

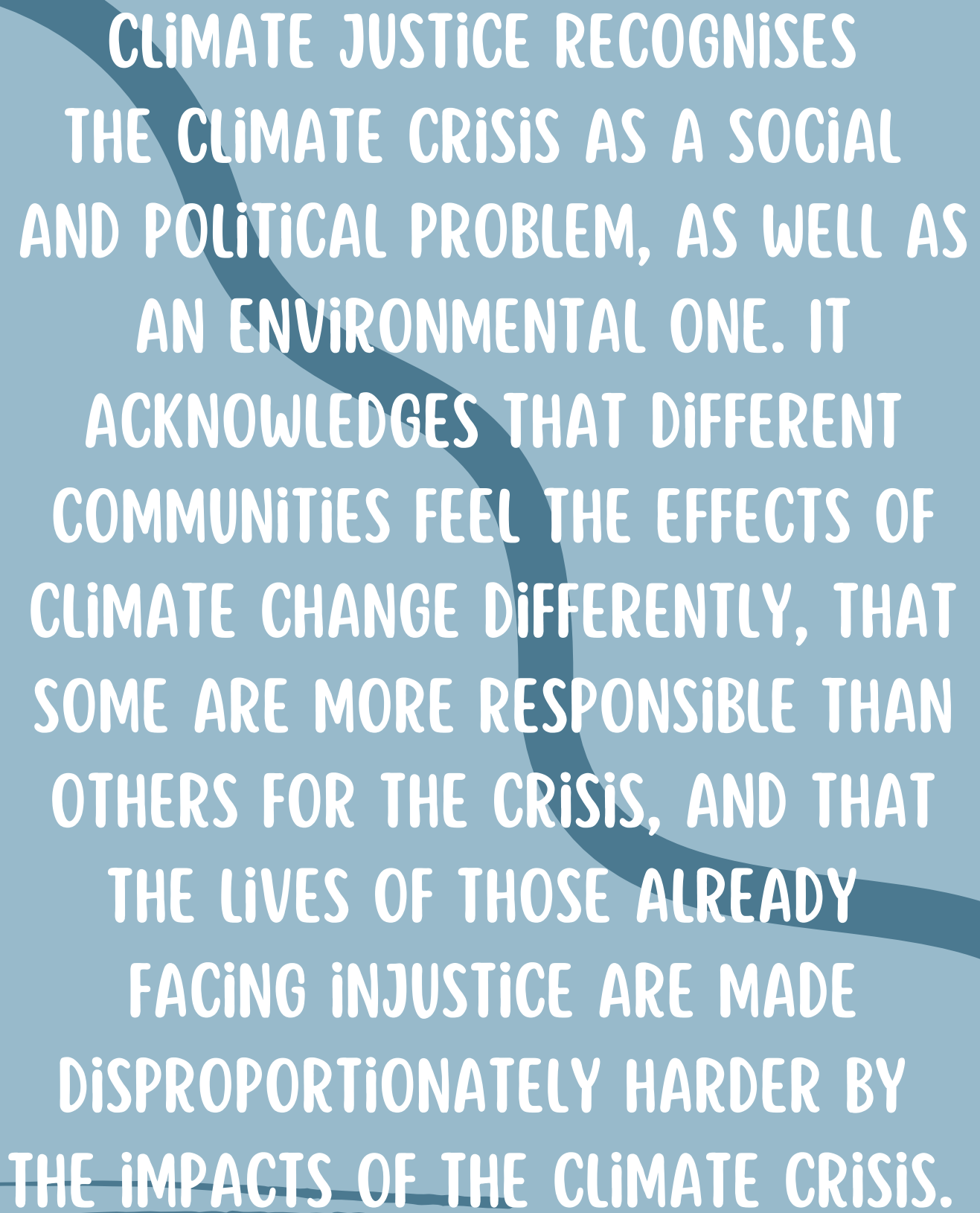
PROPHETIC
ACTIVIST
COHORT 2023



HOW TO BE A CLIMATE STEWARD



A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS



CLIMATE JUSTICE RECOGNISES
THE CLIMATE CRISIS AS A SOCIAL
AND POLITICAL PROBLEM, AS WELL AS
AN ENVIRONMENTAL ONE. IT
ACKNOWLEDGES THAT DIFFERENT
COMMUNITIES FEEL THE EFFECTS OF
CLIMATE CHANGE DIFFERENTLY, THAT
SOME ARE MORE RESPONSIBLE THAN
OTHERS FOR THE CRISIS, AND THAT
THE LIVES OF THOSE ALREADY
FACING INJUSTICE ARE MADE
DISPROPORTIONATELY HARDER BY
THE IMPACTS OF THE CLIMATE CRISIS.

