

PRAYING

Spirit of God, renew your church. We bring our empty vessels, the things we need but don't have – Fill up our lack; Teach us to turn to you when we find ourselves in need. We bring our fears and concerns for the future – Overflow our limitations; Give us confidence to explore the new, the different, the unfamiliar. We bring the parched and scorched places – Make of us streams in the wasteland, That we may carry your refreshing to the whole earth. **Amen.**

We meet your word in the places we've never dared go before. *(Pause)*
Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We give thanks for the never-ending, life-giving power of your Holy Spirit. *(Pause)*
Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We offer our own lives to be landing places for your presence. *(Pause)*
Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**

We bear before you all those who are pioneering new ways of being church. *(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 words of hope and healing.**

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with boldness to try new things.**

Come Holy Spirit: **gift us with fresh wonder at the
transformations you can work.**

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

CHANGING LIVES



CHANGED LIVES



NINE DAYS OF PRAYER 2023

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 2023 Novena booklet by the Very Reverend Bob Keys.)

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: 9

LISTENING

This is how we know that we live in Him and He in us: He has given us of His Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world. (1 John 4:13, NIV)

REFLECTING

I think of it as the Niagara effect. If you have ever been to a great waterfall like Niagara on the Canadian-American border, or the Victoria Falls on the Zambezi river, or even if you have just seen pictures, you can imagine the limitless flow of water. The quantity, the power, the glorious array of colours of the light on the water combine to give an awe-inspiring picture of the beauty of God's creation. Now join me in taking that picture one stage further. Imagine you have a cup or a glass at the bottom of the falls. It would enjoy a never-ending supply of thirst quenching power-giving water. That's the Niagara effect and that's a picture of the Pentecost power of the Holy Spirit. Pentecost, which we celebrate tomorrow, is the day when what Jesus calls 'the gift my Father promised' (Acts 1:4) arrives. The Holy Spirit blows the early Christians out of their comfort zone and into the world to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. They were filled with the fullness of the Holy Spirit, who came with great signs full of significance and power. Luke tells us being filled with the Spirit was something that happened several times over as new opportunities for the Gospel opened up or new situations arose.

The phrase St Paul uses to talk about that filling of the Spirit translates literally as 'be being filled' (Ephesians 5:18). This is a Greek present tense suggesting a continuous action. We are to go on and on being filled with the Spirit. It's the Niagara effect. As the glasses of our lives are held under the limitless, dynamic, powerful provision of God the Holy Spirit, then there is enough to meet our every spiritual need. Perhaps even more importantly, there is overflow to show Christ's love, grace, power and salvation to those around us. That's how St John structures today's verse. The Spirit comes to the believer and the outcome is that we see and share that Jesus is the Saviour of the world. Christ in us and the Gospel in the world. That's what tomorrow's feast of Pentecost is all about. We pray that the Holy Spirit of God will open and fill the lives of our five folk today.

We can't 'Live the Kingdom' in our own strength. But, with the Niagara effect of the Holy Spirit, anything is possible.

PSALM 42 (NRSV)

- 1 As a deer longs for flowing streams,
so my soul longs for you, O God.
- 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When shall I come and behold the face of God?
- 3 My tears have been my food day and night,
while people say to me continually, 'Where is your God?'
- 4 These things I remember, as I pour out my soul:
how I went with the throng, and led them in procession to the house of God,
with glad shouts and songs of thanksgiving,
a multitude keeping festival.
- 5 Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help and my God.
- 6 My soul is cast down within me; therefore I remember you
from the land of Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.
- 7 Deep calls to deep at the thunder of your cataracts;
all your waves and your billows have gone over me.
- 8 By day the Lord commands his steadfast love,
and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life.
- 9 I say to God, my rock, 'Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I walk about mournfully because the enemy oppresses me?'
- 10 As with a deadly wound in my body, my adversaries taunt me,
while they say to me continually, 'Where is your God?'
- 11 Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help and my God.

**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.**