**...and now, the weather...**

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All text by Andrew Graystone unless otherwise indicated.

**INTRODUCTION**

Maximus the Confessor (c580-662) was an activist monk and a theologian from present-day Georgia. A Christian with a truly cosmic vision, he puzzled over what was the proper relationship between human beings and the rest of creation. Like Francis of Assisi five hundred years later, Maximus believed that all of creation was being united to God, but that humans beings have a unique job to do. Whilst all of creation praises God with ‘silent voices,’ humans have been given the distinctive responsibility to give expression to creation’s praise. Maximus described us as “the priests of creation.” But if it’s our job to lead the singing of creation’s praise, it is our job to express its pain too. Today, creation is burning up. We meet to express the planet’s fear and distress, to give words to creation’s grief, and to ask for God’s mercy.

This is a service about climate care / climate crisis.  The overt theme is WEATHER.   Within the service we will build a strong sense of looking to the future. What is projected in terms of the impact of climate change over the next 30 years?

Three podiums of varying heights are situated around the crowd. On each is a 3m A-frame steel ladder. The three ladders represent places in the world directly affected by climate change, eg by rising sea levels, drought, desertification.

The first half of the service is a response of lament and sadness. What will we say to God about the way we have treated the world. Then after 30 minutes we stop. In the second half we will present an alternative vision of a peaceful world. We will call for God’s mercy, and commit ourselves to change. We will ask how we should live to achieve that alternative vision. We end with a corporate commitment to take action now.

As usual, the service will be built around an act of communion, experienced in small groups around the field. There will be a particular emphasis on the materiality of the communion elements – bread and wine from the earth, made and broken by human hands.

It is really important that the service is practical, truthful, joyful and worshipful. We don’t want to simply add to a sense of guilt and hopelessness. We do want to take people on a journey through grief and mourning, to a place of hope, and leave people with a determination to act and a theological basis for doing so. It goes without saying that we are committed to inclusion, both in the delivery and reception of the service. It needs to look, feel and be inclusive. It also needs to have enough of a light touch that people leave feeling joyful, inspired and glad to have been there.

**SONG** **All creatures join with us and sing,**

Lift up the voice of every thing

Sing praises, Alleluia!

Thou burning sun with golden beam,

Thou silver moon with softer gleam,

Sing praises, sing praises,

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Thou rushing wind that art so strong,

Ye clouds that sail in heav’n along,

Sing praises, Alleluia!

Thou rising morn, in praise rejoice,

Ye lights of evening, find a voice,

Sing praises, sing praises,

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Thou flowing water, pure and clear,

Make music for thy God to hear,

Sing praises, Alleluia!

Thou fire so masterful and bright,

That gives to us both warmth and light,

Sing praises, sing praises,

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

All people with a tender heart,

Forgiving others, take your part,

Sing praises, Alleluia!

Ye who long pain and sorrow bear,

On God who made you cast your care,

Sing praises, sing praises,

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Let all things their Creator bless,

And worship God in humbleness,

Sing praises, Alleluia!

Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,

And praise the Spirit, three in one,

Sing praises, sing praises,

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Text traditionally attributed to St Francis of Assisi

Paraphrased by William H Draper (1855-1933)

Adapted by Andrew Graystone

**CALL TO PRAYER**

AZARIAH Don’t move. Keep still for a moment. Stay as you are.

LAURA Look around at this great cathedral where we are gathered. The trees are its pillars. The sky its vaulted roof.

JAMIE Feel the sun on your face.

AZARIAH It is 2052. We have creation’s work to do.

JAMIE Our job is to lament, but not to despair.

LAURA Our calling today is to gather up the voices of all our fellow creatures; the mountains and the seas; the fields and the trees; the creatures we share the planet with, and the ones we have already lost.

JAMIE If the trees want to shout their praise to God, it’s our job to raise their voices.

LAURA If the oceans want to roar in pain, it’s up to us to do that too.

AZARIAH We are the mouthpiece of creation; before God we worship, and before God we weep.

JAMIE So let’s pray together.

AZARIAH We’re gathering with urgency.

ALL **A hurricane is coming.**

LAURA We’re gathering with anger.

