



God of the Wayfarer,
as we journey
from church to church,
guide our feet along
the quiet paths.
May each step bring us
closer to peace,
each sanctuary offer us rest,
and the beauty of creation
restore our souls. Amen.

Leg 1: Bishop Thornton (St. John's) to Markington (St. Michael's), 4.6 miles

- 1 From St. John's car park gate, turn right onto the track. Where it ends at the farm, go straight over the grass through the right-hand gate, keeping the wall on your left. Follow the flagstones of the ancient medieval path through the fields to the Old Church Tower. Take time to explore the historic churchyard!
- 2 Exit the churchyard along the same trajectory, with the churchyard wall on your left. At the gravel track junction, go straight ahead.
- 3 Passing alongside Highfield House, go through the small signed gate on your right (beside a garden), turn left, and head through a ramshackle gate into the next field.
- 4 Walk straight across the field, aiming for a stile between two prominent trees (one living, one dead).
- 5 Keep the fence on your left over the next field, before crossing a stile and following the edge of the paddock on your right to the road.
- 6 Turn left, then take the first right onto Watergate Road (Caution: fast traffic!). Follow Watergate Road for 1.8km to Westerns Lane.
- 7 OPTIONAL HOW HILL ADDITION: At Westerns Lane, continue ahead to the National Trust gate on your left. Climb to the Chapel of St. Michael folly for 360° views across to York Minster & Ripon Cathedral. Return to Westerns Lane.
- 8 Follow Westerns Lane downhill directly to St. Michael's Church.

Leg 2: Markington (St. Michael's) to South Stainley (St. Wilfrid's), 1.8 miles

- 1 From St. Michael's, follow Westerns Lane to the crossroads. Cross straight over onto Back Lane, and then Kingwood Lane (Ripon Rowel route).
- 2 As the lane becomes a rough track, continue straight ahead. Where it turns left into a yard, take the left-hand field gate.
- 3 Cross the fields, keeping the hedge on your right (switching to your left in the 3rd field) as the path becomes a farm track.
- 4 At the main A61 road, cross carefully, turn right along the embankment, and take the gate on your left.
- 5 Follow the marked path across the fields onto Church Lane, turning left to reach St. Wilfrid's Church.

Where to begin?

This is a circular walk, so feel free to start at any point and make your way around!

Free parking is available at St. John's, St. Michael's, and St. Wilfrid's. South Stainley is also served by the number 36 bus.

Leg 3: South Stainley (St. Wilfrid's) to Bishop Thornton (St. John's), 3.8 miles

- 1 Return down Church Lane, continuing all the way back to the A61. Cross straight over to the track opposite the bus stop, passing under the old railway bridge.
- 2 Follow the track past the site of the lost medieval village of Cayton to High Cayton Hall Farm. Pass through the farmyard, through two metal gates, and head diagonally across the field (keeping the small windmill on your right).
- 3 Go through the far gates, turn right down the track, and pass through the gap in the stone wall (look out for the ancient ring-carved stones on your left!).
- 4 Follow the path across open land with woods on your right, pass through a wooden gate, cross the ford, and head straight up the hill track.
- 5 At the road, turn right for a few hundred meters. By 'Moorlands' house, turn left onto the metalled track.
- 6 Before the farmyard at the bottom, take the stile through the hedge on your right and head diagonally right to the far field corner. Continue across the next field, curving down to a small bridge.
- 7 Cross the bridge, walk straight across the field, go through the gate, and bear diagonally left toward the large barn. Pass through the small gate to a fenced track that returns to St. John's Church.



The Northern Churches

A scenic 10-mile circular walk connecting the historic St. John's, St. Michael's, and St. Wilfrid's Churches

Extend Your Pilgrimage:

This route can be combined with The Southern Churches walk for a longer day on the trail: switch leaflets at point **3** / **5**. It may be used alongside one of our 'Pilgrim Walker' leaflets for a more spiritual experience.