



Faiths 4 Climate Justice 2022

Local Press Kit

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*Insert your own language, names, descriptions, etc in the areas highlighted in yellow.

Faiths 4 Climate Justice is a global multi-faith action with grassroots faith communities taking actions in countries across the world. It is organized by the GreenFaith International Network and Co-Sponsored by over 100 organizations, denominations, and lineages, representing more than 100 million people from Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Jain, Baha'i, Indigenous, Christian, and many more faith and spiritual backgrounds.

We are rising together to call for:

- An immediate end to new fossil fuel projects and deforestation
- A rapid transition to 100% renewables and a fair phase-out of fossil fuels
- A commitment to a just transition for impacted workers and climate-vulnerable communities

Actions will take place from 02 October-06 November 2022.

- In the weeks before the United Nations' annual gathering of world leaders, people of faith and spirit will make our moral voices heard and ensure bold action for climate justice.
- Grassroots people of different religions, from Africa to Asia, Europe to the Americas, will take courageous, public action. We will peacefully and directly press governments and financial institutions to do what only they can do to create a harmonious and sustainable world.
- In our actions, we will bring our religion, our spirituality, our faith into the streets and halls of power. We will take action openly, respectfully, boldly, and non-violently. We will share our moral message, our community's good energy, and welcome others.

I. Suggested Talking Points

You can use these talking points when speaking with reporters, in announcements or spoken teachings to your religious or spiritual community, or in other useful ways. Please adapt them for your context.

We've known about climate change for an eternity. Governments and corporations first learned 40 years ago.

The causes are crystal clear - burning fossil fuels, destroying forests, industrial agriculture. We know the solutions - eliminating coal, oil and gas powered projects, along with deforestation. We need to ensure a surge in renewable energy and green jobs.

Climate change's impacts are visible everywhere. In recent months alone, we've seen devastating floods, fires, and storms. The flooding situation in Pakistan, Spain, South Sudan, and New South Wales are warning enough that this problem will render many helpless, disrupt our economic growth and cause deaths. Droughts and rising sea levels are forcing millions from their homes. Those who are least responsible are suffering the most. This is unjust. Closer home, we have witnessed several other devastating effects of climate change, the most recent being *(insert a description of local climate impacts here.)*

This is wrong. Grassroots religious people from around the globe are demanding climate justice. No religious tradition says that we should destroy the planet. Yet this is exactly what governments, financial institutions and major corporations are either doing or allowing - after knowing about the problem for over 40 years.

That's why local religious groups are coming together this October 2022, weeks before the UN climate negotiations COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. Thousands of people, led by 50 grassroots, climate-impacted people of faith from diverse regions and religions, are calling on political and financial leaders to meet a series of ambitious climate demands that get at the heart of the problem.

These demands include:

- an immediate end to new fossil fuel and deforestation, consistent with the International Energy Agency's clear directive that any new coal, oil and gas projects are incompatible with avoiding catastrophic climate impacts
- an equitable phase-out of existing fossil fuel production, allowing the most vulnerable countries and communities the time they need to develop widespread renewable energy
- a massive, generous commitment by wealthy countries to a just energy transition. This support should be directed to heavily impacted workers and communities and climate-vulnerable regions already suffering loss and damage from climate change, despite having done very little to create the problem.

Grassroots religious groups are setting the bar where it must be set: the level of compassion, justice, and love. We are speaking out clearly in support of commitments that meet this bar, and actively organizing against pledges that fail to get the job done.

II. Sample Media Advisory

(Send to local newspapers, radio and TV stations a day or two before your event.)

MEDIA - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date **(of sending the Media Advisory)**

<<Your place of prayer/meditation/worship in your town/city>> will sound the alarm for climate justice and demand action by governments, financial institutions as part of a global, multi-faith action - Faiths 4 Climate Justice.

<<Name of your City/Town, Country>>

Local <parishioners/congregationalists/members of the Jewish community/Buddhists / Christians/Muslims /Hindus> will participate in the Faiths 4 Climate Justice global multi-faith action on [enter date], calling on governments and institutions to act immediately and aggressively to address the climate emergency.

They will do this by [Add in local description of action. This should include target decision maker, demand and what the action will look like]

Over 100 organizations, denominations and lineages stand in support of these events, representing more than 100 million people of faith and spirit.

Religious and spiritual communities are not idly standing by as many of those who have the power to stop the Earth's desecration do nothing. Faiths 4 Climate Justice will make it clear that they will settle for no less than what is compassionate, loving, and just.

