

The Meon Bridge Benefice



POCKET PRAYERS FROM THE FIRE SERVICE TO PENTECOST



Adapted from Thy Kingdom Come Novena 2018

Welcome to the 2018 Pocket Prayers

We invite you to pray with Christians from around the world during the nine days between Ascension and Pentecost, using art and scripture. Changed Lives → Changing Lives is our guiding theme this year as we pray afresh for the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

In doing so, we join thousands of others around the world as part of *Thy Kingdom Come* – an initiative encouraging people to explore through prayer how they might courageously witness to God’s life-changing work.

As the apostles prayed together following Jesus’ ascension, waiting for the Holy Spirit to come at Pentecost, so we wait and pray today. They prayed in obedience, trusting that the way ahead would be revealed. May we, like the disciples, pray anticipating that the Spirit will show us new ways of living and loving. May we be open to where God leads us, to be the change God wants to see in the world - whatever that might require.

As God is at work in us he is also at work *through us* changing the lives of others. Please join with us as we pray together: ‘Come Holy Spirit: thy kingdom come’ and may our waiting and praying this Novena open our hearts afresh to God’s possibilities.

How to use these Pocket Prayers each day

LOOK at these scenes and meet the characters caught up in life-changing moments, where the future is shaped by their encounter with God. Let the images reveal new possibilities for God’s Word to transform us and others.

WAIT prayerfully for the Holy Spirit. Pause, creating a space into which God can speak.

READ the Bible text, allow it to enliven your heart, stir your soul and spark your imagination.

LISTEN for insight through idea or image, through recollection or curiosity. Let that Word dwell within you, as you listen for yourself and your community.

RESPOND to the prompting of the Word, with an action that leads to life-giving change.

Let the words of the collect gather up and bless these moments of prayerful waiting upon God, so his Kingdom might be seen more fully in you.

Introduction to time from Ascension to Pentecost

Pentecost (from the Greek *pentekoste*, 'fiftieth' of fifty days of celebration) has its roots in the Jewish Feast of Weeks, which was completed on the fiftieth day after Passover. On the fiftieth day of Easter, God sends his Holy Spirit to empower the Church to perform the mission which the risen Christ has entrusted to it; and he inaugurates the messianic community of perfect communication. Pentecost celebrates both the Holy Spirit and the Christian Church. It was originally the crown and completion of the Easter season; only later, in the medieval West, did it become a new festival season of its own.

After the Easter Vigil, the time of Pentecost was a preferred occasion for baptism in early Christian centuries, and the services of Pentecost also reflect this baptismal theme. Christ's disciples are born again of water and the spirit. There is some evidence that the ascension was first celebrated on the fiftieth day of Easter, but it was soon moved to the fortieth day in faithfulness to Luke's chronology. Ascension and Pentecost are closely linked. The risen Lord is no longer present to the Church in the body of his flesh; the Church is now to be the new body of Christ, filled with his life through the gift of the Spirit.

The Sunday after Pentecost came to be kept in the West as Trinity Sunday, although it was not prescribed as a universal feast until 1334. In a sense, every feast must be a festival of the Trinity, because the whole Trinity is at work in every moment of creation, redemption and sanctification; but Trinity Sunday provides a particular occasion to reflect on the revelation of God's self as Trinity, immediately after the Great Fifty Days of Easter. The numbering of the following Sundays 'after Trinity' continues the practice of *The Book of Common Prayer*.

