



THE ARCHBISHOP
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Hundreds of thousands of Christians worldwide will be gearing up to take part in the sixth Thy Kingdom Come– a global ecumenical prayer movement for evangelisation, occurring annually from Ascension to Pentecost (13th – 23rd May this year).

From outdoor Pentecost celebrations to prayer walking in the local community, continuous prayer events (online and in person) to family-friendly services, churches worldwide are taking part in a variety of innovative ways adapting to COVID-19 context.

In the UK, Vineyard Churches UK will host their Digital Bow Down event for the second year running, uniting Christians in a collective moment of prayer for their communities on the 14th May. Participants will be encouraged to use the Lord's Prayer and to light a candle at the end of the 15 minutes to symbolise Christ -Light of the World.

Church groups and dioceses, including Edinburgh Churches Together and the Diocese of London, will host continuous prayer events online, using the Upper Room, a virtual prayer room resource created by 24-7 Prayer – based on the Book Acts.

This year Thy Kingdom Come have created an interactive, fun-filled Escape Room, with Winchester Diocese called 'CaThedral PuRRsuits', designed to appeal to all, including those on the fringes of faith. The Escape Room is suitable for all the Church family and beyond, including youth groups (online).

With restrictions slightly easing, a number of dioceses are planning outdoor (COVID-19 secure) events. For example, Coventry Diocese's Cheeky Panda prayer trails – (inspired by the animation series created for Thy Kingdom Come), will encourage children to find hidden panda posters with daily themed content including QR codes to the animations, suitable for use on Church grounds, parks and wider community. Exeter Diocese will host a Labyrinth on the Cathedral Green to encourage prayer during the 11 days (booking is required) and throughout the summer as part of their 'Pilgrims Path' season.

Prayer walking remains one of the most popular ways churches are getting involved, with many groups - such as Churches Together in Greater Manchester, praying for the needs of the local community using key buildings as a proxy for key social issues such as schools (education system); hospitals (healthcare); shops (the economy) etc, with a number of churches using the Oikos Prayer Walking App by Hope Together.

In addition to praying for friends, family members and neighbours to come to faith in Jesus Christ, many churches are also praying for the needs of their local community and the wider world. For example, this year Southwark Diocese will use this time to pray for five and for the Persecuted Church, and others still, are using this time of prayer, to pray for nations devastated by the COVID-19 Pandemic such as India and Brazil.

A number of Cathedrals are also planning to take part including Wakefield Cathedral, Derby Cathedral will be open to the public for morning and evening prayer over the 11 days, Chelmsford Cathedral – turning the inside of the Cathedral into a map of the diocese for people to pray over the

area.

With a presence in more than 170 countries worldwide, Thy Kingdom Come continues to grow internationally, in terms of depth of engagement, with resources being translated in-country into languages such as Finnish (Finland); Maori (New Zealand) Korean (Korea.), Tamil and Sinhala (Sri Lanka) and Cantonese (Hong Kong). Key resources continue to be translated centrally (in the UK) into French, Spanish and Portuguese.

This year, Christians in countries as diverse as Sudan, Greece, Sri Lanka, Japan, Australia, Canada, Trinidad, America, South Africa, Brazil and Burundi will be involved.

The campaign continues to be supported by senior church figures including His Holiness, Pope Francis and the leaders of the main denominations in the UK, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop Justin Welby, Pastor Agu Irukwu, Archbishop Angaelos and Dr Hugh Osgood and the Church of Scotland Moderator.

Phoebe Parkin – Methodist Youth president – who features in one of the youth reflections and main video, said: I love that through participating in Thy Kingdom Come, I know I am praying with people of all ages, of all backgrounds, all over the world. Especially as a young person, it is really reaffirming to know that in all things, whether it is praying for social justice, for peace or for others to know Jesus, that we can turn to God and find hope that God hears.'

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, a long-time supporter of the campaign said: 'The Feast of Pentecost, celebrating the coming of the Holy Spirit at the beginning of the Church, is a great moment for our prayer for the spreading of the Gospel of joy in our Lord Jesus Christ. The days of prayer of "Thy Kingdom Come" are a powerful invitation to that prayer. We may also remember the power of the Holy Spirit in the work of Creation, and so include in our prayers the responsibilities we bear for the created world at this significant time.

