**Pray without ceasing**

A year of prayer for climate justice

**Prayer points**

- Pray for those most affected by the climate crisis. May we listen more closely to their stories and stand in solidarity with their actions to tackle climate breakdown. May we weep when they weep. May we work for a world where all live in peaceful harmony.
- Pray for wisdom for our leaders. That they may show courage and a commitment to the common good, rather than short-term self-interest. That statements may be turned into action, and that they set the direction for us all to build a world where everyone has enough.
- Pray for ourselves, that we may understand more deeply our role in causing the crisis and in building a better future. May our prayers help us align our lives more closely with God’s kingdom – where the hungry are filled and the lowly lifted high.

**Creative prayer suggestions**

**Take it outside.** Stand in your churchyard, local park or under a tree and pray for creation; that we may stop abusing it and instead become active in its restoration.

**News-led.** Collect stories from newspapers or online about people and places that have been recently affected by droughts, floods and extreme weather events. These events are becoming more frequent and more devastating because of the changing climate. Place the stories around the room and ask people to take some time to walk between stories and pray for the affected communities. Also include some good news stories about people and places where people are taking positive action to bring about a better world.

**Hands together, eyes open.** Ask people to add two handprints to a banner and write one word on each handprint – something they will pray for and something they will do. Use washable paint on fabric, or hand-shaped cut-outs for a less messy version.

**Map-led.** Place different types of maps around the room – from the very local and familiar, to maps of places that most people in your group will never have visited. Look at the natural features of those places, and think about the people who live there and what their hopes and dreams might be. Use these as prayer prompts.

**Making climate connections.** Climate breakdown has implications for every area of life, and will make many current injustices worse. Write ‘climate breakdown’ on a piece of paper and place it in the middle of the room. Ask people to write names of people, places or issues that they care about on big sheets of paper and place these on the floor around the centre. After some quiet time, ask people to think about how climate breakdown will have consequences for those issues, people and places, and draw lines or use ribbon or wool to make connections between the pieces of paper. After a further period of quiet, ask the group to join hands and say a final prayer of thanks for our connections to each other and everyone in the world.

Together we STOP this climate crisis
**Letters for creation.** Provide pens and paper and ask people to take some quiet time to write a letter for creation. It could be a letter that celebrates creation, asks for forgiveness, or remembers a place that is changing because of climate breakdown. Invite people to share their letter, and then take some time at the end to pray for the people and places mentioned.

Children are being invited to produce their own letters for creation this Christian Aid Week and beyond. Together with the Church of England, we want to share children’s reflections with the leaders of our world through this creative project. More information can be found here at caid.org.uk/lettersforcreation

**Praying during a carbon fast.** Sit in a dark room and give thanks for all that electricity makes possible. Lament for all the damage that has been done through our overconsumption of fossil fuels. After a few moments of quiet, begin to light candles. As you light each one, name a person that is doing something to stop climate change, or share a story of someone who has been affected. At the end of the session, celebrate those who light a candle rather than curse the darkness.

**Listen, lament, praise and respond.** If you have an hour's slot to pray, you could break it down into four segments of 15 minutes, and take the time to listen, lament, praise and respond. Here are some prayer suggestions that might be useful. Pause between each voice for time of quiet reflection.

- **Listen:** ask one person to read the story of someone in another country affected by the way the climate is changing.
- **Lament:** ask someone to lead a short prayer of lament for the way that we have treated creation, and the breakdown in relationships between people and between people and creation.
- **Praise:** sing or listen to a hymn or song of praise about the glory of creation.
- **Respond:** give everyone a piece of paper shaped like a footprint, and ask them to write on it what they will do differently in the week ahead to respond to this time of prayer. Close by saying a prayer or blessing together.

**A prayer of lament**

How long, O Lord, can we hide our faces from the headlines of flood and drought? How long, O Lord, will communities be displaced by conflict over water? How long, O Lord, will the children of the Caribbean be battered by hurricanes? How long, O Lord, will the people of Philippines live with the reality of stronger typhoons? How long, O Lord, will South Asia experience devastating floods? How long, O Lord, must the soul of humanity bear the pain of trauma and loss, and have sorrow in its heart all day long?

Consider and answer us, O Lord our God! Give protection to all those living in fear of death. Give strength to endure so tragedy will not prevail. Give guidance to decision makers. Give compassion to hearts weary with fatigue.

We trust in your steadfast love, our hearts will rejoice in your salvation, as we participate in your kingdom restoration: praying, acting and giving bountifully with all those preparing and repairing what violence, hurricanes, earthquakes and floods are destroying.

How long, O Lord, will we bring our prayers of lament to you? In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, we pray.

Amen.
**Closing prayer**

Father of creation, thank you for all that you have made; For the stunning diversity of humankind, for the beauty of every flower head, the abundance of a healthy harvest.

Help us to tread lightly and live wisely, remembering our place in the great web of creation.

Challenge us where we need to change our lifestyles, convict us when we need to speak out to amplify the voices of those who are so often ignored. Give us the courage to speak truth to power.

Send us out to play our part in your work of restoring your world, healing broken relationships, working for justice and loving all people.

Amen.

**Franciscan blessing**

May God bless you with a restless discomfort about easy answers, half-truths and superficial relationships, so that you may seek truth boldly and love deep within your heart.

May God bless you with holy anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that you may tirelessly work for justice, freedom, and peace among all people.

May God bless you with the gift of tears to shed with those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, or the loss of all that they cherish, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and transform their pain into joy.

May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you really can make a difference in this world, so that you are able, with God's grace, to do what others claim cannot be done.

Amen.
Tips for setting up a prayer space

• Advertise it in advance and make sure you invite people to come. There is a power in collective prayer to energise and sustain.

• Make sure the space is welcoming and calm. If it’s too cold or there’s lots of noise outside the room, it can be really distracting.

• If you organise an unusual prayer event – for example, one lasting 24 hours, with people from different faiths or a public vigil – you could invite your MP to join you, or tell your local paper that it’s happening.

• Don’t allow this to be one-off. Tell others how it went and encourage them to join next time, or follow up your prayer meeting with a chance for people to discuss the enormity of the crisis. Then encourage people to do something to tackle it. Get in touch with us if you need support doing this. We can suggest actions to take and offer training and support to make it happen.

Keep us updated

Please make sure you tell us about your event! It will encourage others and demonstrate the strength of the movement. We can also provide you with further resources.

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A lack of water in Kenya has shrunk the Mikuyuni earth dam and cracked the surrounding ground.