



Northern Cross

Christian Ecumenical Easter Week Pilgrimage
31st March – 8th April 2012

Briefing Note: The Pilgrim's Crossing on Good Friday

Event Date: Friday 6th April 2012
Meeting Time: 9.30 am
Location: Beal Sands car park, south of Berwick on Tweed, off the A1.
Crossing begins: 9.50 am

The Northern Cross pilgrims who have walked from places as far apart as Carlisle, St Ninian's Bay (Dumfries), Haddington and Bellingham (in Northumberland) approach Lindisfarne from different directions, and each group ('Leg') will stay in a different nearby village on the mainland for the night of Maundy Thursday. On the morning of Good Friday each Leg will have a different distance to cover, ranging from a couple of miles down easy roads (from Fenwick) to Lanark Leg's fifteen mile trek (half of it before breakfast!)

We are an ecumenical pilgrimage and our walkers represent many different Christian traditions. Many will be old friends, and others entirely new to the experience. The meeting at Beal Sands is often chaotic and joyous.

In order to keep the time spent standing around in the cold to a minimum, our deadline for the meeting is only twenty minutes before we plan to start the crossing. However, there will probably be Northern Cross representatives at the Sands during the morning before this.

Joining Us

Often pilgrims who are not able to take a week off work, or are not strong walkers, will arrange to meet us on the sands. From Beal Sands there are no separate Legs – Northern Cross is one! Anybody who wishes to join us in the crossing is welcome. Please make sure you have read the 'logistics' section below, for a better understanding of our arrangements.

As the meeting on the Sands itself is likely to be short and possibly slightly frantic, you might wish to arrange for your own short walk on the morning of Good Friday to get into the spirit of the pilgrimage before joining us. The Northumberland coast is beautiful and remote, and there is always a chance of meeting other Northern Crossers on the way!

This year we are using the broad theme of 'Faith & Trust' as a touchstone for our prayers and liturgy.

Note to Press & Media / photographers

Northern Cross is an act of worship and witness, and we are happy for reporters or photographers to join us on the Sands or walk with us across the Crossing.

However, in the interests of safety, we would like to request that you:

- do not encourage pilgrims to walk away from the poles marking out the Crossing;
- do not ask the cross bearers to separate themselves from the group (not everybody is physically capable of carrying the crosses for long distances);
- do not disregard the marshals' advice or ask pilgrims to do the same.

In general, as this is an act of religious devotion, please respect any individual's wish for space and quiet, and please do not encourage the group to split up. Thank you for your consideration!

Contact Details

For further information, please check our website at www.northerncross.co.uk, and see <http://www.northerncross.co.uk/goodfriday.htm> for updates or email northerncross@northerncross.co.uk we will also be placing updates during the week on our Twitter feed <http://twitter.com/northerncrossuk>

Media and Press representatives

To contact us during the pilgrimage 31 March – 8 April, please call Michael Hanson, Coordinator on **07799 002256**



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Logistics

- Once all the different Legs are present, the group will be called together for a moment of prayer before the crossing. We will then walk a short distance along the road causeway out towards the start of the Pilgrim's Crossing.
- At this point (weather permitting) many walkers will remove their boots. Salt water is notoriously bad for leather and part of the fun of the crossing is the feeling of mud and sand between your toes! The boots will be ferried across by road, to meet us at the other side.
- During the crossing a number of marshals will walk in front, beside and around the group. They will wear yellow high-visibility jackets. These people are here to ensure our safety on the road and the Crossing (the sand can be treacherous if you stray too far from the poles). Please follow their instructions.
- The crosses are carried at the front of the procession. The only people in front of the crosses should be the marshals. Look down at your clothes. Are you wearing a high-visibility jacket? If not, you should be either carrying or walking close behind the crosses!
- Each cross takes two or three bearers, one or two at the front and one at the back. Anyone can help carry any cross – simply offer to take over from the current bearer. The idea is to have frequent changes so that we share the burden.
- On reaching Lindisfarne we will stop to clean our feet and collect our boots. The Legs will have arranged to carry flasks of hot water, bowls and towels for this purpose. Feel free to do the same!

Easter Weekend

Please feel free to stay or return to Lindisfarne over the weekend and join in the Easter services in the various churches.

Small print

'Non-Northern Crossers' – those not listed beforehand on our list of walkers – are most welcome to walk with us crossing the sands, but you must be at Beal Sands by the 'meeting time' listed above at the latest. **You must accept full responsibility for yourself and any dependants with you, as there are a number of risks:** We have a careful risk assessment of the crossing activity, as there are quick sands, it does take a long time – around 1½ hours – and some years the weather can make it so cold that we have to make sure some people do not get hypothermia! Other years it is warm and sunny and people get sunburnt, but the key is that the mud and quick sands are an issue if children are not kept an eye on. If you are a non-Northern Crosser, you must accept that you cross the tidal causeway at your own risk and that you will not be covered by our public liability insurance.

If crossing back to the mainland on foot afterwards, please take careful note of the tide times (details here <http://www2.northumberland.gov.uk/PSCM/HolyIsland.asp>) and we highlight you should cross back along the tidal causeway vehicular road for safety.

We do not advise walking unaccompanied across the tidal sands.

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