



Dear Faith Leader,

Welcome to the National Faith + Climate Forum 2026. Your participation reflects a shared commitment to care for creation, deepen faith and understanding, connect with peers in meaningful pursuit, invigorate your congregation, and strengthen your local community. As clergy and faith leaders, **you are trusted messengers within your communities, helping people make meaning of change, navigate uncertainty, and move toward hope-filled action.** When faith leaders speak and lead visibly, congregations and communities are inspired to engage in solutions that support creation care, community resilience, and the well-being of future generations.

Participating in this forum promises to:

- Equip you with insights from esteemed leaders at the intersection of faith and environmental stewardship.
- Inspire your congregation and explore practical ways to engage in creation care through programs such as the [Climate Ambassador Training](#), [One Home One Future](#), and [Blessed Tomorrow](#).
- Facilitate collaboration with a diverse network of local faith leaders committed to justice and creation care.
- Contribute to a collective vision that enhances our impact, driven by faith and compassion for the world.
- Strengthen your resolve for equitable and conscientious climate action, safeguarding our planet for all communities and future generations.

We are ready to answer the call to protect and heal the Earth. Your presence reflects the power of faith in action and a shared commitment to visibly lead with courage, hope, and compassion as we work toward a just and restored creation.

Rev. Carol Devine
Sr. Director, Blessed Tomorrow

Ashley Lane
Director, Network Activation

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This Living Earth by Steve Connell

"...And that is why, if, from this moment forward, in our voice, you once again hear a harmony with the Earth; then from out of destruction our rebirth comes, and isn't that what life does best. It goes on...

All life is connected. Nothing lives alone.

On this one and only living Earth: home."

Meeting Guidelines

ecoAmerica + Blessed Tomorrow commitments to speakers and attendees:

- 1. Inclusion:** We seek to create brave spaces where all voices are included, heard, and respected. As a collaborative network, we extend compassion, acceptance, and respect to everyone in our community and advocate for inclusive policies and environments.
- 2. Diversity:** We acknowledge that people have different identities, backgrounds, and experiences, and we value the power of those differences. Our community is enriched by the diversity of our team, participants, and speakers, including queer, transgender, and intersex individuals, people of all races, ethnicities, abilities, economic statuses, marital statuses, housing statuses, ages, and backgrounds. We actively seek to create forums and activities that encourage and celebrate diverse participation.
- 3. Equity:** We embrace strategies and foster attitudes that ensure equitable access for all. We champion the voices of those marginalized or overlooked. We advocate for and work toward eliminating disparities experienced by populations subjected to systemic disadvantages through inequitable and discriminatory economic, social, and environmental influences.

These guidelines are designed to foster safe and constructive spaces for dialogue and exchange:

- Participate fully, actively, and constructively, be aware of the allotted time, and mindful to include fellow group members.
- Practice active listening (listen to understand both emotion and intent).
- Respectfully engage one another by asking questions and focusing on ideas, not people, if differences of opinions arise. Refrain from personal attacks.
- Accept the right to pass during any discussion. Each individual has this right and should respect each other's right as well.
- Speak from your own experience instead of generalizing (“I” instead of “they,” “we,” and “you”) and validating others’ stories and experiences.
- Be conscious of body language and nonverbal responses — they are as impactful as words.
- Allow people to acknowledge, address, and learn from mistakes. Be kind in the process.

Agenda

All times listed in the agenda are in Eastern Time. Please note the local times:

12:00 pm - 5:30 pm ET | 11:00 am - 4:30 pm CT | 10:00 am - 3:30 pm MT | 9:00 am - 2:30 pm PT

12:00 pm **Opening Prayer + Welcome**

Ground the day in our faith, reflecting on the spiritual call to imagine and build a thriving future for our congregations and communities. Let us open our hearts to restoration, justice, and collective action as we step into this shared work.

Speaker: Rev. Carol Devine, *Senior Director, Blessed Tomorrow*

12:15 pm **Opening Keynote**

Envision a restored creation in balance, a world where communities flourish because faith and climate action are deeply intertwined. Drawing on *What If We Get It Right?*, the session explores how collective wisdom, justice, and creativity can shape a hopeful future. Participants will be inspired to imagine what congregations can build spiritually, socially, and environmentally when people of faith lead with courage, compassion, and clarity.

Speaker: Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson, *Author of What If We Get It Right?, co-founder of Urban Ocean Lab, co-editor of All We Can Save, and co-creator How to Save a Planet*

12:45 pm **A Call to Clergy: Preaching That Moves People to Act**

Congregations look to spiritual leaders for guidance on the challenges shaping their lives and communities, yet climate and creation care are rarely addressed in preaching. Research shows that when clergy speak about these issues, congregations are more likely to engage in solutions. This session offers practical tools to help faith leaders integrate creation care into sermons in ways that inspire hope, clarity, and action.

1:05 pm **Break + Musical Interlude:** Pause and enjoy music that nurtures reflection and renewal.

1:15 pm

Caring for the Earth: Stories from Faith Communities

Celebrate the launch of *Caring for the Earth: Stories from Faith Communities*, a seven-part film series designed to spark conversation, strengthen relationships, and inspire climate action in congregations and communities. This session features a screening of *Called by Faith: How Will You Answer?*, a film exploring how faith and values call us to respond to the climate crisis with courage, compassion, and hope. Participants will learn how the full series can be used to deepen dialogue, inspire leadership, and move communities from concern to action.

1:40 pm

What Was Always Known: Indigenous Wisdom for Earth, Justice, and Restoration

Explore how Indigenous wisdom deepens our understanding of harmony, interconnectedness, and mutual care within the whole community of life. An Indigenous leader will reflect on how faith communities might reimagine their relationship with land, water, and the natural world, including one congregation's powerful example of returning land to those who stewarded it for millennia. These talks reveal how faith, justice, and care for creation are inseparable.

Speakers: Sister Sue Ernster, *President, Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration*; Rev. Dr. Randy Woodley, *Founder + Co-sustainer, Eloheh Indigenous Center for Earth Justice/Eagle's Wings*

1:55 pm

Stories of Renewal: Faith Communities Rising After Climate Disaster

Hear powerful updates from communities impacted by the LA fires and Hurricanes Helene and Ian, and the faith leaders who have guided their communities through recovery, healing, and rebuilding. These stories show how spiritual leadership, compassion, and community connection create pathways to resilience in the wake of devastating climate events. Participants will witness what renewal looks like when congregations lean into faith, hope, and collective care.

