

# COP 26 PRAYER GUIDE

EIGHT WEEKLY THEMES AND CREATIVE PRAYER IDEAS









### WHAT IS COP26 AND WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

This November, world leaders will gather for the most important climate summit since the landmark 2015 Paris Agreement. COP26 (26th convening of the Conference of the Parties) is being hosted by the UK government in Glasgow, Scotland. These annual United Nations climate talks are key for building global consensus on climate action and justice.

This summit is particularly significant, even more so because it was postponed by a year because of the coronavirus pandemic. Leaders around the world will come together to review the progress on climate change, and to make commitments for the future. Our world continues to warm, and with every extra fraction of a degree our climate becomes more unstable, more unpredictable, and more communities are pushed to the brink as the world changes around them. Since the Industrial Revolution, our planet has been warming at an unparalleled rate due to human activity, and is around 1.3°C warmer than before that time.

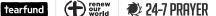
The science is clear: we must keep warming below 1.5°C to avoid catastrophic impacts on our planet and the communities more vulnerable to climate impacts. However, current commitments from world leaders to tackle the climate crisis would

mean our planet's warming will reach 2.4°C - a death sentence for many communities around the world. We need leaders to be more ambitious and take swift action that will put us on course for the 1.5°C threshold that they committed to during the 2015 climate talks in Paris. We need leaders from all nations to hear the voices of people across the world who are already facing disastrous climate change, and to deliver pandemic recoveries and climate commitments that secure a safer world for us all to flourish.

This guide has been created to help you pray for COP26 and the challenges of the reality of climate change. Each week covers a specific theme, and we've added prayer points at the end of each explanation. There are also creative prayer ideas to equip you to pray in new ways, either as an individual, household, or in your local community. We suggest you use this guide in the eight weeks leading up to the conference but also feel free to use it whenever you can!

You can also use the creative prayer stations to create a COP26-themed 24-7 Prayer Room. Find out more about 24-7 Prayer rooms at 24-7 prayer. com/prayerrooms





### **WEEKLY PRAYER THEMES:**

#### **WEEK ONE**

HOSTS OF COP26: GLASGOW - UK

#### **WEEK TWO**

THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING

#### **WEEK THREE**

**DECISION-MAKERS AND LEADERS** 

#### **WEEK FOUR**

**INEQUALITY** 

#### **WEEK FIVE**

CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE WORLD'S POOREST

#### **WEEK SIX**

THE EARTH'S RESOURCES

#### **WEEK SEVEN**

GLOBAL CAMPAIGNERS

#### **WEEK EIGHT**

**BIG AMBITION** 







### Week One 6-12 SEPTEMBER



#### WEEKLY THEME **HOSTS OF COP26: GLASGOW - UK**

Each COP conference is hosted by a particular nation and so this week we are praying for the hosts of COP26, the United Kingdom. It is the responsibility of the host nation to coordinate and set goals for the negotiations and to persuade countries to cooperate. To be successful hosts, we need the UK to "walk the talk" as they seek to lead others to deliver the climate action we need.

This week let's also pray for the host city of Glasgow. The city itself needs to continue getting its house in order to lead by example as the host of the negotiations. This means taking action on climate change but also readying itself to host a major international event. Lots of work needs to happen for volunteers and venues to be ready in time so that negotiations can happen in a well planned and safe manner, orchestrating the tens of thousands of people from across the UN, civil society, and general public who are required to make this summit a success.

#### **PRAYER POINTS**

- » Wisdom, guidance, and ambition for UK negotiators and Alok Sharma, COP26 president
- » Strength, encouragement, and practical breakthrough for those in Glasgow who are working to ensure venues will be ready, and Covid-safe
- » That the UK will be ambitious in setting COP26 goals and will build trust so nations can come together in November to tackle this global climate crisis

#### **CREATIVE PRAYER**

WEEK ONE: WALK THE TALK









### Week Two 13-19 SEPTEMBER



#### WEEKLY THEME

#### THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING

This week the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) - the only universally representative body of the UN - will be meeting to discuss, debate, and make recommendations on subjects relating to international peace and security. This will be a key staging point in the run up to COP26. Good outcomes from this Assembly meeting will build momentum towards, and help lay the foundations for success at COP26.

