



The Anglican Relief
and Development Fund®

WHEN A NATURAL
DISASTER STRIKES -
There is Hope!



A Resource for Disaster Response
Volunteers and Survivors.



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Volunteers and Survivors.*

We give thanks for those who put this resource together: Dn. Shelly Sorem, Dn. John Bowers, Fr. Page Brooks, Dn. Betty Budyka, Becky Osmond and Anthea Kotlan. We pray it blesses those who receive it and we commit it to the service of God.

Introduction

Friend,

If you are a survivor of a natural disaster, you may have lost your home, your belongings, or a loved one. You may be in the darkest emotional state you have ever experienced before - hopeless and not knowing what to do next. For many, it is during these darkest times that we are shown God's love - through neighbors known and unknown - as they give their time and resources to help restore what you have lost. We pray this booklet can be a source of hope to you.

If you are a disaster response volunteer, you have taken the first step by saying "Yes!" to the invitation to serve others. I encourage you to step out in faith and make our Lord known to those He puts in your path. Our God is intentional. He has a plan that you are participating in at this very moment. I encourage you to work at the pace of peace and place relationships over tasks. Get to know those around you, whether survivor, responder, or partner. And from the ARDF Staff and the Spiritual Care Team that developed this booklet, our hope is that you find the inspiration and strength through prayer and God's word to share the truth, love, and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ with those who have weathered the storm.

In His name,

Tommy Lamb

Director, National Disaster Network

The Anglican Relief and Development Fund

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. (Hebrews 11:1 ESV).

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Anger

Is it ok to be angry with God? YES! Scripture tells us that both Job and Jeremiah were angry with God at times, yet God used them mightily. David expressed anger with God and yet he was still called *a man after God's own heart* (1 Samuel 13:14 ESV). He knows all things at all times, including our angry thoughts. *You discern my thoughts from afar...* (Psalm 139:2 ESV). He knows our words. *Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether* (Psalm 139:4 ESV). He acknowledges our anger and gives us a Godly way to work through it. *Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger* (Ephesians 4:6 ESV)

God knows what we are thinking and what we are going to say and He still chooses us. He chooses to love us, care for us, and to be with us. God is a big God and He can take your anger. You can express your anger at God to God.

In my distress I called upon the Lord; to my God I cried for help. From His temple He heard my voice, and my cry to Him reached His ears. (Psalm 18:6 ESV) God hears us when we cry out to Him and gives us peace and comfort in our suffering.

Prayers About Anger

Lord God, I am so angry about the devastation I see around me. So many people are suffering great losses, including me, and I am angry. I know you hear my cry and I ask you to help me with my anger. I pray for Your comforting presence to wash over all of us in these troubled times. Surround me with the grace of Your Holy Spirit and give Your peace to my soul that I may be free from all needless anxiety, worry and anger – be our refuge, Lord.

Prayer for Seeking God

Teach me to seek You, and as I seek You, show Yourself to me; for I cannot seek You unless You show me how, and I will never find You unless You show Yourself to me. Let me seek You by desiring

You, and desire You by seeking You; let me find You by loving You, and love You in finding You. Amen. - ACNA BCP 2019

Anxiety

Anxiety has a way of snowballing. We begin by worrying about one thing and before you know it we are on the worry train and thinking of all the worst-case scenarios. We are thinking about every 'what if' scenario. To get off the worry train and not go down the 'what if' path, we need to focus on the present. God will give us what we need each day. That is why when Jesus taught his disciples to pray He said, *Give us this day our daily bread* (Matthew 6:11 ESV). Daily bread, not weekly or monthly, but daily bread is what Jesus promises. He will give us what we need to get through each day without looking too far into the future.

Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble (Matthew 6:34 ESV). In other words, focus on what we need to do today, taking it one day at a time.

God wants you to give Him your worries and anxieties. *Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you* (1 Peter 5:7 ESV). When we cast our anxiety, worries, and concerns on the Lord we can experience His peace in the midst of our circumstances that are anything but peaceful.

Prayers About Anxiety

Heavenly Father, keep my anxiety in check. Help me stay off the runaway worry train and prevent me from thinking about all of the 'what if' scenarios. Replace my worries with Your peace that passes all understanding. Amen.

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:7 ESV)

Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, it empties today of its strength. - Corrie Ten Boom

Faith

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see (Hebrews 11:1 NIV). Our faith is not based on what we can see or even feel, but rather it is being certain of what we hope for. It is based on Christ and our hope is found in Him. The saying “seeing is believing” doesn’t apply to our faith. Faith is something we believe with our hearts and confess with our mouths.