Speakers: Rev. Mary Ann Harrison, *Pastor, Christ the Shepherd Lutheran Church*; Julie Lehman, *Engagement Manager, Creation Care Alliance of WNC*; Rev. Phoebe Presson, *Executive Assistant - Bishop Teresa E. Snorton, Christian Methodist Episcopal Church*

2:30 pm **Break + Musical Interlude:** A moment to reset and reflect.

2:40 pm **Ambassador Spotlight: Leading Change in Your Congregation**

Hear from Blessed Tomorrow Climate Ambassadors who are helping their congregations turn faith into action through creation care and community leadership. Their stories show what becomes possible when local leadership, shared purpose, and faithful action come together. Participants will learn how to take the training, host a session in their community, and join a growing network of faith leaders driving climate action nationwide.

2:50 pm **Youth Visions 2050: Imagining What's Possible**

Young leaders from diverse traditions share bold visions for the world they hope to inherit and the future they are already helping to shape. This three-part session features youth advocates lifting up justice and climate leadership; how teaching young people to grow food builds agency, resilience, and a grounded faith through connection with the soil; and a Climate at the Dinner Table Skit that uses humor to model how climate conversations can unfold with courage, compassion, and joy.

Speakers: Vic Collins, *MDiv Student, Princeton Theological Seminary*; Brooke Elness, *Youth Activist, EcoFaith Network NE-MN Synod ELCA*; Addie Flesch, *ELCA Climate Leader, St. Olaf College*; Raphaela Gold, *Student, Princeton University*; Ruby Martinez, *Program Coordinator, Eden Village Camp*; Paavo Rundman, *ELCA Climate Leader, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

3:30 pm **Activity Session — Finding Your Climate Calling: What Can I Do?**

Our faith calls each of us to play a role in caring for creation and supporting the well-being of our communities. What role can you personally play in addressing the climate crisis? Together, we will complete the Climate Action Venn Diagram activity to identify meaningful climate actions aligned with your skills, community needs, and sense of purpose.

Speaker: Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson, *Author of What If We Get It Right?*

3:50 pm

Faith in Practice: Building Resilient Congregations Today

Congregations are taking meaningful climate action right now. Learn from communities leading in renewable energy, land stewardship, local food security, and carbon-neutral initiatives. Featuring replicable models to build resilience through solar projects, land stewardship, and more, this session equips participants with actionable ideas and tools to bring home to their own communities, strengthening resilience and creation care from the ground up.

Speakers: Bishop Michael L. Mitchell, *134th Elected + Consecrated Bishop, Presiding Prelate of the 6th Episcopal District, African Methodist Episcopal Church*; Simone Nelson, *Creative Justice Fellowship, Green Chalice/Cypress Creek Christian Church*; Rev. Ryan Pryor, *Lead Pastor, Mission Hills Christian Church*

4:20 pm

Break + Musical Interlude: A short break accompanied by music to ground and uplift the spirit.

4:30 pm

Faith + Democracy: Protecting Our Communities

As the 2026 midterms approach, faith communities play a crucial role in supporting safe, accessible, and nonpartisan civic participation. This two-part session explores why voting and civic participation are expressions of faith and moral responsibility, offering a theological grounding for the role people of faith play in sustaining a just democracy. It then provides guidance on voter access, removing barriers for marginalized communities, legal 501(c)(3) engagement, and tools for congregational voter education.

Speakers: Rev. Dr. Jim Antal, *Special Advisor on Climate Justice to the General Minister + President, United Church of Christ*; Rabbi Jennie Rosenn, *Founder + CEO, Dayenu: A Jewish Call to Climate Action*; Jimmy Small, *President, Muslim League of Voters*; Rev. Dr. Da'Henri R. Thurmond, Sr., *Senior Pastor, St. Paul C.M.E. Church in Savannah, Georgia*

5:00 pm **Building the Future Together: Turning Vision into Collective Action**

Explore how collaboration among congregations, community organizations, interfaith coalitions, and climate justice movements accelerates progress.

Speakers: Jayden Adjodha, *Student, CLEO Institute*; Rev. Dr. Rosetta Robinson Battle, *Founder, The Heartsing Table*; Jim Harper, *Former Chair, Creation Care & Climate Justice Committee, United Church of Gainesville*; Francine Hubbs, *Emergency Management Coordinator, Alachua County Emergency Management*; Kathy Martin, *Creation Care Co-chair, Camp Chapel United Methodist Church*; Tanya Ray, *Coordinator of Youth Ministry + Confirmation, St. Ursula Catholic Church*; Ellen Siegel, *Climate Speaker Specialist, The CLEO Institute*; Rev. Stephen Tickner, *Pastor, North Chevy Chase Christian Church*; Mary Triandafilou, *Co-chair, Green Team, Saint Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church*; Dr. Rebecca Wiese, *Physician, retired ELCA Deacon, Quad Cities Interfaith Creation Care*

5:20 pm **Closing: Faith for a Thriving Tomorrow**

A final blessing and reflection from Rev. Carol Devine calling us to claim the future we choose, one rooted in thriving congregations, just communities, and a restored creation.

5:30 pm **Closing Ritual: Collective Blessing + Song**

Sing along to 'One Home One Future Hymn,' celebrating our shared commitment to building a thriving and just future for all. This closing ritual serves as a powerful reminder of the unity and purpose that drive our climate action.

Explore 100+ practical tools, guides, and inspiration to help you and your congregation care for creation. Find everything you need to take the next step at:
www.onehomeonefuture.org/all-resources

Reflection + Journaling Prompt: What If We Get It Right?

In this opening keynote, we were invited to imagine a future where creation is restored and communities flourish because justice, creativity, and collective wisdom guide our choices. We were encouraged to look clearly at the challenges before us while remaining open to possibility, asking not only what we must prevent but what we are called to build together.

This reflection invites you to consider hope not as passive optimism but as a grounding force that can shape faithful action. The question “what if we get it right?” opens space for imagination, courage, and shared responsibility. As you reflect, consider how envisioning a thriving future might influence the way you lead, speak, and act within your congregation and community.

Reflection Prompts:

- 1. Visioning the Future:** What images, stories, or ideas of a restored and thriving future resonated most deeply with you? What felt newly possible?
- 2. Role of Imagination:** How does imagining a hopeful future change the way you think about climate action today?
- 3. Faith and Courage:** What does courageous leadership look like in your congregation or community right now?
- 4. Collective Wisdom:** Where do you already see creativity, collaboration, or innovation shaping positive change in your community or faith tradition?
- 5. From Vision to Action:** What small or immediate steps could help translate hope and vision into meaningful action in your daily life or congregation?
- 6. Calling and Contribution:** What role might you or your congregation play in helping build the future being imagined?

