



A Pilgrimage Along the Andover Road

From St John's to St George's in our mind's eye, or on foot, bike, or car...

The Andover Road A343 has its northern beginning at the roundabout by St John's church, travels south to Andover and then turns west towards Salisbury where it merges to become the A30 just to the east of the city. It runs through Berkshire, Hampshire and Wiltshire and the diocese of Oxford, Winchester and Salisbury; since the building of the Newbury bypass and the general widening of the A34 it carries less heavy traffic than in earlier years.

The following prompts encourage us to pray where we are, as we journey, whether in our mind's eye or by foot, bicycle, or car. So why not pray along the Andover road as we join as a benefice in pilgrimage on 10 October?

St John's church - pray for Revd Gary and the people of St John's; give thanks for the faithfulness of past generations and their sacrifices in wartime, their vision in building a new unique place of worship, their rich heritage in the Anglo-Catholic tradition. Pray for St John's preschool and the many groups who meet at the church, remembering those unable to gather at this time.

Along St John's Road – pray for Mencap, the doctor's surgery, and for the dentists.

The Post Office & store at the roundabout - give thanks for this important local provision, a lifeline for so many local residents; pray for those who work anti-social hours to serve the community.

St John's Infant School - pray for staff and pupils, governors and parents; for the work of the Oxford Diocese department of Education.

The site of the former Newbury Hospital – pray for all medical and support staff in our town; give thanks for those whose vision and persistence and generosity built a new local hospital; pray for patients, out patients and those in the Rainbow Rooms. Offer to God your concerns and thanksgivings about the health of yourself and others.

The City Playground - give thanks for trees and grass, open space to walk and breathe, a place for children to play. St John's Baby & Toddler Group meets here at present, with stories, songs, snacks and lots of fun!

St Bartholomew's School – pray for young people whose education has been disrupted by the current pandemic and for the headteacher, Julia Mortimore, and staff as they support them; give thanks for those who have been educated in this place and gone out to work and serve across the world in every profession and industry.

John Rankin Primary School (out of sight on the west side) – pray for staff and pupils, governors and parents; for the work of the West Berkshire Education department.



At Kingsland Grange previously the site of a maternity nursing home – pray for babies and young children, especially for parents whose babies were born during the current lockdown period; for those who are pregnant; for those fearful of the future.

At Tydehams - as we cross the parish boundary - give thanks for the benefice of St George and St John, for working and worshipping together; for those whose expertise is making worship available on line; ask that the Holy Spirit will continue to sustain, strengthen and inspire us as we grow together in faith and love.

At Highlands (formerly the site of Highlands Nursing Home) – pray for all residents and staff in nursing homes, giving thanks for their patience and fortitude; pray for those unable to see and hold their loved ones; pray for all who are chronically ill and those caring for them at home.

At the crossroads - pray for all who travel daily, and for visitors to our area; give thanks for those places we can access from here on Monk's lane - the doctors' surgery and pharmacy, the care home and the Cloisters, the rugby club, and College.

The shops and businesses at the top of Essex Street – giving thanks for these local facilities and for the owners and staff in these difficult times.

Park House School - pray for young people, pupils present and past, for staff especially the new head teacher Tom Goodenough; give thanks for the nurturing of bodies and minds through excellence in sport and for the opportunities that the school provides.

Falkland Primary School - pray for staff and pupils, parents and governors, for family life and good relationships between generations.

St George's Church – pray for our benefice incumbent Revd Becky as she leads the clergy team; give thanks for all who observe this day of pilgrimage and reflection in any way. Pray for all who use the St George's facilities, for the preschool and after school club newly gathering again.

New Era Players theatre, formerly St Luke's Mission Church - give thanks for all who stir our hearts and minds with drama and music; pray with thanksgiving for all those who have responded to a missionary call to bring the good news of the love of God to each generation.

St Francis de Sales - we rejoice in the sharing of the gospel message with Christians of all denominations; may we always strive for the peace and unity which the Spirit brings.

The Gabriels – give thanks for all religious communities and pray for a continuous witness in ways old and new of the vocation to a life of prayer and service.

As the Andover Road runs downhill and into Hampshire pray for all who live in Wash Common; give thanks for the beauty of the countryside and the kindness of neighbours and for all the generosity of God.

With thanks to Rita Ball for preparing these prayer prompts.