

To be a pilgrim...

**a weekend conference open to all
6-8 April 2018 at Cliff College, Derbyshire**

Pilgrimage can offer so much to us as individual followers of Christ – and to our churches. Open spaces, companionship on the journey, new ways of seeing a story or a landscape, a sense of adventure, sometimes an element of risk, the need to choose courage... Pilgrimage can help us to think radically about direction, traditions, buildings, prayer, commitment, timing, revelation, sacrifice, God...

Yet, for me, growing up as a Methodist in the second half of the 20th Century, “pilgrimage” was a remote, hazy concept; something engaged in long ago around Canterbury, or far away at the river Ganges. Although the story of the bible is a story of journey, and despite the thread of travel running throughout so many hymns, for various reasons much of the Christian Church lost sight of pilgrimage as a means of grace and an opportunity for mission for a long period of time. This may be particularly true of Protestant churches, including Methodism. Thankfully pilgrimage is resurfacing in all sorts of contexts and styles and a distinctively Wesleyan contribution to the wider understanding of pilgrimage is emerging.

The weekend conference ‘To be a pilgrim’ at Cliff College (6-8 April 2018) offers an opportunity to explore different aspects of pilgrimage – through worship, through images and words, through sedentary activities and, for those who want to, through getting outside into the grounds of the college and the beautiful surrounding countryside. No experience of pilgrimage is needed, just a “Come and see” pilgrim spirit – you will be most welcome.

*Jill Baker,
Vice-President, Methodist Conference 2017-18*

The weekend will include:

- **Keynote presentation by Rev. Michaela Youngson**, President-Designate of the Methodist Conference and one of the chairs of the London Methodist District.
- **Workshops** on a variety of aspects of pilgrimage including:
 - Pilgrimage and pain
 - Pilgrimage and heritage
 - Pilgrimage and protest
 - Pilgrimage and mission
 - How can I develop pilgrimage locally?
- **Open air (optional) opportunities:** exploring pilgrimage within the grounds of Cliff College or walking approximately 6 miles of the Peak Pilgrimage.
- **Authentic journeying:** an exhibition on pilgrimage in textiles and words presented by Ruth Sprague who will also offer stitching workshops as a creative approach to pilgrimage.
- **Pilgrimage on a broader map:** what light can understandings of pilgrimage throw on migration?
- **Plus:** Worship, labyrinth, prayer/play room, late-night options and more...

Registration for the weekend will open in November 2017. You can make an expression of interest at any time by emailing pilgrimage@methodistchurch.org.uk and will then be sent the registration form when it is released. Or keep checking the Methodist Church Website www.methodist.org.uk

Cliff College offers ensuite single or shared accommodation and full board. Day visitors will also be welcome.

Cliff Lane, Calver, Hope Valley, Derbyshire. S32 3XG