

The Great Reformers – From John Wesley to Martin Luther

13 days / 11 nights

Here I stand; I can do no other. God help me. Amen (Martin Luther). Martin Luther's posting of his 95 Theses on the door of All Saints' Church in 1517 objecting to the sale of indulgences, initiated a powerful force of spiritual reform throughout Europe which had profound and long-lasting effects. About two hundred years later, John Wesley, an early leader in the Methodist movement, rode 250,000 miles, gave away 30,000 pounds... and preached more than 40,000 sermons (Stephen Tomkins, biographer) about his doctrine of personal salvation by faith, followed by another on God's grace: free in all, and free for all. As we follow the awe-inspiring trail of these two great reformers, John Wesley and Martin Luther, we will not only be swept up by the splendor of several European cities and the beautiful countrysides of England and Germany, we will also gain an understanding of and deep appreciation for the convictions of those who led the way. Perhaps we will even come away with a desire to live our own lives more courageously.

Day 1: Depart from the USA

Our journey begins with an overnight flight with full meal/beverage service and in-flight entertainment to London, England.

Day 2: Stonehenge & Salisbury

[A]n inward impression on the soul of believers whereby the Spirit of God directly testifies to their spirit that they are the children of God (John Wesley's definition of the witness of the Spirit).

Upon arrival in London, we'll meet our Faith Journeys tour manager and transfer by motor coach through the beautiful English countryside to Bristol. En route we'll stop to experience the mystery of Stonehenge, one of the most famous prehistoric monuments in the world. Some believe Stonehenge is an ancient burial ground, sacred sanctuary or astronomical observatory while others attribute the monument's construction to Merlin the Magician! Still others might espouse ancient folklore which has the Devil bringing the stones in from Ireland, wrapping them up, and putting them on the Salisbury plain. At the end of the tale the Devil cries out, "No-one will ever find out how these stones came here!" to which a friar replies, "That's what you think!" At our next stop, we'll visit Salisbury Cathedral, which, with the tallest church spire in the United Kingdom, is considered one of the leading examples of early English architecture. We'll have some free time to enjoy lunch before continuing on to Bristol for dinner and an overnight stay.

Day 3: Bristol & Bath

The grandfather clock in the Common Room (upper floor of the 'New Room' in Bristol) dating from 1670 was bought by John Wesley's father in 1710 to replace a clock destroyed by the fire at Epworth Rectory. Five-year-old John had to be rescued from that fire and later described himself as "a brand plucked out of the burning."

John Wesley came to Bristol, now the most populous city in South West England, every year from 1739 to 1790, and spent nearly 1,500 nights at the 'New Room.' Today we will enjoy seeing the 'New Room,' a simple chapel built when he started preaching outdoors to the poor people of Bristol. There is also a great landmark and symbol of the city which we will see: the Clifton Suspension Bridge. Spanning the Avon Gorge, it was first proposed in 1753 but not completed until 1864 (in 1885, a 22-year-old woman survived a fall from the bridge when her billowing skirts acted as a parachute; she subsequently lived into her eighties). The afternoon will find us in Bath, built around the United Kingdom's only naturally occurring hot springs. From ancient Roman times, Bath has been known as a spa resort with the Latin name, Aquae Sulis ("the waters of Sulis"), but

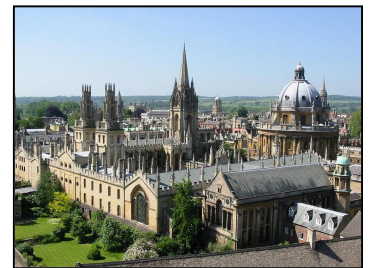


the city also has a variety of theatres, museums, and many other cultural sites. As we return to Bristol for dinner and another overnight stay, we'll visit Hanham Mount where in 1739 Wesley did his field preaching.

Day 4: Oxford

I saw the spires of Oxford, As I was passing by; The gray spires of Oxford, Against a pearl-gray sky (Winifred Mary Letts).

We visit Oxford this morning, an ancient city along the Thames River made prominent by the oldest university in the English-speaking world. This beautiful "City of Dreaming Spires" (coined by Matthew Arnold to describe the harmonious architecture of Oxford University's buildings) is also rich in Christian history and religious figures such as John Wycliffe, John Wesley, C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien. Our guided walking tour includes the Lincoln College rooms once occupied by Wesley, and Christ Church Cathedral (at one time the smallest in England) constructed between 1160 and 1200 by Augustinian monks and a popular site of pilgrimage throughout the Middle Ages. One such pilgrim was Catherine of Aragon, wife of King Henry VIII, who came to pray for her son in 1518. We will continue to London where we will enjoy dinner and an overnight stay.