You may not have heard of the UNGA before, but chances are you have seen pictures of politicians speaking at the Assembly on the news (insert pic). Assembly meetings are key events where countries get together for discussions on international issues. The UNGA plays a significant role in the process of creating international law, and initiates political, economic, humanitarian, social, and legal actions which have benefited the lives of millions of people throughout the world.

#### **PRAYER POINTS**

- » Wisdom and peaceful discussion for those taking part in the UNGA meeting
- » That those who are part of the UNGA will make decisions that will benefit all people, especially those who have contributed least to the climate crisis, yet live on the frontline facing disastrous impacts daily
- » For beneficial and fruitful outcomes that will have a lasting impact

#### **CREATIVE PRAYER**

**WEEK TWO: DELICATE CONVERSATION** 









### **Week Three** 20-26 SEPTEMBER



#### WEEKLY THEME

#### DECISION-MAKERS AND LEADERS

This week we are praying for the delegates and attendees of COP26. Thousands of people will be planning to come to what is the biggest international event of this year. Each country will have a set of negotiators who will negotiate on their countries' behalf. Sadly, in the past few years, some negotiators have tried to curtail ambition on climate action.

Other important attendees will be from national governments themselves. These will be heads of state like Boris Johnson, Emmanuel Macron, and Joseph Biden. Governments' environment ministers will also play a key part in negotiating countries' climate commitments.

Alongside these more political actors will be financial power brokers. These are financial institutions like the World Bank. These financial stakeholders hold the keys to funding the big changes we need in society to reduce our emissions.

#### The attendees to pray for are:

- Negotiators from each country
- » Heads of state
- Governments' environment ministers
- The World Bank
- COP26 President, Alok Sharma MP

#### **PRAYER POINTS**

- » United decision-making and clear communication between country negotiators
- » Boldness for leaders: that they will be ambitious in making decisions that will secure a safer world for all
- » Wisdom and guidance for heads of state and government ministers as they bring their nation's priorities to the table; and that the voices of those most affected by climate change will be amplified and brought to their attention

#### **CREATIVE PRAYER**

WEEK THREE: CHANGE PRAYERS







### **Week Four** 27 SEPTEMBER - 3 OCTOBER



### WEEKLY THEME INEQUALITY

Over the next three weeks we will be praying for the three main asks of the Renew Our World Reset 21 campaign. Over these three weeks you can take part in prayer and action by signing Renew Our World's petition calling on governments and leaders to deliver a clean and fair recovery from the pandemic. The three priorities of the campaign are:

- Dropping debt
- Keeping global warming to safer levels
- » Protecting forests

By delivering on debt cancellation, keeping global warming to 1.5°C and by looking after forests, we can go a long way to delivering a clean and fair recovery from the pandemic for all nations.

Let's start with praying for debt cancellation.

For the first time in history, inequality might increase in every country at the same time. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it took just nine months for the fortunes of the top 1,000 billionaires to return to their pre-pandemic highs, while for the world's poorest, recovery could take more than a decade.

Inequality is seen most acutely in the issue of poorer countries' national debt. National debt is the amount of money a government owes to state lenders. We need to tackle the spiralling debt issue to give poorer countries the financial breathing space to recover from the pandemic. Debt cancellation is a fundamental act of climate justice. By cancelling poorer countries' debts, it will allow them to spend more money on their health care systems, rebuild from the pandemic, and equip themselves to adapt to the changing climate.

#### **PRAYER POINTS**

- » For breakthrough in debt cancellation and generous decision-making
- » That individuals and teams who are fighting on behalf of poorer countries will have influence and power in decision-making meetings
- » For wealthier, influential nations to make decisions that will benefit, not hinder, countries struggling with debt

#### **CREATIVE PRAYER**

WEEK FOUR: **TIED IN KNOTS** 







### **Week Five** 4-10 OCTOBER



#### WEEKLY THEME

#### **CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE WORLD'S POOREST**

This week we are praying for the second ask of the Reset 21 campaign. This is getting the world on track for the safer level of 1.5°C warming.

The world is rapidly warming due to increasing carbon emissions from human activities. As global temperatures rise, droughts, floods, fires, and storms are becoming more frequent and more extreme. The rains that millions of people rely on for their farms become less reliable. Climate change affects us all -- but it's hitting people living in poverty globally first and hardest. This is an issue of justice; the poorest 3.5 billion people are responsible for just ten percent of emissions and yet they already face the most devastating impacts of the climate crisis.

