



## Bilingual Prayers from the Bible on Creation Care Themes

*nā Silvia Purdie, mō Eco Church NZ, August 2023*

### Introduction

Praying from scripture is a central practice in the church both ancient and modern. The Bible shapes and enriches our worship. It keeps us on track.

“Nō te hā o te Atua ngā karaipiture katoa ... hei whakaako ki te tika.” (2 Timothy 3:16. From the breath of God is all scripture, vital to teach the truth.)

“Koia te karaipi, i ākona ki te rangatiratanga o te rangi, i rite ai ki tētahi rangatira whare e whakaputa mai ana i ngā mea hou, i ngā mea tawhito, i roto i tāna toa.” (Matthew 13:52. This is the power of scripture: a storehouse filled with treasures old and new, teaching the kingdom of God.)

As God draws us to include all creation in our worship, we need to be praying scripture. As God calls us to honour Te Reo Māori in our worship, we need to be growing in bicultural and bilingual competence.

As God forms us as Jesus people together, we need to hear each others' voices and speak with one voice.

This collection of Bible prayers highlights aspects of creation care to enrich worship. Verses are chosen which refer to water, land and living things. These have traditionally been ignored in Christian worship, or seen only in symbolic terms, rather than being honoured for their own voice and importance in God's plan.

Te Paipera Tapu holds a central place in the history of Aotearoa. It was highly valued by Māori, and taught many to read. Through several decades in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Te Reo was the main language used for Christian worship in our land, and the Bible was read primarily in Te Reo. This resource comes with the encouragement to use Te Paipera Tapu in fresh ways in worship; it is a resource publicly and freely available, thanks to the awesome work of the Bible Society.

A section of scripture is written in alternating languages, designed for a call and response between a reader and the congregation, or between two readers. These are easy to put on powerpoint so that everyone can read and speak together. Children, young people and adults can all lead. Feel free to change the order of the English and Te Reo verses, or choose only part of the selected sections. Repeating verses can also be a good learning tool.

Following the Bible verses is a prayer suggestion. You are encouraged to make this your own, make it shorter or longer, bring your own prayer styles and concerns.

Verses in Te Reo Māori are taken from *Paipera Tapu*, nā The Bible Society, 2012.  
Verses in English are adapted by Silvia Purdie for congregational responsive reading,  
from various translations.

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## Genesis 1: 1-4 – I te Tīmatanga; In the Beginning

In the beginning God created

**He mea hanga nā te Atua i te tīmatanga**

the heavens and the earth

**te rangi me te whenua.**

The earth was formless and empty

**Kāhore he āhua o te whenua, i takoto kau.**

Darkness covered the face of the watery deep

**He pōuri anō a runga i te mata o te hōhonu.**

The Spirit of God was hovering

**Ka whakapāho te Wairua o te Atua**

over the surface of the water

**i runga i te kare o ngā wai.**

God said, “Let there be light,”

**Ka kī te Atua, “Kia mārama”**

and there was light

**nā, ka mārama.**

God looked at the light and saw it was good

**Ka kite te Atua i te mārama, he pai.**

He separated light from darkness

**Ka wehea e te Atua te mārama i te pōuri.**

*Me inoi tatou ... a ‘collect’*

God of all creation, we give you thanks and praise

that you were there in the beginning – i te tīmatanga –

in the dark – i te pōuri – hovering over creation.

Send your Wairua Tapu on us, we pray.

Speak again: “Kia mārama” into the darkness of our world.

Declare again: “He pai”, that all your creation may indeed be good once more.

We pray in the light of your name, Īhu Karaiti, amen.

## Deuteronomy 8: 1-20 – In Whose Strength? Nā Tōku Kaha?

God humbled you by letting you go hungry in the wilderness;

then he gave you manna to eat,

so that you would know

that people cannot not live on bread alone,

*e kore te tangata e ora i te taro kau,*

but by every word

*engari mā ngā kupu katoa*

that comes from the mouth of the Lord

*e puta mai ana i te māngai o Ihowā*

people can live.

