

## Walking through Scotland's history Methodist Women in Britain: Scotland Pilgrimage 2020

An opportunity for women sympathetic to Christian spirituality (but not necessarily having a professed faith or attachment to Methodism) to join together and travel as pilgrims from Glasgow to Whithorn in Galloway then to disperse from Dumfries.

**Dates:** Monday 18<sup>th</sup> – Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2020

**Cost:** £340. This includes accommodation and breakfast for 5 nights, transport within the pilgrimage route, 3 dinners and travel from the Isle of Whithorn to Dumfries railway station. Pilgrims will need to arrange their own travel to Glasgow and from Dumfries and bring sufficient money to buy a sandwich lunch each day, 2 dinners and drinks along the way; probably between £65-£100 depending on tastes!

**Requirements: A good level of fitness is required.** The days vary in length up to about 12 miles, but several of the days include some rough walking on uneven and occasionally steep paths. In addition, pilgrims will need to be able to carry in a rucksack the essential clothing, toiletries etc. needed for 5 days. Strong walking trainers with ankle support or lightweight boots are required.

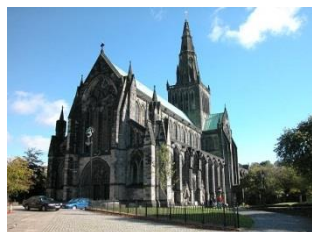
**Accommodation** will be in inns and small hotels and in most places will be in twin or triple rooms, so a willingness to share is also essential. (In some locations we will need people to share a double bed, so please indicate whether or not you are willing to share in this way on the application form). Accommodation along the route is not "grand" and walkers/casual clothing are welcomed.

**Leaders:** The leaders/chaplains for the group will be Jill Baker, a former president of MWiB and former Vice-President of the Methodist Conference and Gillian Womersley, formerly the MWiB Finance and Resources Officer. Both Gillian and Jill have walked this route in its entirety in a pilot pilgrimage in August 2018 and between us have re-walked all sections several times.

**Prayer and worship:** The pilgrimage aims to be inclusive of women with a range of spiritual commitment, experience and practice. Each day will include morning, midday and evening prayers. It is hoped all pilgrims will participate in these, but no-one will be put on the spot!

### Itinerary:

#### **Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May: Arrival, orientation and first steps in Glasgow**



Pilgrims make their own way to Glasgow, gathering in the Sacristy at [St. Mungo's Cathedral](#) at 4pm. (NB the Cathedral museum & toilets are closed on Mondays). After introductions and initial prayers together, we walk through the old part of the city and along the Clyde to Pacific Quay Premier Inn for dinner (cost included), evening prayers, bed & breakfast. (Approx. 3 miles).

(High Street Glasgow is the nearest station to the Cathedral. Please contact Jill for further travel information or to arrange parking at the manse in Anniesland, 12 minutes by train from the city centre).

#### **Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May: Glasgow to Paisley**

Walk from Glasgow to Paisley along the Clyde and the White Cart rivers (approx. 10 miles). Paisley, 'Scotland's largest town' became an important religious hub in Scotland in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, with the establishment of Paisley Abbey. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Paisley was a centre of the weaving industry, giving its name to the Paisley Pattern. The last mills closed in 1993.



After brief visits to [Paisley Abbey](#) and Paisley Methodist Central Hall, we have dinner (cost included), bed & breakfast at the [Watermill Hotel](#), on the White Cart River.

### **Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May: Paisley to Stranraer (Walk: Troon to Ayr)**



We travel by train from Paisley to the seaside and golfing town of Troon from where we walk along the coast to Ayr, birthplace of Robbie Burns (approx. 9 miles). NB be prepared for one (shallow) river crossing on the beach during this walk! In the mid-afternoon we continue our journey south by train to Stranraer, the former ferry hub for travel between Scotland & Ireland, now reinventing itself as a historic pilgrim town. Accommodation at the [North West Castle Hotel](#), with dinner (cost included) bed & breakfast.

### **Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May: Stranraer to Isle of Whithorn (Walk: Castle Kennedy to Glenluce)**

After breakfast in the hotel, a 5-minute bus ride from Stranraer takes us to Castle Kennedy where we begin a varied day's walk through farmland, woodland, moorland and minor roads to the village of Glenluce (approx. 12 miles). The route takes in the ruined Glenluce Abbey, a Cistercian Monastery founded around 1190. In the village of Glenluce we should have time for a cup of tea to refresh us before catching the bus onward to the Isle of Whithorn and checking into our final pilgrim lodgings, [the Steam Packet Inn](#) where we will eat dinner (cost of meal not included).

### **Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May: The Isle of Whithorn – Ninian's Cave**



After a few miles by bus we walk (approx. 2.5 miles) along a minor road and then a footpath down to the beach to visit St Ninian's cave, the 'sacred centre' of our pilgrimage where we will spend some time. The 5.5 mile walk back to the Isle of Whithorn is a wild and beautiful walk along the coast path. Rough and narrow at first, with a likelihood of gorse, brambles and nettles, it opens out into a very pleasant path through fields with stunning views (possibly including seals).

Dinner (cost of meal not included) back at the Steam Packet Inn where we spend our final night.

### **Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May: Isle of Whithorn to Dumfries station**

After breakfast transport will be arranged from the Isle of Whithorn to Dumfries by 1pm for onward trains. If possible this will include a short stop in Whithorn to visit the remains of the Priory, built on the site of Ninian's 4th Century monastery, Candida Casa.

### **Other notes:**

- A good, well-fitting rucksack on a frame with straps at the hip and a waterproof cover is essential equipment. It is essential to travel light and to be able to carry your pack comfortably, as packs will be carried every day except Friday.
- Parts of the route can be quite windy and coastal weather is often difficult to predict accurately. Waterproofs are essential. Lightweight layers in breathable fabrics offer flexibility.
- Total walking mileage is approximately 42 miles, some of it quite rough. Strong walking trainers with good soles and some ankle protection or lightweight boots are required.
- Basic first aid equipment is a good idea, including plasters, pain killers and a remedy for stomach upsets, although we are never far from shops. Again, we can confer and spread the load.
- A more detailed pack list will be provided when places in the group are confirmed.