At COP26, leaders around the world will come together to review the progress on climate change since Paris in 2015 and to make commitments for the future. We need them to be more ambitious and to make decisions at COP26 that will put us on course for 1.5°C. We need leaders from all nations to hear the voices of people across the world, and to deliver pandemic recoveries and climate commitments that give us a safer world for us all to flourish.

#### **PRAYER POINTS**

- » For COP26 leaders to be bold, ambitious and confident in making decisions that will get the world on track for the safer level of 1.5 degrees of warming
- » Protection and resources so communities already struggling because of the impact of climate change can adapt and flourish
- » For the impact on and voices of the world's poorest to be central in all decisionmaking

#### **CREATIVE PRAYER**

WEEK FIVE: WHAT'S THE WEATHER WITH YOU?







### Week Six 11-17 OCTOBER



### WEEKLY THEME THE EARTH'S RESOURCES

This week we are praying for the third ask of the Reset 21 campaign. This is restoring damage to creation, starting with forests. Glasgow, the COP26 host city, is known as the "Dear Green Place" in the language of Gaelic. Let this be a reminder that for all cities, countries, and nations, greening our world should be a priority for climate action.

We are facing the loss of nature around the world. Destruction of land and forests, increased pollution, the climate crisis, and overuse of natural resources all drive species loss. Around 1 million animal and plant species may soon disappear completely. The resources and natural systems that we depend on are starting to collapse. Pandemics, like the COVID-19 crisis, will threaten us more frequently if biodiversity loss is not slowed. It is more urgent than ever to restore the damage that's been done to creation. We should start with forests, which are home to most animals and plants on land, and provide livelihoods to many local communities.

As Christians, we believe that God has created an interdependent world that has flourished with lives that God sees as good. We are also given a duty by God to govern and manage the gifts and resources contained in the natural world wisely, cautiously, and sustainably.

#### **PRAYER POINTS**

- » For forest protection and restoration to be included in international commitments and national climate plans
- » That work will be done with local communities on forest protection and restoration projects, so that their voices are heard and they benefit from the restoration of creation
- » For an increase in awareness of the importance of our earth's resources and positive steps to be taken in preserving these
- » For global companies and multinationals to be conscious of how to make a positive impact

#### **CREATIVE PRAYER**

WEEK SIX: RENEW OUR WORLD









### **Week Seven**

### 18-24 OCTOBER



### WEEKLY THEME **GLOBAL CAMPAIGNERS**

This week we're praying for the wonderful campaigners around the world who are speaking up for creation. Christians all over the world have been making their voices heard in prayer and advocacy for creation. Some get to do that in places where they have the freedom of expression. For others, opportunities are more restricted because governments are violent and suspicious of churches.

Thankfully, Christians have been joining in with campaigns like Renew Our World, finding their voices for the first time. It feels like God is on the move working in young people particularly. In fact, recent research by Tearfund shows that 9 out of 10 Christian teenagers say they are concerned about climate change. However, just 1 in 10 believe their church is doing enough to respond to the climate crisis. So this week let's pray for God to continue to stir young people to care for creation.

#### **PRAYER POINTS**

- » That the voice of campaigners will be amplified and heard, especially on the issue of climate change
- » For young people to use their voice to speak up and speak out; and for their influence to make a difference at this crucial time
- » For freedom for campaigners all over the world as they fight for a better world, and for good relationships with governments that will lead to lasting change

#### **CREATIVE PRAYER**

WEEK SEVEN: SPEAK OUT!







### **Week Eight** 25-31 OCTOBER



### WEEKLY THEME **BIG AMBITION**

Well done for making it to the final week before COP26! We hope you have enjoyed using this resource as fuel for your prayers. For this last week let's give it that one final push over the line in prayer, with the conference starting on Sunday 31st October. We know the opportunity is great and that we are in a pivotal time. The window for averting the worst outcomes of the climate crisis is closing. We need political action and cooperation on a massive scale.

During the current COVID-19 crisis, many people are beginning to wonder what life might look like afterward. Is this a chance to create a new normal? We believe we have an opportunity at COP26 to address the immediate crisis and look beyond it to transform our society and economy so the whole world - current and future generations - can flourish. We believe we have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reset our economies and societies.

Let's do this!

