



World Council of Churches

Prayers for Each Global Goal for Sustainable Development #PrayerforEveryone

Goal 1: No Poverty

Loving Lord, we come before You today, seeking Your face. Our world is riddled by a horrible, debilitating scourge — extreme poverty, where men, women, and children are suffering its terrible consequences, from imprisonment to alienation to desperation. The psalmist reminds us, ‘The Lord is known for His justice’ (Psalm 9:16) and, ‘The Lord hears the cries of the needy’ (Psalm 69:33). Today, we pray for everyone who is trapped in extreme poverty and feels hopeless and helpless. Thank You that You hear their cries. In Your justice, through Your strength, set them free. Loving Lord, show us how to respond.

The Bible also tells us, ‘The needy will not be ignored forever; the hopes of the poor will not be always crushed’ (Psalm 8:19). Lord, bring new life and new hope to those who feel crushed by poverty. Move in this world in a powerful way where disease and deprivation no longer ravage and decimate the dignity of Your precious creation. We look to You. Soften our hearts and tune our ears to the cries of the poor all around us. We want to be Your agents of change. Lord, use us. Challenge us. Inspire us, and move us to action so that together with You we can obliterate the injustice of poverty from our world. In the Name of our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Written by the Rev. Meg Saunders © 2015.



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Goal 2: No Hunger

Lord, You are the source of all life. In You will live and move and have our being. When You created this world, You blessed it in abundance so that we would have enough to eat. We come before you today, however, recognizing our thoughtlessness and propensity towards selfishness. So many in this world, especially the vulnerable, infants, children, and the elderly, suffer from insatiable hunger, dying daily of starvation and malnutrition. We confess this disgrace, Lord, please forgive us.

We ask You also to expose the unjust actions of individuals and nations who perpetuate hunger in this world. Please, Lord, convict them. And show them and us creatively how to achieve food security and promote sustainable agricultural systems for those who live in insecure places, especially where thievery and corruption destroy their work and productivity. Move in the plans of national leaders, Lord, and rouse our minds. Help us not to look away from the man or the woman or the child in need. Give us all a heart of compassion and action to bring life to others and work to eradicate hunger from this world. We put our hope in You, Jesus, and pray this in Your life-giving Name. Amen.

Written by the Rev. Meg Saunders © 2015.



Goal 3: Good Health and Well-Being

O God,
we thank you for the gift of life.
We thank you for the nourishment
you provide us every day
so we can lead a healthy life
in body, mind and spirit.
Help us to overcome greed.
Help us to understand
that happiness and joy do not necessarily
come from riches or material wealth,
but from the freedom we have
and the depth of relationship we form with you,
as we strive to build a community of justice, love and peace.
May all our endeavours pave the way towards eternal life in you.

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Goal 4: Quality Education

Let us respond with hope to the things that hold us back by saying:

God, give us the courage to change our society.

Give us the faith to change ourselves.

Our educational system has made Mary a drop-out.

God, give us the courage to change our society.

Give us the faith to change ourselves.

Poverty has kept Mary away from school.

God, give us the courage to change our society.

Give us the faith to change ourselves.

Gender, class, and caste blindness have alienated Mary.

God, give us the courage to change our society.

Give us the faith to change ourselves.

God of truth, source of courage,

it is hard to change society's systems.

Teach us, we pray:

to give and not count the cost,

to fight and not heed the wounds,

to resist and not seek rest,

to labour and not ask for any reward,

save that of knowing we do your will.

God of mercy, light of light

it is hard to change ourselves. Give us we pray:

a new focus,

a new hope,

a new meaning,

a new direction,

a new purpose,

and a new radiance,

so that the world might know you and be free.

Prayer from India. In: Sing Out New Visions: Prayers, Poems and Reflections by Women, NCCCUSA, Friendship Press, New York, USA



Goal 5: Gender Equality

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

L: O Living God,
we pray for your holy people and for the Church.
We ask that every member may be freed to serve you in truth and grace.
We remember our foremothers.
We remember all women who have recognized that to be a person of faith
is to respond in action.
We give thanks for
Hagar, cast out in the wilderness,
Miriam, poetess of the Exodus, leader through the wilderness,
Deborah, a mother and a judge in Israel,
the women who bathed Jesus' feet with her tears,
the Samaritan woman at the well, who was one of the first to spread
the good news,
Mary Magdalene, first apostle of the resurrection ...

All: We give you thanks, O God.

L: Let us remember all those women
who have faced the unknown in faith and met fear with courage.
We give thanks:
for all those women who have dared to step forward and lead,
for all those women who have challenged the stereotypes of society
and risked standing alone,
for ... *(life up names of women in your own countries and communities)*.

