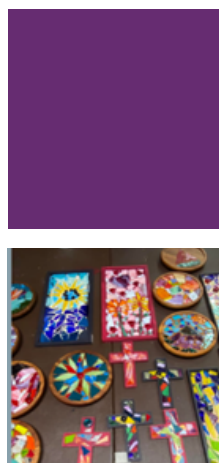




Center for Climate Justice and Faith

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary



"Even as I watch the hills and mountains burn and the creeks and lakes dry up in my beloved Northern California, I long to be in community to change the tide of global warming. When I saw that this Certificate was going to create a global community, I was excited to be part of it."

- Rev. Jill Ross
California, USA



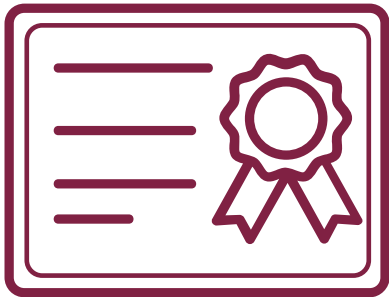
WHAT IS "CLIMATE JUSTICE"?

"Climate justice" holds that the climate crisis is inherently a crisis of racial, gender, and economic inequity. The humans suffering first and foremost the ravages of climate change are disproportionately the world's people of color and economically poor people. Thus, climate justice weds efforts to address climate change with efforts toward racial and economic justice.

Tree of Life by Kristen Gilje

Empowering leaders to cultivate moral, spiritual, and practical power for the work of climate justice in communities of faith

BY THE NUMBERS



21 students completed the Certificate in Climate Justice and Faith

18 students completed the Community Organizing for Climate Justice as Faith in Action training



2 MDiv students graduated with a Concentration in Climate Justice and Faith

10 countries and **14** states represented



"This certificate program is an eye opener in order to understand climate justice from faith perspective. It is a timely course for our generation."

- Simon Halkano Gollo
Moyale, Kenya

CERTIFICATE IN CLIMATE JUSTICE AND FAITH



Students in the Certificate in Climate Justice and Faith wave during a Zoom meeting

The inaugural year for the Certificate in Climate Justice and Faith brought together 22 people from 10 countries to cultivate moral, spiritual, and practical power to be leaders for climate justice in their communities. Participants ranged from recent college graduates in rural U.S., to Bishop staff in Zimbabwe, and a professor in Mexico. All of them united in their passion to work for climate justice in their communities and their desire to gain skills and knowledge to help them in this work.

Students were gathered into three cohorts that met every other week to discuss readings and how they relate to their own context. Despite the distance, cultural differences, and language gaps, students quickly formed close relationships within their cohort.

"Working with others from different geographical locations has brought much more comfort from knowledge that we are not alone in the pursuit of climate justice. I regard being part of the cohort as a privilege and opportunity to tap from the vast knowledge and experiences of others which in turn enriches my knowledge and broaden my perspective." - Arthurage Abereni, Kwekwe Zimbabwe



SACRED ACTION PROJECT

Love for Creation Yola, Nigeria

Sabi Elizabeth Aititya (far right)
with participants in a Climate
Justice Workshop

Sabi Elizabeth Aititya began her Sacred Action Project (capstone project) for the Certificate in Climate Justice and Faith by bringing together frontline congregations and faith-based organizations in her community in Yola, Nigeria to mobilize for education, reflection, action, and advocacy for climate justice. So far, her initiative, Love for Creation, has brought together more than five congregations.

“Through this collaboration we, as people of faith, hope to make a meaningful contribution in the next decade towards a sustainable future for all life on the planet”, she said. “Our contribution seeks to address the root causes of the climate emergency while also supporting those who are most impacted by it. Our contribution will also respond to feelings of ecological grief and eco-anxiety through pastoral care and ceremony, building community resilience, and by taking collective action for climate justice.”

In addition to her outreach to congregations, Sabi has organized “Climate teach-ins” in schools and youth organizations in her community bringing information about the causes, impacts, and solutions to climate change to dozens of students.

SACRED ACTION PROJECT

Climate Conversations

Maryland, USA

For his Sacred Action Project for the Certificate in Climate Justice and Faith, Larry Ryan set out to help congregations throughout his synod start conversations around climate justice. As a member of the ELCA Maryland-Delaware Synod's Creation Care Team, Larry was interested in hearing from synod members about their thoughts on creation care. To gather their input, Larry led small group conversations with four congregations via zoom where 26 participants discussed the church's role in creation care, shared their visions for how the church could be more engaged, and voiced their concerns about the future.

These fruitful conversations provided a space for congregants to begin these conversations about a topic not normally discussed at church: climate change.

"The 26 people who participated in these four Zoom meetings on creation care witnessed to the glories of God from the gifts we have been given in creation. They not only witnessed to me, but to the others who participated. All of us came away with new appreciation for creation and a hopefulness that we will be able to be the good stewards God is calling us to be," Larry said.

