



The Church of Scotland

MODERATOR OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

This email is being sent to: Presbytery Clerks, Ministers, OLMs & Auxiliaries, Interim Moderators & Locums, Readers, the Diaconate, MDS, Ministry Candidates & Probationers, and Session Clerks

Dear All,

As we enter the final few weeks before COP26, the global climate change conference taking place in Glasgow (31st October – 12th November), we are writing to encourage every congregation in the Church of Scotland to do all that we can do to ensure that this gathering succeeds in addressing the huge challenges that we are facing.

A call to prayer and worship

Our first message to you is to encourage our congregations to pray; in our worship and preaching in the Sundays leading up to and during COP26, and to join the many opportunities for in-person and online worship that are now being planned, across Glasgow and elsewhere. We would also ask that you will consider arranging local events where people can come together to pray for justice for the poorest and for our planet.

Let us pray for our leaders involved in momentous decisions; for those whose lives are most blighted by climate injustice; and for the earth which is part of God's beautiful creation. Please also remember in your prayers all those working on behalf of our Church in relation to COP26, including a chaplaincy provision offered through Glasgow Cathedral, open to any who would value an opportunity to reflect in a safe and sacred space, and those involved in arranging a special COP26 ecumenical service to be held on Sunday 7 November at Glasgow Cathedral, which will be live-streamed.

Resources for prayer, preaching and worship on the theme of climate change and safeguarding the integrity of creation are available from [Eco-Congregation Scotland](#) and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland's '[Climate Sunday](#)' website.

A call to witness on the streets

We hope you will encourage as many people from your congregations as possible to take part in the global day of action and mass mobilisation which will take place on the 6th November in Glasgow and around the world.

If you are able, come to Glasgow for a rally which will gather in Kelvingrove Park from 11.30am and will parade through the city streets, arriving in Glasgow Green at 3pm. Faith and belief communities will be a specific part of this rally and we would want as many congregations as possible to consider being there. Details of the rally and how to sign up to be there are available [here](#). If you are hoping to come along and have any questions please email Martin Johnstone (cop26office@glasgowchurches.org.uk). That way we can seek to ensure that you are kept informed of further details as they emerge.

Should the pandemic rule out travelling and gathering in large numbers for you or members of your congregation, or if you are unable to travel for other reasons, we invite you to hold a vigil outside your own church on 6th November as a public sign of solidarity and support for climate justice and care for creation. You may want to organise this in partnership with other churches, faith groups or community organisations. We invite you to send a photo of your vigil, or of the preparation for it, so we can share activity on social media – please email this to mediarelations@churchofscotland.org.uk. In the run up to the 6th November day of action we want to encourage congregations to make banners to hang outside your churches and if possible to bring them to Glasgow. A small number of banners are available from the national office which read 'Care for Creation – Climate Justice Now' which could be hung from railings or the side of church buildings. If you would like to receive one of these please contact Carol Finlay cfinlay@churchofscotland.org.uk.

If people are unable to attend the events in Glasgow or a public witness near you because of geography or physical impairment, we ask that these people offer their prayers in support of the day's events and the success of the COP26 summit as a whole; this joining together in common cause is every bit as valuable.

Hear the voices of those people most deeply impacted

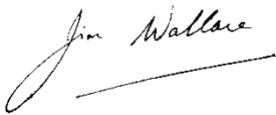
Our third request is to ensure that the wisdom and experience of our sisters and brothers in the countries most affected by global heating and in societies least able to cope with measures to mitigate the impact is uppermost in our thoughts and actions. The poorest are often excluded from decisions which hurt them most. There is a real fear that this will be even more the case in Glasgow where many people will be unable to travel to the UK because of COVID restrictions.

We have a specific commitment to the poorest and most marginalised and we want to ensure that their voices are heard. In partnership with Christian Aid, SCIAF, Tearfund and the Church of Scotland, Glasgow Churches Together COP26 Group have produced four short videos from [Ethiopia](#), [Honduras](#), [Malawi](#) and [Zambia](#). We would encourage you to use and share these videos widely and to do everything else that you can do to ensure that the reality and plight of those most deeply impacted by climate injustice is heard over these coming weeks. We stand, with Christ, in solidarity with them.

We recognise that there are many demands on people's time and energy, but we hope that you will agree that the future of God's sacred earth, and the decisions which will be taken over coming weeks, are amongst the most urgent.

Let us together pray and strive to be a church that acts as if we believe that God made the earth in all its wonder.

In your service,



Rt Hon Lord Wallace of Tankerness QC
Moderator
General Assembly of the Church of Scotland



Robert G Hynd
Moderator
The Presbytery of Glasgow



Revd Dr Martin Johnstone
COP26 Ambassador
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