

## Helping people use your church as a place of prayer

As of Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June, churches may be opened for private prayer. There is no obligation to do this, and for many it would not be an appropriate option, but if you would like to offer your church building for prayer, we hope this document will help. We have a tremendous opportunity to help people find hope and peace in these troubled times, yet extended times of prayer are an unfamiliar concept to most. If you are planning to open your church, what might you do to help people pray while they're there, and what do you need to be aware of, in order to keep people safe?

What follows are some outline ideas for creating spaces for prayer and reflection within our church buildings and grounds, and some guidelines about how to help people stay safe.

1. Guidelines for helping people pray in your church/grounds
2. Prayer stations within the church building
3. A prayer walk around the church
4. A prayer garden within church grounds
5. A prayer walk around church grounds
6. A prayer walk within the local community

### 1. Guidelines for helping people pray in your church/grounds

Important things to consider as you help people use your church for prayer.

- If you decide to open the building for private prayer, you will first need to complete a risk assessment. See our website for a template which you can use.
- Your building needs to be equipped with hand sanitiser stations at the doors. You may also want to arrange furniture or provide floor markings to help people maintain appropriate social distancing, as well as clearly visible signage to help people know what they can or can't do.
- If you would normally have books or leaflets around for people to pick up and use, remove these to minimise the risk of contamination.
- If you offer people the opportunity to light candles, put a sign up to warn them not to do so straight after using hand sanitiser. Provide disposable tissues which people can wipe their hands with before lighting a match or candle.
- People may find it helpful to have printed sheets which they can use to guide their praying. Please include clear instructions to remind people:
  - to use hand sanitiser before picking a sheet up,
  - to take the sheet away with them when they leave.

## 2. Prayer stations within the church

I will make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. [Isaiah 56: 4-7]

An open church provides a place of refuge and prayer not just for congregation members but for people in our communities seeking somewhere to rest their fears and to find the beginning of peace.

A church is already a place of prayer, and you could simply open the doors and let people come and enjoy the peace and tranquillity, but you might also want to consider creating prayer 'stations' – prompts around the building to help people pray. This can be particularly helpful for those who have never prayed before and don't know where to start.

If you do make prayer stations, please bear the following in mind:

- Prayer stations often 'draw people in' – encouraging them to come close and look/read/touch what's there. In the interests of social distancing and avoiding contamination, your stations need to avoid drawing people in close.
- Instead of focal points, think of your stations as a series of 'prayer prompts' around the church. What might you leave around the place for people to stumble upon?
- Use large, bold visuals: posters, objects, photos, artwork, large-font text etc, which can be positioned around the church and seen/read from at least 3 metres distance.
- Where possible and appropriate, use walls, pillars, windowsills and other hard-to-reach locations, to encourage people to stand back and look up.
- Avoid putting groups of chairs out. If you use chairs, ensure they are set at appropriate distance from one another.
- Don't encourage anyone to touch anything. If you want to engage people's senses, stick to what can be done from a distance – sight, sound and smell.

You could consider creating a series of stopping points / reflection spaces within the church building. These might be connected with one another – so there is a sense of journey around the church – or be separate spaces expressing different ways into prayer.

A good first step is to take a walk around your church and consider what spaces you have. Make the most of what 'is'. If your building is open plan, create some quiet corners where people can have a sense of privacy. If yours is an older building with fixed furniture, then use these spaces creatively. Perhaps you have low stone windowsills that provide surfaces, an old table in a corner or a hidden space below an ornate pulpit.

You might then think about what themes or ways of prayer you want to help people explore, and what images or symbols you could use to help people reflect on God and on their own journey through life. Everyday objects can be a powerful aid to prayer. If you use

such objects, they need to be as 'inaccessible' as possible, so people aren't tempted to get up close and touch them.

Alongside each symbol, provide fixed laminated cards with a suitable passage of scripture and /or suggested prayer or reflection exercise. If the cards are clearly visible, there is no need for direct contact with any surfaces.

Alternatively you might use the space in the building to help people experience several different ways of prayer:

#### **a] A contemplative space**

Contemplation is the practice of stilling and being present to the moment, and as such it is profoundly calming in a time of crisis. Your church likely already has an atmosphere of calm about it which people will immediately sense when they come in, but there are things you can do to help them appreciate that tranquillity even more.

