



# Prayers for COP21 in Paris

together we pray for climate justice.

Thank you for your commitment to spending an hour in prayer during the climate negotiations in Paris. By joining together in prayer with people across the country, we can amplify the cries of the Earth and the voices of those facing the greatest risks from climate change.

Here are some **ideas** to guide your prayer. Please don't feel limited to this! We encourage you to get creative and pray however you feel comfortable. An hour of Prayers for COP21 in Paris can be offered by one person in their bedroom, a family in the living room, a congregation gathered in a sanctuary, or a group of friends going for a walk in the park--it's up to you!

## CPJ's Ideas for an Hour in Prayer

*Tip: Start with where you are.*

*The scale of the climate change crisis feels overwhelming, but **global ecological reconciliation starts right where you are**. Allow space in your prayers to acknowledge that humans have become disconnected from nature, and actively participate in reconciliation with your ecological community by getting to know your surroundings today. The following ideas can help you do this.*



*Idea: Hear from those impacted by climate change.*

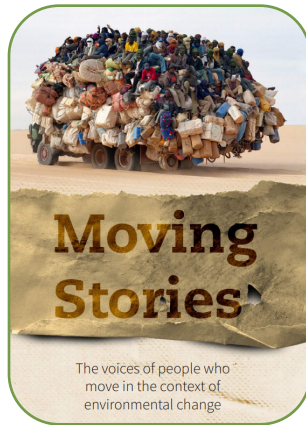
Climate change is not just an environmental issue. It affects social stability, economies, and educational systems. It impacts the pursuits of equality and global peace. It plays out in ecosystems and community health, technology and transportation systems.

The current legacy of climate change is mostly the fault of developed countries and wealthy consumers. However, it is communities in least developed countries, low-lying states, and small-island nations that will be most negatively impacted by climate change.

Extreme weather events, climate variability, and sea level rise due to climate change are already uprooting communities. Fierce typhoons in the Philippines have displaced hundreds of thousands of people; changing rainfall patterns in Peru have severely threatened food production; and unusually heavy monsoon rains in Pakistan have caused flooding that killed thousands and displaced millions.



listen to the challenges of international climate migration



read the stories of people who have to migrate



watch the stories of Canadian communities already impacted

Reflect on how our carbon footprint may cause the forced migration of many feet. Think about how climate change will affect your community, and how your community can affect climate change.

Pray for those whose stories of migration you hear, and those whose stories may never be told. Pray that international negotiations in Paris will be grounded in principles of equity and justice.



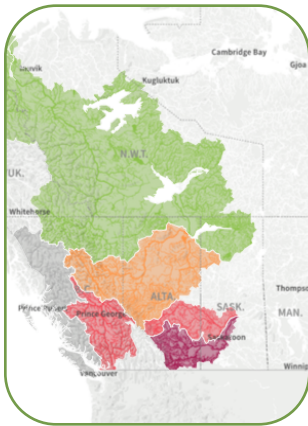
## Idea: Walk a watershed prayer.

One way to get to know your ecological community is to learn about and inhabit your watershed.

A watershed is the area of land from which surface water drains to a single point. Watersheds can be outlined at many scales, and so connect us within our neighborhoods, our neighborhoods within our country, and our countries within continents. No matter where you are, you are in a watershed! Watersheds unite our ecological communities, and they facilitate the cycling of water that sustains life.

Human activity on land and in waterways affects our watersheds.

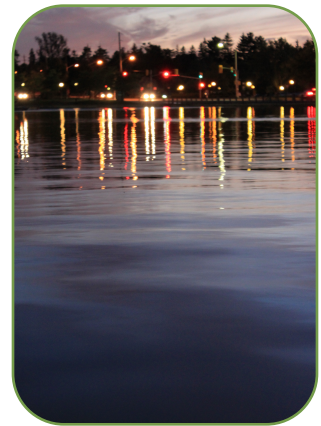
Climate change will negatively impact Canadian watersheds: more variability in rain patterns may compromise fresh water availability and increase risks of water-borne disease. Shrinking glaciers in the Canadian Rockies are leaving less meltwater for aquatic and human ecosystems. Bodies of freshwater are expected to shrink, and droughts may become more frequent in the Prairies. Aquatic ecosystems in Canada's North are particularly at risk due to water temperature fluctuations.



Learn about the current threats—including climate change—to the health of Canadian watersheds using WWF's interactive watershed reports map.



Read the theology behind watershed stewardship, and consider joining KAIROS' Reconciliation in the Watershed program.



