



HOW FAITH COMMUNITIES FUEL SOCIAL MOVEMENTS:

Lessons for Climate Advocacy from the Immigration,
Black Lives Matter, and President Trump Election Campaigns



ecoAmerica
building climate leadership

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About Blessed Tomorrow and ecoAmerica



ecoAmerica builds
institutional
leadership, public

support, and political will for climate solutions in the U.S. We help national mainstream organizations elevate their climate leadership, providing them with strategies, tools and resources to: demonstrate visible climate leadership, empower climate literacy, engage all constituents, and build collective action and advocacy. We help our partners permanently transform into national climate leaders who inspire others on solutions.



We inspire our
communities to act
on one of the

greatest moral challenges of our era: climate change. Blessed Tomorrow is by people of faith, for people of faith, offering ideas, tools, and language that are familiar and compelling. Through Blessed Tomorrow, faith leaders work to reach 100% clean energy, prepare for a changing climate, and engage their communities, while maintaining the distinct voices of their traditions.

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* Leaders from within each movement and academic experts were invited to weigh in on report content.

Cover Photo: The Rev. Dr. Katharine R. Henderson (President, Auburn Seminary) joins leaders from the multifaith movement for justice in song including The Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis (Senior Minister Middle Collegiate Church, Auburn Senior Fellow). Photo provided by Auburn Seminary

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OPENING LETTER

This study provides an analysis of current and visible social movements — specifically New Sanctuary (immigration rights), Black Lives Matter, and the 2016 election of President Trump — and how the involvement of communities and leaders of faith have helped forward progress on each. It offers learnings and lessons from these campaigns in an effort to help advocates for climate solutions to become more effective.

The New Sanctuary Movement, Black Lives Matter, and the election of President Trump — three contemporary and visible campaigns in America — forever changed the landscape of American society and politics.

Americans have reached an emotional tipping point on these issues, and are moving beyond frustration and fear into action. Public awareness and discourse have grown, people are organizing and publicly advocating for change (or resisting the norms that contributed to each issue), and there has been action as a result. In addition, the involvement — or in some cases, the direct leadership — of people and communities of faith has led to significant progress toward the movement's goals.

Climate change is another issue in which concern is reaching a boiling point (73% of Americans are concerned about climate change¹). International policymaker inaction and current federal backsliding are causing public consternation in the face of unprecedented wildfires, hurricanes, droughts, and other severe weather impacting the health, wealth, and well-being of Americans and people worldwide.

Just as the New Sanctuary and Black Lives Matter movements are progressing, so can the movement to bring about just, effective, and timely climate solutions. And, just as people and communities of faith have been vital in creating awareness and action in these campaigns, so can they take action on climate change.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Analysis on the New Sanctuary (immigration rights) and Black Lives Matter movements, and on the 2016 presidential election reveals components of each campaign that have contributed to progress. Patterns in approach and behavior exist that have moved each campaign forward toward their goals. And, while the strategies and tactics are not altogether new, their modern application contributes to a contemporary campaign methodology that other social movements can model. The following are key learnings from these campaigns, offered as guidance for more effective climate advocacy.

Key Learnings

1. Think Nationally, Act Locally

Combine long-term, centralized planning that offers a cohesive, well-aligned national strategy with short-term, decentralized organization to allow for focus, agility, co-ownership and broader inclusion. A mixture of both approaches could prove successful for climate advocacy, allowing campaigns to set the national approach and goals, yet evolve and respond more rapidly on the ground, deferring to their members to shape local programmatic work. Refine and promote the campaign narrative at the local level. Empower advocates and allies with relevant, replicable, and constructive actions and specific, unified calls for policy change.

2. Go Public in Partnerships and Make Public Commitments

Partnerships and networks are key components of successful campaigns. They allow movements to quickly increase reach, efficacy, and the number of boots on the ground quickly. Create and maintain long-term partnerships, with particular investment in front-line communities. Make highly public and visible commitments with member organizations and individuals to help other Americans feel that it is safe to engage in and join the movement.

3. Collaborate for Inclusion and Reach

The climate movement needs to expand to include a diversity of new members for success. Collaboration with local trusted messengers, like faith, health and community organizations, is key. These advocates will help elevate the awareness of the consequences of inaction. A broader base of supporters would name the injustice and cross-cutting nature of climate change and other issues, as well as help build momentum for solutions. The message should include the fact that a majority of Americans are concerned and support climate solutions.

4. Get Personal: Move Past Fear Toward an Emotional Tipping Point

Show Americans that the impacts from climate change are already here, are happening in their own backyards and are affecting their loved ones. This will help elevate concern about climate change. Show how solutions can be just, equitable, and beneficial to their health, wealth, and well-being. This can move the public toward a needed emotional tipping point for action. Help participants feel that they are contributing to a revolution by making bold statements and acting on a moral imperative to move the nation

forward. Employ messengers who have been affected directly by climate change, are calling for solutions, or have had a ‘conversion’ experience. Authentic messengers such as these can best deflect and redirect common objections.

5. Make Messages Moral: Ground Communication in Traditional Values, and Repeat Often

Use short, concise slogans to position the campaign as an ‘all in’ or ‘all out’ issue. Models include “Keep families together,” “Black Lives Matter,” and “Make America great again,” which each appeal to long-held traditional values and moral foundations, and are difficult to argue against. Repeat slogans heavily and frequently, so that they begin to be accepted as a truths.

6. Empower Success: Create and Share a Breadth and Depth of Best Practices and Tools

There is little time left to act alone on climate change. Help others in the movement to achieve mutually successful outcomes. Pool learning and best practices, and create cohesion and greater impact by producing and sharing a wealth of tools and resources, including toolkits, social media packages, guides, pamphlets, and training sessions on how to organize and execute non-violent protests.

7. Become Modern-Media Savvy: Right-Size Content, Employ Innovation, Then Let Go

All three campaigns have employed a modern application of social media, allowing people across the country to form bonds, discuss issues, and collaborate on efforts. Allow individuals to harness their ability to influence the narrative by creating emotionally powerful content that is vivid and authentic. Employ firsthand storytelling and witnessing (through video and written contributions), which are essential in personalizing controversial issues, exposing authority figures, sparking public outrage, and propelling the issue onto the national stage.

8. Have Faith: Involve the Faith Community More Meaningfully

Faith leaders have the unique ability to bear witness to social injustices that impact our world and particularly harm the most vulnerable among us. Involve the faith community (from the leaders of faith traditions to the congregants) in climate action and advocacy. As respected moral messengers, they commonly are regarded as authorities on right and wrong. They also have formidable reach into communities nationwide, with the strong social influence needed to build constituencies. Because a majority of Americans consider themselves religious, faith leaders — especially coalitions of faith traditions — can make significant impacts and harden the political will to seek climate solutions.

Note: While “success” can be a nebulous term, this report’s objective is to shine a light on the faith community’s ability to bring awareness and energy to social movements, bear witness to injustices, and help people along the way. Faith’s role is not necessarily to design solutions or advise, but instead to demand that policymakers elicit effective, just, and equitable solutions that benefit all.

**IMMIGRATION
AND THE
NEW SANCTUARY
MOVEMENT**

INTRODUCTION

For over 2,000 years, persecuted peoples have found sanctuary in places of worship, and even entire cities, in areas from Egypt to Rome and Greece – a tradition carried forward by many faith communities across the United States despite a lack of formal legal protection.²

First sparked in the U.S. in the 1980s, the Sanctuary Movement was driven by a moral imperative to protect people who had made it to American soil after fleeing civil war and mass killings in Central America. (Between 18,000 and 20,000 people in El Salvador alone were killed or went missing in 1980.³) Of the U.S. asylum seekers who were turned away, many were killed upon their return home. Sanctuary supporters argued at the time that the U.S. was not following established asylum and refugee laws. This first wave of the movement garnered participation from over 400 churches and 440 cities in the U.S.⁴ Each church offered a space for advocates to organize, allowing the movement to build political power and social resistance against the immigration policies of then-President Reagan, which primarily targeted Central Americans.^{5,6,7}

In 2007, faith-based organizations launched the New Sanctuary Movement (NSM) to advance social justice in response to immigration raids of workplaces and neighborhoods, which escalated during the Bush administration. Congregations opened their doors to provide refuge for those facing deportation and stood in solidarity alongside immigrants who had established their lives in the U.S., often for many years. Houses of worship began to function as real-life sanctuaries, i.e., sensitive locations where Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers would not enter.

