



**Image of the day -  
Timoleague's award winning mosaics**

## News Reports - COP26 special

# Indigenous peoples and youth at heart of Anglican engagement with COP26



**Indigenous peoples and youth, as well as climate resilience and just financing, are priorities for the Anglican Communion at COP26.**

Indigenous peoples and youth, as well as climate resilience and just financing, are at the heart Anglican engagement with the United Nations Climate Change Conference, according to the Anglican Communion's COP26 Policy Brief. The 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) will be hosted by the UK government in Glasgow from 31 October to 12 November.

The policy brief, published this week, was written by the Anglican Consultative Council's COP26 Working Group, whose membership is drawn from the Anglican Communion Environmental Network, Anglican Indigenous Network, Anglican Youth Network, Anglican Alliance, Lambeth Palace and the Anglican Communion Office at the United Nations. The Working Group is chaired by the Archbishop of Central America and the Anglican Communion lead archbishop on the environment, Archbishop Julio Murray.

The policy priorities brought by the Anglican Communion are climate resilience and just financing. The brief says: "Building climate resilience is a necessary, practical, and pragmatic response to build communities' adaptive capacity to withstand both acute climate shocks and stressors, such as hurricanes or wildfires, and long-term, slow-onset events, such as shrinking water resources and rising sea levels." It also says that just financing must be a core part of any climate change response as building resilience "requires adequate resourcing" and must "[encompass] policies and initiatives that encourage and expect burden sharing, often whereby high-income countries, with fossil fuel driven economies and wealth derived from extractive industries, ensure that money is flowing (through climate funds or other means) to more vulnerable low-income countries."

The policy brief also emphasises that the response to climate change must centre the perspectives of those most impacted – indigenous peoples and youth being among those most heavily affected by the climate crisis. In the opening remarks of the brief, it says: "climate change disproportionately impacts certain populations groups, along the lines of gender, race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status,

for example. Identifying the unique experiences of certain groups and centring their needs in our responses is critical to just climate action. In particular, engaging with and supporting the leadership of indigenous people and young people, and particularly women within these groups, must be a cross-cutting consideration.”

Jillian Abballe, Advocacy Manager and Head of New York Office for the Anglican Communion Office at the United Nations, said this about the brief: “It is our hope that this policy paper will support the advocacy of those attending COP26 to bring specific recommendations to decision makers while at the same time emphasising the Church as a critical actor in addressing climate change and the importance of centring the voices and participation of indigenous communities and young people. That said, this brief is also meant to guide advocacy beyond COP26 and to support Anglicans and others around the world in demanding just approaches to resilience building and financing.”

A delegation of four people drawn from across the Communion will be attending COP26 next week. Archbishop Julio Murray from Panama, Primate of the Anglican Church of Central America; Bernadette Demientieff from Alaska, the Executive Director of the Gwichin Steering Committee; Nicholas Omondi Pande from Kenya and the Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa; and Dr Elizabeth Perry, from the Anglican Alliance. Unfortunately, Bernadette is unable to be physically present in Glasgow, but the rest of the delegation will uplift her advocacy priorities and perspectives during the conference.

The conference will begin on 1 November and end on 12 November.

## **Irish Bishop Martin Hayes to attend COP26 for parishioners working to protect God's creation**

**Bishop Martin Hayes will represent the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference at COP26 in November.**

COPs (Conference of the Parties) are annual global climate summits attended by officials from nearly every country on Earth. This year the UK, in partnership with Italy, will host COP26 in Glasgow.

Bishop Hayes said, "I am looking forward to attending COP26 on behalf of parishioners who are concerned about the environment. It will provide an opportunity, in a public way, to renew our care for God's creation which is an integral part of our Christian vocation. Thankfully the challenge of climate change is now a global priority and I believe that COP26 will be critical for world leaders who will be making decisions for the future of humanity and for all of creation."

"As people of faith we are called to be custodians of God's creation, 'this is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience' (Laudato Si, 217). We are also called to lift up the voices of the most vulnerable in our world – the poor – who are on the frontline of the effects of climate change. The Gospel calls us to stand with the oppressed, always. It

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@catholicbishops

is for this reason that I will join with other Church and religious leaders from around the world at the UN Climate Conference. This is the most pressing issue of our time and the outcome of COP26 will have repercussions for generations to come. “People of faith will gather in Glasgow to pray for our common home, for political leaders, for those who are suffering the disastrous consequences of the climate crisis. We will also unite in solidarity with those who cannot be present, the voices from the developing world who are suffering the most from the effects of climate change.”