What: People of diverse religions sounding climate alarm as part of a global, multi-faith day of action

Where: < name and address of your action>
<<insert street address details>>

List of Speakers: <<Add list of speakers if you will be having speakers at your event>>

Visual opportunities: <<List any visuals that would attract cameras here. For example, "there will be faith leaders from different faiths in their religious attire holding signs and giving prayers," or "We will be sitting in silent meditation outside the Prime Minister's office" or "Unfurling of a large banner which reads (add slogan) at (name of religious facility)."

When: <insert date and time>

For more information, contact: <<insert name of your media spokesperson and their mobile number>>

***Include, in the Press Invite, logos of all the partners you have worked with to organize your event.**

III. Samples of Press Release

(Send to local newspapers, radio and TV stations immediately after your event, or “Under Embargo” until your event is done)

MEDIA - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date **(of the event)**

Tired of waiting an eternity for action, Faith groups join global demonstration for climate justice

In the weeks leading up to COP27, grassroots religious communities demand “compassionate, loving, just” climate commitments by governments and financial institutions

Because governments, corporations, and financial institutions have not addressed the climate crisis - despite decades of warnings from scientists and mounting climate impacts - **(name of your religious/spiritual community)** joined diverse faith communities in a globally coordinated action today under the banner of Faiths 4 Climate Justice.

On **[the said date]**, people of faith from **[your community or group]** peacefully but noisily made their demands known outside the office of **(name of political or corporate leader)**. Participants sounded the alarm by **[ringing bells/beating drums/sounding the conch/shofar]** and holding a prayer and meditation vigil demanding **[a more swift and determined response to the unfolding climate crisis/ a specific outcome from ... Decision-maker ...]**. (Please outline the basics of the event, making it sound as interesting as you can.)

“No religious tradition says that we should destroy the planet,” said **[local religious leader]**. “Yet this is exactly what governments, financial institutions, and major corporations are either doing or allowing - after knowing for years that fossil fuels cause climate change. It’s flat-out wrong.”

“We have been waiting a very long time for meaningful and just climate action,” said **[local religious leader]**. “For the love of God, our neighbors, all vulnerable communities/species/For the sake of all beings, we call on **(name of decision maker)** to **(list your specific demand)**. The longer we wait, the greater the cost in life and suffering.”

The action in **(name of your community)** was part of a global series of events organized by GreenFaith, a global, multi-faith alliance.

Bold actions from people of faith and spirit took place all over the world.

- In Tanzania and Uganda there was a collaborative action against the East Africa Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP). This included street marches (actual activities, if you know).
- In France, community leaders held an interfaith fast at the Total headquarters with a call to Stop EACOP.
- In Indonesia, a youth bike tour with a set of pray-ins at coal-fired power plant sites, called for an end to coal powered projects.
- Germany had a multifaith pilgrimage for climate justice.
- In the US, faith leaders protested at BlackRock, Vanguard, and Bank of America headquarters to end fossil fuel financing.
- In Nigeria, there was a national Interfaith action against gas flaring.
- In Ghana, leaders held a climate justice training for grassroot community and faith leaders, including diverse civil society and religious networks, and with a special focus on women and girls.
- In Kenya, a roundtable discussion with multi-faith leaders calling for bold climate leadership, a street march, and a youth public action, calling for renewable energy financing.
- In Malawi, an event in a public square with Interfaith messages and imagery, calling for an end to coal mining and deforestation.

The worldwide action gave voice to a set of demands developed by grassroots people of faith

These demands include: an immediate end to new fossil fuel projects and deforestation, consistent with the International Energy Agency's clear directive that any new coal, oil and gas projects are incompatible with avoiding catastrophic climate impacts; an equitable phase-out of existing fossil fuel production, allowing the most vulnerable countries and communities the time they need to develop widespread renewable energy; and a massive, generous commitment by wealthy countries to a just energy transition. This support should be directed to heavily impacted workers and communities and climate-vulnerable regions already suffering loss and damage from climate change, despite having done very little to create the problem.

"Grassroots religious groups are setting the bar where it must be set: the level of compassion, justice, and love," said (local religious leader). "We will not stop until (Name of decision maker) commits to (describe the commitment or change you are seeking). The time for action is now."

The campaign was also taken online under the hashtag #Faiths4Climate, with thousands of GreenFaith followers on social media commenting, sharing posts and narrating their experiences with the climate crisis and the actions they have taken to adapt.

