

Prayer Letter September 2022

As I prepare this prayer letter there are areas of the world suffering from unusual heat patterns and there are other areas experiencing unusual cold or wet weather. The consequences of climate change are destructive and tragic for many people. In June the World Council of Churches put out a statement on the urgency of action in response to climate change. You can read the whole statement here.
<https://www.oikoumene.org>

The WCC report states:

Decades of scientific research have validated the reality of the accelerating climate emergency that now confronts us as an actual imminent catastrophe. Decades of advocacy by the World Council of Churches together with many faith and civil society partners have articulated the need for action, for a just transition to a sustainable future, and for accountability to the most vulnerable poorer communities and Indigenous Peoples, reflecting the historic responsibility of the most developed industrialized nations.

The global community is now faced with an existential need to move and act immediately and effectively for the sake of the whole of Creation, of which all human beings are a part. It is a moral and spiritual imperative. Indeed, continuing wilfully on our current destructive path is a crime – against the poor and vulnerable, against those least responsible for the crisis but bearing its heaviest impacts, against our children and future generations, and against the living world.

In many Anglican and Episcopal churches, Creationtide or the Season of Creation is the period in the annual church calendar, from 1st September to 4th October, which is dedicated to God as Creator and Sustainer of all life. As part of the world-wide lament over the effects of climate change many churches and other groups have written prayer, some of which appear below. I invite you to pray with me this month for our world and its peoples.

Sisters and brothers, as we mourn the distress and wounds of God's creation, God weeps with us. As we face rising waters, hunger and displacement, God suffers with us. As we struggle for justice, God struggles with us. As we expose and challenge climate justice, God empowers us. As we strive to build alternative communities, God works with us. As we offer our gifts to all, God blesses us.

So we pray.

God our Creator,
You never cease the work you have begun
and prosper with your blessing all human endeavour.
Help us to be good neighbours to those who share our world today,
and those who will inherit our world in generations to come.
Make us wise and faithful stewards of your creation,
living lightly on the Earth
so that it continues to blossom and flourish now and in the future.

We pray for our beloved planet, scarred by conflict and natural disaster:
bring healing to its lands and cleansing to its waters;
bring justice to its peoples and peace to its nations;
bring life for today and hope for the future.

God, we pray for you to raise up a generation of leaders with the courage to take responsibility for our changing climate, and the part we have played in it.
We intercede for our politicians and leaders – cause them to act in the best interests of all nations today, and all peoples in the future, in order to avoid catastrophic changes. We ask for you to fill the hearts of all who lead richer nations – give them your mercy and compassion on poorer countries already suffering the effects of the changing climate.

God of all Eternity, ignite in us, your people, the faith to believe that you will one day heal our broken world, and grow in us the perseverance to keep praying and working towards that day when your creation will once again be whole and free. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

Archdeacon Anne Russell-Brighty, New Zealand, Vice-President of DIAKONIA Asia Pacific