

Sanctuary First

A PLACE TO BE

Bring Your Kingdom In

June 2019 (02 - 29 June)

During the past few days of the last theme "[Follow Me](#)" the Sanctuary First Community has been joining with Christians from all over the world praying for their families and their communities. They have been praying in a specific way, asking that God would reveal himself to family members and friends, so that those who are seeking faith might find it. Sometimes it's easy to forget that the Christian is called to bring others to faith.

The "Thy Kingdom Come Project" is a 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.

In our readings this month we continue to reflect upon the Lord's prayer and to seek to learn from it ways in which we can sustain our lives to be a witness to those who we love.

We began 2019 with this idea of [Re-Imagining Church](#) and went on to think about our [friendships](#) and our [neighbourhoods](#), seeing them with fresh eyes. We then turned to [behold the remarkable person](#) of Jesus Christ and his life changing words, "[Follow Me](#)"!

So as we reach the halfway point of the year and with the words of Lord's Prayer ringing in our ears, let's continue to reimagine church with old and new friends, in our local neighbourhoods, beholding the man, following him and seeking to bring the Kingdom in!

Each week of the theme runs Sunday-Saturday and has its own subtheme, which contains daily Bible readings and thought triggers.

Date	Subtheme	Readings	Notes
02 June	Bringing Your Kingdom In	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Matthew 6: 10a + Acts 16: 16-23 2. Matthew 6: 10b + Acts 16: 24-34 3. Matthew 6: 11 + Isaiah 55: 1-5 4. Matthew 6: 12 + Isaiah 1: 18 5. Matthew 6: 13a + 1 Corinthians 10: 13 6. Matthew 6: 13b + Revelation 22: 12 7. John 17: 20-26 	<p>Bringing Your Kingdom in... This week we read the Lord's Prayer alongside a series of other readings.</p> <p><i>Some of the verses from Matthew are broken into A/B to denote individual parts of the verse.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Your kingdom come... Confronting culture. In this phrase we are inviting God to bring heaven on earth. Paul certainly found himself paying a high price for confronting the culture of his day. What cultural challenges do we face today? 2. Your will be done on earth as in heaven... The story of the jailor moving from jailhouse to household of faith within a stormy evening is an example of how God can break into the human condition and change our outlook. Did God reward Paul's faithfulness in sharing the good news? Did Paul's and Silas' singing eventually influence the jailor? Does God work despite us or through us? 3. Give us this day our daily bread... Reflect upon the importance of spiritual and physical daily bread and why we need both. 4. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors... Forgiveness is at the heart of the Kingdom of God. God has always been open to love and care for foolish people even when they do foolish things. This passage in Isaiah reminds us of God's grace. The Lord's prayer invites us to be grace filled towards others who have wronged us. 5. Lead us not into temptation... Reflect upon the difference between trials and temptations. Perhaps ask, is it misleading to suggest God might try to lead us into temptations? 6. Deliver us from evil... Reflect upon the danger of assuming evil is a rare commodity we might encounter on occasions. Do we need to be careful we don't turn a blind eye to evil deeds lest we be complicit in our silence? 7. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen. Reflect upon what might be seen as the Glory of God. Could our lives be used to speak of his glory?

Date	Subtheme	Readings	Notes
09 June (Pentecost)	Encounter the power and the glory	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acts 2: 1-2 2. Acts 2: 3-12 + Genesis 11: 1-9 3. Acts 2: 13-15 + Psalm 104: 24-30 4. Acts 2: 16-18 + Joel 2: 26-29 5. Acts 2: 19 + Romans 8: 14-17 6. Acts 2: 20 + John 14: 8-12 7. Acts 2: 21 + John 14: 25-27 	<p>The story of <i>Pentecost</i> is one that tells how a defeated group of believers found a new confidence and boldness in their witness to others about the significance of the death and resurrection of Jesus. This revelation was not only revealed to the immediate believers. Their eyes were opened to understand that others in the community outside of their circle of religious knowledge and faith were also coming to realise that the God of Israel was for everyone.</p> <p>Pentecost is another heavenly extravaganza put on as a sign of the Kingdom. God is at work in the world because it is not our world, it belongs to him.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Heaven's rush hour. The rushing wind speaks of power and change and renewal. Heaven comes and unlocks voices of praise to God and the world stands back in amazement. Do we underplay the significance of the supernatural in our faith? If so, why? 2. Babel is reversed. Reflect upon the idea that Pentecost ushers in a new era of openness. Communication is at the heart of community. Could Pentecost be speaking of the communication that God is longing to have with his creation? 3. It's only 9 o'clock in the morning! Reflect upon the specific time and space that Peter says. It's 9 o'clock and it's the morning. Peter is saying God has touched us in broad day light. Do we expect God to be found in the broad day light of your life? Just when you're about to start work (at 9am or whenever your day starts...) Perhaps the words of wonder from the Psalm can cue us into finding God all around us. 4. It's time for visions and dreams. Reflect upon the idea of expectation. Might we not discover God when we are willing to? He might speak to us not only through people but through a dream or a long held vision. Perhaps we need the courage to share a vision and open a faith door for a friend or a member of our family? 5. Look out for the signs of the Kingdom. Reflect: perhaps there are great problems with those who are looking for signs round every corner. But could there be greater problems for those who just refuse to think God speaks through signs and wonders? 6. Check out the red moon. Red moons happen from time to time. Reflect upon the unusual movements in creation itself and ask is something missing? Is God telling us something? 7. You better believe it - The Kingdom is the reality. Reflect upon the reality that God has a time appointed for everything. The writings of Paul in Corinthians 13 reminds us that we only see things in shadows now, but there's coming a day when all God's plans will be revealed in all their splendour.

