

Rise Up Pay Up

Your church activity pack for taking action on climate-related loss and damage

The climate crisis is making extreme weather events, such as droughts, floods and hurricanes, more common. The impact can cause communities to lose everything, and the damage done can be irreversible.

This is a key issue for communities on the frontline of the climate crisis, who have done the least to cause it. Yet in the global North, loss and damage caused by the climate crisis is often ignored by politicians and the public, and even in our own churches.

But together, we can rise up for action on loss and damage.

This activity pack will help explain loss and damage, and engage your church in learning and acting on the issue.

It will guide you through the key points of loss and damage and then provide instructions for a creative, communal action, which can help everyone to reflect and pray on the issue of loss and damage.

Using the prayer people you create in the activity, you can then demonstrate the desire for action to the wider community and to decision makers.



Read: 10 minutes

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caid.ie/climate

Climate-related loss and damage



What is loss and damage?

In Zimbabwe, crops are lost to drought, putting communities at risk of hunger. In Haiti, people shelter as their homes are damaged in another hurricane. In Kenya, a road is destroyed by a flash flood. And in Nicaragua, culturally important foods are threatened as corn harvests repeatedly fail.

This is what the climate crisis looks like. The people who have done the least to cause it are already facing damage to harvests and homes, they are already losing their lives, land and culture.

This is loss and damage.

Meanwhile, polluters continue to burn fossil fuels, to profit from the poison they produce, and turn their backs on the damage already done.

We say it's time for the biggest carbon polluters to pay up to repair what's damaged.

Why is this happening?

The climate crisis is causing the world to heat and is creating more extreme weather events, such as droughts, floods and hurricanes.

Sometimes communities can adapt – for example, diversifying crops in increasingly arid lands. But often the impacts of the climate crisis are too great for people to adapt, because they happen too quickly or are on a scale so large that communities are unable to manage. This leads to loss and damage.

Sign the petition

You can sign our petition calling for action on Loss and Damage at caid.ie/lossanddamage

What's the solution?

As well as doing all we can to limit temperature rises, communities on the frontline are calling for polluters to pay up to repair what's been damaged and destroyed.

By paying into an international loss and damage fund, the countries and polluters that have done the most to cause the climate crisis could help people recover when disasters strike and compensate them for all that is permanently lost.

The only problem is, no such fund exists – yet!

It's time for governments across the world to set up a central fund to pay for the loss and damage caused by the climate crisis.

This fund should support:

- the hardest hit.
- the rebuilding of homes flattened by hurricanes
- those who can no longer farm their land because of persistent drought.

The companies and countries most responsible for the climate crisis must contribute the most. The money needs to be new, rather than taken from existing aid budgets, and it must be in the form of grants not loans.

Time and again, rich countries have shown that huge sums of money can be found when the political will is there, and there is no more pressing injustice than the climate crisis. The fund could be financed by taxes on fossil fuel extraction, air passenger levies or redirecting fossil fuel subsidies.



The remains of homes in Ngango New Stands, eastern Zimbabwe, after Cyclone Idai in 2019.



Marchers at COP26 in Glasgow calling for loss and damage finance.

‘It’s the worst injustice that the world has ever known. This is why we need to ask the countries that are most responsible to take appropriate measures to address the issues. They need to repay and repair, and pay for the damage that has been done’

Aldrin Calixte, Haiti Survive, Haiti

Together we can

What can we do?

The UK and Ireland are both historical polluters, burning fossil fuels that have contributed to the loss and damage being experienced today.

Rich, polluting countries have continually blocked calls from climate vulnerable countries to establish a loss and damage fund.

The UK and Ireland are still seen as world leaders on climate, so our governments must fully support an international loss and damage fund and use their influence to persuade other countries to do the same.

We can influence our governments to act but only if we rise up.

What can we do in our church?

There isn't enough awareness of the issue among the general public.

- We need to rise up and call on our governments to fully back the creation of an international loss and damage fund as a matter of urgency.
- We need to raise awareness of the issue among the wider public, so that the government realises that the UK and Irish population want action.

