



Lament for Lent

Church Mission Society has today announced a 'Lament for Lent' campaign with free resources to help the church to lament in the face of increasing unrest and uncertainty as persecution against Christians, war, racism, are on the rise together with the climate crisis and other threats to the wellbeing of the world.

The campaign's key free 6-week resource, 'Only With Eyes That Have Cried', is written by leading theologian and missiologist Dr Cathy Ross, who heads up CMS's Pioneer Mission Leadership Training Centre in Oxford.

She says:

"There is much to lament in our world and we need the space and the permission to do so. We need to take time to lament violence, war, racism, exploitation of women and trafficking, the state of our planet and the climate crisis. As Greta Thunberg says, 'Our house is still on fire'."

Through the campaign, CMS hopes Christians will learn to embrace, rather than move on too quickly from personal or collective grief, developing a deeper trust and confidence in God.

The campaign draws upon ideas expressed by Ugandan theologian Emmanuel Katongole in his book, 'Born from Lament: the Theology and Politics of Hope in Africa', wherein he examines the violence and suffering that beset DR Congo in recent years and asks, "How does one live with this?", "Can there be a future and if so, what kind?" and "Where is God?".

As well as using examples from the Psalms, 'Only With Eyes That Have Cried' relays the experience of CMS mission partners such as Ruth Radley who experienced the power of lament while serving in South Sudan. Through stories like Ruth's, people will read about lament as resistance, lament as innovation, lament as activism and lament as hope.

To help people Lament for Lent, CMS is offering the 6-week 'Only With Eyes That Have Cried' resource for free to individuals and churches. Written by Cathy Ross, it also contains prayers by Ian Adams, chaplain of Ridley College, Cambridge and CMS mission spirituality adviser, as well as creative suggestions to help people embrace lament as a spiritual discipline that can deepen their experience of God.

Dr Ross concludes:

“Through Lent this year we hope that you will learn not only to lament but also to take action – this is what is profound about lament – it moves us from grief to action.”

Other lament-related resources will be available on CMS’s popular online Resource Hub.

For more information about the Only With Eyes That Have Cried resource and the Lament for Lent campaign, [click here](#).