All: We give you thanks, O God.

L: Let us remember women who have struggled to reform our history,
who have sought in their time to minister to the needs of those who are hurt,
disadvantaged and alienated in our land.
We give thanks:
for ... *(life up names of women in your countries and communities)*
for those women whose faces and names are unknown, yet whose work
helps to fulfil your vision of shalom on earth.

All: We give you thanks, O God.

L: Let us remember those women, known and unknown,
who have laboured in the struggle before us:
We give thanks:
for ... *(life up names of women in your countries and around the world)*

All: We give you thanks, O God.

**O holy and sustaining God,
make us worthy to inherit their valour and vision.
Challenge us again lest we wither and perish,
by holding to the familiar when it has lost its savour.
As your daughters and sons, may we be brought nearer to a new vision of your love,
through the grace of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

From "Celebrating the Decade" © 1997 WCC



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Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation

God who brought water out of the rock,
God who quenched the thirst of those dying in the wilderness,
God who in Jesus gave the living waters
so that those who taste them would never thirst,
God who in Jesus died on the Cross thirsty,
for there was none to quench his thirst,
listen to all those who truly confess
and grant us forgiveness so that we act responsibly in our use of water,
become sensitive to the desperate needs of those without water,
and gain wisdom in conserving and preserving water so that rivers roll out in justice among all nations
and all peoples.
Amen.



Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

Creator God, you have generously blessed us with an abundance of gifts in this, your world. Help us to share in that generosity by living in a way that ensures that your gifts will continue to be available for future generations.

O God, give us your love for the whole of Creation

Creator God, we rejoice that, as human beings, we have been created in your image and likeness. But we also recognise that humanity alone cannot adequately reflect you. The whole diversity of the earth is needed to give us even a glimpse of your wonder and greatness. Help us to live in a sustainable way so that this marvellous diversity is respected.

O God, give us your love for the whole of Creation

Creator God, we live in a world where some of us throw out food while others go to bed hungry; where some have the modern amenities of life at their disposal and others struggle to find drinking water. May we learn to share with one another and, in this way, come to share in your generosity to all.

O God, give us your love for the whole of Creation

Creator God, the sun, the wind and the waves are your gifts for the flourishing of the whole community of life on earth. Help us to use them creatively to produce sustainable energy for all.

O God, give us your love for the whole of Creation

Through scientists, engineers and scholars new knowledge comes to light; may new developments in the production of sustainable energy protect our fragile planet and promote the well-being of all peoples and all creatures on their journey to wholeness.

O God, give us your love for the whole of Creation

We pray for the United Nations, for all international, national and local leaders and for managers of companies that they may be guided by your Spirit to make wise decisions about sources of sustainable energy for all.

O God, give us your love for the whole of Creation

Creator God, You have blessed humankind with understanding, imagination and memory. Show us how to learn from past mistakes and plan for the future creatively and responsibly.

O God, give us your love for the whole of Creation

Let us pray: Create in us a new heart and a new vision, O God, that the gifts of Your Spirit may work in us and renew the face of the earth. May we be one with you so that our work is yours and your work is ours. We ask this in the name of Jesus, who lives with you and with the Holy Spirit for ever.

Amen

(Prayer written by Sister Catherine Brennan and Sister Ann Concannon, Sisters of St Louis, for Churches Together in Britain and Ireland's Time for Creation resources)



Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Prayer of a man without work

Our good Father God, we give you hearty thanks for the gifts that you have given us, and for our hands with which we can work day by day to provide ourselves with food and sustain our lives. Lord, in your Word you tell us that the labourer is worthy of his hire, and those of us who have lost our jobs feel that we are losing our dignity.

Lord, we are not useless! But our situation and everything around us makes us feel that we are useless. We know, O God, that you love us all the same, because we are your sons and daughters. But more and more people are losing their jobs and the fear of not getting a job makes us really desperate. Lord, we know that this is an evil of our times in this globalized world, and that there are many of us hurting like this.

We trust in your great love, O God, and we know that this is not your will. Free us from this evil. Soften hard and selfish hearts whose desire for gain knows no limits, the hearts of those who should share so that there is food and work for all. Lord, we pray that you will keep us determined and united. Help us to keep our hearts and hands ready to help and encourage our brothers and sisters who are downcast. Lord, we know that you love us. Do not let your sons and daughters lose their dignity. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

From: A collection of Prayers for Peace – 2006, DOV, WCC



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Goal 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure

Lord, we thank You for Your gifts to us, especially our intellects, our imaginations, and our creativity. We come before You today asking on behalf of all those in our world who are vulnerable and need Your help. They are our neighbors, our friends, and those whom You love. We recognize that not everyone in the world has adequate shelter, opportunities, or mobility to rise out of the burden and cycle of poverty. Lord, we need Your help. Please help us.