You can use this activity pack to engage your church on this vital issue and then take steps to raise awareness beyond your church and engage your local politician.

Let's rise up for paying up!



Art from Marwood Church of England Infant School and local artist Lydia Virgin as part of Letters for Creation.

Collective prayer and action

We know that engaging your church collectively can help people to reflect and pray on the issue, and then demonstrate the strength of feeling to the wider community and decision makers.

Can you engage your church through our prayer person activity?

Create your prayer person

It all starts with you and your prayer person.

Creating your person gives you a chance to prayerfully reflect on climate-related loss and damage. Then you can use it to rise up for action.

Your prayer person represents the people at the heart of the climate crisis.

Creating a prayer person will help you think about those most affected and to stand alongside them.

We encourage you to do this with friends and family, creating a congregation of prayer people that can also demonstrate how we are all connected.

You will need:

- A pen.
- Paper (A5 recommended).
- A pair of scissors.
- Colouring pencils – for decorating your prayer person.
- Glue or a hole punch and string – for connecting the prayer people.

Steps

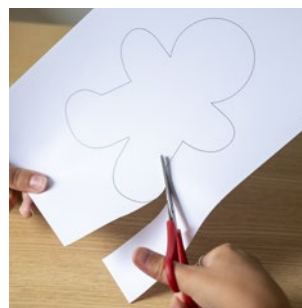


Activity: 5–10 minutes

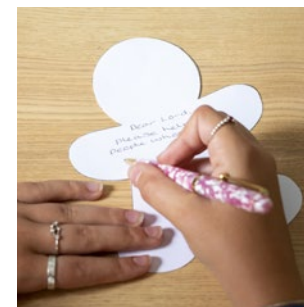
- 1.** Draw an outline of a person on a piece of paper. You can also use the template at the back of this pack.



- 2.** Cut out your person.



- 3.** Write your prayer on your person. You can write your own using the prayer points on the next page or use extracts from our example prayer.



- 4.** Connect your prayer person to others to form a congregation of people all representing calls and prayers for action on loss and damage.



Praying for action

Prayer is a source of strength and hope as we speak with our all-powerful God.

Prayer points

Here are some points to help focus your prayer for climate-related loss and damage:

- Lament for the contribution polluters have made in causing climate-related loss and damage and the impact on climate-vulnerable communities around the world.
- Pray that world leaders will push for the creation of a new international fund for climate-related loss and damage.
- Pray that a fund is designed in a way that ensures the money reaches the poorest and most vulnerable communities.

Or use our example prayer

God of love, hope and justice

We pray for world leaders. Bless them with wisdom, boldness and a heart for justice like yours.

May you gift them with the skills and opportunities required to work in unity so that a loss and damage fund is created this year.

May they act humbly and create a fund that benefits the poorest and most climate-vulnerable communities first.

And may we all lament for our polluting lifestyles which damage your creation.

Amen.

Raise awareness and call for action

Display your prayer people in church

Create a visual display of your prayer people in your church or other community space. This will showcase the issue in a creative way to the local community and help raise awareness.

There are lots of ways you can create this display. One suggestion is to make a sign saying 'pay up for loss and damage' and hang the prayer people underneath it on a wall or whiteboard.

You could complement this with some additional information about the loss and damage campaign, petition sheets or materials for people to add their own prayer person.

Share your prayer people on social media

Make your action visible by sharing a photo of your prayer people online.

You can share your prayer people online using the hashtag **#RiseUpPayUp**. You'll automatically join our online congregation. But don't forget to tag @ChristianAidirl so we see it too. If you don't use social media, email your photo to us at **dthomas@christian-aid.org**

We'll create an online congregation made up of all your prayer people and we'll use it to show decision makers that churches across the UK and Ireland believe it's time for polluters to pay up.

Use your prayer people to engage politicians

Local politicians work for you and are interested in what their constituents care about (even if they don't agree!). They can influence government policies and decisions – even on international issues such as loss and damage.

Show them that you and your church/community want action on loss and damage. Take your prayer people along to their surgery or invite them to visit your display in church. It shows them that lots of people care deeply.

