

## PRAYING

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

Oh revealing God,  
as we stand transfixed in an unexpected place,  
crumpled and surprised to find ourselves here,  
invited, yet uncertain on the threshold,  
help us to recognise our gorgeous Lord Jesus.  
Drawn in, may we kneel in wonder.  
May we go away changed.  
May we draw others to the stable too.  
**Amen.**

We meet your Word in the most surprising places.  
(Pause) Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We express our thanks for those who encourage us towards  
encounter.  
(Pause) Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We offer our joyful praise and worship.  
(Pause) Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We bear before you all who are vulnerable and marginalized, of  
whom you are 'especially fond.'  
(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 response to your invitation.**  
Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with amazement at your humility.**  
Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with courage to share all we have  
seen of you.**  
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 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 7: ADORE**  
**Thursday 17 May**

## LISTENING

Luke 2:8, 13-18, 20 abr.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!” The shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now 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 them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

## REFLECTING

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

We know all about the angels.

They’re built for adoration.

They’re singing a wonderful song of hope and glory. They’re inviting a group of marginalized men to show up at a world premier event in a place which won’t be hostile to them (a stable) to find a vulnerable Saviour there. They’re offering the possibility of peace to all whom God favours. In the novel *The Shack*, the character of ‘Papa’ reminds us that we’re all God’s favourites, reflecting when pressed, that there is no-one whom she is not ‘especially fond’ of!

But what are the shepherds up to? And what can we learn from them about how to adore God?

First, we notice that they are speaking to one another – encouraging each other to make the journey. A bit of daring perhaps? ‘I will if you will?’ Where do we find our encouragement to come and worship? And how do we encourage others? (The Diocesan ‘Ignite’ project might be one example of creating places where those on the margins can experience and learn to worship.)

Then they are acting without delay; ‘they went with haste.’ There’s no

sense of next week being okay. Here, they are a challenge to our tendency to procrastinate at times about entering God’s presence. In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century we have no excuse, with access to so many resources that provide the opportunity for worship. We only have to bring ourselves and a resolve in our hearts.

They share the prophetic words they’ve been told – much to people’s amazement. Seeing Jesus leads them to speak of him and all that he has the potential to be. Are we both amazed by what we hear spoken of Jesus and also able to share what we have seen of him? Does it matter *who* is speaking to us about him? Has worship altered our perceptions and understanding?

They are returning, glorifying God – and surely have been changed by their journey. How that will manifest itself, we’re not told and perhaps we don’t need to know. The question to ourselves is how the act of adoring God will change us, whoever we are, wherever we’ve come from, whatever we go home to.

*As time allows, share your insights with one another.*

Venite - a metrical version:

Come, worship God who is worthy of honour,  
Enter his presence with thanks and a song!  
He is the rock of his people’s salvation,  
To whom our jubilant praises belong.

Ruled by his might are the heights of the mountains,  
Held in his hands are the depths of the earth;  
His is the sea, his the land for he made them,  
King above all gods, who gave us our birth.

We are his people, the sheep of his pasture,  
He is our maker and to him we pray;  
Gladly we kneel in obedience before him –  
Great is the God whom we worship this day!

Now let us listen, for God speaks among us,  
Open our hearts and receive what he says:  
Peace be to all who remember his goodness,  
Trust in his word and rejoice in his ways!

**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.**