

**Liturgical material for the
National Council of Churches in Denmark/WCC
international bell-ringing prayer action**

13 December 2009, 3pm, 15.00 hours, local time in all time zones

The Climate Change Working Group of the National Council of Churches in Denmark, in collaboration with the World Council of Churches, is organising a high-profile ecumenical celebration to take place in the Lutheran Cathedral, the Church of Our Lady, in Copenhagen on 13 December at 2pm, 14.00 hours at the height of the COP15 Climate Summit. At 3pm, 15.00 hours, at the conclusion of the service, the bells of the Cathedral will ring 350 times, drawing attention to the alarming situation the world is facing due to climate change and calling us to hope and action for God's creation.

The number 350 signifies 350ppm (parts per million) CO₂ in the atmosphere, the safe upper limit of CO₂ concentration in the atmosphere, according to climate experts.

Churches in Denmark along with churches all over the world will participate in this bell-ringing. At 3pm, 15.00 hours local time in all time zones, starting in Fiji in the South Pacific, where the day begins, continuing across the globe to Copenhagen at the conclusion of the ecumenical celebration, and sounding onwards to Samoa in the South Pacific, where the day ends, churches will ring their bells, sound conch shells, beat drums and sound gongs in joint action for creation and the climate. We invite all churches to participate in this joint action of prayer and hope for the climate.

The following liturgical material includes inspiration for devotions or worship services that you may wish to arrange in connection with your bell-ringing. The material can be freely used as it fits in your context.

For further information on the bellringing and further liturgical inspiration see:
www.bellringing350.org

This material is compiled by members of The National Council of Churches in Denmark Climate Change Working Group:

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Liturgy for a bellringing service

Below you will find a suggestion for a bellringing worship service that focuses on alarm, hope and action for creation. You are free to use it as it fits in your context. We have two suggestions for hymns; the text and music for these songs is found at the end of the material. For the other hymns, we suggest that you find hymns from your tradition to incorporate into the service you are planning. You can find inspiration for more liturgical materials on www.bellringing350.org.

Prelude (E.g. improvisation on Torsten Borbye Nielsen's "Bells of the World" which has 350 notes to it. See more at the end of this material)

Welcome and introduction to a special bellringing service

Opening prayer

Heavenly Father, you created the sky and sea, the comfort of the moon and stars at night, the warmth and brightness of the sun. You gave us light and life, the beauty of the earth. You gave us your love. Father, we thank you for your never-ending love. We thank you for the wonders of your Creation. Forgive us that instead of caring for your gift, we seek to become masters of your creation. Amen.

1st hymn: Bells of the world (Music at the end of the material)

1. Bells of the world!

Hear how they ring!

Time now to act, not just to sing;
witness the sun, its power unfurled,
heating all life throughout the world.

All that God placed in our hand
we must shield, vowing to stand
firm on His guard.

2. Almighty God,

Lord of all time,

You made a world rich and sublime,
carefully formed all land sea
and with Your breath made us to be;
with each life You are engaged
give Yourself from age to age
down to us now.

3. You made the sun,

You gave it fire,

You made the night time to retire;
planet and star, heaven above,
shine to reflect undying love.

Angels chant harmonies new,
all earth sings wordless but true
how great is God!

4. And in this true image of You
our eyes were formed,
our knowledge grew,
stewards we are of all Your earth
called to renew from death to birth.
As we pray, "Lest we succumb",
may we make Your kingdom come
here in this world.

5. You are the World,
You were made flesh,
gave us new hope to start afresh;
kernel and core, eagle and dove,
all things reflect your gift of love.
May Your law that we must give
beat in us, so we may live
as You would have.

6. For though we know
we should rise higher,
we are consumed by our desire;
hear how our earth, ravaged, consumed,
calls for our care, or we are doomed.
May we free Earth from its pain;
give us hope that once again
Your will be done.

7. In hope and faith
we shall not cease
striving to make a world at peace,
for all that lives, from pole to pole,
from east to west, from soul to soul.
Lord, our God, whose mighty Word
then and now and shall be heard,
renew our Earth!

Hymn with 350 notes

Music and text: Torsten Borbye Nielsen

Translated to English by Edward Broadbridge

Prayer

Together we pray for all of God's creation:
Eternal God and creator:
You created the earth and all things, visible and invisible.
As those you created to care for all creation
We stand before you in awe,
We praise you.

