

# No Faith in Fossil Fuels

## Lent Vigil for Climate Justice

**24 hours a day**  
**14 – 24 February 2024**  
**Westminster, London**



### Prayer is powerful!

As the climate crisis wreaks havoc in our world, we are drawn to our most ancient of traditions – prayer. Bringing us to a posture of humility, prayer allows us to lament the brokenness of creation and hope for the restoration of our world.

We have faith that our prayers are heard and can bring transformation, even in the midst of injustice. That is why we gather in vigil, to pray for creation, for our global neighbours, for bold climate action from the UK Government.

As we enter the season of Lent, join us as we pray 24 hours a day, for 10 days at Westminster, London. Pray for an hour, pray for a day! Join the vigil as we declare, No Faith in Fossil Fuels.

### Why we need climate justice

Around the world creation is crying out. Heatwaves, fires, droughts, and floods are becoming more frequent, wrecking lives, land, and livelihoods. Meanwhile, the biggest polluters who have caused this crisis make vast profits from fossil fuels. As creation groans, the poorest, who have done the least to cause the problem, are paying the price. Poverty and debt crises mean poor countries are struggling to respond. This is unjust.

### Why Westminster?

We believe that the UK Government has a historic and current responsibility to take bold climate action. The extraction of wealth from many nations kicked off the industrial revolution, leading to Britain being the world's 8th biggest historical carbon emitter.

At COP28, while we celebrated the Loss and Damage Fund becoming operational with support pledged for climate vulnerable countries, the UK's financial commitments were well below what is possible and came from existing climate funds.

As we vigil, as we pray, we call on the UK Government to:

1. **Make the UK's biggest polluters pay for climate action.**
2. **Deliver and build on the UK's international climate finance pledges and pay into the UN's Loss & Damage Fund.**
3. **Ban new UK-based fossil fuel projects.**

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### From the prayerful to the political

Locating our vigil outside Westminster is a political move. We want to bear witness to the impacts of the climate crisis and pray for the UK Government to take bold climate action. We also want our prayers to move us into action and tell our politicians why we're there. A great way we can do this is through our local constituency MPs.

Here are three ways you can make the prayerful political as you join the vigil and engage your MP:

- 1. Invite your MP to the vigil – some MPs will be in and around parliament during the vigil. Invite them to meet with you at the vigil site or one of the services taking place.**
- 2. Write to your MP – you can do this before or after you take part in the vigil.**
- 3. Tag your MP on social media– if you use social media, take a photo or record a short message while you are at Westminster and tag your MP.**

Whichever option works for you, make sure you tell your MP why you're taking part in the vigil, and what you want them to do to champion bold climate action in parliament. You can give them an MP briefing to take away - download at [caid.org.uk/C4CJbriefing](https://caid.org.uk/C4CJbriefing)

### Tell your story

The more people we can talk to about the bold climate action we need the

better. You can increase the impact of your action by sharing your story of why you are taking part in the vigil, why action for climate justice matters and what we need UK parliament to do. Share your story in your local paper as well as local church media – many churches and denominations have websites, social media, newspapers and newsletters where you can share your story.

Use the press release template: [caid.org.uk/vigilpress](https://caid.org.uk/vigilpress)

### Practicalities

Below you will find all the practical information you need to participate in the vigil. The first thing you need to do is register for your time slot. As well as reading the information here, you can also join an open zoom call hosted by Christian Climate Action who have lots of experience with vigils and ask any questions you have - details below.

**Location:** The location for the vigil is the pavement outside Parliament on St Margaret's Street on the west side of Carriage Gates / New Palace Yard (no. 6 on the map [bit.ly/lentvigillocation](https://bit.ly/lentvigillocation))

We will be pre-liaising this with the police so they will know what we are doing.

### What do I need to know if I register for a daytime slot?

The pavement outside Parliament is wide and stretches far enough for people to stand or sit without blocking the way. Please ensure that you leave enough space for pedestrians to pass in both directions.



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Very occasionally the police ask people to temporarily clear the pavement near Carriage Gates as a security measure. In this unlikely event, please move across to the opposite pavement on the Parliament Square Garden side of the road and then return as soon as permitted.

