



**FOR ALL
CREATION:**

**SCRIPTURE-GUIDED
PRAYERS FOR
CLIMATE JUSTICE**

tearfund

WHY DO WE CARE ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

For millions of people around the world, climate change is not a debate, a theory or a distraction; climate change is a reality that threatens their survival.

Three years ago, Polly, a subsistence farmer in Malawi, faced a hunger crisis. Changes to the climate had left her plot dry and barren. Her family was constantly hungry. A decade ago they could produce twenty bags of maize per year, and now they could only produce three.

Polly sought help from her local church. She attended Tearfund's Foundations for Farming course where she learned simple techniques to farm her dry, barren plot of land and make it flourish again. After putting the techniques into practice, Polly's first harvest was seventeen bags of maize enabling her to feed her family, sell a surplus bag and invest the money in livestock – something she would never have thought possible.

Polly's story is not an anomaly. We work with farmers in hundreds of communities around the world, and we have heard her story echoed in many other places. **Over the last few years it has become more difficult to grow crops because of hotter and drier weather, and unpredictable rainfall.** When rain does fall, degraded land and deforestation prevent the earth from absorbing it, so the rain that does fall leads to floods.

We care about climate change because we cannot adequately address hunger, extreme poverty, or displacement without addressing climate change. We care about climate change because our brothers and sisters in the global South have been asking us to take action, and we must listen.



THE FACTS

For the first time in decades the number of people experiencing hunger has increased, in part because of climate change.

MORE THAN 820 MILLION PEOPLE EXPERIENCE HUNGER. MANY OF THESE ARE PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY WHO DEPEND ON THE LAND FOR SURVIVAL.

SINCE 2008, NEARLY **175 MILLION PEOPLE** IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN DISPLACED BY CLIMATE-INDUCED DISASTERS - A NUMBER THAT CONTINUES TO GROW.

MORE THAN 1.3 BILLION PEOPLE LIVE ON DETERIORATING AGRICULTURAL LAND, PUTTING THEM AT RISK OF DEPLETED HARVESTS THAT CAN LEAD TO WORSENING HUNGER, POVERTY AND DISPLACEMENT.

The injustice of climate change is that those who have done the least to cause it are suffering the most from climate impacts.

PRAYER IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF MOVEMENTS FOR JUSTICE.

At Tearfund we have seen how prayer can impact even the most dire of situations, and prayer has rooted us in God's love in the toughest of times. We pray because we need hope and faith that God will indeed restore all of creation as he promises in Revelation 21.

This guide contains scripture and prayer for these four areas of the climate crisis:

- GOD'S CREATION
- OUR ROLE AS CARETAKERS FOR CREATION
- THE HUMAN IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE
- WORLD LEADERS AND POLICY MAKERS

After reading the scriptures in each section, you can pray the accompanying prayer or use your own words. Use this guide to pray for justice in your home community as well as the world. Pray that God's justice will be done for all of creation.

WHY DO WE PRAY?

We pray to know God and to know ourselves. Prayer helps us break through the noise of the world and teaches us to listen and understand the heart of God. We pray with our hearts, yes, but also with our hands and our feet. We pray because of God's everlasting grace, justice, and forgiveness. We pray in exultation. We pray with groans. We pray with tears. We pray with laughter.

We pray with thanksgiving for the world that the Lord has given us. For the air we breathe, the fresh water we drink, the food we eat, the

nature we enjoy, the community that supports us, the family who loves us, the children who inspire us.

We pray because climate change threatens all that we love, know, and cherish. We pray because of the impact climate change has on all of us. We pray in Jesus name because he is our Lord and our Savior. We pray God uses us to heal the wounds of our damaged world and to protect those who are in harm's way.

We pray.

PRAYERS FOR GOD'S CREATION

GENESIS 1:1-2

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

From you comes life. In you I am. This world is your creation, your art for us to enjoy, to steward, and to flourish with. We thank you for blessing us with its beauty.

GENESIS 1:11

Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so.

