



**Lee Abbey, North Devon
to
Scargill House, North Yorks.**

Pilgrims' Journey



10th – 19th May 2018

Contents

Introduction	3
The Blog.....	5
Day 1 : Lee Abbey in North Devon to Lee Abbey Knowle West, Bristol.....	5
Day 2 : Lee Abbey Knowle West, Bristol to Lee Abbey London.....	7
Day 3 : Lee Abbey London to Oxford.....	9
Day 4 : Oxford to Villages near Stratford-upon-Avon	11
Day 5 : Villages near Stratford to Lee Abbey Aston in Birmingham	13
Day 6 : Lee Abbey, Aston in Birmingham to Great Longstone, Derbyshire.....	15
Day 7 : Great Longstone, Derbyshire to Astley, Tyldesley and Moseley Common (Manchester).....	17
Day 8 : Astley, Tyldesley and Moseley Common (Manchester) to Southport.....	19
Day 9 : Southport to Bradford	21
Day 10 : Bradford to Scargill House, Kettlewell.....	23
Appendix 1 : Pilgrims' Personal Reflections	25
Esther's reflection	25
Jonathan's reflection	27
Kate's reflection	28
Paul's reflection.....	28
PK's reflection.....	30
Sheila's reflection.....	31
Tim's reflection.....	32
Appendix 2 : Journey reflections from hosts, and others along the way.....	34
Lee Abbey Knowle West, Bristol	34
Lee Abbey London.....	34
Kineton.....	35
Great Longstone, Derbyshire	36
Astley, Tyldesley and Moseley Common	36
Southport	37
Bradford	38
Appendix 3 : The Journey Prayer	39
Appendix 4 : 'God's Great Colour Palette'	40

Introduction



The description of the Journey that follows had its origins in a conversation that Esther and myself had when she visited us at Scargill in November 2017. At Scargill we had been toying with the idea of Journey for a couple of years – indeed the Scargill Council had looked at possibilities for them – but we had never managed to make the vision into a reality. So much could be said about the energy that was generated in that afternoon conversation, but maybe what follows in this booklet best describes the actual outworking of it!

We had the vision for the two sister communities to work together, to serve local churches, to meet with friends, to raise our profile with both those people and the folk that they knew who may not know us yet, and to do the work of mission as we travelled. It was quite clear that we were there to serve the local church – not coming in as the experts – but to be with them in the mission that they did. The project then developed and it was suggested that we use the timeframe of Thy Kingdom Come as a good time to be doing it. We included most of the small missional communities of Lee Abbey, the London club, and some of our mutual friends and those whom we know individually. We could have taken another route, joined with other people, but this was the way the Journey panned out: perhaps almost having a life of its own, or of God's own? Of course the Thy Kingdom Come emphasis also brought in the work of prayer that the Anglican Archbishops of Canterbury and York were working on.

So, from a relatively small conversation, a ten day Journey was born, although at that time we were far from aware of what it might grow into. The distances between the two centres meant that we had to use cars or other transport: even though on occasion I incorrectly referred to it as a walk that was never a realistic option. Apart, perhaps, from the time I accidentally mentioned that it was going from Pentecost to Ascension (rather than the correct way around) in which case the 355 days would easily have been enough; although I doubt if our Communities would have let us go for that long!

I remember speaking to Phil about who to travel with and together we came up with Sheila and Tim: and so thankful I have been that they have been fellow Pilgrims. Esther brought Jonathan from Lee Abbey. PK separately had a vision for such a journey, and so was able to join with us. Kate so helpfully worked with us in Wellesbourne: one of her old parishes. Wendy came to be with us as we did some school's work in Bradford.

Reading the reflections, both of the Pilgrims and of the people to whom we travelled, has been a very humbling experience. We were aware of some of what was going on, but not of course of all the work that God was doing. I daresay that the full impact of these conversations and actions will never be known. But perhaps one of the key things is the idea of 'never doing by ourselves what can be done with others'. Of course this brings its own challenges (after all, there are two ways of doing something: my way and the wrong way!) but at the end it is to God's greater glory that we seek to work together.

Perhaps it is to that togetherness, and God's work through it, that we would want to dedicate these pages, and to which the Journey itself was dedicated.

Revd. Paul Reily
Scargill Community

The Blog

Day 1 : Lee Abbey in North Devon to Lee Abbey Knowle West, Bristol

(Thu 10th May 2018)

After meeting last night to discuss the itinerary - (and a curious insight by Esther about wine bottle tops) - the intrepid group (Paul Reily, Sheila Thompson and Tim Proudler representing Scargill plus Esther Birtwistle and Jonathan Banks from Lee Abbey) prepare for the off.



The cars are loaded high. Should we have brought a trailer and some roadies? We've agreed not to talk too much about the sizes of the bags in case we lose our sense of shared harmony (a diplomatic way of avoiding reference to the size of Paul's suitcase). This must be how it was for the disciples – only I thought they agreed not to carry bags?

The send-off from Lee Abbey is amazing. We, and a mission team destined for South Wales leave at the same time, with the Lee Abbey community praying for us as we prepared to leave. Amidst a fanfare, party poppers and bunting, we finally depart.

The sun shines brightly and the coastline appears spectacular. After only fifteen minutes on the road, the decision is taken to stop for lunch at a coastal beauty spot – the sun still beaming. And



three minutes after we stop it rains. (We blame Paul's shorts!)

The Lee Abbey Knowle West Community in Bristol is our first proper 'Journey' destination. Peter Kovacs ('PK') - who has previously served at both Lee Abbey and Scargill - joins us here. Having flown in from Budapest this morning, he plans to travel with us as far as Derby.

We receive a warm welcome and meet with some of the people closely associated with this Community which represents a beacon of light within the locality, working hard to bring new hope to the area. We gain a greater understanding of the work of the Community here through guided prayer walks, and are able to offer our own prayers of blessing and hope.



We're so thankful for the wonderful hospitality – food, conversation, insight and learning at Lee Abbey Knowle West, and for being made so welcome.

And tomorrow, after helping out at two school assemblies, we travel onward for the next leg of the journey - to Lee Abbey London.

