

Young people's perspectives on why net zero carbon matters

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Climate change is an urgent concern.

We live in an amazing world which has been wonderfully created by an all-loving God. Worryingly though, we're not looking after it very well. Many people needlessly suffer and die every day for a variety of reasons and many more might die if we don't address climate change.

The world's population is increasingly vulnerable to climate change impacts such as droughts, floods, heat waves, extreme weather events and sea-level rise – we must do something about this growing problem.¹

Christians believe that this planet doesn't belong to us. The Psalmist writes: *"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it"* (Psalm 24:1); if everything in this world belongs to God, then we have a responsibility to care for it.

We mustn't forget that planet Earth is the only place that we have and if we choose to abuse it, it will be a choice we may live to regret.

Together we have the power to be the change we want to see in the world.

We are taught as Christians that humans are stewards of the world, if that is so how can we allow such awful things to happen to the world under the hand of humans? We urgently need to sort out the problem or it will simply be too late. Being a young person is difficult when all you hear about is the damage to the environment; it's even harder to think about what the world will be like in the future, our future, our children's future. It is up to us to allow our future families to have a beautiful world to live in. We owe it to them.

"If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth." 1 John 3:16-17

¹ For example, [One billion children at 'extremely high risk' of the impacts of the climate crisis - UNICEF](#), [Climate Change - 11 Facts \(conservation.org\)](#), [Disproportionate Impacts of Climate Change on Socially Vulnerable Populations in the United States | US EPA](#), [Inequalities exacerbate climate impacts on poor – United Nations Sustainable Development](#)

Reaching net zero emissions is central to halting runaway climate change and restoring God's creation. The situation is severe, and the current impacts of the climate emergency are catastrophic for communities worldwide, particularly those who have contributed the least to cause the issue and those in poverty. Jesus taught us to love our neighbour, and in a globalised world, the church needs to be steadfast in reaching net-zero 2030 to show that love. Young people are key drivers of climate action and will be those most affected by the legacy of the climate crisis. **Listen to us when we call for ambition and action. Don't drag your heels. Get on with it, in love, grace and humility.**



Youth for climate strike, Bristol, 2020