Thank you for providing for all of our needs. Each part of your creation serves a particular purpose. Each sings your praises in its own way. Sustainer of life, thank you for giving us a harvest every year that feeds, nourishes, and gives us the energy to be your servants in the world.

GENESIS 1:20-21

And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky." So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

We thank you for the birds in the air, the fish in the streams, the whales in the ocean. Each living thing bears your fingerprints. Each is a testament to your glory. Lord, stir in our hearts a spirit to protect these magnificent creatures and to preserve the oceans that are rapidly changing due to climate change.

PRAYERS FOR OUR ROLE AS CARETAKERS

GENESIS 1:26

Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

Thank you for creating us in your image and giving us the responsibility to care for your sacred earth and everything that lives upon it. Give us the wisdom to rule over your creation so that when we return it to you, it is as magnificent as the day you created it.

GENESIS 2:15

Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

Help us to be the stewards you intended and to bring healing to a world scarred by our greed and mismanagement. Forgive us for not using your creation like we should. Forgive us for our neglect, abuse, and violence against your creation. Help us to walk in the ways you intended.

MATTHEW 25:37-40

Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?" The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

Transform our hearts and awaken our minds. Help us know that as creation suffers so too do those who depend upon it. Give us eyes to see the suffering of your children and the determination to do something about it. Peel back the indifference that allows us to abuse nature and ignore the cries of the most impoverished among us.

PRAYERS FOR THE HUMAN IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE

PSALM 139:13-14

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

Lord, you knit each and every one of us in our mother's womb. As I am fearfully and wonderfully made, so too is everyone and everything on this planet. Thank you for the diversity of the world, and for imprinting each of us with your beauty.

PROVERBS 14:31

Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God.

We acknowledge our complicity in the cycles of chaos that plague the world. We take so much without considering how much it costs. Rid us of our heedlessness and help us to love our neighbors as you taught us.

ISAIAH 1:17

Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.

Give us courage to speak up for what is right, and to become the stewards you designed us to be. Our poorest brothers and sister have done the least to create climate change yet are suffering the most from it. Drought, flood, and famine are more severe now than they have ever been. We are your hands and feet, oh God; guide us in our work to bring healing and salvation to the world.

PRAYERS FOR OUR LEADERS

1 TIMOTHY 2:1-2

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

Give those in positions of authority wisdom and the humility to listen. Remove their pride and sow seeds of peace in their hearts. Give our leaders a heart for the most impoverished among us and the courage to take action where it is needed most.

PSALM 24:1-2

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters.

You, Lord, are the maker of the heavens and the earth, the trees and the glaciers, the rivers and the prairies. We confess that we have squandered and polluted the world you bore up. Forgive us and give us all - especially our leaders - eyes to see the value of creation.

COLOSSIANS 1:16

For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.

In an era of pride and arrogance, when we think we can do whatever we please without consequence, remind us of our purpose. Give us the humility to know our place in the world and to acknowledge your greatness.

Scripture quotations taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version® NIV®
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FLOURISH

END HUNGER • ACT ON CLIMATE

The flourishing of humans and the rest of creation is intertwined.

When the land is degraded, livelihoods are degraded. We are building a movement for flourishing—working for the day when no family goes hungry because they can no longer grow food. Where no one is displaced because climate shocks have forced them from their land and homes.

We believe that God is working for the flourishing of all creation—that in his Kingdom there will be no more hunger, no more violence, no more disasters.

THIS IS HOW YOU CAN JOIN US



LIVE SUSTAINABLY

We examine our own behaviors and attitudes that perpetuate injustice. We have tools to help you embrace sustainability and simplicity in your day to day lives, and reduce your impact on the environment.



ADVOCATE

We cannot address climate change simply by changing our own attitudes and behaviors—we need our leaders to take action. We are mobilizing advocates to urge Congress to take action and reduce the impact of climate change on impoverished communities.



PRAY

We believe prayer is key to overcoming climate change—when addressing problems this large and complex we need God's power and leading to overcome the challenges our world faces.



GIVE

We are working to train 1,000 farmers this year in conservation agriculture. These techniques of farming are not only sustainable, but affordable. \$10/month for 1 year could train 4 farmers.

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