

Order of service: Song of the Prophets

Notes for leaders

Thank you for downloading this Christian Aid order of service. It takes its inspiration from the Song of the Prophets; that is the voices of global theologians, young people, Christian Aid partners, and the prophets of the Bible.

Their collective chorus calls for humanity to be in communion with nature, rather than exploitative consumers of it. They call for justice for those who have done the least to cause the climate crisis but are suffering most. And crucially they call us to imagine how the world could be, and beckon every one of us to do all we can for the restoration of creation and the flourishing of all, to the glory of God.

The service is divided into four parts and we encourage you to include a variety of voices, as indicated in the text. Sermon notes based on the Micah reading have also been prepared to accompany this order of service and are available at caweek.org/resources

As always, feel free to adapt what we offer for your context and use selectively as you see fit. Song suggestions are included throughout and a further list, including references, is provided at the end.

You may wish to go over these songs with the congregation before the service begins so everyone is familiar with them. Leaders' instructions are included in *italics* throughout the service.

Preparation

- Have videos downloaded or ready to stream, including sound.
- Have campaign postcards and giving envelopes on the seats/pews.
- Select readers and provide them with the relevant text and a highlighted order of service, indicating their parts. A maximum of three readers are required.

It could be a banner from a recent awareness-raising or campaign event, or a megaphone placed at the front of the church with a piece of card shaped as a speech bubble saying: 'Communion not consumption' or 'Climate justice now'.

You might wish to bring something of the outside indoors, such as several potted plants. Or you could draw attention to the four elements of earth (with some soil), water, fire (kindling) and air (represented through an empty glass jar).

Visual ways into worship

Arrange an installation of something that echoes or encapsulates the climate crisis for your context and congregation.

If your service is during Christian Aid Week, you might include some rocks and soil to refer to when describing the earth dams being built to help communities in Kenya fight the climate crisis.

Passages included in this service

(Suitable for Christian Aid Week)

Psalm 96:1-6 and 11-13

Micah 6:1-9

Mark 10:17-27 or Revelation 21:3-6

Passage suggestion for other seasons:

Lent: Jesus with the wild beasts,
Mark 1:12-13

Easter: The journey from doubt to
hope, Luke 24:13-49

Harvest: Do not worry but be ready
to act, Luke 12

Advent: Apocalyptic advent, Mark
13:24-37

Christmas: A child shall lead them,
Isaiah 11:1-9

Call to worship

Based on Psalm 96:1-3

Split the gathering into two halves where they are standing/sitting. Alternate the lines of passage spoken by alternate sides of the church.

Side A: O sing to the Lord a new song
Side B: sing to the Lord, all the earth.

Side A: Sing to the Lord, bless his name;
Side B: tell of his salvation from
day to day.

Side A: Declare his glory among
the nations

Side B: his marvellous works among
all the peoples.

**All together: For great is the Lord, and
greatly to be praised.**

Song

Sing for God's Glory

Prayer of Approach

Reader 1: Come and celebrate our
common home

**All: we gather with the family
of humanity.**

Reader 2: With the mountains, islands
and deserts

**All: we honour the glory of God
in creation.**

Reader 1: With the lakes, rivers and seas

**All: we come to the source of
living water.**

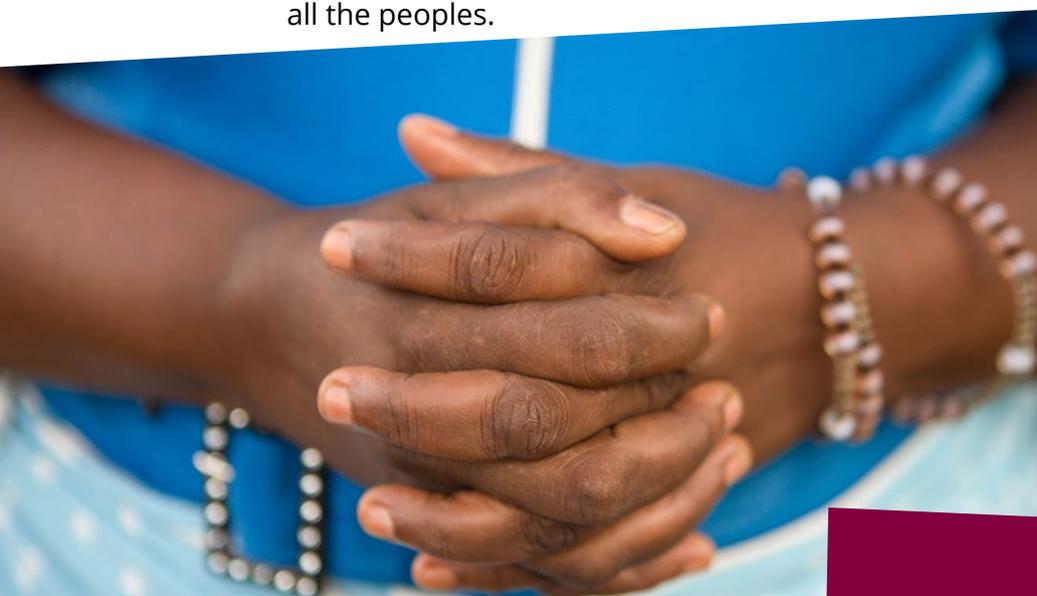
Reader 2: With the land, its soil, seeds
and sustenance

