

Living Faithfully into a New Climate

Prayers of Intercession

A resource in support of church education and engagement on the road from the September 2014 United Nations Climate Summit to the December 2015 international climate change negotiations (COP21).

*With excerpts from **Living Ecological Justice: A Biblical Response to the Environmental Crisis (CPJ, 2013).***



CITIZENS FOR PUBLIC JUSTICE

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it.

Psalm 24: 1

Introduction

Creation Advocacy and Care. Through a sense of wonder with creation we are invited to seek insights into God's will for a just society, a fair economy, and a flourishing land. Creation care rests on biblical foundations uniting spirituality with scientific, ecological, and political insights into dynamic and energizing relationship.



Creation advocacy sets its sights on God's vision of an abundant and ecologically flourishing life for all creatures; it aligns itself with God's passionate work in the world, enacting the divine purpose through faithful worship, engaged community, and prophetic action.

The Climate Crisis. It is now widely accepted that the massive increase in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are largely the result of human activity. And, as the concentration of GHGs continues to grow, climate change is causing the rising of sea levels, species extinction, and glacial melting. Agrarian and fisheries-based livelihoods are threatened by extreme and volatile weather, resulting in conflict over natural resources, food insecurity, hunger and poverty.

The [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) has clearly stated that in order to limit global warming to 2°C above pre-industrial levels — the threshold for “dangerous climate change” — most known fossil fuel reserves must stay underground.

The Road from New York to Paris. In response to this global crisis, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has invited Heads of State along with business, finance, and civil society leaders to a Climate Summit on September 23, 2014, in New York. The [UN Climate Summit](#) is part of a global effort to mobilize action and ambition on climate change. It comes just one year before countries aim to conclude a global climate agreement at the 21st meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP21) in Paris through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

A Role for Faith Communities. Union Theological Seminary in New York will hold the [Religions for the Earth Conference](#), September 19-21. Alongside the UN Climate Summit, the World Council of Churches and Religions for Peace will organize an [Interfaith Summit on Climate Change](#), September 21-22, also in New York, in order to highlight the specific contributions that faith traditions bring to the international climate debate. And environmentalists active in the 350.org movement are planning the biggest March New York has ever seen.

A Call to Engagement and Action. To have an impact on the climate agenda, action needs to happen at all levels. As key leaders meet in New York, their efforts will be supported by grassroots activities around the world. Canadian Christians are urged to get involved.

“Living Faithfully into a New Climate” is a package of materials assembled by Citizens for Public Justice, a member of the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) Commission on Justice and Peace, that aims to assist Canadian faith communities to highlight the importance of the September 2014 events, and also to enable increased engagement in creation advocacy and care as we move towards the December 2015 COP21 meeting in Paris. It is our hope that these resources can be used in the worship activities of all of the 25 member Christian denominations of the CCC.

“Living Faithfully into a New Climate” includes a wide variety of resources that can be used as part of Sunday worship or to support additional learning opportunities in communities of faith. All are centred around responding to God’s call to care for creation.

- A Bible Study on Creation Advocacy and Care
- Sermon Notes for September 21, 2014
- Hymns for Creation
- Prayers of Intercession (this document)
- Activities for Youth and Young Adults
- Additional Activities
- A Living Faithfully into a New Climate Infographic (available at cpj.ca/climate)

All of these materials are as PDFs at cpj.ca/climate. Text-only versions of these resources (except the infographic) are also available.



Prayers of Intercession – for use on Sunday, September 21, 2014

Many congregations offer “Prayers of the People” or prayers of intercession as part of their regular Sunday worship. You are welcome to use the prayer that follows, as printed, or to take one or more of the petitions for inclusion in your faith community’s prayers on Sunday, September 21. Alternatively, you may wish to use one or two petitions each week for several weeks as a way to keep the climate crisis on the hearts and minds of your parishioners.



Celebrant: In response to the climate crisis, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has gathered heads of state, as well as business and civil society leaders for a Climate Summit in New York today and tomorrow. This summit is part of a global effort to mobilize action and ambition towards a new global climate agreement.