Journaling Prompts:

What would it look like if your congregation fully embraced hope as a guiding practice for ministry and action? How might that shape the way you approach climate action in your daily life and within your congregation?

I feel inspired to imagine...

If we truly believed a thriving future was possible, we would begin by...

Reflection + Journaling Prompt: A Call to Clergy

This session invited us to consider the role of preaching and spiritual leadership in helping people of faith connect their faith to climate change. Many people in our communities are already experiencing climate impacts, including health impacts, economic strain, disasters, and uncertainty about the future. They are looking to their faith leaders for guidance, honesty, and hope. Yet climate and creation care are still rarely named in worship, leaving a gap between what congregants are concerned about and what is being spoken aloud. When faith leaders speak clearly and faithfully about care for creation and justice, people listen and respond. Preaching and speaking about climate change can help people move from concern to courage, from isolation to shared purpose, and from anxiety to meaningful action rooted in faith.

As you reflect, consider what your congregation most needs to hear right now and how spiritual leadership can help connect faith, justice, and everyday life in ways that feel relevant, hopeful, and actionable. The following sermon writing kit is designed to help translate these reflections into messages that resonate with your community.

Reflection Prompts

- 1. Moral Clarity:** How does spiritual leadership influence how congregations understand climate change and justice as moral and spiritual concerns? What changes when these issues are spoken about from the leadership?
- 2. Listening to Your Congregation:** What concerns, questions, or experiences related to climate change are already present in your community?
- 3. Speaking with Relevance:** How might creation care or climate justice connect to the lived experiences, values, or spiritual language of your congregation?
- 4. Language that Invites Action:** What messages help people feel invited into participation rather than overwhelmed or discouraged?
- 5. Faithful Leadership:** What would it look like to speak about climate and justice in a way that feels caring, grounded, and hopeful for your community?

Journaling Prompts

What message(s) does your congregation most need to hear right now?

I feel called to speak about...

What message could help our community move from concern toward faithful action?

Ready to turn reflection into practice?

The **Sermon Writing** resource page provides practical guidance and resources to help you integrate creation care and climate justice into preaching in ways that are faithful, relevant, and hopeful.

Scan the QR code below to access the Sermon resources.



Reflection + Journaling Prompt: Called by Faith

In this episode of the film series, *Caring for Earth: Stories from Faith Communities*, we heard from leaders who shared how their congregations are living out their faith by caring for and in relationships with creation. These stories invited us to imagine congregations not only as places of worship but also as places of healing, belonging, and restoration for both people and creation. Through storytelling, we are reminded that change often begins with one person's imagination. When we see what is possible elsewhere, new possibilities begin to emerge in our own communities.

As you reflect, consider how these stories expand your understanding of what a thriving congregation can be. Notice what stirred hope, curiosity, or recognition, and where you sensed alignment with your own community's values or longings.

Reflection Prompts

- 1. Stories as Teachers:** Which story, image, or example most expanded your imagination of what a thriving congregation could look like? What made it feel meaningful or attainable?
- 2. Relationship with Creation:** How does your congregation currently connect spiritual life with the natural world? Where do you see opportunities to deepen that relationship through worship, education, or action on your congregation's or community's land or waterways?
- 3. Grounded in Faith:** Several sacred passages about our relationship to creation were shared in this film. What passage from the holy writing of your tradition speaks to you and grounds you in your faith?
- 4. Local Possibilities:** What elements from these stories could be adapted in your own congregation or community? What small steps might begin moving in that direction?
- 5. Film Series:** This short film is one of 7 in this series created for communities of faith. How can your congregation use this series to educate and inspire creation care and climate justice?

Journaling Prompts

Share a time you experienced worship, singing, or prayer in nature. How might worshiping, singing, reading scripture or prayer in nature change us?

How are you finding new or renewed relationships as you care for the earth?

What is one change, however small, that could help your congregation move closer to this vision of thriving and a deeper connection with creation?

Reflection + Journaling Prompt: What Was Always Known

In this session, Indigenous wisdom invited us to reconsider how we understand our place within creation. Rather than seeing land, water, and living systems as separate from human life, we were reminded of a worldview grounded in relationship, reciprocity, and care for the whole community of life. These perspectives challenge many dominant assumptions about ownership, progress, and sustainability, and instead offer a vision of living in balance with one another and with the Earth.

As you reflect, consider how these teachings expand or deepen your understanding of creation care within your own faith tradition. Notice where you felt invited to listen differently, to slow down, or to reconsider long-held assumptions about humanity's relationship with the natural world.

Reflection Prompts:

- 1. Relationship with Creation:** How did Indigenous perspectives in this session reshape or deepen your understanding of humanity's relationship with land, water, and the living world?
- 2. Faith and Responsibility:** In what ways are care for creation, justice, and community well-being connected in your faith tradition? Where do you see opportunities to make those connections more visible in congregational life?
- 3. Learning with Humility:** What does it mean for your congregation to learn from Indigenous wisdom with respect and humility? How might listening and relationship become part of faithful action?
- 4. Living Differently:** What practices or values shared in this session invite a different way of living, leading, or making decisions within your community?

Journaling Prompts:

Where is my congregation being invited to deepen its relationship with creation?

I am being challenged to reconsider...

One small change that could help our community live more gently and attentively within creation is...

Reflection + Journaling Prompt: Stories of Renewal

In this session, we heard stories from congregations that have walked through loss, disruption, and uncertainty in the wake of climate disasters. These stories offered more than accounts of recovery. They revealed how faith communities become anchors of care, compassion, and hope when familiar structures are shaken. Through spiritual leadership, mutual support, and deep community connection, renewal began to take shape even in the midst of grief.

Renewal does not mean returning to what once was. It often emerges through adaptation, deeper relationships, and a renewed sense of purpose. These stories invite us to reflect on how faith communities can respond not only in moments of crisis but also in the long work of healing that follows. ***As you reflect, consider how resilience is formed through shared care, spiritual grounding, and the willingness to walk alongside one another through uncertainty.***

Reflection Prompts:

- 1. Witnessing Resilience:** What did these stories reveal about the role of faith during times of crisis? How did spiritual practices, relationships, or community presence support recovery?
- 2. Community Care:** In what ways can congregations become places of stability, refuge, and healing when communities experience disruption or loss? What forms of care felt most meaningful in the stories shared?
- 3. Spiritual Leadership:** What qualities or practices enabled leaders to guide their communities through uncertainty? How did compassion, honesty, or presence shape the path forward?
- 4. Preparing for Renewal:** How can congregations hold both preparedness and compassion together? What does it look like to prepare for future challenges while remaining rooted in hope and care for one another?