*ka ora ai te tangata.*

The Lord your God is bringing you

*E kawe ana a Ihowā, tōu Atua, i a koe*  
into a good land, a land with streams of water,  
*ki te whenua pai, ki te whenua o ngā awa wai,*  
springs and deep water  
*o ngā puna, o ngā wai hōhonu.*  
You may say to yourself,  
*Ka mea koe i roto i tōu ngākau,*  
“By my own strength and the effort of my own hands  
*“Nā tōku kaha, nā te uaua hoki o tōku ringa,*  
I have gained these resources,”  
*i whiwhi ai ahau ki ēnei taonga.”*  
But remember that the Lord your God  
*Engari, kia mahara ki a Ihowā, ki tōu Atua,*  
gives you the strength  
*nāna hoki i hōmai te kaha ki a koe*  
to gain resources,  
*i whiwhi ai ki te taonga;*  
in order to confirm his covenant  
*kia mana ai tāna kawenata*  
that he swore to your fathers,  
*i oati ai ia ki ōu mātua,*  
as it is today.  
*ā, ka rite nei ināianei.*

*Me inoi tātou ... a prayer of confession*

God of our ancestors, God of our land,  
we confess to you that we take you for granted.  
We take the resources of the world for granted.  
We so easily assume that creation is ours to take  
and that our achievements are the work of our own hands.  
We have broken covenant,  
with you, with your world, and with each other.  
Forgive us.  
*Hōmai te kaha.* Give us strength  
to live in covenant relationship.  
*Mā ngā kupu katoa*  
*e puta mai ana i te māngai o Ihowā*  
*ka ora ai te tangata.*  
We live by your word. Amen.

## Job 12: 7-10, 13 – Ask the Animals; Ui Atu ki ngā Kararehe

### **Ask the animals,**

Ui atu ki ngā kararehe

### **and they will instruct you**

mā rātou koe e whakaako.

### **Ask the birds of the sky**

Ui atu ki ngā manu o te rangi

### **and they will tell you**

mā rātou e kōrero ki a koe.

### **Speak to the earth**

Kōrero atu ki te whenua

### **and it will instruct you**

ā, māna koe e whakaako.

### **Let the fish of the sea inform you**

Ka whakaaturia mai anō hoki ki a koe e ngā ika o te moana.

### **Which of all these does not know**

Ko wai i kore te mōhio ki ēnei mea katoa,

### **that the hand of the Lord has done this?**

he mea mahi tēnei nā te ringa o Ihowā?

### **The life of every living thing is in God's hand**

Kei tōna ringa nei te wairua o ngā mea ora katoa

### **and the breath of all mankind**

te manawa hoki o ngā kikokiko tangata katoa.

### **Wisdom and strength belong to God**

Kei a ia te whakaaro nui me te kaha;

### **counsel and understanding are his**

kei a ia te tohutohu me te mātauranga.

### *Me inoi tātou ... A prayer of confession*

God of all wisdom and all strength,

nōu te whakaaro nui me te kaha,

we confess that we go looking for wisdom and strength in all the wrong places.

Call us again to seek your truth in your Creation

May we ask the animals, the birds and the fish what they know of you.

May we sit with the land and ask the earth what it knows of you.

Open our ears to truth with no words.

Convict us with the damage that we have done

to animals, birds and fish,

to the air we all breath,

to the earth itself.

You hold all life in your hands

and you have graciously shared this responsibility with us humans.

We confess that we have failed you in caring for all life.

Teach us again your wisdom and your strength.

Be our breath –

homai ki a mātou tōu manawa.

Guide us with your counsel –

araraina mātou ki tōu tohutohu.

## Psalm 36: 5-9 – In Your Light We See Light; Mā Tōu Marama.

Kei ngā rangi, e Ihowā, tāu mahi tohu

**Your faithful love, o Yahweh, reaches to the heavens,**

tutuki noa atu tōu pono ki ngā kapua

**your faithfulness to the clouds.**

Rite tonu tōu tika ki ngā maunga o te Atua

**Your righteousness is like the highest mountains;**

he rire nui āu whakaritenga

**your judgments are deep as the sea.**

Ko koe, e Ihowā, te kaiwhakaora i te tangata, i te kararehe

**You, o Yahweh, give life to humans and animals.**

Anō te pai o tōu aroha, e te Atua

**Your faithful love is so good, o God**

ka okioki ngā tama a te tangata i raro i te taumarumarutanga iho o ōu pakau.

**that people take shelter in the shadow of your wings.**

Ka mākona rātou i ngā mea mōmona o tōu whare

**They are filled from the abundance of your house.**

Ka whakainumia anō e koe ki te awa o āu mea whakahari

**You invite them to drink from your refreshing stream.**

Kei a koe hoki te puna o te ora

**In you is the spring of life.**

Mā tōu marama ka kite ai mātou i te marama

**In your light we see light.**

### *Me inoi tātou ... A prayer of intercession*

As we come now to pray for the world,

we pause to rest a while in the shelter of the shadow of your wings – in your taumarumarū. Overshadow us now, we pray.