WHY SHOULD I CARE?

Why seeking climate justice is an integral part of the christian faith

1 THE LORD HAS CALLED US TO BE STEWARDS OF THE EARTH

In Chapter 1 of Genesis when God created people, God also gives them the mandate to 'rule' or steward the earth

If the earth is God's Garden, we are its gardeners. It does not belong to us but has been placed in our care for a time. A good gardener works to grow and flourish their garden, just as we should do with the earth.



"Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

Genesis 1:26

2 WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO ACT IN LIGHT OF WHAT WE KNOW

We are saved by our faith alone and not our actions, and hallelujah for that! But as we come to understand the heart of God, the realization of that in our lives should be reflected in our actions.

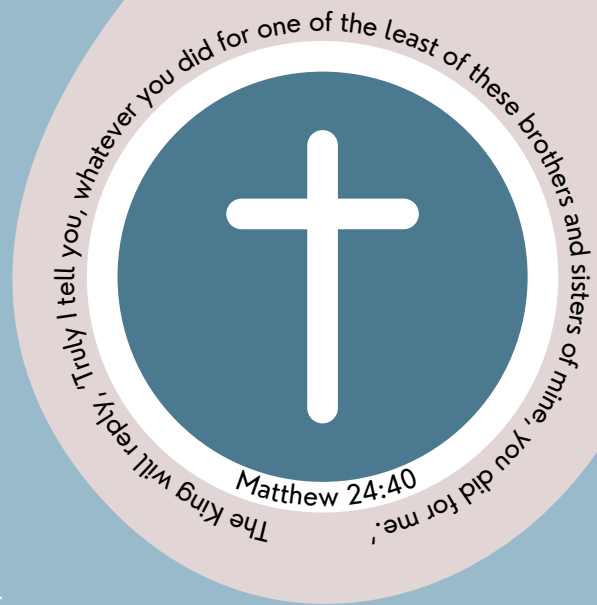


"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."

James 1:22

3 WE NEED TO LOVE OTHERS AS CHRIST LOVES US

We might be detached from climate justice and change, and perhaps we have not seen much of an impact where we live. Even if we're not experiencing the devastating effects in our own backyard yet, we should be compelled by love to act alongside those it is effecting now. We have seen worsening droughts in Kenya, famine in Madagascar, island nations where much of their land will be underwater if we fail to act. Christ welcomes all of us, no one is left behind.



WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO RECOGNIZE, THAT AS WITH SO MANY PERSONAL ACTIONS WE CAN TAKE TO REDUCE OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT, THE ABILITY TO MAKE THESE CHANGES RELIES ON US ALREADY HAVING A SERIES OF EXISTING PRIVILEGES THAT ALLOW US TO MAKE THESE CHOICES.

TALKING ABOUT CLIMATE JUSTICE

WHY IS IT USEFUL TO TALK (AND KEEP TALKING) ABOUT CLIMATE JUSTICE?

Having conversations about climate justice isn't just to raise awareness, it can be a useful tool for sharing ideas, encouraging others (and yourself), as well as getting people on board with promoting climate justice.

Conversation is a two-way street - we talk both to educate and also be educated, to listen and also speak.

Try not to think about 'climate conversations' as a one-time-thing - you can have influence over time, mentioning small things (or big things) that are important to you when it comes to climate justice. Who knows? They may reinitiate a conversation with you about the climate in a week's time or even a few months later!

WHO CAN I TALK TO?

Think about who has influence in your church community: youth workers, those involved in prayer ministry, music, refreshments and so on.

Sometimes people will say no to longer meetings, it can be better to ask for 30 minutes maximum rather than an hour. You might want to start with small conversations over coffee at church or with people you know well or are likely to be supportive. You might want to ask them, is there anyone else they would recommend that you talk to?

You can link in with charities and other churches, they will often support your vision / event / goal or offer fresh ideas.

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel 28 without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you.

Philippians 1:27-28

HOW DO I GET THE CONVERSATION STARTED?

Conversations can be planned (i.e. asking for a meeting), or happen organically (i.e. over a shared meal or prompted by something in your day). Watching the news or reading books might give you topics to talk about and make you feel more confident, but remember conversations are give and take, listening is most important.

You could put something into the church service's notices, saying you want to chat to people about their thoughts on the climate crisis or 'the environment'. You could also use social media, such as TikTok or Instagram to include more people in the conversation.

