

## Wesley Tour of England

Travel around England in the footsteps of John and Charles Wesley. Not only will you enjoy seeing places associated with the Wesleys but you will also be visiting some of England's most impressive and interesting cities, London, Lincoln, Bath and York.

### Day 1 (Tuesday) Arrival in London.

Transfer from the airport to your hotel by coach for a 4 night stay. Later in the afternoon there will be a guided tour of St Paul's Cathedral. A site of Christian worship for 1,400 years and a witness to much of our Christian history, the present cathedral designed by Sir Christopher Wren, is the 5th on the site. It is the only cathedral in England in the English Baroque style. John Wesley attended evensong at St Paul's Cathedral on the day of his conversion.

### Day 2 (Wednesday) London.

This morning we take a Wesley walk viewing places in the City of London associated with John and Charles including Charterhouse where John went to School, the John Wesley conversion memorial and the site where Charles was converted. We will visit Bunhill Fields and see the grave of Susanna Wesley and finish at Wesley's Chapel and House. We will then have a tour of the house with one of their guides and visit the museum, the chapel and John Wesley's grave. There will also be some free time for your own explorations in London.

### Day 3 (Thursday) London.

This can be a free day in London or we can include visits to other sites related to Christianity in this great city. Perhaps a tour looking at Christian art in the National Gallery or a tour of the British Museum looking at archaeological exhibits which prove the historical accuracy of the Old Testament. Details of these tours can be found on the London sites page of this site.

### Day 4 (Friday) Canterbury.

Today we take an excursion to Canterbury returning to London for overnight. John Wesley first preached in Canterbury in 1750 and returned regularly for the next 40 years. Canterbury is also where Christianity gained a firm foothold on English soil 1,400 years ago with the arrival of St Augustine. The fine cathedral built over many centuries embraces all three styles of Gothic architecture and holds a unique place in the history of the Church of England. It is still today the seat of its senior archbishop and the mother church of the Worldwide Anglican Communion. Wesley said 'I live and die an Anglican' and actually never wanted to leave the Anglican church but to reform it from within and today we look at his work in the context of the history of the Anglican church.

### Day 5 (Saturday) Oxford.

We Travel to Oxford home of the oldest university in the English speaking world. Many famous people have been educated there including John and Charles Wesley. On our walking tour we will visit sites associated with them including Lincoln College, Christchurch and St Mary's Church and also sites associated with other events in our Christian history. A visit to Coventry Cathedral is also possible. Enjoy a guided tour of Coventry Cathedral. This cathedral's architecture has an extraordinary and very powerful story behind it, one of ruin and rebuilding. Today the cathedral has an equally remarkable ministry of reconciliation which was also born out of its traumatic World War II destruction and rebirth. The tour includes both the ruins of the old cathedral and the impressive modern cathedral. Overnight in Oxford or Coventry.

### Day 6 (Sunday) York.

We travel to York. On arrival on our walking tour we will discover the connection between York and the Roman Emperor Constantine who was the first Roman emperor to allow Christians throughout the empire to worship openly. York has much other interesting history, the Vikings, the railways and chocolate have all had an influence. There will also be an opportunity to attend Evensong at the Minster. Overnight in York.

Day 7 (Monday). York.

We spend today exploring York further starting with a guided tour of York Minster. Built as a missionary church it is one of the finest Gothic cathedrals in Europe. In the afternoon there is the option of free time or an excursion to the beautiful and dramatic ruins of Fountains Abbey. This great abbey became a ruin at the Reformation. Hear about the Reformation and the dissolution of the monasteries an important part of England's Christian history. Enjoy the beautiful setting of the abbey in the Skell Valley. Overnight in York.

Day 8 (Tuesday) Epworth and Lincoln.

Today we travel to Epworth where the Wesley brothers' story begins, we visit their childhood home the Old Rectory. Later we travel the short distance to Lincoln for overnight. A guided tour of Lincoln Cathedral is included. It is a harmonious mix of Norman and Gothic styles and it hosted the ecumenical service celebrating the 300th anniversary of John Wesley's birth in 2003. Overnight in Lincoln

Day 9 (Wednesday) Stoke on Trent and the Potteries and Chester.

Today we get to enjoy some English countryside as we travel through the Peak District National Park and on to Stoke on Trent. This is the heart of the Potteries Britain's great centre of earthenware and bone china manufacture. John Wesley made many visits to the area. We go on a Wedgwood factory tour. Josiah Wedgwood, known as the father of English potters, founded the factory in 1759 and it still produces beautiful pieces in the same neo-classical style. Hear about the connections between John Wesley and Josiah Wedgwood.

Later we travel to Chester for overnight another place which Wesley often visited. First settled by the Romans it still has plenty of historical character.

Day 10 (Thursday). Ironbridge and Bristol.

Today we travel through the Black Country in the very heart of England, another place which became a haven of Methodism although to begin with John Wesley met much opposition here. John Wesley's story is very much tied up with the Industrial Revolution and the social and educational challenges which it brought so we visit Ironbridge Gorge, said to be the birthplace of modern technology, to see the first cast iron bridge built in 1779 and also visit the associated museum. Wesley watched the construction of the bridge with great interest.

We continue to Bristol where we visit the New Room the first Methodist building in the world, Charles Wesley's house and Hanham Mount where George Whitefield and John Wesley preached. Overnight in Bristol.

Day 11 (Friday) Cornwall.

Today we travel into Cornwall visiting Gwennap Pit near Redruth. Wesley preached here in a depression caused by mining. It has now been remodeled into a terraced amphitheatre in memory of Wesley. Overnight in Plymouth.

Day 12 (Saturday). Plymouth and Bath.

We visit the docks where Wesley preached close to the spot from where the Pilgrim Fathers set out to travel to America in 1620. The Mayflower steps and memorial commemorate them. Then we continue to Bath. For 2000 years this has been a spa town built around Britain's only naturally occurring hot mineral springs. We will visit the Roman Baths. In the 18th century Bath became a fashionable place for the wealthy to take the waters for their supposed health benefits and also a popular place for fashionable entertainments. On our walking tour we will enjoy Georgian architecture from this period and also hear about John Wesley's experiences in the City. Overnight in London.

Day 13 (Sunday). Free time in London and coach transfer to the airport.

This itinerary can be tailor-made for your group. Some general sightseeing can be included in London if required.

Travel is by coach or minibus and accommodation in 3 or 4 star hotels. Contact me to discuss your itinerary and then I will work on a quotation including accommodation and transport. The days of the week indicated work best with this itinerary due to some places not being open on certain days.