Day 5: London

The best of all is, God is with us (John Wesley on his death bed).

We awaken in a city described as the flower of all cities. Our guided tour of London will begin with a visit to Wesley's Chapel, the first Methodist church in London built for the celebration of communion and preaching. Wesley's Chapel, site of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's 1951 wedding, has remained in continuous use by Methodists except for a time during the 70s when structural problems forced its repair. It reopened in 1978 on its 200th anniversary in the presence of Queen Elizabeth II. We will also see John Wesley's House, built next door to his chapel in 1779 where Wesley spent the last 11 winters of his life and died in his bedroom on March 2, 1791. Because many of John Wesley's belongings are still inside the house, our visit will be like a step back into the 18th century. We will also visit Westminster Abbey, a Gothic monastery church that is the traditional place of coronation and burial for English monarchs. Westminster Abbey is neither a cathedral nor a parish church, but a place of worship owned by the royal family. Its interior is a veritable museum of English history where among other things are the medieval coronation throne, Poet's Corner with memorials to Shakespeare, Dickens, and other literary giants, and the tombs of Queen Elizabeth I, "Bloody" Queen Mary, explorer David Livingstone and naturalist Charles Darwin. We will have ample leisure time this afternoon to explore other wonders of the "flower of all cities" on our own before dinner and an overnight stay in London.



Day 6: Brussels & Luxembourg

A mighty fortress is our God (Martin Luther).

Today the EuroStar (high-speed train) will take us to the capital of Belgium: Brussels, known for its waffles, chocolate, French fries, and numerous types of beers. Did you know that the Brussels sprout was named for and first cultivated in Brussels? A brief sightseeing tour will captivate us for Brussels has its own Gothic town hall in the old centre, several cathedrals, parks, and palaces. One famous symbol is the Atomium, a 103-metre (338 ft) tall structure built for the 1958 World's Fair. Consisting of nine steel spheres connected by tubes, it forms a model of an iron crystal. We will transfer travel by coach to Luxembourg for dinner and an overnight stay.



Day 7: Luxemburg & Worms

Patton was buried at the Luxembourg American Cemetery and Memorial in Hamm, Luxembourg along with other members of the Third Army, as per his request to "be buried with my men."

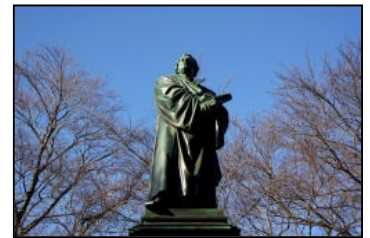
We'll find Luxembourg an interesting mix of culture and tradition acquired from its neighbors. Interestingly, Luxembourg is a trilingual country; German, French, and Luxembourgish are all official languages. This morning we will visit the grave of General George Patton, Jr. who died in a car accident on December 21, 1945 shortly after leading the U.S. 3rd Army to victory in World War II. Later, we'll transfer to Worms, where Martin Luther arrived under less than desirable circumstances when he was called to appear before the Imperial Diet ("Dee-it"). After refusing to retract his views (with the legendary words, "Here I stand, I can do no other"), he was declared an outlaw. While in Worms, we will see a large monument to Luther and other giants of the Reformation erected in the city and now a popular stop along the popular "Luther Trail." We'll continue to Heidelberg for dinner and an overnight stay.



Day 8: Heidelberg

But let me talk of its castle. What times it has been through! Five hundred years long it has been victim to everything that has shaken Europe... (Victor Hugo on a visit to Heidelberg in 1838).

Today begins with a guided tour of the charming city of Heidelberg, known for its romantic and picturesque cityscape, from its Heidelberg Castle to the baroque style Old Town. Our tour includes entrance to the Heidelberg Castle, first built in 1214 and expanded and rebuilt many times over the centuries. The castle is visited by more than three million people a year and there are about 100 weddings a year at the castle's chapel. We'll also have time enough to explore on our own. We might stroll through the long and narrow streets of the old town area, hike up the wooded side of the Königstuhl (*King's chair or throne*) hill, take photos from the old stone bridge (1786) over the Neckar River, or attend an open-air theatre performance. We can share our Heidelberg adventures over dinner then look forward to an overnight stay in this beautiful city.



Day 9: Eisenach

I fought the Devil with ink (Martin Luther of his experience in Wartburg Castle).