In 2012, President Obama called for a stay on deportations of young immigrants, i.e., U.S. residents who had been brought to America as children (under age 16), who lack legal documents and did not enter the country by choice. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program began to accept applications in August 2012.⁸ After meeting a few requirements – including having no felonies or serious misdemeanors on their records – and sharing their personal information, qualified candidates were granted a renewable two-year deferral from deportation, in addition to eligibility for legal employment and access to higher education. As of 2018, the DACA program has granted stays to around 800,000 qualified applicants, known as DREAMers. DREAMers reside in every state, although most live in California (222,795), Texas (124,300), New York (41,970), Illinois (42,376), and Florida (32,796).⁹ Research shows that DACA has reduced the number of undocumented-immigrant households living in poverty,¹⁰ improved mental-health outcomes for DACA-eligible immigrants and their children,¹¹ and generally benefitted the U.S. economy.¹²

Anti-immigrant speeches and reform promises during the 2016 presidential campaign garnered support from Trump voters, but sparked concern nationwide.¹³ After the new administration took office in 2017, ICE raids increased 30%¹⁴, leading to ever-greater numbers of immigrants seeking sanctuary in schools, hospitals, and, most visibly, places of worship to protect themselves from deportation. Despite DACA's positive impact, on September 5, 2017, President Trump announced the program's rollback. However, in August 2018, U.S. District Court Judge Jon D. Bates ruled that the Trump administration must restore the DACA program fully, citing an inadequate rationale for dropping the program. The judge added that the administration's move was "arbitrary

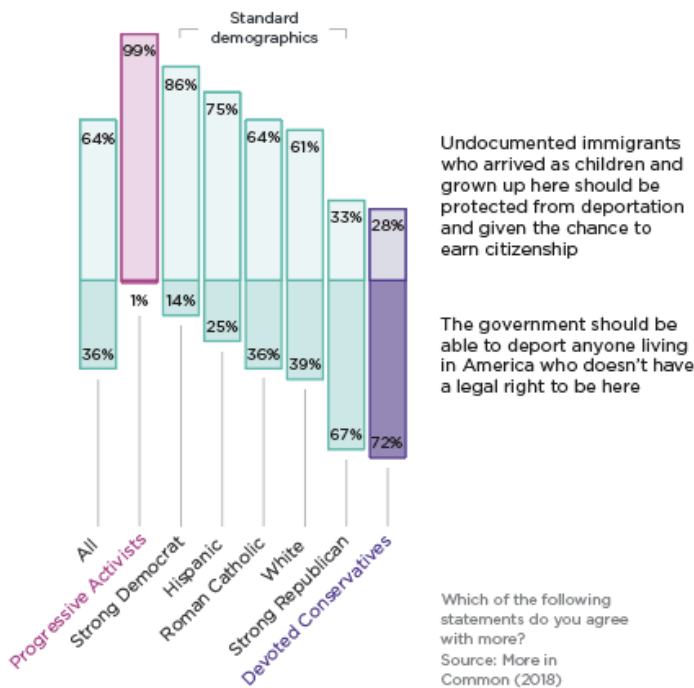
and capricious.”¹⁵ On November 8, 2018, a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit announced a unanimous decision to uphold the ruling to keep the DACA program intact – advancing the case to the Supreme Court.¹⁶

Today, Americans consider immigration to be one of their top voting issues. Only three other priorities – health care, the economy, and gun policy – outrank immigration.¹⁷ Nearly six in ten (59%) Americans say that undocumented immigrants should be allowed to remain in the U.S., with a path to citizenship. While most Americans believe this, there is a constituency of 25% of Americans who say immigrants should be required to leave the country.¹⁸ President Trump and the current administration seem to be acting on behalf of the minority view. Immigration ties with the economy as the top voting issues for Republicans¹⁹.

DACA

Core Beliefs and Demographics

Tribe membership (pictured here: Progressive Activists and Devoted Conservatives) predicts how people think about DACA better than standard categories (such as “Liberal” or “Republican”)



Key demographic groups provide a spectrum of support for the DACA Program. Progressive Activists (described as younger, highly engaged, secular, cosmopolitan, and angry; 8% of the U.S. population) overwhelmingly (99%) believe in DACA protections, while Devoted Conservatives (described as white, retired, highly engaged, uncompromising, and patriotic; 6% of the U.S. population) are highly likely (72%) to believe that the government should be able to deport those on U.S. soil without explicit legal permission.²⁰

Note: This report describes anti-immigrant perspectives to highlight a need for faith communities to advocate on behalf of immigrants and disprove erroneous information.

This same 25% bloc has several interconnected reasons for supporting anti-immigrant policies. Perceptions include that immigrants (both undocumented and legal) are taking American jobs and hurting other workers as cheap labor. Another rationale is that our country's weak immigration policies decrease border security and, as a result, Americans' safety.²¹ Some argue that immigrants threaten American culture. The "othering" of non-white immigrants, a form of racism, also has seeped into their rhetoric.²²

The Federation for American Immigration Reform, an organization that seeks to reduce both legal and undocumented immigration in the U.S., has estimated that in 2017, 12.5 million of these immigrants existed in the U.S.²³ Some media outlets have cast immigrants as "aliens" and "illegals," supporting the perceived rationale for unjust treatment and inhumane policy²⁴.

"We have immigration laws for two reasons. One, to protect our national security. Two, to protect American jobs... We'll make our borders less secure, and by offering a pathway to citizenship we encourage millions of people to rush to the United States to benefit from this proposal." – Rep. Lou Barletta (R-PA)²⁵

"When we have massive unemployment in the U.S., I don't think we need to be increasing immigration and bringing people to take jobs when there are American citizens and legal immigrants who need jobs."
– Ric Oberlink from Californians for Population Stabilization²⁶

The New Sanctuary Movement has seen a resurgence in response, led by faith leaders from a breadth of faith traditions.

A NEW WAVE OF THE SANCTUARY MOVEMENT

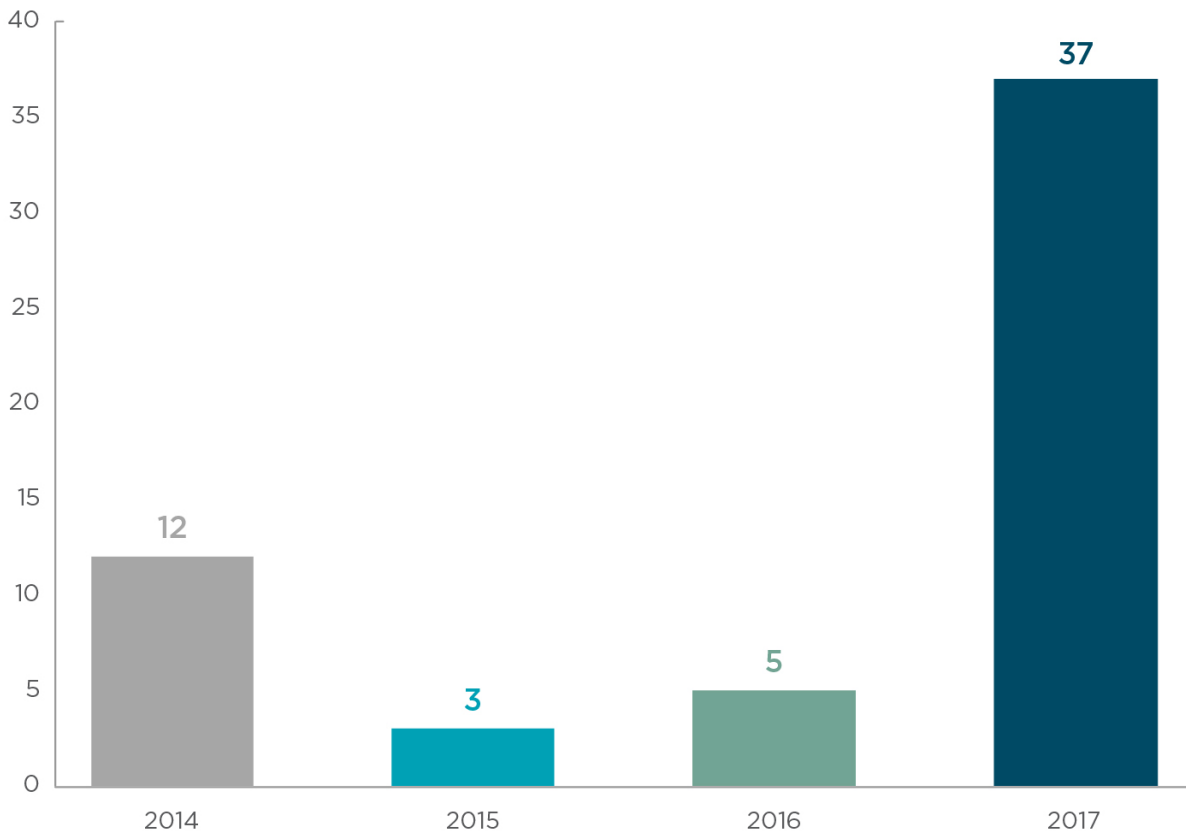
People of faith and religious leaders have been bearing witness and articulating moral arguments against societal injustices for centuries. Today, for many, faith values are driving forces for immigrant-rights advocacy and mobilization. There is a call to act, out of love, on behalf of others in love across faith traditions.

"There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear." – 1 John 4:18²⁷

NSM's objective is to "protect and stand with immigrants faced with deportation." This includes immigrants with and without citizenship status. Moral imperatives drive NSM participants to live their values on family, justice, and protecting the most vulnerable. NSM's genesis is rooted in religious belief and practice, but its values and mission have garnered participation well beyond the faith community.

