

All-age worship for 14th May 2023

Christian Aid

Welcome to this place of worship, where we can meet with God in safety and love for God and each other. This week is a special week devoted to the charity Christian Aid. So, we're going to explore caring for our creation in faith and climate justice.

Let us meet with God now.

Dear God,

We are here to meet with you, on your terms.

We are here to worship you, and to express our love for you.

We want to spend time with you Lord, help us to concentrate on you as we hear the words from the bible, and as we praise and worship.

Amen.

From Psalm 47:

Clap your hands, all you peoples.

Shout to God with songs of joy.

God has gone up with a shout.

Sing praises to the most high.

God is ruler over all the Earth.

We worship God with all our heart.

Let's worship God with the song, '**Come people of the risen King**' SoF 2249, MP 1267

Talk

In Genesis we are told God creates the world, the seas, oceans, mountains, trees, the animals, birds, fish, stars, sky and humans. We are introduced to God as the creator of all things. Genesis also tells us that God looked at creation and saw that it was good!

Genesis 1:31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning – the sixth day.

- Genesis does tell us we are special in God's creation, because we were made in God's image. We are all wonderfully created by God.

Genesis 1:27 So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

- The story of Genesis tells us a lot about our relationships with God, the world and each other. God walked with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and gave them responsibilities to care for the world around them. The Genesis story reveals that God created us for relationships both with God and with creation!
- We sometimes like to think of ourselves (human beings) as different and separate from the rest of God's creation. But Genesis tells us something different.
 - In Genesis 2:15 we learn something really important about what being created in the image of God means for us. We learn that we are supposed to be a people who care for God's creation.

Genesis 2:15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

Activity: Invite people to take five minutes in groups to think about examples of what caring for God's creation looks like to them. (Chalk boards)

Caring for God's creation also means caring for the people on the frontline of the climate crisis – those who will and are being most affected.

Rachel: 1st Bible reading: Micah 6 verses 1-8

International Children's Bible

6 Now hear what the Lord says:

"Get up; plead your case in front of the mountains.

Let the hills hear your story.

²Mountains, listen to the Lord's complaint.

Foundations of the earth, listen to the Lord.

The Lord has a complaint against his people.

He will prove that Israel is wrong."

³The Lord says, "My people, did I do something wrong to you?

How did I make you tired of me?

Tell me.

⁴I brought you from the land of Egypt.

I freed you from slavery.

I sent Moses, Aaron and Miriam to you.

⁵My people, remember

the evil plans of Balak king of Moab.

Remember what Balaam son of Beor told Balak.

Remember what happened from Acacia to Gilgal.

Then you will know the Lord does what is right!"

⁶You say, "What can I bring with me

when I come before the Lord?

What can I bring
when I bow before God on high?
Should I come before the Lord with burnt offerings,
with year-old calves?
⁷Will the Lord be pleased with 1,000 male sheep?
Will he be pleased with 10,000 rivers of oil?
Should I give my first child for the evil I have done?
Should I give my very own child for my sin?"
⁸The Lord has told you what is good.
He has told you what he wants from you:
Do what is right to other people.
Love being kind to others.
And live humbly, trusting your God.

Prayers:

Isha: Creator God, You made the world, and it is good.
The trees, mountains, rivers, and seas.
The birds, lions, ants, and bees.

(Invite the congregation to think about what is good in the world. If you would like, you can invite people to share out loud.)

Creator God, You made us to care for the world and for all people.
Our planet is hurting.
Many people are hurting.
Help us do what we can to bring healing to your creation and your people.

Now let us sing:

When I needed a neighbour - worship folder 107

A tale of two islands (Abigail and Ariana)

Climate justice is about recognising that climate change impacts people unequally. The climate crisis is impacting the people in the poorest countries in the world the most, yet these people have done the least to cause climate change.

