



THE GREATER KANSAS CITY Interfaith Council

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believes almost all of the world's faith traditions hold sacred human's relationship with creation. Scriptures urge us to care for nature, to see God's grandeur and presence in creation, and to be thankful for the bounty God has given us.

The following statements come from many of the faith traditions represented on the GKC Interfaith Council.

We hope they will inspire you to reflect and act to reduce climate change and care for our beautiful world.

`Baha'

"Anthropogenic climate change is not inevitable; humanity chooses its relationships with the natural world...the current global order has often approached the natural world as a reservoir of material resources to be exploited. The grave consequences of this paradigm have become all too apparent, and more balanced relationships among the peoples of the world and the planet are clearly needed."

-Shared Vision, Shared Volition: Choosing Our Global Future Together

<https://www.bahai.us>



The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints



This beautiful earth and all things on it are the creations of [God](#).¹ As beneficiaries of this divine creation, we should care for the earth, be wise [stewards](#) over it, and preserve it for future generations. The earth and all things on it are part of [God's plan](#) for the redemption of His children and should be used responsibly to sustain the human family.² However, all are stewards—not owners—over this earth and its bounty and will be [accountable](#) before God for what they do with His creations.³ All humankind should gratefully use what God has given, avoid wasting life and resources, and use the bounty of the earth to care for the poor and the needy.⁴ To truly reverence the Creator, we must appreciate His creations. God intends His creations to be pleasing to look upon and to enliven the mind and spirit.⁵ It is important to see and appreciate the glory and grandeur of God in everything about us,⁶ because the state of the human soul and the environment are interconnected—each affects the other. The earth, all living things, and the expanse of the universe all eloquently witness of Him.⁷

Source: [Environmental Stewardship and Conservation](#), Gospel Topics Essays, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Hinduism

The Hindu Declaration on Climate Change is a global call to the 900 million Hindus living worldwide to lead lives in harmony and balance with the natural world. It also asks world leaders to find long and lasting solutions to climate change at the upcoming climate negotiations.



Excerpt from the Hindu Declaration on Climate Change:

[W]e call on all Hindus to expand our conception of dharma. We must consider the effects of our actions not just on ourselves and those humans around us, but also on all beings. We have a dharmic duty for each of us to do our part in ensuring that we have a functioning, abundant, and bountiful planet.

Climate change creates pain, suffering, and violence. Unless we change how we use energy, how we use the land, how we grow our crops, how we treat other animals, and how we use natural resources, we will only further this pain, suffering, and violence. On a personal basis, we can reduce this suffering by beginning to transform our habits, simplifying our lives and material desires, and not taking more than our reasonable share of resources. Adopting a plant-based diet is one of the single most powerful acts that a person can take in reducing environmental impact. In doing all of this, we help maintain the ecological and cosmic order, an order that allows life and existence to flourish.

Indigenous Traditions

“Yet, here I am, standing in front of you today, on behalf of the global indigenous community, sharing my language and sharing my culture over the past two weeks of COP24. Because we’re still here. Resilience is in our blood, it’s in our language, and it’s in our relationship with our Mother Earth. Our indigenous ways of knowing, rooted in the experiences of our ancestors, is the medicine that this sick world needs right now.”

-Michael Charles for the International Indigenous Peoples’ Forum on Climate Change at COP24

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5627862ce4b07be93cfb9461/t/5c24fcd34d7a9c7f726ee351/1545927891558/Closing+Plenary+Statement.pdf>



Islam

“Children of Adam, take your adornment at every place of prayer. Eat and drink, and do not waste. He does not love the wasteful.” - [Qur'an 7:31]

“In the Islamic point of view, nature is alive. It’s conscious. It follows God’s laws. And what we’re doing is breaking those laws in the name of our own earthly welfare, and now we’re destroying the very habitat that God created for us.”

-Seyyed Hossein Nasr speaking at the Islamic Declaration on Climate Change
<https://www.yaleclimateconnections.org/2016/05/islamic-declaration-on-climate-changer>



Judaism

from the Union of Reform Congregations

Among the many issues facing our planet, climate change poses a huge challenge to resource development and even daily habits. Addressing climate change requires us to learn how to live within the ecological limits of the earth so that we will not compromise the ecological or economic security of those who come after us.

The Torah commands, "Justice, justice shall you pursue" Deuteronomy 16:20, and thus, our energy policy must also be equitable and just - and the countries most responsible for climate change should be those most responsible for finding a solution to the problem. Judaism also underscores the moral imperative of protecting the poor and vulnerable: "When one loves righteousness and justice, the earth is full of the loving-kindness of the Eternal" Psalms 33:5. Indeed, poor nations are likely to bear the brunt of the negative impacts associated with climate change.