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16 June	Living the dream, sharing the vision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proverbs 8: 1-4, 22-31 2. Psalm 8 3. Romans 5: 1-2 4. Romans 5: 3 5. Romans 5: 4 6. Romans 5: 5 7. John 16:12-15 	<p>Talking to his disciples about the way they should live together everyday, Jesus said "By this shall all people know you are my disciples, because you love one another." So often in our towns and communities as Christians we are seen as groups who are in different camps. Instead of loving each other we are in competition with each other.</p> <p>In our readings this week we are being taught to think beyond the confines of narrow doctrinal positions. Instead we are being invited to view the vastness of God's reach and mercy. If we are to share the vision and the dream of the Kingdom of God. Those of us who say we profess Christ need to learn to live and love together. Indeed we may need to stretch our understanding to see that God's grace extends surer than our narrow perceptions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The mystery of Creator God Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These verses have often been studied alongside St John's prologue. Proverbs 8:30 describes the presence of a co-creator or agent of creation. New Testament writers (see Colossians 1:16, Luke 9.26-27) place Jesus in that role, and that means Jesus gets connected with the wisdom figure of Proverbs 8. 2. Remember we are mere humans... These verses remind us not to grow arrogant and think we are the masters of our world. 3. ...yet sharing in God's glory! The amazing thing is we are called to reflect the Glory of God. 4. Enduring through suffering. It is often in our brokenness that God's glory is revealed through the cracks of our lives. 5. Enduring to produce character and discovering hope. There is something powerful about the idea that enduring to the end is never a failure, it will always point to the hope of Glory. 6. Hope is eternal just like love. It's interesting to reflect upon the Hope of Glory. What does it mean? 7. Enter into the mystery. The Father, The Spirit, The Son... The reality of God invites us so stretch our imaginations, to dream and envision.

Date	Subtheme	Readings	Notes
23 June	Struggle between Grace and Works	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I Kings 19: 1-8 2. I Kings 19: 9-10 3. Psalm 43: 3-5 4. Isaiah 65: 1-9 5. Psalm 22: 19-28 6. Galatians 3: 23-29 7. Luke 8: 26-39 	<p>Last week we reflected on the mystery and glory of a supernatural God. One who appears to break into our laws of physics and suspend them but always with a purpose. A God whose signs and wonders point to another Kingdom, one of grace and completeness.</p> <p>This week we come again to be reminded of the significance of the Cycle of Grace (highlighted in the Church Without Walls report). As Christians we continually find ourselves in a battle between a work ethic to achieve success and the tension of knowing that it is God's world and success is not measured by the same standards. Achievements from God's perspective flow from the place of knowing we are loved and accepted. Yet understanding such love shown by God towards us has been bought with a great price. The grace we receive from God is not cheap grace, it is costly grace. This week our writer will explore the struggle between God's Grace and human achievement.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The exhausted servant. Reflect on the story of Elijah. How easy is it to become disillusioned when facing challenging opposition when we seek to serve? Often our first reaction is to remove ourselves from the situation. We all need time to reflect and regroup. 2. The self absorbed servant. Reflect on the danger of being so focused on one particular aspect of service that we neglect to see the many others around us who are seeking to serve, perhaps from a different perspective, but equally committed to the cause of Christ. 3. When self awareness dawns and God's grace shines. Reflect upon that feeling of undeserved grace and forgiveness that every believer encounters - but think what it might mean to someone who has never been open to encounter grace in this way. 4. When grace is offered and refused. Reflecting upon the open heart of God. 5. When grace never gives up. Continuing on the theme of God's immeasurable love and patience. 6. Grace achieved what the law couldn't. Reflect upon the change of heart that grace brings about in the life and attitudes of the Christian. Explore the rich theme of what it means to 'put on' Christ (see verse 27). 7. Grace and compassion in abundance. This story is an interesting way to finish the week of study around grace. The main character in the story is finally discovered by his neighbours. The King James Version puts it this way "sitting at the feet of Jesus clothed in his right mind". The story begins with a naked mad man running wild and finishes with a scene of hope and serenity. Grace calms the troubled heart.