"This is a faith-based response to a system that is inhumane and unjust and that harms people's human and civil rights." – Jennifer Piper, Metro Denver Sanctuary Coalition, The Guardian

Public Sanctuary Cases Increase from 2014



Source: Orozco, Myrna. Anderson, Rev. Noel. (2018). "Sanctuary in the age of Trump."

Since its start in 2007, NSM has grown to include 1,110 congregations with 40 state coalitions or networks.^{28, 29} Since 2017, over 800 new congregations have committed to action, including those in the Roman Catholic, Episcopalian, Jewish, Methodist, Muslim, Quaker, and Unitarian traditions.³⁰ Major organizers include Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice-California (CLUE-California), Interfaith Workers Justice (IWJ), and the New York Sanctuary Coalition.³¹ Additionally, 16 universities (comprising 64 campuses), 7 states, and 67 cities and counties are participating as of 2018.^{32, 33}

NSM asks members, and all Americans, to bear witness to the plight of immigrants. It works to **personify immigrants, tell their stories, and unmask injustices**. This **sparks determination** among advocates, and connects with Americans more broadly to **transform fear into empathy, justice, and caring**.³⁴ While a majority (69%) of Americans report being sympathetic to deportation's painful consequences,³⁵ not much has been done so far at the local level to help immigrants. NSM calls on Americans to defend the most vulnerable, stand up for each other, and engage in justice advocacy on a personal level. The group offers an opportunity for local congregations to embody their faith in a meaningful way by welcoming, housing, and protecting immigrants.³⁶ This, in turn, strengthens the connection and empathy of all congregants.



United Methodist Bishop Minerva Caracaño (right) and Rabbi Brand Rosen help lead a multi-faith march in support of justice for migrants at Border Field State Park in San Diego – Photo by Mike DuBose, UMNS

NSM's function has evolved to match the changing landscape of immigration policy. In addition to providing housing, participants support undocumented community members by offering **legal assistance and protection against inhumane treatment**. Participation now includes **pledging non-cooperation with law enforcement, as well as guaranteeing confidentiality**.^{37, 38} Sanctuaries also offer **hubs of activism and mobilization**. NSM offers **tools and resources** to empower **Americans to help sanctuary seekers directly and stand in solidarity** with those affected by anti-immigration policies and deportations, as well as advocate for better solutions.³⁹

“We’re living under an administration that is feeding off of a narrative of fear of the immigrant. It’s work we don’t feel like we have a choice in. Our commandments are really clear: Welcome the stranger, work for the oppressed.” – Rev. Alison Harrington, Southside Presbyterian Church; Tucson, Arizona⁴⁰

NSM employs a **decentralized approach to organizing**. It invites communities to come together to decide on their level of participation, yielding a more cohesive and resilient network. Faith coalitions can **adapt their methodologies to specific events**. By using **localized communications and decision-making**, local congregations and other participants' actions are both effective and immediate.

One of NSM's tactics is to **expose the moral injustices** of our nation's immigration system through **“prophetic hospitality.”** This includes promoting stories from affected families to **illuminate cases of inequality and put faces on these injustices**.⁴¹

Such stories have **exposed the denial of individuals’ political, civil, and economic rights**; spotlighted deportation’s constitutional violations; and featured **family separations, child detention, and the plights of DACA recipients**. Stories include thoughts on legislative action that would benefit affected families,⁴² highlighting where current law is failing, and how our government can better satisfy its constituents’ needs.⁴³ Due to these stories’ visibility in the media, activists have **gained access to politicians** who are more open to hearing about and considering better solutions. News outlets are where constituencies are informed about politicians’ actions, and they are the source of information that elicits politicians’ response.⁴⁴

“Media messages were often powerful reminders to immigrants that they do not belong and that they are unwanted – or partially belong and only wanted for the labor they contribute.” – Professor Cecilia Menjivar, University of Kansas Foundation Distinguished Professor of Sociology⁴⁵



Photo by Steve Pavey, Hope in Focus. Permission by Repairers of the Breach

A Closer Look

Family Separations and Child-Detention Centers

On April 6, 2018, President Trump's administration announced a zero-tolerance policy in an "escalated effort to prosecute those who illegally cross our border."⁴⁶ Under the Obama administration, resources and deportations were prioritized to target those who had shown a record of violence, instead of parents and families. The new policy separated over 2,800 children from their parents, including over 100 children younger than 5 years old, and placed them in detention centers as they awaited a transfer of custody or placement with foster families.⁴⁷

Two-thirds (66%) of Americans oppose separating families and children, despite illegal border crossing.⁴⁸ The practice is opposed by 91% of Democrats and 68% of independents, but supported by 55% of Republicans.⁴⁹

Children waiting in detention centers are required to follow harsh rules: They are prohibited from physically comforting their siblings and others; are not allowed to write in the privacy of their rooms, send mail, or run around and play; and are tasked with chores before schooling starts. The U.S. presently maintains over 100 detention centers, ranging from camp-like compounds to converted motels.⁵⁰

The Center for Human Rights and Constitutional Law has collected over 200 firsthand accounts of children and parents from detention centers operated by Customs and Border Protection. Dixiana S. is a 10-year-old from Honduras who was separated from her mother. She says that "for breakfast, they gave me a frozen ham sandwich. The ham was black," adding that in another instance, she "was half asleep and they were calling a girl who had a similar first name as me. A male officer kicked me to wake me up to confirm whether or not I was the person they were looking for."⁵¹

In response to the plight of children like Dixiana, and to deaths of children held in the detention centers, many faith leaders are issuing statements condemning the separation of families and are calling for comprehensive and compassionate reform to immigration policy. Of note, Never Again Action draws comparisons to the groundwork laid on the cusp of the Holocaust and mobilizes Jewish Americans to call for government accountability and, ultimately, the abolition of ICE. Their message: Never Again means Never Again for anybody.⁵²

As of July 2019, the U.S. continues to separate families. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services states that over 11,800 immigrant children in their care remain separated from their families.⁵³

“We desire to see immigration reform include an emphasis on securing our borders and providing a pathway to legal status with appropriate restitutionary measures, maintaining the priority of family unity.” – Southern Baptist Convention⁵⁴

“We urge courts and policy makers to respect and enhance, not erode, the potential of our asylum system to preserve and protect the right to life. Additionally, I join Bishop Joe Vásquez, Chairman of USCCB’s Committee on Migration, in condemning the continued use of family separation at the U.S./Mexico border as an implementation of the Administration’s zero-tolerance policy.” – Cardinal Daniel Cardinal DiNaro, Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston⁵⁵

In addition to storytelling and media attention, NSM has employed specific **messaging tactics to reach American hearts** (as well as minds), with messages rooted in faith values and witnessing injustice. Family is sacred in almost all faith traditions, and NSM messaging features **family togetherness**, which grounds the movement in a moral purpose to protect the family. Faith leaders are also using language that **empowers individual congregations to take up action**, such as “each congregation has the opportunity to go through a discernment process of education and dialogue to decide their role in the movement.”⁵⁶ Another approach utilizes stories of immigrants’ “**national belonging**,” such as “We have been here for years. **We have contributed to society, our community, and the national economy, and we have raised our children here.**”

Slogans Employed by the Movement:

We stand as one

Fight - Build - Dream

Sanctuary everywhere

We stand with Rosa

Never Again means Never

Again for anybody

Refugees welcome

No human being is illegal

Families belong together

Liberty, equality & justice for all

NSM encourages **collaboration and sharing**. This involves **sharing successes and learnings**, as well as offering detailed **pamphlets, toolkits, and guides** on how to provide sanctuary and related assistance. For example, the toolkit designed and shared by the Quaker community’s Friends General Conference shares **information on logistics, communications, capacity building, partnership development, key roles, physical restraints/considerations, press and social media kits, and important steps** for creating a successful sanctuary space.⁵⁷ Other places of worship are providing “**pew cards**” that **inform immigrants of their rights**.⁵⁸ Alliances between local interfaith congregations have formed **a network to support** individuals seeking sanctuary, who require meals, resources, and assistance throughout the process. NSM adds to grassroots efforts by providing **local training, leadership, and civic-participation development**, as well as logistical assistance via interfaith networks and supporting organizations.⁵⁹

KEY RESULTS: TOO EARLY TO GAUGE, BUT FAITH PLAYS A CRITICAL ROLE

In 2011, the movement succeeded in producing a memo that persuaded the Obama administration to grant ICE officials prosecutorial discretion. This made it possible for enforcement officers to grant deferred action on deportation as they saw fit, taking into consideration the citizenship status of people's nuclear families, the amount of time they had spent in the U.S., their contributions to their communities, and whether they had been victims of crime while in the U.S.⁶⁰ Later that year, the administration concluded that deportation efforts would cease in "sensitive locations," including schools, hospitals, and places of worship. In 2014, Daniel Neyoy-Ruiz, the first to receive sanctuary through NSM, was granted a stay of deportation after 28 days.⁶¹