Faith is easy to have when things are going well but more challenging when we face difficulties. *Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance (James 1:2-3 NIV). Joy in the midst of trials doesn’t seem to make sense. However, as followers of Jesus, we know that our trials serve a greater purpose. In our trials, our faith is tested and we have a choice, to turn to the Lord or go it alone. When we turn to the Lord, He equips us to bear whatever comes our way and our faith produces perseverance.*

Are you trying to go it alone or are you turning to the Lord?

Prayers About Faith

Lord God, it is hard to have faith in the midst of my circumstances right now. Increase my faith and help me turn to You and put my trust in You. I know you will equip me with everything I need to get through this and in it my faith will produce perseverance.

Thank you, Lord, for helping me have faith even when I don't feel it.

"Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase." - Martin Luther King Jr.

"Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God." - Corrie Ten Boom

Almighty God, give us the increase of faith, hope, and love; and, that we may obtain what You have promised, make us love what You command; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen. - ACNA BCP 2019

God Works for Your Good

When you have just been through a disaster, you might think to yourself, "Can anything good come out of this?" It is really important for us to grieve and weep for the loss. God never discourages us from weeping. He encourages us to cry over what has been lost. But God gives us a promise to help us to have hope beyond the devastation we might have to look at.

The promise in Romans 8:28 tells us, "*God works all things together for the good for those who love Him, and are called according to His purposes.*" We should note the keywords in that verse. First of all, God promises to work in all things. Not just some things, or partial things, but in all things. That means, regardless of how bad your situation is, God still has the ability to work in it. Second, He promises to work for the good. Our situation may not turn out the way we want it to you, but we can always trust that God is good and loving. Last, we see where God works for those who love Him and are part of His purposes. God

sees our hearts. But God also sees the child-like faith and love that we have.

Even though we may be experiencing a lot of emotions in the middle of our circumstances, God invites us to come to Him, love Him and also trust Him to bring the best out of the worst circumstances.

Prayers About God Working for Your Good

Answer me, LORD, out of the goodness of Your love; in Your great mercy turn to me. Do not hide Your face from Your servant; answer me quickly, for I am in trouble. Come near and rescue me; (Psalm 69:16-18a NIV)

No one is good but One, that is, God. (Matthew 19:17a NKJV)

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:21 NKJV)

Heavenly Father, in you we live and move and have our being: We humbly pray for You to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life, we may not forget You, but may remember that we are ever walking in Your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. - ACNA BCP 2019

Grieving Loss

When we suffer loss, it is natural to be brokenhearted and grieve our loss. It's important for us to acknowledge our loss to grieve and mourn that loss. As we do, God promises to meet us there. *The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. (Psalm 34:18 ESV)* Scripture doesn't say He might be near. It says He is near. We can count on the Lord being right by our side. He doesn't just take a passive and observatory role but an active one. He saves. He saves us from being overwhelmed by loss and

grief. He ministers to us in our loss by His presence, His comfort and His peace.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
(Matthew 5:4 ESV) The blessing comes from allowing the Lord to comfort us. It's okay to cry and grieve the loss of treasured possessions, photos and family heirlooms. We need to mourn our losses. God knows the depths of our grief. He Himself experienced immense grief and loss when His only Son was tortured and died on a cross. He gets it. The Lord will provide comfort for our emotional, physical and spiritual well-being if we allow Him.

Prayers About Grieving Loss

Dear God, I am overwhelmed at the loss of so much. Be close to me in my broken heartedness. Help me experience Your presence and allow You to comfort me. Thank You for understanding my grief and helping me through it. Amen.

You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book. Psalm 56:8 (NLT)

I lift up my eyes to the hills.

From where does my help come?

My help comes from the Lord,

who made heaven and earth. (Psalm 121:1-2 ESV)

“Grief turns us inward, compassion turns us outward, that’s what we need when grief threatens to crush us.” - Billy Graham

Hope

When God told a man named Abram he would be a father, there was little reason for him to believe. He was old, his wife was old and they had no children. God was calling him to reach down and pick up a hope he had long ago let go of.

In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, 'So shall your offspring be.' (Romans 4:18 ESV)

God changed Abram's name to Abraham. He then asked Abraham to follow God's leadership. In exchange, God promised to allow him to become a father. Not just a father of a child or two, but the father of many nations to come. He promised land ownership and a long-term committed relationship to the generations not even born yet.

When God made these promises, Abraham was quick to share his doubts. How can this be? God patiently reassured him and, one by one, kept every promise. God knew that Abraham's wife would also have her doubts. He changed her name from Sarai to Sarah. He even sent messengers to repeat the promises to Abraham again so that Sarah could overhear them for herself.

