

Count Your Blessings

with **Christian Aid**

Lent is the time leading up to Easter when Christians often think about the impact of their actions on others, and do things that show God's love in the world.

This Lent, we are going to reflect on the gift of our world and how the climate crisis is affecting people in it, particularly in Kenya. The activities on this poster will help you journey through Lent from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday.

Each daily action will help you pray, act and give. If you can't do all of the actions each week, just choose a few. Ask a grown-up if you need help with any of the tasks. If you are using this poster in school, or as a small group, then choose from the actions suggested each week.

The Bible begins with the story of creation – which is where our journey will begin.

Children: ask a grown up to write a cheque for the total amount you raise and send it to Christian Aid.

Grown-ups: Write your name, address and 'Children's CYB' on the back of the cheque and send to Christian Aid, 35 Lower Marsh, London SE1 7RL. You can also pay online at caid.org.uk/lenet

If you would like to receive a thank you certificate, please email schools@christian-aid.org with your details and the details of your donation and the activities you have been involved in to support Christian Aid.

Week 1

On the first day of creation, God made day and night

Ash Wednesday

Think about day and night. Name three different things you like about both. Say a thank you prayer for the things you've named. What do you notice as you travel to school in the daylight? Look really carefully at your surroundings. Give 2p every time you notice something new. **Create a picture to show the contrast between light and dark. How about making a wax resist painting?**



Thursday

Which animals are most active during the night? How many can you name? Are any threatened by climate change? **Think about the actions you can take to help animals under threat.**

Friday

When it is our daytime, some of our global neighbours are asleep. Find out about different time zones. **At bedtime, pray for your global neighbours who will be just getting up for school.**

Weekend

Write down some of your thoughts and questions. Begin to draw a picture of a flourishing garden where fruit and vegetables grow – you will add to this picture week by week.

Total:

Week 2

On the second day, God made the sky and water

Monday

What is the sky like today? Can you see any clouds? Do you like the rain? Why? In Kenya, droughts are very common and without water, life is very difficult. Faith says: 'My life has changed because where I was going to fetch water was a long way. I no longer go that distance to get water. Now we are fetching it just near here.' **How many taps do you have in your house, school or church? Give 2p every time you use water today.**



Tuesday

Are there any water stations in your school, church or village/town so that visitors can fill up a water bottle? **If not, could you speak up and ask for one to be installed?**

Wednesday

Faith says: 'I was not able to plant anything. Now we can plant vegetables and water our trees.' **Plant a seed or bulb and water it regularly to help it grow. Could you create a garden in your school or church grounds?**

Thursday

Christian Aid helps local communities with seeds and tools and teaches them how to help their crops flourish. Say a thank you prayer for the different plants and green spaces you see around you each day. Have you got any gardening tools at home or school? **Ask a grown-up to help you count them and give 5p for every tool.**

Friday

How many different kinds of fruits and vegetables have you eaten this week? **Give 5p for each type.**

Total:

Weekend

Write down more of your thoughts and questions, and add some water to your garden picture, such as a pond.

Week 3

On the third day, God made land, sea and plants

Monday

Look at a world map and the areas of land and sea. Ask an adult to help you to find out where Christian Aid works. **Pray for three of those countries.**

Tuesday

Faith's fields used to be dirt and dust because drought meant next to nothing grew. But now Faith can grow crops thanks to a nearby sand dam built by her local community. Can you think of a time when you've used sand to make something? Have you ever tried to make a dam? Can you find out more about how dams are built? **Read how Faith's life has changed because of the sand dam. Pray for Faith and her family.**

Wednesday

Faith and her family are now able to grow vegetables and fruit which they can sell in the market. If you go to the supermarket, can you count the different types of fruit and vegetables for sale? Find out where one item has been grown. How far has it travelled? What do you think about this? **Is there anything we could do differently?**

Thursday

Even the parts of fruit and vegetables we don't eat can be useful and help the soil become rich for growing things in. **Can you name some foods that can be composted? Give 2p for each idea.**

Friday

Could you organise a fundraising event for Christian Aid? **Ask a grown-up to tell you about the Christian Aid Week Big Brekkie events. Could you plan something similar?**

Total:

Weekend

Write down more of your thoughts and questions, and add some fruit and vegetables to your garden picture.



Week 4

On the fourth day, God made the sun and moon

Monday

Do you like looking at the night sky? Have you noticed how the shape of the moon changes over the month? Have you ever tried to count the stars? **How do you feel when you look at the moon and the stars?**

Tuesday

Ask an adult to help you find a poem in the Bible about how amazing the sky is or look at Psalm 8:3-4 yourself.