Journaling Prompts:

When you reflect on these stories, where do you notice grief, compassion, or hope arising in your own experience or community? What does renewal look like when it honors both loss and healing?

How might your congregation be called to show up for one another and for the wider community in times of crisis, not only through action but also through presence, care, and spiritual support?

What practices, relationships, or commitments could help your congregation remain grounded in faith and connected when facing uncertainty or disruption?

Become a Climate Ambassador with Blessed Tomorrow

Lead with Faith. Act on Climate. Inspire Your Community.

You care about your community. You care about creation.

Turn that care into meaningful, faith-led climate action.

The Blessed Tomorrow Climate Ambassador Training

equips you with the knowledge, tools, and confidence to lead in your congregation, your community, and beyond.



Faith leaders and communities have a powerful role to play in caring for our shared home. This training helps you connect your values to action in ways that are hopeful, practical, and rooted in community.

Take the first step toward faith-led climate action today.

Sign up for the training: blessedtomorrow.org/take-the-training

What You'll Gain:

- ✓ **Confidence to Lead:** Talk about climate in ways that resonate across values and beliefs.
- ✓ **Practical Tools:** Ready-to-use resources to bring climate conversations and action to your community.
- ✓ **A National Community:** Connect with and learn from 4,500+ Ambassadors leading change across the country.
- ✓ **Ongoing Support:** Blessed Tomorrow is available to answer questions and offer advocacy opportunities.

Scan the QR code below to access the training!



Reflection + Journaling Prompt: Youth Visions 2050

In this session, young leaders invited us to look ahead with courage and imagination, sharing visions shaped by justice, creativity, and hope for the world they are already helping to build. Through advocacy, stories of growing food and cultivating resilience, and a lighthearted skit modeling climate conversations around the dinner table, we were reminded that youth leadership does more than inspire. It renews communities, challenges assumptions, and reconnects faith with possibility.

Young people often approach climate challenges with honesty and clarity while also bringing creativity, humor, and a deep desire for meaningful action. Their leadership reminds us that hope grows through participation, relationship, and shared responsibility across generations. ***As you reflect, consider how listening to youth can reshape how congregations imagine the future and how faith communities can create space for young people to lead, teach, and guide collective action.***

Reflection Prompts

- 1. Listening to Youth:** What perspectives, questions, or insights from young leaders challenged or inspired you? What did you hear that felt new or urgent?
- 2. Hope in Action:** How do youth voices reshape conversations about climate, faith, and the future?
- 3. Intergenerational Leadership:** Where do opportunities exist for deeper collaboration between generations in your congregation or community? How might youth and elders learn from one another in this work?
- 4. Curiosity and Openness:** Where might your congregation grow in curiosity toward youth perspectives? What might change if youth voices were received not only as inspiration but also as wisdom and guidance for the community's future?

Journaling Prompts

What steps can your congregation take to uplift youth leadership and create meaningful opportunities for young people to shape climate action?

I feel hopeful when...

What might change in your congregation if youth voices were centered in imagining the future?

Activity Sheet: Climate Action Venn Diagram

Addressing the climate crisis does not require everyone to do the same thing. Meaningful climate action emerges when our gifts, values, and energy meet the needs of the moment. **Remember, there is no single right answer. The goal is not perfection, but clarity about where you can contribute in ways that feel authentic, faithful, and sustainable.** Reflect on the questions below. On the next page, fill in your [Climate Action Venn Diagram](#) and identify the actions that sit at the center.

Step 1: What Are You Good At?

List your skills, experience, and resources. Think broadly. This can include professional skills, lived experience, relationships, creativity, organizing ability, teaching, caregiving, storytelling, administration, or community trust.

- PROMPT:
- What do people often come to you for help with?
 - What networks or spaces do you already have access to?

Step 2: What Work Needs Doing?

Identify climate and justice challenges that matter to you. Consider both local needs and broader efforts where congregations and communities can make a difference.

- PROMPT:
- What climate impacts are affecting your community right now?
 - Where do you feel a sense of moral urgency or responsibility?

Step 3: What Brings You Joy or Deep Satisfaction?

Climate action is most sustainable when it connects to meaning and purpose. Consider the work that energizes you and helps you stay engaged over time.

- PROMPT:
- What kind of work leaves you feeling energized?
 - When do you feel most connected to your values, community, or faith?