ALL **The skies are turning dark.**

AZARIAH Young children and old people;

ALL **we stand in front of God;**

AZARIAH Strong people and weak people;

ALL **we bring our planet to God.**

LAURA We’re here to speak out creation’s hopes.

ALL **What have we done God?**

LAURA We’re here to weep for creation’s pain.

ALL **What have we done?**

**PRAYERS WITH THE PLANET**

MAGGIE When was it that we lost touch with everything? The creatures, the plants,

PIP the mountains, the forests,

MAGGIE each other; even ourselves.

PIP We were the generation who sucked the oil from the ground and burnt it, and threw the ashes into the sky.

MAGGIE We were the ones who wrapped our lives in plastic, then threw it into the oceans.

PRU We were the ones who cut down the deep-breathing, air-cleaning forests, to make room for burger beef.

PIP If anyone can speak up for creation, we can.

MAGGIE The coral cried out to God. Save us.

PRU The rainforests cried out to God. Let us stand.

PIP The deserts cried out to God. We cannot bear the heat.

PRU The icecaps cried out to God. We cannot keep from melting.

MAGGIE Have mercy on us, O God.

PIP, PRU, MAGGIE **Have mercy on us.**

PRU Forgive us our arrogance and our greed.

PIP, PRU, MAGGIE **Forgive us O God.**

PIP Spare us from the consequences of our consumption.

PIP, PRU, MAGGIE **Spare us O God.**

**BIBLE READING**

A reading from the prophet Isaiah, chapter 24, verses 1 to 6.

See, your God is going to lay waste the earth  
    and devastate it;  
God will ruin its face  
    and scatter its inhabitants—

it will be the same  for priest as for people,  
    for the master as for his servant, for the mistress as for her servant,  
    for seller as for buyer, for borrower as for lender,  
    for debtor as for creditor.

The earth dries up and withers,  
    the world languishes and withers,  
    the heavens languish with the earth.  
The earth is defiled by its people;  
    they have disobeyed the laws,  
violated the statutes  
    and broken the everlasting covenant.  
Therefore a curse consumes the earth;  
    its people must bear their guilt.  
Therefore earth’s inhabitants are burned up,  
    and very few are left.

Readers This is the Word of the Lord

All Are you sure?

**PRAYERS OF LAMENT AND CONFESSION**

*All you broken things, call out to the Lord:*

*parched Sahara and polluted oceans,*

*Red gazelle and black rhinoceros,*

*Giant tortoise and slippery frog*

*Rain forests and Pacific islands,*

*Cry out to the one who created you.*

ALL ***Cry out to the one who created you****.*

PRU *All you struggling things, call out to the Lord:*

*Bleached coral and beached sea creature,*

*Polar bear and mountain gorilla,*

*Melting ice cap and burning rain forest,*

*Farmers of Sudan and fishers of Bangladesh*

*Earthquake and mudslide, typhoon and hurricane.*

*Cry out to the one who created you.*

ALL ***Cry out to the one who created you****.*

**SONG**

***All things bright and beautiful,***

*All creatures great and small,  
All things wise and wonderful,  
The Lord God made them all.*

1 The purple headed mountains,  
The rivers running by,  
Are filled with deadly toxins,

Cascading from the sky.

*All things bright and beautiful,  
All creatures great and small,  
All things wise and wonderful,  
We humans trashed them all.*

2 Each little flower that opens,  
Each little bird that sings,  
Is tainted with the plastic,

We’ve thrown into our bins.

*All things bright and beautiful,  
All creatures great and small,  
God who made the universe,*

*Looks out on us appalled.*

3 The typhoons in the winter,  
The burning summer sun,  
The changes to the climate,

Have only just begun.

*All things bright and beautiful,  
All creatures great and small,  
All things wise and wonderful,  
We humans trashed them all.*

4 The rich man in his castle,  
The poor man at the gate,

All people high and lowly

Will suffer the same fate.

*All things bright and beautiful,  
All creatures great and small,  
God who made the universe,*

*Looks out on us appalled.*

5 God gave us eyes to see them,  
And lips that we might tell,  
The choices we are making

To turn the world to hell.