Many things we take for granted, like passable roads, access to the Internet, and affordable borrowing credit. We recognize these things help us to conduct our lives each day. And yet, many in our world go without. Today, we pray that You will show us how to solve these problems for people all over the world so that things like research and development will flourish, there will be an increase of small, innovative enterprises, and all life will thrive. Lord, use us in the answers to these problems that seem so large. Inspire our imaginations, our minds, and our wills. And also, Lord, we pray for our leaders, that You will galvanize them towards sustainable solutions to these essential needs of quality infrastructure and creative innovations. We ask this in Your powerful Name, Jesus. Amen.

Written by the Rev. Meg Saunders



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Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities

Call to Worship - A litany for the world

One: Where ignorance, self-love and insensitivity have fractured life in community,

Many: give your light, O God of love.

One: Where injustice and oppression have broken the spirit of peoples,

Many: give your light, O God who frees.

One: Where hunger and poverty, illness and death have made life an unbearable burden,

Many: give your light, O God of grace.

One: Where suspicion and hatred, conflict and fear have challenged your goodness,

Many: give your light, O God of peace.

One: Eternal God, open the eyes of the nations and peoples so that they may walk in the light of love: remove the ignorance and stubbornness of nations and peoples so that they may drink from the fountains of your goodness.

All: Amen.

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Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

We give you thanks, O God, for lively centres of commerce and learning, for clean industrial zones and green transport systems, for hospitals, law courts, sports grounds and galleries, for gardens, parks and open spaces, and for the melting pot of cultures, races and languages that make our cities sing. Give us wisdom to plan for safe and sustainable cities, to reduce our consumption of energy and resources, and to find homes for everyone. Make us rich in community-builders and generous neighbours. Raise up people of faith to seek the welfare of the cities where they live and to proclaim your peace and presence there, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

Prayer of confession / Prayer for renewal

- L1: God of life,
you created the world and saw that it was good.
- L2: Yet, because of our greed and consumption,
we cut down the jungles,
L1: we eliminate plants and animals.
L2: We are destroying the earth.
- L1: We pray for wisdom and strength.
L2: Make us co-workers with you,
to restore life for the dying creatures.
- L1: In your mercy,
C: hear our prayer.
- L1: God of justice,
you command us to establish justice for all.
- L2: Yet, because of our self-centeredness and indifference,
we let the gap between the rich and the poor widen;
L1: we do not have legal protection for migrant workers;
L2: we ignore children living on the street;
L1: we feel helpless seeing young women and men
trapped in human trafficking.
- L2: We pray for wisdom and courage.
L1: Make us co-workers with you,
to strive for justice and share your abundance.
- L2: In your mercy,
C: hear our prayer.
- L1: God of peace,
you command us to love one another
and live in peace with our neighbours.
- L2: Yet, because of our closed minds,
prejudice and suspicion of difference,
we frequently choose violence and war,
L1: we discriminate against minorities and the marginalized,
L2: we suppress basic human rights,
L1: we contribute to conflict amongst ethnic and religious groups.
L2: We pray for wisdom and humility.
- L1: Make us co-workers with you,
to embrace one another and walk peacefully together.
- L2: In your mercy,
C: hear our prayer.
- L1: Tender and compassionate God,
L2: sustain in our hearts the spirit of loving-kindness.
- L1: Strengthen our work with neighbours of different creeds and beliefs,
cultures and ethnicities.
- L2: Guide us as we bring healing to this earth and all of its creatures.
- L1: Preserve in our hearts songs of peace and rhythms of justice.
- L2: In your mercy,
C: hear our prayer. Amen.



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Blessing

L1: Let us ask for God's blessing.

**C: May God bless us with the Spirit
of courage and wisdom,
that we may bear witness to the hope
that is within us. Amen.**

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Goal 13: Climate Action

Christ, we remember the sacrifice you made for the world.

Remind us that you ask us to care for your creation,
challenge us to see how our actions change the world,
be with us as we act to make a difference.

Christ, whom we remember in the bread.

Remind us of those who are hungry,
challenge us to see how our actions change the world.

Christ, whom we remember in the wine.

Remind us of those who are thirsty,
challenge us to see how our actions can change the world.

Christ, we remember your perfect sacrifice.