Since 2017, untold numbers of immigrants have sought sanctuary. Out of 37 people who publicly sought sanctuary, nine have been successful.⁶² In another win, San Francisco U.S. District Court Judge William H. Orrick halted President Trump's efforts to tie billions of dollars in federal funding to immigration enforcement, which would have defunded states that offer sanctuary.⁶³

Altogether, 300 religious leaders have sent letters to President Trump asking him not to end the DACA program.⁶⁴ These include the Evangelical Immigration Table,⁶⁵ the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights, Bend the Arc Jewish Action, Mosaic, and the National Association of Evangelicals.⁶⁶ And, as noted earlier, federal Judge Jon D. Bates of Washington, D.C. ordered the continuation of the DACA program.⁶⁷ Many faith leaders continue to speak out:

"The Catholic Church has long watched with pride and admiration as DACA youth live out their daily lives with hope and a determination to flourish and contribute to society: continuing to serve in the military, and continuing to receive education. Now, after months of anxiety and fear about their futures, these brave young people face deportation. This decision is unacceptable and does not reflect who we are as Americans." – U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)⁶⁸

"Within the Jewish community, many of our own families are alive today because of the relatively open immigration policies of the late 19th and 20th centuries...We understand the cruelty of forcing DREAMers back to the countries where they were born, but in many cases have never lived, and where – in some cases – their lives will be in danger." – Rabbi Jill Jacobs, executive director of T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights⁶⁹

"Deeply embedded in the Christian faith, indeed deeply embedded in the Jewish tradition, which is the mother of the Christian faith, and deeply embedded in the faith and traditions and values of many of the world's great religions, is a profound conviction in a sure and certain value and virtue that care for the stranger, the alien, the visitor, is a

sacred duty, a sacred vow.” – Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, The Episcopal Church⁷⁰

It is too early to gauge the New Sanctuary Movement’s success, as it has experienced a mix of progress and setbacks. Efforts to reform immigration policy and create clearer pathways toward citizenship have been thwarted. Rather than develop a comprehensive plan to address immigration reform, advocates have been forced to spend an increasing amount of time responding, in emergency, to the current administration’s anti-immigration policies and actions. Still, many people are looking to this new movement, and to faith leadership in general, to fight against anti-immigrant sentiment and create the conditions and political pressure necessary to enact comprehensive policy change.⁷¹ What is clear is that efforts to date have led to elevated awareness of the issue and growing support for immigrant rights, and that communities of faith have played a vital leadership role in creating progress.

NSM language finds success for many reasons, including its relevance to our Moral Foundations (the theory that six universal psychological systems underpin humanity’s intuitive ethics: Care/Harm; Fairness/Cheating; Loyalty/Betrayal; Authority/Subversion; Sanctity/Degradation; and Liberty/Oppression).⁷² Leaders center their call to action around kindness, loving your neighbor as God loves you, justice, and protection from danger. Remaining loyal to sacred texts and values comes before loyalty to one’s tribe. Reciprocal altruism and acknowledging that all people were once strangers are core teachings across religions.

Moral Foundations	
Language employed by NSM leadership	Moral Foundations
<p>“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, <i>I was a stranger and you welcomed me...</i> Truly, I say to you, as you did it <i>to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.</i>” — Matthew 25: 35-40</p>	<p>Care/Harm</p> <p>Fairness/Cheating</p>
<p>““When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall do him no wrong. The stranger who sojourns with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you <i>shall love him as yourself for you were strangers in the land of Egypt</i>” (Leviticus 19:33). This teaching permeates Jewish tradition and is echoed 35 times in the Torah.” — The Union for Reform Judaism</p>	<p>Care/Harm</p> <p>Fairness/Cheating</p> <p>Liberty/Oppression</p>
<p>“It starts with the verse in the Quran where God says, ‘We honor the children of Adam and every person is a child of Adam,’ he said. “And if the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, and his followers <i>had not been taken in by the people of Medina</i> when they had to flee Mecca, <i>he probably would have been killed in Mecca</i>” — Imam Omar Suleiman</p>	<p>Care/Harm</p> <p>Fairness/Cheating</p> <p>Liberty/Oppression</p> <p>Loyalty/Betrayal</p>
<p>“I had to go deep to <i>remember what it was like to be a stranger</i> in a strange land. My dilemma may be yours, but the answer is right in our text – don’t oppress the alien, treat them as natives, love them as yourself, for you were a stranger in the land of Egypt.”— Rev. Katharine Rhodes Henderson</p>	<p>Care/Harm</p> <p>Fairness/Cheating</p>
<p>“Our Jewish tradition calls on us to welcome the stranger, to treat immigrants fairly, and to empathize with the widow, the stranger, and the orphan because we ourselves were strangers in the land of Egypt. The inhumane treatment of migrant children and parents is a clear indication that <i>the U.S. government has fallen far short of this standard.</i> We all need to do better, <i>lest this shameful chapter in our nation’s history come to define our future.</i>” — Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism</p>	<p>Care/Harm</p> <p>Fairness/Cheating</p> <p>Authority/Subversion</p> <p>Sanctity/Degradation</p>

Summary of Learnings - New Sanctuary Movement		
Category	Description	Outcomes to Date
Strategy and Approach	<p>Personify immigrants, tell their stories, and unmask injustices</p> <p>Decentralized approach to organizing</p>	<p>Includes 1,110 congregations with 40 state coalitions or networks, 16 universities (comprising 64 campuses), 7 states, and 67 cities and counties are participating as of 2018</p> <p>During the Obama administration, deportation raids were halted in “sensitive locations,” including schools, hospitals, and places of worship</p> <p>Altogether, 300 faith leaders have sent letters to President Trump asking him not to end the DACA program.</p>
Tactics	<p>Providing housing, participants support undocumented community members by offering legal assistance and protection against inhumane treatment</p> <p>Pamphlets, toolkits, and guides</p> <p>Local training, leadership, and civic participation development</p>	<p>An organized and well-informed network of faith organizations committed to carrying out sanctuary</p> <p>Out of 37 people who have publicly sought sanctuary, nine have been successful</p>
Messaging	<p>Family togetherness, which grounds the movement in a moral purpose to protect the family</p> <p>Empowering individual congregations to rise up in action</p> <p>Stories of “national belonging”</p>	<p>Reaching American hearts: Most Americans (62%, up from 31% in 1994) say immigrants strengthen the country because of their hard work and talents, compared with 28% (down from 63% in 1994) who say it burdens the country by taking jobs, housing and health care resources</p>

**BLACK LIVES
MATTER**

INTRODUCTION

The United States has a long and difficult history of race relations since its founding as a country that once depended on slave labor. Progress was made during the Reconstruction era of the late 19th century, resulting in African Americans securing the right to vote and hold office. However, Jim Crow laws and other civil rights deprivations led to oppression, discrimination, and violence against African Americans well into the 20th century.

A half century has passed since the African American Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, which fought to ensure that African Americans and others receive the same legal and civil rights as white Americans.⁷⁸ In the mid-20th century, the movement for civil rights gained momentum. African Americans were facing many inequities, including separate-but-equal practices, segregation, voter suppression, exploitation, and rampant lynchings. Non-violent protests and civil disobedience emerged in response, including the Montgomery Bus Boycott in Alabama, lunch-counter sit-ins, and historical marches such as the 1963 Birmingham Children's Crusade and the 1965 Selma-to-Montgomery march.^{79, 80}

The movement included a diversity of churches and faith denominations, progressive and grassroots organizations, and black-owned businesses and colleges.^{81,82} Faith communities' heavy influence, including the national leadership of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., played a central role in galvanizing the movement. The movement followed a "charismatic leadership" model, with a hierarchy of clergymen working alongside secular activists, with a small decision-making body comprising the majority of the organizational structure.^{83,84} Tactics such as community organizing, explicit goal-setting, door-to-door canvassing, citizenship-education classes (to pass the literacy tests required to vote), political education courses, visible leadership, and universal and aspirational moral messages proved successful.⁸⁵ The movement's success led to the end of legalized racial segregation and discrimination in the U.S., and to a new recognition for African Americans that included the creation of the following federal laws:

