

Prayer stations

Kinnecting with God and creation care

Use these kinaesthetic prayer stations to help people engage with prayer for the environment, climate change, and people who are already living with its effects. Each one details what if any equipment you need to get together in advance, instructions for setting up, and the text for the instruction signs you will need to display – (simply copy and paste these into a word document, enlarging the font so that the instructions are clear enough to read).

They can be used as a stand-alone resource, but obviously work best in the context of response to a sermon, seminar, or other exploration of how our faith relates to these issues.

Used together, the stations should take 30-40 minutes to work round, but if you have less time you can obviously leave out a couple. You can use them within an intercessions slot, have them set up as an installation for a special service or day of prayer where people can come and go independently and/or use them individually as prayer or intercession responses. If you are using them all together, they should be worked round in order.

You might also like to use mp3 worship tracks of songs celebrating creation, God's provision, and his heart for the poor to create a playlist or CD to pray in the background as people are moving round the stations. (If you're stuck for ideas, check out some of our songs, or use our 'Outward focussed song index' at www.thesanctuarycentre.org/whereworldandworshipmeet-songs). Or, if you prefer, use sound effects of nature.

1. Celebrating creation: Unspoken truth is spoken everywhere

Equipment needed: Bibles, pens, paper and a print out of the sign you create using the 'For display' text below.

Instructions for setting up:

1. In advance: Enlarge and print out a sign using the text in the 'For display' section.
2. On the day: Lay out everything that's needed and display the sign you have made.

For display:

Celebrating creation: Unspoken truth is spoken everywhere

- Read Psalm 19 and use it to thank God for his creation, and how he reveals himself to us through it.
- Take a moment to think of special places you go to, or memories of places that you have visited, where their natural majesty or beauty have inspired you or spoken to you about God. Thank him for these too.
- Ask him to open your eyes to see more of him in the world he has created – and to be moved to praise him for his provision and creativity.
- Use the pens and paper, and the psalm you have read as inspiration, to write your own short psalm of praise to God for his creation, particularly focussing on things which inspire, or speak to, you personally.

2. Exploring damaged relationships: Us and God

Equipment needed: PowerPoint or other similar presentation device to scroll through images, device to play this through, pens and paper and a print out of the sign you create using the 'For display' text below.

Instructions for setting up:

3. In advance: Enlarge and print out a sign using the text in the 'For display' section, select images of creation and create a PowerPoint or use a digital photo frame.
4. On the day: Lay out everything that's needed and display the sign you have made.

For display:**Exploring damaged relationships: Us and God**

- Watch the images as they come up in front of you and celebrate them. Use the pens and paper provided to jot down notes about any images that particularly strike you, or elements of nature that you particularly enjoy.
- Thank God for the colour, variety, beauty and creativity of what you are watching. Acknowledge that it belongs to him and that you are his guest in it – invited to enjoy it, see him through it, and to steward it wisely.
- Psalm 8:3-4 says:
 'When I consider your heavens,
 the work of your fingers,
 the moon and the stars,
 which you have set in place,
 what is mankind that you are mindful of them,
 human beings that you care for them?'
- Close your eyes and imagine God looking at a different set of pictures... power stations, oil spillages, traffic fumes, damaged weather patterns – how do you think his heart is affected by this?
- Ask for a spirit of humility towards creation and your entitlement to the resources God provides through it – in the light of who it belongs to.

3. Exploring damaged relationships: Us and creation

Equipment needed: Large world map that can be laid out on the floor; pens; paper (needs to be at least A4, and preferably larger so people can draw round their feet on it); scissors and a print out of the sign you create using the 'For display' text below.

Instructions for setting up:

5. In advance: Enlarge and print out a sign using the text in the 'For display' section.
6. On the day: Lay out the world map on the floor, place the other items near it, and display the sign you have made.

For display:**Exploring damaged relationships: Us and creation**

"The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it." (Psalm 24:1)

- Meditate on the scripture for a few moments. What does it make you think of or feel?

- Do you think we act as if the earth is God's, or sometimes as if it's ours to do as we want with? When God gave people the world in Genesis, what kind of attitude do you think he wanted us to have towards it, its resources, and the people who live in it?
- As a mark of respect, and submission, remove your shoes.
- Step gently on to the map. Pray for your footsteps to tread lightly on the world.
- After a few minutes, step off the map – now, using the paper provided, draw round one of your feet, then cut out its shape.

Take a few minutes to think through what impact having a lighter footprint would have – jot down any ideas you have for things you could do or pray to help you put this into practice.

4. Exploring damaged relationships: Us and others

Equipment needed: reflective film 'For the sake of the poor' available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mcx4oZ9ZCGA>, the means to play it, print outs of the prayers of confession and absolution provided below and a copy of the sign you have made using the text below.

Instructions for setting up:

1. In advance: Enlarge and print out the prayers of confession and absolution and a sign using the text in the 'For display section'.
2. On the day: Put out the items required, and display the sign you have created.

For display:

Exploring damaged relationships: Us and others

- The climate is warming and the poor – usually those who have done the least to contribute to climate change – are being affected the most. For example, a country like Bangladesh is suffering from rising sea levels, increased flooding and salt water intrusion despite the fact that it has contributed almost no CO₂ to the atmosphere.
- When we hear of large scale natural disasters, unpredictable weather patterns and the devastation caused to the poorest communities by droughts and floods we often feel powerless and angry. Why does God allow this?
- Watch the film and prayerfully respond. Don't worry if you don't have words... offer your silence or inexpressible feelings to God:

'And if we don't know how to pray, it doesn't matter. He does our praying in and for us... making prayers out of our wordless sighs, our aching groans.'