WHAT CAN I TALK ABOUT?

Consider what interests are shared: Are they passionate about other things? Such as Fairtrade, BLM, children's future (grandchildren), food scarcity / drought etc. can be tied into climate justice. Local issues can be linked to Global issues and what is happening in the Global South. What are their values / what do they care about? Do you have things in common?

Don't be afraid to be vocal about practical changes you have made in your own life to promote climate justice (i.e. moving towards a more vegetarian diet, making a monthly donation to a charity working on the effects of the climate crisis, or reducing your plastic consumption when it comes to groceries or other purchases). You could have a positive effect on those around you just by sharing things you are doing in your own life.

You could also share the ways in which your thinking has changed about issues of climate justice - talking about a good book you read, or a podcast you listened to that changed your mind about something can be a really great starting point for conversation.

Loving god, thank you for the world you created
Help us to live in faith, courage and love
Give us the strength to protect and care for our environment
May we know moments in our day where we rest in your presence,
Fill us with peace and power of your holy spirit that we may be rejuvenated and strengthened so we may resist the injustices of the world.

We ask these things in Jesus' name
Amen

WASTE REDUCTION: REDUCE, REDUCE, REDUCE

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. This slogan is often used as a 'throw away' comment. While we spend hours repurposing or sorting out the cardboard from the tins we forget the first instruction. Reduce!

The idea of 'living simply' is one reflected throughout the bible and Christian traditions. In Genesis, we are told that we are stewards of creation. We can show our love and respect for our neighbours by using our planet's resources with care.

By reducing what we consume, we can reduce what we waste. There are many ways to cut down on waste in your church. You could ask to try the following:

Phasing out disposables for catering i.e. cups, cutlery, and plates. Using and reusing crockery.

Make newsletters accessible via digital means. Such as on the church website to reduce printing.

Use refillable cleaners to reduce the plastic bottles and spray tops that go in the bin.

Clothes and Toy swaps. Using any clothes that are too worn out as rags for cleaning.

Set up a repair cafe so that people can learn new skills to fix items rather than replace them.

Collect unwanted gifts to become raffle prizes to raise church funds.

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.

Psalms 24:1

Use dried flowers or potted plants for winter flower arrangements to stop buying flowers out of season.

When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted."

John 6:12

Loving God, motivate us to act to increase awareness and understanding of the extreme damage our lifestyles have on climate change.

Encourage us to take responsibility for how we live with each other and the world around us.

Help us to be a beacon of hope, as you are to us.

Equip us to call out those who profit from industries that contribute to the climate crisis, and help us to work together to transform your world.

We pray for justice for the most vulnerable and most affected by the climate crisis,

We pray that you will help inspire people to act,

We pray that we may have the courage to never stay silent and to always speak out against injustice.

We ask these things in Jesus' name
Amen

EATING FOR THE PLANET

According to WWF, diet makes up around a 7th of a person's daily carbon footprint in the UK, with some foods being much larger polluters than other. For example, production of beef emits more than double the greenhouse gasses per kg than lamb. Other large polluters include dairy products, coffee and prawns.

Here are some easy steps to modify your diet and decrease its carbon footprint:

EAT LESS MEAT

This doesn't mean you have to go fully vegetarian, but reducing the number of days you eat meat, even just in your main meal, can make a huge difference.

So instead of meat, try: tofu, jackfruit, lentils or beans.

TRY NON-DAIRY ALTERNATIVES

There's now a wide range of alternatives for most dairy products, so if this is something you are going to try, the trick is just finding something you like.

Tip: If a recipe specifies a certain type of non-dairy milk for example, ignore it! You can use any non-dairy milk in most recipes.

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?"

Matthew 6:25

WONKY VEG

Supermarkets reject veg that isn't the shape or colour that we've grown to expect, even if that veg is perfectly edible, creating a large amount of food waste and wasted energy spent on farming and transportation. Schemes like farm boxes sell this veg to cut down on this source of waste.

FOOD WASTE

You can reduce your own food waste by only cooking what you will eat, and freezing leftovers if you can, and by using your waste to make your own compost or putting it in a food waste bin rather than general waste (this depends on your council).

YOUR NEW FAVORITE RECIPES

To give you some ideas, here are some recipes you could try that are veggie or vegan alternatives to familiar meals

Tip: We find BBC Goodfood recipes to be the simplest especially for vegan recipes as others can include a lot of weird ingredients that are hard to source, expensive, and unnecessary.