God specializes in hopeless situations. He changes circumstances and identities.

In what areas of your life do you need to hold onto hope despite difficult circumstances? Is God calling you to a new identity? Do you need to share your doubts honestly?

Prayers About Hope

God, I don't see how You can bring about what I want and need in my current situation. It all seems so far out of reach. Give me the strength to hold onto hope and look for the ways You provide for me and those I love. I need to become one who hopes in You.

ROUGH TRANSLATIONS

Hope nonetheless.
Hope despite.
Hope regardless.
Hope still.

Hope where we had ceased to hope.
Hope amid what threatens hope.
Hope with those who feed our hope.
Hope beyond what we had hoped.

Hope that draws us past our limits.
Hope that defies our expectations.
Hope that questions what we have known.
Hope that makes a way where there is none.

Hope that takes us past our fear
Hope that calls us into life.
Hope that holds us beyond death.
Hope that blesses those to come.

From *Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessings for the Seasons* by Jan Richardson

Joy

Joy and sorrow typically live together, and we all will spend most of our lives experiencing both. The idea that anyone will arrive at joy and set up a permanent home is unrealistic.

After Jesus rose from the dead, He returned and spent over a month with His disciples reminding them of His teachings. At the end of this time He gave them the assignment to tell others about their experiences with Him, and then He ascended into heaven.

Jesus' followers must have felt sad when He left, but they also felt joy seeing Him go to be with His heavenly Father. *While He blessed them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy...*(Luke 24:51-52 ESV).

His followers must have been sad to see Him go, but they also must have felt renewed in their purpose.

Unlike happiness, which could be based on circumstances, joy is resilient. We can hold onto joy amid some of life's most frustrating circumstances.

Prayers About Joy

Lord God, it's so easy for me to lose sight of joy right now. Help me catch glimpses of it and store it in my heart. I give You all the situations and people filling me with frustration. I release them to Your care.

IN THE LEAVING

In the leaving,
in the letting go,
let there be this
to hold onto
at the last:

the enduring love,
the persisting hope,
the remembering of joy,

the offering of gratitude
the receiving of grace
the blessing of peace.

From *Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessings for the Seasons* by Jan Richardson

Overwhelmed

Are you feeling overwhelmed? There are so many tasks before you and you don't know where to even begin. Know that you are not alone. God is with you. He knows you are struggling and He doesn't want you to be overwhelmed. God cares about your burdens. Just as animals wear yokes to share the load, the burden, Jesus wants us to be yoked to Him so we don't have to carry our burdens alone.

Jesus says, Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light. (Matthew 11:28-30 ESV)

God is a God of order, not one of chaos, and He can help bring order to our chaos. *For God is not a God of disorder but of peace.* (1 Corinthians 14:33a NIV)

Lift up the tasks you have to the Lord and ask Him which ones He wants you to do today. Each small task that gets checked off your very long to-do list brings order to your chaos and lessens the feeling of being overwhelmed.

And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. (Colossians 1:17 ESV)

Prayers About Feeling Overwhelmed

Lord God, I am completely overwhelmed. There are so many things for me to do that I don't even know where to start. Give me the wisdom to tackle the most important tasks today. Help me to prioritize. I know you are a God of order and not chaos, so please bring order to my chaos. Amen.

The moment we recognize our complete weakness and our dependence upon Him will be the very moment that the Spirit of God will exhibit his power. - Oswald Chambers, My Utmost for His Highest

Patience

Sadly, bad things do happen to good people. For example, we may be impacted by hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, or wildfires.

Patience is a virtue during natural disasters when we struggle and face times of suffering.

Think about Noah and the flood that he had to endure. He needed patience because it took him about 100 years to build the ark. He had to be patient while all of God's creatures were loaded onto the ark...two by two. He had to be patient for 40 days before the rain stopped. And he had to be patient for yet another five months before they could leave the ark, all the while living in a ship turned into a modern-day zoo! Even then Noah had to wait for about a year while the earth dried out. He was patient!

Finishing is better than starting. Patience is better than pride.
(Ecclesiastes 7:8 NIV)

There is no question that it is hard to be patient during and after a natural disaster. The disaster can't end fast enough. Relief and recovery take too long. Fortunately, daily prayer and trust in God can help each of us to find patience.

