

YCCN Relay to COP26

Communications guide for supporters

This guide will give you some tips on how to communicate about the YCCN Relay to COP26, and hopefully help you answer some commonly asked questions.

The Young Christian Climate Network

- The Young Christian Climate Network (YCCN) is an action-focused community of young Christians in the UK aged 18-30 choosing to follow Jesus in the pursuit of climate justice. The [YCCN website](#) provides further detail on YCCN's aims and values

Relay to COP26

- YCCN have planned a 1200+ mile relay from the G7 in Cornwall to COP26 in Glasgow involving all ages in walking, praying, and offering support and hospitality. Inspired by the long Christian tradition of pilgrimage and the history of Christian activism, YCCN are coordinating this as a group of young Christians seeking to mobilise the UK church at large behind the struggle for climate justice.
- There will be 10 key Residency Hubs in cities along the route where YCCN will host various events and activities in partnership with churches. These are scheduled to take place in Exeter, Bristol, Reading, London, Birmingham, Manchester, York, Newcastle, Edinburgh and Glasgow. Smaller events will take place in other towns and cities along the route too. The [YCCN events webpage](#) provides further information about the Residency Hubs.

YCCN's key messages around the Relay

- The climate crisis is both a reflection, and a cause, of deep injustice in the world
- This crisis arises from our abuse of God's creation, and our broken relationship with our neighbours worldwide who suffer most from its consequences. We are convinced of the Biblical mandate to care for creation, and lament its exploitation
- The climate crisis is a storm we all face, but we're not all in the same boat.
- Climate-vulnerable countries must be able to access finance for adaptation and loss and damages without incurring further climate-related debt.
- We are organising this Relay to COP26 to show we care about climate justice and creation care. We want to see systematic change on a global and a local scale. We hope that by running this relay, we can raise awareness of COP26 and our imperative as Christians to engage in creation care and climate justice, individually and collectively.
- We are walking as an act of faith hope and love
 - *Faith that our actions will be listened to and can create change.*
 - *Hope that it isn't too late, we can stop climate change.*
 - *Love for our planet and one another*
- This year in the UK, we have a moment of opportunity, and a moment of decision when the UK hosts the UN's COP26 climate conference in Glasgow: We must *Rise to the Moment*. *In years to come, we want the UK church to*

look back on 2021 and say: “We did not sit at home while unjust decisions were made on our doorstep, we set sail towards a just future”.

- This relay, while led by young Christians, is open to **all**, regardless of age or faith.
- Join us!

YCCN’s use of a boat as a representation of hope

YCCN is using a boat as a symbol of the relay. This boat is a representation of the hope we all share that we would #RiseToTheMoment and use this year to set sail towards a more just future. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been recognition that **“We’re in the same storm, but not in the same boat”**. As a network of young people under 30, YCCN is mindful that they are on the course of another storm too; over half of all emissions have been released in their lifetimes, and global average temperatures are set to rise by several degrees over the decades ahead. The consequences of this storm will not be felt equally, but they will be felt acutely. And many climate-vulnerable countries are already feeling the force of this brewing storm.

How you can get involved

YCCN are still looking for volunteers to take a coordination role on some of their route sections, and they would particularly welcome more offers of accommodation along the route. [Find out more and sign up here](#).

There are many additional ways in which you can show your support, as follows.

Ways to support the Relay:

- **Invite your local MP to: join you on the walk, or attend your event/church service, or meet with you to discuss the issue of climate justice.** - www.yccn.uk/political-engagement
- Host the walkers, either as a stop-off point for refreshments along the way, or potentially offering some nearby accommodation to the start/ends of a leg.
- Hold a prayer vigil or church service to encourage your local community to think about the issues of climate justice, ideally as the walk is close by.
- Join in for a section of the walk to encourage those walking and connect with young Christian climate activists. Sign up [here](#).
- Support the Christian Aid / YCCN campaign action ahead of COP26 you can take the action individually and encourage your church to get involved (e.g. in a service or other event). Taking inspiration from YCCN’s boat, we’re creating a fleet of paper prayer boats to take to COP26 in Glasgow. Create a prayer boat with your church to help us make sure decision-makers cannot ignore our calls for climate justice. Find the resources you need to create a paper prayer boat [here](#).
- Get involved in walking a tributary section (there may be one already planned for your area – if not, you might like to help organise one using [YCCN’s guide to tributaries](#)!)
- Support the YCCN and Christian Aid prayer and campaign actions ahead of COP26:
 - Join in the YCCN campaign actions to contact your MP at www.yccn.uk/
 - Create a paper prayer boat (individually or with your church) to help us make sure decision makers cannot ignore our calls for climate justice, and use this to reach out to your MP. Find the resources you need to create a paper prayer boat on the [Christian Aid website](#).

Appendix: Wider messaging on context, COP26, and climate justice

COP26

COP26 is the 26th meeting of world leaders at the UN climate change talks, which will take place in Glasgow, 31 October – 12 November 2021. The conference has been described as the most important gathering on climate change since the Paris agreement was signed in 2015. For many, these UN climate talks remain the best, and only, global platform to build consensus on climate action and climate justice.

The climate crisis and climate justice

- We are living in a moment of urgency, and of opportunity. People living in poverty in the most climate vulnerable countries have long been living with the impacts of inaction on climate change – more intense disasters, more unpredictable rain, rising sea levels – any further delay is a matter of life and death. The climate crisis is an issue of profound injustice: those who are hardest hit have done least to cause the crisis that now threatens them whereas the world's richest economies which built their wealth almost exclusively on fossil fuels and bear a huge responsibility for causing the climate crisis we now face.
- According to the IPCC 2018 report "Limiting global warming to 1.5°C, compared with 2°C, could reduce the number of people both exposed to climate-related risks and susceptible to poverty by up to several hundred million." Current commitments are in line with 3°C warming this century.
- A call for climate justice is a call for a system that no longer relies on exploitation of people, communities, and the earth. Following Jesus means following his radical call to love and care for our neighbours. This includes seeking climate justice. Climate *justice* encompasses the solutions that we want, tackling the climate crisis in a way that acknowledges that the people facing its worst impacts have done the least to cause the problem. Climate justice is inextricably linked to economic justice, and gender justice, and reparations for the damage done. For us it means recognising that the UK is historically the 6th largest emitter of greenhouse gases – and that the only way to really solve the crisis is for rich countries like the UK to urgently reduce their emissions, and to support communities that are living with the impacts.

The global pandemic and the climate crisis

Covid-19 has not overridden the climate crisis. If anything, it has deepened it. As the world tackles the pandemic, we could go back to business as usual, perpetuating inequality, injustice and climate breakdown. Or we could rebuild in a way that will put us on a path to a better, just, future where everyone can thrive, free from the devastating impacts of climate change and poverty. How governments and powerful bodies decide to recover from the pandemic will affect our collective ability to keep climate change under control for decades to come. The UN Environment Programme has said "Climate change is a crisis that will, ultimately, dwarf all of the impacts of the pandemic in both scale and longevity'.

The urgency of a faith-inspired vision of climate justice

Churches - with people of faith everywhere - have a key role to play in shaping the outcomes of COP26 and in strengthening the global movement for climate justice. All people of faith can bring about change when acting together. And faith leaders have an important role in supporting this.

- Faith leaders have a significant voice and influence with the UK Government and the wider public.
- Faith leaders can help shape public debate and ambition and mobilise people to speak prophetically for climate justice.
- Faith leaders can bring the voices of those directly impacted by climate change to wider public attention by calling on their unique network of local and global connections.