

**PRAYING**

*Silence is kept for several minutes, to allow people to pray for the 5 people they have chosen to pray for throughout the Novena. It may be appropriate to invite people to speak those names aloud if they wish to.*

Thank you Lord for your presence with us and your promise of power in the Holy Spirit. We pray for increased openness to minister in your power within our communities.

May we all be deepening our discipleship as we share our faith with those around us.

Reveal to us where you are at work, and make us ready to play our part. Amen.

*(Prayer written by Alison Callway - Licensed Lay Minister in the North Downs Benefice)*

We meet your word with open hearts, inviting you to visit us again.

*(Pause)* Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We give you thanks for the gift of your Spirit flowing to every corner of our lives.

*(Pause)* Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We offer to you our prayers for those living out their faith in the world of business and commerce.

*(Pause)* Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We bear before you those who are homeless, with no safe place to rest and be refreshed.

*(Pause)* Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

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

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with alertness to know when you are knocking at the door.**

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with kindness, to welcome, to include and to make room.**

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

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 an instruction, plain text is to be read by a leader, bold text is to be read together. The reflection is taken from the Thy Kingdom Come 2024 Novena booklet by Bishop Anthony Poggo, Secretary General of the Anglican Communion).

**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

"Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me. To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches." (Revelation 3:20-22, NRSV)

### REFLECTING

Don't you just love these wonderful verses? They are amongst the most precious verses in the New Testament to so many Christians around the world. One of the most famous paintings of Christ by Victorian artist William Holman Hunt shows Christ knocking on a door that has no handle on the outside and can only be opened from within. He said that he painted it, '...with what I thought to be divine command, and not simply a good subject.'

In these verses the Lord Jesus writes to Christians at Laodicea who thought themselves to be spiritually rich, better than others, and needing nothing. He invited them to realise that they were, 'poor, blind and naked'; and to open the door of their church and the doors of their hearts, so that Christ could make them all they were meant to be. Laodicea was known for its rich cloth, its eye medicine and its wealth; however we are not called to focus on materialistic things. We are called to be like the Lord Jesus. We are never to be defined simply by our nationality, our wealth or poverty, our education or our occupation but by our being, to use St Paul's expression, 'in Christ.' Inviting Christ to share our life is not just a conversion decision, though it is that 'great transaction' of which baptism is the great illustration and symbol. It is a daily essential, no matter for how long we have been a Christian.

There is an African proverb which says, 'A canoe is never too big to capsize.' There are times when it is our pride, our determination to be self-made men and women, that gets in the way of our becoming more like the Lord Jesus. We are never too big, too old, too mature, too clever, too important to need to be carried by Christ. Just like the disciples on the road to Emmaus in Luke 24, we find that when we

open the door to Christ, the guest becomes the host. May we show hospitality to all, for by so doing some people have offered hospitality to angels (Hebrews 13:2).

Pray that your five may also have the humility to hear Christ knocking and calling at the door of their lives and open the door to welcome Jesus as He waits to welcome them.

Luke 6:27-36 (NRSV)

27 "But to you who are listening I say:

**Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,**

28 bless those who curse you,

**pray for those who mistreat you.**

29 If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also.

**If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them.**

30 Give to everyone who asks you,

**and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back.**

**31 Do to others as you would have them do to you.**

32 "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you?

**Even sinners love those who love them.**

33 And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you?

**Even sinners do that.**

34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you?

**Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full.**

35 But love your enemies, do good to them,

**and lend to them without expecting to get anything back.**

Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High,

**because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.**

**36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.**

**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.**