**All: we give thanks for God's
generous provision.**

Reader 1: With the forests of great trees,
the lungs of the planet

**All: we will sing with joy and clap
our hands.**

Reader 2: We join with the whole of
creation, inspired by those
who have gone before and the
prophetic voices of today



Florence prays more
people like her in Kenya
can have access to a dam
full of fresh water.

All: **We dare to praise and pray
for another possible world.**

Reader 1: To the glory of God,

All: **Amen.**

Adapted from 'We are the Amazon', an Ecumenical act of solidarity and justice for the Amazon and its people.

Part one: The Earth

Reading

'Let the heavens be glad,
and let the earth rejoice;
let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
let the field exult, and everything in it.
Then shall all the trees of the forest
sing for joy before the Lord;
for he is coming,
for he is coming to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with his truth.'
Psalm 96:11-13

Song

Where are the Voices for the Earth?

Prayer of Lament

O God, the heavens are not glad,
the earth does not rejoice
warming gases fill the atmosphere
pollution turns clean air foul
climate breakdown wreaks havoc.

The sea roars with the grief
of all the plastic that fills it
of the destruction of coral reef.
The fields exclaim despair
for delayed rains and prolonged drought
for species extinction on a daily basis.
No song of joy rings out
from the trees of the forest
decimated by forest fires.



Glory with her sister Lanie in the Philippines.

How long O God, how long
until your justice comes
for all your creatures
and the earth.
In you we put our trust. Amen.

Part two: Young people

All-age talk

An all-age talk is available at
caweek.org/resources

Reading

These are the words of a young person living at the sharp edge of climate change in the Philippines (Glory, pictured above).

'I am 19-year-old Glory, from the Philippines. I live on a small island of Tabugon, Carles with my family. It's beautiful and peaceful, with fresh air, coral reefs, and fresh seafood. But it is changing. Living on an island is very challenging. I really feel the impact of climate change. My message for the world is that, we must act on the crisis of climate change. We need to be responsible. We should be concerned on protecting our surroundings because this has been created for us. We have the wisdom to know what is right and what is wrong.'

Either

Full reading at

christianaidcollective.org/we-must-act

and/or

Video

This short video highlights the speech of Severn Suzuki at the Earth Summit in 1992 with words that are echoed in the speeches of Greta Thunberg today. Will there be another Greta to echo the words of Severn in twenty years' time, or will we listen this time since we don't have twenty more years to make the necessary changes?

youtu.be/TJICmLMb06Y

Song

All Things Bright and Beautiful

Prayer of confession

Reader 1 For the beauty of the earth
desecrated by pollution
extinguished by forest fires
choked by plastic waste
Christ, our God, to you we plead
forgive us for systemic greed.

Reader 1 For the urgency of this hour
ignored by apathy or
procrastination
wasted by ineffective decisions
denied by economic interests
Christ, our God
and Saviour,
forgive us for selfish
short-term behaviour.

Reader 1 For the joy of human love
fractured by forced migration
crushed by bereavement
lost to typhoons, floods, starvation
Christ, our God, bringer of justice
forgive us for this climate crisis.

Absolution

Reader 2 God you know me.
You know that I can be loving
and kind;

and you know that sometimes I
get things wrong.
I'm sorry for the times I hurt
other people,
forget to listen to you
and don't bother to take care
of your world.

All **God forgive you,
Jesus bless you.
God's Spirit help you to
grow in love.**

Reader 2 Amen.

