



## A Call To Prayer and Self-Denial

### Opening Prayer<sup>1</sup>

Like light dappling through the leaves of a tree  
and wind stirring its branches,  
like birdsong sounding from the heights of an orchard  
and the scent of blossom after rainfall,  
so you dapple and sound in the human soul,  
so you stir into motion all that lives.  
Let your graces of healing flow this night,  
for our soul is wounded  
and there is brokenness in our life.  
Let your graces of healing flow, dear God,  
for those whom we love are in need this night  
and there are agonies in the life of the world.  
There are agonies in the life of the world, O my soul,  
and those whom we love are in pain.

Recall the events of the day and  
pray for the life of the world

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### Scripture



#### **Romans 8:19–21 (NIV):**

For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.


### Reflection from the United Women in Faith Climate Justice Bible Study



Today, we strive to meet our stewardship duties and respond to the urgent need of the climate crisis. All of creation, the planet, and people are suffering from human-caused climate changes. The window for addressing it is rapidly closing, disproportionately endangering those who have been the least responsible, those who are already in vulnerable situations, and those whom Jesus loved the most and is asking us to serve. This is why climate justice is social justice and it's doing God's work. It is their voices we want to center and lift up in prayer and our voices we raise to call for action. In these moments of much suffering and fear, we remain faithful in God's promises and Jesus' teachings by organizing to tackle the climate crisis and mobilizing not only individual actions but much-needed collective efforts to call for systemic change. This calls for a transformation of our political, economic, cultural, social, and spiritual practices. It also calls us to be courageous to speak with a prophetic voice against systems of injustice and work towards liberation.

## Unpacking

We recognize that the practices and the institutions in which we participate contribute to the exploitation of creation, the marginalization and oppression of people, and the climate crisis.



“We find ourselves in an unfettered slide toward catastrophic climate change, a predicament that is rooted in our commoditization of labor and natural resources that amasses wealth for a powerful few. Colonization had the central aim of acquiring natural resources (spices, minerals, gold, etc.), land, and people.”

—Jacqueline Patterson,  
From *Climate Justice: A Call to Hope and Action*



We must therefore strive for material transformation by being willing to unlearn practices that don't serve our call for stewardship, heal, and rebuild relationships rooted in justice and God's love, and seek transformative, systemic change in our societies.

Based on the Scripture and reflections above, reflect on the following questions. You may ask individuals to reflect on these questions on their own first and write their answers in their journals and then share voluntarily with the larger group.

- What climate stories of lament are close to your heart?
- Where do you see injustice and exploitation present either at the root or the manifestations of the issue?
- How is Romans 8:19–21 calling us to work for liberation?
- What societal changes we could take to address this issue holistically?

 Song**“The Climate is Changing”**

by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

TUNE: ST. DENIO 11.11.11 (“Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”)  
(See [youtu.be/ZCRHGhqYUTO](https://youtu.be/ZCRHGhqYUTO) for tune.)

The climate is changing! Creation cries out!  
Your people face flooding and fire and drought.  
We see the great heat waves and storms at their worst.  
We pray for the poor, Lord – for they suffer first.

We pray for the animals here in our midst  
who cannot defend their own right to exist.  
We pray for the mountains and forests and seas  
that bear the harsh footprint of our human greed.

We thank you for people who treasure the earth,  
whose faith has long taught them its beauty and worth.  
We thank you as well for the children and youth  
who look to the future and speak out the truth.

We thank you, for leaders, courageous and brave,  
who know that the earth is worth fighting to save,  
who care about justice and what they should do,  
who listen to science and work hard for you.

You love this good earth, and you sent us your Son!  
May we love our neighbors – there’s work to be done.  
May we, by your Spirit, do all in our power  
to care for your earth in this critical hour.

Tune: Traditional Welsh hymn, in John Robert’s *Caniadau y Cyssegr* (Songs of the Sanctuary), 1839  
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E-mail: [carolynshymns@gmail.com](mailto:carolynshymns@gmail.com) New Hymns: [carolynshymns.com](http://carolynshymns.com)



## Candleholder Activity

As we are preparing to make our candleholder and gather our materials. Let's reflect on the following prompts:

- Think of a story of your ancestors and the land.
- Think of a personal memory of you and the land.
- Think of a wish you have for future generations and the land and what you want your legacy to be.

Now, we will make our candleholders together. We will use the materials and reference logo to paint the symbol of our sisterhood and write phrases or words that remind us of our past, present, and future. We will allow time between each step to complete what is asked and we'll share stories as we wait for everyone to finish.