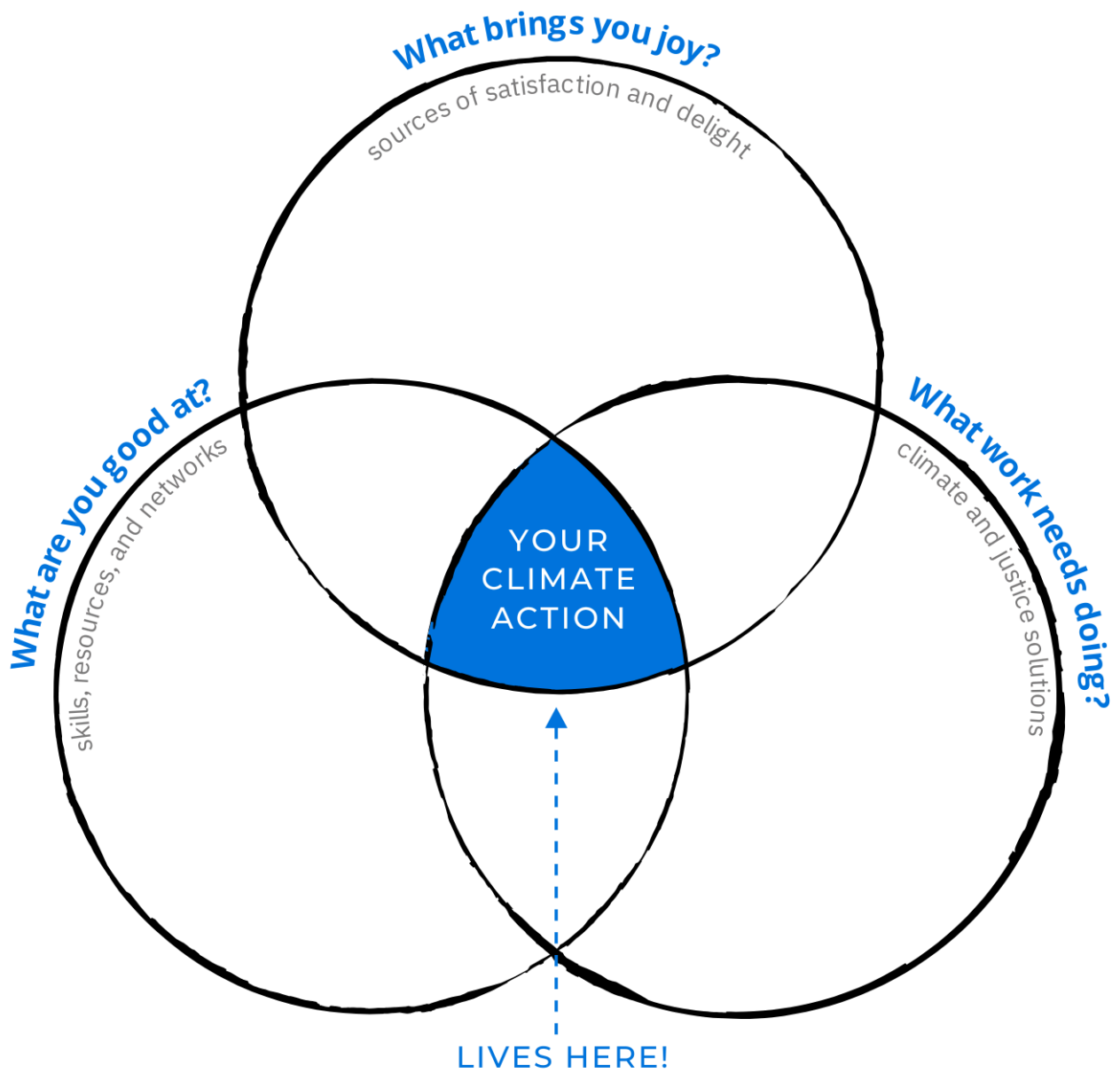
Step 4: Where Do These Overlap?

Look for the intersection between your gifts, what the world needs, and what sustains you. This is where meaningful climate action often begins.

- PROMPT:
- What are one or two actions you could begin or deepen in the next six months within your congregation or community?

Step 5: Take Action!

Fill in each circle using your reflections above. Then, write down two concrete climate actions that emerge from the center of the diagram.



My Climate Actions:

1. _____

2. _____

Disaster Preparedness Checklist

Preparing for climate disasters is crucial for houses of worship to ensure the safety of their congregations and communities and to protect their facilities. **Below are 10 steps you can take!** A spanish language version is available at OneHomeOneFuture.org



1. Form an Emergency Response Team

Establish a team to create and implement an emergency plan. Include members trained in first aid, emergency response, and crisis management and those who are familiar with the physical layout of the property (it is recommended to record a video) and the location of shut-off valves or switches for water, gas, and electricity. Sign up for local emergency alerts for your area.



2. Create an Emergency Plan

Develop a comprehensive emergency plan for the disasters likely to occur in your area. Determine if the building can be used as an emergency shelter and/or point of distribution. Include procedures for securing the congregation, evacuation routes, and emergency contacts. Post the address, phone number, and emergency contacts by phone. Keep the Emergency Plan in an easy-to-find and well-marked location.



3. Update Insurance and Backup Important Documents

Review your policy with your insurance agent and update it if needed. Ensure that all important documents are backed up, secured onsite, plus copies kept offsite, including membership records, insurance and financial documents, historical documents, and legal papers.



4. Stock Emergency Supplies

Maintain a supply of easily accessible emergency items such as water, non-perishable food, flashlights, batteries, first aid kits, and blankets to support your congregation if there is a need to shelter in place. Be sure the fire extinguishers and defibrillators are in good working condition. Create a kit of items needed to hold worship services.



5. Evaluate and Secure Property

Strengthen your building. This may include updating drain systems, adding trees and permeable surfaces to prevent flooding, installing storm doors and shutters, securing loose items that could become projectiles, evaluating roof and foundation conditions, and fire safety.



6. Establish a Communication Plan

Set up reliable communication methods to contact members, especially those who are most vulnerable, during and after a disaster. This could include social media, text message alerts, and a phone tree. Regularly update your congregation about the emergency plan. Encourage families to develop their own emergency plans. Connect with local leaders to receive information and offer support.



7. Partner with Local Authorities and Organizations

Collaborate with local leaders, emergency management services, other houses of worship, and community organizations. Join a network that can offer support during a disaster. Consider [Willing to Respond](#), a joint venture to help congregations work better together and connect with their local disaster response infrastructure.



8. Conduct Drills and Training

Create evacuation and shelter-in-place signs, and regularly schedule drills to practice the emergency plan with your congregation and response team. Organize training sessions on preparedness topics such as CPR, first aid, disaster response, and emotional well-being.



9. Review and Update the Plan Regularly

[Deepen your knowledge about climate change and the impacts.](#)

Update the church directory, including emergency contacts and notes about members who would need assistance in an emergency. Review and update the emergency plan annually to incorporate new insights and address any changes in your congregation or community's needs.



10. Support Emotional Well-Being and Spiritual Resilience

[Learn about the mental health impacts of climate change.](#) Be proactive in supporting the mental health of congregational members, especially youth. Incorporate actions to support mental health into the life of the congregation and increase it as a priority during and after a disaster.

How to Start a Green Team at Your Congregation

Creating a Green Team within your congregation is a powerful way to foster environmental stewardship and engage your community in sustainable practices. This step-by-step guide provides practical advice to help you establish a successful team.

- 1. Grounding in Faith:** What passages in your holy texts or traditions of your faith call you to care for creation?
 - Connect with others who are concerned about climate change and want to do something.
 - Gain the support of the congregation's leadership, including clergy, staff, and board leaders.
- 2. Recruit Team Members:** Build a diverse and committed team.
 - Announce the formation of the Green Team during services and via the congregation's communication channels (bulletins, emails, social media).
 - Encourage members of all ages and backgrounds to join to ensure a variety of perspectives and skills.
- 3. First Meeting:** Start with a prayer and a grounding passage of Scripture.
 - Create a vision and mission of the Green Team that aligns with your congregation's and tradition's vision and mission.
 - Brainstorm ideas that the team can focus on, such as reducing waste, increasing energy efficiency, or promoting sustainable food choices.
 - Set short-term easy goals where there is energy and long-term goals that align with your congregation's values and capabilities.
 - Prepare a report outlining the purpose, goals, and potential benefits of the Green Team for the board. Request a budget or start-up funds to kickstart the initial projects.
 - Present the proposal during a church board or leadership meeting and secure formal endorsement and support.
- 4. Green Audit:** Examine how the congregation cares for creation in all aspects of its life.
 - Use the Congregational Green Assessment on **page 29** and the One Home One Future's [Efficiency Checklist](#) to evaluate energy usage.
 - Identify key areas where improvements can be made.
 - Document findings to track progress and prioritize initiatives.

