

GETTING STARTED WITH CLIMATE SOLUTIONS: A GUIDE FOR THE AME CHURCH

Whereas Jesus commands us to “...love one another” (John 13:34) and God has given us responsibility to care for His good creation (Genesis 1:28, Genesis 2:15)





Why the AME Church is leading on climate – and how you can make an impact.

Throughout our history, the AME Church has led on the most pressing social issues of our day. As such, our faith leads us to act on climate.

Climate change is profoundly impacting God's creation and people. Millions are suffering from toxic pollution from dirty, outdated power plants near their homes. The health of our children, elderly, and those with chronic illnesses like asthma are put at greater risk. From droughts in Africa, to rising seas in the Caribbean, to the lack of economic diversity in our rural communities, changing weather patterns and warmer temperatures are threatening the livelihoods of our faithful and their ability to provide for their families.

As we answer God's call to love and serve one another, the AME Church commits to making our families and communities healthier and stronger. We resolve to support policies that will move us towards safe, clean energy. We will make our homes, buildings, and transportation less polluting. We will build awareness for climate solutions in our ministries, congregations, and communities, so that all will have the opportunity to share in the benefits of the clean energy economy.

The AME Church stands together with others of faith and goodwill who are calling for urgent action on climate change on behalf of the world's poor and God's creation. We are a founding member of Blessed Tomorrow, a comprehensive program that offers a network of support, guidance, and a robust platform of tools and resources to inspire and empower our climate change leadership.

This guide will show you how to reduce your impact on the earth and engage others on solutions, so they in turn will be inspired to lead on climate in their homes, congregations, and communities.



Blessed Tomorrow Founding Leadership Circle

- **Shantha Alonso**, Executive Director, Creation Justice Ministries
- **Rev. Dr. Jim Antal**, Conference Minister and Pres., Mass. Conference of the United Church of Christ
- **Rev. Canon Sally Bingham**, President and Founder, Interfaith Power & Light
- **Rev. Canon John Dorhauer**, 9th General Minister and President, United Church of Christ
- **Joshua DuBois**, CEO and Founder, Values Partnerships, Inc.
- **Rev. Dr. Gerald Durley**, Senior Pastor Emeritus, Providence Missionary Baptist Church
- **Dr. Chris Elisara**, Director of Creation Care Task Force, World Evangelical Alliance
- **Rev Dr. Eric Elnes**, Senior Minister, Countryside Community Church
- **Rabbi Steve Gutow**, Former President and CEO, Jewish Council on Public Affairs
- **Rev. Fletcher Harper**, Executive Director, GreenFaith
- **Rev. Dr. Katharine Rhodes Henderson**, President, Auburn Seminary
- **Rev. Dr. Susan Henry-Crowe**, General Secretary, The General Board of Church and Society of The United Methodist Church
- **John Hill**, Director of Economic & Enviro. Justice Assistant General Secretary for Advocacy & Grassroots Organizing, The General Board of Church and Society of The United Methodist Church
- **Rev. Stephanie Johnson**, Energy Stewardship Minister, Province 1 of the Episcopal Church
- **Imam Mohamed Magid**, Former Director, Islamic Society of North America
- **Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie**, AME First Vice President, General Board
- **Brian McLaren**, Pastor and Author
- **Dan Misleh**, Executive Director, Catholic Climate Covenant
- **Rev. Dr. Otis Moss, III**, Senior Pastor, Trinity United Church of Christ
- **Rabbi Jonah Pesner**, Director, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism
- **Rev. Dr. Gabriel Salguero**, President, National Latino Evangelical Coalition
- **Dr. Matthew Sleeth**, Executive Director, Blessed Earth
- **Richard Stearns**, President, World Vision, U.S.
- **Rabbi Warren Stone**, Co-chair, National Religious Coalition on Creation Care
- **Rev. Cameron Trimble**, Executive Director, Center for Progressive Renewal
- **Dr. Mary Evelyn Tucker**, Senior Lecturer and Research Scholar, Yale University
- **Rev. Jim Wallis**, President and Founder, Sojourners
- **Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins**, General Minister and President, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- **Rev. Elder Dr. Nancy Wilson**, Moderator, Metropolitan Community Church

Let's Get Started

It's easy to get started in creating a healthier, more just, and more positive future. There are several simple (but meaningful) things you can do right away. And, with a measure of forethought and planning, there are many other ways you can move your leadership forward for larger impact.