Day 2 : Lee Abbey Knowle West, Bristol to Lee Abbey London

(Fri 11th May 2018)

Day 2 begins at the Knowle West Community with morning prayers, reflecting on the previous day's activities, the mission of the Community, and the day and journey to come. And, following a photo call by the front door, we ready ourselves for the journey to our next location - London.



We split into two groups – one setting out with Esther for South Ealing Tube Station and then journeying to London by rail. The other, (Tim and Paul) have first been invited to take part in morning assemblies at a local school - the School of Christ the King Primary School.

The school assemblies are a real joy - the kids are attentive and well behaved. Paul has created a fantastic prop (aka four card strips, hinged) which we use to help tell the story of the man lowered through the roof of a house by his friends, to be healed by Jesus. Through a series of amazing cardboard contortions, the strip becomes a bed, morphs into a pair of legs, then a window, a door, a figure '4', a pitched roof, a flat roof and a rope. The kids seem to really enjoy it, learning in the process

about the Scargill/Lee Abbey journey, the importance and value of friendship, and how friends can work together to help point people towards Jesus.

We eventually all gather at the next destination - Lee Abbey London. Another warm welcome awaits us here, and wonderful hospitality.

The Lee Abbey London Christian Community provides accommodation for students of all faiths (and none). The evening is spent mingling with students, following which 'Christian Comedian and Magician', Tom Elliott, provides the evening's main entertainment. Jonathan is clearly keen to be involved – why else would anyone sit on the front row?! And involved he is - much to our great delight. A wonderful evening had by all, good conversations and great fun.



Day 3 : Lee Abbey London to Oxford

(Sat 12th May 2018)



The third day of the Journey begins where it left off last night – at Lee Abbey London... We awake refreshed and ready for the day ahead.

We reflect on the difficult work undertaken by the Community here. The students who stay in this accommodation are young. Many are international, and faith isn't generally so high on their agenda. When we join the Community for morning prayers we pray for the Spirit of God to fall anew on this place, supporting the Community in their valuable Kingdom work.

And, as ever, we are hugely grateful for the hospitality we've been shown.

We reach Oxford, and join a church plant sale at St James' Church, Cowley. We're made to feel very welcome, and enjoy conversations about the Journey with many who are there. Paul's former barrow-boy skills are soon in evidence, and we're impressed by how easily he has the punters eating out of his hands - queuing up for chili plants, rhubarb and other garden delights.



I have become slightly concerned by the amount of baggage we are transporting around the country, but my plea for us not to buy anything in the sale is quickly forgotten in the excitement. Firstly by PK, as he succumbs to an unreasonably large jigsaw, and then by me as I find myself in possession of an old fashioned hand drill – all within the first five minutes of the sale. More luggage!

As the day winds down, we have some prayer time in the vicarage, and plan our involvement in Sunday's church services.

Despite the impending rain clouds, some decide to go out in search of the largest ice cream they can find – and find it...

We are hugely grateful to our various hosts for their hospitality this evening...

Before close of day we reflect on what we have each learned so far on the Journey. Highlights are:



- Community is not a place – it's a people. We are reminded of the vastness and variety of God's people. Members of both Scargill and Lee Abbey can work together in a ministry of reconciliation between God and fallen humanity.
- The importance of simply being with people where they are – sitting alongside and listening.
- The importance of being in the present moment, which is where God will always be found.
- The power to bless. The people that we visit are changed by us coming and being with them and blessing them. We can make a difference to people and their situations just by being God's people and presence there.
- That we should set aside our own agendas and trust that the Lord has gone ahead of us on this Journey and then fall into step with the way He has planned for us.

Tomorrow we will spend time talking about our Journey at a number of different churches, culminating at our new destination(s) in the locality of Wellesbourne and Kineton, Warwickshire.

Day 4 : Oxford to Villages near Stratford-upon-Avon

(Sun 13th May 2018)

Day four dawns bright and sunny in Oxford. As ever, we are hugely grateful to our hosts for their warm welcome and generous hospitality. Today will be a long day. But, before it begins, we're treated to a delicious cooked breakfast in the church hall. And now we're ready for the day!

Between us we're able to cover four different church services at St James and St Francis Churches in the parish of Cowley, including a Punjabi service (providing a very different cultural and interesting experience for those attending).



During the services, we're each asked questions about the Lee Abbey and Scargill Communities, the purpose of the Journey and its links to the 'Thy Kingdom Come' initiative. It's a great opportunity to share what we're doing.

And then it's time to hit the road again. Miraculously, even PK's jigsaw manages to find a place in the cars (did we leave something behind?!). Then, we're on our way, but where?!

We arrive at St Peters Church in Wellesbourne (near Stratford-upon-Avon) in time for coffee, cake and an early evening service presided over by Kate Mier. Kate, who's currently coming to the end of a year in Scargill's Community, previously served in this church from 2004.

Those who attend are clearly delighted to steal her back for the evening. During the service, she takes the opportunity to put us on the spot with some questions. I am as prepared as I can be, having memorised key

information about last night's Eurovision Song Contest. But instead, Kate is interested in our experiences of Community, Hospitality and the Journey (perhaps just as well). One thing we all agree on - the Journey is helping us to see clear links between these three things – and we see God's heart at the centre of them.

Following the service, we travel to nearby Kineton where we are treated to the most lavish and sumptuous bring and share meal I can remember (the equivalent of slaughtering the fattened calf?!). Not for the first time, we are humbled by the generous hospitality of our host communities.

It has been a long day, with many different and fruitful encounters, and late in the evening we finally make our way to the homes of our various hosts... Tomorrow is another day...



Day 5 : Villages near Stratford to Lee Abbey Aston in Birmingham

(Mon 14th May 2018)

Some of us are now forgetting what day it is, or what date, or even both. But we're pretty sure that this is Day 5, which must make it the halfway point for the Journey.

Day 5 begins with a prayer meeting in St Peter's Church, Kineton. We are so impressed at the creativity involved by the local community in constructing a prayer tent within the church.



Once again, we are treated to an unexpected and lavish breakfast. We thank our generous hosts for their wonderful hospitality which helps us so much on the Journey.



A short time later we're back on the road. We do a car swap as we pass my home near Warwick. It's also an opportunity to lose some luggage – the hand drill is deposited here, but PK's unreasonably large jigsaw journeys on. Perhaps it will help us see the bigger picture?