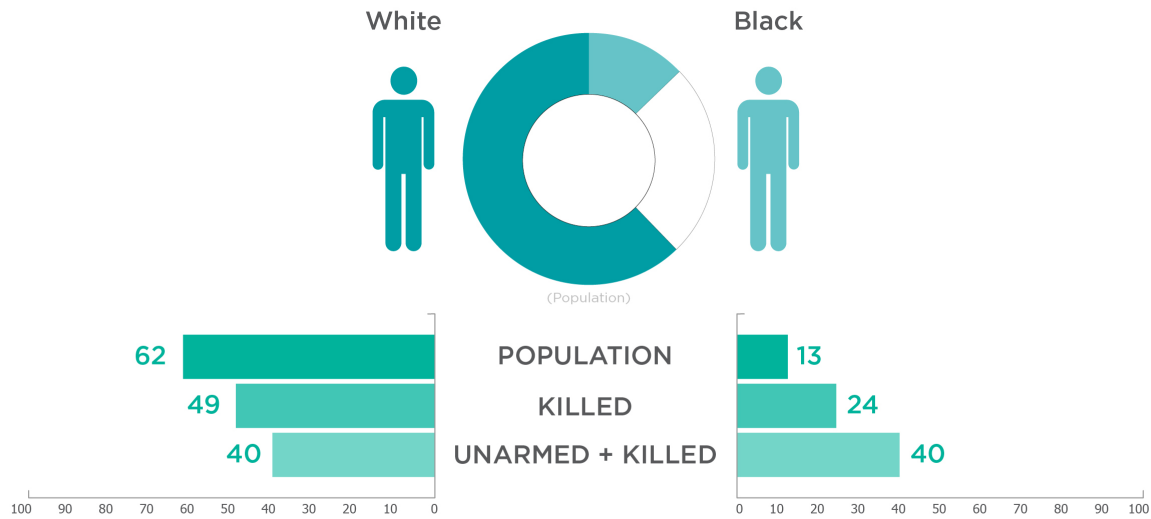
The Civil Rights Act of 1964 banned discrimination based on race, color, religion, gender, or national origin in employment practices; ended the unequal application of voter registration requirements; and prohibited racial segregation in schools, in the workplace, and in public accommodations.⁸⁶

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 restored and protected voting rights for minorities by authorizing federal oversight of voter registration and elections in areas with historic under-representation of minorities as voters.⁸⁷

The Fair Housing Act of 1968 banned discrimination in the sale or rental of housing.⁸⁸

However, persistent racism and police brutality continued, leading to the unjust deaths of numerous African Americans. A recent study showed that, in the U.S., black people are 2.5 times more likely than their white neighbors of being shot by police⁸⁹. The study also showed that an unarmed black person is five times more likely to be shot by police than an armed white person.⁹⁰ Additionally, black Americans are incarcerated at over five times the rate of white Americans.⁹¹

Unarmed black men are **5x** more likely to be shot and killed by police than unarmed white men



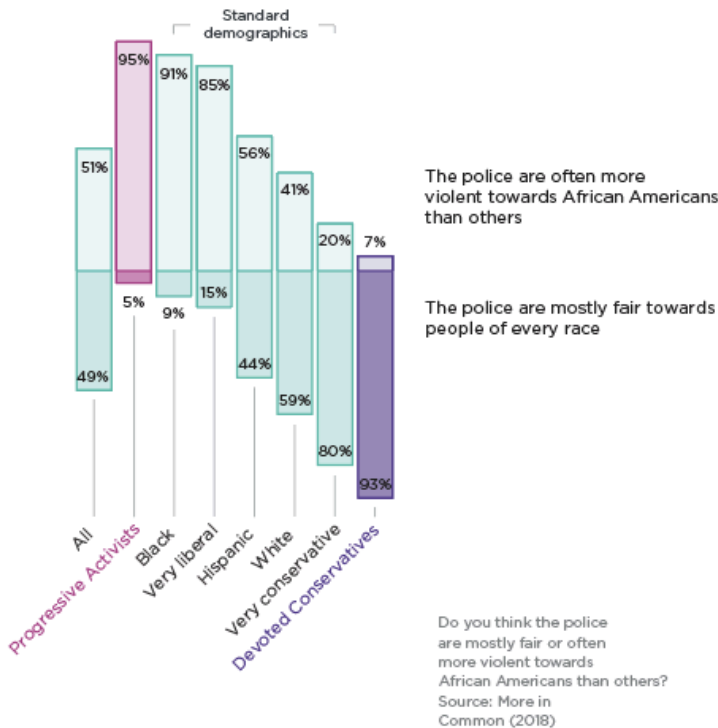
Note: 2015 national data. POPULATION axis refers to respective percentage of U.S. population. KILLED refers to respective percentage of total killed by police. UNARMED + KILLED refers to respective percentage of total unarmed and killed by police.

Source: The Washington Post, (2015).

Police Brutality

Core Beliefs and Demographics

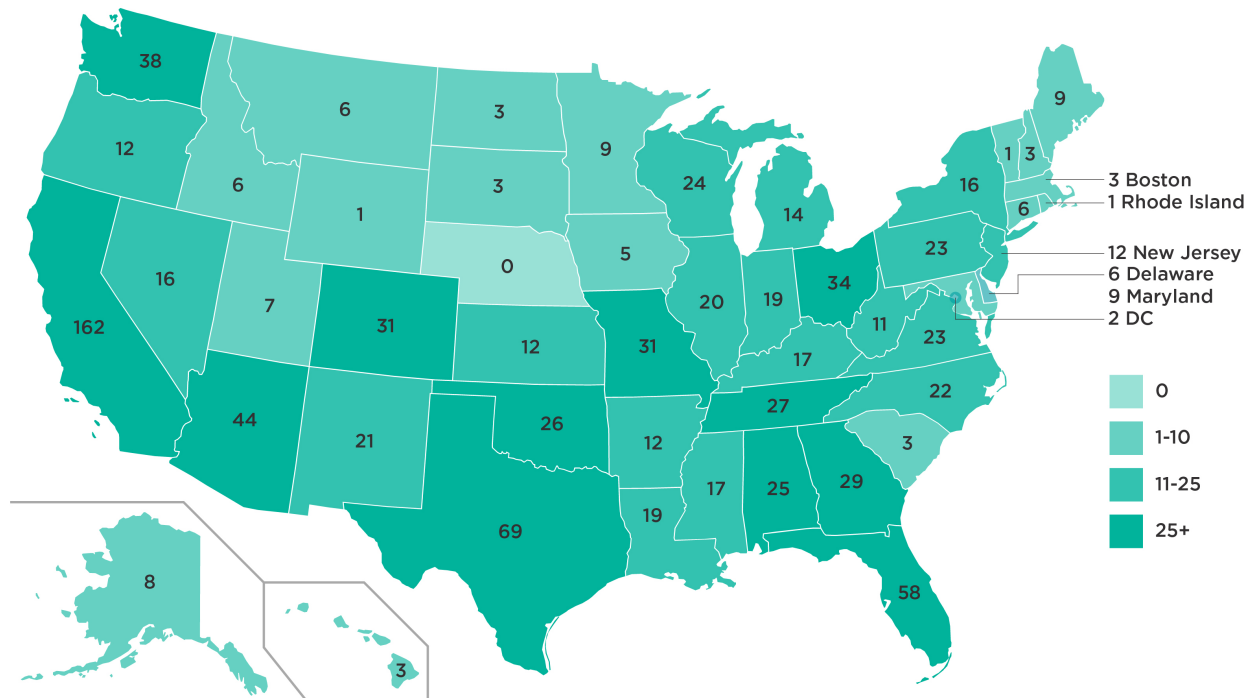
Tribe membership (pictured here: Progressive Activists and Devoted Conservatives) predicts how people think about Police Brutality better than standard categories (such as “Liberal” or “Republican”)



An increase in the visibility of police shootings (captured on smartphones) of unarmed black men and women has sparked national outrage. The 2013 acquittal of George Zimmerman, who shot unarmed 17-year-old Trayvon Martin, served as the tipping point for action. Black Lives Matter (BLM) was created in response, as a renewed national movement against racism and police brutality.

A variety of perspectives exist on the topic of police brutality, and this chart illustrates stark differences among key demographic groups. Progressive Activists (described as younger, highly engaged, secular, cosmopolitan, and angry; 8% of the U.S. population) overwhelmingly (95%) acknowledge a disproportionate amount of police violence towards African Americans, while Devoted Conservatives (described as white, retired, highly engaged, uncompromising, and patriotic; 6% of the U.S. population) strongly believe (93%) that police treat every race fairly, most of the time.⁹²

Number of Deaths in Police Encounters in the U.S. in 2017



Source: The Washington Post. (2017).

BLACK LIVES MATTER: CREATING A WORLD FREE OF ANTI-BLACKNESS

BLM works to elevate awareness and end the systematic oppression, racial profiling, villainization, and mass incarceration of black Americans. According to the Black Lives Matter Global Network, BLM has “committed to struggling together and to imagining and creating a world free of anti-Blackness, where every Black person has the social, economic and political power to thrive.”⁹³ What began as a passionate response and a hashtag on Twitter (#BlackLivesMatter) has since evolved into the eponymous nationwide movement to revalidate the fact that black humanity is and should be valued as much as any other.

BLM builds on the civil rights work of the 1960s by classifying racial discrimination as a human-rights violation. National organizations have raised awareness of the inequities within policing and incarceration, including the Rev. Al Sharpton’s National Action Network, the Southern Poverty Law Center, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). However, BLM has sparked a renewed and expanded effort, calling for an end to systemic racism in policing, the deconstruction of the culture of mass incarceration, and the social reconstruction of race relations. The Black Lives Matter coalition movement also calls for policy reform to increase access to quality education for children of color.⁹⁴

In contrast to the generally centralized model of leadership during the civil rights era, Black Lives Matter operates under a decentralized leadership model. This **participatory form of democracy** functions without one sole leader or spokesperson and utilizes social media so that any person, anywhere, can contribute to leadership and the movement.⁹⁵ It also allows individuals and institutions from all backgrounds, races, and religious affiliations to join the movement and **stand in solidarity**. BLM defers to members for guidance, thereby empowering **decentralized leadership**.

