



# STAND UP

# TAKE ACTION

## AGAINST POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

# Stand. Pray. Pledge. Act.

Your church is invited to join millions of people calling for action on poverty and climate change.



16 to 18 October 2009

Stand Up and Take Action is supported by the United Nations Millennium Campaign, the Global Call to Action against Poverty (the White Band organisation) and Micah Challenge, the international Christian campaign against poverty.

Christian agencies in the UK participating in Stand Up and Take Action include CAFOD, CARE, CCOW, Christian Aid, QPSW, Tearfund, Traidcraft and World Vision.

God calls us to love our neighbour and to “do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God.” Faced with the challenges of extreme poverty and climate change, churches around the world are seeking to follow God’s command. They’re supporting practical projects. Combating injustice. And, through prayer and campaigning, pressing for policies to help create a fairer world.

Prayer and campaigning have already brought about real change: think of the \$90 billion in debt relief gained by the Jubilee campaign and Make Poverty History! But there is still much to be done. The economic crisis and climate change are endangering progress on the Millennium Development Goals. As vital climate negotiations in Copenhagen approach, we need once again to press for action that meets the needs of the poorest.

**“Stand Up and Take Action” offers us an opportunity to join our prayers and actions with those of thousands of people in the UK and millions around the world.** From Australia to Peru to Zimbabwe, people will “stand up” and reaffirm their commitment to fight poverty and climate change, then take action to request that their leaders do the same.

Your church can join in by standing, bringing the needs of the world to God in prayer, renewing your commitment to work for justice and care for Creation, and asking MPs and parliamentary candidates for action on poverty and climate issues. And you can use this simple sign of commitment as a springboard for other actions.

When you stand up and take action, you’ll be part of a bigger movement within the UK, within the global church, and within the global community. **Last year over 100 million people around the world took part in Stand Up and Take Action.**

So join in! Stand. Pray. Pledge. Act. And then keep praying and acting. Not just because the needs of the world demand it, but because a righteous and loving God cries out that his people stand up for justice and peace.

## You can participate in this year’s Stand Up by:

- **Making “Stand Up” a part of your church service**

During services on the weekend of 18 October ask your church to stand up and take action. Register your service as a “Stand Up” at [www.standagainstopoverty.org](http://www.standagainstopoverty.org)\* Overleaf are pledges, suggestions of where to find worship materials and a list of possible actions for your Stand Up service – you could even invite your MP and local candidates to take part!

\*If your diocese has signed on to participate through Just1, Just1 will handle the registration.

- **Making “Stand Up” a part of your Micah Sunday or One World Week celebrations**

Micah Sunday offers an annual opportunity for churches to renew their commitment to “do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God.” Many churches will celebrate Micah Sunday on 18 October, using Stand Up as their campaign action. One World Week also begins on the 18 October: a “Stand Up” would be a great way to be in solidarity with and show your concern for others in our “one world”.

- **Joining “The Great Persuasion”**

People across the country will be lobbying their MPs and candidates on poverty and climate issues. Look at [www.standagainstopoverty.org](http://www.standagainstopoverty.org) to find a lobby you can join in your area; if none is listed, contact [campaigns@bond.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@bond.org.uk) to set one up.



UN Millennium Campaign



GOAP-Korea



CIVICUS

## How to Stand and Be Counted

1. To pre-register, go to [www.standagainstopoverty.org](http://www.standagainstopoverty.org) and click on “Are you planning an event.” Fill in the registration form.
2. At the event, ask everyone to stand.\*The group, or a leader, can then read a pledge or prayer of commitment and take whatever action you have decided on. Count the number of participants. If possible, take a picture.
3. Immediately after the event, go back to the Stand Up website and upload your numbers and any pictures you wish to share. Only materials uploaded by the end of 18 October can be counted, so speed is of the essence.

\* For those of us for whom the act of physically standing is difficult, if not impossible, the symbolic act of Standing Up is interchangeable with other symbolic gestures such as raising a hand or holding up a banner with the Stand Up and Take Action message.

## Pledges

Many people find it helpful to make a pledge as they stand. Here are three possibilities from agencies and groups supporting Stand Up and Take Action. Christian Aid also has a special Copenhagen pledge, that you could use. Or write your own!