#### **PRAYER POINTS**

- » For hope and ambition to be at the heart of COP26 rather than worry and uncertainty
- » For transformation and breakthrough to be achieved at COP26 that will create a positive impact for the future
- » For world leaders at COP26 to make joint commitments to get us on track for 1.5 degrees, and for a safer future for us all

#### CREATIVE PRAYER

WEEK EIGHT: TIME TO DREAM







And that's it! If you want to stay up to date with what happens at COP26 then follow Renew Our World's social media accounts:



renewourworld.net



RenewourWorld



RenewOurWorld\_



renewourworld\_

Also, don't forget to take part in Renew Our World's Reset 21 campaign!











### BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT -------

"DO NOT MERELY LISTEN TO THE WORD, AND SO DECEIVE YOURSELVES. DO WHAT IT SAYS." **JAMES 1:22 (NIV)** 

"DEAR CHILDREN, LET US NOT LOVE WITH WORDS OR SPEECH BUT WITH ACTIONS AND IN TRUTH." 1 JOHN 3:18 (NIV)

- » Pray for wisdom and guidance for those leading
  » Ask God to bring to mind one practical thing discussions at COP26 in Glasgow
  - you can do to join in and "Walk the Talk"

#### Some examples

- >> Walk to the shop rather than drive
- » Buy local produce
- » Take a reusable bag to the shop
- » Read a book on climate change or

- Watch a climate change documentary
- » Begin recycling or starting a food compost
- » Tell someone about a lifestyle change you've made to encourage them on a personal journey





### Week Two DELICATE CONVERSATION



### GET STARTED .....

The UN General Assembly has the power to initiate political, economic, humanitarian, social and legal action affecting millions around the world. Use this creative time to pray over the delicate discussions that will happen at the UN General Assembly meeting that there would be peaceful discussion by delegates, and that they might initiate positive change and bring peace to those who are in

### (I) BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT .....

"FINALLY, BROTHERS AND SISTERS, REJOICE! STRIVE FOR FULL RESTORATION, ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER, BE OF ONE MIND, LIVE IN PEACE. AND THE GOD OF LOVE AND PEACE WILL BE WITH YOU." 2 CORINTHIANS 13:11 (NIV)

"HE HAS TOLD YOU, O MAN, WHAT IS GOOD; AND WHAT DOES THE LORD REQUIRE OF YOU BUT TO DO JUSTICE, AND TO LOVE KINDNESS, AND TO WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD?" MICAH 6:8 (ESVUK)

"LET EVERYONE BE SUBJECT TO THE GOVERNING AUTHORITIES. FOR THERE IS NO AUTHORITY EXCEPT THAT WHICH GOD HAS ESTABLISHED. THE AUTHORITIES THAT EXIST HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED BY GOD." ROMANS 13:1 (NIV)

### **◯** DO IT ·······

#### You'll need:

- » Tissue
- » Pen

- » Tissues are delicate and tear easily. Reflect on this as you do this prayer activity and use it to guide your prayers
- » Take a tissue and hold it
- Ask God to place words and prayers on your heart for the UN General Assembly conversations
- » Begin to write your prayers down on the tissue, reflecting on how delicately you need to write for the tissue not to break
- >> Use this to pray for peace and protection over the delicate conversations happening. If the tissue rips, pray for restoration and redemption for fractures in conversations and in our world





### Week Three CHANGE PRAYERS



### (I) BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT .....

"I URGE YOU, FIRST OF ALL, TO PRAY FOR ALL PEOPLE. ASK GOD TO HELP THEM; INTERCEDE ON THEIR BEHALF, AND GIVE THANKS FOR THEM. PRAY THIS WAY FOR KINGS AND ALL WHO ARE IN AUTHORITY SO THAT WE CAN LIVE PEACEFUL AND QUIET LIVES MARKED BY GODLINESS AND DIGNITY." 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-2 (NLT)

You'll need:

» A coin/loose change

### **⊘** DO IT .....

- » Dig out three coins from your pocket, bag or wherever you keep your loose change
- » Take your first coin, and turn it in your palm as you pray for graceful communication, peaceful discussion, and fruitful conversation between negotiators
- » Take your second coin, and pray for Holy Spirit wisdom and God-led guidance for our world leaders
- » Take your third coin, and pray for the fair and careful stewardship of money by financial brokers





## Week Four TIED IN KNOTS



### GET STARTED .....

On an individual level, debt can be very stressful. It plays on your mind; you feel tied up and your choices are limited. This has a significant impact on your life, happiness, and mental wellbeing. Debt at a national level has a significant impact on every person in the country.