- Play music every now and then. Silence is precious and shouldn't be done away with altogether, but some people find music a great help when sensing the presence of God.
- Light a scented candle or burn incense. The Fragrance can be powerful when people are seeking to ground themselves and receive God's peace.
- Light candles on the altar. Many people find watching flames helps them become aware of the work of the Spirit in and around them.

#### **b] A listening to the Word space**

You could use the Gospel reading for the day, together with a guide to the practice of *lectio divina*, laminated on clearly visible cards. You could post this in several places around the church, to be visible to people from various different sitting positions, or print off sheets for people to use (reminding them to take them away with them afterwards to avoid anyone else touching them).

A simple guide to *lectio divina* can be found within the 'additional resources' pages.

#### **c] An intercession space**

Create a **visual prayer board** with a collage of newspaper headlines, pictures, Bible verses, simple prayers and images of local places or groups needing support.

You might use one of your usual noticeboards for this or a large sheet of MDF on an easel. Set it in a prominent place together with a visible guide sheet suggesting how to use the board as a starting place for prayer.

Aim to refresh your prayer board weekly. Some things will stay, whilst new events and needs emerge.

#### **d) A gratitude trail**

Create a series of cards, each with a simple Bible promise and a suggestion of what people might like to say 'thank you' to God for. For example:

'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want' (Psalm 23:1).

Thank God for the ways your needs have been provided for in recent days.

Print these on coloured card (the same colour for each one) and post them around the church. As people wander round, they will notice them and follow the trail.

### 3. A prayer walk around the church

The different structures, spaces, materials and visual images within a church building can provide a series of stopping points for reflection and prayer. Take a slow walk around your church and look afresh at what is there. Sit for a while and listen to the sounds you can hear – what do they suggest to you? How might you turn these sights and sounds into invitations to prayer? Below is an example based on a city church. Though your church will be different in its layout and feel, the example may help you notice what is particular to your setting. You might mark each stopping point visibly with a banner or sign and post up an invitation to prayer related to that space.

#### **Meeting God in this place – in this moment of my life**

*I look down at the floor*

I think of feet that have walked these stones before me

My faith, building on the foundation they made for me

- Who has guided me on my faith journey so far, in person or through what they have written?
- What past experience of God's goodness grounds me in my life today?

*I look up to the ceiling*

I consider praise of God carved in stone, the work of human hands

- For what do I praise God today?
- How does God invite me today to express my praise in what I do, and in what I build with my life?

*I look to the arches*

I consider the support I need from God

- How do I need God to uphold me today?
- What heavy load am I invited to let go to God's care?

*I face the scaffolding put up to gain safe access to the roof so it can be repaired*

- Are there parts of me which I tend to ignore but which could do with a little tender loving care?
- Where in my life have I built scaffolding for safety that - now the repair work has been done and the structure is secure - I can now begin to take down?

*I look to the East window, I consider the light flooding through.*

I see this light echoed in candle flame

- What are the sources of light in my life?
- Where in my life do I want to ask God to say, 'Let there be light'?

*In the window I see Jesus with arms outstretched, surrounded by doves*

- Where do I sense the Holy Spirit, life-giving holy dove, moving in my life?
- In what way might Jesus be inviting me, with open arms, today?

*I listen to the sounds of this place*

- What movements of the outside world do I become aware of as I listen?
- I let this world I hear, and the people who pass by, rest in the goodness of God.

*I look around at anyone I share this space with*

- Who do I want to thank God for today?
- Who is on my heart today? Who needs something from me, or has something to give me that I must be open to receive?

#### 4. A prayer garden within church grounds

Many people have found this lockdown season a time to reconnect with creation and the natural world. A garden can be an inviting and restful place to pause and lose oneself awhile in the wonders of creation. Now might be a time to begin making your grounds a garden where – like Mary Magdalen – we become surprised by the presence of the risen Christ. The garden may become a gift of this time of uncertainty, providing a lasting resource for years to come.

