Creation shouts for joy

As the days get longer and signs of spring appear, it feels much easier to resonate with those Bible verses about hills breaking out into song, trees clapping their hands and creation shouting for joy.

After an extremely difficult year, with much uncertainty still ahead, try to take a moment this month to rejoice in the beauty of creation. Take a moment to focus on the new life on show and allow it to inspire you with a vision of creation restored.

In our work for climate justice, we are inspired by the prophets of the Bible and their modern-day successors. Those who not only offer a challenge of truth to power, but also visions of a new and hopeful future. Even Amos, renowned for his incisive criticism of the rich and powerful, brings this vision of a world restored: 'They shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant them upon their land, and they shall never again be plucked up, out of the land that I have given them.' Turning to the prophets does not only connect us to powerful critique and righteous anger. It also sets before our eyes a future worth changing for. A world more just and more peaceful, more beautiful and more joyful, than the one we now know.

Who are the prophets that we should be listening to today to inspire us in our journey towards climate justice? This month, look out for voices from the most affected communities and listen to their stories.

Prayer Points

- At the end of the month the UK is hosting a climate finance conference. Climate finance is money made available to tackle the climate crisis. Money to help communities change farming methods that are no longer viable because of the changes to the climate, money to ensure everyone has access to clean energy or money to restore nature and prevent further damage. Without this money, we cannot achieve climate justice as countries who have done the least to cause the crisis will continue to face its worst impacts.

- Rich countries had promised to pay $100bn a year to support climate vulnerable communities, but this promise has never been met. Pray that this conference is a success, and that progress is made in agreeing a new deal on climate finance.

- At the end of February, the UN released its assessment of countries’ plans to tackle climate breakdown and found that they fall far short of what is needed. Secretary General of the
UN, Antonio Guterres, described the report as a red alert for the planet, saying ‘Decision makers must walk the talk. Long-term commitments must be matched by immediate actions to launch the decade of transformation that people and planet so desperately need.’

- Pray that the report acts as a reminder to world leaders of what is at stake and spurs on further action.

- It’s a year since full lockdown restrictions were first introduced in the UK, which led to dramatic changes to our everyday lives. In September, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies estimated that over 50 million people worldwide had been affected by floods, droughts or storms as well as COVID-19. The number is a stark reminder that for millions of people, the pandemic arrived on top of the existing climate crisis. The overlap of crises makes people more vulnerable and recovery more complicated.

- Pray for all those who have struggled this year, due to loneliness, disaster or sickness, and give thanks for all those who are supporting people in need.

- Pray that the decisions that our governments are taking today help us to build back from the pandemic in a way that also tackles the climate crisis – a way of justice.

Prayers
Almighty God
You are the author of life, we see so much of your goodness all around us. From the seas to the mountains, the plants and animals, and the way you bring life and peace to stormy seas and dry deserts.
We pray that in this time of climate crisis and ecological emergency, you may help us to rediscover your love of creation.

God, in your mercy hear our prayer.

God, you use ordinary and unexpected people to carry out your ways, showing that it’s your power that works through us.
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, for scientists dedicating their careers to warning us about changes to the planet, and for young people striking for their future.
We pray that those in power will hear these prophetic voices.

Help them to see beyond short term political priorities and give them wisdom and courage when they face difficult decisions.

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, 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 and to stand against injustice to people and to planet.

God, in your mercy hear our prayer.

Amen
- Anna Wooding

Almighty God,
thank you for the pictures in your word of your power to redeem and restore, not just sinful and fallen human beings, but all of your creation.
Help us to recognise both our privilege and our responsibility, as your people, to partner with you in drawing this world back towards all you intended it to be until that time when, in Christ, all things are made new.
Give us the courage to, here and now, voice a vision of this world where justice prevails and where all people have what they need to flourish, and to know fullness of life in you.

In Jesus’ name we ask it.
Amen.
- Rev Fiona Forbes

Keep the prayer chain going
Don’t forget to sign up to join the prayer chain, so that we can fill every day with prayer ahead of the crucial COP26 conference in November.

caid.org.uk/prayerchain

Sign our latest petition at caid.org.uk/climate-justice-petition