

DAILY WAITING

NINE DAYS OF PRAYER 2022



CHANGED LIVES



CHANGING LIVES

DAY: 8

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

For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to human standards in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.

(1 PETER 4:6, NIV)

REFLECTING

Sometimes we make happen the very things we most want to avoid. One thing we often fear, and yet create for ourselves, is separation. We feel distant from those who are different to us, those we consider 'other'. We feel separated from those who have gone before.

Sometimes we feel separated from God. Some people we think are beyond reach. Sometimes we feel beyond

reach ourselves, consumed by darkness, loneliness and fear.

What a profound message then for us in this passage. Jesus descends into the darkness, into the places we fear most, to bring us out of death and into life. Those who are consumed by darkness hear the Good News and are brought into the glorious light of God. Those who are dead are made to live new lives, which witness to the miracles of God.

Many people may be physically alive, but they are not truly living. There are those who live submerged by circumstances, situations, and anxieties. The gospel gives people new life – God turns dead ends into turning points, rejection into acceptance, death into new life. It says that no-one is beyond redemption. There is no sin God doesn't forgive when repentance is true. Those whom we give up on, whom we consider past hope, God never stops searching for. When they are found, God celebrates: 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep' (Luke 15:6).

The generosity of God overflows with such power that even death is swept away. Whilst we do not fully understand the mechanisms of salvation, we are encountered by the one who gives life to the dead. Where people turn away, God welcomes. Where we are tempted to judge, God calls us to love. When flesh inevitably dies, spirit lives. It is a call to live according to God's standards, rather than wither according to our own. Pray today for your five friends, that the

Spirit of the one who crosses every boundary to bring the message of His love might reach them.

As you pray for your five people today, remember this: no one is beyond the presence and promise of God.

PSALM 18 (NRSV)

- 1 I love you, O Lord, my strength.
- 2 The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer,
my God, my rock in whom I take refuge,
my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
- 3 I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised;
so I shall be saved from my enemies.
- 4 The cords of death encompassed me;
the torrents of perdition assailed me;
- 5 the cords of Sheol entangled me;
the snares of death confronted me.
- 6 In my distress I called upon the Lord; to my God I cried for help.
From his temple he heard my voice, and my cry to him reached his ears.

**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, your love pursues us;
In fear we run and hide,
Yet you reach us at the edges and in the shadows.
Draw us into the light of your grace,
Where every kind of darkness loses its power;
Form us into communities of your love,
Where every person finds a warm embrace.
Amen.

We meet your word in honesty and vulnerability,
(Pause)

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

We express thanks for those who have made us
welcome when we have felt on the edge.

(Pause)

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

We offer ourselves to carry lights into the darkness of
exclusion, division and hostility.

(Pause)

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

We bear before you those who feel they are beyond
reach.

(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 the wisdom to
discern our own darkness.
Come Holy Spirit: gift us with resolve to work for
reconciliation and inclusion.
Come Holy Spirit: gift us with the courage to
cross borders and sit with
those who feel like outcasts.
Come Holy Spirit: gift us with yourself.**