*All things bright and beautiful,  
All creatures great and small,  
All things wise and wonderful,  
We humans trashed them all.*

Text by Cecil Frances Alexander

Adapted by Andrew and Peter Graystone

**BIBLE READING**

Luke 12: 54-59

*When you see clouds coming in from the west, you say, ‘There’s a storm coming,’ and it does. And when the wind blows in from the south, you say, ‘It’s going to be hot,’ and it is. You hypocrites! You know how to forecast the weather. How come you don’t see the warnings I’m giving you about the crisis ahead?"*

This is the Word of the Lord

ALL **Run that past us again**

*When you see clouds coming in from the west, you say, ‘There’s a storm coming,’ and it does. And when the wind blows in from the south, you say, ‘It’s going to be hot,’ and it is. You hypocrites! You know how to forecast the weather. How come you don’t see the warnings I’m giving you about the crisis ahead?"*

**SONG INDESCRIBABLE**

From the highest of heights to the depths of the sea

Creation's revealing Your majesty

From the colours of fall to the fragrance of spring

Every creature unique in the song that it sings

All exclaiming

Indescribable, uncontainable,

You placed the stars in the sky and You know them by name.

You are amazing God

All powerful, untameable,

Awestruck we fall to our knees as we humbly proclaim

You are amazing God

Who has told every lightning bolt where it should go

Or seen heavenly storehouses laden with snow

Who imagined the sun and gives source to its light

Yet conceals it to bring us the coolness of night

None can fathom

Chorus

Indescribable, uncontainable,

You placed the stars in the sky and You know them by name.

You are amazing God

Incomparable, unchangeable

You see the depths of my heart and You love me the same

You are amazing God

You are amazing God

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**SECOND CALL TO PRAYER**

AZARIAH As we journey through time, we have a job to do.

JAMIE Our job is to live in hope, and to do justice.

LAURA Our calling today is to gather up the voices of all creation; to join with all creatures in praising our God.

JAMIE If the trees want to shout their praise to God, it’s up to us to raise their voices.

LAURA If the oceans want to roar in pain, it’s up to us to do that too.

AZARIAH We are the mouthpiece of creation; before God we worship and before God we weep.

JAMIE So let’s pray.

AZARIAH We’re gathering with hope.

ALL **We’re gathering with expectation.**

AZARIAH Young children and old people;

ALL **bringing ourselves to God;**

AZARIAH Powerful and powerless

ALL **Bringing our planet to God.**

LAURA We’re here to speak out creation’s hopes.

ALL **What shall we do God?**

LAURA We’re here to commit ourselves to God’s future.

ALL **What shall we do?**

**PRAYERS WITH THE PLANET**

*All you powerful things, praise the Lord:*

*Niagara Falls and Pacific Ocean,*

*Tiger and tyrannosaurus,*

*Killer whale and golden eagle,*

*Forces of gravity and pull of the tide,*

*Forked lightening and nuclear power;*

*Give praise to the one who created you.*

ALL ***Give praise to the one who created you****.*

NIA *All you weak things praise the Lord:*

*Sparkle of light and breath of the breeze,*

*Scuttling ant and wriggling tadpole,*

*Tear in the eye and hair on the head,*

*Soft feathers and gentle sighs,*

*Scents of the rose and dandelion seeds;*

*Give praise to the one who created you.*

ALL ***Give praise to the one who created you****.*

Text: Peter Graystone

**BIBLE READING** Isaiah 11: 1-9

READERS A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;

from its roots a Branch will bear fruit.

The Spirit of the Lord will rest on them—

the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,

the Spirit of counsel and of might,

the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of God—

and they will delight in the fear of God.

They will not judge by what they see with their eyes,

or decide by what they hear with their ears;

but with righteousness they will judge the needy,

with justice they will give decisions for the poor of the earth.

They will strike the earth with the rod of their mouth;

with the breath of their lips they will slay the wicked.

Righteousness will be their belt

and faithfulness the sash around their waist.

The wolf will live with the lamb,

the leopard will lie down with the goat,

the calf and the lion and the yearling together;

and a little child will lead them.

