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### **Why are Christians called to protect Creation and address climate change?**

*Excerpted from a 2015 statement by the Ecumenical Leaders' Group of Maryland:* Like all people everywhere, we live from and rely on the health and wellbeing of God's creation — air, water and land, wildlife and domestic animals, local ecosystems, biomes, and the great interconnected ecosystem that the whole Earth shares. Heat-trapping pollution like carbon dioxide and methane, released into the air by humans at unprecedented levels over the last hundred and fifty years, has damaged and endangered the stability of our climate, made our oceans more acidic, and is threatening global health and security. Climate change will harm our neighbors in Maryland. In Maryland, we see the impacts of our reliance on fossil fuels in many places. Our traditions teach that we are responsible for the most vulnerable people in our communities, and environmental degradation harms the poor in particular, and makes many sick: older adults face lung problems, young people deal with asthma, and disenfranchised people of all ages are subjected to pollution in their communities. We see the impacts of hurricanes and other disasters made worse by climate change. As leaders in a state with 3,190 miles of coastline, we see how many natural and human treasures rising ocean levels will destroy. Caring for God's creation – including all its inhabitants – means slowing and limiting our use of fossil fuels and significantly reducing our climate pollution.

### **How can our church community take action on climate change now?**

We are called to work together to fight for environmental justice: to move our economy off of fossil fuels, to clean our air and repair our damaged climate. And one of the most important ways we can do that this fall is to vote our values! Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. called voting a “moral responsibility,” and it's a moral responsibility we each hold today.

Whether we are gathered online or in-person, we can take action together, and in community! We're inviting congregations to do so by setting aside a few minutes during worship or other programming to allow individuals to call on their elected officials to make climate and environmental justice a priority and to vote for elected officials who share our value of Creation Care.

[FOR ONLINE GATHERINGS] Even when we're gathered online, we can take action together, and in community! So in a moment, we're going to play a few minutes of music, during which I invite everyone to click on the link we're putting [in the chat/in the comments] right now, [VIRGINIA - TAKE ACTION!](#)

Double-click on that link to open a form that will give you an opportunity to join with faith communities across the commonwealth. We will commit to exercising our right to vote and we will call on our elected officials to make climate justice a priority.

*Suggested music to play while people complete the form (In Zoom, “Share Screen” > “Advanced” > share audio.) Please note that licensing for broadcast any of the songs below is the responsibility of your congregation.*

[One Voice](#)

*(The Wailin’ Jennys)*

[Woke Up This Morning \(With My Mind Stayed On Freedom\)](#)

*(Resistance Revival Chorus)*

[FOR IN PERSON GATHERINGS] To honor our kinship with creation for the greater good, we will now take action together, and in community! So in a moment, we’re going to play a few minutes of music, during which I invite everyone to complete their bulletin insert. As a sacred community, we will commit together to using the power of our voice and our votes to call on our elected officials to prioritize climate and environmental justice.

*Suggested music to play while people complete the form. Please note that licensing for broadcast any of the songs below is the responsibility of your congregation.*

[One Voice](#)

*(The Wailin’ Jennys)*

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*(Resistance Revival Chorus)*