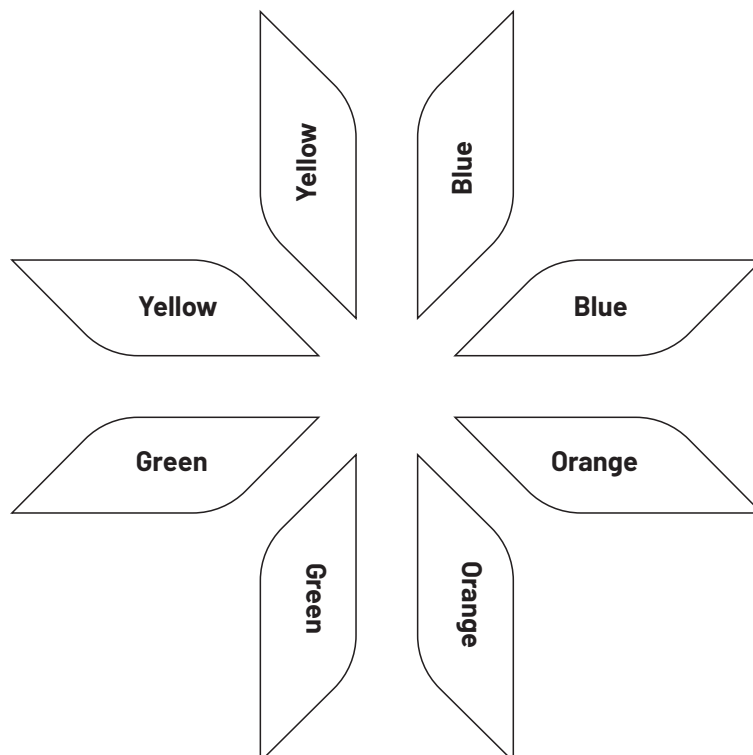
### Stewardship is both small and big acts of love

Have additional materials on hand to share with those that might not have them.

### A symbol of our sisterhood

Let us be reminded that we have sisters around the world to whom we are accountable and who are with us in our work of care, justice, and liberation.

1. Pour a small drop of each color of paint on a palette.
2. Refer to logo image to trace the figure with a permanent marker on the glass as a guide for painting and colors (optional).
3. Paint the glass using the guides or as the Spirit inspires you.



## A reminder of our ancestors

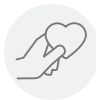
Invite participants to share a story or two about something you learned or treasured from your ancestors as you're waiting for the paint to dry.

*Leaders: You may want to ask one or two people to share ahead of time to help get this time of sharing started.*

With care use the permanent marker and write on the candleholder:

- The name of ancestor that has personally inspired you.
- A word or two of a value or lesson they shared with you.

If you get your fingers painted, your ancestor might be trying to tell you something, or at least you get to remember this story until you wash your hands.



## A present joy

The present is a gift. Give the gift of your time to someone who hasn't shared to share their story of a present joy of theirs.

Use the permanent marker to write one thing that gives you hope or you're thankful for.



## A prayer for the future

The last will be first, and now we get to hear from everyone else and their wishes for the future. Ask the last person that shared to invite someone else to share their story and for everyone else that hasn't participated yet to share as well.

Use the permanent marker to write one wish or prayer for the future.



## Firing up our hearts

May the warmth of this friendship and God's love fire up our hearts to seek God's justice. Place the candle in the middle of the glass. Reflect on the following questions and write your answers on the square piece of paper:

- How is God calling you to take action toward climate justice?
- What are daily small practices we can cultivate?
- What are community practices or projects we can join or champion?
- What structural changes can we demand from people in power?

Light the candle and place the candle on top of the piece of paper. On its side place the elements of creation you have brought.



## Offering

Love calls us today to give from the gifts that have been shared with us. These elements and objects we have brought for our offering today remind us of the diversity and richness of these very gifts. We light these candles to fire our hearts and illuminate our minds drawing from the wisdom of our ancestors, our present joys, our prayers for the future, and the help of the Holy Spirit. We remember that by offering our time, money, and actions, we are continuing a legacy of love, justice, and stewardship.

Pass around the offering basket while singing the offering song. If you are meeting online, you might ask participants to donate online by visiting [uwfaith.org/give](https://uwfaith.org/give). Play or sing the suggested offering song or others to allow time for people to share their offerings.



## Offering Song

*Choose the song that best fits your context.*

*"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow," The United Methodist Hymnal, #95*

*"For the Fruits of This Creation," The United Methodist Hymnal, #97*

*"This Is My Father's World," The United Methodist Hymnal, #144*



## Closing Litany

Now, we invite you all sisters in faith to engage in a shared litany.

**Leader:**

Gracious God, we are thankful for your providence, and the wonders of your incredible world. We give praise to you and proclaim:

**ALL: The earth is full of your creations.**

**Leader:**

We recognize our complicity in the suffering of your people and all of creation.

**ALL: We repent and seek the transformation of our hearts to amend our brokenness and build relationships rooted in your infinite love.**

**Leader:**

We call upon you to guide us in our journeys as we set to answer your calling to care for one another and all of your creations.

**ALL: Let us answer our call for stewardship with love and care seeking not to dominate but to deepen our wonder and understanding of your world and our interdependence with all of your creation.**

**Leader:**

We recognize that stewardship requires us to think first of those most impacted and generations to come.

**ALL: May we find Christ in all of those who suffer, and may our hearts be filled with thirst for your love, mercy, and justice.**

**Leader:**

God almighty, you are omnipotent, the Alpha and the Omega. We seek your providence and wisdom in every step of our journeys to care for your creation.

**ALL:**

**Make us instruments of your love and let us share the manifold of your grace.**

**Amen.**



## About the Author

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### Endnote

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1. J. Philip Newell, "Prayers of Thanksgiving & Intercession," *Sounds of the Eternal: A Celtic Psalter* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002) 13–17.