Wait patiently for the Lord. Be brave and courageous. Yes, wait patiently for the Lord. (Psalm 27:14 NLT)

Prayers About Patience

Almighty God, we pray that You will bless us with patience as we deal with the devastation that surrounds us during a natural

disaster. In addition to our family, Father, our friends and neighbors are struggling as well. Help all of us to be like Noah, so that we can be patient as we wait for others to come to our aid, to help us through the disaster, and to help us with long-term recovery. Amen.

Prayer for Patience

O merciful Father, You have taught us in Your holy Word that You do not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men: Look with pity on the sorrows of Your servants. Remember them, O Lord, in mercy; nourish their souls with patience; comfort them with a sense of Your goodness; lift up Your countenance upon them; and give them peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. – ACNA BCP 2019

Perseverance and Endurance

During and after a crisis or natural disaster we must draw strength from God and find a way to endure. We must find a way to remain firm under suffering or misfortune without yielding, even if it is difficult. In the long run, we must find a way to persevere, to continue in a course of action even in the face of difficulty and obstacles.

Ruth lost her husband at a young age. She left Moab with her mother-in-law Naomi, moved to Bethlehem, and had to endure. She had to adapt to a new culture, to a whole new way of life. Ruth humbled herself and worked hard in the fields. God was faithful and redeemed her. That's how Ruth was able to provide for Naomi.

God helped Moses so that Moses could successfully lead his people out of Egypt. There were problems before the journey and along the way. There were plagues, a sea to cross (with Pharaoh's army nipping at their heels!), no water to drink, and no food to

eat. During these difficulties, Moses turned to God and he persevered. With God's help, Moses led His people to the Promised Land.

God knows when we are suffering and struggling. He provides us with the strength to endure and to persevere.

Prayers For Perseverance and Endurance

Almighty God, as the wind blows hard, as the waters rise, or as the smoke fills the air, give us the strength that we need to endure and persevere as we struggle with the natural disaster that has impacted us. We may be overwhelmed at times, but we know that You are with us and that You will guide us through the disaster today and as each day passes. Amen.

For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. (Hebrews 10:36 ESV)

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us. (Hebrews 12:1 ESV)

Prayer for Endurance

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first He suffered pain, and entered not into glory before He was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the Cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. Amen. - ACNA BCP 2019

Praise

A tragedy like a natural disaster can strike our family, our neighbors, our coworkers, and others at any time. What do we do? Tragedy struck Job, who was very blessed. He lost everything...his children, his wealth, his livestock, his crops, his health, and even the relationship of his wife and friends. His three friends falsely accused him of wrongdoing and blamed his troubles on his unrepentant heart. What did Job do? He persevered and he praised God: *The Lord gave me what I had, and the Lord has taken it away. Praise the name of the Lord!* (Job 1:21b ESV)

Job could praise God because he knew that all he had was given to him by God. Job knew that God gives us everything and that God can take everything away. In both cases, God was to be praised. Job trusted God's decisions.

Unfortunately, we may be impacted by natural disasters which can be very challenging. Regardless of the situation, praise God and trust Him. He is sovereign and He will see us through every circumstance. Praise Him through sunny days and disasters as well.

Prayers For Praise

Almighty God, You are always worthy of our praise. You created everything...the heavens, the ground under our feet, and the beauty that is all around us. Help each of us to praise You in every circumstance, even during a natural disaster when we are discouraged and hurting. Amen.

Through Him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge His name. (Hebrews 13:15 ESV)

Hymn for Praise (Doxology; words by Thomas Ken, 1674)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Him, all creatures here below
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

Strength - When You Lack Strength

There are some days in life when we feel as though we cannot carry on, especially during times of disaster. After all the emotions, anxiety, and work that may follow a tragic event, we may be so depleted emotionally and physically that we cannot keep going. Yet God provides strength for us, even in the middle of the hardest of circumstances.

In Deuteronomy 33:25 God gives a promise to one of the tribes of Israel and tells them *as your days are so your strength will be*. This is a wonderful promise that God gives to all of us. Essentially whatever our day holds, God will give us the strength to match that challenge. He knows what our days hold because He holds our days.

The Bible not only gives this promise but also gives some wonderful imagery to go with it. In Isaiah 40:31, God tells the people of Israel that He will lift them up on eagles' wings to carry them when they are weak. To teach their young to fly, mother eagles would push their young from the nest, but then swoop down to uplift and carry them on their wings. What a wonderful picture! Even though we may not feel like we can fly on our own, God sends his spirit to swoop down and raise us up on His wings. He will carry us through the hardest of times!