Now, go for a prayer walk in your watershed! Think about how your community's activity affects your watershed.

Imagine how the water you see will flow to be connected with water from all across your watershed. Reflect on how your watershed, and its wellbeing, fits into the global cycling of water.



## Idea: Take a Carbon Sabbath.

Climate change presents a moral problem whose solutions must include spiritual action. Many scholars, Rabbis, theologians, and pastors suggest that Sabbath practices may be an important part of the response to our growing ecological crisis. Sabbath provides liberation from dominating cycles of restlessness, it cultivates ecological awareness, and it opens space and time to inhabit—and thus become reconciled with—Creation.

Read the passage below:

Jubilee means not only rest and reverence for the land but also rest and reverence for that other land, "the land of ourselves, the tiny country each of us comprises, whose geography we know so well. We are to let that land, the land of our bodies, our blood, our breath, and our bones, lie fallow too" (qt. Maria Harris). In ways that we must discover for ourselves and our families, we can learn to practice Sabbath, to break the frenetic pace of our daily, weekly, monthly, yearly lives, in order to renew our health holistically. This is not so much a matter of being religious on Sunday. In fact the demands of church activities may make that day as frenetic as any other day. Rather the Sabbath concern is to recall who we are and to recover our humanity, so that we may continue to live in the world without succumbing to the reigning ideology and mechanisms of production and consumption, so that we may live less in competition and more in community with those around us. The Sabbath-Jubilee mandate for rest might lead us to consider the whole range of factors that are causing stressful lifestyles, various kinds of over consumption, and patterns of overwork, which can undermine our physical and emotional health, our families, and our social life. It might enable us to consider the other Sabbath-Jubilee mandates concerning debts and slavery and the distribution of economic resources for the life of all. And it might help us to understand why so many are so poor and not blame them for being poor. Our churches and synagogues can become Jubilee communities, small laboratories in which we can practice alternative economic possibilities, try new forms of solidarity, and experience Jubilee spirituality together.

*Kinsler, Ross, and Gloria Kinsler. The Biblical Jubilee and the Struggle for Life. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1999. Pgs. 20-21.*

How might the Sabbath practice the authors describe impact your life? Your faith community? What could it do for Canada? The world?

Pray that our economies will become organized around Biblical Jubilee principles, instead of patterns of exhaustive (and exhausting) consumption and exploitation.

Practice an hour (or a day!) of Sabbath: leave your car behind and your lights off. Go for a walk. Sit outside. Be still.

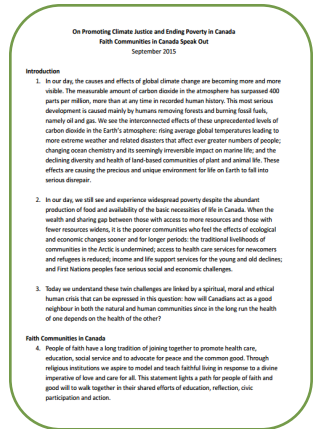
Be present in creation.



## Idea: Read the Canadian interfaith statement on Promoting Climate Justice.

Leaders of 25+ national Canadian churches and other faith-based organizations have issued a call for federal government action to end poverty and fight climate change. The interfaith statement, *On Promoting Climate Justice and Ending Poverty in Canada*, calls for Canadian leadership in ending poverty and fighting climate change.

- Spend time reading the interfaith statement. Pray for bold faith action on climate change.
- Reflect on how you and your faith community can act for climate justice.
- Sign the climate justice petition: [www.cpj.ca/climate-call](http://www.cpj.ca/climate-call).
- Write a letter to your MP, tell him/her what you love about this glorious Earth, why you are concerned, and what you want him/her do.



## Idea: Create Hope.

Climate change is a daunting challenge for our global community, and movement towards climate justice can feel hopelessly insignificant. As people of faith, we can cultivate and share hope for the restoration of all of creation.

Draw or paint what you hope ecological reconciliation looks like for your community.  
Pray that this hope may be realized!



**Thank you for offering Prayers for COP21 in Paris. We hope that these ideas have inspired you! We wish you peace, blessings, and above all comfort, knowing you are in the company of Canadians raising prayers all across the nation.**

**Together we pray for climate justice.**



*Want more inspiration? CPJ has created a collection of climate justice worship materials that leaders can use to engage their community on climate change. Find them at [www.cpj.ca/climate](http://www.cpj.ca/climate). Also check out *Living Ecological Justice: A Biblical Response to the Environmental Crisis*, a faith-based learning tool for Canadian Christians trying to live out the justice mandate to care and advocate for creation.*

