

Preparing for Paris: Carry the Baton and Become a Beacon of Hope



Briefing for Churches

Thank you for carrying the baton! You are one of many churches across Scotland joining together to send a message to Paris calling for climate justice. This briefing note explains about climate justice, the Paris 'CoP' and what you can do to help.



The baton was sent on its way at the Eco-Congregation Scotland Annual Gathering on 25 April in Falkirk. Eco-Congregation Scotland is taking the baton to Paris, to express the demands of churches in Scotland that negotiators agree to a deal to promote global climate justice. The baton which will pass around churches in Scotland throughout the summer of 2015 will take with it the hopes and aspirations of Christians across Scotland for a just and lasting settlement.



Time for Climate Justice is a global movement including the World Council of Churches, Christian Aid and others. The main source of greenhouse gas emissions are the big industrial countries of the north: China, the USA and the countries of the EU. Yet the burden of climate change often falls most heavily on developing countries in the global south. You can find out more about Christian Aid's involvement in climate justice here: <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/ActNow/climate-justice/Index.aspx>

What is the Paris 'CoP'?

The Paris CoP is the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Over 190 countries will meet to attempt to negotiate a deal on climate change to limit emissions from developed countries and help developing countries adapt to the impact of climate change and develop low carbon economies.



Why are we interested?

Church leaders in Scotland and around the world are speaking out urgently about climate change.

Right Rev John Chalmers, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, said on 16 February 2015: *'The earth is the Lord's and everything that is in it, and yet we treat it as if it were some disposable asset. Climate Change is perhaps the most pressing issue in human history, its effects are most keenly experienced by the poorest of the world's poor; so, it is also a matter of social justice and it needs to be tackled with great urgency.'*

Check the website for up to date details:

www.ecocongregationscotland.org/get-involved/events/baton-relay/

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Pope Francis, writing to the UN Convention on Climate Change in November 2014 said: 'The effective struggle against global warming will only be possible with a responsible collective answer, that goes beyond particular interests and behaviour and is developed free of political and economic pressures. It is only possible with a collective answer that is able to overcome attitudes of mistrust and to promote a culture of solidarity, of encounter and of dialogue able to show the responsibility to protect the planet and the human family.'

What should you do now you have the baton?

1. **Please take care of it:** you are responsible for its safe keeping until you pass it on to the next named recipient.
2. Tell your congregation about the importance of climate change and the CoP – you can quote from the notes above or find out more at the links below.
3. Fill in the name of your church on the postcard and send it to us. We want a postcard from every stop on the baton's summer tour! We will collect all the postcards and present them to Aileen McLeod, Scottish Government Environment Minister who will be going to Paris.
4. Please tell the local papers what you are doing and get them to run a story. You can download a simple story and advice on contacting the media here: www.ecocongregationscotland.org/get-involved/events/baton-relay/
5. Encourage everybody to write to their new MP and MSPs asking them to support our call for climate justice at Paris.
6. Let us know what you have done and please **send us some pictures:** we need to share your stories with others in Scotland and in Paris.



Find out more:

Christian Aid is committed to tackling climate injustice. Read more at: http://www.christianaid.org.uk/whatwedo/issues/climate_change.aspx. They have also published a new report on the theology of climate change: <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/images/song-of-the-prophets-a-global-theology-of-climate-change-november-2014.pdf>

SCIAF are campaigning on climate justice: <http://www.sciaf.org.uk/campaign-with-sciaf/climate-justice.html>

For the love of ... you can find details on the ECS website: <http://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/materials/for-the-love-of/>

The World Council of Churches global climate justice movement: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/what-we-do/climate-change>



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