As this is a continuous vigil you should be able to find people praying when you arrive. Please say hello and take up a place alongside them. When they go, or if there is no one there please sit or stand near the gates so others can readily find you. We plan to have a banner on the ground - please keep an eye on it while you are there.

**Please turn up in time for the slot you have registered for, if the banner or anything else is left unattended at any point the police will dispose of it.**

### Being prepared:

- Dress for the weather. Wear layers because you will get colder standing or sitting still.
- Bring something to sit on (such as a camping chair or a stool) if you want.

### Facilities:

- There are public toilets in the subway under Parliament Street (Westminster Station) open from 7am to 9pm and Charing Cross and Waterloo station toilets are open from early morning till late at night
- There are a number of cafes and pubs a short walk away
- The Tesco Express just outside Westminster Station is open from 7am till 11pm

### What do I need to know if I register for the overnight slot?

People have previously found that keeping vigil on the street overnight can be an opportunity for profound encounter with God, however it requires a degree of resilience, and we suggest that you are realistic about this if you are considering signing up.

We have created a seven-hour slot for overnights, marked purple on the rota, because tubes and trains will stop running around midnight and will not start again till around 6am. However, you can join for a shorter period during the night without registering if transport is not an issue for you. Please email [christianclimateaction@gmail.com](mailto:christianclimateaction@gmail.com) to let them know if that is the case. People on the overnight shift are also always grateful to see people who can come early.

**Being prepared:** There are several things you will need for an overnight shift, especially as it might rain.

- Camping chair with an extra insulating layer for the seat (e.g. a sit mat)
- Wear very warm clothing. It always feels much colder than you expect.
- Waterproofs sufficient to cover you and your chair. Using a rain poncho or a polythene sheet works well
- Wear waterproof footwear and gloves
- Umbrella
- A rug or a sleeping bag to wrap around you.
- We highly recommend a survival bag, preferably a thermal one available in all camping shops





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You can email Christian Climate Action if you need to borrow any items:  
[christianclimateaction@gmail.com](mailto:christianclimateaction@gmail.com)

Don't forget to bring whatever food, drink and medication you will need.

### Keeping warm

- As well as dressing up take a short but brisk walk every hour to keep warm.
- A candle in a lantern can somehow make you feel warmer.

### Facilities

Toilet facilities are very limited at night.

- Waterloo station (about 15 minutes walk) toilets close at about 1am and reopen shortly after 4.30am (5:30am on Sunday).
- There is a 24 hour automatic public toilet with disabled facilities (with a radar key) about 15 minutes' walk away at Regency Place, junction with Horseferry Road, SW1P 2DZ.

### Safety

The area outside Parliament is reasonably well lit all night and there is a twenty four hour police presence guarding Parliament. There are occasionally strangers who may seek to engage with you and if you find this uncomfortable a prayerful attitude and silence is usually enough to ensure that you are left alone. However, this is sometimes an opportunity for meaningful encounter and we invite you to have an open mind and a compassionate heart in such situations. Please act within your comfort – your safety and peace of mind is paramount.

### Numbers

We aim to have three or more people overnight. **If we do not have at least**

**two people, we will not go ahead with that shift.**

### What else?

#### Updates and questions

Please join our private Facebook group **Lent Vigil for Climate Justice 2024** to ask questions and post any updates and photos of the vigil. Importantly, you can use this page to let people know if you are going to be late to your slot.

#### Zoom calls

You can also join either of our Zoom open calls hosted by Christian Climate Action who have lots of experience of running vigils from the practical to the prayerful – ask any questions you have. Zooms take place on **Wednesday 24 and Tuesday 30 January, 6- 7pm.**

Use this link to register:  
[bit.ly/lentvigilzoom](https://bit.ly/lentvigilzoom)

#### Preparing to pray

You've registered for your vigil slot, got all the information you need, now you may be wondering how you'll spend your time at the vigil. Here's some ideas:

- use the Prayer Hour guide for a simple format of prayer, reflection and stillness for climate justice [caid.org.uk/vigilhome](https://caid.org.uk/vigilhome)
- use Christian Aid's Prayers and Placards resource and create your own placard to hold or place in front of you as you vigil [caid.org.uk/C4CJpack](https://caid.org.uk/C4CJpack)

