



Thy Kingdom Come 2020

Dear Bishop Rachel,

We write to let you know our thinking as to **Thy Kingdom Come 2020** which runs from Ascension [**21 May**] to Pentecost [**31 May**]. Every single day hundreds of millions of our brothers and sisters around the world say the prayer Jesus put on our lips, praying 'Thy Kingdom Come'. In the past few years, the focus of our prayers in these days between Ascension and Pentecost has been for the coming of the God's Kingdom in the lives of family and friends, neighbours and colleagues that they might come to faith.

But TKC is not a slogan and it is vital we aren't tone deaf to what is occurring around us. The Holy Spirit always has an address, speaking in our mother tongue, thereby applying and particularising the work of Jesus Christ to certain individuals in different locations at distinct times. So, when we pray '**Come Holy Spirit**' during Thy Kingdom Come 2020 we pray in this specific context of the COVID crisis, with all that we face, all that is unknown and all we are helpless before.

Haven't we sensed more than ever the longing for the Kingdom of God – where there is no pain or crying, no injustice or loneliness? Haven't we longed for God's ways to be seen in the world? Haven't we been most moved by those who give their lives to serve all that the Kingdom of God stands for? We long for signs of the Kingdom. And as a church do all we can to serve that Kingdom.

In the light of this the team at TKC have sought to discern what the theme of Thy Kingdom Come 2020 should be. Over past years we have endeavoured to be clear in our messaging – that in these 11 days we pray for the Spirit to work significantly in those who don't follow Christ, that they might encounter his love and peace and make the best decision anyone can ever make – become followers of Jesus. And that they in turn would come to give their lives in service of the Kingdom of God.

But however important prayer is we know the pray-er is called to action. So, this year we will be encouraging all not simply to pray that friends and family, colleagues and neighbours might encounter the love of God in Christ, but that they would experience that love in action. We are calling this '**Prayer and Care**' – care for those you are praying for, pray for those you are caring for. Of course, churches up and down the country doing this is a daily reality, and this time of prayer gives itself to an even deeper engagement with the needs around us. There are many ways we are suggesting this could happen; by care, by contact, by service – but serving as Christ serves.

This year as we pray for others, we pray that they would come to know Christ so that they may come to give their lives to serve God's Kingdom. We will once again encourage every person taking part in TKC to **pray for 5** others who don't know the love of Christ and then to resolve to invite them along to something appropriate once our church buildings are reopened. All this prayer is reliant and expectant that the Holy Spirit would draw more and more to encounter God's love in Christ, so we might be and bring the difference in the world he sends us to stake everything on.

We have attached to this letter five ways churches can be involved in this year's Thy Kingdom Come.

Yours in Christ,
Chris Russell



The Revd Canon Chris Russell | Archbishop of Canterbury's Advisor for Evangelism & Witness
Lambeth Palace, London SE1 7JU | Tel: 020 7898 1180 | Switchboard: 020 7898 1200
chris.russell@lambethpalace.org.uk | www.archbishopofcanterbury.org

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