Among the tactics that BLM uses to unmask police brutality and racism, the use of **social media** particularly stands out. The use of **Twitter** and the hashtag **#BlackLivesMatter** has brought millions of Americans and others worldwide together to bear witness and hold conversation. The use of social media has made it possible to raise awareness of important events, that might otherwise have been buried, to make a significant impact on public consciousness. **Phone-captured video footage and firsthand accounts** have shaped media coverage and how Americans perceive the movement.⁹⁶ These videos expose racist rants, stories of people calling the police to report black people doing everyday things “while black,” and live feeds of police brutality and tragedy, giving Americans a new and clearer window into the world of black oppression. Social media has also given leaders a medium through which to **organize and initiate action quickly**.

Drawing inspiration from the Civil Rights Movement, **peaceful BLM marches and rallies** have created awareness and drawn support. Vigils have been held to honor and remember victims of police brutality. **Public education campaigns** promote BLM goals within communities and seek to apply these goals to educational systems, to increase access to quality education for children of color. But it has been the dramatic and dynamic tactics – disruptive protests such as “**die-ins**” and **bridge and tunnel blockades** – that have received the most visibility and have made the greatest emotional impact on the public.^{97, 98}



Photo by David Purger, PhD, Stanford University

Notably, BLM’s **message** differs distinctly from that of the Civil Rights Movement. In the 1960s, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. used beautiful and prophetic language to highlight the goodness and potential in black and all Americans. He transformed the movement by focusing on nonviolent protests and on teaching members how to maintain strength and dignity in the face of oppression.⁹⁹

BLM offers a more contemporary aspirational narrative, **calling for a world free from anti-blackness**. It acknowledges **black humanity and equality**, though BLM messaging from the organization itself focuses on **affirmation of (vs. aspiration to) black humanity and equality, making stronger demands for due process and dignity, instilling resilience in the face of oppression, and embracing broadly intersectional inclusivity**. BLM messaging has a more **urgent** tone, and the **content employs data and storytelling to unveil racial disparities**. It focuses more on the victims and perpetrators, and less on those who are working for the cause.¹⁰⁰ BLM’s narrative, beyond the hashtag and slogans, entails knitting together **firsthand stories** from its millions of members.

Defining the Black Lives Matter agenda, by the movement itself	
Public Statement	Key Player
“We are a collective of liberators who believe in an inclusive and spacious movement. We also believe that in order to win and bring as many people with us along the way, we must move beyond the narrow nationalism that is all too prevalent in Black communities. We must ensure we are building a movement that brings all of us to the front.”	Black Lives Matter
<p>“We affirm the lives of Black queer and trans folks, disabled folks, undocumented folks, folks with records, women, and all Black lives along the gender spectrum. Our network centers those who have been marginalized within Black liberation movements.”</p> <p>“We are working for a world where Black lives are no longer systematically targeted for demise.”</p> <p>“We affirm our humanity, our contributions to this society, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression.”</p> <p>“The call for Black lives to matter is a rallying cry for ALL Black lives striving for liberation.”</p>	Black Lives Matters
“The police brutality and killings are not, to be sure, new; the emerging movement against them, however, is.”	Frank C. Harris, The Next Civil Rights Movement?
“United Church of Christ believes, ‘when Black lives are systematically devalued by society, our outrage justifiably insists that attention be focused on black lives.’”	United Church of Christ
BLM activists “want to suggest that the work of transforming America now means that everyone is entitled to their human dignity and their due process. And if they don’t speak perfect English, if they’ve not graduated from high school, they still deserve respect in this nation.”	NPR interview with Dr. Khalil Gibran Muhammad, New York Public Library

THE ROLE OF FAITH COMMUNITIES: MORAL SUPPORT, MORAL LEADERSHIP

In 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King summarized civil rights progress in his book *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?* to inform the future of the movement. He argued that legal strategy alone would not be sufficient.¹⁰⁶ In recent years, faith community leaders at the local and national levels have worked hard to carry MLK's dream forward. People of faith are active in and stand in solidarity with Black Lives Matter, thereby extending the movement's reach, action, and efficacy.

Many Americans look to faith traditions to inform their sense of what is right and wrong. When tragedy hits, faith leaders and places of worship offer solace and comfort, places to honor victims, and platforms on which to call for solutions. Among black Americans, 83% classify their belief in God as absolutely certain, compared with 61% of whites and 59% of Latinos.¹⁰⁷ Faith communities have mobilized for the BLM movement in the name of social justice.



Photo by Nora Rasman and the Unitarian Universalist Association

One of the more notable examples of faith participation in BLM followed the August 2014 shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, by police officer Darren Wilson. The shooting took place just a few miles from Traci Blackmon's Christ the King Church. Now an organizer in the BLM movement and the acting executive of the United Church of Christ's Justice and Witness Ministries, Traci Blackmon bridges the faith community and the BLM organization.



Traci Blackmon, 2016

“This is what I learned in Ferguson, that the church is not a static organization that is transported from place to place, but rather that the church emerges to meet the present needs of the people.” – Traci Blackmon, United Church of Christ¹⁰⁸

In the wake of the shooting – which prompted the “hands up, don’t shoot” slogan – 200 local clergy, calling themselves Clergy United, organized themselves to act as liaisons between the community, protesters, and the police.¹⁰⁹ Clergy United members canvased neighborhoods and met with residents. They appeased community anger by listening to residents’ frustrations and fears, and they transformed that frustration and fear into inclusive plans for nonviolent public protests in the days that followed. During both nonviolent and, importantly, violent protests, **Clergy United** members were vital in working toward peace as they coached protesters and spoke to police on behalf of residents, encouraging law enforcement to see protesters as people, rather than as a mob.¹¹⁰

“As tear gas canisters clanked around him, Bishop Edwin Bass of the Church of God in Christ shuttled between protesters and police, urging each side not to attack the other.” – Rick Jervis on Bishop Bass¹¹¹

“We wanted law enforcement not to see the crowds as a mob, but as people... We wanted to humanize.” – Bishop Edwin Bass, Church of God in Christ¹¹²

Similarly, other people of faith have come together to fight racism in their communities. In Memphis, Tennessee, for instance, 169 clergy members from 95 different congregations came together to **denounce the presence of two statues** depicting Confederate military Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest, a slave trader and KKK member, and Confederate President Jefferson Davis. The mayor of Memphis proposed moving these statues from their current locations (public parks) to a more “historically appropriate site.” Christian and Jewish religious leaders signed a letter voicing their support for this relocation.¹¹³

“Fair-minded Americans acknowledge that slavery was cruel and un-Christian. Indeed, slavery stands as one of the darkest blights of our nation’s history. Thus, these statues should be relocated to less prominent, more appropriate settings.” – Pastor Michael Gaines of Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis¹¹⁴

In 2016, one of the signatories, Pastor Stephen Cook of Second Baptist Church in Memphis, adopted a **resolution calling for “our brothers and sisters in Christ to discontinue the display of the Confederate battle flag** as a sign of solidarity of the whole Body of Christ, including our African American brothers and sisters.” The resolution’s objective was to inspire tolerance and sensitivity to unite people under the Body of Christ.¹¹⁵ The statues in question and other Confederate monuments were eventually removed through legal means.