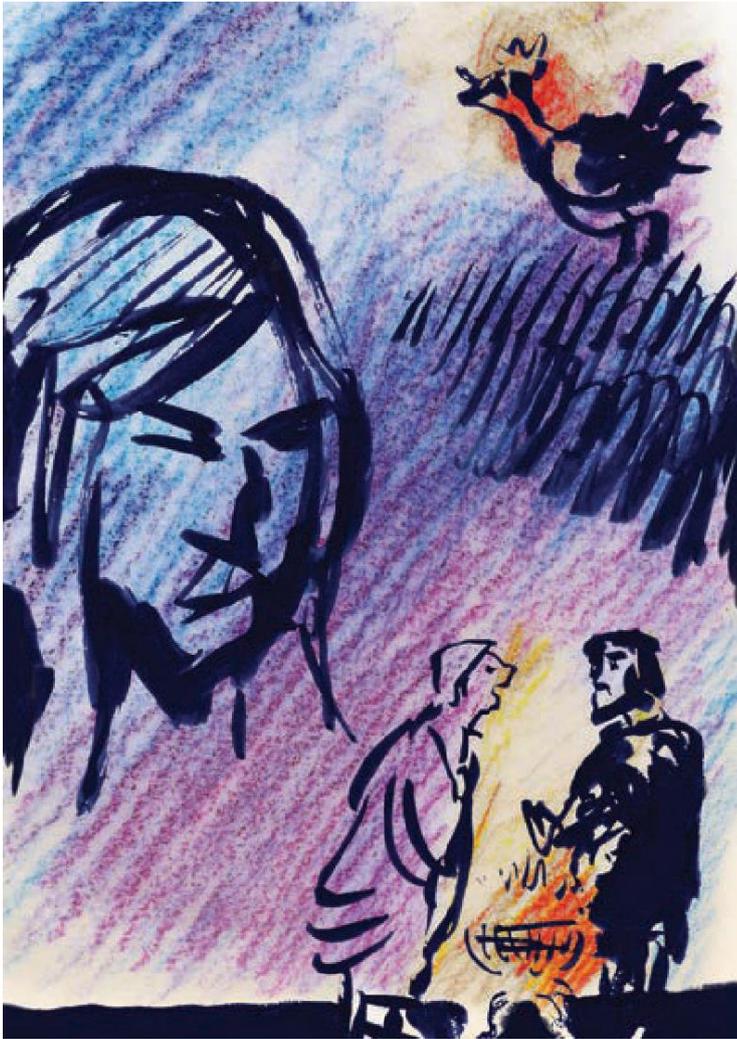
Thy Kingdom Come



Thy Kingdom Come is an annual global prayer movement, which invites Christians around the world to pray between Ascension and Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus Christ. What started out as an invitation from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York in 2016 to the Church of England has grown into an international and ecumenical call to prayer.

Our hope is that:

- people will commit to pray with God's world-wide family - as a church, individually or as a family;
- people will be empowered through prayer by the Holy Spirit, finding new confidence to be witnesses for Jesus Christ.



**Sunday 13 May:
Sorry**

LOOK... and be curious.

WAIT... with prayerful expectation.

Come Holy Spirit: Thy Kingdom Come.

READ... the text with an open mind.

While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, "You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth." But he denied it, saying, "I do not know or understand what you are talking about." And he went out into the forecourt. Then the cock crowed. And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the

bystanders, "This man is one of them." But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, "Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean." But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know this man you are talking about." At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, "Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times." And he broke down and wept.

(Mark 14:66-72)

LISTEN... for a word with a willing heart.

RESPOND... with prayer and action.

O God of the cock-crow and the bitter tears, may our hearts be truly broken by every denial of your long, suffering love for us, every rejection of each other, every cowardly and self-protective moment.

With the morning, bring your mending so that dauntless we may find ourselves able to walk the way of the cross again

Amen.



**Monday 14 May:
Offer**

LOOK... and be curious.

WAIT... with prayerful expectation.

Come Holy Spirit: Thy Kingdom Come.

READ... the text with an open mind.

They brought the child to Eli. And she said, "Oh, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the Lord. For this child I prayed; and the Lord has granted me the petition that I made to him. Therefore, I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he lives, he is given to the Lord."

She left him there for the

Lord.

(1 Samuel 1:25b-28)

LISTEN... for a word with a willing heart.

RESPOND... with prayer and action.

O self-surrendering God,
you are glad for each gift we offer up to you.

As Hannah let go of everything she had prayed for, everything she had longed for, everything you blessed her with, it seems her heart did not break and that you blessed her more.

