

## Prayer points – September 2023



### Season of Creation Prayer (from [Season of Creation toolkit](#))

*Creator of All, from your communion of love life sprung forth like a mighty river and the whole cosmos came into being.*

*On this Earth of overflowing love, the Word was made flesh and went forth with the life-giving waters proclaiming peace and justice for all creation.*

*You called human beings to till and keep your garden. You placed us into right relationship with each creature, but we failed to listen to the cries of the Earth and the cries of the most vulnerable. We broke with the flowing communion of love and sinned against you by not safeguarding the conditions for life.*

*We lament the loss of our fellow species and their habitats, we grieve the loss of human cultures, along with the lives and livelihoods that have been displaced or perished, and we ache at the sight of an economy of death, war and violence that we have inflicted on ourselves and on the Earth.*

*Open our ears to your creative, reconciling and sustaining Word that calls to us through the book of Scripture and the book of creation. Bless us once again with your life-giving waters so that the Creator Spirit may let justice and peace flow in our hearts and overflow into all creation.*

*Open our hearts to receive the living waters of God's justice and peace, and to share it with our suffering brothers and sisters, all creatures around us, and all creation.*

*Bless us to walk together with all people of good will so that the many streams of the living waters of God's justice and peace may become a mighty river all over the Earth. In the name of the One who came to proclaim good news to all creation, Jesus Christ. Amen.*

### 'The Age of Climate Disaster'

At least 115 people [were killed in wildfires that swept through the town of Lahaina in Maui](#) in early August. The largest wildfire ever recorded in the EU has been devastating Greece – and [killed twenty people](#). Canada's worst recorded wildfire season has seen more than 1,000 fires active [simultaneously](#): [59,000 square miles](#) have been burned and at one point, half the population of the Northwest Territories was under evacuation orders. Iran has [declared national closures](#) to cope with temperatures of up to 50 degrees Celsius (122F). In the Andes, a heatwave [has led to winter temperatures of 37 degrees Celsius at high altitudes](#), melting snow and creating water scarcity. And while many have too little water, others are experiencing too much, as storms cause floods in many areas, including [Pakistan](#), [China](#) and other [parts of Asia](#), [Slovenia](#) and other parts of Europe, [Chile](#) and other parts of Latin America, the [Caribbean](#), and the US. As an article in Foreign Affairs [stated](#), "The age of climate disaster is here."

Lord, we pray for each person who is suffering because of what human beings have done to the earth. We ask you to sustain them amidst loss and to inspire and strengthen those who are supporting relief and recovery. We pray that as individuals and societies, we may not become numbed or paralysed by what is happening, but may be inspired to take positive action to limit emissions – and to seek justice for those who have done the least to cause the climate crisis, but are among the most affected.

### Call for Justice! Make Polluters Pay

*"These are some of the injustices of the climate crisis - those who didn't cause the climate crisis, those who aren't responsible for the rising global emissions - they're the ones on the frontlines. They're the ones whose voices are not being listened to. And they're the ones who don't get climate finance for mitigation, or adaptation, or finance for loss and damage." [Vanessa Nakate, Ugandan climate activist](#)*

Bob Kikuyu, Global Theological Advisor for Christian Aid, [writes in a sermon for Season of Creation](#): "Developing countries are calling on the global North to recognize the impact of climate change, loss of life and livelihoods and damage to infrastructure and economies and to pay into a loss and damage fund ... At the COP27 UN climate summit in 2022 it was agreed to create a fund for addressing losses and damages in particularly vulnerable nations: many questions remain around how it will work and how much money wealthy nations will provide." We continue to pray that wealthy nations and businesses will resource an adequate, justly administered loss and damage fund. On 23<sup>rd</sup> September in the UK, people will come together for '[Make Polluters Pay](#)' day, calling on the Government to make UK-based fossil fuel companies, many of whom are making vast profits, pay into the fund in recognition of the impacts of fuels they have extracted and are still extracting. We pray for the success of this day.

