



Today marks the launch of the Archbishop of Canterbury and York's third annual global, ecumenical prayer movement – Thy Kingdom Come.

Considered one of the most dynamic prayer initiatives to emerge from the Church of England in recent years, high profile figures from across the main denominations gathered together at Lambeth Palace and Bishopthorpe, to hear plans for this year's Thy Kingdom Come from May 10th - 20th.

One of the highlights from both events was the premier of a new film featuring Archbishop Justin Welby, his grandson Elijah and Brian Heasley, Director of 24/7 Prayer International.

In the film Brian shares his powerful story of how he went from criminal to Christ follower, something which he credits to the persistent prayers of loved ones.

Thy Kingdom Come is a simple invitation to pray between Ascension and Pentecost for friends and family to come to faith. Now in its third year, participation has grown every year.

In 2016 – 100,000 Christians pledged to pray. By 2017 – more than half a million had pledged to pray from more than 85 countries including Ghana, Netherlands, Malaysia, Cuba, South Africa, Australia, Korea, Japan and the Philippines to name a few.

In the UK, in 2017 every diocese in the Church of England was involved. Many cathedrals took part, hosting 'beacon' events designed to focus prayers in towns and cities nationwide.

The campaign's broad ecumenical appeal led to more than 50 denominations and traditions being involved last year; including the Roman Catholic Church, the Methodist Church and the Redeemed Christian Church of God.

The positive impact of Thy Kingdom Come 2017 continues to unfold as numerous stories of personal and communal transformation pour in from churches, families and whole communities alike.

Among the stories arising from the initiative – many of them deeply moving – is one from a couple who had not seen their son for 22 years. 'We pray every day obviously for him but during Thy Kingdom Come he was one of the people we prayed for as a group,' they say. 'We put his name on the altar before God and... yesterday he came home.'

This year also sees some digital developments including a brand-new website and a Thy Kingdom Come devotional app created by leading Christian publishers SPCK. Both products will be translated into several languages including Spanish, Korean, and Swahili and will be launched in time for Easter.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby said:

“The business of being witnesses to Jesus Christ and of praying to be witnesses compels us to look into the world around us. It compels us to seek, to experience the compassion of God for a world caught up in lostness, in sin, but also in suffering and pain, in oppression of the poor, in cruelty, in abuse, in outrageous inequality, in all the things that go against the Kingdom of God.

“There is no limit to what the Kingdom of God does, and so the moment we start praying Thy Kingdom Come we look outwards.

“The Kingdom of God when we pray for the Kingdom to come, the Kingdom will transform individuals, the Kingdom transforms society, the Kingdom transforms the globe and the Kingdom transforms the cosmos.”

The Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu said: “It gladdens and warms my heart to know that many Christians throughout the world are committing themselves, from today to Pentecost, to pray for the Coming of Our Father in Heaven’s Kingdom – a Kingdom of Justice, Peace and Joy in the Holy Spirit. And with a passion for people from every nation, tribe and language to encounter Jesus Christ – the Light of the world. Please join me in praying the “Our Father who art in Heaven....” on the Hour every Hour when you are able.”

Emma Buchan, Project Manager of Thy Kingdom Come and the Archbishops’ Evangelism Task Group Project Leader, said:

“It is such a blessing to be involved with Thy Kingdom Come and what God is calling us to. I pray and hope that in some small way we can encourage individuals, families and churches to pray for people to come to know Jesus Christ.

We were amazed by the level of engagement last year – from Australia to Cuba, from Japan to the Falkland’s and across denominations.

We have received a number of powerful testimonies – including stories of answered prayer as well as many people and churches committing, even more so, to pray for loved ones to come to know Christ.

We are so excited to see what happens next.”

Find out more about Thy Kingdom Come

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