

Praying for our climate

Prayer guide



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Throughout scripture we see God’s love for this world. ‘The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it,’ declares the psalmist (Psalm 24:1). But with record-breaking storms, severe droughts and rising temperatures, we’re seeing creation being knocked off balance – and people being pushed back into poverty as a result. If we are to truly love our global neighbours, we have to tackle the climate crisis.

Let’s pray together in thankfulness, lament and hope for all of creation, our global neighbours and our world leaders in the midst of this climate emergency.

We hope that the ideas and stories in this prayer guide will help you draw near to God and cry out for those worst affected by the climate crisis.

Let’s prepare our hearts:

‘Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.’

1 John 3:18

Amen.

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Prayer of lament

Our world and our neighbours are impacted unequally by climate change. Those who are least responsible are impacted first and worst. For families like Orbisa's, everyday life is a real struggle. Orbisa lives with her husband and nine children in Afar, north-east Ethiopia – one of the hottest inhabited places in the world.

Over the last few years, rainfall in her region has reduced dramatically because of climate change. Orbisa says, 'In the past we had rainfall every six months, but now we don't know when the rainfall will come. The length of the dry season is increasing.' Without rain, her animals are dying, which means less income, less food and poor health for the family. Orbisa now has to travel many hours every day to fetch water, but still her children go thirsty.

This is what the climate emergency looks like. If we don't take urgent action now, climate change will continue to push millions more people like Orbisa deeper into poverty.



Lord God, you made the world and declared it was 'very good'. And yet, we have not treated the earth and our fellow humans with the care and respect they deserve. We are sorry and ask for your forgiveness.

Give us the courage to keep raising our voices about the climate emergency, which affects people living in poverty the worst. And may your Spirit of peace be in the hearts of all people, so that conflicts end in peace, and relationships are restored.

Amen.



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Prayer of thanksgiving

Spend some time giving thanks to God, appreciating the beauty of his creation. Fill it with your own words, or use this prayer from Rev Cate Williams, Diocese of Gloucester, from the Church of England's World Environment Day prayers.



*Creator God,
We acknowledge that as your handiwork,
we stand alongside all that you have made.
Trees and rivers, mountains and valleys,
soaring birds and scuttling creatures,
all are held within your care.
May we grow in our love and appreciation
for the fabulous variety around us;
and may our awe and wonder draw us closer
to the natural world, and through it to you,
the God of all things.
Amen.*

**'Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;
let the sea resound, and all that is in it.'**

Psalm 96:11



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Prayer for the church

We as Christians must put our faith into action for climate justice. We as the church must do the same. Let's spend time reflecting on how the church can respond to the climate crisis, being led by young people who are raising their voices and calling on the church to bring climate change into the heart of ministry. Here are some examples of what young Christians involved in [WeAreTearfund](#) have told us:

‘We are moved by faith. We hear God’s call to creation care and see a world that’s been neglected, a world that’s on fire, and if we the church don’t care enough to put it out, who will?’

‘We are in a climate emergency.’

‘Extreme weather conditions are destroying people’s livelihoods, natural disasters are leaving many without a place to call home, and people’s lives are being lost. Those who contributed to this problem the least are suffering the most. We don’t just care because it may one day affect us, we care because it is already affecting thousands around the world and soon we will pass the point of no return.’

‘If we sit back and do nothing, many more lives will be lost.’

‘To do nothing is to turn our backs to our God-given duty. It is up to us as those who are called to love our neighbour to do just that. How can we claim to love God if we do not care about his creation? How can we claim to love others when we are burning down their house?’

‘We the church must love in action and not just words. We must hear the cries of a world in peril and use our platform to respond with the love of Jesus. A love that disrupts the status quo and inconveniences itself to bring restoration. This is our responsibility. This is our worship.’



Spend some time praying that the local and global church will engage more fully with the climate crisis.



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Prayer for your local area

As we pray to the God of abundance, let's remind ourselves that right in the beginning, God delighted in his creation. 'God saw all that he had made, and it was very good' (Genesis 1:31). In our day-to-day lives we have the opportunity to give thanks to God for his daily provision, and also to worship him through our actions and the way we look after his creation locally.



Take some time to think about your local area and some of the impacts of climate change affecting your part of the country. What environmental issues are you aware of where you live? What, or who, do you see helping to address these things? As you walk, talk to God about some of the things that come to mind eg:

- litter and waste in your local environment
- water shortages or flooding
- local renewable energy projects
- areas of great biodiversity which need protecting
- local renewable-energy projects that need to expand.

'For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.'

Romans 8:19–21



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Prayer for world leaders

Now let's pray together for world leaders as they act on climate change together – that they work hard to find solutions and take urgent action.

'I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people — for kings and all those in authority...'

1 Timothy 2:1–2



Ask for wisdom for countries most impacted by climate change to know how to adapt to a changing world, and pray that their leaders would hear the cries of the most vulnerable. Some ideas of where to pray for:

- Ethiopia and Kenya, where people are experiencing the driest conditions and hottest temperatures since current record-keeping began
- Pakistan, India and other countries where changing weather patterns often cause devastating flooding

- Ecuador, Vietnam or island nations which are fast losing ground to rising sea levels



Pray for large emitting countries to be ambitious in their commitments and actions, and to prioritise justice and equality. Some ideas of where to pray for:

- the UK, that it uses its global influence to turn climate pledges into action
- the USA which, as one of the world's biggest carbon emitters, still falls far short on the action it needs to take if it's to contribute its fair share to a safe future for everyone
- China whose climate targets are still woefully inadequate

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