



# The Vergers Voice

*The news blog of the Vergers Guild*

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Friday, November 13, 2015

## VGEC and FOCCUS Pilgrimage to Canterbury and the County of Kent - July 2016



"A view of the Cathedral-Church of Canterbury in Kent" by J. Johnson 1654

By Ken Holloway, VGEC News Manager with the Rev. Matthew Corkern, VGEC Chaplain

Subtitled, "A Journey of History, Art, Architecture, Literature, Politics and Religion", the 2016 extended learning experience led by our VGEC Chaplain, [The Reverend Canon Matthew T.L. Corkern](#), is finalizing reservations and travel arrangements for the trip to England during the first ten days of July 2016. This pilgrimage is a joint event through the [Vergers Guild of the Episcopal Church](#) (VGEC) and [Friends of Canterbury Cathedral in the United States](#) (FOCCUS).

Fr. Matthew is a veteran pilgrimage leader, with significant knowledge of Anglican history. With his pilgrimage experience, you'll find yourself living a tableaux filled with all things Anglican and British. He summarizes this year's itinerary:

"Ancient places tied to St Augustine; vineyards and forests of the Tudor kings; laughter in country-pubs and seaside villages; medieval prophets and pilgrim sites at Chaldon, West Malling, Chilham and Barreston; the great country-houses and gardens of Kent at Penshurst Place, Walmer Castle, and Churchill's Chartwell House; Chagall Glass in Tudeley; RAF Folkestone Museum and the White Cliffs of Dover; intimate experiences to explore art, architecture and worship with the scholars and parishioners of our mother-cathedral; Baptismal Renewal at the oldest parish church in England; as well as people and events in and around the cathedral city of Canterbury during Kings' Week."

Matthew's focus for VGEC travelers is spot-on: "Each setting will allow for an experience not only of learning but also of tranquility... a respite from the frantic pace of modern life... and a chance to joyously laugh with kindred souls!" But please, no virges and no hats!

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## VERGERS GUILD ITINERARY SUMMARY

- Friday 1 July - Flight to London-Heathrow from Newark, New Jersey joined by The Reverend Canon Matthew Corkern as Pilgrimage Chaplain
- Saturday 2 July - Prayers before [The Ladder of Salvation at St Peter & St Paul Church \(Chaldon\)](#) and relaxing afternoon visit to Winston Churchill's [Chartwell House](#) and Garden
- Sunday 3 July - Conclave Eucharist at [Rochester Cathedral](#), Treasures of the Cloister – [St Mary's Abbey \(West Malling\)](#) and evensong with Anglican Benedictine Sisters
- Monday 4 July - Visit [Penshurst Place](#) with HM Lord-Lieutenant of Kent, Viscount De L'Isle followed by viewing [Chagall Windows at All Saints' Church \(Tudeley\)](#) with Patricia Dunkin-Wedd
- Tuesday 5 July - [Chilham Village Church Castle](#) + Harbledown Views + [St Dunstan's Church](#), then an Introductory Tour of [Canterbury Cathedral](#) with Mrs. Christine Pascale and Evensong at Canterbury Cathedral
- Wednesday July 6 - The ANCIENT OF DAYS: Quinan Gate and [Queen Bertha's Walk](#), Baptismal Renewal at [St. Martin's Church \(Canterbury\)](#), then tour [St. Augustine's Abbey](#)
- Thursday 7 July - [St. Nicholas' Church \(Barfreston\)](#) and paying homage to those who gave greatly at [RAF Folkstone](#) followed by [Dover Castle](#), [Walmer Castle Gardens](#) and [St. Augustine's Cross](#)
- Friday 8 July - The in-depth workings of Canterbury, Stained-glass tour with Curator [Leonie Salinger](#), Evensong at Canterbury Cathedral
- Saturday 9 July - Free morning, then [Doddington Place Gardens](#) with Sir Richard and Amicia Oldfield, Prayers at [Swanscombe Church](#), then Supper at the Deanery as guests of [Dean Robert Willis](#) and a Candlelight Pilgrimage with the Dean
- Sunday 10 July - Gather in the Cloisters for Commissioning before the [Alan Willet Window](#), final conclave Eucharist, and flights home

Fr. Matthew's dedication to pilgrimage ministry is summed by his pledge as Pilgrimage Chaplain and Tour Organizer, "I personally guarantee this spiritual-cultural sojourn, and look forward to sharing this wonderful occasion for faith and fellowship. I feel extremely blessed to be traveling 'The Pilgrim Pathways in Canterbury and the County of Kent' with each of you."

[Scott Smith](#), president of the VGEC has attended several of the VGEC/FOCCUS pilgrimage events over the past several years. He added, "I first went to Canterbury with the FOCCUS group led by Fr. Matthew in June of 2009. I can honestly say that this was one of the most significant experiences of my life. I was the only verger on that trip and I was able to spend time with Chris Crooks, Vesturer and Head Virger at Canterbury and his team of professional vergers. Words simply cannot describe how much I learned on that one trip, not only about the workings of the Cathedral, but also about how life is today and how it might have been along the Pilgrims' Way so many years ago."

You can contact The Rev. Matthew Corkern at [rector@calvarysummit.org](mailto:rector@calvarysummit.org). Prices, details, and an expanded itinerary can be found [HERE](#).

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*Abstract: The Annual VGEC Pilgrimage series for 2016 is entitled [The Pilgrim Pathways in Canterbury and the County of Kent](#). This terrific travel-learning opportunity is in the final stages of planning and reservations, with just a few openings remaining.*

Posted by [Ken Holloway](#) at 1:58 PM



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[dmgrondin](#) November 14, 2015 at 7:57 PM

Due to a conflict in dates, I am not able to travel with Matthew this year. I am so jealous of those of you who will be able to take this incredible trip to Canterbury and Kent. Scott is right when he say "words cannot describe how much I learned on that one trip". My trip to Canterbury was so fascinating that I'm still talking about the four days I spent at Canterbury Cathedral. If you have the time to travel this summer, I strongly encourage you to take this trip.

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