

World Student Christian Federation



Universal Day of Prayer for Students 2010

First celebrated in 1898, the Universal Day of Prayer for Students is observed on the third Sunday of February; in 2010 it is celebrated on February 21st. The UDPS is one of the oldest ecumenical days of prayer.

In line with WSCF's theme for 2010 the UDPS theme is 'Climate Justice'. Former WSCF Chairperson Rev. Ejike Okoro of Nigeria has prepared the 2010 UDPS liturgy and accompanying Bible study on behalf of the Africa region.

Introduction to the theme

Enjoy the earth gently
Enjoy the earth gently
For if the earth is spoiled
It cannot be repaired
Enjoy the earth gently

Yoruba Poem, West Africa

Appreciation and Care of God's Creation are throughout our Christian tradition and throughout our traditional cultures. For thousands of years humans lived in harmony with the land, sea and other creatures. Relatively recently in our history because of our own greed we have upset the balance between humans and Creation. We are now so out of balance with Creation that the earth's climate is changing. Changes in the climate have a profound effect on Creation and also humans, especially the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters. If we don't take radical action to change our behaviour we are dooming Creation and humankind to catastrophe.

As Christians we are called to work for justice and peace for all people and to care for God's Creation. As Christians we must take urgent action for Climate Justice. In this year that WSCF has dedicated to Climate Justice, may every local SCM branch, every national SCM and each student in the Federation and all

senior friends educate themselves about climate change and make a firm commitment to work for Climate Justice.

Creator God – maker and shaper of
all that is,
seen and unseen;

You are in the expanse and depth
of Creation, and in the processes
that make life possible.

Yet we are distracted by the gods
we make ourselves and our
lives become fractured and fragmented.

In our brokenness we disturb the
Earth's capacity to hold us.

Instead we find climate uncertainty
and global injustice.

Call us back from the brink.

Help us to choose love not fear,
to change ourselves and not the planet;
to act justly for the sake of the vulnerable;
and
to make a difference today
for life tomorrow.

In your name – Father, Son and Spirit.

Amen.

Prayer by Martyn Goss, England

Climate Justice web resources

Information on climate change www.climateark.org

Christian climate change organisation www.operationnoah.org

The Earth Charter www.earthcharter.org

Eco-congregations www.ecocongregation.org/scotland

Network of Earthkeeping Christian Communities in South Africa

www.neccsa.org.za

Points way forward for caring for the environment www.projectearth.com

Preparing for celebration of the UDPS

To prepare for this liturgy please:

1. Read the liturgy through and adapt it for use in your situation. The structure is a suggestion; different parts are optional and can be modified according to your local situation.

2. Organise the venue; in your university or college, in a church supportive of your SCM, or in the place where you usually gather with your group.

3. Brainstorm creative or symbolic acts to illustrate the theme to be carried out during the worship.

Some examples:

A) inform people about a local example of climate change or environmental problems

B) prepare a picture show to illustrate environmental degradation

C) prepare a survey on climate change; invite people to fill in the survey about their contribution to climate change. Invite people to share the results of the survey in the reflection time

D) Share some examples of how to combat climate change and how to take action for climate justice

E) Invite people to commit to take action for climate justice and to write their commitment on a piece of paper, at the offering everyone brings forward their commitment to work for climate justice.

4. Find someone or some people (student, senior friend or clergy) to prepare a sermon/reflection. It would be appropriate for the sermon/ reflection to be about the scripture readings chosen or generally on the theme. Inviting local students to share their own experiences and to participate in the liturgy is recommended.

5. Choose the scripture readings. Here are some suggestions:

Exodus 16:13-21 God provides the people with enough

Deuteronomy 30:19-20 Choose life

Job 38:39-39:8 God's care for creatures

Psalms 104:26-35 God provides food for all creatures

Psalms 146 Trust in God, not earthly leaders

Isaiah 24:4-7 The earth dries up and withers

Ezekiel 36: 24-26, 28b I will remove your heart of stone

Matthew 6: 28-30 Consider the lilies of the field

Luke 12: 13-21	Accountability for that which God has provided
Luke 18:18-29	The rich young ruler
Acts 2: 42 – 47	Living in loving community
Romans 8:18-23	The groaning of creation for redemption
2 Corinthians 9:6-15	The need to share the abundance of God

6. Find people to lead the music.

7. In consultation with those who will lead the music select the songs and music for the liturgy.

8. Organise baskets for offerings.

9. Find people to lead the liturgy and the Bible study; try to have several people (women and men, students and senior friends) taking the leader's part

10. Announce that there will be a collection for the SCM of Haiti. After the service send an electronic transfer or cheque to WSCF in Geneva for the Haitian SCM.

11. Invite students and senior friends to share this liturgy and the Bible study.

