

# *The Moral Imperative*

## Project SnowFall's "Letter to Our Congregation" #5 September 27, 2018

**1. Buddhist** "We have a brief window of opportunity to take action, to preserve humanity from imminent disaster and to assist the survival of the many diverse and beautiful forms of life on Earth. Future generations, and the other species that share the biosphere with us, have no voice to ask for our compassion, wisdom, and leadership. We must listen to their silence. We must be their voice, too, and act on their behalf."

**2. Jewish** "In Leviticus 26, the Torah warns us that if we refuse to let the Earth rest, it will "rest" anyway, despite us and upon us – through drought and famine and exile that turn an entire people into refugees."

**3. Hindu** "A radical change in our relationship with nature is no longer an option. It is a matter of survival. We cannot destroy nature without destroying ourselves."

Climate change creates pain, suffering, and violence. Unless we change how we use energy, how we use the land, how we grow our crops, how we treat other animals, and how we use natural resources, we will only further this pain, suffering, and violence. "A radical change in our relationship with nature is no longer an option. It is a matter of survival. We cannot destroy nature without destroying ourselves."

**4. Islam** "Disruption of the global climate is a consequence of our corruption in the earth. We are but one of the multitude of living beings with whom we share the earth, and a minuscule part of the divine order, yet we have exceptional power, and bear the responsibility to establish good and avert evil in every way we can."

**5. Evangelical Lutheran Church of America** "...an honest accounting requires a recognition that we all participate both as consumers and investors in economies that make intensive and insistent demands for energy. In addition, as citizens we have chosen to support or acquiesce in policies that shift the burdens of climate change to communities that are most vulnerable to its effects. People who are already challenged by poverty and by dislocation resulting from civil war or famine have limited resources for adapting to climate change's effects."

### **6. Pope Francis**

"Doomsday predictions can no longer be met with irony or disdain. We may well be leaving to coming generations debris, desolation and filth." 161

"That is why, in the absence of pressure from the public and from civic institutions, political authorities will always be reluctant to intervene, all the more when urgent needs must be met. To take up these responsibilities and the costs they entail, politicians will inevitably clash with the mindset of short-term gain and results which dominates present-day economics and politics. But if they are courageous, they will attest to their God-given dignity and leave behind a testimony of selfless responsibility. A healthy politics, capable of reforming and coordinating institutions, promoting best practices and overcoming undue pressure and bureaucratic inertia, is sorely needed." 181

"What would induce anyone, at this stage, to hold on to power only to be remembered for their inability to take action when it was urgent and necessary to do so?" 57

**7. Presbyterian Church USA** The love of neighbor, particularly the least of Christ's brothers and sisters, requires action to stop the poisoning, the erosion, the wastefulness that are causing suffering and death. The future of our children and their children and all who come after is at stake.

**8. United Church of Christ** "WHEREAS, the predicted impact of global warming will have a disproportionate impact on those living in poverty, least developed countries, the elderly and children and those least responsible for the emissions of greenhouse gases;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-sixth General Synod of the United Church of Christ admits Christian complicity in the damage human beings have caused to the earth's climate system and other planetary life systems, and urges recommitment to the Christian vocation of responsible stewardship of God's creation, and expresses profound concern for the pending environmental, economic, and social tragedies threatened by global warming, to creation, human communities and traditional sacred spaces;"

### **9. The United Methodist Church**

"Leaders in some developed nations continue to debate, from places of comfort and privilege, the "reality" of a changing climate in order to perpetuate their polluting ways. As the church we witness firsthand the consequences of

climate disruption inner communities and in the lives of those Christ calls us to be with in ministry. Recognizing our complicity and responsibility, we seek to chart a new path rooted in economic and ecological justice. We understand climate justice not simply as an environmental or economic concern but rather as a deep ethical and spiritual concern that the Church must address so that abundant life is ensured for our children and future generations.

#### **10. Unitarian Universalist Association**

“WHEREAS, global climate change is fundamentally a moral and ethical crisis induced and exacerbated by human activity that can and must be modified to maintain a livable world for ourselves, our descendants, and other species; THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the 2015 UU General Assembly calls on Unitarian Universalists to unify and provide ethical and moral leadership for climate action and to do so within our congregations and within our multi-faith communities;”

#### **11. Lutheran**

Many have reacted to these changes with grief and anger. In their outrage some have understandably focused on the neglect and carelessness, both in private industry and in government regulation, that have contributed to these changes. However, an honest accounting requires a recognition that we all participate both as consumers and investors in economies that make intensive and insistent demands for energy. In addition, as citizens we have chosen to support or acquiesce in policies that shift the burdens of climate change to communities that are most vulnerable to its effects. People who are already challenged by poverty and by dislocation resulting from civil war or famine have limited resources for adapting to climate change's effects.

1. A Buddhist Declaration on Climate Change May 14, 2015  
[http://fore.yale.edu/files/Buddhist\\_Climate\\_Change\\_Statement\\_5-14-15.pdf](http://fore.yale.edu/files/Buddhist_Climate_Change_Statement_5-14-15.pdf)
2. A Rabbinic Letter on the Climate Crisis  
<https://theshalomcenter.org/civicism/petition/sign?sid=17>
3. A Hindu Declaration on Climate Change  
<https://www.hinduclimatedeclaration2015.org/>
4. Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change  
[http://www.ifees.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Islamic\\_Declaration\\_V4.pdf](http://www.ifees.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Islamic_Declaration_V4.pdf)
5. Caring for Creation - Evangelical Lutheran Church of America  
<https://www.elca.org/News-and-Events/7697>
6. Pope Francis - Laudato-Si  
<https://earthministry.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Laudato-Si.pdf>
7. Presbyterian Church USA  
<http://presbyterian.typepad.com/files/call-to-restore-creation.pdf>
8. UCC - A Resolution on Climate Change 2007 GS26  
[http://www.ucc.org/environmental-ministries\\_synod-resolutions\\_a-resolution-on-climate](http://www.ucc.org/environmental-ministries_synod-resolutions_a-resolution-on-climate)
9. UMC - The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church 2016:  
Climate Change and the Churches Response pg. 81  
<https://www.cokesbury.com/forms/DynamicContent.aspx?id=87&pageid=920#9569> pg. 81
10. UU 2015 Action of Immediate Witness  
<https://www.uua.org/action/statements/support-strong-compassionate-global-climate-agreement-2015-act-livable-climate>
11. Lutheran  
<https://www.elca.org/News-and-Events/7697>