

Hungry to provide

**Jessica, hungry to provide for her children, carries maize grain from the fields to make porridge to feed her family.**

This order of service has been prepared for Christian Aid Week 2022 and is also intended for use across the year given its focus on the pervasive problem of hunger and the underlying cause of climate injustice.

We have designed this order of service to be user friendly, allowing you to copy and paste the elements you wish to use for your own purposes. We have provided two options for the prayers of thanksgiving and intercession, including one that is more interactive.

The service draws on inspiration from two passages of scripture Matthew 3:1-10 and Revelation 21-22. A full sermon pack including additional passages can be found at [**caweek.ie/resources**](http://caweek.ie/resources) The service includes reference to three symbols: leaves, fruit and an axe. These symbols can be interchanged, not all need to be used and you can adapt the emphasis on the symbols you use according to your passage choice.

Visual way into worship

You may wish to display a visual symbol or combination of symbols related to the themes you will explore in this service. Our suggestions include:

* Tomatoes, beans or cucumbers to connect with the stories of drought-resistant seeds being used to help transform communities in Zimbabwe – if using the service in Christian Aid Week.
* A bunch of leaves and a drawing of a tree – if using the Revelation 21 and 22 passages set for the Sundays at the beginning and end of Christian Aid Week.
* An axe or image of an axe – if using the Matthew 3:1-10 sermon notes. (If using a real axe, be sure to display with care.)
* A loaf of bread and a stone – if using the Matthew 7:9 sermon notes.

Film preparation

There are several films suggested for inclusion in this service that you may wish to download and have ready in advance:

* [Call to worship and Song of Kingdom Come](https://christianaid.resourcespace.com/pages/view.php?ref=4532&k=a03542e4c9)
* [The Lord’s Prayer](https://www.christianaid.ie/resources/global-lords-prayer-film)
* The Christian Aid Week film can be downloaded at [**caweek.ie/resources**](http://caweek.ie/resources)

Hymns and songs

**Janet and her fellow congregants gather joyfully at church for the Sunday service.**

We provide song suggestions within the order of service available from third party websites and a list of song suggestions at the end of this resource.

Prayers

We have prepared all the prayers based on the scripture passages that have inspired this order of service. The words in capitals and bold are intended to encourage participation by all those gathered.

Points for prayer are also included for the prayer of intercession for those churches who do not tend to use written prayers.

If you choose to use option two for the prayers of thanksgiving and intercession, do prepare the materials in advance. See details within the order of service.

**Jessica walks home from the garden with her husband and children as the sun sets.**

Order of service

Introduction

Welcome your community in your own words.

In our service today we are going to consider what it means to live fruitful lives. This is a phrase used throughout the Bible. Bearing fruit that is good and that will last is something we are called to do as followers of Jesus.

What does this mean, to bear fruit, in today’s world? In a world where 44 million people face the challenge of daily food shortages and chronic hunger, what does ‘fruit that will last’ mean to all our lives?

As fruit is a source of sweet sustenance and life, we cannot just consider the challenge of hunger. We must also consider the solutions and change that we can participate in bringing about.

We will root these ideas in the stories of Jessica and Janet from Zimbabwe. We will reflect on these big questions through the lived experience of hunger caused by drought.

Let us worship.

Call to worship and opening song

‘On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.’ (Revelation 22:2)

Let us come to the river  
and be like trees planted by streams of water,  
putting our roots down deep into God’s word,  
bearing good fruit that will last  
not withering from fatigue,  
stretching out to receive  
and be a source of healing.  
Amen.

Join in the singing of the *Song of Kingdom Come* when the words appear on the screen after the short reflection.

Film 1: [Song of Kingdom come](https://www.christianaid.ie/resources/song-kingdom-come-video)  
Or visit [**caweek.ie/resources**](http://caweek.ie/resources)to download.

A gathering prayer

Creator, Son and Spirit,

we gather together,

online and/or in-person\*

to seek Your presence

in our time of worship.

**WE ARE HUNGRY FOR YOU**

Meet us at our point of deepest need.

Connect us with the needs of others.

Equip us to join in your creative work.

Transform us more into your likeness.

**WE ARE HUNGRY FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**

We gather with Jessica and Janet

and their communities in Zimbabwe (this Christian Aid Week).\*

May their stories make us hungry for justice

and even more impatient for change.

**WE ARE HUNGRY FOR YOUR JUSTICE**

We gather with all of creation;

with the mountains and the hills.

We shall burst into song,

with the trees of the field

we will clap our hands.

**WE ARE HUNGRY TO PRAISE YOU**

**AMEN.**

\*Change according to your context and when you are using this service.

Song:

[Let all Creation Sing](https://www.resoundworship.org/song/let_all_creation_sing) available to download from Resound Worship

First reading – Psalm 1

Prayer of confession

Good God of creation,

we sing praise to you.

But even as we raise our voices

we know we have faltered and failed.

Walking on paths that turned our hearts inward,

sitting with those who scoffed

at the cries of people in poverty,

mocking those on the margins,

denying the earth in her distress.

Too often our leaves have withered

our branches are barren.

We have failed to be pruned

and the axe is now poised.