Prayers For Strength

A Prayer for Strength When Weary by Rebecca Barlow Jordan

Lord, I'm weary. My energy is sagging, and my motivation is lagging. And I am so in need of You. I need Your strength

and Your fresh touch. Your Word says the joy of the Lord is my strength. If that's true, then I need Your joy to replace all the bone-tired parts of my mind, body, and soul.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
(Psalm 46:1 NKJV)

And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:9 NKJV)

Thanksgiving

Even amid of the most difficult circumstances, there are things for which we can be thankful. There may be destruction and devastation around you but there is still beauty in God's creation. What beauty can you see around you in creation today?

Thankfulness doesn't have to be in the big and grand but can be in the small and simple. It can be the ability to breathe in the breath of life, the ability to walk and talk, and the beauty of family and friendships.

Having an attitude of gratitude is a choice. We have to be intentional about being thankful especially when things are difficult. The Bible says to *give thanks in all circumstances...* (1 Thessalonians 5:18). When we can be thankful it turns our attention from our situation to the God who provides, cares, comforts and moves in the midst of our circumstances. Try starting or ending your day with three things for which you are thankful and see if it helps you have an attitude of gratitude.

Prayers For Thanksgiving

Dear God, help me to have an attitude of gratitude. Help me to notice the beauty of Your creation and how You are working in big and small ways in my life. Thank You for this day and the ways in which You are providing for me. Amen.

Gratitude produces deep, abiding joy because we know that God is working in us, even through difficulties. - Les Stanley

*Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good,
for His steadfast love endures forever! (Psalm 107:1 ESV)*

Most merciful Father, we humbly thank You for all Your gifts so freely bestowed upon us: for life and health and safety, for strength to work and leisure to rest, for all that is beautiful in creation and in human life; but above all we thank You for our spiritual mercies in Christ Jesus our Lord; who with You and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen. - ACNA BCP 2019, pg. 637

Waiting

We have become people who do not like to wait – not in lines, not for things to be delivered, not even for the time it takes for our phone to pull up something from the internet. We have become an instant gratification society. We click on something and it immediately appears. We order from Amazon and it can be there the same day. Waiting has become significantly harder with all of our modern-day conveniences. But God is a God of waiting. Abraham waited 100 years to have his promised child, Noah had to wait 40 days for the rain to stop, and we are still awaiting the return of Jesus. Waiting is hard but necessary. Waiting requires us to daily seek God, to daily depend upon Him, and to daily surrender our will, our desires, and our timing to His. *Wait upon the Lord.* (Isaiah 40:31 KJV)

There is much waiting after a natural disaster; waiting for the water to recede, the fire to be put out, or the tornado to pass. Waiting for insurance adjusters, supplies, and rebuilding can seem impossible. In times such as these it's good to be reminded that all things are possible with God. Lean on him in the waiting. See

what the Lord might have for you IN the waiting and look for where He is working while you wait.

Prayers For Waiting

Gracious Lord, waiting is hard. I feel like all I do is hurry up and wait. My patience is running thin and I don't want to wait. Give me the steadfastness to endure in the waiting and help me see where You are at work while I wait. Amen.

But for you, O Lord, do I wait; it is you, O Lord my God, who will answer. (Psalm 38:15 ESV)

If the Lord Jehovah makes us wait, let us do so with our whole hearts; for blessed are all they that wait for Him. He is worth waiting for. The waiting itself is beneficial to us: it tries faith, exercises patience, trains submission, and endears the blessing when it comes. The Lord's people have always been a waiting people.

- Charles Spurgeon

Space For Reflection

Use this space to journal thoughts or write down your own prayers.

Next Steps

Are you feeling like you need to make a deeper connection with God? Here is a simple prayer that involves three parts: sorry; thank you; and please.

Lord Jesus Christ, I am sorry for the things I have done wrong in my life (take a few moments to ask His forgiveness for anything particular that is on your conscience). Please forgive me. I now turn from everything that I know is wrong. Thank you that You died on the cross for me, so that I could be forgiven and set free. Thank You for offering me forgiveness and the gift of Your Spirit. I now receive that gift. Please come into my life by Your Holy Spirit and be with me forever. Thank You Lord Jesus, Amen

- Nicky Gumbel, *Why Jesus?* (Alpha N. America, 2008)

If you have prayed this prayer for the first time, or if you are returning to the Lord after being absent for a time, consider taking the next step.

*Alpha is an outreach that seeks to help as you ask some of life's most important questions. By estimates, over a million people in the US have engaged with Alpha in the last three years. Plug into on their website: <https://alphausa.org/try/>

*Seek out a local church. Share your decision for Christ with other believers. Your local church body can provide food for the journey as you walk with God into the future that He has for you.



The Anglican Relief and Development Fund[®]

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