Remind us that you are with us as we seek to live differently,
challenge us to see how our actions can change the world,
be with us as we act to make a difference.

David Rose © Christian Aid

Goal 14: Life Below Water

Prayer of confession and intercession

L1: Creator God,
God of the oceans,
God of the land and all that is within it:
You created this world with the power of your word.
You formed humankind with your own hands,
and breathed your own breath into us.
You gave us these lands as a gift
– a source of our identity and sustenance.
you empowered us to be the stewards of what you have made.

L2: Loving God,
we have failed you and abused the gift you have given us.
We have offended you and defiled what you have made.
Forgive us for betraying your trust.
Forgive us for our greed and arrogance.
Forgive us for what we have done to your earth.
Forgive us for what we have done to your oceans.
Forgive us for what we have done to your creatures,
on the land, in the sky and in the depths.

L1: Hear, O God of Compassion:
The cries of the land have become a desert;
land laid barren through corrupt agricultural practices, pollution,
mining and deforestation.
The cries of islands are drowning in the rising seas,
oceans that rise with the melting of the ice.
The cries of distress from Mother Earth
- storm and drought.

L2: God of Life,
heal your wounded earth.
Empower us to choose the road that leads to life.
Guide us in the paths of righteousness
for your name's sake
So that we may experience once again
your Shalom in the land and in the sea.
This we ask in the name of the one
who came that we may have life in abundance,
your Son, our Saviour Jesus the Christ.

C: Amen.

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Goal 15: Life On Land

Giver of Life,
in the midst of a plundered earth
we groan with creation:
Have mercy on us.

Giver of Life,
In the midst of poisoned water
we groan with creation:
Have mercy on us.

Giver of Life,
in the midst of polluted air
we groan with creation:
Have mercy on us.

Giver of Life,
in the midst of mountains of waste
we groan with creation:
Have mercy on us.

Giver of Life,
in the midst of a world of war
we groan with creation:
Have mercy on us.

Giver of Life,
we who are made in the image of
God have gone astray
and creation groans with us:
Have mercy on us.

From: Worshipping Ecumenically, p. 119-120 © 1995 WCC Publications



Goal 16: Peace and Justice, Strong Institutions

Compassionate Lord, Your word tells us to pray and seek the peace and welfare of the places we live: our communities, towns, cities, and nations. We come to You seeking Your intervention for our world groaning in turmoil and unrest. The corrupting influence of power has contaminated many places in our world.

Too many of our leaders, those who rule over us, allow exploitation, terror, discrimination, dishonesty, greed and self-interest to guide their decision-making. Their citizens live in misery. We cry out to You, compassionate Lord, for justice in these hurting, broken places; for healing in fractured relationships; and Your supernatural peace in the war-torn, hostile places on our planet.

Compassionate Lord, move in the hearts and minds of our leaders. Give them wise and judicious minds to govern with equity and honesty. Help them to set up sustainable, functional structures so that they are held accountable and their citizens flourish. And, for us, Lord, galvanize us to be Your ambassadors of reconciliation and action. Do not let us sit idly by as others suffer.

We know as You walked the earth, You touched people and made them whole. You fed people with meager resources thereby renewing their lives and restoring their dignity. Compassionate Lord, we know you care about us all. Give us Your vision for this world. Move us to action. We pray this in the Name of our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Written by the Rev. Meg Saunders © 2015.



Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals

L: The families living on two dollars a day or less cannot wait for better food.
C: **Lord, make haste to help them.**

Sung response: Kyrie eleison

L: The young people whose search for work is endless and hopeless
Cannot wait for a job.
C: **Lord, make haste to help them.**

Sung response: Kyrie eleison

L: The women and children trafficked and enslaved cannot wait for freedom.
C: **Lord, make haste to help them.**

Sung response: Kyrie eleison

L: The war-torn, tired of constant violence and fleeing danger
cannot wait for peace.
C: **Lord, make haste to help them.**

Sung response: Kyrie eleison

L: The despised and heckled,
The tainted and taunted,
the gossiped about and tossed out
cannot wait for acceptance.
C: **Lord, make haste to help them.**

Sung response: Kyrie eleison

L: The lonely who sit lost and alone
cannot wait for the phone to ring.
C: **Lord, make haste to help them.**

Sung response: Kyrie eleison

L: The infected with HIV but too poor to pay
cannot wait for medicine.
C: **Lord, make haste to help them.**

Sung response: Kyrie eleison

L: The wounded by rubber bullets and choked by tear gas
cannot wait for democracy.
C: **Lord, make haste to help them.**

Sung response: Kyrie eleison

From the 2011 WCC Central Committee meeting © WCC