Faith leaders care for creation in a number of ways:

1. Lead by example with climate-friendly operations and practices
2. Engage your congregations, communities, and peers on climate solutions
3. Support policies that lead us away from dirty fuels
4. Reduce the pollution created by your homes, buildings, and transportation
5. Stand together with others who are calling for urgent action on climate change

Through the AME Church website, you now have access to a robust set of free tools, resources, events, and more to support your climate leadership, including:

- **The AME Church Climate Resolution** which outlines the biblical basis for why the AME Church is addressing climate change.
- **A video** explaining why the AME Church is leading on climate solutions.
- **A letter** to the AME Church from the AME Social Action Commission in support of the resolution.
- **Ideas, resources, and research-driven communication tools** to engage your congregation and its leadership in caring for creation.
- **Best practices with tips and ideas** from other faith leaders who have successfully shepherded their communities on climate change.
- **A community with news, a forum, and more** to enable you to connect with others and share stories to help you achieve your goals.

Additional tools, guides, and tips can be found directly at ame-church.com.

OFFICIAL WEBSITE
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July 6th - 13th, 2016
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2013-THE GOAL OF DISCIPLESHIP / 2014-THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." Matthew 9:37-38
"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5

2015 - THE EVIDENCE OF DISCIPLESHIP / **2016 - THE EVIDENCE OF THE HARVEST & THE FRUIT OF DISCIPLESHIP**

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Caring for Creation Today

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SUCCESS STORY

"We are a midsize church, not a mega-church. If we can do it, anybody can."

Rev. Dr. Earl D. Trent, Jr.
Senior Pastor, Florida Avenue Baptist Church
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Get on the PATH TO POSITIVE
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THIS WEEK'S INSIGHT
[How Connecting with Core Values Builds Strong Climate Solutions](#)

ON OUR TWITTER FEED
 Blessed Tomorrow
@BlessedTomorrow
Joint #Catholic orders #divest: 'We believe the Gospel asks no less of us' bit.ly/28RuiXe #Divestment

GET ON THE PATH **CARE FOR CREATION** **INSPIRE OTHERS** **CONNECT & SHARE**

Elevate Your Climate Leadership

Below are important steps you can take or start right now to elevate your climate action.

1. Engage Others

- ☐ **Craft Your Story.** Take a few moments to think about and write down your thoughts on why you have decided to lead on climate solutions. This will help prepare you to discuss your plans with your leadership and your members. Here are some guiding questions: (more ideas, resources, and tools to help you create your story are online at ame-church.com)
 - Why did you decide to lead on climate?
 - What does your faith tradition say about caring for others?
 - What are the needs and wishes of your congregants, and how does your leading on climate help to meet them?
 - How does leading on climate impact your congregation and house of worship?
 - What do you plan to do?
 - What do you hope to achieve for your congregation, community, and creation?
- ☐ **Engage your congregation**
 - Develop a list of members who would be interested in joining and participating in a climate solutions committee.
- ☐ **Engage your peers**
 - Inspire and empower clergy and laity with actionable information and powerful resources, including sermons, articles, and worship materials.
- ☐ **Engage your leaders**
 - Begin discussions to gain support for you and the congregation leading on climate change and to identify solutions to potential obstacles.
- ☐ **Engage elected officials**
 - Urge AME Church leaders, ministries, congregations, and laity to endorse strong national, state and local climate policies.
- ☐ **Commit to becoming climate literate**
 - Get to know the facts and learn best practices so you can speak effectively about climate impacts and the benefits of solutions.
- ☐ **Inspire collective action**
 - Let your congregation and community know they can be more effective by collaborating with other like-minded leaders and institutions.

2. Explore the Growing Faith and Climate Network, and Join the Conversation

- ☐ **Go to ame-church.com** and check out all the site has to offer, including powerful engagement tools, events, and the latest thought leadership on faith and climate.
- ☐ **Find out who else is leading on climate change within your community** and the AME Church. Connect with them to share thoughts, experiences, and ideas.
- ☐ **Share your leadership and progress.** Tell friends, family, and colleagues why you are taking action on climate change and how you're making a difference.

3. Reduce Pollution

- ☐ **Start with less polluting, more efficient energy use.** Look for ways to make your congregations, homes, buildings, and transportation use less energy. Move away from dirty fuels and towards safe, clean energy like wind and solar.
- ☐ **Plant trees and create community gardens** to green your public spaces and inspire healthier lifestyles.
- ☐ **Purchase climate-friendly supplies and appliances,** and implement recycling and composting programs in your homes, schools, facilities, and house of worship.
- ☐ **Explore smart transportation.** Encourage congregants to carpool or take public transportation to services, or provide a low-impact shuttle.
- ☐ **Be thoughtful about your events.** Choose climate-friendly facilities and caterers for your gatherings, and be mindful of waste when producing materials.

Need more inspiration and ideas on how to lead on climate? Visit blessedtomorrow.org to take advantage of free tools, tips, ideas, and resources.





The AME Church is a founding member of Blessed Tomorrow, a comprehensive climate program for faith institutions offering support, guidance, and resources to inspire and empower faith climate change leadership.

www.ame-church.com | www.blessedtomorrow.org