



## August 8, 2021 – Pentecost 11 (B) COP26

Taking advantage of a unique virtual opportunity, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry invites all Episcopalians over 18 to consider applying to be a delegate to the 2021 United Nations climate change conference — known as the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties, or COP26. Applications are due by Aug. 20, and the presiding bishop's delegation will attend daily virtual events during COP26, which takes place in Glasgow Oct. 31 to Nov. 12.

“This year’s online platform will allow for wider representation on the delegation,” said the Rev. Melanie Mullen, director of reconciliation, justice, and creation care for The Episcopal Church. “Episcopalians who are young adults, people of color, Indigenous, LGBTQ identifying, and from communities affected by climate change and environmental injustice are especially invited to apply.”

Organizers underscored the vital importance of decisions from the annual COP gatherings in the effort to reverse the worst effects of climate change. Already this year, June was recorded as North America’s hottest on record and the fourth hottest globally; the western U.S. is experiencing its worst drought in two decades.

“Non-governmental organizations, including religious bodies like The Episcopal Church, participate in these UN meetings by advocating for our own needs and concerns, especially giving voice to vulnerable populations within our Church,” said the Rt. Rev. Marc Andrus, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of California and head of the delegation. “As delegation members, we stand in solidarity with smaller nations, such as those in the Pacific Ocean, who already feel the leading-edge effects of climate change.”



During the conference, delegates will be expected to attend two to five hours of events per day and follow a particular issue within the climate negotiations. They will have the opportunity to speak at Episcopal Church COP events and write and publish blog posts about their engagement with the event.

“We bring our values and beliefs into the room at the COPs,” Andrus said. “The world religions hold the earth to be sacred, respect the rights of vulnerable populations, and have sacred paths for people to travel that lead us from disintegration to wholeness.”

The presiding bishop began sending a delegation to the COP with the historic Paris Agreement meeting in 2015 and has done so every year since. Delegates bring back what they learn to share with the wider church and also carefully monitor the major workstreams of the COP. These workstreams include mitigation, finance, adaptation, loss and damage, and raising ambition, which means accelerating progress to achieve emissions reduction goals and involves building consensus and partnering strategically at local and global levels.

The presiding bishop will announce his nominations for the delegation by early September. Members will meet monthly ahead of COP26 via video conferencing as well as daily during the November event. To learn more and to apply by Aug. 20, visit <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/creation-care/cop26/>. Contact [creation@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:creation@episcopalchurch.org) with questions.