Seminaries across the nation — such as the New York Theological Seminary, Vanderbilt Divinity School, and Wesley Theological Seminary — have begun to introduce courses specific to BLM that offer theological perspectives on race relations, racism, and solutions.¹¹⁶ Seminaries **train ministers to advocate, employ ministers’ leadership, and develop tangible solutions**, providing similar assistance to the congregation-based training of civil rights activists in the 1950s and 1960s. As a former civil rights-era mentor and activist, the Rev. James Lawson now holds workshops on nonviolent conflict, similar to the training he offered in Nashville during the 1960s. The James Lawson Institute propels the movement by sharing his experience and knowledge regarding nonviolent strategies, including specifics on marches, boycotts, sit-ins, and organizing.¹¹⁷ The students, faculty, and alumni of the Eden Seminary in St. Louis have also been a foundation of support in Ferguson, giving headline-making speeches and leading police-reform efforts.^{118, 119}

“There are a lot of young people speaking out on Black Lives Matter that may or may not have a church affiliation whatsoever, yet they have figured out that the human body matters...So, seminaries need to be really in front of this, not behind it, leading the way.” – Rev. Joseph Evans, dean of the predominantly black Morehouse School of Religion¹²⁰

Several faith **denominations are now incorporating BLM goals into their policies**, signaling a transition from standing in solidarity toward weaving reconciliation into operations and programmatic work. For example, the Episcopal Church has various interrelated commitments to respond to injustice and to move toward healing as part of its “Jesus Movement,” including a resolution to give \$5 million in grants to local programs that promote racial reconciliation. The Church has held gatherings for leaders to deepen their understanding and has developed updated training curricula.¹²¹ The United Church of Christ offers a curriculum called the “Sacred Conversations Resources Guide” to assist its congregations on racial-justice issues.¹²² The American Baptist Churches USA publicly declared that “we affirm that black lives matter. Every life matters. And we call again upon our churches to bring forth from the wells of our faith a renewed moral movement to end the scourge of racism.”¹²³

“By insisting on the intrinsic worth of all human beings, Jesus models for us how God loves justly, and how his disciples can love publicly in a world of inequality. We live out the love of God justly by publicly saying #BlackLivesMatter.” – United Church of Christ¹²⁴

Faith leaders have been instrumental in **uniting people of different races** amid the divisive killings of unarmed black men and cases of retaliatory killing of white police officers. The dignity of all human beings is a core value of faith leaders, and they have brought this value forward as they have helped those who are suffering. Vince Smith, pastor of the multiethnic Circle Church of Alexandria, Louisiana, has been one of these peacemakers. Following the deaths of unarmed black civilian Alton Sterling and one black police officer (Montrell Jackson) and two white officers (Brad Garafola and Matthew Gerald), the unrest in Baton Rouge spread throughout Louisiana and the rest of the country.¹²⁵ Smith is a voice of comfort and reason to families of victims by acknowledging the existence of multiple perspectives in every tragedy. As Smith explains, “The worst thing we can do as a multiethnic church is to dismiss the narrative of people.”¹²⁶

At the First Baptist Church of Crestmont, located in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania, Pastor Jerome Coleman has played a similar peacemaking role. Coleman’s experiences as both a black man and a past law-enforcement official have been instrumental in his current efforts. When asked about Black Lives Matter, and the recent rebuttal phrase “all lives matter,” Coleman explained how all lives do matter, but black lives are the ones that are currently under attack.

“I get that all lives matter. But if all lives matter, then when there’s a Jew beside the road beat up, Jewish lives matter. If all lives matter, then if I’m on my way down the road and a Samaritan is beat up, Samaritans’ lives matter. And if all lives matter and law enforcement is [attacked]...then law enforcement lives matter. And if all lives matter, then when...black men are being stopped unnecessarily, shot and killed and murdered, then black lives matter as well.” – Pastor Jerome Coleman, First Baptist Church of Crestmont¹²⁷

KEY RESULTS: WHILE AWARENESS INCREASES, BLACK LIVES ARE STILL BEING TAKEN

BLM’s strategies and activities have been effective in raising awareness and garnering support for the movement, as well as influencing the national narrative and American attitudes. As of 2017, more than half of Americans supported the Black Lives Matter movement (55%), with only 34% opposing.¹²⁸ Black Americans and white Democrats are equally as likely to support the movement, with two-thirds supporting BLM (65%).¹²⁹ A majority (59%) of black Americans are hopeful that BLM will be effective in improving racial equality in the future.¹³⁰

Media coverage of police brutality against African Americans has sparked debate on the equity of policing. Over the past few years, confidence in the police has dropped to 30% among African Americans (down from 35% in 2017), 45% among Latinos (down from 59%), 39% among liberals (down from 51%), and 44% among those under 35 (down from 56%).¹³¹ In 2018, 64% of Americans reported that they were concerned about the state of race relations, with 37% saying they worried “a great deal,” representing a doubling in worry from the previous year.¹³²

Confidence in Police Has Shifted by Demographic Group



Source: Normal, Jim. (2017). "Confidence in the police back at historical average." Gallup.

Percentage who have "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in the police.¹³³

To increase confidence and transparency in the police, federal and state officials have begun to outfit officers with body cameras, a move that shifted police behaviors: A 2014 study found that police who lacked body cameras were twice as likely to use force as those who had them.¹³⁴ The group Campaign Zero¹³⁵ also has emerged, with the goal to "end police violence in America." Among the 10 policy solutions it proposes - including demilitarization, community representation and oversight, and limiting the use of force, among others - is a detailed body-camera policy requiring the recording of all interactions with the public, thereby allowing citizens to review footage and necessitating updates to privacy law. The policy also tracks body-camera implementation coverage and includes four measures of efficacy: fairness, transparency, privacy, and accountability.

Faith communities' actions toward recognizing and advocating for Black Lives Matter, including reconciliation efforts in their policies and programming, are also measures of progress. However, it is clear that even more faith leaders and denominations are needed to inspire a religion-as-social-justice perspective and to effect the social change in their communities to increase the BLM's reach.

"We've accomplished a lot in four short years. Ferguson helped to catalyze a movement to which we've all helped give life. Organizers who call this network home have ousted anti-Black politicians, won critical legislation to benefit Black Lives, and changed the terms of the debate on Blackness around the world." - Black Lives Matter Global Network¹³⁶

“...There was a great social awakening which is still going on in the United States that is there. And we have seen substantial change. BLM is exposing still another change in the movement towards our future because the issue of police brutality and killing is the issue of slavery. It’s the issue of the lynchings of the 20th century for which we have more than 6,000 documented experiences...So, as I have looked at this whole business, I recognize that the BLM represents the 21st century and the time now where the black community is willing to say these killings are unjustified. They must be exposed, and they must stop. We were not ready for that then. And we don’t have yet enough white people and other people convinced that it’s time to be rid of it, which is the task that has to happen.” – Rev. James Lawson¹³⁷

MORAL FOUNDATIONS, AS SAID BY BLACK LIVES MATTER GLOBAL NETWORK

BLM breaks through boundaries through its grounding of all six of the Moral Foundations (the theory that six universal psychological systems underpin humanity’s intuitive ethics: Care/Harm; Fairness/Cheating; Loyalty/Betrayal; Authority/Subversion; Sanctity/Degradation; and Liberty/Oppression).¹³⁸ BLM language is a rallying cry against those who have been oppressed by the institutions that govern us. It recognizes the black American identity’s totality as a prerequisite for understanding the love for and pain of others. Every moral foundation fuels the demand for justice.

Moral Foundations	
Language employed by BLM leadership	Moral Foundations
“We’ve committed to struggling together and to imagining and creating a world free of anti-blackness , where every Black person has the social, economic, and political power to thrive.”	Liberty/Oppression Care/Harm
“Black Lives Matter began as a call to action in response to state-sanctioned violence and anti-Black racism. Our intention from the very beginning was to connect Black people from all over the world who have a shared desire for justice to act together in their communities. The impetus for that commitment was, and still is, the rampant and deliberate violence inflicted on us by the state. ”	Fairness/Cheating Loyalty/Betrayal Authority/Subversion Sanctity/Degradation
“We are unapologetically Black in our positioning. In affirming that Black Lives Matter, we need not qualify our position. To love and desire freedom and justice for ourselves is a prerequisite for wanting the same for others.”	
“We are expansive. We are a collective of liberators who believe in an inclusive and spacious movement.” – Black Lives Matter Global Network	

Summary of Learnings - Black Lives Matter		
Category	Description	Outcomes to Date
Strategy and Approach	<p>Emerged organically as a grassroots movement, then a more organized strategy evolved</p> <p>Empowering decentralized leadership</p> <p>Classifying racial discrimination as a human-rights violation</p> <p>National leadership followed grassroots efforts</p> <p>Clergy United: 200 local clergy acting as liaisons between the community, protesters, and police</p> <p>Seminaries train ministers to advocate, employ ministers' leadership, and develop tangible solutions</p>	<p>As of 2017, more than half of Americans supported the Black Lives Matter movement (55%), with only 34% opposing.</p>
Tactics	<p>Use of social media: phone-captured video footage and firsthand accounts</p> <p>Peaceful BLM marches and rallies, vigils, public-education campaigns, disruptive protests such as "die-ins" and bridge and tunnel blockades</p> <p>Employs data and storytelling to unveil racial disparities</p> <p>Knitting together firsthand stories from its millions of members</p>	<p>Federal and state officials have begun to outfit officers with body cameras; police who lack body cameras are twice as likely to use force as those who have them.</p> <p>Respond and organize BLM actions quickly</p>
Messaging	<p>A world free from anti-blackness</p> <p>Employs data and storytelling to unveil racial disparities</p> <p>Knitting together firsthand stories from its millions of members</p> <p>Affirmation of (vs. aspiration to) black humanity and equality, making stronger demands for due dignity, instilling resilience in the face of oppression, and embracing broadly intersectional inclusivity</p> <p>Focuses more on the victims and perpetrators, and less on those who are working for the cause</p>	<p>64% of Americans reported that they were concerned about the state of race relations, with 37% saying they worried "a great deal," representing a doubling in worry from the previous year</p> <p>"We've accomplished a lot in four short years. Ferguson helped to catalyze a movement to which we've all helped give life. Organizers who call this network home have ousted anti-Black politicians, won critical legislation to benefit Black lives, and changed the terms of the debate on Blackness around the world. Through movement and relationship building, we have also helped catalyze other movements and shifted culture with an eye toward the dangerous impacts of anti-blackness."</p>

THE ELECTION OF PRESIDENT TRUMP

INTRODUCTION

Religion, specifically Christianity, has been at the center of American public life for most of American history, but the interplay between faith and politics has fluctuated through the centuries. One-third (33%) of voters attended religious services at least once a week as of 2016,¹⁴² but the politicians who represent these constituencies must carefully maintain the separation between church and state – a boundary that continues to remain under debate today.