We are called to pray in all situations presenting our requests to God, for His will to be done, and that He might be our strength and an ever-present help in times of trouble.

### (I) BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT .....

"GOD IS OUR REFUGE AND STRENGTH, A VERY PRESENT HELP IN TROUBLE." PSALM 46:1 (ESVUK)

"DO NOT BE ANXIOUS ABOUT ANYTHING, BUT IN EVERY SITUATION, BY PRAYER AND PETITION, WITH THANKSGIVING, PRESENT YOUR REQUESTS TO GOD." PHILIPPIANS 4:6 (NIV)

"'OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN, HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME. YOUR KINGDOM COME, YOUR WILL BE DONE, ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN." MATTHEW 6:9-10 (ESVUK)

#### You'll need:

- » Rope, string, or twine
- » Scissors

### **₯ DO IT** -----

- » Cut a piece of string, as long as you like.
- » Begin to tie knots into your string.
- Think about a time when your choices were limited and tricky, or a time when you faced financial challenges. How did this make you feel?
- Continue to tie knots.

- Once you have enough knots to make your string much shorter than it was, consider how it looks messy and tangled - much like the opportunities of nations in debt.
  - » Begin to undo the knots you tied. As you wiggle, tug, and twist them free, sense the relief you feel when you get a knot out. Pray for this release over countries currently bound up in debt - for God's will to be done, that His kingdom will come and that people will know God as their ever-present help in times of trouble.





### **Week Five**

### "WHAT'S THE WEATHER WITH YOU?"



### GET STARTED .....

In this creative time, find a view outside or take yourself out for a walk. We discuss the weather all the time. A casual conversation, something to fill the time with a neighbour, cashier, or a colleague at work. But the weather is not merely small talk; it governs food supply, natural disasters, and the livelihood of billions across the world. As we see more extreme weather becoming increasingly common, pray for the most vulnerable who are unproportionally impacted.

### 

""...IF MY PEOPLE WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME HUMBLE THEMSELVES, AND PRAY AND SEEK MY FACE AND TURN FROM THEIR WICKED WAYS, THEN I WILL HEAR FROM HEAVEN AND WILL FORGIVE THEIR SIN AND HEAL THEIR LAND."

2 CHRONICLES 7:14 (ESVUK)

"HE COVERS THE SKY WITH CLOUDS; HE SUPPLIES THE EARTH WITH RAIN AND MAKES GRASS GROW ON THE HILLS. HE PROVIDES FOOD FOR THE CATTLE AND FOR THE YOUNG RAVENS WHEN THEY CALL."

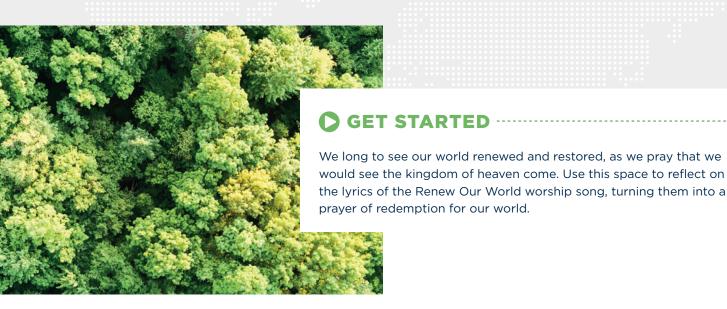
**PSALM 147:8-9 (NIV)** 

### **⋙ DO IT ·······**

- » Sit by a window, go outside, or take a walk.
- » Notice the weather where you are right now.
- » If it's raining, spend a moment in gratitude for having fresh water and pray for those who struggle with not enough.
- » If it's sunny, hold your face to the sun and remember God's provision. Pray for his provision for nations whose weather is harsh and unpredictable.
- » Notice what else you can see around you; let what you see guide and lead your prayers for change in the climate crisis and how the most vulnerable are impacted.







### (I) BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT .....

"FOR, BEHOLD, I CREATE NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH: AND THE FORMER SHALL NOT BE REMEMBERED, NOR COME INTO MIND."

