

Christian Aid guide to the General Election 2019

**'The way of Jesus is the Way of Love.
And the Way of Love can change the world.'**

– Bishop Michael Curry

With every decision, we can choose whether we follow the Way of Love. In this interconnected world, many of our decisions and actions affect our sisters and brothers around the globe. Following the Way of Love has the power to change the world into one in which every human being, made in God's image, can flourish here on Earth.

The UK general election, on 12 December, is an opportunity for us follow the Way of Love. We can use this time to call on future decision makers to act with love for the world's poorest. We can call for policies that help lift people out of poverty, and for solutions to a broken world where our economic system continues to fuel poverty, inequality and the climate crisis.

Christian Aid has set out a vision of a world in which everyone can flourish in our 2019 manifesto: *For dignity, equality and justice*. This sets out the key requirements for the next UK Government to address the scandal of poverty.

Read our call to action in full at caid.org.uk/generalelection

Summary of our manifesto

Christian Aid's manifesto seeks solutions that address the underlying drivers of climate change, global inequality and poverty, and which put us on track to a more just and sustainable world. One in which our global climate emergency is recognised by world leaders and where the rapid and radical changes required are made; one in which the world's wealth is more evenly spread and responsibly managed; one in which every person's voice can be heard; and one in which decision makers prioritise peace over war.

Our global climate emergency

The countries and communities which played the least part in causing climate change are now bearing the brunt of climate breakdown.

Christian Aid is calling for a New Deal for Climate Justice that would see the UK spearhead a massive transfer of finance and technology to poor and climate-vulnerable countries, stop supporting fossil fuels and support sustainable levels of consumption. The UK must

also ensure the development of renewable energy does not exploit people or destroy the environment and that the necessary transformation of our economy is done in ways that address inequality in the UK too.

Find out more about our New Deal for Climate Justice at caid.org.uk/climatejusticepetition

A fairer global economy

There has never been so much wealth internationally – yet poverty persists across the world, because of political choices that are made, and because of inequities in power and privilege.

Governments and the private sector both have a role to play in building just, sustainable economies. The UK Government's engagement with the rest of the world must not be based on the values of self-interest, but must put the realisation of human rights at the heart of all that we do.

To create a fairer economy, we need to see a crackdown on tax dodging and an end to exploitative vulture funds and debt.

Sustainable development as a human right

Spending 0.7% of gross national income every year on sustainable development should be a minimum commitment, not a maximum.

We want to see all aid spent on poverty alleviation and sustainable development.

Prioritising peace over war

The UK does not have a good reputation as a peacemaker.

While the UK apparently seeks a peaceful outcome to the humanitarian emergency in Yemen, our country sells weapons to the Saudi-led coalition to bomb the country. In addition, the UK continues to back the Saudi-led coalition's military operations, despite its consistent violations of humanitarian law and evidence that it is deliberately bombing civilian targets.

We call on the UK Government to prioritise peace over war.

How to engage with candidates

Hustings

Hustings usually occur in specific 'seats' or constituencies when an organisation, such as a church, invites local candidates to a public meeting. An audience of voters listens to the debate and puts questions to the candidates.

If you can get involved in local hustings, this will demonstrate to the candidates that many of their constituents really do care about global poverty. Find out if a hustings is happening in your area by looking at:

- Local churches' websites and social media feeds.
- Your local candidates' websites – find details of your candidates at whocanivotefor.co.uk
- The Churches Together Britain and Ireland (CTBI) website: churcheselection.org.uk

Write to your candidate

You can write or email your candidates with your chosen question(s). Find details of your candidates at: whocanivotefor.co.uk

On the doorstep

If candidates and/or their volunteers knock on your door, please take this opportunity to ask them questions about tackling global poverty and inequality. See our suggested questions below.

Suggested questions

1. The climate crisis

The climate crisis is the biggest issue of the day. True justice requires a full package of change, not just to reduce emissions, but also to support the poorest in the world to adapt and thrive. Christian Aid is calling for a New Deal for Climate Justice which:

- Transfers a fair share of finance and technology to poor and climate-vulnerable countries.
- Stops fuelling fossil fuel expansion overseas and here in the UK.
- Develops renewable energy without exploiting people or destroying the environment in the global South.
- Curbs the over-consumption that is driving climate breakdown.

- Invests in decarbonising the UK economy in a way that addresses economic and social inequalities, starting with a commitment to spend at least 2% of gross domestic product on a fair transition to a net zero economy.

Do you support such a deal?

2. Tax justice

Tax dodging keeps people trapped in poverty. It robs developing countries of money that can be used for essential services like healthcare, water sanitation and education. Yet UK tax rules continue to be rigged in favour of tax dodgers.

If elected as MP, will you act to bring forward legislation requiring UK companies to publish the taxes they pay on a country-by-country basis, so that developing nations know where money is made, and where tax is paid?

3. Prioritising peace

Many previous governments have claimed to pursue peace in areas of conflict, while continuing to sell arms. A recent example is in Yemen, where the previous UK Government claimed to pursue peace, yet sold weapons to the Saudi-led coalition that consistently violates humanitarian law.

If elected as an MP, will you act to suspend arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates? Will you also seek to reform the arms exports controls regime to be much stronger in vetting UK arms deals?

4. Sustainable development

The UK has a proud history of helping the very poorest through international aid. If elected as an MP will you commit to ensuring this continues by:

- Ensuring the Department for International Development remains an independent entity?
- Committing to a minimum of 0.7% gross national income, to be spent on aid every year?
- Ensuring that this money is used to alleviate poverty and does not contribute to the climate crisis?