*(pause)*

Your mighty love is our safety

and in your light we see light.

We pray for those who are anxious and afraid –  
may they find a place of shelter and safety.

We pray for those who feel lost and alone  
and those who are ill.

Into your light we bring the names and faces of those we pray for  
and all those whose names and faces we do not know.

Your mighty love is our safety

and in your light we see light.

Mā tōu marama ka kite ai mātou i te marama.

We pray for ngā kararehe, the animals –

the ones we know and love

and the wonderful diversity of living things that share our world.

We pray for streams of fresh water.

We pray for safe homes, free from pollution.

Ko koe te kaiwhakaora i te tangata, i te kararehe

You give life to humans and animals.

May we support and enable the life of all your creation.

Kei a koe te puna o te ora  
In you is the spring of life.  
Mā tōu marama ka kite ai mātou i te marama  
In your light we see light.  
Amen.

## Psalm 46 – Ko te Atua tō tātou Piringa; God is our Refuge

### **God is our refuge**

Ko te Atua tō tātou piringa,

**and our strength,**

tō tātou kaha;

**a helper who is always close**

he kaiāwhina e tino tata ana

**in times of trouble**

i ngā wā o te hē.

**Therefore we will not be afraid,**

Nā reira kore ake tō tātou wehi,

**though the earth shakes**

ahakoa nekehia te whenua,

**and the mountains topple into the sea**

ahakoa kāhakina ngā maunga ki waenga moana.

**When he raises his voice**

Puaki ana tōna reo

**the earth melts**

rewa ana te whenua.

**“Be still**

“Kia āta noho

**and know that I am God,**

kia mātau ko ahau te Atua,

**exalted among the nations,**

e whakanuia ahau i waenganui i ngā tauwi,

**exalted on the earth.”**

e whakanuia ahau i te whenua.”

**The Lord of Hosts is with us**

Kei a tātou a Ihowā o ngā mano;

**the God of Jacob is our refuge.**

ko te Atua o Hākopa tō tātou piringa.

Me inoi tatou ... Options:

- Read these verses from Psalm 49 with a pause after each verse.
- Share images and information about climate change and respond with verses from Psalm 49.
- Choose a couple of verses to teach to the congregation in Te Reo, and memorise.
- Sing: ‘Be still and know’
- Sing: ‘He Honore’

## Psalm 148 – Whakamoemititia! All Things Praise!

*(Note on pronunciation: whaka-moe-miti-tia. Whakamoemiti (tia) is a word used for 'praise' in Te Paipera Tapu, but has not continued in general usage in Te Reo.)*

Praise! Adore!

**Lift God high!**

Whakamoemititia a Ihowā

**i runga i ngā rangi.**

Sun, moon and shining stars, join us in praise!

Whakamoemititia ia,

**e te rā, e te marama,**

**e ngā whetū whakamārama katoa!**

All things praise the name of our God,

Kia whakamoemititia e rātou

**te ingoa o Ihowā;**

because God commanded and all things were created.

nāna hoki i whakahau, ā,

**kua hangā rātou.**

From the earth all things praise and live in God's ways.

Whakamoemititia a Ihowā

**i runga i te whenua.**

The deep sea and all its creatures,

fire and hail, snow and frost, wind and storms,

mountains and hills, fruit trees and forests,

wild and tame animals, reptiles and birds

praise our God!

Kia whakamoemititia e rātou

**te ingoa o Ihowā.**

And we people join the endless song of praise,

**e ngā iwi katoa,**

every man and every woman, young and old,

ngā taitama, e ngā taitamāhine,

**e ngā koroheke rātou ko ngā tamariki –**

come, praise!

**Adore! Lift God high!**

God's name alone we praise

**nōna anake hoki te ingoa e nui ana**

for God's glory covers all the earth and all the sky.

**kei runga ake i te whenua, i te rangi, tōna korōria.**



## Isaiah 19: 5-10 – Maroke; Drought and Lament

*Isaiah's prophecy of drought in Egypt rings all too true for a warming world.*

*The waters of the river will dry up*

Ka kore haere hoki ngā wai o te moana  
*and the riverbed will be parched and dry.*

ka mimiti, ka maroke te awa.

*The reeds and rushes will wither and die.*

Ka mate ngā kākaho me ngā raupō.

*All the plants along the Nile*

Ko ngā otaota i te taha o te Naera  
*will dry up and be no more.*

ka maroke, ka kore noa iho.