Be prepared to begin small. It's better to begin somewhere and make a difference rather than to try and begin everywhere and soon feel defeated! Transform one corner and provide a seat. Plant some flowers. Perhaps add some bird feeders in the area. You might lay out the shape of a cross with stones or add a suitable Bible verse or prayer in the area.

It's worth taking a walk around your grounds to see if there's a suitable secluded corner to use, perhaps sheltered from the wind by surrounding trees or shrubs.

If you want to develop your garden / grounds in a fuller way, some further ideas are provided within the additional resources pages.

## 5. A prayer walk in the church grounds

While in some settings the walk around church grounds will be a very short one, some churches have more extensive areas to explore and walk. To begin with, take a slow walk around your grounds, seeing the different spaces afresh and the potential they may hold to act as invitations to prayer:

- Perhaps there's a tree with large roots where people might be guided to consider where they put down their roots in challenging times.
- A seat with a view might be a place to look out on the surrounding area and pray for its people, or to be invited to rest in the presence of God.
- A wild area with a mown path might be a space to be present to the sights and sounds of creation and to give thanks to God for life in its abundance.
- Gravestones might be linked with the remembrance of the significant people in our lives who have died, trusting them to the goodness of God.
- A wall of bricks might invite us to consider how our lives are interconnected.

Mark reflection points out visibly, numbering them to help create a sense of journey. For each point, provide a written invitation to pray and reflect on a laminated card attached to a post in the ground.

A prayer walk in the grounds can also follow a connected theme. For example, you might take the 'I AM' sayings in John's Gospel, linking each one with an associated symbol and the relevant Bible verse.

## 6. A prayer walk within the local community

If you'd like to help people get out and about, praying around the local community, here are some ideas for helping people do 'prayer walks':

- Take a walk around your local area in the company of Jesus.
- Imagine he is walking with you, side by side.
- Ask Jesus to help you hear and see with his ears and eyes and to feel with his heart.  
What does Jesus guide you to notice?
- Who do you see?
- What places do you pass by?
- What do you feel prompted to pray for?
- What needs do you perceive?
- What do you want to give thanks for?
- When the walk is ended, sit down and reflect with Jesus about the experience.
- What stays with you?
- What do you want to rest with Jesus?

A further possibility is to provide a written guided prayer walk around your parish [or part of it]. This might be an online resource that can be downloaded. Give step by step guidance for the route, building in some 'stations' [reflection and prayer points].

If you take this approach it will be important to walk the route yourself more than once, noting down the instructions you will need to provide and suitable landmarks for people to watch out for. To give an idea of how the end product might look, an example is posted within the additional resources pages.

**Lectio Divina**  
Hearing the Word of God in the Scriptures

*Lectio* [Reading / hearing]

We 'hear' the scripture reading. This implies more than simply reading the words – as we might with a newspaper or book. This is a relational exercise: we begin and continue in the presence of a God who is always reaching out to us, and is doing so now through these words. We listen out for words, phrases or images that seem to touch us. The movement is one of noticing – or of being guided to notice.

*Meditatio* [Pondering]

Remaining in the presence of God, we ponder those words and any linked images of feelings that seem to be for us today. Pondering suggests the active use of our minds. Why do I notice these words or have this inner response? While our minds are actively engaged, this is more than a mental puzzle awaiting a solution that lies within the power of our reach: we must remain open, for it is the Spirit that is our guide and teacher here. 'Pondering' suggests this stance of active, yet patient attentiveness.

*Oratio* [Responding]

As meaning unfolds we respond to how God meets us in these words. How am I called, challenged, invited or comforted by God present to me now? Our response may take the form of words, or be made in some other way. I continue to listen to how God responds to me.

*Contemplatio* [Resting]

Here it is enough to be with God who reaches out to us in this way. Thoughts and feelings are there, but less actively pursued. We rest as God continues to work for us, taking us deeper into what we have received. The temptation might be to move along quickly; we have got our word for the day, what else do we need? Imaging someone watering plants in dry ground: it is not enough to make the ground wet; the water must continue to flow until it reaches down to the deepest roots. So we abide here while the gardener does his work.

## Beginning contemplative prayer

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Where you are now is a meeting place with God  
God is here and now.  
Turn aside to greet him.

