

As COP26 begins in Glasgow, the Archbishop calls for “radical action” and says the outcome of the talks will be “life or death for millions of people”.



Archbishop Justin Welby said:

“The COP26 climate talks are emergency surgery for our world and its people. The outcome will be life or death for millions of people. That’s how seriously we must take this moment. The eyes of the world are on Glasgow: leaders must deliver for the whole human family. We can, and must, choose life, so that our children may live.

“If these talks do not deliver, we face a dark, disturbing future” but there is still time, just, to save our world from the worst of the catastrophe. While we face a fearful future, if we miss this chance, the message of faith leaders to Governments, particularly for those in wealthier nations, is this: take courage, be bold and commit to the necessary radical action.

“This is a chance to start living in a way that is healthier, kinder, and better for everyone. This is an opportunity to say to our neighbours in poorer countries that we are one human family” and we are no longer content for one part of that family to suffer so that the other can build material prosperity. This is an invitation for the whole of humanity to take a decisive, historic step towards a better world.

“I’ll be in Glasgow tomorrow [Monday 1st November] with young Anglicans and Anglicans of Indigenous groups from around the global Anglican Communion. It is their voices that I hope are heard, along with those of everyone on the burning front lines of climate injustice: the poorest, most vulnerable, and marginalised people already living with droughts, floods and vanishing natural resources. People who face ruined lives and livelihoods, mass migration, instability, famine, war, and death. People who see our prosperity, our vaccines against all manner of diseases including Covid-19, and yet do not share in their benefit. We can no longer ignore the cries of people who are oppressed and of the groans of our Earth. God’s creation is wounded, and our neighbours weary of bearing the burden.

“Our sisters and brothers from Indigenous communities give prophetic witness to the devastation of the life of the earth, the exploitation of its resources and the terrible impact on nature’s diversity. They know from lived experience that the well-being of humanity is utterly dependent on the well-being of all creation.

“The great teaching of Jesus Christ is that anyone in need is our neighbour, to be shown love in action. I pray that, at these vital talks, we have a profound sense that we are neighbours to each other. I pray that we rediscover that we are part of God’s creation, not at war with it – and that we belong to one another. I pray that we discover the generosity, community, collaboration, resilience and, above all, justice that God calls us to embrace.

“And finally, I pray that we choose the path that leads to more fullness of life for us all.”

“Choose life so that you and your descendants may live” (Deuteronomy 30:19)

3 min read

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