[www.prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk](http://www.prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk)

## Sustainable Development Goals and Africa Climate Summits

Climate-related meetings taking place in September include the Sustainable Development Goals summit, held on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> at the UN in New York, and the Africa Climate Summit, hosted by Kenya from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup>. The UN [hopes that the SDG Summit](#) “will mark the beginning of a new phase of accelerated progress” towards the Sustainable Development Goals and “reignite a sense of hope, optimism, and enthusiasm for the 2030 Agenda.” The [aim of the Africa Climate Summit is](#) “to design and catalyse actions and solutions for climate change in Africa by providing a platform to deliberate on the nexus between climate change, Africa’s development reality, and the need to push for increased investment in climate action globally, and specifically in Africa.” We pray that these summits may galvanise action that helps promote a sustainable future for all.

## Just Resources for a Just Transition

A concern about the transition to a decarbonised economy is that some of the key mineral resources needed are found in sensitive environmental areas, often with a history of external exploitation. We pray that justice will prevail in all situations where the presence of vital minerals runs the risk of creating environmental harm and exploitation. We pray with the [Pacific Council of Churches](#) specifically about deep-sea mining: “Help us bring the gospel of good news to the oceans and rivers. Teach us what it means to live without plastic, fossil fuels, and mining which harms our seas.”

## Intergenerational Justice

*“The obligation to respect children’s rights requires States to refrain from violating them by causing environmental harm. They shall protect children against environmental damage from other sources and third parties, including by regulating business enterprises ... Effective remedies should be available to redress violations... States should provide access to justice pathways for children”*

[In an important legal opinion](#), the UN’s Committee on the Rights of the Child has offered support to young climate activists who are trying to hold countries responsible for their failure to act on climate change.

Recent lawsuits by young people in the US, Australia and [Europe](#) have drawn attention to the [intergenerational injustice](#) of prioritising present economic concerns over the health and future of the world’s children. One such case, in Montana, [recently resulted in a victory](#). The UN committee’s opinion [will strengthen other cases](#).

Father, we give thanks for the courage of young people and their allies who are pointing out intergenerational injustice and calling for children’s rights to a safe environment to be recognised. We pray for the success of their legal actions, for their sake – and the world’s.

## Voting for the Planet

*“Today we made history!”* With these words, the [Ecuadorian environmental group Yasunidos celebrated](#) the vote by Ecuador’s citizens to [“keep crude oil in the ground”](#) in part of the Yasuni national park in the Amazon. Following the citizen-requested referendum, all new oil wells are banned, and Petroecuador will have one year to close all its active oil wells and remove all infrastructure. It’s estimated the vote will result [in an estimated 726 million barrels of oil staying in the ground](#) – and will help preserve one of the world’s biodiversity hotspots. The Ecuadorian government [had pointed out](#) the ban would cause a financial loss of about \$1.2 billion a year – but Yasunidos’ Pedro Bermeo [said](#) the vote showed other things were more important: the *“greatest national consensus at this time is in the defence of nature, the defence of Indigenous peoples and nationalities, the defence of life”*. Lord, we thank you for this example of people prioritising care for your creation over growth at all costs. We pray that it will sustain and [inspire all](#) seeking to end fossil fuel exploitation and the destruction of sensitive environments.

## Sending Out

(1<sup>st</sup> part: [Season of Creation](#), 1<sup>st</sup> verses from [Pastoral Team of Bambamarca, Peru](#); 2<sup>nd</sup> part: [Pray & Fast](#))

*The poor of the world are thirsty/For justice and for peace/ Their journey is unending/ Till hate and oppression cease.  
The Lord of heaven is thirsty/ For justice and for peace/ His battle is unending/ Till hate and oppression cease  
Let the people of God become thirsty/ For justice and for peace/ And join the river of justice/ Till hate and oppression cease.* And may God’s springs of living water renew us, so that, by God’s grace, in our lives and in our nations, Justice may swell from a trickle to a river and peace and righteousness flow in never-ending streams.