You can begin by becoming aware of this meeting place, this 'here' and 'now' moment by moving from the busy flow of your thoughts into your senses

Listen to the sounds of this place, giving all your attention to your hearing...louder sounds and quieter...from close by and from distant places...with different tones and textures.

Look at what is around you – the shapes and the colours, the light and the shadow...take your time...this is a deep breath between all that activity... and God is in this deep breath.

As you stay in this meeting place you may become aware of your physical self...the weight of your feet on the floor, the relaxation of your fingers as you let them uncurl, the slow rhythm of your breathing. Take time to be with yourself in this way, for God meets you here.

Your feeling self may also greet you: – the lightness or heaviness, tiredness or energy, gratitude or sorrow. Receive your feeling self gently – as a guest in this place. A name for how you feel in this moment may come to you. Acknowledge its presence with you but also let it go – allow it to rest.

In this meeting place your thoughts will come and go. They might want to hustle you out of this moment, telling you there's somewhere more important you need to be. But there's nowhere more important for this moment than here and now – where God is. Even hurry and worry deserve to rest for a while.

In this meeting place God may speak or be silent – either way is good. Speech may flow from your heart to God, in words or in stillness.

God is here

God is now.

## Further ideas for creating a prayer garden

### A garden of the seasons:

This might be a circular garden divided by a cross of low hedging such as box. Each quadrant represents a season and is planted accordingly. One option would be to have an inner circle or centre point representing Christ, the still point of the turning world. Instead of box the cross could be represented by paths.

As an option the season could represent different stages within our life journey:

- times of letting go – autumn
- times of waiting – winter
- times of rebirth – spring
- times of bearing fruit – summer

A simple written guide could be made available for each 'season' with a linked prayer / reflection exercise.

### A garden of rest:

Christ is our resting place – the centre-point from whom we learn who we are. He is our home, abiding in us and inviting us to abide in him.

Representing this, a seat [or seats] seems obvious; with linked texts:

*Come to me all you who are weary and heavily laden, and I shall give you rest.*  
[Matthew 11.28]

*Our hearts are restless until they rest in thee.* [Augustine of Hippo]

### A garden of the paschal mystery

Acknowledging that we meet sorrow, difficulty within life, and yet through Christ experience joy and resurrection. This seems fitting for a graveyard, that naturally reminds us of death, and yet so often carries with it symbols of life and rebirth – for example snowdrops.

This could be a garden with a sense of journey:

- Beginning with *a place of sorrows* – a garden that expresses the pain of Christ's passion and our own sufferings – stones, thorns, a passionflower, a cross, a 'tree of sorrows' where people can symbolically lay down a burden they carry.
- *A place of rest* – representing Christ in the tomb – the garden where they laid him – a sense of waiting, emptiness and yet of hope. This might be a simple 'Japanese' style garden of moss, ferns and stones.
- *A place of rebirth* – the Easter garden where Jesus meets Mary – flowers, colour, buds, blossom, bulbs. A place to give thanks and express hope.

### A paradise garden

Jesus' words to the thief: 'Today you will with me in Paradise' [Luke 23:43]

The word 'paradise' comes from the old Persian for an enclosed garden space.

The symbol of Eden as symbolising the harmony of all creation and humankind with God.

And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden in the east...out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches [Genesis 2:7-10]

Paradise gardens traditionally are enclosed, sheltered spaces, laid out symmetrically, perhaps divided by water rills or with a fountain.

### **A water garden:**

A simple water feature with an accompanying text, with seating and simple planting around.

Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life. John 4

Psalm 1: The tree planted near streams

Isaiah 58:17 The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your need in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water whose waters never fail.

Isaiah 49:10: he who has pity on them will feed them, and by springs of water shall guide them.

Isaiah 49:10: he who has pity on them will feed them, and by springs of water shall guide them.

He leads me beside still waters, he restores my soul [Psalm 23]

### **A sacred space garden:**

Representing in physical space the presence of God with us in every 'here' and 'now'. A sheltered space, perhaps set apart by a circular hedge with one entrance.

To see a World in a Grain of Sand  
And a Heaven in a Wildflower,  
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand  
And Eternity in an hour.

