



*Thy Kingdom Come
In
The Diocese of Lexington*

Seeking a vision for God's People In

WORSHIP, MINISTRY AND MISSION

A time of Prayer from
August 24th to September 1st

During Ascensiontide 2018, the Archbishop of Canterbury called the entirety of the Anglican Communion to a season of prayer for *Thy Kingdom Come*. He asked each of us to join in... *an initiative encouraging people to explore through prayer how they might courageously witness to God's life-changing work.*

Inspired by this, our Bishop, the Rt. Rev'd. Mark Van Koevering, is asking us to consider what *Thy Kingdom Come* looks like in the Episcopal Diocese of Lexington.

As Bishop Mark asked in his first pastoral letter to the Diocese...

I have been reflecting on how we might begin a Great Conversation in our diocese to describe the good that God is doing in and through us so that we might describe a common vision.... This is an invitation for individuals, families and churches to spend nine days in concentrated prayer on the theme of Thy Kingdom Come. As you pray, inquire how you might better live out your call to be the Church and participate in bringing the way of God to grow in the Diocese of Lexington...

To help facilitate a time of prayer for our Diocese, this guide has been developed to lead us through with specific readings and questions along the way.

Following these nine days of prayer, Bishop Mark will offer sermon themes for Sundays, September 2nd, 9th, and 16th, focusing on God's Kingdom made real in our Worship, our Mission and our Ministry.

Come Holy Ghost, our souls inspire, and lighten with celestial fire...

How to use the guide each day...

READ the Bible text, allow it to enliven your heart, stir your soul and spark your imagination. Then pause for a moment and read the passage a second time, asking God what these words might mean for us today.

LOOK at the 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.

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 question each day and bring your reflections with you to church on Sunday, September 2nd, where they will be gathered and used in seeking a collective vision for what God is calling us to be in the Diocese of Lexington. Or if your church is not collecting the responses, simply mail them to:

The Episcopal Diocese of Lexington
Attn: Thy Kingdom Come
P.O. Box 610
Lexington, KY 40588-0610

Friday, August 24th, the feast of St. Bartholomew the Apostle

Read...the text with an open mind...then, read it a second time.

A dispute arose among the disciples as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. But Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves." *Luke 22:24-27*

Look...at the scene in the reading. Let your curiosity look for God at work in the people and their interactions.

Wait...in prayerful expectation.

Listen...for a word with a willing heart...

Almighty and everlasting God, you gave your apostle Bartholomew grace to believe and to preach your Word: Grant that your Church may love what he believed and preach what he taught; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Respond...seeking clarity and vision to the question...

Tell about a time when you experienced God's Spirit alive and moving within Our Diocese. What was the setting? Describe how you know that the Holy Spirit was present. What made the experience/situation possible?

Saturday, August 25th

Read...the text with an open mind...then, read it a second time.

Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, 'Ananias.' He answered, 'Here I am, Lord.' The Lord said to him, 'Get up and go...to the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying...so that he might regain his sight.' But Ananias answered, 'Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done'...But the Lord said to him, 'Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings...*Acts 9:10 ff*

Look...at the scene in the reading. Let your curiosity look for God at work in the people and their interactions.

Wait...in prayerful expectation.

Listen...for a word with a willing heart...

Almighty God, you have given your only Son to be a sacrifice for sin, and an example of godly life: Give us grace to receive the fruits of his redeeming work, and to follow in the steps of his holy life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. Amen.



Respond...seeking clarity and vision to the question...

What brought you to the Diocese? What keeps you in the Diocese? What do you treasure about the Diocese?

Sunday, August 26th, the 14th Sunday after Pentecost

Read...the text with an open mind...then, read it a second time.

Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God....*Ephesians 6:13-17*

Look...at the scene in the reading. Let your curiosity look for God at work in the people and their interactions.

Wait...in prayerful expectation.

Listen...for a word with a willing heart...

Grant, O merciful God, that your Church, being gathered together in unity by your Holy Spirit, may show forth your power among all peoples, to the glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Respond...seeking clarity and vision to the question...

When Jesus looks at our Diocese, what might He think is the most important thing we should be doing in His name?

Monday, August 27th

Read...the text with an open mind...then, read it a second time.

Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked, nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful! Their delight is in the law of the Lord, and they meditate on his law day and night. They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that do not wither; everything they do shall prosper...

Psalm 1:1-3

Look...at the scene in the reading. Let your curiosity look for God at work in the people and their interactions.

Wait...in prayerful expectation.

Listen...for a word with a willing heart...

Direct us, O Lord, with your most gracious favor, and further us with your help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy Name, and finally, by your mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Respond...seeking clarity and vision to the question...

Tell about a time when Our Diocese helped prepared you to represent Jesus Christ in the world. What made that possible?

Tuesday, August 28th

Read...the text with an open mind...then, read it a second time.

Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha...She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs...the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, 'Please come to us without delay.' So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived...all the widows stood beside him, weeping...Peter knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, 'Tabitha, get up.' Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. He gave her his hand and helped her up...*Acts 9:36 ff*

Look...at the scene in the reading. Let your curiosity look for God at work in the people and their interactions.

Wait...in prayerful expectation.

Listen...for a word with a willing heart...

Everliving God, whose will it is that all should come to you through your Son Jesus Christ: Inspire our witness, that all may know the power of his forgiveness and the hope of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Respond...seeking clarity and vision to the question...

How might our Diocese offer a different sense of belonging, meaning, purpose, and security than the dominant culture in the eastern half of Kentucky?

Wednesday, August 29th

Read...the text with an open mind...then, read it a second time.

About noon the next day...Peter went up on the roof to pray...he fell into a trance. He saw the heaven opened and something like a large sheet coming down, being lowered to the ground by its four corners. In it were all kinds of four-footed creatures and reptiles and birds of the air. Then he heard a voice saying, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.' But Peter said, 'By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is profane or unclean.' The voice said to him again, a second time, 'What God has made clean, you must not call profane'*Acts 10:9 ff*

Look...at the scene in the reading. Let your curiosity look for God at work in the people and their interactions.

Wait...in prayerful expectation.

Listen...for a word with a willing heart...

O God, you prepared your disciples for the coming of the Spirit through the teaching of your Son Jesus Christ: Make the hearts and minds of your servants ready to receive the blessing of the Holy Spirit, that they may be filled with the strength of his presence; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Respond...seeking clarity and vision to the question...

What signs do you notice of God circulating around the communities of Our Diocese? How might God be present? What might God be up to?

Thursday, August 30th

Read...the text with an open mind...then, read it a second time.

I love you, O LORD my strength, O LORD my stronghold, my crag, and my haven. My God, my rock in whom I put my trust, my shield, the horn of my salvation, and my refuge; you are worthy of praise. I will call upon the LORD, and so shall I be saved from my enemies.'*Psalm 18:1-3*

Look...at the scene in the reading. Let your curiosity look for God at work in the people and their interactions.

Wait...in prayerful expectation.

Listen...for a word with a willing heart...

Heavenly Father, in you we live and move and have our being: We humbly pray you so to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but may remember that we are ever walking in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Respond...seeking clarity and vision to the question...

Describe some of the gifts that the Episcopal/Anglican tradition offers to our local communities? What do you see as the most precious treasures we have to offer our neighbors?

Friday, August 31st

Read...the text with an open mind...then, read it a second time.

On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, "Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water."....*John 7:37-38*

Look...at the scene in the reading. Let your curiosity look for God at work in the people and their interactions.

Wait...in prayerful expectation.

Listen...for a word with a willing heart...

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. Amen.



Respond...seeking clarity and vision to the question...

Have you witnessed what might be considered seeds of a new future present within our Diocese? If yes, please give an example. If no, how might you discover them?

Saturday, September 1st

Read...the text with an open mind...then, read it a second time.

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life."

John 8:12

Look...at the scene in the reading. Let your curiosity look for God at work in the people and their interactions.

Wait...in prayerful expectation.

Listen...for a word with a willing heart...

O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you, bring the nations into your fold, pour out your Spirit upon all flesh, and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Respond...seeking clarity and vision to the question...

How might our Diocese influence the peace and wellbeing of communities? What kind of public presence does our Diocese currently have, and what kind of presence might God be calling us to?