- 5. Develop an Action Plan:** Create a detailed plan to achieve the team's goals.
 - Based on the audit, list specific projects the Green Team will undertake, such as hosting an Earth Day worship service, installing programmable thermostats, or hosting educational workshops.
 - Assign responsibilities and set timelines for each project.
 - Determine necessary resources and partnerships that could enhance the projects.
- 6. Launch and Promote Green Initiatives:** Implement the action plan and raise awareness within the congregation.
 - Communicate to generate excitement and participation.
 - Use church newsletters, bulletins, and announcements to keep the congregation informed about the Green Team's activities & successes.
 - Celebrate milestones to maintain enthusiasm and support for ongoing and future projects.
- 7. Monitor, Evaluate, and Adapt:** Ensure the effectiveness of the initiatives and make improvements.
 - Regularly check the progress of each project against the goals set in the action plan. Let go of initiatives that don't have energy or support.
 - Solicit feedback from the congregation to evaluate the impact and reception of the initiatives.
 - Adjust plans as necessary to optimize outcomes and address new opportunities or challenges.
- 8. Foster Community and Faith-Based Engagement:** Extend the reach of your Green Team's efforts beyond your congregation.
 - Collaborate with local environmental groups or other houses of worship to collaborate, share resources, and broaden impact.
 - Organize community events like clean-up days or eco-fairs to engage the broader community and promote environmental awareness.
 - Incorporate faith-based reflections and teachings that support the work of the Green Team, reinforcing the spiritual basis for environmental stewardship.

Congregational Green Assessment

This assessment provides green teams with a detailed analysis of how your congregation integrates creation care into all aspects of community life. By examining practices across worship, education, spiritual, pastoral care, buildings and grounds, community outreach, and justice and advocacy, you'll gain valuable insights to shape a strategic climate action plan and enhance your environmental stewardship.

Instructions:

- 1. Evaluation:** Utilize this tool to systematically assess your congregation's practices in key areas: worship, education, spiritual and pastoral care, buildings and grounds, community outreach, and justice and advocacy.
- 2. Rate Each Practice:** Assign a rating for each practice on a scale from 0 to 5, where 0 means no integration of the practice and 5 indicates full integration into congregational life.
- 3. Review + Plan:** Calculate the scores to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Use this data to discuss and prioritize actions for your strategic plan for climate action and creation care.

Area	Description	Rating
Worship: Ritualize creation in worship	Incorporates creation care themes into prayers, litanies, and sermons consistently.	
	Hosts special annual worship services like Tu BiShvat, Earth Day, and the Season of Creation.	
	Utilizes eco-friendly practices in worship (eco-palms, plants, flowers, candles, communion ware).	
	Features eco-celebrations and tips on bulletin boards, in announcements, etc.	
	Regularly conducts worship services outdoors.	
	Incorporates elements of nature indoors, such as water features and natural imagery.	
	Worship Rating:	

<p>Education: Creation + climate are regularly studied</p>	Have led a Group Blessed Tomorrow Climate Ambassador Training for the congregation.	
	Conducts book studies and educational series on creation care and climate issues.	
	Includes climate justice themes through guest speakers and sermon series.	
	Hosts congregational and community events focused on climate justice and creation care.	
	Actively participates in local, state, or national environmental advocacy efforts.	
	Involves children and youth in eco-centric programs like VBS, curriculum, field trips, gardening.	
	Promotes outdoor experiences like hikes, canoeing, biking, camping.	
	Education Rating:	
<p>Spiritual + Pastoral Care: Mental Impacts of Climate Change</p>	Raises awareness and provides resources and support around mental health impacts, including eco-grief from climate change.	
	Supports mental health needs related to climate (children and youth, climate anxiety, grief care).	
	Increases resilience by preparing for heat and climate disaster event care for members.	
	Fosters relationships with neighbors, community leaders, and other congregations.	
	Hosts support groups for congregation and community.	
	Facilitates contemplative practices and worship experiences.	
	Encourages time spent in outdoor spiritual activities.	
	Spiritual + Pastoral Care Rating:	

Consumption: Sustainable and Ethical Practices	Reduces or eliminates the use of toxic substances in cleaning products, paints, carpets/rugs, deodorizers.	
	Buys coffee, tea, chocolate, and other products from fair trade sources, such as Equal Exchange.	
	Supports local farmers by purchasing local produce to support the local economy and reduce transportation.	
	Focuses on reducing single-use products, especially plastics, using reusable dishware, compostable, or recyclable items.	
	Advocates for reduced consumption of paper and plastic products.	
	Offers vegetarian and vegan options at meals and promotes fruits and vegetables for everyone.	
	Consumption Rating:	
Buildings: Actions to lower dependence on coal, gas, oil	Completed an energy audit to identify opportunities for improvement and potential savings.	
	Implements building use policy around energy consumption for members and outside groups.	
	Reduces energy consumption (reminders, sensors, insulation, programmable thermostats).	
	Implements energy-saving actions (LED lights, Energy Star appliances, renewable energy).	
	Uses renewable energy or has taken steps toward wind, solar, and geothermal energy.	
	Has a disaster preparedness plan in place.	
	Reviews disaster preparedness plan annually.	
	Has a recycling program.	
	Hosts a clothing closet.	
	Buildings Rating:	

Grounds: Support conservation and restoration	Hosts or participates in local farmers' markets or offers a CSA program for fresh produce.	
	Encourages cycling by installing bike racks.	
	Reduced lawn size and removed invasive plants.	
	Plants native plants and trees (protect and care, knowledge of, relationship to, additional plantings).	
	Implements a composting program for organic waste.	
	Eliminates the use of toxic chemicals in lawn and garden care.	
	Has a gardening program (vegetable, herbs, pollinator).	
	Implements systems to reduce water use and support natural water systems (watershed, rain barrels, water garden)	
	Supports animal husbandry (bees, chickens, goats) and Wildlife (pollinators, birds, etc).	
	Grounds Rating:	
TOTAL RATING:		

Energy Efficiency Savings Worksheet for Congregations

In pursuing a greener congregation, think of energy savings as a snowball. Start with small, manageable steps like changing light bulbs or adjusting thermostats. These initial savings are not just a reduction in costs but an opportunity. **Use this worksheet to track these savings** and guide your next steps. **Then, reinvest the savings into the next level of energy efficiency measures**, continuously increasing your investment in sustainable and clean energy solutions.

