



Lord, show me the way



and make me ready to follow it.

Saint Bridget of Sweden* – saint, human being and role model

All saints are born as ordinary people, like you and me. Individuals who dare to stand up for their beliefs. With their lives, saints can inspire us to become more authentic and to be the beacons for a better world. They can help us find the courage to listen for our calling and purpose in life.

Saint Bridget of Sweden is of special importance to the congregation in Fresta as she was probably born here, around the year 1303. She is the patron saint of Sweden and in 1999 she became the patron Saint of Europe.

Saint Bridget
* Heliga Birgitta

The Birgitta walk

This booklet can be a support for this pilgrimage. On the last page, there is a map marking out the twelve stops along the Birgitta walk. At each stop, you will find a sign with a word and a question inspired by the life of Saint Birgitta. Every stop has its own page in the booklet. Here you can read Birgitta's own prayer, bible phrase, psalm verse and some words for reflection.

You are welcome to stay a while at each stop to read some, or all, of the accompanying texts. Bring with you a word or a phrase to ponder on your way to the next stop. If you are walking with a fellow pilgrim you may share your thoughts and ponderings along the way. Please try to walk part of the journey in silence, so as to give room for quiet reflection. Once it is time to move on from one stop to another, you may say the prayer of all pilgrims, as told by Saint Birgitta: Lord, show me the way and make me ready to follow it.

May God bless you on your journey.

Pax et bonum! (Peace and all good things!)

Fresta församling

1. Saint Birgitta's grove (Birgittalunden)
Calling *Where are you headed?*



O Lord, make haste and illuminate the night.

Bible phrase Psalm 121:1b-2

I lift up my eyes to the hills - from where will my help come?

Reflection

You are called upon by God to be the one you truly are, deep down in yourself. Nobody else. You are needed here on our planet with your own, specific gifts. If you were to let your abilities guide you, what life would you lead then?

Psalm 795:1

I am always on the way toward a distant destination, beyond what we call time and space. This goal gives me courage, gives me strength, gives me the inspiration to meet the years I see ahead. So whatever I do, I shall never let go of the hand the Lord has given me. Whatever I do, I shall never let go of this unseen land called heaven.

Lord, show me the way and make me ready to follow it.

2. The Fresta streamlet (Frestabäcken)
Clarity *What is truth?*



I long for You, as the dying long for You

Bible phrase Psalm 121:5

The Lord is your keeper.; the Lord is your shade at your right hand.

Reflection

Life is like a journey without a map. There is nothing you can do but move forwards. Only the future can tell what lies beyond the next turn. The only thing certain is that you do not travel alone. God walks faithfully by your side. If you listen closely, God will show you your way home.

Psalm 795:2

Deep down inside I carry with me a piece of a faraway land, the promise that is where I belong. Deep down inside I carry hope of a distant shore, to meet the Lord face to face. So whatever I do, I shall never let go of the hand the Lord has given me. Whatever I do, I shall never let go of this unseen land called heaven.

Lord, show me the way and make me ready to follow it.

3. The Sanda swamp (Sandakärret)

Inspiration *What brings creativity?*



Say to my soul, that nothing happens without you permitting it, and that nothing of what You permit is without comfort.

Bible phrase Psalm 121:8

The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forever more.

Reflection

The word inspiration derives from latin and means bring to life or breathe into. God shaped man and breathed life into him through his very nostrils. The story of Adam and Eve might even tell you something about yourself; God is what brings you to life.

Psalm 795:3

Should God be a lie, I would find my journey devoid of meaning, life would be hollow. But I believe in the man, crucified in the name of love. You know, the grave that was left, the grave that was found empty. So whatever I do, I shall never let go of the hand the Lord has given me. Whatever I do, I shall never let go of this unseen land called heaven.

Lord, show me the way and make me ready to follow it.

4. The Sanda spring (Sanda källa) Justice *What is injustice?*



O Jesus, Son of God, You who were silent in the presence of Your accusers. Restrain my tongue until I find what I should say and how to say it.

Bible phrase Luke 2:34b-35

“Behold, this child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed. Yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

Reflection

Life is unfair. Yes, everything is unjust, and God is all that is just. Because the justice of God is not that of man. When God brings judgement He forgive us out of love. How do you judge?

