



Charles Whitfield Prayer Pilgrimage Newcastle to Hamsterley Friday 24th – Sunday 26th September 2021

Introduction

Rev Charles Whitfield was ‘the most significant person in Baptist history of in North East England’¹, a minister who came to a Baptist conviction of faith in his teens and joined the Baptist church in Newcastle (to which Westgate Baptist Church is the successor), and who served in Hamsterley for fifty years until his death 200 years ago in 1821. He was an evangelist, preacher, organiser, educator, and was instrumental in reviving the Northern Baptist Association as a fellowship of churches.

Inspired by his example, this prayer pilgrimage has been routed to commence in Newcastle and finish in Hamsterley. We will visit several Baptist churches en-route, a number of which have historic connections with Whitfield’s ministry, meeting leaders and members of these churches for prayer and reflection. We will talk and pray on the way, considering what of Whitfield’s legacy is relevant to us today, what is God speaking to us in these days as we start to emerge from the Covid pandemic, and also considering our future as we enter a significant process of review and transition under Hayley’s leadership.

We will also enjoy some the North East’s superb landscapes and visit some of its historic centres. It’s an opportunity to receive from God, to enjoy fellowship, and to grow a larger vision of our Baptist life and witness. And to get a little fitter as well!

Itinerary

There are three stages to the journey:

Friday 24th September: Newcastle to Stocksfield, up the Tyne Valley via Gateshead riverside, Metro Centre, Blaydon, Wylam and Prudhoe

¹ David Neil, *The Baptists of North East England*, Lintons, Durham, 2006, p31

Saturday 25th September: Stocksfield to Rowley up the Derwent Valley via Hidley, Ebchester and Blackhill

Sunday 26th September: Rowley to Hamsterley into Weardale, via Waskerley and Wolsingham

Timings of departures and arrivals are given in the table below.

You are welcome to join at any point – either to walk part or all of a stage; or to join at one of the church stopping points. We aim to have a support driver to help ferry people to convenient points when they reach stopping points; and to have a phone contact person available each day to update on progress towards each stopping point.

We anticipate walkers travelling to the start points and bringing food with them for lunch. At the end of each day, we will use public transport or support vehicles to help walkers to return to their start point and anticipate walkers will return home to rest overnight. At the end of each day, we will hold a prayer gathering for 30 minutes or so and visit a local pub or restaurant for an optional evening meal.

If you are interested or willing to help with a support car or being a phone contact liaison on any of the days, we are looking for volunteers to help in these capacities. You may be a walker who has a spouse or friend who can help with a support vehicle. We would be interested to hear from you if you can offer in any of these ways.

Route & itinerary

DAY	PLACE	DISTANCE (miles / km)		TIME	ACTIVITY
Friday 24 th Sept	Westgate BC*	0	0	9.00am	Prayer gathering
	Swing Bridge*	1.6	2.6	10.30	Pause on Tuthill stairs for prayer. Meet reps from Gateshead churches & pray on the way
	Metro Centre (station)*	4.6	7.5	11.45	
	Blaydon (station)*	6.8	11.4	12.45	
	Newburn bridge	8.9	14.5	1.30	Lunch stop by River Tyne
	Wylam*	11.8	19.7	3.30	
	Prudhoe*	14.6	23.5	4.30	Stop for coffee
	Stocksfield**	17.7	28.6	6.00pm	Prayer at the church & evening meal
Saturday 25 th Sept	Stocksfield	0	0	9.00am	Morning prayer gathering
	Hindley Farm	1.9	3.0	10.30	Prayer
	Ebchester (church)*	7.0	11.2	12.30	Lunch & prayers
	Blackhill*	10.2	16.3	3.00	Prayers
	Rowley**	13.6	21.7	5.00	Meal & prayers
Sunday 26 th Sept	Rowley	0	0	10.30	Morning worship
	Waskerley	2.9	4.7	1.00	Lunch stop
	Wolsingham	9.6	15.5	4.00	Prayers/service
	High Shipley	13.9	22.4	6.30	
	Hamsterley BC**	15.5	24.9	7.30	Evening prayer gathering & dinner

Timings based on average speed of 4km / 2.5m per hour

* Public transport (rail or bus) available

** Car available to ferry walkers back to the start at the end of each day

Route description:

The route will take recognised footpaths and be off roads as far as possible

Friday

Footpath on the Keelmen's Way (S side of River Tyne) to Newburn; Tyne Trail on north side of the river to Wylam, Prudhoe & Stocksfield

Saturday

To Old Ridley, up minor road to New Ridley, footpath down to overlook Hindley Farm; lane to Apperley Farm; then bridleway & footpaths through woods following Lynn Burn & Mill Burn valleys to Ebchester; Derwent Valley railway walk to Blackhill & Waskerley Way railway path to Rowley via Lydgett's Junction & Hown's Gill

Sunday

Waskerley Way to Waskerley; footpath around Drypry wood & along Salter's Ridge, then bridleway or footpath past Tunstall Reservoir, down Waskerley Beck valley to Wolsingham; Weardale Way to Monkfield; footpaths via Middle Shipley, North Carr Wood; Spa Wells Bank, Adder Wood to Hamsterley

Use the separate booking form on the next page of this document to respond and express your interest; or respond directly to Paul Revill at paulrevill@thenba.org.uk

Booking Form

Use this form to express your interest in the prayer pilgrimage. Please list your name and church and fill in the right-hand boxes with a Yes or Y for everything you would like to help with. Use the final boxes to make us aware of any special needs or for any additional comments for clarification.

NAME			
CHURCH			
DATE	EVENT	TIME	RESPONSE YES / NO
Friday 24th September	Prayer Gathering at Westgate Baptist Church	9.00am	
	Walk to Swing Bridge (1½ miles)	9.45am	
	Prayer Gathering at Gateshead end of Swing Bridge	10.15am	
	Walk to Metro Centre (3 miles)	10.30am	
	Walk to Blaydon (2 miles)	11.45am	
	Lunch stop & Walk to Wylam (5 miles)	12.45pm	
	Walk to Prudhoe (3 miles)	3.30pm	
	Walk to Stocksfield (3 miles)	4.30pm	
	Prayer at Stocksfield Baptist Church	6.00pm	
	Evening meal in Prudhoe	7.00pm	
	Offer of help with transport		
Saturday 25th September	Prayer gathering at Stocksfield Baptist Church	9.00am	
	Walk to Hindley Farm (2 miles)	9.45am	
	Walk to Ebchester (5 miles) finishing with lunch	10.30am	
	Walk to Blackhill (3 miles)	1.30pm	
	Prayer with Blackhill Baptist Church	3.00pm	
	Walk to Rowley (3½ miles)	3.45pm	
	Prayer gathering with Rowley Baptist Church	5.00pm	
	Evening meal in Rowley	6.00pm	
	Offer of help with transport		
Sunday 26th September	Morning worship with Blackhill Baptist Church, led by Paul Revill	10.30am	
	Morning worship with Rowley Baptist Church	10.30am	
	Walk to Waskerley (3 miles) – from Rowley Lunch stop at Waskerley	12.00 noon	
	Walk to Wolsingham (6½ miles)	1.30pm	
	Tea & prayer gathering at Wolsingham (tbc)	4.00pm	
	Walk to Hamsterley (6 miles)	5.00pm	
	Prayer gathering in Hamsterley	7.30pm	
	Evening meal in Hamsterley	8.00pm	
	Offer of help with transport		
Any special needs (e.g., medical, diet)			
Additional Comments			