STEP 1: Review and total the amount of your current energy bills.		
<i>*It's important to note not only the cost but also the consumption (in kilowatt-hours for electricity, therms for gas, gallons for water and fuel, and miles for airline trips) because prices can fluctuate. This will allow you to accurately track your savings and adjustments needed due to rate increases.</i>		
Baseline Annual Costs	Electric bill	\$ / kWh
	Gas bill	\$ / Therms
	Water and sewer bill	\$ / Gal
	Vehicle fuel	\$ / Gal
	Airline trips	\$ / Miles
	TOTAL COST	\$
STEP 2: Take quick, easy steps that save — target 30% energy savings.		
Conservation Savings <i>*Place signs to remind everyone to turn off lights and conserve energy. Studies have shown reminders can significantly reduce unnecessary energy use.</i>	Switch to LED light bulbs.	\$
	Switch to programmable thermostats	\$
	Seal windows and doors to prevent drafts	\$
	Lower the temperature on your water heater	\$
	Upgrade to energy-efficient appliances	\$
	Install smart power strips	\$
	Opt for wise travel options (e.g., carpooling, teleconferencing)	\$
	Promote meatless or plant-based meals	\$

	Use produce from a community garden. Have a “stone soup” meal to use up foods that might otherwise go into the trash.	\$
	Use reusable cups, plates, and utensils for gatherings and events	\$
	Implement water-saving practices for landscaping (e.g. drip irrigation system)	\$
	TOTAL SAVINGS	\$

STEP 3: Invest savings into improvements—target 30% energy savings.

Building Improvements	Insulate	\$
	Plug air leaks with weather stripping and caulking	
	Upgrade to a more efficient HVAC system	\$
	Replace old windows with energy-efficient models	\$
	Install tankless water heaters	\$
	Implement lighting controls and automation	\$
	Upgrade to low-flow faucets and toilets	\$
	TOTAL INVESTMENT	\$

STEP 4: Make it yourself or buy clean energy from a utility.

Buy Clean Energy	Install wind or solar power systems	\$
	Purchase clean energy from utilities	\$
	Transition to electric vehicles	\$
	Install electric vehicle charging stations	\$
	Implement on-site composting or biogas solutions	\$
	TOTAL INVESTMENT	\$

Candidate Climate Assessment

Elected leaders shape the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the future of our communities. *Use this tool to evaluate candidates' climate leadership and environmental priorities in elections.*

Step 1: Preview Your Ballot

Before voting, visit Vote411.org to review your ballot. For each candidate, gather information from their website, public statements, voting record, if applicable, and media coverage.

Step 2: Criteria

Assess each candidate based on their demonstrated leadership and policy commitments in the areas below. **Each category can earn 0–3 stars, for a maximum total of 30 stars.**

- 1. Climate Leadership:** Does the candidate recognize and prioritize climate action as a critical issue? (e.g., listing climate change as a primary concern, has a Climate Action Plan)
- 2. Fossil Fuel Independence:** Has not accepted money from [fossil fuel interests](#) and has signed the No Fossil Fuel Pledge (NoFossilFuelMoney.org).
- 3. Environmental Track Record:** If previously in office, has supported comprehensive environmental protection measures?
- 4. Climate Investment Priorities:** Prioritizes funding for clean energy, green infrastructure, sustainable food systems, clean transportation, electrification, efficiency, composting, conservation, and climate-ready infrastructure.
- 5. Renewable Energy Support:** Explicitly supports transitioning to renewable energy sources like wind, solar, and geothermal?
- 6. Sustainable Land Use:** Supports development and zoning policies that lower emissions, protects natural spaces, and promotes walkable, transit-oriented communities.
- 7. Resilience + Adaptation:** Advocates for measures that strengthen community resilience, including nature-based solutions, cooling centers, flood protection, fire preparedness, and climate risk planning.
- 8. Climate Equity + Environmental Justice:** Prioritizes protecting vulnerable communities and addressing inequities in climate impacts.

- 9. **Climate + Public Health:** Recognizes climate impacts on public health and supports policies that reduce pollution and improve community well-being.
- 10. **Community Engagement + Collaboration:** Actively engages with the community (forums, town halls, and events) and works collaboratively with local environmental organizations to address climate challenges.

Step 3: Candidate Scorecard

Score each category based on how well the candidate meets the criteria. **Each category can earn 0–3 stars, for a maximum total of 30 stars:**

- **0 stars:** No clear position, unclear stance, or evidence of opposition
- **1 star:** General support with limited detail or commitment
- **2 stars:** Clear policies, measurable goals, or a consistent record
- **3 stars:** Strong leadership demonstrated through concrete action, funding commitments, or a proven track record.

*The **total score** indicates the candidate's commitment to prioritizing climate action and their ambition in implementing progressive environmental policies.*

Candidate Name:			
Position Running For:			
Criteria	Score		Score
Climate Leadership	☆☆☆	Sustainable Land Use	☆☆☆
Fossil Fuel Independence	☆☆☆	Resilience + Adaptation	☆☆☆
Environmental Track Record	☆☆☆	Climate Equity + Environmental Justice	☆☆☆
Climate Investment Priorities	☆☆☆	Climate + Public Health	☆☆☆
Renewable Energy Support	☆☆☆	Community Engagement + Collaboration	☆☆☆
			TOTAL: ____ / 30

Ballot Measure Climate Assessment

Understanding the implications of county and state-wide ballot measures related to environmental issues is crucial before casting your vote. ***This section helps evaluate the impact of these measures on sustainability, climate resilience, mitigation, and environmental justice.***

Step 1: Directions for Assessing Ballot Measures

- **Preview Your Ballot:** Visit Vote411.org to access a preview of your ballot and review all related ballot measures.
- **Identify Relevant Measures:** Focus on measures that address emissions reduction (electricity, food & agriculture, industry, building, transportation), nature protection and restoration, and promote equity.
- **Gather Information:** Review the measure's text, arguments for and against, and endorsements from trusted organizations.

