

## Called to Climate Action

### 2019 Iowa Religious Leaders Statement on the Climate Crisis

Creation is sacred. People of faith are called to care for creation. Our privilege provides the opportunity, and our faith traditions demand we act for climate justice. The climate crisis reaches every corner of the Earth: the oceans are polluted and warming rapidly, the air is being degraded, species are going extinct, and the most vulnerable and marginalized in our human family are at the highest risk of facing the worst impacts of climate change. This must change. Due to the harmful actions of humans, we are currently facing an unprecedented planetary emergency. Humanity created this crisis, therefore we also have the ability to solve it.

#### As people of faith, we are called to...

- **Alleviate** our world's injustices. Climate change disadvantages people in our own neighborhoods, states, countries, and across the world. We must embrace justice to reverse the harm caused by our actions. Climate change does not only harm humans but all living things and our very relationship with creation.
- **Promote** equity. People who contribute to the problem the least, experience the greatest effects of the climate crisis. The marginalized and vulnerable - people who are poor, the young, the elderly, women, people of color, the sick - suffer more from floods, earthquakes, dry wells, pollution, disease, and displacement from their homes. The climate crisis magnifies inequalities. Iowans of faith must take action proportional to their gift of privilege in solidarity with those who suffer from the worst effects of climate change.
- **Reject** the excesses of the culture of materialism. Our constant demand for more is transgressing Earth's limits. Our common home is finite. Love requires the abundance of creation to be shared equitably among humanity.
- **Revere** the inherent sanctity of nature. Creation is a gift to all, and it inspires us through its beauty. Nature provides the solutions to climate change. We are a part of nature - not independent from it.
- **Embrace** diversity in our climate action. We must use an expanding set of possibilities to solve this existential crisis. These solutions will require an open dialogue of people from diverse faith traditions, cultures, ethnicities, and ideological backgrounds. The future demands we diversify our sources of clean

and renewable energy, promote biodiversity, and develop a range of both public policy and market-based solutions.

- **Invite** human creativity to solve the climate crisis. Our differences such as race, sex, religion, country of origin, and ability are in fact our strengths. We need the historically marginalized and oppressed to lead climate action with their own experiences, insights, and voices.
- **Value** our common home. Many of us can pinpoint a specific place on Earth we cherish and hold close to our hearts. Together, all of these individual places make up our shared planet. We also share home with future generations to come.
- **Commit** to individual and collective action. We have all contributed to this problem in some way, and each of us can also offer solutions. We must hold each other accountable and ensure our individual actions do not cause harm to creation. Yet, individual actions are not enough. We must work together to find and implement policy changes to prevent climate change from becoming irreversible.
- **Rejoice** in climate action. We can find joy in an altered lifestyle that does not waste and only consumes what we need. Instead of looking at these changes as burdensome, we can be joyous because we have the human ability to guard, serve, and partner with creation to live in a more sustainable world.
- **Grow** in our faith through climate action. We face a significant challenge, but faith is the practice of living in hope and trust that we can make a more sustainable and just world for current and future generations. When we faithfully act for climate justice, we grow in our right relationship with all of creation.
- **Empower** our youth to lead. In the past year, global youth have championed the historical values needed to force the powerful to act on the changing climate. Climate change will significantly impact the future of this generation.

We have a duty to implement climate justice throughout the world. Climate action strengthens our faith. We need love and empathy to solve the climate crisis. As people of faith, we are called to climate action.