

Newsletter

September to November 2025



Pilgrims of Hope

It has been a busy and fruitful summer across the Justice & Peace Scotland network. Members have enacted the call from the late Pope Francis to be Pilgrims of Hope in this Jubilee Year. In doing so, they provided prayerful witness as we staged events supported by heartening numbers.

Almost 300 people participated in three major gatherings you will find reports of in this newsletter: the No To Nuclear Weapons Christian ecumenical vigil at Faslane commemorating the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (see picture above), our worship and celebration of New Scots in the Together For Sanctuary service and our Dignity Not Detention solidarity witness at Dungavel.

We hope you can help us build on this momentum by attending the Season of Creation Conference in Stirling next Saturday, 6th September, signing up to the Red Line for Gaza campaign and Turn Debt Into Hope petition, and supporting both the mass lobby for climate action and the anti-poverty march Scotland Demands Better. Details of all can be found in this newsletter.

Stay in touch



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It's a key moment for climate action – join the mass lobby on 18th September

People from all over Scotland will gather at the Scottish Parliament and Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh on 18th September to tell our MSPs: this is a moment for leadership that protects what matters most – our health, our nature, our communities, our climate, and our future. You are being asked to join them.

Thousands of people met their MPs in Westminster in July. The Edinburgh event is connected with that, making sure people in Scotland can meet their decision makers too, because most climate policy is devolved.

With a Scottish election just round the corner next May, and a new Climate Change Plan being prepared, this is a critical time for MSPs to be hearing from us.

Members of Justice & Peace Scotland, in addition to many others across the climate action network as well as any concerned individuals, will be asking MSPs to use all opportunities to act with urgency to help us build a fairer, healthier, more stable and resilient future for everyone by:

- *Making our homes warmer and more energy efficient*
- *Supporting us to secure jobs and the skills we need to deliver these jobs*
- *Transforming our food system so that everyone has access to healthy, sustainable food*
- *Enabling better public transport and safer streets for walking, wheeling and cycling*
- *Reducing poverty and supporting those most impacted by climate impacts*
- *Ensuring a thriving natural environment that supports our health, wellbeing, and livelihoods for generations to come.*

It doesn't matter if you've never met your MSPs or spoken about climate before. You will be given all the support you need, from making it super easy to contact your MSPs to feeling confident on the day. You won't be doing this alone. Let's act now, and change forever.

 **Register [here](#)**



No To Nuclear Weapons



Thinking security differently

Justice & Peace Scotland will be sending a delegation to London later this year for a conference with fellow members of Justice & Peace Europe that will explore an alternative vision for security co-operation between Britain and France.

This has been narrowly focused on maintaining and upgrading the countries' nuclear arsenals since the signing of the Lancaster House Treaties.

The date of 1st November has been chosen for the conference, and walk to Lancaster House and vigil outside Downing Street, to coincide with the 15-year anniversary of the Treaties. The two nations this summer reaffirmed their commitment to logistics-sharing over their nuclear deterrents for the stated purpose of maintaining peace. This is a concept the conference will seek to challenge, and instead promote a possible framework for genuine peace.

More than £300 billion globally has been spent on nuclear weapons over the past five years. Leading to "shameful" reductions on how the world's treasures could be deployed for the betterment of people and the planet.

That was one of the messages delivered by Archbishop William Nolan at the No To Nuclear Weapons peace gathering at the South Gate of HM Naval Base Clyde at Faslane at the start of this month. Organised by Justice & Peace Scotland it served as a commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki which is estimated to have caused more than 210,000 deaths.

The event was led by Archbishop of Glasgow, also Bishop-President of Justice & Peace Scotland, Rt Rev Rosie Frew, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and Most Rev Mark Strange, Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church. They were joined by representatives from the Quakers, the Iona Community, the United Reformed Church, Pax Christi Scotland and the Glasgow Worker as almost 150 people stood in solidarity to renew a shared commitment to the common good and the flourishing of creation.

The group came together for prayer and reflection on the immorality of possessing nuclear weapons at a time when conflicts in the Middle East and Eastern Europe rage and the threat posed by these soon-to-be upgraded and expanded stocks in the UK is greater than in recent memory. The current generation of such weapons – held by nine countries – is understood to be 80 times more powerful than those dropped in Japan in 1945.

"You can't spend billions on nuclear weapons and then spend billions on other things as well," said Archbishop Nolan. "And shamefully, the British government has reduced the foreign aid budget and they are going to put that money, they told us, towards military spend. It shameful that should happen – especially at a time when so many people throughout the world are badly affected by climate change. And badly affected by war as well. War that is fuelled by the arms supplied by so many nations, including Britain itself, with weapons of mass destruction not acting as deterrents but instead creating an arms race.