Romans 8:26-7, *The Message*
- If you find it helpful, pray through the confession and repentance prayers provided.

Prayer of confession

Almighty God — creator, shaper and sustainer of all life,
 And loving Father.
 I confess that I have not loved you with my whole heart;

I have been careless with the creation you so lovingly crafted,
And deaf to its song of praise.

I have taken to satisfy my selfish desires, rather than my need
And been indifferent to the consequences
As your world's song of praise has been silenced.

Because of our greed and carelessness, the world is hurting, and many of your most vulnerable children are suffering
as a result.

Please forgive my indifference.

Prayer of absolution

Almighty God — creator, shaper and sustainer of all life,
And loving Father.

Thank you for the forgiveness won for me by your Son – the redeemer of all creation.

I receive your grace to me, and your love for me as I am.

Change me now into what you would have me be –

Move me to love and care for your world

And make me ready to work for the good of all creation

Through the love and power of your son, my Saviour, Jesus Christ.

5. Restoring stewarding relationships: God and us

Equipment needed: A globe of some kind (preferably inflatable, so that it isn't on a stand and can be easily held by people), and a print out of the sign you create using the 'For display' text below.

Instructions for setting up:

1. In advance: Enlarge and print out a sign using the text in the 'For display' section.
2. On the day: Put out the globe on a table, or the floor, and display the sign you have created.

For display:

Restoring stewarding relationships: God and us

- Hold the globe in your hands for a few seconds and remember that God has the whole world in his hands - lovingly cradling creation, as well as his children
- Take a few minutes to pray
- Ask God to help you worship him in this way too - by loving his creation and being the steward he has called you to be
- Ask him to bring to mind anything that might look different in your attitude or actions as a result.

6. Restoring stewarding relationships: Creation and us

Equipment needed: Natural food such as different fruits or munchy seeds; flowers, leaves or foliage; pictures of natural wonders such as mountains, waterfalls, and wide, expansive views; pens and post-it-notes and a print out of the sign you create using the 'For display' text below.

Instructions for setting up:

1. In advance: Enlarge and print out a sign using the text in the 'For display' section. Then gather together the different visual and taste stimuli.
2. On the day: Lay out everything you have brought on an attractive cloth, and display the sign you have created.

For display:**Restoring stewarding relationships: Creation and us**

- The items here represent some of the gifts that nature holds - and our Father's provision.
- Taste something, or look at something in more detail - thank God for it, and anything it reveals about him.
- Pray that we would see the good things of creation as gifts we are entrusted with, not just as things we have the right to use and own. And that we would be responsible stewards, who care for the earth.
- Taste something else and think of one thing you will do differently or look into more to develop your value for God's creation, and your commitment to steward it. (If it helps you, make a note of it on the post-it-notes provided and take this away.)

7. Restoring stewarding relationships: Others and us

Equipment needed: Top soil in a bucket or wheelbarrow; an empty bucket; a towel or baby wipes for people to use after they have handled the soil; several pictures – a couple of people who rely on the land for their livelihood, one of dry and barren land, and one of flooding such as the ones below; a print out of a world map; and a print out of the sign you create using the 'For display' text below.



Floodplains in Bangladesh
© 2010 Liz Baddaley



Dry, cracked earth
© fourbees.com



Irene Kijara, tea farmer, Uganda
© Simon Rawles, Fairtrade Foundation



Babubhai Parmer, cotton farmer, India
© Simon Rawles, Fairtrade Foundation

Instructions for setting up:

1. In advance: Enlarge and print out a sign using the text in the 'For display' section. Source, enlarge and print out pictures, a world map, and gather together the other items needed.
2. On the day: Lay out everything that is required and display a copy of the sign you have made.

For display:**Restoring stewarding relationships: Others and us**

- Look at the pictures and items here which represent poor communities who rely on the land for their survival.
- Many poor communities are already suffering the impacts of climate change, despite doing very little to cause it. Some nations, such as Senegal, are experiencing drought and deforestation; others, such as

Bangladesh, are even more vulnerable to land loss, flooding and cyclones. Many of these nations are experiencing unpredictable weather, or the merging of seasons, threatening agriculture where it is most desperately needed to succeed.

- Pray for God's wisdom, mercy and healing so that solutions are found and communities are able to thrive.
- Ask God to help you to see the links between your lifestyle and the lives of those in these communities, many of whom are affected by climate change even now. Think about your consumption of energy, the amount of food and other resources you consume, and its effect on the worlds' poorest communities.
- Take a handful of soil - full of nutrients and moisture and place it in the empty, barren bucket. Pray that we would learn to live more simply, so that others can simply live and that God's gifts, which can sustain all of us, would be shared fairly.

8. Restoring stewarding relationships: Us and those in power

Equipment needed: some basic information on the environment and climate change from an organisations such as Friends of the Earth or A Rocha, pens and paper and a print out of the sign you create using the 'For display' text below.

Instructions for setting up:

3. In advance: Enlarge and print out a sign using the text in the 'For display section'.
4. On the day: Put out the items required, and display the sign you have created.

For display:

Restoring stewarding relationships: Those in power and us

- Using the pens and paper provided, write down four or five individuals, groups or organisations whose views, and actions have a big impact – good or bad - on the environment, climate change, and the people already living with its effects.
- Spend some time praying for God to give them wisdom, change their hearts where necessary, and mould them into stewards of his creation.
- Ask him to help you consider whether there is anything you should be doing to raise awareness about creation care with these people.
- Use the pens and paper to make a note of anything you decide to do and try to follow it up as quickly as possible after this time of prayer.