

The Church of England's lead Bishop for the environment, the Rt Revd Nicholas Holtam is calling on congregations to join Pope Francis, Patriarch Bartholomew, members of the global Anglican Church and Christians around the world to fast and pray for the care of creation on 1st September.

Bishop Nicholas said:

"It will do us all good to stop, fast, think and pray about the need to care for God's good but fragile creation. We live at a time when human activity has caused a dramatic reduction in the earth's biodiversity and when people are causing climate change through our profligate use of fossil fuels. A consensus has emerged about the need to move to a low carbon economy.

"Whatever the scientific, economic and political difficulties at root this is a spiritual problem. Prayer helps clarify what we want and strengthens our determination for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. On 1st September, join the prayer for the care of creation."

The latest commitment by the CofE to transition to a low carbon future seeks to join with other denominations including the Orthodox Church, which has celebrated a Day of Prayer for the Environment on 1 September since 1989; and with the Roman Catholic Church. Pope Francis established a 'World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation' for the Catholic Church which will be held annually on the same date.

Other members of the Anglican Church across the world have pledged their support for praying on the 1st September for climate justice, including the Archbishop of Cape Town and Primate of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, the Most Revd Dr Thabo Makgoba who made the following commitment:

"I fast in solidarity with children who will go to bed hungry tonight because their parents cannot afford the rising prices of food;

I fast in solidarity with climate refugees who have lost their homes and livelihoods due to climate change;

And I fast in solidarity with people of faith around the world because we know that hope is rising."

Notes

Archbishop Makgoba is chair of the international Anglican Communion Environmental Network (ACEN) and in February this year hosted a meeting of bishops from around the Anglican Communion whose dioceses are suffering from the consequences of climate change and environmental degradation. In a statement [The World is our Host: A call to urgent action for climate justice](#), the bishops encouraged Anglicans to "join in prayer and fasting for climate justice on the first day of each month as an integral part of life and worship".

The Lutheran World Federation has been promoting a global 'Fast for the Climate' and has invited its member churches to fast and pray on the first day of every month until December 2015, when the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 20) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will take place in Paris, France. The fast is seen as "a way for religious communities to express and act upon their concern about climate change and climate justice", to "show a commitment to undertake the necessary transformations in their communities", and to "demand that national governments work for more ambitious and ethical outcomes in climate negotiations", according to Dr Carlos Bock, who was Director of the LWF Department for Mission and Development when the initiative was launched.

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