

Thy Kingdom Come Day 1: Amazing Grace (Psalm 150)



Thy Kingdom Come is a global prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray from Ascension to Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus.

Since its start in May 2016 God has grown Thy Kingdom Come from a dream of possibility into a movement. Christians from 172 countries have taken part in praying 'Come Holy Spirit', so that friends and family, neighbours and colleagues might come to faith in Jesus Christ.

This praying together has been across our diversity and differences as every person, household and church are encouraged to pray in their own way. It's really good that this initiative that started from the Church of England Archbishops has also become an ecumenical movement of prayer..

During the 11 days of Thy Kingdom Come, we hope that everyone who takes part will:

- *Deepen their own relationship with Jesus Christ*
- *Pray for 5 friends or family to come to faith in Jesus*
- *Pray for the empowerment of the Spirit that we would be effective in our witness*

After the very first Ascension Day the disciples gathered with Mary, constantly devoting themselves to prayer while they waited for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Like them, our reliance on the gift of the Holy Spirit is total – on our own we can do nothing.

Through the centuries Christians have gathered at that time to pray for the coming of the Holy Spirit. 'Thy Kingdom Come' picks up this tradition. So we dedicate the days between Ascension and Pentecost to pray 'Come Holy Spirit'.



We are praying that the Spirit will inspire and equip us to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with our friends and families, our communities and networks. It has been amazing how many varied ways there have been in which people from every tradition have taken up this challenge. The effects have been remarkable.

It is our prayer that those who have not yet heard the Good News of Jesus Christ and his love for the world will hear it for themselves, and respond and follow Him. Specifically, we again invite each and every Christian across the globe to pray that God's Spirit might work in the lives of 5 friends who have not responded with their 'Yes' to God's call.

You might like to write the initials of your friends here.

You will find lots and lots of resources to help you use this time of prayer fruitfully on the website <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/resources/new-2021> This includes a Novena, (if you don't know what that is have a look at the website) which I will be using as the basis of prayers on Facebook each morning from Monday to Thursday on the Methodist Facebook page here <https://www.facebook.com/groups/aemethodists>.

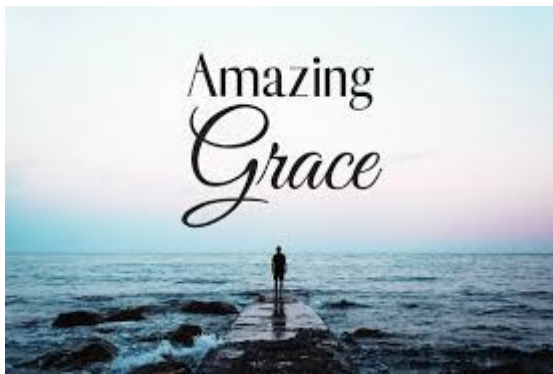
The Novena helps us to pray the Psalms and to use some words from the psalms to inspire our prayers for the five people for whom we are praying especially in this period to come to faith. Today we read Psalm 150

- 1 Praise the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens.
 - 2 Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness.
 - 3 Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre,
 - 4 Praise him with tambourine and dancing, praise him with the strings and pipe,
 - 5 Praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals.
 - 6 Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.
- Praise the Lord.

This psalm continues yesterday's party/celebration theme. Four of the six verses simply list instruments that we can use, and the last verse wraps it all up with the inclusive 'everything' – you, me, animals, plants, the natural order, the cosmos and

the big bang itself! Verse 2 is quite different and specific: Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness. It invites us to catalogue the ways in which God has been involved in shaping our lives, accompanying us on our journey. For the Israelites, they would have thought about their release from Egypt and later from exile, about the promised land, and their God-given kings and prophets. For us too, it invites us to recall times when God came close to us; people who were instrumental in bringing us to faith or building us up; occasions when we have known God's rescuing power from our own sin or from life's troubles.

We do this by remembering those times formally (perhaps in a journal, by telling a friend, or writing our own psalm). If you do this (as we hope you will), two things will happen.



The first is that you will be amazed at how blessed you are by God – by amazing grace!

The second, which flows naturally out of it, is that you will find yourself longing for others whom you know and love to experience this same blessing.

It is this deep longing which gives us the energy to hammer on heaven's door for them until one day they are able to sing this psalm for themselves. Come, Holy Spirit, and give us the gift of story-telling; Help to hear and be changed by our story.

Thy Kingdom Come can sometimes be seen as being about the future, eternity, heaven and all that kind of stuff. But I am constantly reminded about how my New Testament tutor, Neil Richardson, spoke about the kingdom of God as being both now and not yet – a Kingdom theology for now and then!

So let's not be so heavenly minded that we're of no earthly use or, as another saying puts it let our prayer and our talk not just be 'Pie in the sky when I die' but also 'sound as pound while I'm around'. Our prayers are immensely practical, for the five people we name to come to faith in Christ. Prayer doesn't stop there of course, but let

that be our focus for this period up to Pentecost, on Sunday May 23rd.

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