Because our sacred texts teach that humankind has an obligation to improve the



world for future generations, Jewish tradition encourages families and communities to reduce their waste and make smart consumer choices, investing in companies that do not pollute and supporting behaviors and policies that encourage conservation.

Protestant Christianity

A reflection on climate care from my Christian faith perspective:

In our sacred texts, God declared the earth and all that was in it good, and entrusted humanity as caretakers of that good earth. We must be good stewards of the shared land we inhabit to ensure the health of all and future generations.



-- Rev. Dr. Matthew Silvers, Lees Summit Christian Church

Care for creation and justice are at the centre of the World Council of Churches work on climate change. The Bible teaches the wholeness of creation and calls human beings to take care of the garden of Eden (Gen 2:15). The God of the Bible is a God of justice who protects, loves and cares for the most vulnerable among his creatures.

The present world development model is threatening the lives and livelihoods of many, especially among the world's poorest people, and destroying biodiversity. The ecumenical vision is to overcome this model based on over-consumption and greed...

It's time for climate justice. When creation is threatened, churches and Christians are called to speak out and act as an expression of their commitment to life, justice and love.

Roman Catholic

"We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all. The worldwide ecological movement has already made considerable progress and led to the establishment of numerous organizations committed to raising awareness of these challenges. It is my hope that this Encyclical Letter can help us to acknowledge the appeal, immensity and urgency of the challenge we face."
-Encyclical Letter *Laudato si'* of the Holy Father Francis on Care for our Common Home: http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html



Science of Mind

The Science of Mind belief is that everything in existence is an expression of the Divine, and therefore IS divine. This includes people, animals, plants, planets and stars. We are all part of the One life that is God expressing in an infinite number of unique ways, and we are all connected in that expression. This means each one is responsible for the wellbeing of the whole - what harms any divine creation, harms all of divine creation, so we, as sentient beings MUST honor, respect and support the health of ourselves, each other, our communities, and our planet. This is our divine charge.



Sikhism

The closing verse, or shalok, of the very first prayer Jaap Ji / Meditate Oh My Soul in the Sikh scriptures, emphasizes humanity's link with all of creation:

Shalok

Pavan guru paanee pita maataa Dharat mahat
divas raat du-ay daa-ee daa-i-aa khaylai sagal jagat
chang-aa-ee-aa buri-aa-ee-aa vaachai Dharam hadoor.
karma aapo aapnee kay nayrhai kay door
jinee naam Dhi-aa-i-aa gay masakat ghaal
Naanak tay mukh ujlay kaytee chhulee naal



Air is the Guru/God, water is the Father, and Earth is the Great Mother of us all.
Day and night are the two nurses, in whose lap the whole world is at play.
Good deeds and bad deeds-the record is read out in the Presence of the Lord of Dharma.

According to their own actions, some are drawn closer, and some are driven farther away.

Those who have meditated on the Naam, the Name of the Lord, and departed after having worked by the sweat of their brow

O Nanak, shining are their faces and they save many others

COMMENTARY: The air is our guru, because it is the medium through which Guru's words are brought to us; water is our father because it is through water that we are conceived, and earth is our mother because it has the procreative power that nurtures all life. If we realize this, we cannot harm our environment because we are an integral part of it as it is a part of us.

Nanak also championed the equality of women seeing them as the source of human creation, equal if not superior to all others.

An important element in the work of these contemporary teachers like Nanak, Buddha and Mohamed is the call for humanity's full acceptance of responsibility for what we have done – physically and spiritually – to and on the earth. Only through accepting this responsibility will healing and transformation occur.

Sukyo Mahikari

Sukyo means “Universal Principles” and *Mahikari* means “True Light.” This is a supra-religious practice based on the understanding that all people, regardless of their religious tradition, race, or nationality, have a common Origin. We are all brothers and sisters living on this one and only planet earth. *Sukyo Mahikari* encourages people to direct their hearts toward that which unites us, joining hands over spiritual values that are common to multiple traditions, and actively working toward a society that will generate and sustain a humane and harmonious world for future generations.