Faith communities also gathered this weekend at several events alongside the UN Climate Summit, and environmentalists active in the 350.org movement brought together thousands of people to call for action to address climate change.

Let us join with those gathered in New York as we pray for them, and for the restoration and flourishing of God’s glorious creation.

Let us pray.

Leader: God of Glory, God of Grace, we lament the destruction that our greed, consumerism, and endless pursuit of “more” have wrought upon your beautiful creation. We repent for the misguided choices that we have made and the resulting fragility, devastation, and spoiling of your earth, your air, your seas, and your creatures. Open our eyes, Lord, that we might follow your path.

Response: Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for the preservation of wildlife habitats, for the strength of old growth forests, for the health of the oceans, and for the purity of the air.

Response: God of the wilderness, hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for the well-being of all of the beautiful creatures of God’s great earth, especially those that are endangered and facing extinction.*

Response: God of the Amur Leopard, hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for our faith leaders and all faith leaders. For those who teach our children and youth, and all who guide us on our faith journey.

Response: God of the Wood Poppy, hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for those in government: our municipal leaders, our premiers and MPPs/MLAs, and those who represent us in Canada's parliament, that you might give them wisdom and courage to discern your will and your way.

Response: God of the atmosphere, hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for all those gathered in New York this weekend, for government leaders from around the world, for people of faith, and for environmentalists. May they all be guided by your goodness, your wisdom, and your grace.

Response: God of the North Atlantic Right Whale, hear our prayer.

Leader: Lord, we ask that, with our support and encouragement, our elected leaders might pursue policies that support the well-being of the earth and all its creatures, that they will generously support those whose lives have been most profoundly impacted by climate change, and that they will contribute willingly to fund adaptation and mitigation commitments in the Global South.

Response: God of the oceans, hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for people throughout the world, that we all may hear the cries of your fragile earth. That we might hear the thundering of glaciers and oceans, and melodies of the streams. The calls of birds of the air, the songs of the seas, and the howls and chirps of all those creatures which roam the hills and valleys of the Earth.

Response: God of the Mountain Gorilla, hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray that we might structure our lives, our livelihoods, and our economies in ways that respect and preserve the Earth.

Response: God of the Polar Bear, hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray that we might think beyond ourselves and our current desires, mindful of the needs of peoples across the planet and future generations.

Response: God of the Sumatran Rhino, hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray that we might offer ourselves in concrete acts of sacrifice and dedication to the health and well-being of the earth, the skies, and the seas.

Response: God of the Leatherback Turtle, hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray that we might respond to God's urgent call to care for creation and to advocate on behalf of the voiceless plants, animals, water systems, and ecosystems.

Response: God of the Monarch Butterfly, hear our prayer.

Leader: As we journey from New York to Paris and our world leaders seek to conclude a global climate agreement through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, we pray that we all might be guided by your goodness and grace.

Response: God of the universe, hear our prayer.

**According to the [World Wildlife Fund](#), the following animals are critically endangered: Amur Leopard, Black Rhino, Cross River Gorilla, Hawksbill Turtle, Javan Rhino, Leatherback Turtle, Mountain Gorilla, Saola, South China Tiger, Sumatran Elephant, Sumatran Orangutan, Sumatran Rhino, Sumatran Tiger, Vaquita, Western Lowland Gorilla, Yangtze Finless Porpoise. Many others are endangered, vulnerable, and threatened.*

CITIZENS FOR PUBLIC JUSTICE

a national organization inspired by faith to act for justice

We at CPJ hope you have found these resources useful, educational, and inspiring towards your pursuit of climate justice.

CPJ has been a faithful voice for public justice in Canada for more than 50 years, bringing together justice-oriented Christians, churches, religious orders, and organizations. Still, there is much work to do – and we could use your support! CPJ depends on donations from committed citizens like you who value our unique Christian perspective on justice issues. Please go to cpj.ca/support and join your voice with ours!

For additional resources or to support our work, visit:

www.cpj.ca

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