"So when we stand here and highlight the futility of nuclear weapons we are also highlighting the evil that they are causing because so much money is being directed into this facility that could be directed into saving lives and doing good throughout the world. And we are also highlighting the futility of trying to achieve peace through weapons on mass destruction. We can only achieve peace by reconciliation and friendship."



Red line for Palestine

The plight of the Palestinian people was uppermost in the hearts and minds of those attending the National Justice and Peace Network Conference in Swanwick, last month.

The conference theme of Just Peace - challenging the concept that only violence can solve conflict - could only trigger images of the horrors unfolding in Gaza. Representatives, including a group of Justice & Peace Scotland commissioners, gathered in red at the centre for a symbolic photograph to highlight the red lines that the Israeli government has crossed in its flagrant disregard of international law as war crimes are carried out in a daily basis.

As the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem, Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, said of the place of Christ's birth: "It really does seem that our Holy Land, which preserves the highest revelation and manifestation of God, is also the place of the highest manifestation of Satan's power."

Pope Leo XIV recently called for a "halt to the barbarity" that has witnessed indiscriminate bombing of the strip, forced displacement, the targeting of civilians and journalists, and deliberate starvation across the past two years. Unconscionably, the ordinarily cautious and respected Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) body having recently declared a Level 5 "catastrophic" famine - Israeli government-made - that has left more than 500,000 starving and been responsible for 600 deaths of the almost 62,000 Gazans killed. At a time when Israel only last week approved further illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank that would effectively cut it off from East Jerusalem.

Powerlessness is an understandable response but silence cannot be. We ask that you give your backing to the Red Line for Gaza campaign by clicking [here](#).



REFLECTION

"We pronounce their names one by one. They ask us all to commit ourselves to finding or pursuing the path to peace with greater intelligence and passion, starting with a ceasefire and offering the conditions for doing so, from the release of hostages to not taking an entire people hostage."

Cardinal Matteo Zuppi, the head of the Italian Bishops' Conference, on leading a seven-hour vigil this month in which he read out the names of all the 12,211 Palestinian and 16 Israeli children who had then been killed in the Holy Land since 7th October, 2023.

March against poverty as Scotland Demands Better



Join us in demanding a fairer, better Scotland for all. Justice & Peace Scotland are one of the many organisations endorsing the Scotland Demands Better campaign led by the Poverty Alliance. This movement is calling for real change as too many families in Scotland struggle.

The campaign is our chance to come together and demand that politicians make the changes we need for a society where every household can thrive and prosper: better jobs with fair pay, better investment in essentials like housing and transport, and a stronger social security system that gives everyone the foundations to thrive.

On Saturday 25 October, we invite all our supporters across to join us in the Scotland Demands Better March and Rally in Edinburgh. The march will begin at the Scottish Parliament and end in The Meadows, where there will be music, speeches and family-friendly activities.

Justice & Peace Scotland will gather under our banner and we'll share the meeting point and timings soon. To receive all details as confirmed, make sure you are following us on social media or have signed up for our mailing list via the links on the front page of this newsletter.

Click [here](#) to learn more about the campaign aims or to find out when a local Scotland Demands Better Public Meeting is happening near you.

Help build a more equitable world and become a Fair Trade Finder

Choosing Fair Trade products supports ethical and sustainable practices in global trade, ensuring fairer prices, decent working conditions, and environmental sustainability for farmers and workers in the Global South.

Scottish Fair Trade, of which Justice & Peace Scotland is a longstanding member, recognises, on its own, changing shopping habits isn't sufficient to redress the effects of a global economic system that is not working. The problems are systemic and widespread in the operation of financial markets where deregulation, large scale investors in futures commodities and currency manipulation have all adversely impacted the core development within countries both rich and poor.

However, that does not mean it isn't important to see greater visibility, and bring greater awareness, of products carrying the Fair Trade label. That is why you are being asked to become a Fair Trade Finder. The aim is to create a map full of all the Fair Trade products available across Scotland.

Visit your local shop, supermarket, restaurant or café, find Fair Trade products, take a few photos, fill in the form, add the photos and once approved, your entry will appear. You can even add museums, galleries, theatres and other cultural places. With lots of Fair Trade products in many locations all over the country, it's easy for everyone to choose Fair Trade.

Find out more [here](#)



Christians from across Glasgow and beyond gathered for a celebration of welcome and sanctuary as part of Refugee Festival Scotland in June. The service at The Immaculate Conception Church in Maryhill, organised in partnership with Justice & Peace Scotland, as a member of Scottish Faith Action for Refugees (SFAR), brought together almost 100 people from a host of different countries. These included Iran, El Salvador, the Philippines, Nigeria, Ukraine, Uganda and Eritrea. As well as the Catholic Church, represented were the Church of Scotland, Scottish Episcopal Church, Methodist Church, Quakers, Salvation Army as well as others.