We arrive at the house of the Lee Abbey Aston Community and are made to feel welcome by two of the Community - James and Will. A couple of the group go to see the work of the local Foodbank and to chat with the volunteers and clients.



Paul and I spend a few hours at the Salvation Army Youth & Community Centre, where Jo and another 'Paul' (also members of the Aston Lee Abbey Community) are leaders. They show us around, and we spend time with some of the local kids as they enjoy some time out and games together.

On our way back to the Community house Pilgrim Paul and I receive a photo of our colleagues enjoying chocolate ice-creams. This is perfect, or is it? When we catch up with them, their excuses for why there was no ice cream for Paul and I appear contradictory and flimsy :



'the last ones in the shop' and 'they'd have melted'. Only an hour earlier we'd acknowledged that nothing is impossible for God, and yet...

...We will decide later whether to forgive!

After a meal, the Aston Community has arranged a prayer meeting / prayer walk at the local church. We pray for their work here, and for the local area. This is a predominantly Muslim area, and our prayers extend to the Muslim community as they prepare for the start of Ramadan.

Day 6 : Lee Abbey, Aston in Birmingham to Great Longstone, Derbyshire

(Tue 15th May 2018)

Some of us spend morning prayer with the Aston Community, whilst the remainder set off to Aston Parish church to take part in morning prayers there. As always, we are so grateful to our various hosts for opening their homes to us, and for showing us such generous hospitality.

This morning we say goodbye to one of our *pilgrims*, PK, as he remains behind in Aston, preparing to travel to London and onward back to Hungary. With heavy hearts, we bid him farewell and re-pack the car. Our load is lighter without PK, but at least we have a giant jigsaw to remember him by, safely packed away and destined for Scargill. Enough said about the jigsaw. We are also reflective - PK was by far the best photographer in the group, and we wonder how we will survive without him.

We reach our new destination within the Derbyshire Dales, and Esther has bravely stepped up to the plate and volunteered to take the group photo...

We miss PK...

Pat is our host, and has bravely invited all five of us to stay in her wonderful

house in Great Longstone within the Derbyshire National Park. The group heads up to nearby Longstone Edge to take in the beauty of the local landscape. Whilst there, Paul decides he will try his hand at photography, and he lines up the next group selfie.



How we miss PK..!

Pat has invited quite a few friends of Lee Abbey and Scargill to her home, and we enjoy tea, cake and

good conversation in the garden, with a backdrop of beautiful Derbyshire countryside.

Afterwards, we all make our way through the village, stopping to pray at a number of key locations. The village is very vibrant – alive, very much a *working* village. But we find that there are still some significant areas in which God’s breakthrough and protection are needed.

Our walk eventually leads us to the Crispin Pub, where we tuck in to some great food. After the meal, a pub quiz has been organised. Paul seems to have prophetic tendencies - his table adopts the name ‘Winners’ and beyond anyone’s expectation it actually does come to pass. He’s as humble as ever. We are *pleased* for him!

The evening finishes back at Pat’s house with evening prayer.



Day 7 : Great Longstone, Derbyshire to Astley, Tyldesley and Moseley Common (Manchester)

(Wed 16th May 2018)

Day 7 opens in Great Longstone. A much cooler and breezier day today. But before we step out together into the cold morning, I need to share a revelation : I have never before seen a 'Lazy Susan'. Why doesn't everyone have one of these on their breakfast table? I watch as Jonathan misses the point, reaches for the butter and nearly sends a glass of orange juice flying. Hey ho... Esther is looking pleased – today she has named a local hill after herself. What a humble group of travellers we are!



We finish breakfast and make our way to the Methodist Church for prayer, stopping off at St Giles Church. Here, we admire the creativity of local people in the shape of their annual flower display on the theme of Nursery Rhymes.



We pray again for this village and locality in the Methodist church and prepare to move on to our next location... Thank you Pat and the people of Great Longstone for your warm welcome and hospitality.

The journey continues, and we arrive at a Community Café in Tyldesley, Manchester and meet members of the three churches



of Astley, Tyldesley and Moseley Common over lunch. The café takes food close to its sell by date, provides free meals and acts as a family drop in centre, particularly for young families.

Paul and I head off to different primary schools to take part in assemblies – once again we talk to the children about the Journey, being friends together and friends pointing others towards Jesus. We re-enact the story



of the man lowered through the roof - deftness and cardboard-prop gymnastics are back in play(ish). It is such a privilege to be here and to share about Jesus in this way.

We split into three groups and spend time within the three different parishes, at the churches of St George, St John and St Stephen, reflecting, praying / prayer walks. It is clear to us how much the church and local people care about this community, but as ever there are obstacles and challenges to be prayed into.

After finding our hosts and dropping off bags we make our way back to St Stephen's School and church. The church communities have prepared a veritable feast. We enjoy conversation, learning



more about the area and sharing about the Journey. A talent evening follows the meal. Whilst we are outgunned by the local talent we are still able to contribute to the evening with stories, poems and testimonies... We thank you all for a wonderful afternoon and evening.

Day 8 : Astley, Tyldesley and Moseley Common (Manchester) to Southport

(Thu 17th May 2018)

As Day 8 dawns here in Manchester, we begin to sense the end of the Journey coming into sight. There are mixed feelings. We're all tired and a little disorientated by now, but we've developed such strong bonds together, supporting each and 'being' in addition to 'doing' Community.



We gather at St George Church, Tyldesley and chat with others from the wider church team over tea before setting out on a short prayer walk in the local area.

There are issues to be addressed in any community, but such potential too. We sense a beating heart just below the surface of this locality, and we pray as we walk for the realisation of new hope. We pray that the churches would become stronger as they work together, reaching out in the strength of God's love to all corners of Astley, Tyldesley and Mosley Common.



Soon we are on the road again, and on our way to Southport in the Diocese of Liverpool. We don't know what to expect, but as we arrive we realise that we are at the seaside. It is somehow unexpected. The pent-up child in each of us is unleashed and we spend an hour just being, well a bit 'silly'. What JOY, what laughter.



We've been told to go to Westminster Café for lunch. Sheila is in charge of our limited funds and orders her lunch... Wow!