First up we have Charlie. (Ariana)

Charlie: Hi! I am Charlie. I live on a big island. On my island, I, along with my community, enjoy lots of resources – like trees, water, and coal. We use coal, oil and gas as fuel and energy to power our heating, watch TV, and use our computers, our cars and lots of other appliances! We have cut down huge numbers of trees for profit and to access more land. All these things make life comfortable on my island. Because we use fossil fuels, we have a

high standard of living and some people have gotten very rich! And since we have a high standard of living, we eat lots of meats and imported foods.

Narrator: Next up we have Carla. (Abigail) Hi Carla!

Carla: Hi. I'm Carla. I live on a small island. We don't have access to so many resources as Charlie. On my island we have to work very hard to grow food to feed our families, and to sell the things we grow to make a living. Our island is small and getting smaller as the sea levels rise. This means it is even harder for us to grow food. Many in our community are worried about whether we will be able to stay in our homes. Some of the smaller islands nearby have already disappeared under the sea!

Narrator: As Charlie's Island burns coal for fuel, uses gas and oil for energy, cuts down trees for paper and eats a diet rich in red meat, all of this has an effect on the Earth's atmosphere. As carbon dioxide and other gases are released into the air, these gases hold in heat, causing the climate to get warmer, not just where Charlie lives, but across the whole world. These gases act like a greenhouse, and as a result, the world is heating up. Glaciers and ice sheets in the Arctic and Antarctic are melting quickly. Water from the melting ice falls into the oceans and causes the sea level to rise. Let's find out the impact that the rising sea is having on Charlie and Carla.

Charlie: On my island we are a little worried about rising sea levels, but we are able to build flood defences and sea walls. We have enough resources that make this possible.

Carla: On my island it's different. We are losing the land where we are able to grow crops. This means we are getting poorer. We have no money to build flood defences and we are at risk of being completely flooded off our island. And rich countries aren't helping with the costs of protecting our community or helping us rebuild our lives elsewhere.

Narrator: Everything that happens here affects things in other places. We share our everyday lives with other people, and our actions and choices have an impact on them and the world around us. We are all part of a community: at school, in our home, in our town, in our country and in our world. I think what we have all experienced with the pandemic and lockdowns over the past few years demonstrates this very well. Things that happen even on the other side of the world can eventually affect us all.

Our demonstration showed that climate change doesn't affect everyone in the same way. Some people are affected worse than others, and often the people who are worst affected are those people already living in poverty.

Let's sing: Beauty for brokenness, hope for despair SoF 664, MP 806

***Janet's Story – Powerpoint.**

Climate change is a direct result of human activity. Rich countries, like the UK, produce a lot of fossil fuel emissions so we hold a greater share of the responsibility for causing climate change.

But the impacts of climate change are felt most by people, like Janet Zirugo, who live in poorer countries. Janet lives in a village called Njani in Zimbabwe, Africa. She is 70 years old and has a big family that she helps to care for. Janet has 10 children and 28 grandchildren, and she is great grandmother to 8 more children.

One result of climate change that affects millions of people is drought. A drought is when there isn't enough rain or water to grow food or for drinking! Where Janet lives, droughts have become a much bigger problem because of climate change. Janet farms to make a living and to feed her family. But farming is much harder when there is drought. Janet told Christian Aid about how difficult it was to feed her family and herself when drought took away their ability to grow food. Janet shared her own food with the children, but still they didn't have enough, and all experienced lots of hunger.

In addition to caring for her own family, Janet helps to look after children whose parents have died. Even though she and her community have faced challenges, they make sure to love and care for one another.

For Janet, hunger took away her freedom as a parent. She had sleepless nights thinking about her family. She had to sell things to make sure that they could eat, and she traded and shared with the wider community to make sure that they all had enough to get by. Janet has worked with Christian Aid's partners in Zimbabwe to change the ways she grows food. Now, when drought hits, Janet's important crops can cope better. This means that Janet is able to support her family and the children in her community, even when drought comes!

Janet and her community have contributed the least to climate change, but they are having to live with the reality and impacts of it every day.

Let's sing again as the **offertory** is taken up : **He's got the whole world in His hands**
Worship folder 30/JP 78/MP 225

Prayer:

God, our Farmer

You plant the seed

You water the seed

You nourish the seed

You value the widow's mite

You value what we bring today

What we bring today

Is already yours
Accept these, our offerings
And use them to help dreams come true
In this community
Through this church
And in your world
Through Christian Aid.
Amen.