Psalm 78:1

For the sake of life, the truth will come to light.
For the sake of life, the seed of longing will grow.
For the sake of life, the path of peace will be clear
To those who dare to walk – for the sake of life.

Lord, show me the way and make me ready to follow it.

5. The read bridges (Röda broarna)

Courage *Do you have courage?*



*Lord, show me the way
and make me ready to follow it.*

Bible phrase Luke 1:48-50

For he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed.
For the mighty one has done great things for me, and holy is his name.
His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

Reflection

At times, you need to be your own superhero, and perhaps even one to others, as well. We all need to be saved at some point in our lives, that takes courage on the part of the hero. Superman is very brave. But Superman does not exist in real life. How can you be brave as a human being? When were you courageous?

Psalms 78:3

For the sake of life, powerlessness turns to fury.
For the sake of life, righteousness will flow.
For the sake of life, sources of joy
Will lend courage, hope, and power – for the sake of life.

Lord, show me the way and make me ready to follow it.

6. The Cliff church (Klippkyrkan)

Belief *What do you believe in?*



It is dangerous to delay, yet perilous to go forward.

Bible phrase Luke 2:15b-17

“Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told to them about this child.

Reflection

Whether you find it easy or difficult to believe, faith itself does something to you. To believe can be like diving into the unknown or like coming home to safety and comfort. No matter what you believe, God always believes in you.

Psalm 788:4

For the sake of life, God became a child, our equal.
 For the sake of life, He gave His life for us.
 For the sake of life, the true kingdom of righteousness
 Will show itself through us - for the sake of life.

Lord, show me the way and make me ready to follow it.

7. The view (Utsiktsplatsen)
Perspectiv *How far can you see?*



Answer my petition and show me the way.

Bible phrase Psalm 23:3

He restores my soul.

He leads me in the right paths for his name's sake.

Reflection

Sometimes you must venture far from yourself to return to the person you are, deep down inside, and sometimes, all you need to do is pause. The longest journey you will make is the one you will do towards your own centre. Your soul is infinite and you have many undiscovered places within yourself.

Psalm 762:1

Be still, let silence bring you close. The presence is there. A power who want to carry, yes to open the room locked deep within you. The child living there, silently screaming “hear me”. You are a prayer, God is your prayer.

Lord, show me the way and make me ready to follow it.

8. The mire (Myren) *Do you have faith?*



*I come to You, as the wounded go to the doctor
in search of aid.*

Bible phrase Psalm 23:4

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil,
for you are with me; your rod and your staff - they comfort me.

Reflection

The phrase "do not be afraid" is featured in the Bible, in somewhat different varieties, over 400 times. This means you can find a message of this kind for more than each day of the year. Perhaps it occurs so often because it is what God most of all wants you to know. Do not be afraid.

Psalm 762:2

Let your worries sink like stones to the bottom. All your life is a conversation with Him who carries the universe and lives in your heart. He shares in your life, both happiness and pain. You are a prayer, God is your prayer.

Lord, show me the way and make me ready to follow it.

9. The old country road (Gamla landsvägen)
Crossroads *Who is your guide?*



Give peace o Lord to my heart.

Bible phrase Psalm 23:6

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
 and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

Reflection

Who do you let guide your steps? Is it chance or you yourself, your loved ones, or God? Looking back on your life, you might find patterns in events which at the time seemed random to you. Could it be that God already knows where you are headed?

Psalm 762:3

Be still, let silence bring you close. The presence is there. A power wanting to carry you, yes, dare the faith that lives deep within you. Listen to the voice calling you: "Follow me! You are a prayer, I am you prayer."

Lord, show me the way and make me ready to follow it.

10. Harby **Patience** *Is it bravery to endure?*



O Lord God, for whom nothing is impossible and who can do all things, give me the strength to carry out good works and be able to persevere in the good.

Bible phrase 1Kor 13:4,7

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Reflection

At this point you have come quite a way, both in life and on this pilgrimage. How has the road been this far? Does it hurt? Your body and soul might feel tired and weary. The remedy for a tired soul is God's love and it can give you the courage to continue your journey, to find your way home.

Psalm 717:1

At last you came, you were a stranger,
a mythical character I had heard of.
So many had painted your pictures
But it was beyond the pictures that you came
We thought you were useful, for sale,
We wrote your name on our banners going into battle
We built cathedrals high up towards the sky
but you kept lowering yourself towards us.