Esther seems to be living out the parable of the Talents (Matthew 25 : 14-30), and we learn that investing in 'two-penny shove machines' isn't a wise growth strategy. We console Esther and move on.

The biggest news is that we ALL get to enjoy ice-cream at the end of the pier, and we even manage a half decent selfie there (though we still miss PK!).



The evening turns out to be amazing. We join members of various church denominations for a meal out, and then are treated to a sensational ecumenical evening service at St John Stones Roman Catholic Church.



The various churches meet together for prayer on a Tuesday, but this joint service has been inspired by our Journey. So many people have come, and the Salvation Army band and singers are here too. The service is filled with a heady mix of praise, worship, joy and fun. And of course, a demonstration of churches united and working together for one God. Amen to that...



The service is followed by cake and tea in the hall, and a chance for us to talk more about the Journey. Each day takes us by

surprise, and this day is no exception...

Day 9 : Southport to Bradford

(Fri 18th May 2018)

Day 9 dawns bright and sunny in Southport. We have had a lot of sunshine on this journey, and have discovered warmth in every place we've been.

Esther gets in the quote of the day before we even set off. After getting into my car she asks, 'Sorry to be a pain, but can I get into the boot?'. And now we can't set off because we can't stop laughing. Is my driving really that bad?

As ever, we extend our gratitude to our various hosts for opening their homes to us and for their warmth and hospitality.

Paul and Sheila go ahead to St Stephens Church, Bradford and spend time with kids from the St Stephens C of E Primary School. When they arrive, children are playing football and other games in the churchyard. The children have created a beautiful chalk design on the ground. There is fun and enjoyment all around - a picture of God's Kingdom: different nationalities, even different faiths all coming together and experiencing God's love. Wendy (of Scargill descent) is there too. Referring to Samuel choosing David she explains to the children that no matter how clever we might think we are, it's what's on the inside that matters to God. Craft activities and a film follow.





Meanwhile, back in Southport, Esther, Jonathan and I are releasing a little of God's love, in the form of chocolates, to the people we meet on the street. This is fun – we share in some great conversations and find opportunities to talk about the Journey. Esther even strikes up a conversation with a *real* photographer who takes our photo

for us (though it's important to note that we still miss PK!)

We share a meal at a Bradford Balti restaurant which has been recommended to us by one of our hosts. We are not disappointed. Even Paul feels there's enough naan to go around!

The day ends at a social event organised for us at St James Church Hall. It is so fitting that Chris Edmondson and his wife Susan are here too. Chris, formerly Bishop of Bolton is chair of the Scargill Trustees and a former Warden of Lee Abbey. There are around 20 others from the local area too, many with connections to Scargill which is now only an hour's drive away. We answer questions about the journey. We've had a lovely day and evening, and we are grateful too for those who provided hospitality along the way.



And finally, Scargill – end of our journey, is now in sight...

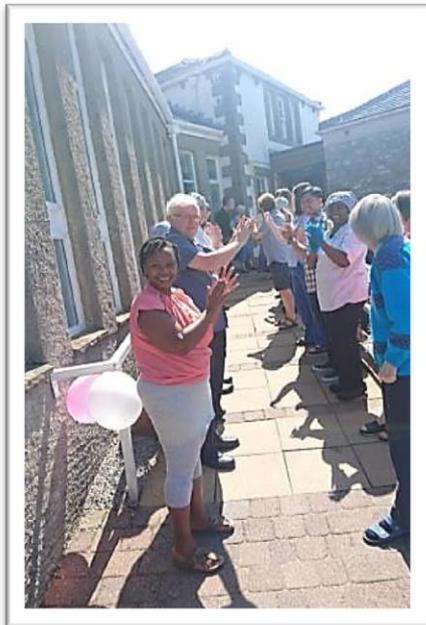
Day 10 : Bradford to Scargill House, Kettlewell

(Sat 19th May 2018)

Is this really Day 10? If it is, our Journey must now be coming to a close?



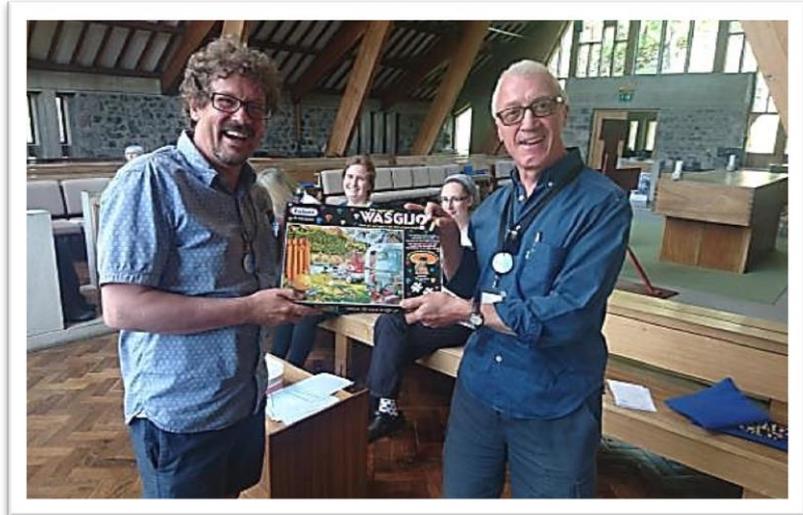
As we say goodbye to a number of our hosts outside St James Church, Bradford I try my hand at a selfie. I have the idea to use a 10 second timer on my phone (I've seen PK doing something similar). Success! A selfie in which we're all in the picture.



We arrive at Scargill an hour later. Balloons adorn the driveway, and bunting too. It may be in part for the royal wedding, but in our now found humility, we decide it's for us! Community and friends form a human tunnel for us to walk through as we make our way the final few yards into the doors of Scargill House. After the Bradford selfie I'm still feeling confident, and I pass my phone to Jonathan to take a pic of us passing through the human tunnel. Afterwards, he is looking perturbed. It seems I left the 10 second timer on. We seem to have left the tunnel by the time the photo is taken...

We do still miss and love our fellow pilgrim PK, for all that he brought to this Journey (and not just because he really did know how to work a camera). Oh, and in case PK was wondering – the jigsaw has now made it to Scargill where it was gratefully received...