So, in our letting go of everything we pray for, and everything we long for, may we too know your blessing breaking in our lives.

Amen.



Tuesday 15 May:

Pray for

LOOK... and be curious.

WAIT... with prayerful expectation.

Come Holy Spirit: Thy Kingdom Come.

READ... the text with an open mind.

“Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone? Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!”

(Matthew 7:7-12)

LISTEN... for a word with a willing heart.

RESPOND... with prayer and action.

O God of invitation, as we stand at the door,
as we ask the hard questions, as we search you out,
may we sense you already at work preparing a feast of answers,
drawing us over the threshold and satisfying all our hungers.

Amen.



Wednesday 16 May:

Help

LOOK... and be curious.

WAIT... with prayerful expectation.

Come Holy Spirit: Thy Kingdom Come.

READ... the text with an open mind.

When he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door; and he was speaking the word to them. Then some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the

roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven ... I say to you, stand up, take your mat and go to your home." And he stood up, and immediately took the mat and went out before all of them; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

(Mark 2:1-5, 11-12)

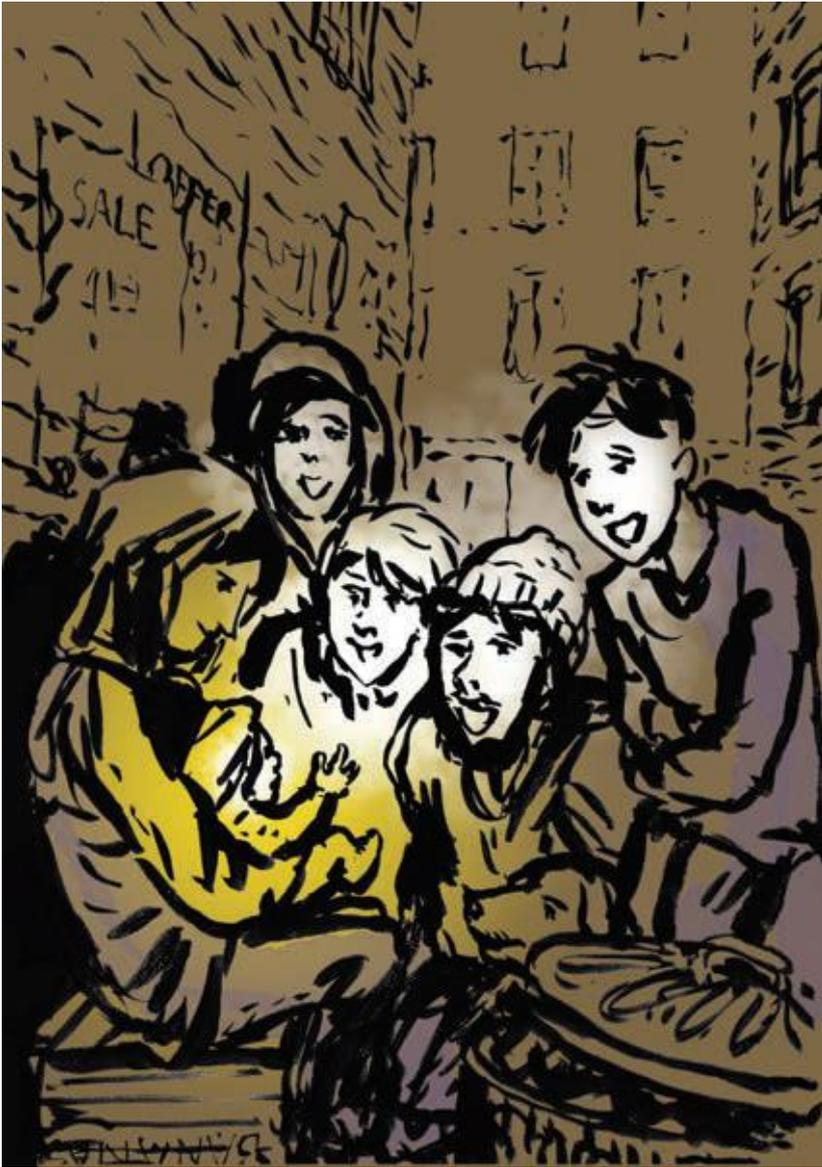
LISTEN... for a word with a willing heart.

