

Simple Climate Change Worship Resource

Note: This simplified worship resource on the theme of climate change, is adapted from the 2016 World Environment Day worship resource, *Together for a World Made Whole*. Visit <https://www.unitingjustice.org.au/environment/information-and-action-resources/item/1172-wed2016> to download the original resource, including theological and biblical reflections from a range of voices and all-age service ideas.

Call to Worship

Leader: You are invited to respond with actions

Creator God,

out of the darkness,

life emerged

A candle is lit

In light and breath

you gave birth to the world

Take a deep breath in and out

Jesus is the light of the world.

In him all things are made whole

Cup your hands together and then make them into a ball. Hold them together for a few moments. (2016 Uniting Church in Australia Assembly)

Opening Prayer

Leader: O God who gives birth

to all that we see, all that we know, all that we dream,

All: and all that is unseen, unknown and unimagined,

We celebrate your life that holds and nurtures the universe,

we celebrate your love which joins creation as one and unites all things with you;

We give thanks for your life which is incarnated in Christ

and which is revealed in every created being;

We savour your presence which is limitless and welcoming,

and your Spirit which fills every moment of time and every fragment of matter.

Amen (Adapted from <https://sacredise.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/A-Liturgy-of-Creation-and-Communion.pdf>)

Hymn / Song

For example:

TIS 100 All Creatures of Our God and King

TIS 107 Sing praise and thanksgiving, let all creatures living

TIS 135 All things Bright and Beautiful

155 O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder

156 Morning has broken

651 Take, take off your shoes

Or 'He's Got the Whole World in His's Hands'

Prayer of Confession

Leader: God, you created our planet, the birds, fish, and other animals and you saw all that you had created and called it good. God of life, you also formed us, the human family to act compassionately and gently to all forms of life.

All: Remind us, O God, and help us to change.

We confess that we often forget that we are utterly dependent upon you and interdependent with the rest of your creation. We confess that instead of acting compassionately and gently, we have instead over-used and abused creation, forgetting that our lifestyles impact others around the globe.

Forgive us, O God, and help us to change.

We confess that we have not done enough to protect our planet. We confess that we have failed to insist that our government act urgently and swiftly on climate. We confess that we, as consumers, have not held companies accountable for their reckless pollution and carbon consumption, nor have we worked hard enough to limit our own consumption and pollution.

Forgive us, O God, and help us to change.

God of wisdom, help us understand that whatever we do to the web of life we do to ourselves. God of power, help us acknowledge that we must act now and wake up to our moral obligation to the future of the planet, which you have entrusted to our hands.

Forgive us O God, and help us to change.

All: God of grace and salvation, today we open our eyes, ears, and hearts to the pain of our planet amid the changing climate. We open our hearts to your truth, to see in you the way of healing and hope for our planet. We are beloved children of God, forgiven, renewed, and sent out into the world to work for the healing of our planet and for justice, in faithfulness to God. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Leader: Receive this, the good news: "For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us." (Psalm 103: 11-12 In the name of Jesus, you are forgiven.

All: Thanks be to God.

(Adapted from UCC Litany of Environmental Confession)

Hymn / Song

For example:

TIS 668 Touch the earth lightly
TIS 658 I, the Lord of sea and sky
TIS 473 Community of Christ
Or “This is My Father’s World”

Bible Readings

Esther 4: 1- 17

John 3: 16-17

Romans 8: 18-21

(Optional: a selection of verses from Psalm 104, for example: verses 1,10-23 or 24 -30)

Sermon:

For Such a Time as This – Jessica Morthorpe

Play from here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KgRgxwf82f0>

Passing of the Peace

(Communion) To insert a creation communion liturgy, visit <https://sacredise.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/A-Liturgy-of-Creation-and-Communion.pdf>

A New Creed

We are not alone,
we live in God’s world.
We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.
We trust in God.
We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God’s presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.
We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.

(from the United Church of Canada)

Hymn / Song

For example:

TIS 268 Joy to the world

TIS 690 Beauty for Brokenness

TIS 137 For the beauty of the Earth

Notices

Prayers of the People

Leader: Spirit of life,

We pray for all people living with the effects of climate change now:

For the sake of those facing rising temperatures, drought and water shortages,

All: Creator God, in your mercy, renew this damaged world.

Leader: For the sake of those facing unpredictable weather, disrupted seasons and failed crops,

All: Creator God, in your mercy, renew this damaged world.

Leader: For the sake of those facing flooding, land loss and salination of vital water supplies,

All: Creator God, in your mercy, renew this damaged world.

Leader: For the sake of all those who fear the changing climate,

All: Creator God, in your mercy, renew this damaged world.

Leader: For the sake of the poor, the vulnerable, and the refugee

All: Creator God, in your mercy, renew this damaged world.

Leader: For the sake of us all,

All: Creator God, in your mercy, recreate our hearts that we might partner with you to renew this damaged world.

(Based on: <http://www.thesanctuarycentre.org/resources/written-prayers-prayers-in-response-to-climate-change.pdf>)

Offering - *An offering of our lives*

There are many ways to care for the earth in our everyday life. Composting, gardening, taking more active and sustainable transport options (walking, cycling, public transport), holidaying domestically rather than internationally, switching to renewable energy, and reducing meat consumption are just a few examples.

Invite the individuals in your congregation to write down on pieces of paper (or share in the chat box when online) a step that they have already taken in their daily life to care for the earth, and a further step that they would like to commit to. Collect these up as an offering to God, the earth and each other, and as an affirmation of what the congregation is already doing and an encouragement to take further steps in the race. Stick the offerings up on a display board (or in a slide or document) for people to return to in the weeks that follow to be inspired.

Uniting Church in Australia Prayer

'For The Sake Of The Planet'

Creator God,
breath and source of life,
in love you called the world into being
and in grace you made us and call us your children.
We stand in awe of the wonder of your creation:
its beauty and wildness;
complexity and power;
resilience and fragility.

God of life,
you call us to be participants in the web and
wellspring of life:
to be nurtured by the planet;
to be nurturing of the planet;
to cherish the world and all that lives.
But we have failed and creation groans under our weight.

God of grace,
forgive us in our brokenness:
when we have taken too much from the earth;
when we have not spoken out
against greed and destruction;
when we have allowed our most vulnerable neighbours
to be harmed.
We seek courage and forgiveness to be made whole.

God of love,
we pray for those people, communities and nations
already suffering the devastating effects of climate change;
and we pray for the diversity of life on earth,
so much of it already threatened by our actions.

God of hope,
we pray for the world's leaders
Bless them with wisdom and creativity,
and a shared vision of hope for all creation.
May they find the determination
to take strong action against climate change,
and the political will to act together for the common good.

Creator God,
we pray for us all,
that we might restore our relationships with each other
and work together to heal the earth.
Renew us in your grace
for the sake of your creation. Amen.

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Sending out

Creating God,

your name is written in every leaf, every bird, every river, every stone, every living being.

Thank you for calling us by name. Thank you for your continued creating power in moisture, rivers, forests and oceans.

Make us attentive to the wounds of the earth and willing to work for the healing of the whole creation.

Send us out as your hands and feet to care for the earth and take action on climate change so that we and our children can enjoy an abundant nature and live a long life on earth.

Amen.

Blessing Hymn

For example:

TIS 755 You shall go out with joy and be led forth in peace

TIS 768 Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow

For other liturgies, including all-age, creative and reflective options, please visit our website:
<https://www.unitingearth.org.au/worship/>