All **God you know us.
You know that we can be
loving and kind;
and you know that sometimes
we get things wrong.
We're sorry for the times we
hurt other people,
forget to listen to you
and don't bother to take care
of your world.**

Reader 2 God forgive us.
Jesus bless us.
God's Spirit help us to grow in
love.

All **Amen.**

[Silence]

SAYING YES

Reader 1 **All** Because we are God's people,
we will care for each other.

Reader 2 Because we are part of God's
creation,
All **we will care for the earth.**

Reader 1+2 **All** Because we are loved by God,
**we will share God's love with
everyone.**

Absolution from Iona Community Worship
Book 2017.

Part three: Prophetic voices from the Bible

Old Testament reading: Micah 6:1-9

This script has been provided of Micah 6:1-9 to hear this familiar passage in a new light.

Micah 6:1-9 A script for three readers

Reader 1 Listen my people.
I need to talk with you.
I have questions.
I need answers.
I have cared for you.
I rescued you from slavery.
I gave you wise leaders,
both women and men.

You need to remember the stories
of who I am
and what I have done.

Listen my people.
I am talking to those of you who
live in the countryside.
I am questioning those of you who
live in cities and towns.

Reader 2 What have I done to you?
How have I wearied you?
Speak, the mountains are listening
to you.
The earth is waiting to hear your
voice.

What can I do?
What can I bring to God?
What does God want of me?
What will keep God happy?
What will keep God off my back?

Would God be impressed with
barrels and barrels of olive oil?
Would God be satisfied with
thousands of animals from my
flocks?
Perhaps my riches are not
enough?
Should I offer to God the life of
my precious first born child?

Reader 3

Listen mortal.
Listen to what God says.
Look carefully at how God acts.
Remember the stories of what
God has done.
God has shown you clearly
what is bad
and what is good.

You are to do justice to act fairly.
Do justice in the home and in the
street and in the marketplace.
Do justice in your community.
Work with others to do justice
globally.

Do justice with strangers and
friends and family alike.

You are to love kindness.
You are to be generous.
You are to share your resources
and share them with a smile.
You are to care for those in need.

You are to walk humbly with God.
No pretence, no bluster.
You are to walk wisely and
purposefully.
You are to pray and wonder.
You are to respect the earth.
You are to experience and learn
who God is
and what God is about.

Listen up mortal.
God has told you what is good.
So do it.

Do justice.
Love kindness.
Walk humbly with your God.

New Testament reading: Mark 10:17-27 or Revelation 21:3-6

In the Mark passage we hear the challenging prophetic voice of Jesus: 'It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.' Mark 10:25

And in Revelation we are given an inspiring, prophetic vision of the earth as God's home: 'See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them.' Revelation 21:3

Song

The Kingdom of God

Sermon

Notes on Micah 6:1-9 are available in the climate justice sermon pack at caweek.org/resources

Part four: The prophetic voice of communities experiencing climate injustice

Before we respond to God with our offering, we listen to the prophetic voice of communities experiencing climate injustice.

Video

Play the Christian Aid Week film available at caweek.org/resources

or

Reading

Katalina Tahaafe Williams, a theologian writing from Australia and the Pacific islands:

'Only the willingly ignorant continue to deny the link between our consumerist lifestyles, climate change, and suffering in the developing world. Promoting economic growth as the answer to all our problems, and in particular global poverty, is irresponsible. We need to recognise that our current growth-oriented system is driven by powerful economic interests set on making profits, however short term.'

'... And it is just plain wrong to ignore the suffering of the poorest and most vulnerable populations in the world especially when they are the least contributors to climate change.'

Response: giving/offering

Drought drives people to the brink. Storms tear families apart. Raging waters show no mercy. Our world is in crisis. We have the power to stop it. People living in poverty are on the frontline of this climate crisis. They are losing food, water, homes and family. Every day, they walk further, dig deeper and build stronger to survive. Unrelenting. Determined. They battle the worst of a climate crisis they did not create. This is unjust. But a better way is possible. A way that restores justice to our broken world today. A way that protects the future for all of us, our children and grandchildren.

In our giving let us put our words into action, sharing our resources with those on the frontline to fight for justice.

And let us give with God's vision of a more just world in our mind's eye and hope in our hearts.

Do use the envelopes on your seat/pew to make your contribution, and by completing the Gift Aid slip you help make your giving go further. And do consider making a regular contribution to the work of Christian Aid. More information is available about this on the envelope.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession

God of abundant life,
we see your goodness all around us and
we thank you for every part of it;
from the plants and animals which play
their part in complex ecosystems,
to the dry deserts and stormy seas which
test the limits of life.