And at this point we've travelled over 900 miles, spent 9 nights in 9 different beds in 9 different locations, never quite being quite sure where we are or have just come from. We've met so many people in so many



different situations and have had countless conversations and encounters. Some of the places we've been have been affluent, others more deprived. But we've been made so welcome at every location.

We've really bonded too, becoming our own little community - loving, laughing and supporting each other through the ups and downs of the journey. We have experienced what it means to BE community in addition to DOING community. And we have felt God's presence with us throughout.

We spend tonight at Scargill House, and tomorrow we finally end the Journey as we celebrate the Pentecost. And so it only remains for us to thank all who have provided support along the way and to those who have followed us on the blog.

And our final message to you all,

Thy Kingdom come,

Thy will be done...

...Wherever we journey in this world.

Now signing off, Tim.

Appendix 1 : Pilgrims' Personal Reflections

Esther's reflection

I went into this Journey believing that God was totally in it, but not at all sure of what to expect. We knew where we would be stopping each night and it felt like we had the skeleton outline of what we would be doing – but there were no real details or 'flesh'.

The day before we left we were asked to give 3 specific prayer points for Community afternoon prayers and we asked for the following:

1. Safety in travel
2. Unity among the Team (some of us had never met before) and unity in purpose in the communities and places we were visiting
3. Blessing – for God to pour out His blessing as we prayed blessings on the people and places we visited

All of these prayers were answered. In over 1,000 miles travelled we encountered not a single delay or traffic jam. The Team formed a strong bond through sharing and being Community together as we journeyed, and in every place visited we experienced unity in purpose and in praying 'Thy Kingdom Come'. God's presence and blessing was apparent in conversations, opportunities to pray, share and encourage. As we prayed for God's blessing on others, so we were blessed. The hospitality we received on every occasion was wonderful. It was a journey too of joy and laughter.

As I reflect I am aware that my way of 'being' throughout the Journey was much more living in the present than usual. The days were very full and because I didn't really know what was coming up next I couldn't worry about it. If I had to speak in public, or share on a one-to-one basis, I trusted God to give me the words – and He did. It was also an opportunity to step out and do new things, for example giving away chocolates to brighten people's day in Southport.



We followed the Novena prayers and our rhythm of prayer as we journeyed was such a special time. It was so natural for us to pray and I loved praying together and saying our Journey Prayer. It was important for us to commit to God and lay down to Him the community we were in before we moved on. We then offered to Him our time with the next community we would visit. I think the rhythm of prayer enabled us to 'be in the present'.

Visiting so many places in such a short period of time gave us a small 'window' through which to catch a glimpse of the different communities, each one unique, and served by faithful Christians seeking to reach out to those around them and to impact their communities with God's love and grace. People come to us at Lee Abbey, but this was us going out to be where they are. This is now making our daily Community prayers more significant through having more understanding of communities and therefore praying in a more informed way. It's obvious that our guests from Lee Abbey go back into their communities, and as our logo indicates the arrows out are bigger than the arrows in (in faith that they go out filled and refreshed), but it somehow feels more real and connected, and makes our ministry here even more alive and purposeful.

Trusting God, being 'in the present' and our rhythm of prayer I think allowed space – an inner space – which meant that the Journey wasn't overwhelming. It was at times disorientating as we were in a different place every day, it was busy and it was tiring. But there was a real sense of God's leading and guiding us each step of the way.

Returning to Community life has been a challenge. The immediate contrasts that hit me were that being 'in the moment' quickly disappeared, my inner space vanished and I felt overwhelmed.

The question is how do I learn from this experience as I seek to live differently, and on a daily basis to be in the present and to find inner space in a busy community?

Jonathan's reflection



The Importance of Prayer

This was very much a 'prayer' journey. It had been constructed around the, 'Thy Kingdom Come', prayer initiative. It was lifted and supported in prayer both before and during the journey. We joined communities in prayer meetings and prayer walks. We prayed with individuals we met along the way. We also established a rhythm of prayer within our group, meeting regularly together to use the daily prayer material produced by the Church of England for, 'Thy Kingdom Come'. We experienced the benefits of this in the safety and unity of the group and in the blessings we experienced along the way.

Community

In spending no more than one night in any one place the contrasts between the nine different communities we visited stood out starkly. Each had very different challenges, each had faithful servants of God engaging with those challenges. We saw the importance of unity within the Church with different denominations coming together to serve their communities. We also saw this unity in our own group with a recognition of the shared ministry of the Scargill House and Lee Abbey Communities.

Mission

The journey highlighted the need for a mighty move of God throughout this nation. We saw Christians reaching out to their communities, attempting to build bridges with those from very different economic backgrounds and those from all faiths or none. This highlighted the importance of our own ministries at Scargill House and Lee Abbey, places of renewal and refreshment for those serving their communities.

Our Own Individual Journeys

We also recognised that each of us had experienced our own individual journeys over this time. I enjoyed the sense of living in the moment, never being sure what would come next but trusting in God's provision

for these times. I am hoping that this will encourage me to step out more boldly in faith to live out the adventure God has set out before me.

Kate's reflection

I am very thankful for the lovely opportunity to revisit churches I left last year and to begin to make some connections between the life of local churches and the more focussed experiences of community and hospitality at Scargill.

Although I am no longer actively part of the churches in Fosse Deanery, the warmth of their welcome to me reminded me that we are family and we belong together for all eternity.



Both at Kineton where I preached, and Wellesbourne where I hosted a panel conversation, people were very receptive and eager to learn how they might develop community and hospitality in their own contexts. I left thinking how much our communities have to offer local churches, wondering if we could do more to resource churches, and glad to have begun to formulate some thoughts to take back with me into parish life as I leave Scargill.

Paul's reflection



I guess that the most immediate reflection I have is how different every place was. Whether it was a larger community (like the London club) or staying in a family home; whether it was inner city Bristol, Birmingham, or Bradford, or the more leafy Kineton, Wellesbourne or Great Longstone; whether we were leading assemblies, doing prayer walks, involved in services, or attending socials, pub quizzes and plant sales: there was never a dull moment. And that reflects the inherent 'differentness' that we see between the three persons of the Trinity. I think that I also found that human need was common: we all

need a saviour and friend in our lives: whoever we are!

