

## **RICHMOND AND BARNES DEANERY SYNOD**

Monday 30th September 2024 – 7:30pm

At ST RICHARDS'S, HAM  
Ashburnham Rd, Richmond TW10 7NL

(Coffee/Tea will be available from 7.15pm)

### **A G E N D A**

- 1 Opening prayers – Rev Simon Coupland.
- 2 Hymn.
- 3 Introduction and welcome, Rev Alex Barrow (Area Dean).
- 4 Minutes of meeting of 22nd May 2024.
- 5 "What does Southwark Vision Mean for my Church". Deputy Diocesan Secretary, Jackie Pontin, talks about Southwark Diocese's ten year "Christ-Centred, Outward Focussed" plan to sustain and grow the Church throughout the Diocese and how that fits in with your church's mission action plan. With discussion and Q&A.
- 6 Eco Deanery update including proposal to endorse the [Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty](#) as individuals and churches (see below for full proposal).
- 7 Area Dean's Notices.
- 8 AOB
- 9 Closing Prayer.

## **A proposal for the Deanery submitted by Judith Russenberger**

This year as we mark the Season of Creation “Faith leaders...[will] call on followers to endorse the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty proposal” <sup>(1)</sup>

The Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty is a proposal that there be a ‘concrete, binding plan to end the expansion of new coal, oil and gas projects and a managed global transition away from fossil fuels’. It would ‘complement the Paris Agreement by providing the global roadmap needed to halt the expansion of fossil fuel, manage an equitable phase-out of coal, oil and gas, and lay the foundations for a true just energy transition in which no worker, community or country is left behind’. Its outcome would be to ‘protect people from the threat fossil fuels pose to our climate, our health and our future’ <sup>(2)</sup>

The proposal can be endorsed by governments, by cities, by organisations, and by individuals. To date the treaty has the support of the 12 Pacific and Caribbean states and most recently of the nation of Colombia, as well as the World Health Organisation and European Parliament. It has been endorsed by cities across six continents - forty five in Europe including Copenhagen, Bonn, Greater Paris, Lyon, Amsterdam, Rome, Turin, Geneva, Birmingham, Edinburgh and London.

The treaty has received support from various faith groups, including in the UK the Diocese of Carlisle, the Iona Community, Green Christian, St John’s Waterloo, Quakers in Britain and Tearfund. It has also been endorsed by 926, 488 (and counting) individuals including scientists, Nobel Prize winners, and ordinary people like you and me.

As humans created by God, we have been tasked by God to till and protect the earth and its rich biodiversity (Genesis 2:15) and as followers of Christ we have been taught to love our neighbour as ourself - knowing as St Francis eloquently articulated, that these our brothers and sisters include all flora and fauna, human and nonhuman alike.

We are therefore bound by our allegiance to God who is creator, redeemer and sustainer, to care for this earth, curtailing the worsening effects of the humanly created climate crisis and its destructive impact on lives around the world. We are called to act with justice, with mercy and with humility before God.

Can I Synod invite members to both sign as individuals and to take this same proposal - unless it has already been done - to their PCC to as an institution, and their congregations as individuals? Thus enabling everyone to have the option of being part of this historic treaty and to be actively engaged in marking this Season of Creationtide.

<sup>(1)</sup> <https://fossilfuel treaty.org/faith-letter>

<sup>(2)</sup> <https://fossilfuel treaty.org/>

## *Sign the Faith Letter for a Fossil Fuel Treaty*

As leaders across diverse religious and spiritual communities around the globe, we call on governments to develop and implement a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty

**SIGN AS AN INSTITUTION**

**SIGN AS AN INDIVIDUAL**

We have been granted a gift, an earth created in all its diversity, vitality, and abundance, for which we are called upon to be stewards. But **this role of stewardship has been overshadowed by neglect, exploitation, and unsustainable consumption that threaten the natural balance, social harmony, and existence of life on earth.**

**Too many coal mines and oil and gas wells are already under production**, setting the world on course to fail to meet the Paris Agreement's goal of 1.5°C. To avoid the worst impacts of the climate crisis, we must hold ourselves, our neighbors, and our governments accountable and collectively act.

**For too long, government action has been painstakingly slow and catered too much to the reckless and deceptive fossil fuel corporations, preventing meaningful and timely climate legislation.** There is a glaring disconnect between countries' approvals for continued fossil fuel expansion and their rhetoric proclaiming long-term 'net zero' targets, a dangerous veil to evade responsibility, delay action, and rely on unproven technologies.

**The burning of coal, oil, and gas is responsible for 86% of CO2 emissions in the past decade, according to the IPCC.** Just 100 companies account for more than 70% of emissions. With these emissions also come the costs of local pollution, environmental degradation, and health impacts associated with extracting, refining, transporting, and burning fossil fuels.

**These costs are disproportionately paid by those who are most vulnerable to, and least historically responsible for, the consequences of climate change** - lives lost, homes and farms destroyed, and millions of people displaced. It is our moral imperative to protect those most in need and to uphold the human rights of future generations by employing renewable sources of energy.

The science surrounding the most urgent danger facing humanity is undeniable: **to be good caretakers of our common home, we must act and phase out the production of fossil fuels.** Several faith institutions around the world have already divested from fossil fuel companies, now we take the next step in calling on governments to plan a global just transition.

The current scale of the climate crisis requires a cooperative global solution that addresses the fossil fuel industry directly. **We call on governments to urgently commence negotiations to develop and implement a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, laying out a binding global plan to:**

1. **End expansion of any new coal, oil or gas production** in line with the best available science as outlined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the United Nations Environment Programme;
2. **Phase-out existing production of fossil fuels in a manner that is fair and equitable**, taking into account the respective dependency of countries on fossil fuels and their capacity to transition;
3. **Ensure a global just transition to 100% access to renewable energy globally**, support dependent economies to diversify away from fossil fuels, and enable all people and communities, not least the Global South, to flourish.

**We hail from many faiths and beliefs, but together we can remedy the decades of negligence to safeguard our coexistence with this earth.** Just as our beliefs are entrenched in religious and spiritual teachings, our response to the climate crisis must be deeply rooted in science and equity to heal the planet and people alike.

We have a narrow window of opportunity to act which is why we are joining the growing chorus of Indigenous Peoples, civil society leaders, youth, cities, lawmakers, academics, and scientists calling for a global treaty to phase out fossil fuels and support a just transition powered by renewable energy and a sustainable future for all.