Larry is hopeful that these conversations will help inform the work of the synod's Creation Care Team and build a movement for climate justice throughout the synod.



Students from Humble Walk, Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Maryland discuss climate change

"This course was life-changing for me. It came at a time of new sensitivity and sense of summons into the climate crisis and climate justice, and provided the tools, the understanding, the accountability, and the mentoring I needed to move forward

- Participant in Community Organizing for Climate Justice and Love in Action

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE AS LOVE IN ACTION



Students in the Community Organizing training meet via Zoom

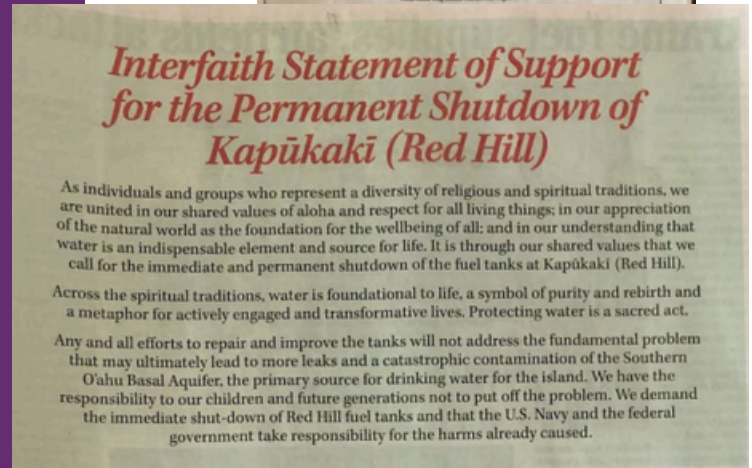
Community Organizing for Climate Justice as Love in Action is a web-based three-part training in the arts of faith-rooted community organizing. This course equipped participants with skills, knowledge, spiritual grounding, and a community of support to address the climate crisis in ways that build racial and economic equity.

During its inaugural year, 18 participants from six states completed the program. Participants attended a three-day training followed by a mentored 12-week practice phase and a second two-day training. The 12-week practice phase included weekly cohort gatherings for support and network building. The program is supported by partnering organizations, GreenFaith and the Organizing for Mission Network of the ELCA.

Throughout the course students designed and began implementing a final project that would address climate injustices in their community. These projects ranged from closing fossil fuel infrastructure, to get out the vote campaigns, and a program inspiring young people to get involved. Learn more about these projects in the following stories.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING PROJECT

Shut Down RedHill O'ahu, Hawaii



During World War II, the U.S. Navy built a fuel storage facility into a hill in the Kapūkaki (Red Hill) area on O'ahu, near Pearl Harbor, in order to save these fuel reserves from aerial attack. Nearly 80 years later, 15 of these tanks are still in operation directly above one of O'ahu's main freshwater aquifers.

Since 2014, more than 55,000 gallons of fuel from these tanks has leaked into the surrounding ground and groundwater. After the most recent leak in November 2021, petroleum was detected in the water at the Red Hill Elementary school and the Pearl Harbor/Hickam military base even after repeated communication from the U.S. Navy insisting the water was safe to drink. In the first days of December, it was confirmed that the Red Hill well was contaminated. About 4,000 military families who relied on this well were displaced for months. Some were sickened and hospitalized.

Rev. Brianna Lloyd, Associate Pastor at Lutheran Church of Honolulu, participated in the Center for Climate Justice and Faith's Community Organizing for Climate Justice as Love in Action training. For her final project, Shut Down Red Hill, Brianna is building an interfaith movement to advocate for the full closure and removal of the Red Hill Storage Facility. As part of this project, Brianna worked with faith leaders to publish a full-page statement in Hawaii's biggest newspaper, the *Star Advertiser*, calling for the closure of the facility. This statement was signed by 150 faith leaders from around the islands and served as a launching point for the larger campaign which Brianna continues to lead.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING PROJECT

Protagonists of Transformation

When Pope Francis charged young adults in the Catholic Church to “be protagonists of transformation”, Anna Robertson took note. Until July of 2022, Anna served as the first Director of Youth and Young Adult Mobilization at Catholic Climate Covenant and recently completed the Community Organizing for Climate Justice as Love in Action training. For her final project, Anna designed the Common Home Corps, a cohort-based mentorship program to build a youth movement for climate justice within the Catholic Church. The goal of this program is to “equip and inspire young people across the U.S. Catholic sphere to be protagonists of transformation toward a society shaped by integral ecology”.