Poised to cut down

the excesses that crucify all creation,

the systems that impoverish all people,

the privileges that diminish our faith.

But even now it is not too late.

For in the face of judgement

comes the offer of grace

and the hope that deadwood can spring to life.

Where we have failed to bear good fruit

and share your abundance for the earth

**GOD HAVE MERCY**

When our actions and intentions

have been as chaff for the winds of heaven

**GOD HAVE MERCY**

Forgive us.

Restore us.

Inspire us now

to delight in your purposes,

to embrace your possibilities,

to inhabit your promises,

to flourish as fruit for the world you so love

and bring healing for all the nations.

**AMEN.**

Second reading – Matthew 3:1-10   
or Revelation 21:1-16 or Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5

Song:

[If the fields are parched](https://resoundworship.org/song/if_the_fields_are_parched_have_mercy) available to download from Resound Worship.

Prayer of lamentation

Establish the work of our hands, O God.

**WE CALL TO YOU, GOD OF CREATION**

faithful to us by the trees of Eden;

**WE CALL TO YOU, GOD OF REDEMPTION**

faithful to us on the tree of Calvary;

**WE CALL TO YOU, GOD OF FULFILMENT**

faithful to us from the tree of life’s healing.

We are your people so answer us, O God,

from the streets of your city,

from your river of life,

from your throne in heaven.

**ANSWER US NOW**

in words of power

and mighty deeds.

Speak to our cries of ‘how long.’

How long will the bellies of children lie empty?

How long will their mothers pray in vain?

How long will temperatures rise beyond record?

How long will the clouds fail to give rain?

How long will the crop fields turn into dust?

How long will the floods cover the plain?

How long will so few live with far too much?

How long will so many be denied what they need?

How long before the healing of nations?

How long will injustice and suffering remain?

But heaven, we know, this is much of our making;

our scapegoats,

our alibis,

they all know the truth:

Our pointing the finger and prayers of ‘how long’

echo back on our piety and demand us to answer

**HOW LONG, HOW LONG?**

How long will indifference, inequality and injustice

deny compassion, healing and fullness of life?

Come and come soon Lord.

Let the peoples rejoice,

from Eden to Calvary,

from heaven to earth.

Lift every voice to sing, ‘Amen!’

Establish the work of our hands.

**Time with children – download our All-age service resource at** [**caweek.ie/resources**](http://caweek.ie/resources)

Song:

[**When I Needed a Neighbour**](https://christianaid.resourcespace.com/?r=4531&k=ece7b44117)Or visit [**caweek.ie/resources**](http://caweek.ie/resources)to download.

**Sermon - See sermon pack for Zimbabwe stories and passage pointers, including for Matthew 3:1-10 and Revelation 21- 22 at** [**caweek.ie/resources**](http://caweek.ie/resources)

**Vimbainashe and Phanuel play a game with their friends just outside their home while the sunsets over their dry and dusty land.**

Song:

[**God of All Compassion**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9whoIRev9A) available to download.

Response: giving/offering

Use the envelopes on your seat/pew or visit [**caweek.ie**](http://caweek.ie) to make your contribution. If you’re in Northern Ireland, you help make your giving go further by using the Gift Aid slip. Please consider making a regular contribution to the work of Christian Aid. More information is available about this on the envelope and online.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Option 1:

(The responses in this prayer of intercession are taken from Revelation 7:16-17)

Creator God,

cultivator of our faith,

thank you for the privilege

of living in this global garden

planted to bear your fruit,

to delight our tongues,

to fill our bellies,

to energise our bodies.

You have given us life

in all its fullness.

You have given us life,

yet millions still hunger.

Take these gifts of money

and use them to help Christian Aid

support communities throughout the world, and

partners who hunger to provide.

But may our support not end here.

May we be the seeds

from which your kingdom\* grows.

In our hunger for peace, we pray for

[Name countries in this week’s news headlines.]

But may our concern for them

not stifle our concern for

Zimbabwe

Afghanistan

Syria

Ukraine

and all those other places to whom our hearts have become hardened through over-familiarity.

**THEY WILL HUNGER NO MORE AND THIRST NO MORE**

In our hunger for justice, we pray for

[Name individuals whose stories have touched you from this week’s news headlines.]

But may our concern for them

not stifle our concern for

Jessica

Janet

and all those known to us

who hunger to provide for those they love in our global community.

**THE SUN WILL NOT STRIKE THEM, NOR ANY SCORCHING HEAT**

In our hunger, we pray for

[Name prominent figures in positions of power and authority, such as those in government. Name other powerful individuals who have been prominent this week.]

But may our concern for them

not stifle our concern for

your little ones,

children who go to bed hungry,

whose parents struggle to provide for them

in times of desperate drought.

**GOD WILL WIPE AWAY EVERY TEAR FROM THEIR EYES**

And in our hunger, we pray

that you will fill us

with your hope,

your passion

and your life,

that we may go out from this place

to give, act and pray.

So all who hunger to provide

may be filled to overflowing.