VEGGIE SHEPHERDS PIE



VEGAN PANCAKES



VEGAN CHOCOLATE TRAYBAKE



VEGAN CHILLI



God is great, and God is good, And we thank him for our food;
By his hand we all are fed; Give us, Lord, our daily bread.

O Lord, we thank you for the gifts of your bounty which we enjoy at this table. As you have provided for us in the past, so may you sustain us throughout our lives. While we enjoy your gifts, may we never forget the needy and those in want.

DRESSING FOR THE PLANET

‘ACT LOCAL’ WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR CLOTHING:

Taking the climate into account when we are getting dressed takes two main things into account - the people who are involved in the production of clothing, and the resources that go into making and transporting those clothes. The goal is to do the least harm possible, both to people and the planet, acting as stewards of the earth and good neighbors to the world.

Not sure where to start with your climate-conscious wardrobe? Try thinking about it in terms of distance from your home. Generally, the further away you go, the more impact your purchases will have on the climate and on people.

CLOTHES ALREADY IN YOUR OWN HOME

The easiest way to limit your impact when it comes to purchasing clothes is to not purchase any!

MAKING OR REPAIRING YOUR OWN CLOTHES

You can make your own expressive pieces from scratch, or you can use your skills to mend and repair garments you already own. Sewing up a hole in a t-shirt, for example, or turning a pair of ripped jeans into shorts. Search for sewing classes or groups that meet in your local community.

But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.

1 Timothy 6:6-7

BORROWING CLOTHES FROM FRIENDS OR FAMILY

Another way of sharing clothes between friends and family is to organize a ‘clothing swap’, where everyone brings a few items of good-quality but unwanted garments to a central location, and then people get to ‘shop’ around to find new-to-them items to take home.

As with so many personal actions we can take to reduce our carbon footprint, the ability to make these changes relies on us already having a series of existing privileges to make these choices. Take this opportunity to reflect on what these privileges may be in your own life.

SHOPPING SECOND-HAND EITHER IN-PERSON OR ONLINE

If you are lucky enough to live somewhere where you have access to in-person second-hand shops, that is a great place to start. It's much easier to tell if something will be wearable for you if you can try it on and touch the fabric. Alternatively, you can search for clothing online using platforms like Depop and Vinted. This can be helpful if you are looking for something specific, or need access to a larger size range than can be found in most charity shops.

CONSIDERING YOUR OPTIONS WHEN BUYING NEW ITEMS

Finally, if you are able to when buying new, consider making fewer purchases from more ethical companies. You will find that different companies prioritize different elements of 'ethical' when making their clothing - so some might focus on paying their garment workers a livable wage, while others will care more about the air miles associated with their products.

And remember, buying and caring for a pair of 'fast fashion' (or high street) jeans over many many years could be easier on the environment than buying a new pair of 'ethical' jeans every season.

Loving God, you put us on this earth to love and share this world's bountiful resources with our brothers and sisters-

A world devastated by climate change, but also
A world filled with life, wonder, hope and love,
A world where people and communities can fight against injustice,
A world where we can recycle, reuse and live sustainably.
Merciful God, please give us the compassion and tools we need to help those most in need
give us the strength to empower others to tackle the climate crisis.

We ask these things in Jesus' name
Amen

CLIMATE AND COMMUNITY

Community is great for encouraging change in more people, and encouraging each other to keep going with change and activism when things get hard. The church is a wonderful source of community, and its many community groups that may be in place can be utilised in being good climate stewards:

1 SHARING INFORMATION

Speak to each other! Small groups and youth groups could run sessions on climate justice, a church newspaper, email chain, or other form of wider congregation could contain quick tips for small changes to make in your life, a noticeboard could have a poster with ideas for each month.

2 SHARING RESOURCES

Connect with a food bank and send donations, set up a tool sharing program where members could borrow other's tools rather than purchasing their own for one-time jobs, set up a clothes swap especially for children's and baby clothes, and local school uniforms, support a charity fighting for climate justice.

3 LEAN ON YOUR FAITH

Organise a prayer vigil on the theme of climate justice, use climate and justice focused passages in services.

Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

1 Peter 4:8-10

Loving God, give us the courage to fight for climate justice
and to create inclusive spaces for all voices to be heard,
especially those most affected.
Give us the courage to find new ways of living so we won't
continue to hurt our natural world,
Give us the courage and strength to fight for the world you
envisioned,
Give us the courage to love our neighbour as ourselves
Give us the courage to be more aware and to deepen our
understanding for those in extreme poverty around the world,
Where there is injustice, pain and suffering, let us bring hope
and love.

We ask these things in Jesus' name
Amen