

A Service of the Word for Ascensiontide

Ascension Day marks the first day of *Thy Kingdom Come* - an annual invitation to prayer called by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York.

Lasting for eleven days, the focus is specific prayer in churches, households and as individuals for friends, families, communities and countries to come to know the saving love of God in Jesus Christ, and for ourselves that empowered by God's Spirit we would grow in confidence to show and tell of God's love.



Please join in all the words in bold.

God has gone up with a shout.
the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.

Psalms 47:5

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
Amen.

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you
and also with you.

Opening Prayer

Almighty God,
your Son has opened for us
a new and living way into your presence.
Give us new hearts and constant wills
to worship you in spirit and in truth;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Thy Kingdom Come Song

Prayers of Penitence

Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord,
we come to you in sorrow for our sins,
and confess to you our weakness and unbelief.

We have lived by our own strength,
and not by the power of your resurrection.
In your mercy, forgive us.
Lord, hear us and help us

We have lived by the light of our own eyes,
as faithless and not believing.
In your mercy, forgive us.
Lord, hear us and help us.

We have lived by the light of our own eyes,
as faithless and not believing.
In your mercy, forgive us.
Lord, hear us and help us.

We have lived for this world alone,
and doubted our home in heaven.
In your mercy, forgive us.
Lord, hear us and help us.

May the God of love and power
forgive us and free us from our sins, heal
and strengthen us by his Spirit, and raise
us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen**

A Reading from Genesis 12.1-3

The Call of Abram

Now the LORD said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'

At the end the reader says:
Alleluia. Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Canticle

**All nations shall come and worship You, O Christ,
and share in the feast of Your kingdom.**

1. Great and wonderful are Your deeds,
 Lord God the Almighty.
2. Just and true are Your ways,
 O ruler of the nations.
3. Who shall not revere and praise Your name, O Lord?
for You alone are holy.
4. All nations shall come and worship in Your presence:
for Your just dealings have been revealed.

**To the One who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be blessing and honour and glory and might,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

**All nations shall come and worship You, O Christ,
and share in the feast of Your kingdom.**

The Great Commission

A reading from Matthew 28:16-20

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

This is the gospel of the Lord

Praise to you O Christ.

Short Reflection

Hymn: Thine be the Glory

We renew our commitment to our reigning Lord

Let us affirm the faith of the Church which Christ commissions us to share with the world

Do you believe and trust in God the Father source of all being and life, the One for whom we exist?

I believe and trust in Him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

I believe and trust in Him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in the world?

I believe and trust in Him.

This is the faith of the Church.

This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen**

Intercessions

Lord, bless Your world
And fill us with Your Spirit

Merciful Father,
**accept these prayers for the sake of Your
Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen**

The Lord is here
His Spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and good,
our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give You thanks, holy
Father, almighty and eternal God, through Jesus
Christ the King of glory.

Born of a woman,
He came to the rescue of our human race.
Dying for us,
He trampled death and conquered sin.

By the glory of His resurrection
He opened the way to life eternal
and by His ascension,
gave us the sure hope
that where He is we may also be.

Therefore the universe resounds with Easter joy
and with choirs of angels we sing for ever to your
praise:

Hymn: And can It be

The Lord's Prayer

Being made one by the power of the Spirit,
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

**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.**

Responsory

As we wait in silence,
make us ready for Your coming Spirit.

As we listen to Your word,
make us ready for Your coming Spirit.

As we worship You in majesty,
make us ready for Your coming Spirit.

As we long for Your refreshing,
make us ready for Your coming Spirit.

As we long for Your renewing,
make us ready for Your coming Spirit.

As we long for Your equipping,
make us ready for Your coming Spirit.

As we long for Your empowering,
make us ready for Your coming Spirit.

The Blessing

God the Father,
who has given to His Son the name above every name,
strengthen you to proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord.
Amen.

God the Son,
who is our great high priest passed into the heavens,
plead for you at the right hand of the Father.
Amen.

God the Holy Spirit,
who pours out His abundant gifts upon the Church,
make you faithful servants of Christ our King.
Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

A little more about Thy Kingdom Come...

During the 11 days of Thy Kingdom Come, it is hoped that everyone who takes part will:

- Deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ
- Pray for God's spirit to work in the lives of those they know
- Come to realise that every aspect of their life is the stuff of prayer

After the very first Ascension Day the disciples gathered with Mary, constantly devoting themselves to prayer while they waited for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Like them, our reliance on the gift of the Holy Spirit is total – on our own we can do nothing.

Through the centuries Christians have gathered at that time to pray for the coming of the Holy Spirit. 'Thy Kingdom Come' picks up this tradition. Over the past three years more and more worshipping communities have dedicated the days between Ascension and Pentecost to pray 'Come Holy Spirit'.

We are praying that the Spirit will inspire and equip us to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with our friends and families, our communities and networks. It has been amazing how many varied ways there have been in which people from every tradition have taken up this challenge. The effects have been remarkable.

It is our prayer that those who have not yet heard the Good News of Jesus Christ and his love for the world will hear it for themselves, and respond and follow Him. Specifically, we again invite each and every Christian across the country to pray that God's Spirit might work in the lives of 5 friends who have not responded with their 'Yes' to God's call.

Whether you have joined in 'Thy Kingdom Come' before or not, we invite you to take part – along with churches from over 65 different denominations in over 170 countries around the world.