*The fishermen will groan and lament.*

Ka tangi anō ngā kaihi ika, ka auē

ka pōuri anō ngā kaihora.

*Those who work the flax will despair,*

Ka whakamā hoki ngā kaimahi o te muka pai,

*The workers will be dejected and sick to the stomach.*

Ko ōna tūranga, mongamonga noa,

ka pōuri hoki ngā wairua

o ngā kaimahi katoa e utua ana.

### *Me inoi tātou ... a prayer of lament*

Lord of all,

**we turn to you, we cry to you.**

**Ka huri mātou, ka tangi ki a koe.**

In a changing climate, our hearts twist with fear.

The warnings of today echo the ancient words of prophecy.

Our world faces scorching heat,  
drought that turns rivers to dry ditches.

Lord of all,

**we turn to you, we cry to you.**

**Ka huri mātou, ka tangi ki a koe.**

Ka pōuri ngā wairua –

our souls turn dark with worry.

We bring to you now our fears for the years ahead.

...

Lord of all,

**we turn to you, we cry to you.**

**Ka huri mātou, ka tangi ki a koe.**

Hear our cry, Lord

for you are our hope.

In you we place our trust.

For we know you and we love you,  
through Jesus our redeemer.

Amen.

## Matthew 13: 1-2 – Dawn at the Lake

I taua rā i haere atu a Īhu i te whare,  
ka noho ki te taha o te moana.  
*On that day Jesus went out of the house  
and sat on the edge of lake.*

Nā, he rahi te hui i huihui ki a ia, ā,  
ka eke ia ki te kaupuke noho ai;  
*Such large crowds gathered around him  
that he got into a boat and sat down  
i te takutai anō te hui katoa e tū ana.  
while the crowd stood on the shore listening to him tell stories.*

### Me inoi tatou ... a reflection

The Gospels give us this lovely glimpse into who Jesus was and how he did things. It tells us of his relationship with creation.

Jesus loved the dawn. He would rise while it was still dark, wrap his cloak around him and go outside. For Jesus this was his time with his Father, while the air hung still, while the first birds called to each other. He loved to climb up the hill and sit on a rock looking out across the valley, and he especially loved the lake. His disciples would come to find him, after a rushed breakfast, bleary eyed, and there he would be, utterly still in the dawn, totally connected with God, fully aware of all the nature around him. He saw every shimmer of fish, every swooping insect, every shift in the light.

He didn't seem to mind when the crowds came, as they did. And one morning he decided to get into Peter's boat and push off a bit from shore, while it was still so calm – he marino te moana, he mārie. He knew, of course, that in the stillness his voice would carry for miles, and each person standing on the shore would hear him quite clearly.

In Māori the word 'rongo' means both to hear and it means peace. This little Bible story, of Jesus speaking on the lake, is the most beautiful moment of rongo. I rongo ngā tāngata – the people heard his words, and knew the peace of God, fully.

Lord Jesus, give us your peace and speak to us again.

Teacher Jesus, show us how to be in your creation and to know your Father.

Amen.

## John 7: 37-39 – Streams of Wai Ora

### **On the last and most important day of the festival**

I te rā whakamutunga, i te rā nui o te hakari,

### **Jesus stood up and cried out**

ka tū a Īhu, ka karanga, ka mea:

### **“If anyone is thirsty, come to me and drink!**

Ki te matewai tētahi, haere mai ia ki ahau, kia inu!

### **The one who believes in me**

Ki te whakapono tētahi ki ahau,

### **as the Scripture has said**

ka rite ki tā te karaipiture,

### **will have streams of living water**

ka rere mai ngā wai ora

### **flow from deep within**

i roto i tōna kōpū.”

### **He said this about the Spirit**

I kōrerotia tēnei e ia mō te Wairua

### **given to those who believe in Jesus**

meāke nei riro i te hunga e whakapono ana ki a ia.

### *Me inoi tatou ... a prayer of intercession about water*

Ka rere mai ngā wai ora.

Living water flows

from you, into all the world,

into our hearts and out again.

We pray this morning for water.

As the world warms we fear too much water or not enough.

Jesus cries out, “Come to me – haere mai ki ahau.

If you are thirsty – ki te matewai koe

Drink – kia inu.”

Lord, we need your wai ora.

May streams of living water flow

in the desert places of our world.

We pray for water systems

around the world and right here in ...

We pray for those who work hard to deal with waste water and protect fresh water.

We pray for people threatened by flood, for the safety of vulnerable communities.

We pray for decision makers that they will hold clean water in the highest value.