And now the family version of the Lord's prayer, followed by the more well-known version:

Our Father in heaven, you are awesome!
Show us who you are and how you want us to be.
Make earth more like heaven.
Please give us what we need to keep going each day.
Help us when we are wrong and clean us up on the inside.
Help us to let other people off and move on.
Keep us from bad stuff.
You're in charge!
You're strong and powerful and always there.
Forever!
Amen.

Our Father in heaven hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen

Act Justly:

Discussion: How can we as a church join in with God in caring for creation and people created in the image of God?

(This space is for people to talk together about who God is and how as a church community you can join in with God's mission to care for creation. (Use the white board.))

You may want to consider different categories of ways to get involved:

- Personal – What are some of the things you can do as individuals to have a positive impact on climate change?
- Communal – What are some things you can do as a church locally that can positively affect the local environment?
- Global – What are things you can do as a church that may have an impact in the places where climate change has already been affecting communities living in poverty?

Get creative: Create an artistic response to climate justice. Or a collaborative artwork.

***Esther's story Power Point from Christian Aid.**

Mapping connections:

Here I have put up a copy of the world map. The map shows, highlighted in orange and red, the areas most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Clearly, the map highlights particularly, Africa, Asia, the Philippines, Pacific Islands, parts of central and South America and Greenland. You are invited to mark your connections to communities around the world. This could be family or friends in other cities and countries, or places that you have lived, visited or have a cultural connection to. The purpose of this activity is to show that even in our churches we have global connections and relationships with places elsewhere in the world. It is important to remind ourselves we are part of a global community.

Let's sing: Jesu's love is very wonderful Worship folder 46.

Introduction to intercessions

Esther Saizi told Christian Aid: 'When my husband passed away last year, it was a difficult period. I was heartbroken by his passing. Eventually as I knelt down and prayed to God, I knew he was with him and I had to move forward. I knelt and prayed that God would help me.'

Let's take a moment to pray for one another and our world. Rejoicing in the answer to prayer that Esther received, and confident in the power of prayer to change the world, together we pray.

We pray for people throughout the world suffering from poverty and injustice

- The challenge of soaring inflation making it difficult to afford everyday essentials.
- People affected by natural disasters such as drought, famine and flood.
- The impact of climate change, particularly when it destroys essential crops.
- Esther Saizi and women like her who bring their communities together.
- Farmers who provide essential food for their communities.

- Cooperatives which give people more power over their own lives.
- An end to the economic exploitation by big businesses.

Please join in with the refrain: **God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.**

Creator God, We thank you for the gift of our wonderful world.

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

We thank you for day and night.

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

We thank you for the sky.

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

We thank you for land and sea, plants and trees.

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

We thank you for the different seasons, for the sun, moon and stars.

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

We thank you for fish and the variety of sea life and every kind of bird.

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

We thank you for all living creatures – for the animals and wildlife and for one another – humans created in your image.

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

Please help us to care for your world and one another – to love mercy, seek justice and walk humbly with you, our God.

Amen.

Let's sing again Jesus put this song into our hearts. Worship folder 49/SoF 299/MP 376/

Summary:

Now we have time to think as I ask the following questions:

- I wonder, is there something new you have learned today or something you've thought about in a new way?

- I wonder, what do you think God has been saying to us through our worship, activities and conversations? Is there something we need to think about more deeply or to talk about some more?

- I wonder, is there any action that you would like to take because of the things we've reflected on today?

We've been reminded that God has blessed us with a beautiful, amazing world and with one another. Each one of us is wonderfully created in the image of God. We were created to live in peace with God, the natural world and one another – to care for the world and everything in it – including each other.

Song ; We are marching in the light of God SoF 1076/MP 718/R&S 555

Celtic Blessing

May the road rise up to meet you.

May the wind be always at your back.

May the sun shine warm upon your face; the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand.

Amen