Wednesday

One of the ways that we can challenge the effects of climate change is to use new forms of energy. Find out about how solar energy works. Can you spot any buildings with solar panels? **Give 10p for every building you see.**

Thursday

We have seasons because the Earth is tilted as it makes its yearly journey around the sun. **Which season of the year do you like best? What makes it special?**

Friday

Faith (pictured left with her son Hilary) lives with uncertainty now the seasons are different because of climate change. She says: 'The weather has changed. When I was young, there was a lot of rain and food was plenty. Today the rains are very poor. There was also a lot of livestock and today there is very few.' **What changes could you make to help look after our planet and limit the effects of climate change?**

Weekend

This Sunday is Mothering Sunday – a day to say thank you to mums, carers or anyone who loves you lots and looks after you. Could you make a thank you card? **Write down some of your thoughts and questions, and add some seasonal details to your garden picture. You could add snow to show winter or a bright sun for summer.**

Total:



Week 5

On the fifth day, God made water creatures and flying creatures

Monday

How many different birds can you spot when you go for a walk? **Look up their names and give 10p for each type that you see.**

Tuesday

If you have a garden at home or school, could you set up a bird bath to provide water for the local birds?

Wednesday

The dove is a symbol of peace. How can you make your school or community a peaceful place? **Write a prayer on the theme of peace.**

Thursday

Some people, like Florence from Kenya (pictured), have beehives and sell honey. **Can you find a honey recipe and ask a grown-up to help you make it?**

Weekend

Write down some of your thoughts and questions. Add some birds or bees to your picture of a garden.

Friday

The Kenyan coast is home to amazing wildlife and it's one of the most biodiverse parts of Africa. There are over 550 plant and 50 animal species unique to Kenya's coastal forests. The sea is home to five species of sea turtle, dugongs, whales and dolphins. **Can you think of any more creatures that live in the sea? Give 5p for every answer.**



Week 6

On the sixth day of creation, God made animals and people

Monday

Do you have any pets? What are your favourite animals? Faith uses her cows to plough her land, so she can grow crops. **Give 20p for every animal you can think of that helps us in our daily lives.**

Tuesday

The creation story teaches us that every individual is unique and valuable. Christians believe each person is created in the image of God and is wonderfully made. **Ask a grown-up to help you read Psalm 139:13-14.**

Wednesday

Think about your friends and family and what makes each person special. **Make a card or gift for a friend to show them that they are special to you.**

Thursday

What do you enjoy at school or Sunday school/church club? Maybe it's being with your friends or learning new things? Climate change is making children in Kenya miss school because they have to spend their time fetching water instead or because failed harvests mean their parents cannot afford school fees. The children who do go to school are often hungry, making it harder for them to learn. **Give 10p each time you eat a meal with family or friends today.**

Total:

Weekend

Write down some of your thoughts and questions. Add an animal you've seen in a garden to your picture.

Friday

The Anglican Church in Kenya knows it's important to plant more trees to help the fight against climate change. They promote tree planting to mark family events such as weddings, baptisms and births. **How can we help to look after our world and care for our global neighbours?**



Week 7

On the seventh day, God rested

Holy Week and Easter

Monday

Find a quiet space to rest. Think about all the things and people that you love in the world. **Say a thank you prayer.**

Tuesday

Read or listen to Psalm 148. How many different parts of creation are mentioned? **Give 5p for every one of these things you see in your local area.**

Wednesday

Write your own poem or create a piece of art or drama about the gift of creation and why it is important to look after our beautiful world. You could join in with 'Letters for Creation'. This is a project that invites children to tell leaders what they think about climate change and looking after our world. **Letters can be in any form: written word, art, song, rap, poetry or prayer. Find out more: caid.org.uk/lettersforcreation**

Thursday & Friday

This week is called Holy Week and it leads to Good Friday. During this time, Christians remember the story of how Jesus died on the cross. Easter reminds Christians of God's love for his world and for people, and that there is always hope for change. Ask an adult to help you read the Easter story. How do you feel as you listen to the story unfold? Jesus' friends thought everything was hopeless, but they soon discovered everything was hopeful. **What do you hope for? How can you help to change the world for the better?**

Total:



Thank you

'Now I'm watering my garden and the fruit trees on our farm. We eat and sell the fruit.'
Faith

Let's meet Faith

This is Faith with her husband Steven and their five children Mwinza, Kioko, Carol, Kelvin and Hilary. Faith and her family live in Kenya. Droughts are now more common in Kenya due to climate change. Often the people who did the least to cause climate change have to face its worst effects, from droughts to floods. Without water, Faith and her husband Steven couldn't grow crops. Without crops, they didn't have enough to eat or to sell. But now Faith grows crops that are lush and green thanks to a nearby dam. Her local community got together to build the sand dam with the help of Christian Aid.

The rains don't fall often but when they do, the community can collect every last drop of water in the dam. This gives Faith's

community a way to survive even when there is a drought. A water source like this gives people like Faith hope for the future. With water Faith can farm. With water she can make bricks to extend her home for her children and build an outside toilet. With water she can grow a garden full of vegetables and fruit trees.

Faith grew such an amazing crop of tomatoes that she sold enough to pay for her children to go to school and buy two cows. With water she can keep the cows healthy so that they can help plough the fields on her farm and provide nutritious milk for her family.

As you journey through Count Your Blessings, you'll need the following items:



paper or a notebook to write down your thoughts, reflections and questions.



plain paper to draw a picture.



pencils or pens to write down your reflections and draw your picture.

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