The service featured songs, poems and prayers. A warm welcome was offered by Father Jim Lawlor of the host church and the sermon was delivered by Father Andriy Chornenko of the Ukrainian Catholic Parish of Glasgow. Father Andriy shared a reflection on the Good Samaritan, urging all to "go and do likewise" for the stranger in our midst.

Two young people from the parish, sisters Ruth and Rita Nansasi spoke of finding sanctuary and welcome in Scotland. While Esther Moodie, coordinator of Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees, challenged the congregation to consider how they can get involved in refugee integration.

The service concluded with food prepared by the community, featuring dishes from El Salvador, the Philippines and more. Refugee Festival Scotland (13–22 June) celebrates the culture, creativity and contributions of people who have made Scotland their home.



Upcoming Events

Saturday, 6th September - Season of Creation Conference, St Margaret's Church, Raploch, Stirling, FK9 4UA, 10am to 3pm

You are warmly invited to this special event, hosted by the Bishops' Conference of Scotland, as Christians across the world will once again this September mark the Season of Creation; a sacred time of prayer, reflection, and action to renew our relationship with God and all creation. Marking the 10th anniversary of Laudato Si' - Pope Francis' landmark encyclical that called us to hear "both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor" that has inspired a global movement of faith-filled ecological conversion - Laudato Si' executive director Lorna Gold will be keynote speaker. The day will also include workshops and Q&As with Laudato Si' Animators Scotland, Justice & Peace Scotland, and SCIAF.

Booking is free but essential: click here to reserve your place

THE BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF SCOTLAND CARE OF CREATION OFFICE INVITES YOU TO...

SEASON OF CREATION CONFERENCE 2025

Ideas in Practice:
ST NINIAN'S AND ST CUTHBERT'S PARISH HAMILTON

Guest Speaker:
LORNA GOLD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - LAUDATO SI' MOVEMENT

Workshops and Q&As:
LAUDATO SI' ANIMATORS, JUSTICE & PEACE SCOTLAND AND SCIAF

SAT 6th SEPT 10AM - 3.00PM St. Margaret's, Stirling, FK9 4UA

BOOK YOUR FREE PLACE AT: WWW.BCOS.ORG.UK/SCC25 OR SCAN HERE:

Sunday 7th September - Mass for the Care of Creation, St Andrew's Cathedral, Glasgow, 12 noon

A special service on the 10th anniversary of Laudato Si', Rev David Coleman, Environmental Chaplain for EcoCongregation Coleman, will give a talk afterwards.

Thursday 18th September - Mass Lobby of Scottish Parliament

For details and sign up information see item on page 1.

Saturday 18th October - National Day of Solidarity To End Immigration Detention, Glasgow

Justice & Peace Scotland are currently in discussions with various partners to create an event to support the day.

Join our mailing list or follow our social media - all details on how to do so on page 1 - to receive details nearer the time.

Saturday, 25th October - Scotland Demands Better, Anti-Poverty March, Edinburgh

For details and sign up information see item on page 3.

Sunday, 30th November - Dignity Not Detention, Solidarity Gathering, Dungavel IRC, 1pm to 1.45pm

J&PS among those involved in the regular solidarity gatherings at Dungavel for the asylum seekers detained there. A warm welcome is extended to any groups or individuals who wish to attend and bring banners, speak on the day or bring cards or biscuits held inside.



Plea to break down barriers and see the humanity in others

Archbishop William Nolan implored for an end to the dehumanising of those who come to this country and find themselves in immigration detention centres as he addressed June's Dignity Not Detention solidarity gathering at Dungavel.

A disturbingly racist rhetoric is being whipped up around non-nationals who happen to be persons of colour in the UK. And the Bishop-President of Justice & Peace Scotland - organisers of the event along with Scottish Peace Network - called on this to be challenged. "They are not a number, not a statistic, they are people," he said. "And we have to look those people in the eyes and see human beings."

Those inside centres such as Dungavel, treated differently from nationals simply because of their origins, do not know how long they will remain there as their cases are heard, with the UK the only country in Europe where unlimited detention exists. Justice & Peace Scotland will never turn its back on the stranger and, thanks to tremendous support from the Motherwell J&P commission, gathered in sizeable numbers, in torrential rain, to demonstrate that compassion.



TURN DEBT INTO Hope

More than 240,000 people globally have signed the Turn Debt Into Hope petition for debt justice placing people and planet before profits.

This Jubilee Year - with its Biblical origins in debt forgiveness - join them in calling for relief for 54 countries whose development is crippled by repayments. **Sign here**