Pete Greig, Founder of the global 24-7 Prayer Global Movement, who features on this year's TKC app, via Lectio 365 content, said: "Never in any of our lives has the message of Pentecost been so needed in our world. At Pentecost the disciples who have been locked down in the upper room, fearing for their lives, are filled with courage as they take to the streets. It is profoundly a moment of new beginnings for the church, and thus for the world, born out of a constancy and intensity in united prayer. In this moment of bewildering challenge for the church around the world, prayer is the most natural, necessary and wonderful thing we can do. Thy Kingdom Come provides the opportunity for us to petition heaven for a great awakening to occur in our lives, the lives of our loved ones, the life of the church and within the very fabric of our nations. I am excited for these ten days and expectant to see how God responds to the prayers of his people at this time."

The Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell said: "Jesus said 'I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly' (John 10.10). I remember reading this when I became a follower of Jesus Christ as a teenager and it is still central to my understanding of him. I think we can all agree that

life has been so tough this last year. When I think of all those who have struggled, I long for them to know the gift of abundant life Jesus offers, to have their burdens carried by him, and to discover the deep and trustworthy peace he pours out.

"Thy Kingdom Come is about prayer: praying for those on our hearts, praying for those who don't know Jesus - to find him, praying for our Church as we seek to be simpler, humbler and bolder. I pray for you too.

"Sign up to Thy Kingdom Come. Get hold of the resources. Join in prayer together at your local Church. Wherever you are, whatever you do, pray 'Thy Kingdom Come' – in your life, in the lives of those you love, in the lives of your neighbours, friends and companions, in the life of our nation. Thy Kingdom Come O Lord, sweeping gently and with justice and mercy across our world."

The Archbishop has written and recorded a Daily Prayer Journal - [listen here](#)

This year, Thy Kingdom Come have created resources for all ages including the Cheeky Pandas animation series for children and the app which was produced by Missional Generation, Youth reflections for young people in partnership with the Archbishop of York's Trust and the main 11 videos including a diverse range of voices including Bishop Rose Hudson Wilkin, Archbishop Angaelos and the music video for the civic hymn – 'We Seek Your Kingdom' featuring Noel Robinson, Andy Flannagan, Lou Fellingham and Donna Akodu, created with LICC.

The campaign has also been very intentional re. increasing its offering of accessible resources, providing most of the videos in BSL, large print versions of the Novena and Prayer Journal (also available in Braille via the Torch Trust) and activity packs for children with learning disabilities.

About this year's resources: Thy Kingdom Come have created a range of [digital resources for all ages](#) this year including:

- For children, an 11- part animation series for children, called the Cheeky Pandas packed with Bible stories, animations, worship, prayer and high-profile guests including Nicky Gumbel, Bear Grylls, Pastor Agu and Sola Irukwu, Pete and Sammy Greig, CBeebies Gemma Hunt and BBC'S Radzi Chinyanganya.
- For Youth, Thy Kingdom Come have produced a series of [11 video reflections](#) from young influencers including Guvna B, Elle Limebear, Joshua Luke Smith and Pippa Baker with accompanying discussion plans suitable for use in colleges, homes and youth groups.
- For All – Video contributors this year include frontline workers – the 'hidden heroes of the pandemic'; Archbishop Stephen Cottrell; Archbishop Angaelos, Bishop Rose Hudson-Wilkin; Methodist Youth President, Phoebe Parkin, music video of the [civic hymn – 'We Seek Your Kingdom' with LICC](#) and newly created films celebrating modern 'heroes of faith' Corrie & Betsie Ten Boom and CS Lewis.
- The award-winning TKC App this year, features content from global prayer movement, 24-7 Prayer's Lectio 365's app comprising audio reflections from Archbishop Justin Welby and Pete Greig and will be available in 8 different languages. The children's app, created by Missional

Generation is also available this year, alongside the Prayer Adventure Map.

- Other digital resources include [The Escape Room](#).

The Archbishop of York has recorded each day of the Prayer Journal that he wrote for Thy Kingdom Come 2021.

You can listen to this [here](#)

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