

DAILY WAITING

PRAYING

Oh God of longing hearts,
you make a place of stone into a place of life,
you make dry ground into pools of water.
Show us what it means
to live in your presence, to find strength in you,
to create Zion's highways in our hearts
every day, year and season of our lives,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

We meet you in all the places where you dwell.
(Pause) Come Holy Spirit. **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We express our longing and yearning for you.
(Pause) Come Holy Spirit. **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We offer you our journey, for transformation.
(Pause) Come Holy Spirit. **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We bear before you all who travel unrelentingly dusty roads.
(Pause) Come Holy Spirit. **Thy Kingdom Come.**

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

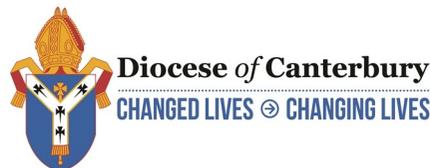
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours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

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with your company.**

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with responsive hearts.**

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with a song on the journey.**

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with yourself.**



CHANGED LIVES @ CHANGING LIVES
NINE DAYS OF PRAYER 2020

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.

DAY 7: ADORE

LISTENING

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!
My soul longs, indeed it faints For the courts of the Lord;
my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God.
Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts,
my King and my God.
Happy are those who live in your house, ever singing your praise.
Happy are those whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the
highways to Zion; As they go through the valley of Baca
they make it a place of springs;
the early rain also covers it with pools.
They go from strength to strength;
the God of gods will be seen in Zion.

(Psalm 84:1-7)

REFLECTING

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

In his poem 'Church going,' the poet Philip Larkin comes across a derelict church and stops to reflect on what meaning it contains, noting that

A serious house on serious earth it is
In whose blent air all our compulsions meet
Are recognised and robed as destinies.
And that much never can be obsolete

The Psalmist might agree. In this Psalm of longing and hope we are reminded that for different reasons birds and bats might be welcome in our churches, nuisance though they may seem, because they turn a place of stone into a living roost and show us that we all can find a home, a place of belonging, in God's presence. Adoring the temple and the experience of being there is a way of expressing love for God who it celebrates with its transcendent beauty. Maybe we ourselves have experienced or seen in others a sense of rebellion or boredom about 'having to go to Church' which can change into longing and joy when God has been encountered there and we can't wait to get back? And this Psalm also captures a sense of the corporate joy of the place where God dwells, where holy praises are forever sung. But outside God's house, life goes on, and sometimes it can seem as if

we're travelling endlessly through a dusty valley, as if we've been living in dust for years and years. The Psalmist again encourages us to discover the life of the place where we are. If 'Zion's pathways' are in our hearts, then that transforms the place where we put our feet and we can find springs of water as we travel through the dry river beds. We know that, after seasonal rains, life can race through these arid parched lands.

As the people of Israel journeyed through the wilderness, the Ark was the tangible reminder of God's presence with them always. On our pilgrimage through whatever land, we can travel lighter, knowing God is with us always, that his mobile, consoling, refreshing presence accompanies us.

He comes to us. We come to him. And we adore the place - wherever it is - where that occurs.

As time allows, share your insights with one another.

A Song of the Wilderness

- 1 The wilderness and the dry land shall rejoice, the desert shall blossom and burst into song.
 - 2 They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.
 - 3 Strengthen the weary hands, and make firm the feeble knees.
 - 4 Say to the anxious, 'Be strong, fear not, your God is coming with judgement, coming with judgement to save you.'
 - 5 Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
 - 6 Then shall the lame leap like a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy.
 - 7 For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert;
 - 8 The ransomed of the Lord shall return with singing, with everlasting joy upon their heads.
 - 9 Joy and gladness shall be theirs, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.
- Isaiah 35.1,2b-4a,4c-6,10

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