

Climate Sunday – 2021

This service is St Michael's contribution to a nationwide wave of prayer and thought in preparation for the COP26 conference in Glasgow in October and November this year. COP26 will be the 26th in a series of United Nations conferences. It stands for Conference of the Parties and seeks to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The intention of our service is to galvanise us into renewing our commitment to action (both political and social), prayer and lifestyle change in the face of Climate Change and all that that means to us and people all over this planet which we call our common home. We can no longer ignore this catastrophe which is already seeing island nations in the Pacific disappearing under rising oceans, rivers and lakes like Lake Baikal, the source of life to so many, drying up, sea ice disappearing, wild fires consuming vast areas of forest and grasslands being reduced to desert.

The great injustice of this crisis is that those who are producing the least causative gasses are affected the most yet they are doing their bit too.

The Archbishop of Aotearoa and Polynesia said, in 2018,

“The Tongan island where I used to fish as a boy with my father now has stripped coconut palms as the salt water attack the roots and cyclones ravage above...

The conch, in the Pacific Islands, is blown to signify something of importance. We need to blow a conch to alert the world of

danger, not only to ourselves but to planet Earth. We need to call for a working together to care for our common home. We need to raise prophetic voices today. We face great crises together. We have the opportunity to forward a new movement of caring more deeply for God's creation, of celebrating its wonders and of discovering our common humanity.

The Archbishop of Cape Town, said in the same year,

“In southern Africa we are dependent on water for life – and climate change is changing rain patterns. Mozambique has been devastated by flooding. In Namibia, Swaziland and South Africa the greatest impact has been crippling drought. In Northern Namibia and Southern Angola people have been forced to slaughter their cattle, destroying their future economic stability. In Cape Town we fear a city of 3 million might run out of water before next year's rains come. So we are developing a theology of care for creation and integrating it into our preaching and prayers. We are joining the world season of creation, acting locally, involving the Mothers' Union and Bishops are incorporating tree planting into their confirmation ceremonies, encouraging young people to care for trees as a symbol of their Christian lives. Diocesan solar farms will generate green energy to feed into local power grids. We need faith leaders who, in the words of Pope Francis, “can hear the cry of the poor and the cry of the Earth.””

As individuals and as a community we come together to endorse what we have already embarked on and to invigorate

our continued response to the disastrous threat and reality which is climate change. In doing so we seek God's Kingdom for all his Creation.