Step 2: Criteria

Assess each relevant ballot measure based on its potential impact in the following areas:

- **Environmental Impact:** Does the measure contribute significantly to environmental sustainability and natural ecosystem health?
- **Resilience Building:** Does the measure enhance local resilience to environmental disasters and climate change?
- **Justice and Equity:** Does the measure promote environmental justice and equity, particularly for historically marginalized communities?

Step 3: Ballot Measure Scorecard

Score each impact area based on how well the measure meets the criteria, using a scale of 0-5 stars:

- **0 stars:** Does not meet the criteria or may have negative impacts.
- **1-2 stars:** Partially meets the criteria with some beneficial aspects.
- **3-5 stars:** Fully meets the criteria with significant positive impacts.

Ballot Measure:	
Criteria	Score (0-5)
Benefits the local environment or climate.	☆☆☆☆☆
Contributes to local resilience against environmental challenges.	☆☆☆☆☆
Addresses environmental justice and equity issues.	☆☆☆☆☆
TOTAL:	___ / 15

Ballot Measure:	
Criteria	Score (0-5)
Benefits the local environment or climate.	☆☆☆☆☆
Contributes to local resilience against environmental challenges.	☆☆☆☆☆
Addresses environmental justice and equity issues.	☆☆☆☆☆
TOTAL:	___ / 15

Ballot Measure:	
Criteria	Score (0-5)
Benefits the local environment or climate.	☆☆☆☆☆
Contributes to local resilience against environmental challenges.	☆☆☆☆☆
Addresses environmental justice and equity issues.	☆☆☆☆☆
TOTAL:	___ / 15

ecoAmerica is a non-partisan, 501c3 non-profit organization. We do not endorse or oppose any candidates for public office. This information and tool is provided to empower individuals to make informed decisions based on their climate values.

Reflection + Journaling Prompt: Building the Future Together

This session highlighted how working together with other congregations and organizations can make a big difference in local climate action. Think about how you can use these ideas to connect with others in your community and start building partnerships that drive collective change. ***The prompts below will help you think about ways to get involved and make a plan.***

Reflection Prompts:

- 1. Understanding Collaboration:** Reflect on the discussions about building networks. Why do you think collaboration is essential in addressing climate issues?
- 2. Current Engagement:** Think about your congregation's current involvement in community and religious networks. What roles does your congregation play, and how do these efforts contribute to local climate action?
- 3. Identifying Opportunities:** Consider potential partnerships within your local community. What other congregations, organizations, or groups could you collaborate with to strengthen your climate action efforts? What efforts are already being implemented that you can support?
- 4. Overcoming Challenges:** Recall any obstacles you've encountered in previous collaborative efforts. How did you address these challenges, and what did you learn from those experiences?
- 5. Future Actions:** What's next for you in your climate action work? How can you take what you've learned today to enhance or expand your efforts?

Journaling Prompts:

List three congregations, groups, or organizations in your local community that you could connect with to enhance local climate action. Describe the strengths each partner brings to a collaborative effort.

For each group you listed, is there a specific project or event you could collaborate on? What would the goal of this partnership be, and how would it contribute to community-wide climate action?

What congregations, organizations, or groups in your community are already doing work that aligns with your congregation's values, gifts, and resources? How might you approach them first with curiosity and a willingness to listen, exploring how you could support and strengthen work that is already underway?

Getting Outside the Walls: Grant Application Guide

Welcome to the guide for the Getting Outside the Walls grant, aimed at empowering congregations to lead impactful climate action. This resource will help you prepare and submit your application, ensuring that you meet the eligibility criteria and maximize your chances of securing funding for your community-focused climate initiatives. Let's get started.

Step 1: Confirm Eligibility

- Your congregation must be located in the United States.
- The congregation-led project must have a climate justice/creation care focus.
- Must be a partnership and collaboration between **2 or more** congregations or congregations and local organizations.
- Applicants must have attended the 2026 National Faith + Climate Forum
- Matching contributions are required: monetary or in-kind (e.g. venue provision, printing services, or time).
- Proposals must include plans to continue or build on the collaborative relationships beyond the initial kickstart phase or event.
- The project must work toward local collective impact (city, state, or regional).

Step 2: Develop Your Project Proposal

- Clearly define the objectives and expected outcomes of your project.
- Outline the scope of the project, including specific activities, target communities, and intended climate actions.
- Detail how the project will foster community engagement in creation care and climate justice.
- Explain how the project will reduce obstacles that keep congregations from taking climate action in their local communities.
- Outline your matching contributions.

Step 3: Fill Out the Application Form

- Access the application form, which becomes **available on April 25, 2026**.
- Fill in all required fields accurately, ensuring that all information reflects the project's aims and logistical details.

Step 4: Review and Submit

- Before submitting, review your application thoroughly to ensure that all information is complete and accurate. Check for any errors or omissions that might impact the evaluation of your proposal.
- Submit the application by the **June 1, 2026, deadline**. You will receive a confirmation email once your application is received successfully.

Step 5: Notification and Planning for Project Implementation

- After successfully submitting your application, you can expect notification by **July 1, 2026**. Use the waiting period to discuss further planning and preliminary steps with your project partners.
- If you receive a grant award, carefully review the grant agreement and all conditions outlined by Blessed Tomorrow.
- Organize a kickoff meeting with all project partners to discuss the details of the grant award and plan the initial steps for project implementation.
- Publicly announce the grant award to your congregation and community to generate interest and gather additional support. This will help in rallying more stakeholders and resources around your project.

Application Opens
April 25, 2026

Submission Deadline
June 1, 2026

Notifications By
July 1, 2026

We Have a Common Calling Hymn

We have a common calling, O God of love and grace —
to care for your creation, to tend what you embrace.
We have one home, one future; we're not in this alone.
We're called to work together for this our common home.

You call us to be partners — to notice and to care;
you make us loving stewards of land and sea and air.
We see our climate changing; God, show us what to do
to care for your creation, to heal the earth with you.

We'll work to build strong leaders; we'll listen to our youth.
We'll strengthen congregations to help them speak the truth.
We'll work with other partners in our communities —
for moral, wise perspectives must shine in times like these.

We see our neighbors suffering — especially the poor —
and so we'll work toward justice and toward an earth restored.
We'll work as loving neighbors to plan and to prepare.
We'll allocate for climate; the earth deserves its share.

O God, as congregations, we don't act out of fear;
our moral obligations will motivate us here.
We seek a blest tomorrow; our voices rise above.
May we, today, be faithful in this great work of love.

Written by Carolyn Gillette inspired by One Home One Future