



The Green Corner



Climate Action for Peace

This is the theme of the United Nations International Day of Peace (or “Peace Day”) on 21 September. We may not think that our “green” choices have much to do with peace, but the UN explains the link:

Climate change causes clear threats to international peace and security. Natural disasters displace three times as many people as conflicts, forcing millions to leave their homes and seek safety elsewhere. Water and crops are increasingly being contaminated by salt (partly as a result of rising sea levels); this endangers food security, and the impact on public health is escalating. The growing tensions over resources and mass movements of people are affecting every country.

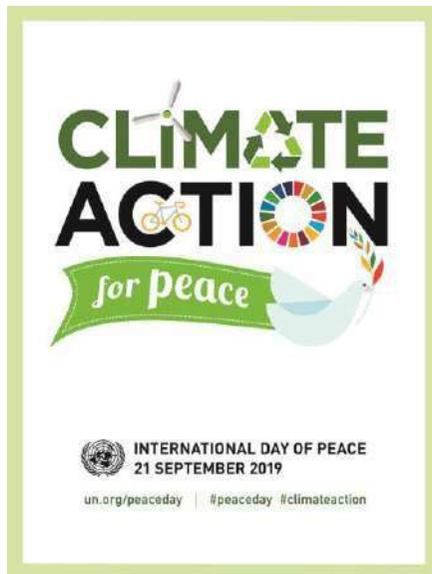
Peace can only be achieved if concrete action is taken to combat climate change. In May, UN Secretary-General António Guterres said “nature does not negotiate” and emphasized four key measures that Governments should prioritize to reach carbon neutrality by 2050: tax pollution, not people; stop subsidizing fossil fuels; stop building new coal plants by 2020; focus on a green economy.

On 23 September, the United Nations is convening a Climate Action Summit to accelerate action to implement the Paris Agreement, the landmark 2015 agreement about combatting climate change. The Summit will focus on the sectors that create the most emissions and the areas where building resilience could make the biggest difference – as well as provide leaders and partners the opportunity to demonstrate real climate action and showcase their ambition.

In the lead up to the International Day of Peace, the United Nations calls upon all to take action to tackle climate change. Every human is part of the solution - from turning off the lights to taking public transport, to organizing an awareness raising campaign in your community.*

This year's Peace Day provides opportunity for us to reflect on what more we can do – as individuals, families and as church – to be part of the solution at this time of climate emergency. As we take action to reduce our carbon footprint, we are also helping to create a more peaceful and just world.

Jane Collett



* Taken from the UN website <https://www.un.org/en/events/peaceday/> (amended)