From Heidelberg to Eisenach, we travel this morning up a steep forested slope to one of the best-preserved medieval castles in Germany: Wartburg Castle, which was founded in 1067 and which looms over the city. It was at Wartburg Castle that Martin Luther, disguised as "Knight George," translated the New Testament into German. At the castle there is a museum containing many Reformation artifacts, including paintings, sculptures, weapons, furniture and tapestries, and the *Lutherstube*, the room where Luther did the translating and upon whose wall hangs a portrait of him disguised as *Junker Jörg* (Knight George) by Lucas Cranach. While none of the furnishings are original to Luther's time, the stove and desk approximate what Luther's room would have looked like during his 10-month stay, and behind the stove is a hole going through to the bare masonry which is associated with the legend that Luther threw his inkpot at the devil. Eisenach was home to Martin Luther as a child, and we will have the opportunity to visit the *Lutherhaus*, one of the oldest and most picturesque half-timbered buildings remaining in Eisenach and now a museum featuring multimedia exhibits related to Luther's teachings. We might also explore the *Marktplatz* with the *Georgenkirche* (the Church of St. George) where Bach was baptized and where the Gothic baptismal stone still stands. Tonight we'll enjoy dinner and an overnight stay in Eisenach.



Day 10: Eisleben

Come to me, all of you who weary, and I will give you rest (Luther's last sermon in St. Andrew's Church. He finished with the words: "I am able to say many more things about this text, but I feel very weak and sick today. I hope I can do it later." The following Thursday he died.).

Martin Luther was born and died in the small city of Eisleben (Luther had a special affection for this city now officially known as "Luther-City Eisleben" *Lutherstadt Eisleben*). We'll savor a guided tour of all the Luther sites in Eisleben including his birth house and death house which are both now well-preserved museums. If time permits, we'll also visit the Church of St. Peter and Paul (also known as the *Taufkirche* or "baptism church"), where Martin Luther was baptized on November 11, 1483. The remains of the original baptismal font whose Latin inscription reads, "*Rudera baptistierii, quo tinctus est b. Martinus Lutherus 1483*", can still be seen inside the church. We'll also see the very pulpit from which Luther preached his last sermon in St. Andrew's Church. This afternoon we'll continue to Wittenberg for dinner and overnight.



Day 11: Wittenberg

Justice is a temporary thing that must at last come to an end; but the conscience is eternal and will never die (Martin Luther).

Wittenberg, known also as Lutherstadt-Wittenberg (Luther City Wittenberg), is the city where, in 1517, on the doors of All Saints' Church (also known as the *Schlosskirche* or "Castle Church," built 1496–1506), Luther nailed his 95 Theses, sparking the Reformation. The church, including the doors, were seriously damaged by fire in 1760 but were later restored. Our tour will take us to see the Bronze doors (which replaced the wooden doors and which are among the most photographed in Europe) that now bear the Latin text of the 95 Theses, and the restored burial church of the Reformers. We will also visit Luther's well-preserved house where he and his family lived (it contains many Reformation relics, including Luther's desk, his pulpit, and first editions of his books). We'll enjoy the remainder of the day to explore Wittenberg before meeting with a local Lutheran congregation for worship and dinner before enjoying our second night's stay in Wittenberg.



Day 12: Wittenberg & Berlin

Therefore, it is clear and certain that this faith alone justifies us... Nothing of this article can be yielded or surrendered, even though heaven and earth and everything else falls (Martin Luther).

As we make our way to Germany's largest city, we will stop along the outskirts in what was formerly the American sector of postwar Berlin, to visit the Allied Museum which documents the political history and roles of the Western Allies in Germany – particularly Berlin – between 1945 and 1994. Objects on display in the Museum's permanent collection include a British Handley Page Hastings transport plane, a railway carriage from a French military train, and the guard house from the famous border crossing point Checkpoint Charlie. In Berlin, we will see the famous *Unter den Linden Strasse*, (the iconic boulevard of linden trees which formerly led directly to the city palace of the Prussian monarchs), the Parliament Building, the Reichstag, the Brandenburg Gate (a former monumental entry to *Unter den Linden* and only remaining gate of a series through which Berlin was once entered), as well as what remains of "the wall," and "Checkpoint Charley," and many other unforgettable sights. We will have much to remember as we meet together for a farewell dinner and last overnight stay in Berlin.



Day 13: Return to the USA

We will let the wonder of all we have seen and heard settle over us; then like other pilgrims of other times, go back to our lives with renewed faith and readiness.

We leave our hotel and head for the airport to return to the U.S.



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