Bishop Hayes continued, “Pope Francis has urged us to create the momentum that is needed at this critical time. A

few weeks back the Holy Father joined scientists and 40 religious leaders to promote climate awareness among decision-makers in their countries, with the faithful in their communities, and to ‘plead with the international community, gathered at COP26, to take speedy, responsible and shared action to safeguard, restore and heal our wounded humanity and the home entrusted to our stewardship.’ I hope that the decisions agreed next week in Glasgow will help realise this worthy ambition.

“At COP26 I intend to advocate for policies relating to climate justice, to attend civil society events, interfaith gatherings and prayer vigils which will take place around this conference. At Mass I will pray to preserve God’s creation and for this and for future generations.”

Bishop Martin Hayes is Bishop of Kilmore, the coordinating bishop for Laudato Si’, and a member of the Council for Justice & Peace of the Bishops’ Conference. Bishop Hayes speaks about COP26 in a brief video interview available above.

## **Global faith institutions make largest-ever divestment ahead of COP26**

**Days before the UN climate conference, COP26, in Glasgow, and the G20 Summit in Rome, 72 faith institutions, including 37 from the UK, announce their divestment from fossil fuels in the largest-ever joint divestment announcement by religious organisations.**

The global divestment announcement comes from faith institutions with more than \$4.2 billion of combined assets under management in Australia, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Nepal, Peru, Ukraine, the UK, the United States and Zambia.

**Participating institutions include** the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Scotland; the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church; the Presbyterian Church of Wales; the Presbyterian Church in Ireland; 15 Catholic dioceses in the UK and Ireland, including the Archdioceses of Glasgow, St Andrews & Edinburgh, Birmingham, and Southwark; the Church of England Dioceses of Truro and Sodor & Man; and the Buddhist religious movement Soka Gakkai International - UK. The UK Churches and dioceses involved in this announcement represent nearly 2,000 local churches.

It follows the recent call from **Pope Francis and other faith leaders** to global governments to address the 'unprecedented ecological crisis' ahead of COP26 and calls from an international alliance of grassroots multi-faith activists who have called for an immediate end to all fossil fuel finance. Today's announcement shows an increasing number of Catholic institutions are responding to the recent Vatican recommendation to divest from fossil fuel companies and invest in climate solutions.

**Bishop Bill Nolan, Bishop of Galloway and Lead Bishop on the Environment for the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Scotland**, said: "The bishops decided that disinvestment would show that the status quo is not acceptable and further, that given the harm that the production and consumption of fossil fuels is causing to the environment and to populations in low income countries, it

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was not right to profit from investment in these companies. Disinvestment is a sign that justice demands that we must move away from fossil fuels."

Many **UK Churches** have fully divested from fossil fuel companies this year, including the Church of Scotland, the Church in Wales and the Baptist Union.

The fossil fuel divestment movement has grown exponentially in recent years. According to a new report published today, more than 1,485 institutions with combined assets of over \$39 trillion have made some form of divestment commitment, up from a starting point of \$50 billion in 2014. Faith institutions have been at the forefront of the global divestment movement, representing more than 35% of total commitments. Glasgow, Rio de Janeiro, Paris, Seattle and Auckland are also announcing their divestment commitments today, joining the C40 Divest / Invest Forum supporting the advancement of divestment of their city and pension funds.

The International Energy Agency (IEA) stated in its recent Net Zero by 2050 Roadmap that there can be no new coal, oil and gas developments if the world is to limit global warming to below 1.5°C and prevent catastrophic climate impacts. As world leaders prepare to meet at COP26, the UK Government is coming under increasing pressure over plans for the Cambo oil field off the coast of Scotland, supported by oil giant Shell, which would release emissions equivalent to the annual carbon pollution from 18 coal-fired power stations.

Last month, more than 20 Southern African Anglican bishops, including the Archbishop of Cape Town, the three bishops of Mozambique and the Bishop of Namibia, called for an immediate halt to gas and oil exploration in Africa. They said that "a new era of economic colonialism by fossil fuel companies is well underway" and that "Africa's natural habitats are being destroyed at an alarming rate through the extraction of oil and gas".