God, Jesus Christ, saviour of the world:
In becoming human you entered into creation

In you the created world is reconciled with the eternal God.
Standing before you we acknowledge our responsibility towards all of creation
We confess that each time we think only of ourselves and of our own needs we are guilty of neglect
towards your creation.
Your creation is groaning and crying out our mistakes to you.

Holy Spirit, breath of God:
Through your power you renew all creation.
You bring life to everything and create life anew.
We thank you for making us part of life
And we thank you that when we strive to care for creation and
live in awe and respect in the world,
we know you are making use of our gifts.
Together with all creation we offer you our thanks.
Amen
Ecumenical prayer from the Working Fellowship of Churches in Sachsen, Germany

Responsive reading of Psalm 8, 1-9

L: Leader

C: Congregation

L: O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory above the heavens.

**C: Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded a bulwark because of your foes,
to silence the enemy and the avenger.**

L: When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have
established;

C: What are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?

L: Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor.

**C: You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under their feet,**

L: all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field,

C: the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

L: O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!
(New Revised Standard Version)

2nd hymn

Reading: Planet Earth, our sick patient

Our earth is sick
Its temperature is soaring.
The earth is fever-struck.
We've wrapped the earth in blankets.
It can't cool down.

Each increase in greenhouse gasses
Piles on more blankets,
Heats up our suffering earth even more.
The climate of the earth is changing.
Ice is melting, sea levels rising.
Storms gain in strength,
Bush fires rage ever stronger
Water supplies disappear
Animal species die out
Coral reefs are destroyed
The earth is a sick patient!

When we are struck down by illness
When our temperature soars to dangerous levels
When our glucose levels rise
When our cholesterol levels rise
When our blood pressure rises
We do something.
We call in sick
We stay in bed
We call a doctor
We take medicine
We take it easy
We focus on our health
And we hope with all our strength
Until we recover and get going again

But what are we doing to help the earth?
This precious place
That was and is the gem of the Universe?
How are we helping this sick patient
Who is getting sicker by the day,
by the month,
by the year?
How do we stop where we're going
and start helping the earth
start giving it the peace and calm
the tender loving care
it needs
to get well?

Keld B. Hansen 2009

The Apostolic Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit

and born of the virgin Mary,
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Alternative creed

We believe in God, who creates all things, who embraces all things, who celebrates all things, who is present in every part of the fabric of creation.

We believe in God as the source of all life, who baptizes this planet with living water.

We believe in Jesus Christ, who is with the suffering one, the poor one, the malnourished one, the climate refugee, who loves and cares for this world and who suffers with it.

And we believe in Jesus Christ, the seed of life, who came to reconcile and renew this world and everything in it.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the breath of God, who moves with God and who moves among and with us today.

We believe in everlasting life in God.

And we believe in the hope that one day God will put an end to death and all destructive forces.

Amen.

Gurukul Theological college, India / adapted by Keld B. Hansen 2009

3rd hymn

Suggested texts for preaching

Genesis 1,1 – 2,4; Exodus 23,10-13; Deuteronomy 30,19-20; Isaiah 24,4-6; Ezekiel 18,30-32; Psalm 104 1,24-31; Psalm 146,1-10; Luke 15,11-31; Luke 19,1-10; Acts 2,42-47; 1. John 5,1-5.

Sermon

Silence / lighting of candles for Creation

Prayer

Lord, you created heaven and earth and
the stars that glow in the dark,
you gave us the beauty of the earth in all its diversity
you gave us your unending love
you gave us warmth and love of our neighbour
to share the joy of your creation with others.

We thank you for all that you entrusted us with.
Forgive us that we have not
cared for your gift as we ought.
We ask you:
lead us to walk new paths that respect your creation,
respect the fragility of life and the earth
respect and love our neighbour.

Loving Father, without your grace and love,
without your help
we can do nothing.
Help us rebuild and heal all that we have destroyed,
Help us rediscover your wisdom of love.
Jacqueline Ryle 2009

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in Heaven
Hallowed be thy name
Thy Kingdom come
Thy will be done
On earth as it is in Heaven
Give us today our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us
And deliver us from evil
For thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory
For ever and ever
Amen.

4th hymn

Bell Ringing Prayer:

Jesus Christ, Saviour of the world:
There's a ringing in our ears and our hearts throb
as temperatures rise
an image emerging ever clearer
of communities gasping for breath
of ecosystems gasping for breath
of the earth experiencing increasing climatic change
species dying and ordinary people becoming
climate refugees.
Drought, floods, cyclones, sickness
destroy landscapes,
All the plagues of Egypt, only created by humans.