William Blake (*Fragments from "Auguries of Innocence"*)

'Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground'  
[Exodus 3: 1-6]

Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it. How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven [Genesis 28: 16-17]

Be still and know that I am God [Psalm 46]

### **A Trinity Garden – A Garden of community**

3 interconnecting teardrop shaped flower beds with a central feature [a stone with text, or a simple water feature. A Trinity garden can be linked with ideas of community and interdependence. A further option might be circular seating around a central space, with

open 'aisles' between the seats to express that this is an open and inclusive space rather than a closed and excluding one.

**A Bible Garden:** With flowers and plants mentioned in the Bible.

**A labyrinth garden**

A labyrinth can be mown in grass or set out with bricks or stones. For a guide to praying the labyrinth see the *Pathways into Prayer* pack.

<https://www.canterburydiocese.org/our-life/prayer/prayer-resources/>

## An example of a guided prayer walk around the local area

This example is taken from a church in inner city London.

Whilst this guide is text only, you may also want to include photos you take on your exploratory walk.

### Prayer walk from St. Alphege Centre for Prayer to Red Cross Garden

*This walk is about half a mile in length, including the return to St. Alphege. There are opportunities along the way to sit and rest for a while.*

As you come out of St. Alphege turn left and then right when you reach Pocock St.

1] As you cross Glasshill St. look right and you will see a **small row of almshouses**, rebuilt in 1820. A previous generation thought to provide housing for those most in need of it – well built houses with gardens.

Giving ‘alms’ is more about giving money; it involves taking responsibility for one another’s welfare, as parts of one Body in Christ.

*In what ways does Christ invite you to give alms to your neighbour?*

*These remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers...*

*The faithful all lived together and held everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and shared out the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed. [Acts 2: 42-47]*

2] Ahead of you is **the railway viaduct**, built in the nineteenth century as London was expanding and now part of the network carrying people to and from work each day. The railway arches have long been workshops – places of physical labour. In this area many have become office spaces for service industries.

*Pause to hold before God people in their workplaces – those in the offices you see, and those making their daily commute*

*Let the favour of the Lord our God be upon us,  
And prosper the work of our hands  
O prosper the work of our hands [Psalm 90:17]*

3] Cross over Great Suffolk St. and continue along the same direction along Pocock St. On your right **building work** is taking place for student accommodation

*What are you building through your time and efforts? What do you give your energy too?  
What sense do you have about what the Lord might desire to build through you?*

*Unless the Lord build the house, those who build it labour in vain [Psalm 127:1]*

4] On your left is **Blackfriars Crown Court**. Depending on the time of day you may see people outside taking a break from the workings of the court. Inside people await trial, release or sentence, jury members weigh up evidence, witnesses and those affected by crime relive what took place, those involved in defending the accused and those working for their prosecution make their cases.

*Pray for all those involved and affected by the workings of the court this day. God is just, and asks us to act justly. God's justice is shown in mercy.*

*Mercy and faithfulness have met;  
Justice and peace have embraced.  
Faithfulness shall spring forth from the earth  
And justice look down from heaven. [Psalm 85:10]*

5] Outside the Crown Court you'll see a **row of Ginkgo trees** with their fan shaped leaves. Fossils of this tree date back some 270 million years. Individual Ginkgo trees are long-lived, some lasting over a thousand years.

Amidst the changing face of this London street these trees speak of 'slow time' – of a past beyond the first human footprint, and earthly life beyond the years allotted to us.

*Lord, let me know my end  
And what is the measure of my days;  
Let me know how fleeting my life is.  
You have made my days a few handbreadths... [Psalm 39:4-5]*

6] At the end of Pocock St, turn right into Sawyer St. As you follow Sawyer St. round you'll see training facilities for **the Fire service**.

*Hold to God those who serve today within the emergency services, and those who will need their help*

7] At the end of Sawyer St. take the zebra crossing across the main road. Turn left. You are now walking alongside the wall of the **Mint St. adventure playground**. You'll see a painted sign on the wall.