In the name of Christ,

farmer, gardener and cultivator,

**AMEN.**

\*Kin\_dom can be used instead of kingdom if preferred and familiar in your context. The idea of dropping the ‘g’ was given prominence in the writing of the late Dr Ada María Isasi-Díaz in her book, Mujerista Theology.

Option 2: A creative prayer of intercession

Preparation:

* Draw a large tree on wallpaper lining paper and fix it to the wall in an appropriate location in the church.
* Print and cut out the axe, leaf and fruit templates for each person to have one of each. (You may choose to use just one of the three templates depending on the emphasis you take for this service.)
* Provide a supply of pens, pencils and Blu-tac.

Introduction:

We have reflected on the injustice in this world which leaves women like Jessica struggling and seeking alternative solutions to provide their families with the most basic necessities of life.

We offer these gifts of money to the ongoing work of Christian Aid in Zimbabwe and across the globe. We are thankful for all that we have and pledge to share our resources to enable those who are hungry to provide.

But we recognise that this is not enough.

We invite you to reflect for a moment [depending on your context you may wish to play some music here], then write or draw a response on each – or one of – the cut out fruit, leaf and/or axe in response to the following:

**Leaf –** a prayer and a hope for healing for a situation in your heart and for all who hunger in Zimbabwe and around the world.

**Fruit –** a good act or service we promise to do in the world to make a lasting difference.

**Axe –** an injustice that needs to be cut down or cut back so all of creation can flourish.

When you are ready, please come and fix your leaf and fruit to the branches and lay the axe at the foot of the tree.

We lay the axe at the base of the tree – not to cut it down but to make clear that there is still time for repentance.

[As you complete this interactive prayer, do please, think about those around you who may struggle or may not be able to move around the church. Offer to bring a leaf, fruit and/or axe for someone else.]

When everyone who wishes to do so has stuck their templates on the tree, offer them to God with your own words – or use the short prayer below:

God of all the earth,

we offer with our gifts

these leaves of our compassion

this fruit of our promises

and the axe of our aspirations

for the healing of the nations

and the transformation of the world.

Amen.

**RESPONSE:** Invite the congregation to add their voices to our loss and damage campaign. A petition sheet is available at [**caweek.ie/resources**](http://caweek.ie/resources) or you can take the action online at [**caweek.ie/action**](http://caweek.ie/action)

Song:

**We Shall Go Out with Joy**

Blessing

In the name of God who plants the seed of justice:

Be hungry.

In the name of Christ who hangs on the tree of love:

Be fruitful.

And in the name of the Spirit who inspires

God’s will in our hearts and our lives:

Be celebrated.

You are Christ’s people,

here and throughout the world

now and forever.

Amen.

**In the past, Janet’s family has gone through drought which devastated their harvests and drove the family into hunger. Today she smiles because her family now has food to spare.**

With thanks to Christian Aid worship and theology collective members – the Rev Tim Presswood, Regional Minister for Church Life for the North West Baptist Association and college manager for Northern Baptist College, and the Rev Dr Craig Gardiner teacher of theology at Cardiff University and Cardiff Baptist College – for their help creating this service.

Song Suggestions

**All Things are Possible***,* Darlene Zschech, Hillsong Worship

**Behold, Behold I Make all Things New***,* John Bell, Wild Goose Resource Group

**Canticle of the Turning***,* Rory Cooney (can also be sung to Kingsfold tune)

**Come Let’s Sing***,* Joel Payne, Resound Worship

**Everlasting God**, Chris Tomlin

**For Everyone Born a Place at the Table***,* Shirley Erena Murray

**For the Beauty of the Earth**, Folliott S. Pierpoint

**From Life’s Beginning***,* Marcus Pagnam, Resound Worship

**God the Maker of the Heavens***,* Sam Hargreaves, Resound Worship

**Hungry***,* Kathryn Scott, Vineyard Worship

**If the Fields are Parched***,* Chris Juby, Doxecology albumn, Resound Worship

**Let all Creation Sing***,* Paul Zach and Andy Ziph, Doxecology album, Resound Worship

**Let Justice Roll Down***,* Garth Hewitt, from Justice Like a River

**Let’s Sing to the Lord***,* Yes, Sing God a New Song,Brazilian folk song; translated by Gerhard M Cartford

**Cantad Al Señor**, Brazilian folk song. Translated by Gerhard M Cartford

**Nahasdzáán Nihimá/Mother Earth***,* from Singing the Sacred: Musical Gifts from Native America

**Nature Sings with Beauty***,* Chris Juby, Resound Worship

**O the Life of the World is a Joy and a Treasure***,* Kathy Galloway

**Pray***,* Tim Hughes,Worship Central

**Simple Living***,* Keith and Kristen Getty

**Sing Hey for the Carpenter***,* John Bell and Graham Maule, Wild Goose Resource Group

**Sing for God’s Glory that Colours the Dawn of Creation***,* Kathy Galloway

**The Kingdom of God***,* Taizé, Brenton Brown and Ken Riley

**The Peace of the Earth***,* Guatemala, translated by Christine Carson

**Touch the Earth Lightly***,* Shirley Erena Murray

**You Shall Go Out with Joy***,* Stuart Dauermann

**Where are the Voices for the Earth***,* Shirley Erena Murray

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