

DAILY WAITING

NINE DAYS OF PRAYER 2022



CHANGED LIVES



CHANGING LIVES

DAY: 4

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.

LISTENING

You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1 PETER 2:5, NIV)

REFLECTING

In a building, each and every brick is essential. Christ says that each and every one of us is a living stone of His church, dependent on one another and an essential part of the structure.

Every building begins with the foundation. No structure will ever hold if the foundations aren't deep and sure. As Christians, as living stones in the construction of God, we have one foundation: Jesus Christ. The difference between being the living stones of the Church and dead wood of our

own construction is the need to renew, deepen and celebrate our foundations in Christ every day. We crumble as soon as we build on any other foundation except Jesus.

In the places to which Peter is writing, buildings were a way for people to show off their power and status. Not unlike today, people would build elaborate monuments, physical structures which denoted success, strength, and social standing. But the Christians Peter addresses were powerless. They couldn't compete with these displays of grandeur or celebrate their faith in the power of God through building impressive places of worship.

Taking these words to heart, it would seem that for Peter it does not matter if you cannot build huge temples or erect great monuments to God. It is not about these outward displays. The stones He wants are 'rejected by humans but chosen by God' [1 Peter 2:4]. God wants the outcast, the unwanted, the unloved, the rejected. These are the people whose lives can be testament to the greatness of grace. Our lives, our bodies, our very beings bear witness to the transformative power of God who has a place for each one of us. And this happens as we are built together into a spiritual house for God.

To be a living stone is to glorify God with our lives rather than build for our own glory or power. It is to transform the way we understand power and status. It is to go exactly where God needs us to be. It is to transform and be transformed – from being ignored, neglected, and oppressed – to being a part of God's divine plan. It is to inhabit the language of living as God's people. And each person is essential in this. The five that you hold before God in prayer have an essential place to take in His building. Only the Holy Spirit can do this.

Today, we reflect on how our lives glorify God and testify to His grace in a way that nothing we ever build ourselves could. Let us pray for deeper and stronger foundations in Jesus that keep us steady, that the Holy Spirit might build us into a dwelling for His glory.

PSALM 91 (NRSV)

- 1 You who live in the shelter of the Most High,
who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,
- 2 will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress;
my God, in whom I trust."
- 3 For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler
and from the deadly pestilence;
- 4 he will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will
find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.
- 5 You will not fear the terror of the night,
or the arrow that flies by day,
- 6 or the pestilence that stalks in darkness,
or the destruction that wastes at noonday.
- 7 A thousand may fall at your side,
ten thousand at your right hand,
but it will not come near you.
- 8 You will only look with your eyes
and see the punishment of the wicked.
- 9 Because you have made the LORD your refuge,
the Most High your dwelling place,
- 10 no evil shall befall you, no scourge come near your tent.

**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.**

PRAYING

God, our only true Architect, builder of all loving homes,
As Jesus was welcomed into the home of Mary and Martha,
And as he entered the house of Simon Peter to heal the sick,
May we welcome friends and strangers into our homes,

Offering respite and hope.
Bless our homes with trust, respect, and an ever-open door,
And our hospitals as places of healing.
Amen.

We meet your word in Gospel story and Epistle teaching.

(Pause)

Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We express thanks for and to our hospitals, for the burden they have carried in Covid.

(Pause)

Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We offer our churches as shelters of refuge and hope.

(Pause)

Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We bear before you the homeless we pass daily on our streets.

(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 foundations of faith to keep us upright.**

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with windows open to hope.**

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with a roof of love to protect the stranger.**

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