Throughout her time at the Covenant, Anna heard from both young adults in the U.S. Catholic community and those who accompany them in ministry that climate change is a concern, and climate justice a priority. These insights are consistent with findings from a study from Springtide Research Institute which found that 75% of young Catholics (ages 13-25) are concerned about the environment. Anna used the mentored 12-week practice phase of the community organizing training as an opportunity to explore what kinds of programs could equip both Catholic young adults with the tools to constructively engage in climate justice work and those engaged in young adult ministry with the practical and pastoral tools to accompany young adults in moving through climate anxiety toward meaningful action rooted in faith. What emerged from the series of one-to-one meetings Anna conducted for the course in conversation with Kelly Marciales, her assigned mentor for the course, was Common Home Corps, a project plan for engaging small, local cohorts of Catholic young adults in faith-based community organizing training focused on bringing about climate justice in the Church and world.

With 17,000 parishes, billions of USD in endowments, and millions of acres of land, the Catholic Church in the U.S. has the potential to make an incredible impact for climate justice. Anna believes that the youth and young adults in the Catholic Church have the power to push the Church into action and leaders in the Catholic Church agree.

“Bishops are not normally young people, but we are like Grandfathers, and grandfathers normally listen to their granddaughters and grandsons. They have very close relationships to their granddaughters and grandsons. So please, the young people: Tell your Grandfather Bishop about [fossil fuel] divestment”, Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich.

"The climate justice and faith concentration helped me further form my vocation. It challenged me to think deeper and broader about God's divine justice-seeking love; how to share it and how to see it in the world around. As a faith leader I get to help ask the question of 'how might this action/policy harm or help our neighbors (human and non-human.)' The concentration also helped me get connected with more people who share in creation care and faith."

- Kaylie Inez, M.Div, Candidate for Word and Sacrament
Graduate in Concentration in Climate Justice and Faith at PLTS

CONCENTRATION IN CLIMATE JUSTICE AND FAITH AT PLTS



PLTS students Julie Gerrish and Tori Valcarcel
at a Faiths 4 Climate Justice interfaith event

The Concentration in Climate Justice and Faith is for PLTS MDiv and MA students who are interested in focusing more deeply on earth-honoring theology, ethics, spirituality, and practices that connect ecological well-being with racial, economic, and gender justice. Students have opportunities to take classes on climate justice, engage with local climate justice organizations, and represent PLTS at local and international climate actions.

PLTS STUDENTS AT THE U.N. GLOBAL CLIMATE SUMMIT (COP26) IN GLASGOW



Julie Gerrish, PLTS student in the Concentration in Climate Justice and Faith (right) participates in an action at COP26 calling for a “Loss and Damages” fund to help vulnerable nations recover from climate disasters. Photo: Simon Chambers/ACT

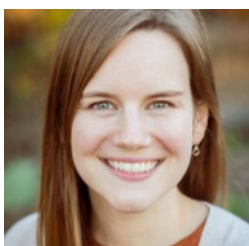
Two students from the Climate Justice and Faith Concentration, Julie Gerrish and Kelly Miller-Sanchez (not pictured), were official members of the ELCA delegation to the UN Climate Change Conference known as COP 26 (the Paris Climate Summit was COP 20) in Glasgow, Scotland October 31 – November 12, 2021.

Thousands of delegates representing NGOs (non-governmental organizations, what we in the U.S. call non-profits) from around the globe were present to influence negotiations. Julie and Kelly were among these NGO representatives pressuring governmental representatives to make bold commitments to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions AND support policies that prioritize the well-being of climate vulnerable people, particularly Indigenous communities.

MEET THE FACULTY AND STAFF



Dr. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda
Director, Center for Climate
Justice and Faith
Professor of Theological and Social
Ethics, PLTS



Sarah Berg
Assistant Director, Center for
Climate Justice and Faith

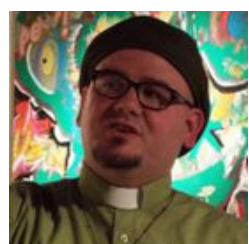
Community Organizing for Climate Justice and Love in Action



Kelly Marciales
Coordinator of Community
Organizing for Climate Justice as
Love in Action



The Rev. Abby Mohaupt
Director of Education and Training
GreenFaith



Rev. Steve Jerbi
Minister of Worship and Christian
Formation at University
Congregational Church
Seattle, WA

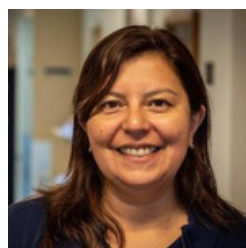
Certificate in Climate Justice and Faith



Phoebe Morad
Coordinator of Certificate in
Climate Justice and Faith
Executive Director, Lutherans
Restoring Creation



Rev. Dr. Neddy Astudillo
Coordinator of Spanish-language
Certificate in Climate Justice
and Faith
Latinx and Latin America
Training Coordinator, Greenfaith



Elena Cedillo
Program Executive for Climate
Justice, Lutheran World
Federation



Rev. Dr. Chad Rimmer
Program Executive for Identity,
Communion, and Formation,
Lutheran World Federation



Dr. Ryan Cummings
Program Director for Hunger
Education, ELCA