Mr XYZ of (Country) a priest, said: "The climate crisis is real. As a religious leader I have since stopped focusing on prosperity gospel and now preach a lot on responsible behavior to reduce global warming. With the #Faith4Climate I am more emboldened."

Ms XYZ of (Country) said as a youth she was bitter with the elitist countries that were turning a blind eye to the realities surrounding fossil fuels and targeting Africa. "This is neocolonialism. The profits are taken away while we are left to clean after the rich. This is unfair," she commented on the GreenFaith World Facebook page.

Visuals: [\(link to photo and video clips\)](#)

Media contact: [\[person fielding to contact for media enquiries, their mobile phone number\]](#)

Spokesperson: [\[your spokesperson, including any relevant title - e.g. parish priest - their mobile phone number\]](#)

Sample Press Release

Australia/Pacific

October 13, 2022

Religious groups condemn Australia's coal and gas exports, demand justice

Faith communities across Australia and the Pacific have today called upon the Australian Government to stop approvals for new coal and gas projects and an end to the use of taxpayers' money to prop them up.

An open letter, addressed to Prime Minister Albanese and signed by diverse senior faith leaders from the Pacific and Australia, will also be presented today.

Signatories to the letter include the Anglican Archbishop and Primate of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia, the Grand Mufti of Australia and New Zealand, senior Buddhist monks, heads of churches and peak faith organizations, senior Pacific faith leaders and First Nations leaders.

Grassroots people of faith in major cities across Australia are also demonstrating their solidarity with the faith leaders and First Nations signatories. Several people have added their voices to this call through all-night vigils, meditation, chanting or fasting, before gathering in Cathedrals and other iconic places of worship in the morning.

Rev. James Bhagwan, the General Secretary of the Pacific Conference of Churches, said: "We, in the Pacific, have welcomed the willingness of the new Labor Government to listen to the peoples of the Pacific. This is what we are saying: coal and gas exports from Australia are a threat to our survival. When coal and gas is burned offshore from Australia, our homes and cultures are threatened no less than if they are burned on Australian soil."

Venerable Bhante Sujato, an Australian leader in the Theravada Buddhist tradition, said: "It is not a morally coherent position for Australia to be committed to reducing emissions while at the same time exporting twice as much coal as we burn domestically."

Uniting Church Minister, Rev. Ray Minniecon, a Kabi Kabi and Gurang Gurang Elder, who also has South Sea Islander heritage, said: "We've seen a shift for the better under Labor, but if the Albanese Government truly respects First Nations peoples, they would restore the power they need to protect Country."

“This on its own would often mean that new exploration and mining could not go ahead”, he said.

The Australian and Pacific faith communities’ actions are part of Faiths for Climate Justice’, a global faith-led campaign for just transition to renewable energy. Beyond the Pacific, Faiths 4 Climate Justice events are taking place in over 40 countries.

Visuals: [\(link to photo and video clips\)](#)

Media contact: [\[person fielding media enquiries, their mobile phone number\]](#)

Spokesperson: [\[your spokesperson, including any relevant title - e.g. parish priest - their mobile phone number\]](#)

IV. More on how to write a media release

Send your media release to reporters **immediately after your action or event**. The goal is to give the media all the information they need. Media releases are ideally accompanied by 2-3 of the best photos from your action, as well as links to short video clips.

Here is the [basic structure](#) of a media release.

Hints for Creating Great Media Releases:

- **Eye-catching title:** Just like the headlines of a newspaper, summarize your event or action into no more than seven words. This is your chance to grab their attention.
- **Opening paragraph:** Make your opening paragraph short and include the most media-worthy feature of your action in this opening paragraph. It is also important that this paragraph includes where and when the action or event is happening and what it is.
- **Second paragraph:** Add more information and background.
- **Opening quote:** Just like the opening paragraph, the first quote should be the most media-worthy quote, from the most media-worthy spokesperson.

- **Second quote:** This could be more information from the first spokesperson, or a quote from a second spokesperson to provide a diversity of voices.
- **Last paragraph:** Finish with your demand, e.g, that your local MP come out in opposition to or support of a project or legislation.
- **Include your contact details:** This should include contact details of your media liaison and of your spokespeople.
- **Add '###' to the bottom:** This tells the media person it's the end of the release.
- **No more than a page:** It's rare that a media release about an action or an event is longer than a page. The media will contact you if they want more information.
- **Send it in an email:** The subject line of the email should be 'RELEASE: [title of your action or event]'. Then copy and paste the media release into the body of the email. This is a lot more likely to be read than sending it as an attachment.