



## Climate Change: Do My Choices Matter? January 18, 2022

Dear Member of the JustFaith Network,

We are grateful that you are a part of our JustFaith community. Whether you are a graduate of one of our programs or you are just getting to know us, we hope this offering will help sustain you spiritually and/or equip you to work for justice.

Our monthly small group resource is sent on the third Tuesday of each month; you can access an archive of past resources by logging into your JustFaith account. You can invite your friends, family, Sunday School class, or current or past JFM small group to join you in-person or via video conferencing. If you are new to video conferencing, Zoom tutorials are available on our YouTube page – [Click here to access.](#)

While we hope that these resources will inspire and nourish your community, for a more robust experience, consider one of our longer programs. Click [here](#) for more information. This week's resource speaks to themes found in our Eco-justice series, which you will find [here](#).

This week's small group experience relies on each participant having listened to this podcast: "[Is Your Carbon Footprint BS?](#)" Please share this link in advance so that all participants can come prepared to discuss. Note: ask participants to do the exercise described in the podcast involving a three-circle Venn diagram and come prepared to share their results with the group.

Last but not least, all of our work is a collaboration with people like you. When you donate, your gift helps us sustain and equip individuals committed to making the world better. [Click here to help out.](#)

Also, please feel free to forward this resource to friends and family! In fact, can we urge you to do so. We want this resource to reach as many people as possible.

With gratitude,

The JustFaith Ministries Staff



## Welcome and Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

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When everyone has dialed in, begin your time together with these or similar words:

**Welcome, friends! It's so good to be with all of you. Today we'll begin with an opening prayer and spend a few minutes checking in with each other. Then we'll have some conversation about a podcast we listened to, before closing in prayer. This a time to care for one another and to be inspired to grow and act.**

**Let's take a few seconds of silence to pause, to listen to our breathing, and to be present in this space.**

*Pause for 30 seconds before beginning the opening prayer. In advance, assign someone to read aloud the following prayer:*

**HEAR, O HUMANKIND, the prayer of my heart.  
For are we not one, have we not one desire,  
to heal our Mother Earth and bind her wounds?  
And still to be free as the spotted Eagle climbing  
the laughing breath of our Father Sky,  
to hear again from dark forests and flashing rivers  
the varied ever-changing Song of Creation?**

**O Humankind, are we not all brothers and sisters,  
are we not the grandchildren of the Great Mystery?  
Do we not all want to love and be loved, to work  
and to play, to sing and dance together?**

**But we live with fear. Fear that is hate,  
fear that is ambition, competition, aggression,  
fear that is loneliness, anger, bitterness, cruelty,  
fear that is mistrust. envy. greed. vanity. . . and yet  
fear is only twisted love, love turned back  
upon itself, devouring itself, hating itself,  
love that was denied, love that was rejected . . .  
and love . . .**

**Love is life – creation, seed and leaf  
and blossom and fruit and seed, love is growth  
and search and reach and touch and dance,  
love is nurture and succor and feed and pleasure,  
love is life believing in itself.**

And life. . .

Life is the Sacred Mystery singing to itself, dancing  
to its drum, telling tales, improvising, playing  
and we are all that Spirit, our stories all  
but one cosmic story that we are loved indeed,  
that perfect love we seek we are already.  
That the love in me seeks the love in you,  
and if our eyes could ever meet without fear,  
we would recognize each other and rejoice,  
for love is life believing in itself.

From Earth Prayers, pp. 124-25.

## Check-In Time (10 minutes or so)

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Ask these open-ended questions. If you are by yourself, journal about them.

*Note: If you are with a group, these questions have the potential to take up a lot of time. Some weeks may require more check-in time than others, depending on the needs of the group. To provide a shorter yet meaningful check-in time, choose ONE of the questions below, and ask participants to share a ONE sentence response.*

- **Before we begin this our reflection, let's take a few minutes to check in. How is everyone feeling?** (It will be a bit more difficult via phone to know if someone is being talked over or is trying to get a word in.... Be sure everyone has a chance to speak).
- **What is something you're struggling with this week?**
- **Where have you seen a sign of hope this week?**

*Other optional questions include: What is something you've learned about yourself during this time of social distancing? Where have you experienced a "thin place" in the last week? Where have you seen beauty this week? What is one new behavior you'd like to continue doing when the virus has passed us by?*

## Reflection (25 minutes or so)

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Participants should have listened to [this podcast](#) prior to the gathering.

Our discussion today has two parts:

1. First, what thoughts did you find most helpful in the podcast? Anything surprise you?
2. Second, share your Venn Diagram notes with the group. Depending on the size of the group, allot five minutes (or more) for each person to share.

## Announcements (5-10 minutes)

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- This resource is a small sample of the kinds of conversations had in our 8-session programs. For a more intensive experience related to matters of Climate Change, see our Eco-justice program series; click [here](#).
- On Thursday, January 20, 7:00 p.m. ET, JustFaith Ministries' "Acting for Justice" Series will continue with teacher/activist, Tim Darst. Tim will address the topic, "Seeking Climate Justice at the Intersection of Race, Immigration and the Environment." For more information or to register, click [here](#).
- Let participants know that the materials for this gathering were free, put together by the JustFaith Ministries staff to equip more people for the work of peace and justice. To support the creation of more resources and programs, participants are encouraged to donate to JustFaith Ministries; click [here](#).
- Are there any opportunities for action or advocacy happening in your community this week? Invite participants to share ways to support the work of local groups working for justice or care for the environment.

## Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

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Then say: **Before we join in the closing prayer, let us pause to acknowledge the presence of the Holy Spirit, who is as close as our very breath.**

*Pause for 30 seconds. Then share the reflection below.*

**Almighty God, who are mother and father to us all,**



Look upon your planet Earth divided.  
Help us to know that we are all your children,  
That all nations belong to one great family,  
And all of your religions lead to you.

Multiply our prayers in every land  
Until the whole Earth becomes your congregations,  
United in your love.  
Sustain our vision of a peaceful future  
And give us strength to work unceasingly  
To make that vision real. Amen.

- Helen Weaver, found in Earth Prayers, p. 115

Then, in these words, invite any participants who have a prayer, a concern, or a request to briefly share it:

**We are disciples on a journey.  
We are the body of Christ, broken for the world.**

**We hold one another as we carry the concerns of our neighbors.  
If you feel moved, please share your prayer aloud.**

Pause

**We pray also for the members of the JustFaith community across the country. Unite us through the power of your Holy Spirit, that together we might participate with you in the building of your Kingdom, in order to create a more just and peaceful world.**

**Amen.**