Sukyo Mahikari members learn, and practice transmitting, the “True Light,” a positive spiritual energy radiated from the palm of the hand. By both giving and receiving True Light, the spirit, mind, and body are gradually purified and elevated to reach higher levels of spiritual understanding, elevation, and consciousness. The Light can also be focused toward animals, plants, gardens, and agricultural fields, as well as to our food, homes, workplaces, and educational facilities. As more and more people revitalize their innate spirituality—spiritual wisdom—through the Art of True Light and the Universal Principles, it becomes easier to find solutions to a multitude of problems facing both individuals and all humankind. Almost every area of human endeavor today is affected by the discussion about what it means to be a human living on planet earth at this special time. *Sukyo Mahikari* can support and speed up this process as more and more people embrace the practice of the Art of True Light and the Universal Principles.

Universal Sufism

There is one Holy Book, the sacred manuscript of nature, the only scripture which can enlighten the reader. ~ Hazrat Inayat Khan

Most people consider as sacred scriptures only certain books or scrolls written by the hand of humanity, and carefully preserved as holy, to be handed down to posterity as divine revelation. People have fought and disputed over the authenticity of these books, have refused to accept any other book of similar character, and thus clinging to the book and losing the sense of it, have formed diverse sects. The Sufis have in all ages respected all such books, and have traced in the Vedanta, Zendavesta, Kaballah, Bible, Qur'an, and all other sacred scriptures the same truth



that they read in the incorruptible manuscript of nature, the only Holy book , the perfect and living model that teaches the inner law of life: all scriptures before nature's manuscript are as little pools of water before the ocean.

To the eye of the seers, every leaf of the tree is a page of the holy book that exhibits divine revelation, and they are inspired every moment of their lives by constantly reading and understanding the holy scripture of nature.

For the mystic, nature is bread and wine, the soul's nourishment... Every leaf of the tree is a page in the holy book that contains divine revelation. – Hazrat Inayat Khan

One spirit animates all of creation, bringing forth the radiant splendor that is the web of life on Earth. Our lives are embedded in and sustained by this web. The very air we breathe embodies our interconnection and interdependence within Earth's living system.

As we awaken to the sacredness of creation we discover that beneficence is our moral imperative.

The current ecological crisis caused by human activity is upending the natural world, and foments climate disruption at a scale that endangers the lives of millions of human beings and countless species and ecosystems world-wide, now and for future generations.

How can we renew and uphold our spiritual values, and live in accordance with them? How are we inspired to act at this time?

The sanctity of our Earthly home and our shared responsibility for its care compel us to adopt measures to immediately reduce harmful impacts. We call upon each of us, our extended communities, and those in spheres of power to:

- curtail use of fossil fuels, deforestation, use of hazardous chemicals, and all other practices that damage the web of life;
- make choices concerning consumption, diet, finance, agriculture, transport, housing and activism that focus on protecting and restoring the natural world.

Inayatiyya Sufi Order Climate Change Statement.

Zen Buddhism

“What is our relationship to our environment? That is a question which the Buddha's teaching addresses very clearly. In Buddha's time there were not the same kind of problems with the pollution of air, water, and ground. The Buddha, for that reason, did not talk very specifically about those kinds of pollution. He taught us a slightly different kind of ecology, a more basic and more comprehensive kind of ecology.



This teaching is so fundamental that not only is biological ecology a natural consequence of this teaching, but so is ethical ecology, spiritual ecology, and finally through the teaching of the patriarchs the ecology of moment-to-moment correct situation, correct relationship, correct function. If we understand this way correctly, then we can understand all relationships, including our relationship to our environment, which means not only ground, water, air, sky, trees, plants, and animals, but also each other.

Sometimes so many hindrances appear in our life, in our practice, that it is tempting to indulge in self-doubt and become paralyzed. The ecological problems confronting us appear to be overwhelming. The mental pollution, for those who attempt some kind of practice, is often more overwhelming still. How can we even begin to help this world? One of the most important teachings I received from Zen Master Seung Sahn is that there are two kinds of mind. There's a mind that says "I can," and there's a mind that says "I cannot." If one thinks "I cannot," then one cannot. If somebody thinks "I can," then it's possible. Best of all, just do it. Every moment of our life the Buddha continues to give us the great present, his Dharma. The best present we offer in return is to apply this teaching to our life. Then "do it" correct balance; "do it" harmony; "do it" true love; "do it" moment-to-moment correct situation, correct relationship, correct function. Then our life is no longer ours, but belongs to the whole universe. Then ecologically correct life is not something special. It is simply the correct function of our true nature. This is indeed the great person's way. Can we attain it right now?"

Extracted from ["Ecology of Mind"](#), a dharma talk given at the Buddha's Birthday Ceremony at Providence Zen Center on April 9, 1990, by Zen Master Wu Bong (The Kwan Um School of Zen).