing Walk In Other Places...

This can be one walk or a number of separate walks. You decide! You know where you want to be!

Beatitude One – ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit’ – there are many ‘thin’ places where we feel God’s presence and many of them are not in churches. Find your ‘thin’ place (a place where you feel God’s presence is strong) and reflect on the first Beatitude. Pray for those who are struggling with spiritual direction in their lives and for ourselves when we are in a spiritually dark place.

Recall – ‘for there is the kingdom of heaven.’

Beatitude Two – ‘Blessed are those who mourn’ – find a place that you connect with life passing. This might be a graveyard but can also be a roadside flower display, a memorial such as a garden, a tree or bench in memory of someone. You don’t have to know the person or their history. Reflect on the second Beatitude. Pray for those who mourn, those made sad by regret, for the opportunities we have missed in life to improve our own health and skills, for those stripped of opportunity.

Recall – ‘for they shall be comforted’.

Beatitude Three – ‘Blessed are the meek’. Find a place where you can celebrate the natural environment. It can be a walk of some length or just the opportunity to stand and look at a flower, a tree or someone’s garden. Permit nature to fill you with humility.

Recall – ‘they shall inherit the earth.’

Pray about what ‘inheriting the earth’ means for you and your community.

Beatitude Four – ‘Blessed are the peace-makers’. Find a place of reconciliation or a war memorial – you might find both in your local churchyard. Reflect on the ways that neighbourhoods are changed by negotiation and communities’ cross boundaries to make connections. Recall all the ways in which people respect cultural differences and encourage listening to each other. Pray for places where difference is not respected or celebrated. Remember all those caught up in wars and conflicts, the areas of the world where disagreements and difference becomes hostility. Give thanks for all the peacemakers, past and present, in our own community and beyond.

Recall – ‘for they shall be called the children of God.’

Beatitude Five – ‘Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake.’

Finally, walk and find a quiet place to sit. Reflect on what it means to be a member of a Christian and secular community. Remember those persecuted for their religious and political beliefs and pray for prisoners of conscience.

Recall – ‘for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.’

Remember this verse - ‘I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.’

Ask for God’s Blessing for your family, friends and community before leaving this place.