



Let Justice and Peace Flow

Season of Creation 2023

A Mighty River
Amos 5: 24

Season of Creation

Let rivers of justice and peace flow

Introduction

Season of Creation is a time from 1st Sep to 4th October when churches around the world come together to think about God the Creator, celebrate the beauty of creation but also think about the damage that we humans have done to creation.

Project

This Sunday School project aims to:

- help children and young people explore faith and climate justice
- prepare artwork that can be used to challenge and inspire others

Key learning points:

- The climate crisis is a consequence of injustice: richer nations bear most responsibility for global heating and yet it is those in poorer nations who are being hit first and worst by the climate crisis.
- In the Bible, Amos makes clear how much God hates injustice. Amos tells the people of God that there are consequences for their greed and corruption of power.
- All the people of God are called to be prophetic – to call out injustice when it happens, and to boldly live a different way rooted in peace, justice, fairness, and love.

Session 1

What you will need:

- Print out the picture from a climate protest (bottoms of the document). We included one, but if you could also find one from your local context
- Blank paper and pens/crayons



Introduction

Explain that in this session, as a part of the Season of Creation, we will be thinking about the climate crisis and God's call for us to live together with more fairness, justice, and peace. During the Season of Creation, Christians around the world will be reflecting on the climate crisis and our shared responsibility to care for God's creation. The climate crisis isn't only about the planet and the environment, it also demonstrates a failure to love one another and treat all people fairly and with care.

To start the session, run a short exercise: show the picture of the young people from a protest holding posters, and explain that it is from a protest where people are calling for a fairer future.

Ask the children to spend one minute thinking about what message they would put on their poster to show others what future they want. After a minute, get them into pairs to share their short messages. Then they can write their messages on the papers.

Make space for the children to share their messages; if the group is too big, just ask for one or two volunteers to share.

Bible Study

Explain that the bible has lots of important stories of Prophets – people who used their voices to highlight injustice and to tell important truths to people in power and the wider community. As well as calling out injustice, they often shared visions of a better way to live. Today we will be looking at the prophet Amos, who had a lot to say about how the people of God were behaving and that instead of being God's example for the world, they were being greedy and not treating people fairly. Amos is telling the people of God that this behaviour has consequences.

Read Amos 5: 11-15 & 24.

Ask and explore these questions:

- Why is God angry in this passage?
- What does God ask people to do instead?

Amos was speaking to the Israelites but is there is anything we can learn today from what he says when we think about the climate crisis?

- What causes climate change?

Note to Teacher:

Climate change is caused by burning fossil fuels like gas, coal and oil. It is also caused by cutting down and burning trees.



- Is everyone equally responsible for the climate crisis?

Note to Teacher:

Rich nations like Europe and the USA and Canada are most responsible, they became rich by developing their economies. These countries started burning fossil fuels a long time ago to power the trains, ships and factories that powered their industries. As people in these nations became richer, their lifestyles also became more polluting, as people heated their homes, fueled their cars, took more flights and changed their diets.

- What are the impacts of climate change?

Note to Teacher:

Less predictable weather patterns and extreme weather incidents like: flooding, storms, drought. Sea levels rising. As a consequence leading to homes/schools/farms being washed away, lost and damaged. Increased issues of Water scarcity and challenges growing food.

- Is everyone equally affected by climate change?

Note to Teacher:

People who depend on the rain to grow their crops or who do not live in strong houses are more impacted. It is mostly the poorer nations who are impacted because their buildings (schools, churches hospitals etc) might not be built with strong materials. Climate change is having a bigger impact on countries closer to the equator, many of whom bear less historical responsibility.

Typically, climate change is having the worst impacts on people living in nations that bear little historical responsibility for climate change (i.e. economically less- developed nations). Richer countries that have done the most to cause the problem also have more money to be able to adapt to changes they are experiencing. Take for example Anamarie's story:

Anamarie Rivera, a mother of four, had just given birth to her youngest daughter when last September's Super Typhoon Noru hit her hometown of Jaen, Nueva Ecija in the Philippines. "We went to my sister-in-law's house when the winds got stronger", she says. "I was only able to get my kids out ... I wasn't able to save any of my belongings." Anamarie's house was made from light materials with a makeshift roof of galvanized iron, a type of housing that is common in Filipino communities living in poverty.

The typhoon struck several provinces in the northern part of the Philippines, causing widespread damage not only to housing, but to farms and the livelihoods of farming communities. "It completely destroyed our crops," says Ashley Arante, whose mother worked in the rice fields. "We had a hard time meeting our daily expenses afterwards."

The stories of Anamarie and Ashley illustrate just two of the struggles endured by millions of Filipinos affected by the climate crisis. Climate change impacts are measured not only by the strength of typhoons, but also by the lasting impact they have on already-vulnerable communities.

Story shared by [actalliance](#).



Highlight that the climate crisis can be viewed as a consequence of human greed and exploitation. Rich countries and companies responsible for harming the planet have often been getting rich as a consequence. This is similar to Amos's message to the people of God; God hates the evil of greed and exploitation!

Explain that next week you are going to do some art. These artworks will be the children's prophetic message to their community. Ask them to think about what message they would want to share about climate: what is the problem? Who is being most affected? What could a better future look like? How can we better live out God's vision for the world together, as the people of God? The theme of the art is: let rivers of justice and peace flow.

Session 2

What you need for this session

large sheets of paper (poster size) like flip chart paper or old posters that you can paint on the back of. Pencils to draw and erasers.
Paints and brushes or crayons.

Start the session by recapping the previous session. Ask the children what they learned in the last session.

Remind the children that the theme for the session is **Let Justice and Peace flow.**

Before you start the session invite the children to consider a river. They are big and powerful and over time can carve through rock and move mountains! But every river starts small. Every river starts as small water drops, that combine to form a stream, and as the stream flows, it becomes a river that runs across the land to the sea.

We are all like the drops at the beginning of the river, but when we come together as a community and use our voices to make the world a better place then together we become a river of justice and peace. So remember... that no water drop is too small to be part of a flowing river!

Tell the children that you are going to spend the session making some art reflecting on what they have learnt about climate justice. (You may wish to show them some examples provided below to inspire them!)

Ask the children to think about the little actions that people can take or the big movements that can make a difference to help to slow down climate change and to make the world a sustainable and just place for everyone; especially those most affected by climate change.



After the art has been made: Discuss with the children how you can best share the art they have made to help influence others.

Some ideas to get you started:

- Put up in the church hall
- Ask for a slot to show and talk about the art in church
- An after church 'art exhibition?'
- Can you use social media - get them onto the Diocesan facebook/website/newsletter

Please post on social media using #seasonofcreation so that we can share with others in different parts of the world!

Find additional images below.



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and Peace Flow**
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Appendix

Session 1 image



Young people in South Africa taking part in a climate protest outside of the Parliament, 2019. (<https://www.groundup.org.za/article/climate-strike/>).



Artwork by Fabian Awroheh from Jordan.





Artwork by Shamira Sitharam

from Malaysia



Artwork by Mukwiza from Zambia



Artwork by Marwood Infant School

from England.