**James Buchanan, Bright Now Campaign Manager at Operation Noah**, said: "As the UK prepares to host COP26, we are delighted that 37 UK faith institutions have decided to divest from fossil fuel companies and join this record global divestment announcement. We call on the UK and global governments to end fossil fuel subsidies and bring an immediate halt to new oil and gas exploration, including the Cambo oil field."

**Archbishop Bernard Longley, Archbishop of Birmingham**, said: "Our commitment to divestment in fossil fuels is a response both to the cry of the earth and of the poor, taking us one step further towards its consolation. We join many other faith organisations who are making the ethical choice to 'shun companies that are harmful to human or social ecology... and to the environment', as Pope Francis calls us to do in the Vatican's manual *Journeying Towards Care For Our Common Home*. To see so many united in this aim gives me great hope for the future."

**David Palmer, Chief Executive Officer of the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church**, said: "The pace of change across the oil and gas sector has been inadequate and falls well below the targets set at COP21 in

Paris. We hope that COP26 will refresh these targets and we look forward to joining other faith groups in Glasgow next month in calling for immediate action to address the climate emergency."

**Revd Evan Morgan, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Wales**, said: "Our General Assembly passed a resolution to divest from fossil fuels this year as part of our new green environmental policy as a denomination. We realise time is running out and to safeguard the planet and fulfil our role as stewards of God's creation, the Church amongst other organisations must act. The time for words, however well meaning, is over and actions now are the order of the day and to be proactive in our response to the challenges of the climate crisis."

**Rt Revd Dr David Bruce, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland**, said: "At its General Assembly on 5 October 2021, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland directed its trustees to employ a new strategy in relation to companies producing fossil fuels or deriving part of their turnover from their use. Specifically this will mean divesting from those companies that derive more than 10% of their turnover from oil and gas extraction and engaging with other companies which are major users of fossil fuels. We believe that our investment policies should be informed by the biblical understanding of creation that leads to a commitment to God's world and to our global neighbours."

**Robert Harrap, General Director of Soka Gakkai International - UK**, said: "As a Buddhist organisation based on a philosophy of respect for the dignity of life and the non-duality of the individual and the environment, it is important

to us that we invest sustainably and responsibly. Our trustees have decided to divest from fossil fuels because this is a key way to protect our precious planet and the people most at risk from the climate crisis."

**Bishop Luke Pato of Namibia** said: "We are guardians of the land for the generations to come. Namibia is the driest country south of the Sahara and our ground water is the heritage we leave for our children and grandchildren. We cannot risk drilling operations that pollute precious water sources, abuse indigenous rights and threaten the heritage site of the Okavango Delta."

**Tomás Insua, Laudato Si' Movement Executive Director,** said: "People of faith are divesting at scale from dirty coal, oil and gas, demanding the G20 in Rome to finally conclude that there is no future for fossil fuel finance. As Pope Francis said, 'enough of the thirst for profit that drives the fossil fuel industry's destruction of our common home'."

**Revd Dr Rachel Mash, Environmental Coordinator of Green Anglicans,** said: "Faced with environmental devastation, pollution of precious water sources and abuse of land rights caused by fossil fuel companies, it is easy for those on the frontline of climate change to feel overwhelmed by the power of these corporations. When we hear that faith communities are taking their money out of these companies, it rekindles hope that we are not alone."

**Revd Fletcher Harper, Executive Director of GreenFaith,** said: "In the midst of a climate emergency, fossil fuel divestment is a moral imperative. More and more religious groups - Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist and Jewish as well as

Christian - must continue to add their names to the growing list of divestment commitments, and must also lead the way by investing in ensuring access to clean energy for absolutely everyone - particularly the 800 million people who lack electricity."

## LINKS

**Operation Noah** - [www.operationnoah.org](http://www.operationnoah.org)

**Bright Now campaign** - [www.brightnow.org.uk](http://www.brightnow.org.uk)

The Vatican recommended divestment from fossil fuel companies in June 2020. [www.reuters.com/article/us-vatican-environment-idUSKBN23P1HI](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-vatican-environment-idUSKBN23P1HI)

In September, more than 20 **Southern African Anglican bishops** called for an immediate halt to gas and oil exploration in Africa. [www.greenanglicans.org/anglican-bishops-call-for-an-immediate-halt-to-gas-and-oil-exploration-in-africa/](http://www.greenanglicans.org/anglican-bishops-call-for-an-immediate-halt-to-gas-and-oil-exploration-in-africa/)

