

What is climate justice?

And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you. ... The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; with me you are but aliens and tenants. (Leviticus 25.10,23)

God's ideal of Jubilee provided economic justice to God's people, restoring land every



50 years to those who were without and keeping others from owning more and more, because, as this scripture points out, all the land is really God's.

The climate crisis is causing the inequality of human rights, to a place to live and a livelihood, as well as health, adequate clean water, nutritious food, culture, and even life itself.

The communities most affected or vulnerable to effects are often the ones that have contributed the least to climate change.

Climate justice is the term now used to address this unequal historical responsibility that countries and communities bear in relation to the state of the climate, suggesting that "the countries [like ours], industries, businesses, and people that have become wealthy from emitting large amounts of greenhouse gases have a responsibility to help those affected by climate change." (climatepromise.undp.org/)

Jesus teaches us that God is on the side of those who suffer

and those who are marginalized by the powers of the world; and that wealth should not be what we strive for, but rather, justice for people and the earth.

April 22 is Earth Day, the 55th anniversary of this movement begun by a United States senator which mobilized 20 million people that first year to demonstrate against the legacy of 150 years of industrial development and its serious health impacts (earthday.org/earth-day-2025/).

It is indeed ironic that American and many other global political leaders are now choosing to roll back environmental protections and impede greening initiatives.

Individual action: As a lead-up to Earth Day, educate yourself on climate justice and consider what Jesus would call us to do. Check out the quizzes and fact sheets under the Earth Hub tab on the earthday.org site.

Parish action: Plan a congregational event for Earth Day 2025. This year's theme is Our Power, Our Planet: educate, advocate, and mobilize.

Resources: (more at nb.anglican.ca/GreeningUp):

Wikipedia: Climate Justice

For a Canadian perspective: Centring Social Justice is Sound Climate Policy at climateinstitute.ca

Cheryl Jacobs worships at Christ Church Cathedral and is trying to live greener...