We pray that in this time of climate
crisis and ecological emergency,
you may help us to rediscover your
love of creation and to reflect that in
our own lives.

God, in your mercy
All hear our prayer.



In Kenya, Faith's fields are green and thriving thanks to a nearby dam.

God who speaks through unexpected people,
We thank you for contemporary prophets who are challenging us to act on climate change;
for indigenous people and their invaluable knowledge of the land and sea where they live,
for scientists dedicating their careers to warning us about changes to the planet,
and for young people striking for their future.

We pray that you will help those in power to hear their prophetic voices.
Help them to see beyond short term political priorities and business plans.
and give them wisdom and courage when they face difficult decisions.

All God, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

God of second chances,
we recognise the damage we have done to the earth
and the injustice we see in society every day,
all of it fuelled by worship of profit and possessions.

We pray for the coming of a better world with justice, kindness and humility at its heart.
We ask that you guide us to be co-creators of this new world.
Give us confidence to follow the prophetic voices
to stand against injustice to people and to planet.
So that together,
in your strength,
we stop this climate crisis.

God, in your mercy
All **hear our prayer.**

We ask all this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray together...
Our Father... [in your preferred form]

Response: action – new creation and a new deal

You can raise your prophetic voice by taking action right now. There are several opportunities to be involved in the campaign for climate justice in 2020.

Sign up to be part of the Christian Aid prayer chain at caid.org.uk/prayerchain or caid.ie/prayerchain if you're in Northern Ireland.

You could maybe have a sign-up sheet for this at the back of the church or available by the tea and coffee after the service.

And right now before you go, while we sing our closing song, you can add your voice to the call for a New Deal for Climate Justice by signing the climate justice campaign postcards available on your seats/pews. Put them into the baskets/collection points on your way out.

Song

You Shall Go Out With Joy

Blessing

May God bless us with wonder at creation's glory.
May God bless us with fury at creation's spoiling.
May God bless us with courage at this critical hour.
And may the blessing of God,
Creator, Son and Holy Spirit,
rest upon us and on all creation,
this day and for the future to come.
Amen.

Adapted from ACT Alliance.

Song list

All Things are Possible, Darlene Zschech, Hillsong Worship.

All Things Bright and Beautiful, Cecil Frances Alexander.

Behold, Behold I Make all Things New, John Bell, Wild Goose Resource Group.

Canticle of the Turning, Rory Cooney (can also be sung to Kingsfold tune).

Come Let's Sing, Joel Payne, Resound Worship.

For Everyone Born a Place at the Table, Shirley Erena Murray.

For the Beauty of the Earth, Folliott S Pierpoint.

From Life's Beginning, Marcus Pagnam, Resound worship.

God the Maker of the Heavens, Sam Hargreaves, Resound Worship.

Let Justice Roll Down, Garth Hewitt, from Justice Like a River.

Let's Sing to the Lord, Yes, Sing God a New Song, Cantad Al Señor, Brazilian folk song. Translated by Gerhard M Cartford.

Nahasdzáán Nihimá/Mother Earth, from Singing the Sacred: Musical gifts from Native America.

O the Life of the World is a Joy and a Treasure, Kathy Galloway.

Pray Tim Hughes, Worship Central.

Simple Living, Keith and Kristen Getty.

Sing Hey for the Carpenter, John Bell and Graham Maule, Wild Goose Resource Group.

Sing for God's Glory that Colours the Dawn of Creation, Kathy Galloway.

Strength Will Rise as we Wait Upon the Lord, Brenton Brown and Ken Riley.

The Kingdom of God, Taizé.

The Peace of the Earth, Guatemalan, translated by Christine Carson.

Touch the Earth Lightly, Shirley Erena Murray.

You Shall Go Out With Joy, Stuart Dauermann.

Where Are the Voices for the Earth, Shirley Erena Murray.

With thanks to Ruth Burgess and Iain McLarty for their assistance in drawing together this order of service. Ruth writes and edits liturgies and stories for Wild Goose publications and writes for Spill the Beans. Iain does worship development work with the Church of Scotland's priority areas, is a choral and orchestral conductor, and has been involved in worship planning for World Council of Churches events in recent years. And thanks to the wider Christian Aid worship and theology collective for their initial ideas and insights for the service.

Together we STOP this climate crisis