**The International Energy Agency (IEA)** stated in its Net Zero by 2050 Roadmap that there can be no new coal, oil and gas developments if the world is to limit global warming to below 1.5°C. [www.iea.org/news/pathway-to-critical-and-formidable-goal-of-net-zero-emissions-by-2050-is-narrow-but-brings-huge-benefits](http://www.iea.org/news/pathway-to-critical-and-formidable-goal-of-net-zero-emissions-by-2050-is-narrow-but-brings-huge-benefits)

**The Global Divestment Announcement Statement** can be found at the bottom of this blog: <https://brightnow.org.uk/news/global-divestment-announcement-divest-your-church-cop26/>

## Logjam breaks: CofE leaders criticize Ghana bishops on anti-gay bill support

**Following on the statement by the Archbishop of Canterbury other church leaders in the Church of England have come out in opposition to the draconian anti-gay bill due for consideration by the Ghanaian parliament.**

It's not so clear to this reader that in all cases their opposition to the bill includes criticism of Ghanaian House of Bishops although the Guardian's headlines its coverage "UK church leaders criticise Ghanaian bishops for support of anti-LGBTQ+ law".

The **Portsmouth Diocese senior staff** issued a statement that includes a sharp rebuke of the Ghanaian bishops:

"As a diocese, we have long-standing, formal links with the Anglican Church in Ghana, which we value. However, we are dismayed to hear that the country's Anglican bishops have thrown their weight behind the 'Promotion of Proper Human Sexual Rights and Ghanaian Family Values' Bill.

"We are seeking urgent conversations with our colleagues in Ghana to ask why – not least in the light of the communique signed by all Anglican Primates in 2016, in which they pledged to reject criminal sanctions against members of the LGBT+ community, and to challenge homophobia."

Several below endorse the Portsmouth statement.

The Guardian's story includes these tweets:

I am gravely concerned by the draft anti-LGBTQ+ Bill due to be debated by the Ghanaian parliament. I will be speaking with the Archbishop of Ghana in the coming days to discuss the Anglican Church of Ghana's response to the Bill.

My full statement: <https://t.co/WcQMKzBseg>

— **Archbishop of Canterbury** (@JustinWelby) October 26, 2021

I entirely share Bishop Sarah's view that what is being proposed in Ghana is shocking and unacceptable. My prayers are with the LGBT community in Ghana and across the world. <https://t.co/CBycQjOpjh>

— **Stephen Cottrell** (@CottrellStephen) October 26, 2021

I support this statement from Portsmouth Diocese. <https://t.co/bkPb1N3PFx> [pic.twitter.com/wkI5nvcPM1](https://pic.twitter.com/wkI5nvcPM1)

— **Paul Bayes** (@paulbayes) October 26, 2021

Likewise. <https://t.co/lywrbgsDYy>

— **John Inge** (@BishopWorcester) October 26, 2021

The legislation proposed by Ghana is unacceptable. It will instil fear & mistrust. It proposes to imprison LGBT+ people for being who they are and goes against the love that God calls us to have for each other and has for us all. My prayers are with Ghana's LGBT+ community. <https://t.co/XIVZtP9y1g>

— **Bishop of Southwark** (@BishopSouthwark) October 26, 2021

I support fully the Archbishop of Canterbury's statement. As someone who has lived in Ghana, and knowing the gentleness, graciousness and generosity of its people, this proposed legislation is shocking and concerning, and I fear will lead to violence and fear-filled lives.

<https://t.co/ii5xRStebo>

— **Graham Usher** (@bishopnorwich) October 26, 2021

## People and places

### National Heritage Award for Timoleague church mosaics

**The mosaics at the Church of the Ascension, Timoleague in Kilgariffe Union of Parishes were awarded the National Heritage Award for County Cork in 2021.**

Built in 1811, the church building is of local and national importance. Minister Heather Humphreys TD has recently visited the building to see the mosaics which date back to 1894. The church is currently undergoing a five-phase conservation plan to prevent the mosaics from getting spoiled by water entering the building.

The Rev. Kingsley Sutton, Rector of Kilgariffe Union, said:



I am delighted to accept this award on behalf of the hard-working team that is safeguarding the heritage of The Church of the Ascension, at Timoleague. Our sincere thanks to Finola Finley who was the guest lecturer for our national heritage day in August. She shone a spotlight on the history of the many stained glass windows, which are another outstanding feature of this unique church building. Phase two of our conservation plan is soon to be completed, helping to protect the amazing mosaics of this hidden gem in West Cork. We are very grateful for all the financial help and support we've been getting, but we still need to raise at least another €250k to complete the project. Please consider helping, by donating at [timoleaguemosaics.ie](http://timoleaguemosaics.ie). We look forward to being part of National Heritage week again next year.