Almighty, love, Jesus Christ,
You who takes upon you our death - and gives us life
We are weighed down by guilt and idealism

Bring us under the protective wings of faith
You who are the truth, the way and the life!
Show us your way again and give us the will to follow it.
Give our politicians and parliaments the will and courage
To choose and want to walk your path,
Where all people are equal and there is no arrogance,
Where everything you created flourishes in its own right in your honour
There's a ringing in our ears and our hearts throb
And not without reason.
Let bells ring across the land and through cities
Take away the power of the sandgrains trickling through
the hour-glass of fear.
Scatter the sand instead as exquisite chimes
350 chimes of beautiful sound for the health of the earth
in your honour.
Martin Ishøy 2009

Blessing

5th hymn:

1. Can't you hear the distant bells are ringing?
People waken as they hear their song.
Everywhere the air is filled with music.
Now we see a new day has begun

2. So we know the darkness is behind us,
and the morning waits for us to sing.
Everywhere the light of God is shining.
Hear the joyful bells of heaven ring.

3. See the light that conquers over darkness
God has given us a brand-new day.
We're rejoicing of this new beginning.
Celebrate this Easter gift today

*Estonian liberation hymn by Heli Vith
Tune: Piret Pormeister-Rips
Translated to English by Kristin Markay*

Final prayer

Loving Father, you gave us yourself in your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us through your grace renewed insight to live according to your Word, to respect and care for your creation. Empower us to follow your will, to speak out, to act now. Stay with us, Lord, that we may learn from you. Holy Spirit, help us to see where our treasure is, for where our treasure is, there will also our hearts be. Stay with us, Father, as we leave your house. Holy Spirit, we pray, lead us and guide us day by day.

Postlude

You can find texts and music below for "Bells of the World" by Torsten Borbye Nielsen and "Can't you hear the distant bells are ringing" by Heli Vith. The tune for "Bells of the World" can be listened to at www.bellringing350.org.

1. Bells of the World – a hymn with 350 notes

"Bells of the world" has been composed for use on December 13th in connection to the bellringing campaign, when churches will ring their bells 350 times on December 13, 2009 at 3.p.m. local time. Hymnwriter and pastor, Torsten Borbye Nielsen, has composed this hymn, which has 7 verses – each with 50 notes – 350 notes in all, when the whole hymn is sung. The hymn calls to alarm, hope and action. A version that is less focused on bells is also available at www.bellringing350.org

Bells of the World

Tune and text: Torsten Borbye Nielsen 2009

English version: Edward Broadbridge

♩ = 92

1 F# Bm E/G# F#/A# F# G D A F#/A#
 Bells of the world! Hear how they ring! Time now to act, not just to sing; wit-ness the

5 Bm A D E7/B A/C# E^(6Us4) E A B7/F#
 sun, it's power un-furled, hea-ting all life through-out the world. All that

9 Em D G A D E F# Bm E Bm
 God placed in our hand we must shield, vow-ing to stand firm on His guard.

2. "Can't you hear the distant bells are ringing" (Hommikul)

"Can't you hear the distant bells are ringing?" is an Estonian freedom song written by Heli Vith. The hymn is also useful in bellringing services on December 13, 2009. Tune and text follow on the next pages.

1. Can't you hear the distant bells are ringing?

People waken as they hear their song.
Everywhere the air is filled with music.
Now we see a new day has begun

2. So we know the darkness is behind us,
and the morning waits for us to sing.
Everywhere the light of God is shining.
Hear the joyful bells of heaven ring.

3. See the light that conquers over darkness
God has given us a brand-new day.
We're rejoicing of this new beginning.
Celebrate this Easter gift today.

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Hommikul

Heli Viht

Piret Rips

6 *mf* 1. Kau-gel väl-jal he-li - se-vad kel-lad, nen-de ku-min kos-tab ü-le

10 maa. _____ O - rus o - ja kal - dal ha-jub u - du,

13 ter - ve maa võib jäl - le är - ga - ta. Möö - das öö ja käes on jäl - le hom-mik,

17 kas - te-piis - ku sä - de - le-mas maas. _____ Tae - va-vee-rel koi-du kau - ge ku-ma,

21 val - gus võit - nud pi-me-du-se taas. See on Loo - ja kin-gi-tus me maa - le, *f*

25 päev, mis mei - le kor - du-ma-tu, uus. Ol-gu sel - lel päe-val mei-e ü - le

29 kõik - jal ra - hu, rõõm ja _____ va - ba - dus. *Fine*