

Creating a prayer wall of hope



Gathering at the launch of the Prayer Chain for Climate Justice outside parliament in Westminster. Help us keep the Prayer Chain going throughout the year by creating a wall of hope in your church.

Christian Aid grew out of the need to support refugees following World War Two. For 75 years Christian Aid and its partners have provided humanitarian relief and long-term support for poor communities worldwide, while tackling the root causes of injustice and championing people's rights.

Today we face perhaps the most challenging global crisis yet – the climate crisis.

We are running out of time to tackle the crisis and this year is particularly crucial, with the UK hosting the G7 and the UN climate talks, COP26. Plus, the way we choose to respond to the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic could help us set a new course for the coming years.

At this moment we invite you to join us in giving thanks for the progress that has already been made in tackling poverty and bringing climate justice. But also to reflect on how much further we must go, and what our role is in building God's Kingdom. Join us in creating a prayer wall in church or elsewhere to which people can add

their own reflections on the past and hopes for the future. Taking the time to do this physically allows us to place these hopes in God's hands and commit to be part of the transformation to bring justice.

Together with friends around the world we are filling every day ahead of COP26 in November with prayer for climate justice. Please sign up to fill a slot at caid.org.uk/prayerchain

Share pictures from your prayer wall via campaigns@christian-aid.org or tagging us on twitter @christian_aid

Creating your wall

At its most basic, a prayer wall needs to give people chance to add their own words - or images or feelings. So, a big roll of paper and some marker pens will work fine!

There are many ways to make it more creative and if you have somebody particularly artistic in your congregation it's worth asking them to be involved. Some beautiful prayer walls have been created from things you might already have lying around, but here are some ideas.



'A Woolen Prayer' created by the congregation at St Luke's, West Holloway.

Creative ideas

Chicken wire and wool

Affix a couple of metres of chicken wire to a wooden frame or bamboo poles that are securely weighted to the ground. Provide strips of wool and paper notelets with holes punched in them. Ask people to write their prayers on the notelets and loop the wool through the hole before weaving the wool onto the chicken wire frame. Over time the wool will fill the wire with colour.

Pegs and Parcel Tags

Add rows of string to a bare wall and provide pegs and parcel tags for people to add their prayers to the strings.

Sticky Note Tree

Paint or draw the outline of a bare tree: its trunk, roots and branches but no leaves. Provide different coloured sticky notes for people to write their prayers on and stick them to the outline as leaves for the tree.

Paper People

Provide paper chain people (or ask people to make their own) to write prayers on. As people add their person to the wall they build a sense of togetherness and standing alongside others.

Use your church's outside space

While gathering inside is restricted, think about whether you have outside space that could be used as the basis for your prayer wall. You could tie prayer flags or prayer

bunting onto your church railings or buildings. Even once pandemic-related restrictions are relaxed, this is a great way to show your community that you are praying for the world!

Connecting our prayers to the world

People pray in all sorts of different ways and it can be useful to provide a few pointers to help people get started. For example, you could share some recent newspaper articles about climate disasters that need our prayers, or photographs of your local area or places that are significant to your community. You could print out and display some of these quotes from our friends around the world who are living with the impacts of the crisis.

"Before this drought situation, December was the time to prepare land. January was the time for sowing crops. Now there's at least a two-month variation, and now the rainy season is too short. It will start when we prepare the land but it stops again, so there's not enough rain and, also, it will not keep the season we know before. Before it was regular and we could prepare but now we can't even predict the time of the rain." - Kefo, Ethiopia

"There is a continuous failure of season, there's no rain and because of that the productivity is declining with time. Previously, we produced different types of crop, but now we can't, and that's something I've noticed as a result of climate change, and we used to be known as good producers of honey, but now there's no honey." - Mekonnen, Ethiopia

"With this climate change, the coffee, sometimes it suffers from many diseases and pest and there's less yields so that's why we chose to grow cocoa and to have another income. The weather was different 20 years ago. There were longer days of the rainy season and it used to start in May. Now you have no certainty when the rain is going to start." Angela, Nicaragua

"One of the big challenges here in Kitui County is lack of water. Before, the rains were reliable and food was plenty. But now we are experiencing drought because of poor rainfall. Before, we used to get two seasons: long rains and short rains. But now the rain has stopped raining for a period of say, two years." - Naomi, Kenya

You can find monthly prayer points at caid.org.uk/prayerchain

Print the following instructions to help people contribute your prayer wall

Take a minute to reflect on the pictures and words around you.

Spend a moment quietly listening to God.

Write about a change you are grateful for in recent years. Write down a hope for the world in the coming years.

Attach your hopes to our wall, and commit to praying and acting to make it happen. Know that you are standing in solidarity with people everywhere who are working to bring God's kingdom.

Praying safely in a global pandemic

Rules about gathering with people from outside of your household are likely to change over the next few months, and we encourage everyone to stick to the local rules to help keep communities safe. The beauty of prayer is that it can be done anywhere and without any resources! But when it becomes possible for places of worship to be open more widely, we encourage you to make sure that your prayer wall is set up safely, providing space for social distancing where necessary and keeping the space well ventilated. Once communal worship is possible, you could encourage your congregation to add to the prayer wall as part of a service.

Beyond prayer

'You pray for the hungry. Then you feed them. This is how prayer works.'

– Pope Francis

Prayer is one form of activism, helping us align our actions with God's desires. To support your prayers, find our latest political action on climate at caid.org.uk/climate

Please tell us about your prayer wall

Please let us know you are joining the prayer chain by signing up at caid.org.uk/prayerchain or by emailing us via campaigns@christian-aid.org

We'd love to hear from you and share your pictures.