**ISAIAH 65:17 (KJV)** 

"THEREFORE, IF ANYONE IS IN CHRIST, HE IS A NEW CREATION. THE OLD HAS PASSED AWAY; BEHOLD, THE NEW HAS COME." 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 (ESVUK)

#### You'll need:

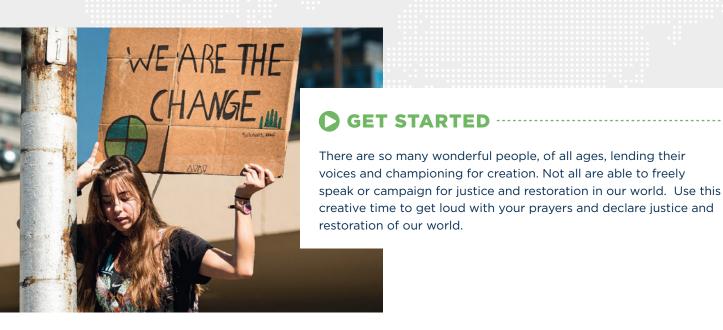
- » Renew Our World Worship Song
- » Art supplies such as paint, coloured pencils, or crayons
- » Paper and a pen

### **∑** DO IT ······

- » Begin in prayer asking God to speak to you as you listen to the song. You could simply pray "Speak Lord, your servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3:9).
- » Listen to the song. Write out the lyrics that stand out to you: use these as fuel to inspire your words to God.
- » Listen to the song again. This time paint or draw the images it evokes in your mind: offer these to God as a prayer.
- » Listen to the song one final time. Sit and listen, soak in the lyrics, meditate on the meaning and add your "Amen" at the end.







# (I) BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT .....

"I CRY ALOUD TO THE LORD: I LIFT UP MY VOICE TO THE LORD FOR MERCY." **PSALM 142:1 (NIV)** 

"LIFT UP YOUR HEADS, YOU GATES; BE LIFTED UP, YOU ANCIENT DOORS, THAT THE KING OF GLORY MAY COME IN. WHO IS THIS KING OF GLORY? THE LORD STRONG AND MIGHTY, THE LORD MIGHTY IN BATTLE. LIFT UP YOUR HEADS, YOU GATES; LIFT THEM UP, YOU ANCIENT DOORS, THAT THE KING OF GLORY MAY COME IN." **PSALM 24:7-9 (NIV)** 

### **∑** DO IT .....

- » Be Loud! Challenge yourself to shout your prayers for those all over the world who are using their voice to fight for change. Be noisy and lift up your voice!
- » Make or grab an instrument and use this while you pray.

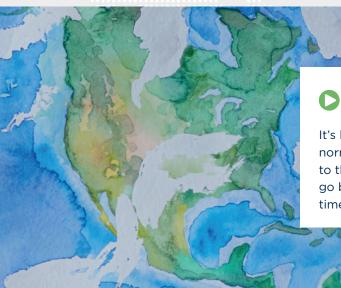
#### Three ways to make an instrument

- » Place rubber bands over a box or Tupperware.
- » Fill a Tupperware box with coins, pencils, marbles (anything you can find that rattles).
- » Cover the top of an empty can with paper tied with string making a drum.

#### You'll need:

- » Rubber bands
- » Cardboard box or Tupperware
- » Coins/pencils/marbles
- » Empty can
- » String





### **○** GET STARTED ··

It's likely we've all asked ourselves that question of "what is the new normal?" Many are longing for change rather than things going back to they were before. With climate change we don't have time to go back to before: it's time to have holy ambition. Use this creative time to pray for a "new normal" of climate justice and healing.

### (I) BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT .....

"...IN THE MIDDLE OF ITS STREET. ON EITHER SIDE OF THE RIVER WAS THE TREE OF LIFE, BEARING TWELVE KINDS OF FRUIT, YIELDING ITS FRUIT EVERY MONTH; AND THE LEAVES OF THE TREE WERE FOR THE HEALING OF THE NATIONS." **REVELATION 22:2 (NASB)** 

"PURSUE LOVE, YET DESIRE EARNESTLY SPIRITUAL GIFTS, BUT ESPECIALLY THAT YOU MAY PROPHESY."

1 CORINTHIANS 14:1 (NASB)

- » Sit still for a few moments.
- » As you sit, let hope for our world and its people rise in your heart. Feel hope rise from the tips of your toes to the top of your head.
- >> When you feel ready, turn this into prayer. Allow yourself to move freely; give yourself permission to let the hope in your heart form the prayers from your soul. (You might like to listen to music, write in a journal, draw or paint, get up and dance and sing, or sit still in the quiet.)
- » Imagine throwing open the windows of possibilities. Pray the big prayers and dare to have holy ambition and hope for a new normal.

