

Climate Crisis, Confession and Lament: Liturgy and Suggested Script

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An audio recording can be found [here](#).

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/eqw8j09g0rcnarw/ClimateandLament.mp4?dl=0>

I've read a number of the scientific reports, read key books and watched many documentaries/lectures from leading scientists. Although I'm not a climate scientist, here is my rough summary which is representative of the view of 98% of climate scientists.

If we continue with anything like our current levels of carbon emissions we face a future which includes mass starvation, global migration and societal collapse. This will effect just about everyone you know and love. It is already affecting some of the poorest in the world.

If we don't significantly reduce our carbon emissions we will perhaps see these events (starvation, mass migration and societal collapse) unfold within my lifetime but almost definitely within the lifetime of my children.

The Intergovernmental Panel of Climate change (IPCC) and have said that we have a decade to decarbonise our societies globally or we will reap horrific consequences that are not compatible with human life.

The secretary General of the the UN spoke these words at a gathering of leaders last September.

'Climate change is the defining issue of our time – and we are at a defining moment. We face a direct existential threat. Climate change is moving faster than we are – and its speed has provoked a sonic boom SOS across our world. If we do not change course by 2020, we risk missing the point where we can avoid runaway climate change, with disastrous consequences for people and all the natural systems that sustain us.'

Back in April, after a thousand arrests of Extinction Rebellion protesters, our government unanimously declared a climate emergency but, as yet, there is nothing close to the action required nationally or globally to prevent disaster. For example,

“Heathrow emits 18 million tons of CO2 a year. Around the world there are 118 countries whose total emissions are less than Heathrow Airport's. A third runway will produce a further 7.3 million tonnes.” (Taken from Heathrow Pause Website)

Furthermore, if all carbon emissions were stopped right now across the world, we would still be seeing a temperature increase and its devastating effects for the next 10-15 years. A temperature increase is locked in whatever we do.

And it gets even worse. We do not see a linear increase in temperature as emissions go up. No, it is more like exponential due to positive feedback loops.

Eg.

- Ice reflects sunlight back to space
- An increase in temperature through carbon emissions melts the ice
- This results in less ice to reflect back the sunlight
- So there is a further increase in temperature
- Which in turn melts the ice.

There is sadly no way way to 'sugar-coat' this message. We are in a dire situation. But I'm a Christian and I pledge my allegiance to Jesus.

In a few moments we are going to have a time of prayer, and then we are going to talk about what the church should be doing in this desperate hour.

Check In (Use a different person from above if possible)

(Unscripted: So we are going to move into a time of lament in a few minutes but I just wanted to hit the pause button after we have heard some hard hitting facts. Maybe we've heard them for the tenth time, the hundredth time, as a reminder of what we already know. Maybe there's some new information and those facts lead to feelings, lead to us reacting. As humans we are full of emotions and it is worth checking in with those and how we are feeling.

So what I'd like to do is to spend 2 minutes doing that. If you could get into pairs I'd like you to spend 1 minute speaking to the person next to you about how what you've heard makes you feel.

Now the temptation, when you're doing this, is to move into what you're going to do or what you're going to change or challenge. But it would be really good to spend that minute sitting with your feelings and talking about how you feel as a response to seeing those videos of the seas rising, the graphs with lines going in the wrong direction to hearing about the global justice impact. How are you feeling?

I will let you know when that minute is up and then switch over and chat to another person.)

Confession and Lament

(Unscripted) Ladies and gents. I was at a prayer meeting the other day, praying about the issues, and said if you have come with someone you know tonight you may want to give them a hug and ask if they're ok. This is awful.

So we are going to pray together.

If you are able, can I invite you to stand.

I will lead you in some prayers and responses.

When I say say the words "Lord have mercy" can you respond with "Christ have mercy". I have tweaked the words of an old confession which we will use together'

Climate change is real.

Desmond Tutu said: 'Twenty-five years ago people could be excused for not knowing much, or doing much, about climate change. Today we have no excuse.'

Lord Have Mercy,
All: **Christ have mercy**

Climate change is happening now.
[The Poorest Countries are the most vulnerable]
Lord have Mercy,
All: **Christ have mercy.**

Climate change requires extensive and sustained action to prevent the unfolding of a disaster of apocalyptic proportions.
Lord have Mercy,
All: **Christ have mercy.**

(Kneel and Face Away from Congregation towards Candles)

Almighty God,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through consumerism,
by being caught up and complicit in economic systems and lifestyles which bring destruction.
In your mercy
forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly,
love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God.
Amen.

Music In BackGround: [Elevator Song/Healah Dancing Keaton Henson/Ren Ford](#)

Video: Youtube Mountain (on Mute)- Repeat <https://vimeo.com/22439234>

Candles: People are asked to come and light candles at the front.
(Those leading the service can go first kneel at the front and light a candle)

Lamentations 5:15–22 (ESV)

¹⁵ The joy of our hearts has ceased; our dancing has been turned to mourning. ¹⁶ The crown has fallen from our head; woe to us, for we have sinned! ¹⁷ For this our heart has become sick, for these things our eyes have grown dim, ¹⁸ for Mount Zion which lies desolate; jackals prowl over it. ¹⁹ But you, O Lord, reign forever; your throne endures to all generations. ²⁰ Why do you forget us forever, why do you forsake us for so many days? ²¹ Restore us to yourself, O Lord, that we may be restored!

Wait 90 Secs

Habakkuk 3:17–18 (ESV)

¹⁷ Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, ¹⁸ yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

Wait 90 Secs

Romans 8:38–39 (TNIV)

³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth,
As it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,
For ever and ever.
Amen.**