One could remark on the wonderful unity between the Pilgrims. Five of us did the whole trip; PK joined us for the first half; Kate was in action on the Sunday at Kineton and Wellesbourne, and Wendy took the year 6's in the church at Bradford. Whatever was done, one knew that the rest of the group were rooting for you and 'had your back covered'. I was also left wondering, 'why has it taken 60 years to do this?' Scargill has been around virtually all of that time and yet I'm led to believe that this is the first time that a joint journey between Lee Abbey and Scargill has been undertaken. Perhaps that sense of working together was enhanced when we were asked by the London Club: 'why weren't we invited to come on the journey?'

One could summarise these two thoughts and say that we are more effective and better together than we are apart. This leads to all sorts of potential joint working but I'll leave those whose responsibility it is to think and work this through.

A final thought is about making connections between the gospel and our friends and those whom we would speak to about Jesus. In our life time so much mission has been about 'doing' the gospel to people: telling a message and trying to persuade them to believe in the right things. Our friends are not foolish and they recognise when they are being 'done to' or 'evangelised'. One of the main things that Scargill and Lee Abbey embody is a perspective on mission that includes 'being'. So, maybe this leads to a pint at Weatherspoon's or a coffee around the kitchen table: and then an honest and genuine conversation about Jesus when the subject comes up? Surely there is more integrity and honesty in this for our friends? It also means that all can be involved. One doesn't have to be a 'Billy Graham' to pluck up courage to invite people to an event, rather just like tea and beer! Not only does this make sense, but it is what our Society is crying out for. A sense of belonging and acceptance that's rooted in Jesus and does not depend upon who one is or what one has. The government has no levers to pull on this one and so can't mend Society: but by the grace of God, Jesus can.

PK's reflection



It was a privilege for me to join the journey. Unfortunately, I couldn't go all the way, but the days I could spend with this joyful team were definitely worth it.

Having served on both communities it was great to be reminded of how God is changing us through our shared lives. Whenever we move out of our regular daily routine and get to explore other parts of God's Kingdom, we have an opportunity to marvel at the greater picture that the Lord is drawing and get to

appreciate our role in it from a different perspective.

As I have been living in Hungary again in the last 4 years, it felt like an even bigger contrast to what I'm involved in every day. That's what this journey primarily meant to me. Seeing God at work in very diverse ways. The places, the faces, the challenges, and the joys of mission across the UK. But it was also a reminder of how he is using us and not only as individuals, but as a team, united for his cause.

Scargill and Lee Abbey have played probably the most influential part in my life. But the true inspiration is the vision that God has set for these two communities and indeed many other intentional Christian communities. And that goes beyond the borders of our estates or even our countries.

I believe this vision is always about a shared journey of broken people and how God makes the most of our talents. This journey felt like a very intensive and symbolic manifestation of that idea.

I can only encourage any communities, that whenever they get a chance to get to know people outside their local environment, their denomination or even their cultural background, take it!

Sheila's reflection



When I thought about the journey I was to make it was easy to feel overwhelmed by the number of places we were due to visit, the scheduled programme and the lack of control, someone else would tell me where and possibly when I was to sleep and eat and what I was to do. The most important lesson I learned was that by living in the moment I didn't become anxious about what was coming next, and so found the journey virtually stress-free and even enjoyable! Focusing on the present meant I only needed to think about what I was doing then and not worry about the next event on the programme, by not wasting energy worrying about the future I had enough to deal with the current situation. Therefore I was not exhausted at the end of the trip despite a much more hectic schedule than is usual for me, taking part in activities way beyond my routine and meeting a lot of new people.

Although we did have a hectic schedule each day included quieter periods and I valued the rhythm that emerged, the time in the cars became a routine, for the first few days we even sat in the same seats, maybe craving a little 'normality' in the midst of so much change. The team dynamics were interesting, we quickly became close and appreciated our times alone, but as soon as we arrived at the next destination we automatically spread out and mingled with our new hosts. We had scheduled events at each location but between these were the deeper, perhaps more significant, conversations, often with our hosts as we chatted one-to-one.

I was struck by the willingness of people to allow us into their lives and homes; showing us their local area and inviting us to join them in their activities be it a toddler group or telling us the needs of their locality, and how people valued an opportunity to tell their stories of 'ordinary' life. Trust wasn't an issue because each person was part of the Scargill/ Lee Abbey family, they were known to someone I trusted so I was able to go confidently into the home of someone I'd never met before.

One of my abiding memories will be the laughter we shared, at times over trivial incidents, that certainly reduces stress and was somehow unexpected!

Tim's reflection

To be honest - I never really thought I could do this journey. There are irrational but very real reasons going back many years as to why it seemed a personal impossibility - definitely something to avoid. However, whilst at Scargill in November 2017 I received some anointing prayer. I wasn't quite sure what an 'anointing prayer' was, but I (perhaps naively?) was seeking prayer for *boldness* and *courage* to help me move forward in a particular ministry initiative which I'm trying to get off the ground.



The very next morning, after breakfast, Paul approached me out of the blue and asked if I would consider being involved in a Journey that he was arranging. There is no way that he could have known about the prayer from the night before.

I was so humbled to have been asked. But did I rejoice? No. In fact, my heart sank. Whilst the timing was certainly interesting, I was also frustrated. Because, if this was meant to be an answer to prayer, then why was it something that I already knew I couldn't agree to do?

But perhaps partly because of that, and because boldness and courage were precisely what was needed, I eventually decided to accept the challenge. It wasn't easy - it took a couple of months and some very sleepless nights. But if not now, then when to learn to trust in a God we're told has our best interests at heart? I had to trust that he would be walking with me through my concerns and fears. As one of the drivers, and also custodian of the blog, there was then to be no turning back.

And so that's the backdrop for the two reflections that follow.

Reflection 1:

I did find myself pretty anxious during the first one to two days – silly things around how the hosting would work out – a different bed every night and a lot of uncertainty around the itinerary – quite unsettling.