RESPOND... with prayer and action.

O faithful God,
help us to find our way through the crowd to you.

Grant us faith to rip off the roof so we may see your face;
help us not to mind the mess
when we bring others into your presence for the first time.

And if we should ourselves be paralyzed by fear and indecision
bless us with friends who will place us before your eyes and entreat your healing.
Amen.



**Thursday 17 May:
Adore**

LOOK... and be curious.

WAIT... with prayerful expectation.

Come Holy Spirit: Thy Kingdom Come.

READ... the text with an open mind.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ... And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!" The shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So, they

went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ... The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

(Luke 2:8, 13-18, 20 abr.)

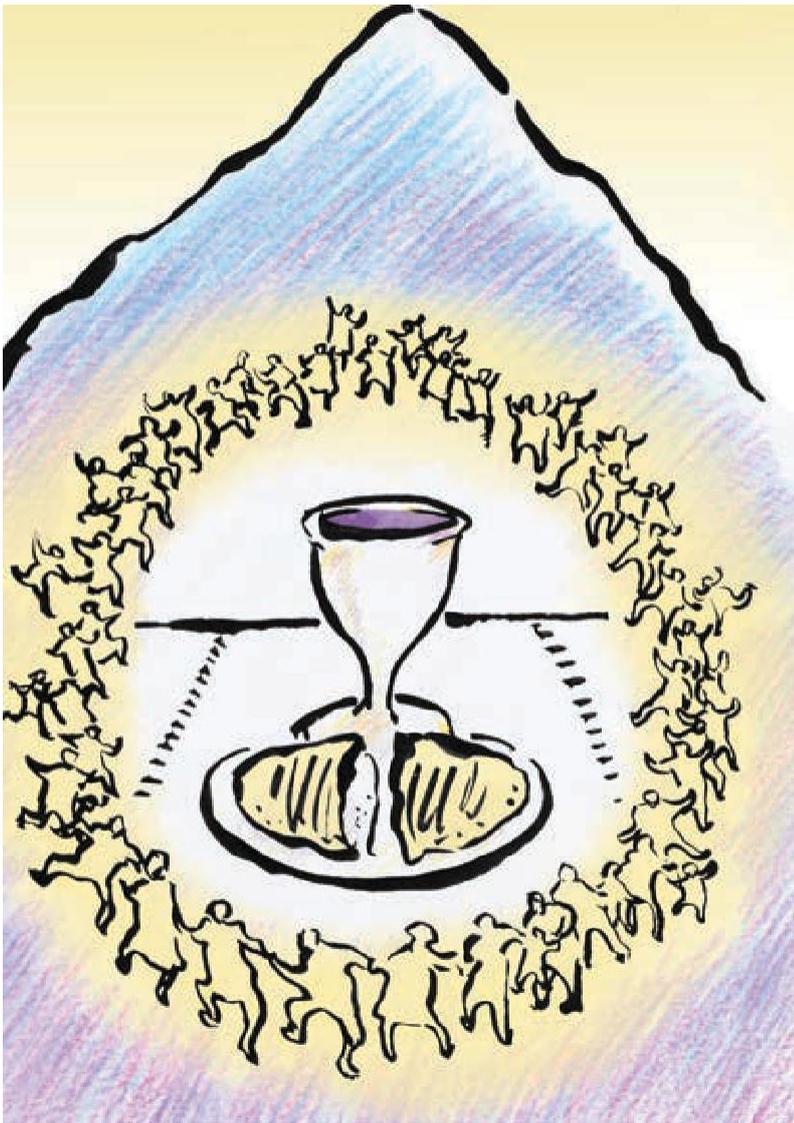
LISTEN... for a word with a willing heart.

RESPOND... with prayer and action.