*What does the word 'adventure' mean to you? Jesus challenged people not to play life safe but to be daring in their reaching out for what really matters in life.*

For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake and for the sake of the gospel will save it. [Mark 8:35]

8] As you walk alongside the outside wall of the playground, you'll see an entrance to your right. Walk through into **Mint St. Park**. To your right you'll see a play area and to your left an area for physical exercise. Further on you'll see a terraced area of grass where on warm days workers and students sit to eat their lunch, and to the right a garden of flowers, herbs and shrubs with a winding path running through it.

Just a few years ago Mint St. was a neglected patch of grass; a place to walk through rather than to linger. A community organisation has worked to revitalise the park, making a place to play, a place to keep fit, a place to share a meal with friends, a place to be caught by the wonder of God's creation for one prepared to look. It is no longer a place to hurry through but somewhere that invites us to find a right balance in life: to rest, to play, to nurture relationship, to make time to wonder.

*Take some time with God to consider the balance in your own life; is there anything you sense you need to take more time for?*

When you are ready to leave the park, look out for the exit at the far end of the path that runs below the terraced area. At the road turn right and walk a short distance to the traffic lights. Cross the road here. A few yards to the left you'll see the entrance to Red Cross Way.

9] As you begin walking along **Red Cross Way** you'll see low blocks of flats, some small shops and a cafe. The area has a local feel. Alongside train lines carrying people to and from the centre of London, busy main roads, the Shard on the skyline, there are streets that are tucked away and people whose lives are centred in this place. London easily gives a sense of anonymity; but each person has a name, a story, sorrows they bear from yesterday and fears and hopes for tomorrow.

*Pray for the people who live in this place. God loves and cares for each one, not just everyone. He calls each one by name.*

10] To the right you'll see the **Cathedral School**, and depending on the time of day and year, glimpse children coming in and out or at play. Jesus commended children to his disciples: their openness to learn, their willingness to receive, their capacity to question and to wonder. We easily get stuck in our ways, thinking that one way or another we've worked out our place in life and have no more to learn.

*Ask God to help you recover the openness and capacity to wonder of a child*

Unless you change and become like children you will never enter the kingdom of heaven [Matthew 18:3]

11] Opposite the school is **Red Cross Garden**. Enter the garden and walk round its paths. Find yourself a place to sit and pause a while. The garden, cottages and attached hall owe their origins to the work of Octavia Hill, the Victorian social reformer, who campaigned for quality housing and green spaces for ordinary people at a time when the rapid growth of London meant the loss of its open spaces with many people living in cramped, and unhealthy conditions. You'll see information about Octavia Hill and the park as you walk round. Like Mint St., Red Cross Garden has been recently restored by a community organisation. In one corner of the park you'll see a mural of the parable of the sower and underneath a commemorative plaque with these words:

God saw the earth and behold it was very good

Have we done our best to make it very good?

Here in this garden we can sense what humankind can sow: not just a garden but also a place of community. The prophet Isaiah sees a world where 'they shall build houses and inhabit them, they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit', and where, 'the wolf and the lamb will feed together', for 'they shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain' [Isaiah 65: 20-25]

Here is a garden sown and nurtured – a place to rest and enjoy; a place of beauty where all can freely come in and out and find refreshment

*What have we sown?*

*What do I sow through my daily life, work and relationships?*

*What will I sow today?*

## **12] The return journey:**

No prompts are given for the return journey to St. Alphege. You may wish to retrace your steps: leaving the park, walking back along Red Cross Way; crossing the road by the lights, walking through Mint St. Park; crossing the road towards the fire station; walking along Sawyer St. and then into Pocock St, passing the Crown Court and then under the railway bridge to St. Alphege.

As you do so, see what God brings back to mind. You may want to pause here and there again and let God take you deeper into this reflection. There may be one particular point where you feel led to be still and to ponder.

You will also doubtless see new things – people, buildings, skylines, trees, traffic...keep your mind and senses open, allowing the Spirit to bring you into awareness of God's presence in what is before you.

If you wish, and are confident in the map and your sense of direction [!] try out a new path back and see what God has for you there.

When you have come back into St. Alphege, or finished your walk and are returning home, spend a few moments in quiet giving thanks for the way you've sensed God's presence alongside you as you have walked.