And then something happened. I simply had to give up being anxious. It just wasn't possible to keep worrying about arrangements one or two days ahead when we weren't even sure what would happen in the next one or two hours. And the penny dropped, and I began to see – God is not to be found in a future extrapolation of our worries, in an imagined future that may never come to pass. Instead, God was to be found in each present moment of the journey. And that for me was a revelation. If you want to find God, search in each moment of your day, and pray expectantly into a future that you seek to find, not one borne out of your own anxieties or concerns.

That's not to suggest that the Journey became a walk-in-the-park, not at all. But, when things got particularly tough, solutions seemed to materialise unpredictably, usually at the eleventh hour and fifty ninth minute. Sound familiar?

Reflection 2:

The second observation was simply the sense of joy that we experienced. That's not to make light of the significant conversations and encounters along the way. But in the moment – as pilgrims, as close *community*, we found real joy and laughter. You'll often see this reflected in the blog entries.

On reflection, whilst the first of the fruits of the spirit is love, the second is joy (Galatians 5:22-23). How fantastic. I also realised how close we'd become as friends within our pilgrim community, supporting each other through ups and downs along the way.

I do now feel ready to give my own ministry initiative a go, building on a new found *boldness* to step out, and the courage to trust that God will be in each present moment. It's also left me wondering what an outworking of these reflections might look like if applied by our churches and wider communities... What changes might they bring?

Appendix 2 : Journey reflections from hosts, and others along the way

Following on from the Journey, we asked those along the route whether they had any reflections of their own about what we'd done and the impact we'd had on others. What follows are the responses we received back.

Lee Abbey Knowle West, Bristol

“On hearing about The Journey, several Lee Abbey Friends looked to us to organise a get-together with the ‘Pilgrims,’ and what an appropriate way to start the Journey that proved to be, gathering local Christians and Lee Abbey connections (and cake) at Lee Abbey House. This was followed by us using the pilgrims as ‘reinforcements’ in our prayer efforts to bless the area, with three guided prayer walks around strategically significant areas of our neighbourhood.

At the local catholic school, the staff and children loved the Friday morning assemblies led by two pilgrims: an interactive presentation of the friends working together to lead the paralysed man through the roof to Jesus. In all of these activities, it was great that we could add value to our neighbourhood in this way.

The pilgrims joined us in our shared meals and shared times of prayer. The conversations throughout the two days were helpful at understanding each other's contexts and ministries; these insights may also be helpful for community members here hoping to transition to a larger community.”

Lee Abbey London

“It was truly wonderful to be able to welcome the Pilgrims to Lee Abbey London as they stopped off for overnight relaxation and refreshment.

The weary travellers arrived as strangers and left as friends, even though they were only with us for one night. It was a truly precious time as we shared our experiences of living in community and I can honestly say that I felt truly blessed to be able to be just a small part of this special journey. Maybe we welcomed angels as guest, without even knowing it. They were a pretty special bunch!”

“What an absolute pleasure it was to Host the Teams from The Scargill Movement and Lee Abbey, Devon on their recent Journey. This was a joint event to serve, support and be Missional to many of the local churches and Christian Communities along the way and Lee Abbey, London was delighted to be included in a visit... – but slightly disgruntled at not being invited to participate - haha J.

However, in a tremendous act of grace and forgiveness, we welcomed the weary travellers into our midst and were blessed by their presence, support and prayers. We also had the delight of having Christian Comedian and Illusionist, Tom Elliott entertain us for a magical and somewhat hilarious night.

This was Community in Action and, I believe, that we all experienced tremendous fellowship and blessings throughout this visit, including a little impromptu party in the Staff Lounge, after hours.

Here’s hoping that there may be more such collaborative adventures in the future!”

Kineton

“30 years after our church community went to Lee Abbey to discuss the direction we should take, we welcome the pilgrims here in Wellesbourne, Kineton and Combrook (Warwickshire). What a delightful group of Christian people! Their visit has been so uplifting- sharing prayer times, testimonies and seeing their loving service to one another and all the people they meet. It was affirming too of our own strength of community and the hospitality we were able to show. Our Bring and Share supper and cooked breakfast seemed to be much enjoyed! We enjoy a strong sense of community here, but we were encouraged by their visit to reflect on how we as a church might develop this further. Although we do not live under one roof, there is much to apply to our community of serving Christians.

- making everyone feel at ease,
- gentle acts of simply noticing the needs of others,
- supporting and nurturing each other’s’ spiritual growth,

- walking alongside each other in our shared journeys of lifelong pilgrimage and, so importantly,
- the complete acceptance of who we are, that each of us is valued and we should strive to enable each other to become the person God calls us to be.

When we see Christ in and serve one another, then we deepen our sense of community and love for one another. This is what is so evident whenever time is spent with either the Scargill or Lee Abbey communities.

Their visit was a joyous, uplifting and supportive time for us and a real feeling of the Holy Spirit working in this time and this place. Thank you for your visit and on-going support to your community friends and visitors alike. God bless you in all the work you are doing to show how Christian love, one for the other, can transform lives.

Come again. SOON!"

Great Longstone, Derbyshire

"It was lovely to be able to offer hospitality to the group after the many times Roy and I had been on the receiving end at Devon and more recently at Scargill. Our Friends group always enjoy our meetings and to be part of the journey made it really special. They felt the Prayer walk was a very positive way of witnessing around the village, and the food, fellowship and fun in the evening at the Crispin ended the day together very happily. Our time of prayer in the Methodist Chapel on the Wednesday morning gave us the opportunity to reflect on the time spent in Great Longstone. The knowledge that we were part of huge wave of prayer from Ascension to Pentecost was really uplifting."

Astley, Tyldesley and Moseley Common

"I have been lucky enough to visit Scargill House 4 times and shared in the 'mission' week when members of community came to us. The reflection that Tim read in our 'Team's got Talent' night really resonated with me - I visualised the 'colours' as he spoke and without exception everyone I've ever known spend time at Scargill leaves with a smile. On the morning that the group from Scargill/Lee Abbey left for the next leg of their journey I had that same sense of having been 'touched' by your visit. You all brought a different colour and element to the visit and

collectively you splashed that colour over us - for me it's almost like having a massive spiritual hug.” (Note - See Appendix 4 for context on ‘colours’)

“As a team we are seeking to give expression to the call upon us to minister across our three separate parishes but as those who are one in the Lord. We are deeply grateful to our friends who travelled to be with us and shared of themselves during the week of Thy Kingdom Come. There were opportunities for prayer in our three parishes and fellowship as we gathered together from across all three. We were blessed and are very grateful.”