O revealing God,
as we stand transfixed in an unexpected place, crumpled and surprised to find ourselves here, invited, yet uncertain on the threshold,
help us to recognise our gorgeous Lord Jesus. Drawn in, may we kneel in wonder.

May we go away changed.

May we draw others to the stable too. Amen.



**Friday 18 May:
Celebrate**

LOOK... and be curious.

**WAIT... with prayerful
expectation.**

Come Holy Spirit: Thy
Kingdom Come.

**READ... the text with an
open mind.**

On this mountain the Lord of
hosts will make for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of
well-aged wines, of rich food
filled with marrow, of well-
aged wines strained clear. And
he will destroy on this
mountain the shroud that is
cast over all peoples, the sheet
that is spread over all nations;
he will swallow up death
forever. Then the Lord God
will wipe away the tears from
all faces, and the disgrace of

his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. It will be said on that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us. This is the Lord for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation. For the hand of the Lord will rest on this mountain.

(Isaiah 25:6-10)

LISTEN... for a word with a willing heart.

RESPOND... with prayer and action.

O gentle God,
you cross all the barriers of separation; longing to be near us,
you wipe away our tears,
you shower us with precious gifts; your comfort soothes away our shame.

May we spread the word that you have spread a table
- and that all are welcome at your feast. Amen.



Saturday 19 May:

Silence

LOOK... and be curious.

WAIT... with prayerful expectation.

Come Holy Spirit: Thy Kingdom Come.

READ... the text with an open mind.

I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope;

my soul waits for the Lord

more than those who watch for the morning, more than those who watch for the morning.

(Psalm 130:5-6)

LISTEN... for a word with a willing heart.

RESPOND... with prayer and action.

O God of the new day,
Your Son Jesus knew what it meant
to watch and wait through the dark silence of the longest night.

Teach us how to wait with heaven's indrawn breath on tiptoe with anticipation,
until all of our being reaches towards you, all our desire is for you,
and all our onward movement is for your Kingdom coming. Amen.

The Day of Pentecost – Sunday 20th May 2018



Jesus Christ, whom we worship, is our crucified, risen and ascended Lord and we have walked with him through his journey of love.
We have faced the agony of his suffering and death on a cross.
We have rejoiced at his bursting free from the bonds of death.
We have enjoyed his risen presence with us
and his revelation of himself through the breaking of bread.
We have seen his return to the throne before which every knee shall bow
and every tongue confess that this Jesus is Lord.
And now, with the followers of his own time,
we await the coming of the promised Holy Spirit, his gift to his people,
through whom we make Christ known to the world.

God, who as at this time
taught the hearts of your faithful people
by sending to them the light of your Holy Spirit:
grant us by the same Spirit
to have a right judgement in all things
and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort;
through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Spirit of truth lead us into all truth,
give us grace to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
and strengthen us to proclaim the word and works of God. Amen.

The artist: Ian Pentney

Ian Pentney is an Architect and Illustrator based in London and is currently taking an MA in Children's Books and Graphic Novels at Middlesex University.

He says:

“Drawing has always been a passion for me since I was a little boy and is central to my practice as an Architect and as an Illustrator. I use drawing with or without colour to communicate design ideas and as a narrative tool in storytelling. I'm also passionate about keeping travel sketchbooks, using the medium of pen and watercolour to explore the uniqueness of place.

The opportunity to work on the Novena is, I think, a wonderful one, because it brings together all the things I am most passionate about. For me, my faith is really very central and I love this idea of using image and text together to help people to find a way to pray. For me, that's sort of the perfect project.”

View more of Ian's work at www.ianpentney.com

These pocket prayers are provided to help you pray daily, whenever and wherever you can, between Ascension and Pentecost. You will be joining individuals, groups, schools, churches and deaneries praying together throughout Kent, the UK and the world.

Pray expecting the Holy Spirit to empower us in new ways; wait for a renewing experience of God's strengthening to us and our Christian communities.

Additional prayer resources, including Daily Waiting liturgies with reflections, can be found at: www.canterburydiocese.org/novena



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