

DAILY WAITING

NINE DAYS OF PRAYER 2021



CHANGED LIVES → CHANGING LIVES

DAY 2: THANKS

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

Solomon's Dedication of the Temple

²² Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands to heaven.

²³ He said, "O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and steadfast love for your servants who walk before you with all their heart,

²⁴ the covenant that you kept for your servant my father David as you declared to him; you promised with your mouth and have this day fulfilled with your hand.

(1 Kings 8:22-24, NRSV)

REFLECTING

Thank you is such an overused word, too easily spoken, rarely carrying weight. We aren't talking here about the 'thank you' we learnt to say when taught to mind our Ps and Qs, nor the 'thank you' of appreciation given to someone who holds the door open for us. This is more even than the

‘thank you’ we give when our birthday gift turns out to be what we’d always wanted but never realised, though this does get nearer the meaning.

Solomon’s ‘THANK YOU’ is more like the one we say when we find our way home in a storm, after we were sure we were lost; or when a stranger returns the irreplaceable Stradivarius violin we left on the train; when the neighbour finds our toddler, straying on the street. It is the ‘thank you’ we give when we look back with steadfast faith, able to reflect on the crises of our lives, and see God has been there helping us to build up something beautiful to God’s glory.

Not many of us are called to build a temple. Solomon’s pledge to fulfil his father’s vow took seven years, hundreds of workers and artisans, a huge variety of tools and materials, the rough and the smooth, precious gold and common cedar, dull stone and shining bronze, all contributing to the complete temple. Not to mention strong backs and great patience in the face of set-backs and foul weather. It was a test of endurance, suffered in order to glorify God.

And we are all called to build something – be it a house or garden, a family, a work team, a parish, a mature Christian life. For this we need stamina, steadfastness and patience in a crisis.

Whenever I call, Love

You’re there

To listen me through

One more crisis’. (Donna Hardy, Songs to a Watchful Lover, A Journey through the Psalms, 2003, Psalm 116).

And when the crisis is over, when we see some progress towards our contribution to God's will, let's stand back and take stock of the work we have achieved in co-operation with God, with the blessing of the Spirit. Let us give ourselves a moment, when the work is complete, to sit and rest, admire the view, and confirm: 'These are thy wonders, Lord of Power' (G. Herbert, The Flower).

PSALM

5 Gracious is the LORD, and righteous;
our God is merciful.
6 The LORD protects the simple;
when I was brought low, he saved me.
7 Return, O my soul, to your rest,
for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.
8 For you have delivered my soul from death,
my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling.
9 I walk before the LORD
in the land of the living.
17 I will offer to you a thanksgiving sacrifice
and call on the name of the LORD.
18 I will pay my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all his people,
19 in the courts of the house of the LORD,
in your midst, O Jerusalem.
Praise the LORD!
(Psalm 116:5-9, 17-19, NRSV)

**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

Unstinting God,
You keep your promise and covenant of care.
When I am depleted,
You full-fill me;
When I am exhausted,
You give me rest;
When I am half-finished,
You complete me with unswerving love.
Amen.

We meet your Word in times of rest and labour;
(Pause)
Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**
We express our thanks for all who use their hands to your
glory;
(Pause)
Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**
We offer you our co-operation to work within your vision;
(Pause)
Come Holy Spirit: **Thy Kingdom Come.**
We bear before you those who's plans have come to a full-
stop.
(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 harmony with our fellow workers.

Come Holy Spirit: gift us with simple-hearted gratitude.

Come Holy Spirit: gift us with the opportunity to rest in wonder.

Come Holy Spirit: gift us with yourself.