The cow will feed with the bear,

their young will lie down together,

and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

and the young child will put its hand into the viper’s nest.

They will neither harm nor destroy

on all my holy mountain,

for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of God

as the waters cover the sea.

This is the Word of the Lord

ALL **Thank God for that!**

**SONG GOD THE MAKER OF THE HEAVENS**

**God, the maker of the heavens,**

and the planet that we share,  
show us how to live, like Jesus,  
lives of gratitude and care.  
Make us mindful of the footprints  
from the lives that we pursue.  
Make us partners in your mission:  
you are making all things new.

God, the gardener of Eden,  
teach us how to tend this earth,  
learning from the changing seasons,  
times of fallow and new birth.  
Lord have mercy when we’re careless,  
rich resources we misuse.  
Use our hands to heal creation:  
you are making all things new.

God of labour and vocation,  
Lord of science, trade and art,  
take our efforts and our passions  
make them mirrors of your heart.  
Every habitat and creature  
loved and valued, God, by you.  
May our lives reveal your Kingdom:  
you are making all things new.

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Tune: Nettleton

**CONSECRATION**

AZARIAH The night before he died, Jesus met with his friends.

LAURA They knew that a storm was coming.

AZARIAH They knew there was nothing they could do.

JAMIE Jesus took some bread and gave thanks to you, God.

He broke it into pieces, and gave it to everyone.

“This is my body,” he said. “Do this, and know that I am with you.”

AZARIAH Jesus is alive

**ALL *And we are alive in Jesus.***

LAURA Later, he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to you God.

He shared it with them, and said “This is my blood. It brings new life.

Do this, and know that I am with you.”

AZARIAH Jesus is alive

**ALL *And we are alive in Jesus*.**

**L**AURA And so, remembering Jesus, who died,  
was raised to new life, and is alive forever,   
we are glad to share that life and live in him.

AZARIAH Jesus is alive

**ALL *And we are alive in Jesus.***

JAMIE Our planet is broken and we are broken too.

ALL ***Lord have mercy****.*

AZARIAH Sun and rain; seed and grain.

ALL ***This will be Christ’s body*** (Reach hands toward the bread)

LAURA Shade and shine; grapes and wine.

ALL ***This will be Christ’s blood*** (Reach hands toward the wine/juice)

JAMIE Blow the wind of your Holy Spirit  
so that this bread and wine  
can be for us the body and blood of Jesus.

AZARIAH In this bread, God is broken for us, and for our world;

In this wine, God is poured out for us, and for our world;

and in God’s brokenness, we will live

until Christ returns to make us whole.

**BLESSING**

Take the stone in your hands and feel it. Get to know it...but do not own it. It doesn’t belong to you. It has a life of its own. It cries out to God with its own voice.

It doesn’t belong to you. Of course it doesn’t. You don’t have to own everything. This stone has a work of its own to do. And so do you. But take this stone with you, and care for it as if were the whole world – which it is.

Be yourself. And if what this means

is unclear to you, look around at

the things of this earth. Study the stone

which always does what it was made

to do: it doesn’t always fall in the

same way, sometimes resting in high

places and at other times finding its

rest where the earth allows it to lie,

but its purpose is to move downward,

and in this, the stone loves God in the

way it can, singing the new song

which God gives each creature and thing –

and also you who hear this and at times

wonder what to do, and how to be.

Text by Meister Eckhart (c. 1260 – c. 1328)

**SONG HOW GREAT THOU ART**

O LORD my God! When I in awesome wonder

Consider all the works Thy hand hath made;

I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,

Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee,

How great Thou art! How great Thou art!

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee,

How great Thou art! How great Thou art!

When through the woods and forest glades I wander

And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;

When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur,

And hear the brook, and feel the gentle breeze:

Then sings my soul...

And when I think that God, His Son not sparing,

Sent Him to die - I scarce can take it in:

That on the Cross, my burden gladly bearing,

He bled and died to take away my sin:

Then sings my soul...

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation

And take me home - what joy shall fill my heart!

Then shall I bow in humble adoration,

And there proclaim, my God how great Thou art!

Then sings my soul...

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