Lord, show me the way and make me ready to follow it.

11. The homestead (Främjartorpet)
Freedom *What is true freedom?*



*Set my heart aflame with your love's fire,
 so all within with which you disagree
 may be swept away like ashes in a raging storm.*

Bible phrase 1 Kor 13:12

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; but then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.

Reflection

To be free and yet imprisoned is the paradox of humanity. While in paradise Adam and Eve might have been completely free, though naive and ignorant. But they were banished as they ate the forbidden fruit. Till they ate of the forbidden fruit. In a way humanity was released by God gifted with free will, but still she is held back by her torn longing for the age of innocence. When are you free?

Psalm 717:2

You are a child lying on a floor of dirt

You freeze lest we act.

You touch bodies, hate injustice,

You lovingly share generous wine.

You ascend from every empty grave

You are a wind calling: it will be spring!

You come to us like a refugee across the mountains

You follow us where no one else can.

Lord, show me the way and make me ready to follow it.

12. The Bronze Age grave site (Bronsåldergravarna)

Hope *Is there a light in the darkness?*



Send your Holy Spirit to enlighten my heart and strengthen me on my journey, so that I may continue doing good.

Bible phrase 1Kor 13:13

But now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Reflection

To God, it is never too late. The road ahead may be hard to see, for life has no map. No matter how crooked, steep or heavy the road might be, God will lead you and help you travel down your path. Because God is home, waiting for you.

Psalm 717:3

You are the song of life I forgot
 The truth I betrayed day by day
 I let myself down; the mirror I hid
 Bears your precipice, your features.
 Come closer. Stay with me. It is getting dark
 And maybe it will grow lighter again.
 Your life shall carry me; I hear a blackbird
 Singing in the hour before dawn.

Lord, show me the way and make me ready to follow it.

Heliga Birgitta från Fresta/Saint Bridget from Fresta

Birgitta Birgersdotter was born in Fresta around the year 1303 and therefore we have good reason to believe that she visited our church as a child. Perhaps she gazed up at the crucifix from the 13th century with big, round eyes and listened to the stories of Jesus, Mary and the Saints.

Medieval letters and certificates tell us of a land exchange in the year 1296 between Birgittas father, mr Birger Persson, and a mr Rörík Matsson. Birger then leaves Finsta in exchange for Skällnora Gård. The exchange takes place about seven years prior to the birth of Birgitta.

What the letters shows us is that it was not until the year 1317 that Birger once again bought himself a property in Finsta. By that time his daughter Birgitta has been married for a year, to Ulf Gudmars-son and they have moved to Ulvåsa in Östergötland.

In the papal acts of canonisation the birthplace of Birgitta is mentioned in several places as "in regno Swecie de civitate Frastad", except for one of the saved handwritten papers, Codex Harleian 612 at the British Museum, where it is called "Fristad".

This leads us to allow ourselves the striking thought that the Saint Birgitta was both baptised and took part in worship right here, in Fresta church. In this way, the patron saint of Sweden and Europe, is brought even closer to us today, to join us in our pilgrimage as a role model and source of inspiration.