We pray for thirsty people that in their desperation they will be given a cup of water to drink.

Send your Holy Spirit, we pray. Homai tōu Wairua Tapu.

May living water flow. Rerea mai ngā wai ora.

## Acts 4: 24 – Mea Katoa; Everything!

**E te Ariki**

O Lord,

**nāu nei i hanga**

you have made

**te rangi me te whenua**

the sky and the earth,

**te moana me ō reira mea katoa**

the sea and everything in them.

*Acts 4:24*

*Me inoi tātou ... a prayer of intercession*

Lord God, maker of all that is, ngā mea katoa,  
hear us as we pray for your creation.

We praise you, we give you thanks  
for beauty and wonder,  
for the delicate balance of earth and atmosphere,  
te rangi me te whenua.

This balance is under threat, Lord,  
and we pray for your sustaining power.

We need you now.

**E te Ariki**

O Lord,

**nāu nei i hanga**

you have made

**te rangi me te whenua**

the sky and the earth,

**te moana me ō reira mea katoa**

the sea and everything in them.

We praise you, we give you thanks for  
the glory of the skies, the gifts of sun and moon and stars  
for wind and air, rain and rainbows.

We pray for our atmosphere.

We confess that we have polluted the air and are warming the planet.

Inspire our efforts to reduce carbon emissions.

We pray for climate scientists and activists and analysts.

Help us care for your creation.

**E te Ariki**

O Lord,

**nāu nei i hanga**

you have made

**te rangi me te whenua**

the sky and the earth,

**te moana me ō reira mea katoa**

the sea and everything in them.

We praise you, we give you thanks

for the land we call home, the rock on which we stand,  
the intricate forests, farms and gardens which sustain life.

We pray for our earth.

We confess that we have buried our rubbish in the land,  
and damaged the homes of other creatures.

Inspire our care for ecosystems.

We pray for gardeners, environmentalists and tree planters.

Help us care for your creation.

### **E te Ariki**

O Lord,

**nāu nei i hanga**

you have made

**te rangi me te whenua**

the sky and the earth,

**te moana me ō reira mea katoa**

the sea and everything in them.

We praise you, we give you thanks  
for the sea, for crashing waves and sandy beaches.

We pray for the oceans.

We confess that we are filling the seas with plastic, and overfishing.

Inspire our care for the sea.

We pray for fishermen, sailors and marine biologists.

Help us care for your creation.

### **E te Ariki**

O Lord,

**nāu nei i hanga**

you have made

**te rangi me te whenua**

the sky and the earth,

**te moana me ō reira mea katoa**

the sea and everything in them.

We praise you, we give you thanks  
for all the living creatures you have made.

We pray for animals, birds and fish.

We confess that so many are under threat.

Inspire our care for your creatures, in our homes and around Aotearoa.

We pray for vets and farmers, birdwatchers and lobbyists.

Help us care for your creation.

### **E te Ariki**

O Lord,

**nāu nei i hanga**

you have made

**te rangi me te whenua**

the sky and the earth,

**te moana me ō reira mea katoa**

the sea and everything in them.

## Revelations 21: 5-6 – Houtia; All Things New!

Then the one sitting on the throne said:

**“Nā, ka hangā houtia e ahau  
ngā mea katoa.**

I am making everything new.

**Tuhituhia.**

**Nō te mea he pono,  
he tika ēnei kupu.**

Write this, for these words are true and can be trusted.

**Kua oti ēnei mea.**

Everything is finished.

**Ko ahau te Ārepa, te Ōmeka,**

I am Alpha and Omega,

**te tīmatanga, te whakamutunga.**

the beginning and the end.

**Ka hoatu noa e ahau**

I will freely give

**ki te tangata matewai**

to everyone who is thirsty

**he wai i te puna o te wai o te ora.”**

water from the spring of life.”

### Me inoi tātou ... a prayer of hope

Yes, Lord, indeed, we are thirsty –

ngā tāngata matewai mātou.

Hope is in short supply.

Restore, we pray, our trust in what is true,  
for your words are te mea pono, te mea tika –  
true and trustworthy.

For you are the beginning and the end –

te tīmatanga, te whakamutunga –

and so we entrust all our lives, and all our world, to you.

You are making all things new.

You will make all things new –

Ka hangā houtia e koe ngā mea katoa.

Renew us, we pray, today

and renew your world.

Even now, right now, we drink of your living water –

te wai i te puna o te wai o te ora.

Well up, Wairua Tapu, your life and your hope in us.

Amen.