“We were so blessed to enjoy our visit from Lee Abbey and Scargill friend’s on their journey from Lee Abbey to Scargill house. Having visited both communities over the years I really value their insight and wisdom. As we went on our parish prayer walk around the new housing to be built behind our church they shared key points to pray for. Thank you for sharing your wisdom and sharing the joy of being part of the Kingdom.”

Southport

“Thank you for a marvellously uplifting visit, so many people have said how wonderful it was.”

“Following an invitation to speak briefly at the Southport Joint Churches early morning prayer time Paul encouraged the use of Scargill as a prayer venue. The result was a 48 hour prayer vigil attended by 20 members of the prayer group . While at Scargill the Lee Abbey/ Scargill Pilgrimage was promoted with the request that Southport might on May 17th be one of the overnight stops with an appropriate use of the team. As a result a planning group was formed resulting in an ecumenical ' Worship Celebration Service ' those leading the service held in a local RC Church were assisted by the Salvation Army Band and Songsters. Approximately 150 attended with a strong contribution from the team both at the service and social event which followed. It was felt by all concerned that from a small beginning much fruit resulted and the profile particularly of Scargill was greatly enhanced and the ecumenical life of the local church enriched.”

Bradford

“We really didn't know what to expect when our churchwarden suggested we took part in 'the journey' by hosting a social evening here at Bolton, St James. What we experienced was 5 wonderful pilgrims from Lea Abbey/Scargill sharing their experience in a most refreshingly honest, vulnerable and life affirming way, as they testified to the grace of God in and through people they had met along the way.

Hospitality is a wonderful thing, in that when you offer it, invariably you end up receiving a blessing yourself...this was definitely our experience.”

“We have enjoyed many years of relationship with Scargill and have received much generous hospitality in that time. To be able to reciprocate by hosting the travelling team and to continue to strengthen relationship has been a joy and a gift. Being able to extend that relationship to our church school was an added bonus - one which I would love to see grow and develop further.”

Appendix 3 : The Journey Prayer

During the Journey, we used the Novena prayers made available through the Thy Kingdom Come initiative between Ascension and Pentecost.

In addition, we had our own Journey Prayer...

Loving Father,

We thank you for your love and grace that always reaches out to us.

We thank you for your life expressed in the Lee Abbey and Scargill Communities.

As we journey together may we grow in your life and in your love and grace.

Bless the communities we visit as they reach out in love to bring life to others.

Renew and refresh your church by your Spirit as we pray 'Thy Kingdom Come.'

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

(Our thanks for the Journey Prayer to Sam Cappleman, Chair of the Lee Abbey Movement)

Appendix 4 : 'God's Great Colour Palette'

After a long journey across a grey landscape on a dull and damp day, I finally arrive back at Scargill. It's been a few months.

The decorators are in - a few dedicated Working Friends are there too, all busy, hard at work. The smell of fresh paint fills the place. Dust sheets all over the floors. The Old House is enjoying a little bit of TLC.

What is it about this place that makes it so special? The new paint on the walls is light in colour, but there's another palette being used at Scargill too.

Somewhere, seemingly in the very fabric of this place, is something quite remarkable - I think of it as '**God's great colour palette**'. It's always overflowing with colours and it's always in use. Everyone has access to this resource - even guests.

There are many colours to choose from, but the main ones go by the names Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness and Self-control. I should warn you - the last one, Self-control can sometimes be a bit tricky and it does catch people out. For some reason it often results in a lot of laughter.

Community (and Scargill's extended Community of Friends and Companions) all have their preferred colours - the one's they're good at using. But there are also the ones that they're less practiced at, and are trying to learn how to use. The colours can also be combined to create some wonderful shades. When properly blended you can achieve compassion, a listening ear, care, understanding and acceptance to name but a few.

There's one mix that everyone here is keen to create - it's a shade called 'Hospitality'. It's hugely popular, so much so that it's now become Scargill's 'House Mix'. There's a lot of Love poured into that one. But all God's paints are good, however mixed.

This place is so full of colour. It can get messy at times, but this is God's art room, God's picture, and there's 'work-in-progress' everywhere. There are paintings containing laughter, others display understanding, reconciliation, forgiveness and even healing. They are simply *stunning*. Some people use paint rollers to apply God's colours, others thick brushes. Some splash colour, others select fine brushes and focus on intricate detail. Some of the children add colour with stickers, felt-tips and even thick crayons.

The guests tend to get a lot of colour on them while here - it's inevitable. Some are a little reluctant or shy at first, but so many seem to end up leaving like walking graffiti art, but so often smiling too, even if they weren't when they first arrived. Messy? Perhaps. Beautiful? Yes, and amazing.

After a few days I have to get in to my car and drive back, outside the gates of Scargill. After a while I reach the motorway where I get cut up and shown the middle finger by a white-van driver. (Hang on - it was *you* that cut *me* up?). I reach some drab services and stand in a grey line of largely silent people, to get a rather sad, overpriced and somewhat flaccid sandwich. Not many people laughing here. It's also a bit devoid of colour - a world containing mainly shades of grey.

But now I've got my eye in, I've noticed one or two people who also seem to have some of God's colour palette, and they're splashing it here, into this grey environment. I watch what's happening. It's surprising what even a small speck of colour achieves, even if it's just a kind smile towards another person. Usually well received, brightening up a few surprised souls. Some people are just looking on, not responding - well, not yet anyway.

I'm really beginning to see that we should encourage those who step out to paint a little of God's colour palette into this world. And perhaps we can join them, painting God's colours in to our own communities, and into any environment in which we find ourselves?

By the way, did I mention that these colours can be taken away from Scargill? And the more you use, the more they will replenish. But, even if you did find yourself running low, you can always come back and get more.

It's funny - it seems to me that even the 'white-van driver' might find himself knocked sideways by one or other of the shades - there is a shade called Grace that God fully perfected through his Son, Jesus Christ. And of course there's that simple but timeless primary colour called LOVE...



(Tim Proudler, March 2018)