

PRAYING

We wait upon the Holy Spirit to gift us with renewing grace.

Oh God, maker of mountains
present in our highest heights and lowest depths,
as we recognize all that you have saved us from,
help us also to see the life you lead us to.
Drawn from the pit of despair
may we stir up dust to sing
and make it our delight to dance
in praise of you.
Amen.

We meet your Word in the dance of life.
(Pause) Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We express our thanks for times of challenge and times of joy.
(Pause) Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We offer our tomorrow to your people.
(Pause) Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We bear before you people who see their hopes collapse around them.
(Pause) Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We wait upon the work of your Spirit as we say the Lord's Prayer together:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with clarity in times of turmoil.**
Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with determination to look forwards.**
Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with a voice to sing your praise.**
Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with yourself.**



DAILY WAITING

Jesus ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. Acts 1:4

This service is for use by individuals or groups and can be adapted to suit your context. Hymns, worship songs and additional prayers may be added as you wish. Italic text is intended as an instruction, plain text is to be read by a leader, bold text is to be read together.

GATHERING

As you begin your time of prayer, take a moment of silence to remember and delight in the promise of the Holy Spirit Jesus gives to all his disciples. Read the following from John 14 together:

I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever - the Spirit of truth... On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

Make a sign of being present to God and one another – light a candle, open a Bible, share the peace....

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your people

And kindle in us the fire of your love.

Come, Holy Spirit, be with us as we pray

And leave us not as orphans.

Come, Holy Spirit, renew us in body, mind and spirit

And send us out to be your presence in your world.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your people

And kindle in us the fire of your love.

Optional hymn or worship song.

CHANGED LIVES @ CHANGING LIVES



NINE DAYS OF PRAYER 2018

DAY 1: PRAISE
Friday 11 May

LISTENING

Psalm 30:6-12

As for me, I said in my prosperity, “I shall never be moved.” By your favour, O Lord, you had established me as a strong mountain; you hid your face; I was dismayed. To you, O Lord, I cried, and to the Lord I made supplication: “What profit is there in my death, if I go down to the Pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it tell of your faithfulness? Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me! O Lord, be my helper!” You have turned my mourning into dancing; you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, so that my soul may praise you and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever.

REFLECTING

(The image for this text can be found in the Novena booklet or on www.canterburydiocese.org/novena)

Which one of us hasn't been in a place where we've been lodged in distress; which one of us hasn't had a three a.m. moment when we toss in the darkness – waiting for hospital tests, receiving bad exam results, still waiting for a new vicar and feeling neglected by the Church; or just needing a kind word, a breath of fresh air in place of another setback. We wonder if we'll ever feel alive again. The posture of lament is hunched, crouched and clenched, hidden in corners away from light. Perhaps a little like the disciples after the Ascension, we are stuck 'in-between' the question and the answer. Can we commit these nine days to the prayer 'thy kingdom come', and trust in the Holy Spirit to set our feet tapping?

The posture of praise is head held high and arms flung open, defences down, embracing the future. Sometimes all it takes is practice. By practising praise we rebuild trust, and the self-imposed distance between ourselves and God shrinks. Practising for the sake of God's promises we accept that the ground we stand on is never stable, but if we face the climb, we gain the view and enjoy God's self in creation, compassion and glory. Praise in the face of adversity is life-changing, as God's promises become fulfilled.

If you think this psalm is just Old Testament stuff, remember how well Jesus knew his scripture: and we soon arrive at the Beatitudes: 'Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted'.

Yes, we are blessed if we mourn, but not if we wallow in self-pity. If we praise, we stay alive through the experience – like freezing cold hands in winter, we begin to feel the tingle in our finger tips as the blood returns.

So let us give praise in unlikely places, and at unlikely times; in the morning when we rise, let's rely on God's desire to clothe us in joy, even before we know what the day will bring; let our praise be contagious to those we meet. Praise is always outward-facing, not self-regarding. Let praise open our eyes to God's ever-present, always beyond us, glory.

As time allows, share your insights with one another.

A Song of the Church:

- 1 We praise you, O God,
we acclaim you as the Lord;
- 2 All creation worships you,
the Father everlasting.
- 3 To you all angels, all the powers of heaven,
the cherubim and seraphim, sing in endless praise:
- 4 Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
- 5 The glorious company of apostles praise you.
The noble fellowship of prophets praise you.
- 6 The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.
Throughout the world the holy Church acclaims you:
- 7 Father, of majesty unbounded,
your true and only Son, worthy of all praise,
the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide.
- 8 You, Christ, are the King of glory,
the eternal Son of the Father.
Lord, show us your love and mercy,
for we have put our trust in you.
In you, Lord, is our hope:
let us never be put to shame.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be forever. Amen.**