## **Drumbeg charity 'soup-porters' return to kitchen to raise funds**

**Volunteers in Drumbeg, Down diocese, have resumed their monthly soup lunch fundraiser for the first time since the coronavirus pandemic forced its suspension in March 2020.**

Members of St Patrick's Church of Ireland in the village welcomed 32 people to their church hall on Friday 1 October when they raised more than £200 for international aid agency, Christian Aid Ireland, The Ulster Star reports.

The fundraising lunches are organised by a 12-strong team of parishioners who take turns to make the soup and run the

event, supported by the rector, the Reverend Willie Nixon. There are usually four soup varieties on offer, changing from month to month.

October's event was organised by Jacqui Bloomer, Rosemary Bunting, Cynthia Dorman, Joan Maguire, Ann McNally and Hazel O'Hara. The soups on offer were lentil, mushroom, vegetable and leek and potato.

Simple church hall lunches, consisting of home-made soup served with bread and cheese have been a mainstay of Christian Aid's church-based fundraising for more than fifty years and had been interrupted only by the covid pandemic. The Drumbeg lunch is held from 12.15 on the first Friday of every month.

To comply with public health advice, the Drumbeg volunteers have introduced table service rather than serving from a hatch as in the past. Diners wear a mask until they are seated at a table.

Christian Aid Ireland's Senior Church and Community Officer Helen Newell attended the Drumbeg lunch to thank the organisers and diners for their support.

She said: "We are grateful to Reverend Nixon and all the organisers for their hard work, and to everyone who attended to support the event. The Drumbeg lunch comes at a time when Christian Aid Ireland is helping people on the frontline of the global hunger crisis – hunger that is made worse by conflict and climate change."

The next Drumbeg soup lunch will be held on Friday 5 November from 12.15 and everyone is welcome.

To help Christian Aid Ireland reach more people affected by hunger, please visit [caid.ie/Hunger](http://caid.ie/Hunger) or telephone 028 9064 8133 to make a donation.

## Tuam & Limerick Clergy Conference

**The annual clergy conference of Tuam, Killala and Achonry and Limerick and Killaloe took place in the Dunraven Arms Hotel and Conference Centre between 18th and 20th of October.**

These joint conferences have been held for several years now. They are not only informative and contemplative,





giving some space for the clergy of both dioceses to come away to a quiet place for a time of prayer and reflection, they also enable the clergy to get to know each other better ahead of the uniting of the dioceses which takes place on 1st November 2021.

This year there were several ‘new faces’ present so the conference offered an opportunity for them to engage with the ‘old hands’ and those who have been around for a while could renew friendships and welcome the ‘rookies’ to the clergy team.

The conference was led by Fr. Henry O’Shea OSB of Glenstall Abbey. He chose as his theme ‘Where are we now?’, ‘How did we get to where we are?’, ‘Where do we want to be?’ and ‘How are we going to get there?’ Fr. Henry interspersed his reflections with many amusing, at times hilarious, anecdotes which at the same time forced us to think while maintaining a ‘light touch’ atmosphere.

The conference closed with a celebration of the Holy Communion in the parish church at which both bishop Patrick Rooke and bishop Kenneth Kieran spoke about their impending retirements and their hopes for the future of the united dioceses.

## Poem for today

### In A Field by Seamus Heaney

Last poem of Seamus Heaney, published eight years ago

And there I was in the middle of a field,  
The furrows once called "scores" still with their gloss,  
The tractor with its hoisted plough just gone  
Snarling at an unexpected speed  
Out on the road. Last of the jobs,  
The windings had been ploughed, furrows turned  
Three ply or four round each of the four sides  
Of the breathing land, to mark it off  
And out. Within that boundary now  
Step the fleshy earth and follow  
The long healed footprints of one who arrived  
From nowhere, unfamiliar and de-mobbed,  
In buttoned khaki and buffed army boots,  
Bruising the turned-up acres of our back field  
To stumble from the windings' magic ring  
And take me by a hand to lead me back  
Through the same old gate into the yard  
Where everyone has suddenly appeared  
All standing waiting.

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