## The Micah Call (*Micah Challenge*)

*Leader: This is a moment in history of unique potential, when the stated intentions of world leaders echo something of the mind of the Biblical prophets and the teachings of Jesus concerning the poor, and when we have the means to dramatically reduce poverty.*

All: We commit ourselves, as followers of Jesus, to work together for the holistic transformation of our communities, to pursue justice, be passionate about kindness and to walk humbly with God.

We call on international and national decision-makers of both rich and poor nations, to fulfil their public promise to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and so halve absolute global poverty by 2015.

We call on Christians everywhere to be agents of hope for and with the poor, and to work with others to hold our national and global leaders accountable in securing a more just and merciful world.

## Promises to the Poor (*Just1*)

Let's start by standing in silence for a few moments and listening for the voices of the poor coming from the east, west, north and south.

Now let us say to the east, west, north and south that they can count on us.

- We promise to stand up for stopping extreme poverty and hunger. So we speak out today for the billion people who go to bed hungry every night
- We promise to stand up for reducing child mortality. So we speak out today for the 30,000 children who each day die due to poverty
- We promise to stand up for improving basic health. So we speak out today for all people those fighting diseases which ravage communities, for ensuring clean fresh water for everyone, and for the care of mothers in childbirth
- We promise to stand up for promoting fairness, justice, and respect. So we speak out today for all those people working for peace and justice and human rights
- We promise to stand up for primary education for all. So we speak out to ask that children everywhere will get a full course of basic schooling
- We promise to stand up for respecting the world's resources. So we speak out for those people already suffering the effects of climate change, and for those working hard to ensure that the riches and benefits of our planet are shared by all
- And finally we promise to stand up and speak out against poverty – whenever we can, again and again



Elaine VanCleave



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## Stand Up and Take Action (*Global Call to Action against Poverty, adapted*)

We are on our feet to defeat extreme poverty and restore balance to the environment. We say to our leaders: Be great. Listen when the poorest speak. Fight to keep your promises to end poverty. Sign a global climate deal this year that is

AMBITIOUS enough to leave a planet safe for us all,

FAIR for the poorest who did not cause climate change but suffer the most from it,

And BINDING with real enforceable targets.

We Stand Up not just today, but EVERY DAY to demand what's right.

## Prayers, Hymns and Readings

A Stand Up Worship Materials sheet is available on the BOND website at [www.bond.org.uk/pages/masslobby.html](http://www.bond.org.uk/pages/masslobby.html) This contains prayers on poverty, suggestions of hymns (both traditional and modern) with appropriate themes, suggested sermon themes and Bible studies for personal reflection or small groups.

In addition, if you're celebrating Micah Sunday or One World Week, you can use the worship resources available at the Micah Challenge UK and One World Week websites. Service materials with climate change themes can also be found on the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) website in the section on Time for Creation.

## Actions for a Stand Up Service... and Beyond

Here are some suggested actions:

- Write to your MP or Government leaders to ask for action on poverty and climate change. Many agencies – including CAFOD, Christian Aid, Jubilee Debt Campaign, Tearfund, Traidcraft and World Vision – have action postcards or letters you could sign during or after your service.

Church of England churches may also want to use materials from the new Climate Justice Fund website, launched on the 7th of September. Baptist, Methodist and United Reformed Churches may also want to use materials from the Joint Public Issues Team.

- Invite your MP and other candidates to come to your service and take part in the Stand Up. Ask them to count the people taking part and to answer questions about their commitment to tackling global poverty and climate change. Then follow up with them over time...
- Reach out! If you have connections to a school, invite pupils and their parents to participate in your service. If other groups use your premises during the week, invite them, too.
- Do members of your congregation or your wider community have links to Stand Up in other countries? If so, try to include each other in your prayer and campaigning.
- Take up a challenge. God calls us to an ongoing journey of love and justice. So why not use "Stand Up" as an occasion for thinking more deeply about the way God calls us to live? You might want to think about how to reduce your carbon footprint. To consider how you could use your individual and collective time, talents and money to go further in fighting poverty and climate change. If you're looking for inspiration, why not try the LiveSimply website's Community Challenges page?

Diocese of Bath and Wells



Peoples Empowerment Trust (PET)



Harehills Lane Baptist Church



Elaine VanCleave