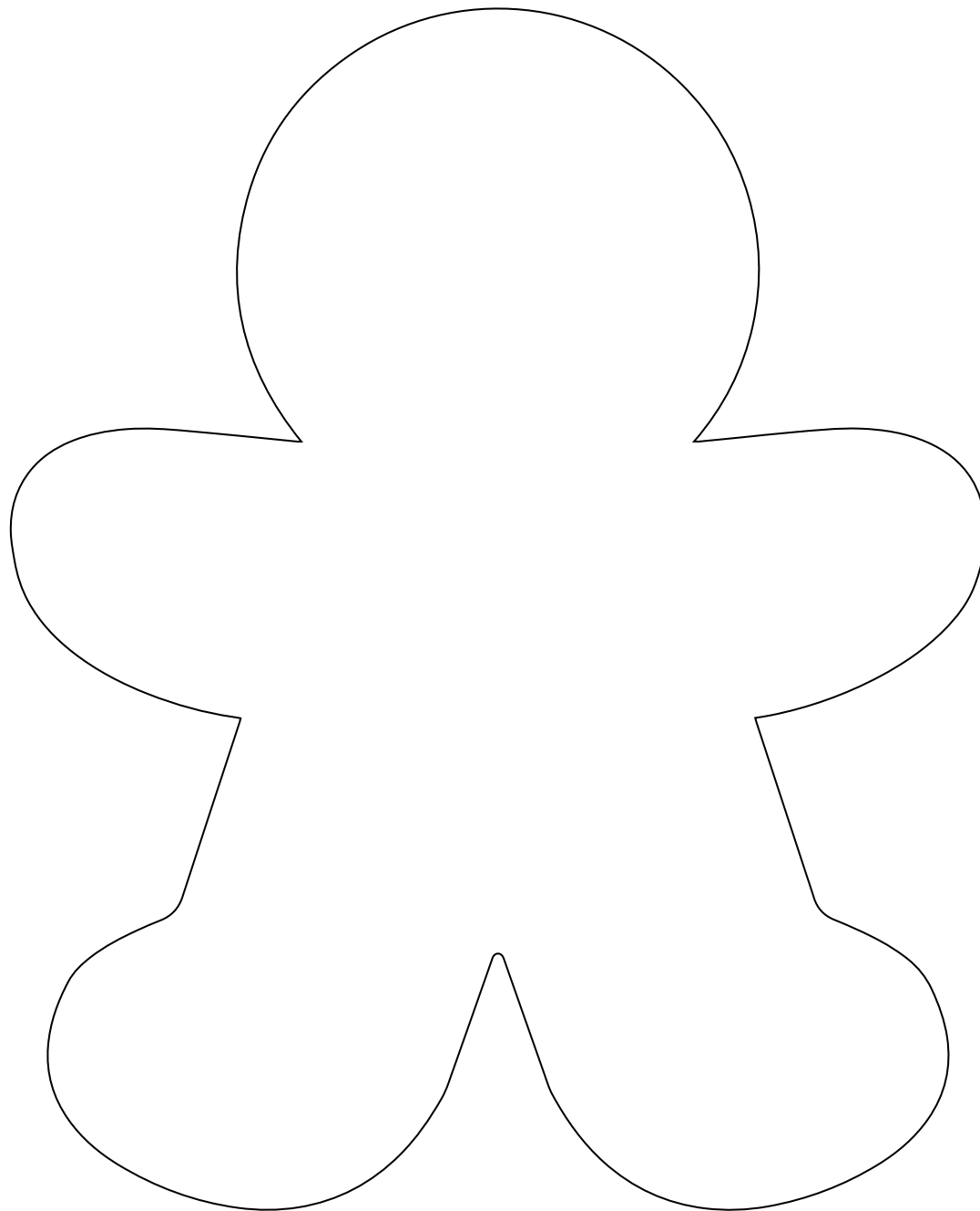
To really make an impact, meet your politician as a group, so that they can hear directly from many constituents who want action.



Christian Aid supporters marching for climate justice at COP26 in Glasgow

Prayer person template

Making your person using scrap paper is kinder on the environment. But if you need to, you can print and use this template.



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