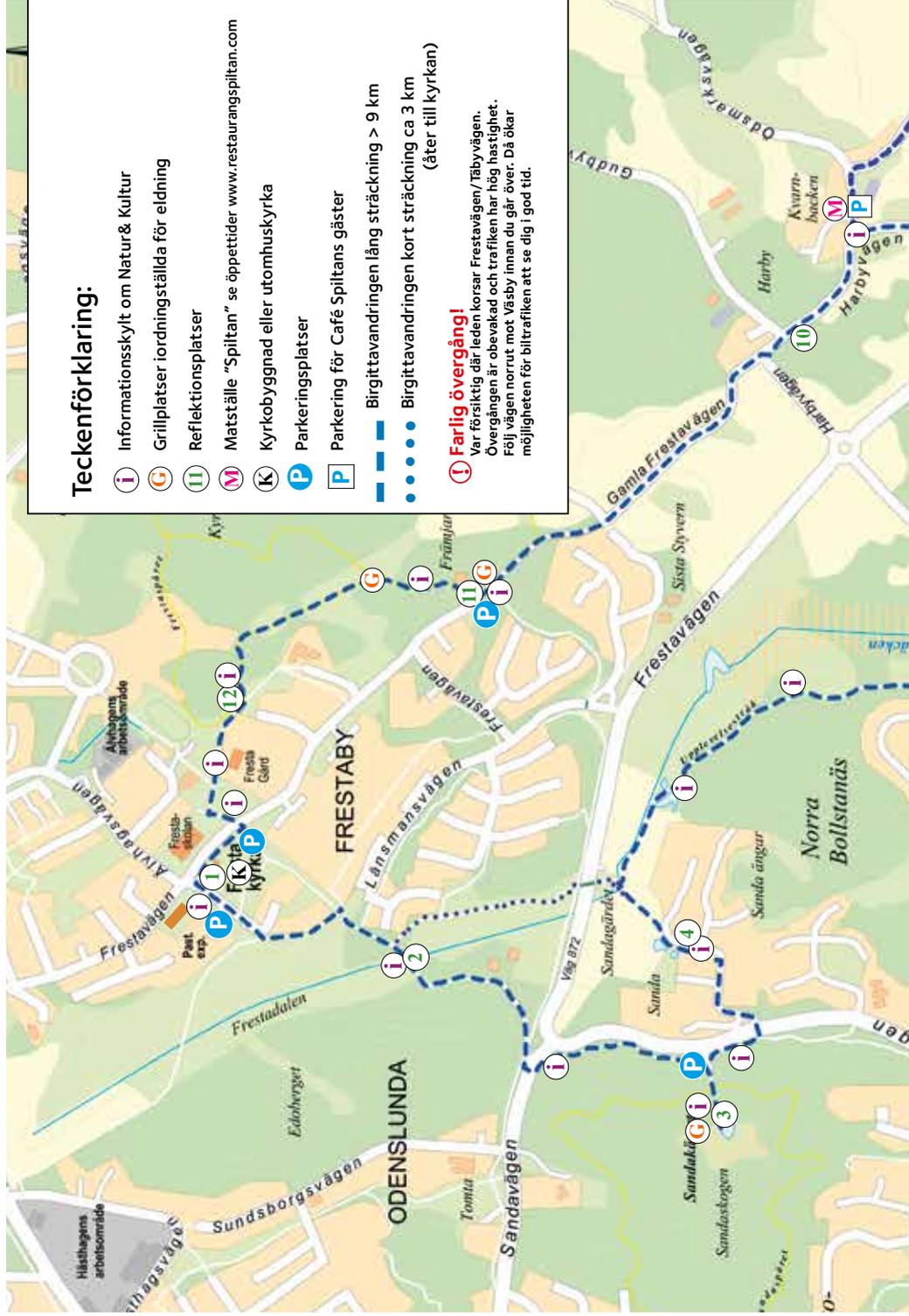


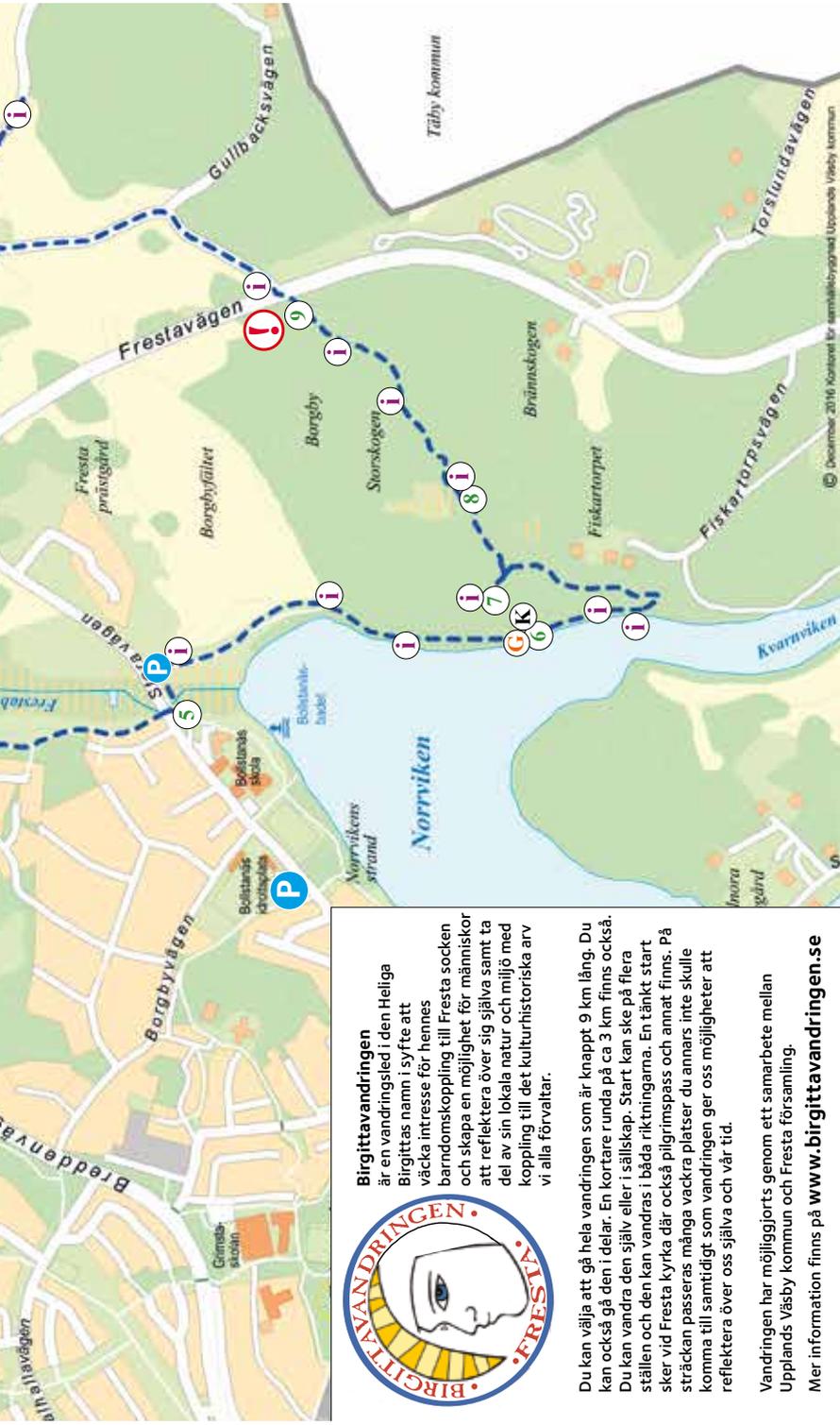
Teckenförklaring:

-  Informationsskylt om Natur & Kultur
-  Grillplatser iordningställda för eldning
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-  Parkeringsplatser
-  Parkering för Café Spiltans gäster
-  Birgittavandringen lång sträckning > 9 km
-  Birgittavandringen kort sträckning ca 3 km (åter till kyrkan)

Farlig övergång!

Var försiktig där leden korsar Frestavägen/Täbyvägen. Övergången är obevakad och trafiken har hög hastighet. Följ vägen norrut mot Väsky innan du går över. Då ökar möjligheten för biltrafiken att se dig i god tid.





Birgittavandringen är en vandringsled i den Heliga Birgittas namn i syfte att väcka intresse för hennes barndomskoppling till Fresta socken och skapa en möjlighet för människor att reflektera över sig själva samt ta del av sin lokala natur och miljö med koppling till det kulturhistoriska arvet vi alla förvaltar.

Du kan välja att gå hela vandringen som är knappt 9 km lång. Du kan också gå den i delar. En kortare runda på ca 3 km finns också. Du kan vandra den själv eller i sällskap. Start kan ske på flera ställen och den kan vandra i båda riktningarna. En tänkt start sker vid Fresta kyrka där också pilgrimspass och annat finns. På sträckan passerar många vackra platser du annars inte skulle komma till samtidigt som vandringen ger oss möjligheter att reflektera över oss själva och vår tid.

Vandringen har möjliggjorts genom ett samarbete mellan Upplands Västerås kommun och Fresta församling.
Mer information finns på **www.birgittavandringen.se**

Har du upptäckt skador på reflektionsskyltarna utmed leden? Vänligen meddela fresta.forsamling@svenskkyrkan.se.
För informationsskyltar, mark- och övriga anläggningsfrågor kontakta Upplands Västerås kommun.



WWW.BIRGITTAVANDRINGEN.SE
WWW.FRESTAFORSAMLING.SE

Svenska kyrkan 
FRESTA FÖRSAMLING

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