Back in 1971, the *Green v. Connally* Supreme Court ruling removed tax benefits from academic institutions that engaged in racial discrimination. According to historian Randall Balmer, this served as the genesis of the (Christian) Religious Right.¹⁴³ Evangelicals responded to the ruling by supporting the Republican Party in the hope that their institutions' tax benefits would be restored.

In 1979, Jerry Falwell created the Moral Majority to address what he and some other faith leaders perceived as the nation's moral decline. The Moral Majority, originally a Southern organization for the Religious Right, quickly grew, mobilizing chapters in 18 states, acquiring ownership of several Christian media outlets, and creating several political action committees (PACs).¹⁴⁴ It became one of the largest conservative lobbying groups in the U.S., with more than 4 million members and over 2 million donors.

The Moral Majority's platform included a traditional American vision of family life (a breadwinning father, a homemaking mother, and obedient children), opposition to media outlets that it claimed promoted an anti-family agenda, opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment and Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, opposition to homosexuality, prohibition of abortion, and support for Christian prayers in school.¹⁴⁵ The tactics that the group employed to influence Americans included lobbying, direct-mail campaigns, phone hotlines, rallies, and religious TV broadcasts.¹⁴⁶ Falwell claimed victory and eventually announced the dissolution of the Moral Majority in 1989.¹⁴⁷ However, he revived it in 2004, this time under the name the Moral Majority Coalition, to help conservative (i.e., Republican) politicians get elected. Republicans responded at the polls, with a steady trend toward more socially conservative policies and leadership, from the Nixon-Agnew, Reagan-Bush, and Bush-Cheney administrations, to the GOP takeover of the U.S. House in the 1990s and Newt Gingrich's Contract with America.

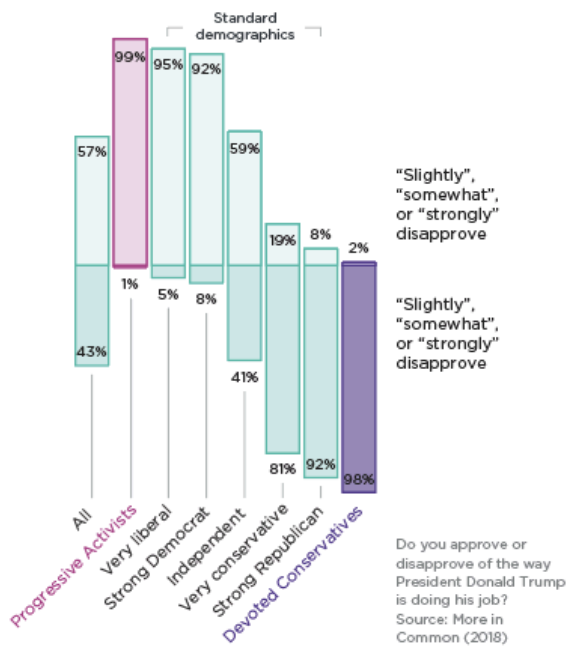
Note: It is important to clearly define the intent behind studying the election of President Trump. This particular analysis shows that when the faith community is comprehensively engaged, and the messaging and tactics align with its culture, the outcomes are powerful. Faith is not a means to an end. The Religious Right has invested in these communities for 30-40 years, and are finding success. Of course, many factors contributed to the election, but this analysis purposely examines faith as a success factor.

Election of Trump											
Presidential vote by religious affiliation and race											
	2000		2004		2008		2012		2016		Dem change '12-'16
	Gore %	Bush %	Kerry %	Bush %	Obama %	McCain %	Obama %	Romney %	Clinton %	Trump %	
Protestant/other Christian	42	56	40	59	45	54	42	57	39	58	-3
Catholic	50	47	47	52	54	45	50	48	45	52	-5
White Catholic	45	52	43	56	47	52	40	59	37	60	-3
Hispanic Catholic	65	33	65	33	72	26	75	21	67	26	-8
Jewish	75	19	74	25	78	21	69	30	71	24	+2
Other faiths	62	28	74	23	73	22	74	23	62	29	-12
White, born-again/evangelical Christian	n/a	n/a	21	78	24	74	21	78	16	81	-5
Religiously unaffiliated	n/a	n/a	19	80	n/a	n/a	21	78	25	61	+4

Approve President Trump

Core Beliefs and Demographics

Tribe membership (pictured here: Progressive Activists and Devoted Conservatives) predicts how people think about President Trump better than standard categories (such as "Liberal" or "Republican")



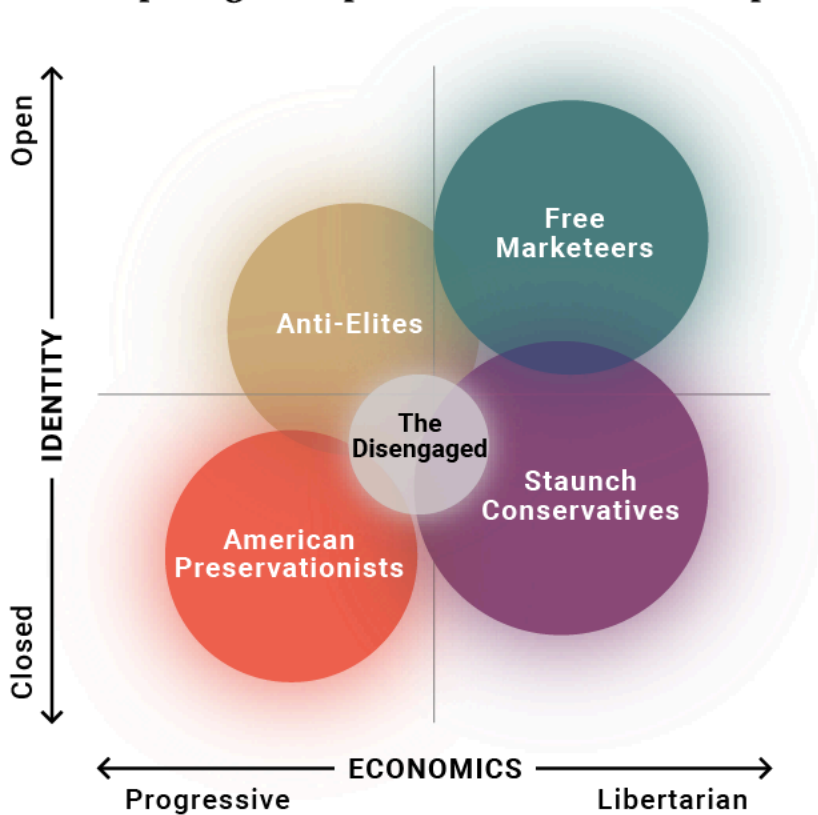
Fast-forward to 2016, and the election of President Trump and Vice President Mike Pence. White evangelical Christians, in particular, were among Trump’s strongest supporters, with more than eight in ten (81%) casting their votes for the Trump-Pence ticket.¹⁴⁸ In rural communities, which are generally more isolated and deferential to tradition, 93% of white evangelicals voted for Trump.¹⁴⁹ This held true for the 2018 midterm elections as well, with three-quarters (75%) of white voters who identified as evangelical or born-again Christians voting for Republican candidates.¹⁵⁰

Opinions on President Trump vary widely by demographic group. Progressive Activists (described as younger, highly engaged, secular, cosmopolitan, and angry; 8% of the U.S. population) overwhelmingly disapprove (99%), while Devoted Conservatives (described as white, retired, highly engaged, uncompromising, and patriotic; 6% of the U.S. population) overwhelmingly approve (98%).¹⁵¹

RELIGION, POLITICS, AND ELECTIONS

The late 20th century showed some indication that religion has been losing influence in American public life and politics. In 2018, 39% of Americans attended church once a week, down from a majority (75%) in 1955.¹⁵² Trump's election, among other things, has demonstrated evangelicals' lasting influence on conservative politics. They work to preserve and restore more traditional, often "Southern," Christian values to the nation's approach to social issues, and they have made headway.¹⁵³ Every president since 1976, both Republican and Democrat, has had an affiliation with evangelical leaders,¹⁵⁴ giving evangelicals a voice in influencing policy from the top down. Politicians often use recognizable phrases from the Bible and other Christian sources to signal their commitment to and solidarity with other believers.¹⁵⁵ Especially for evangelicals, having a personal relationship with God is of primary importance. Christian principles guide every aspect of their lives, including civic and political activity. In politics, evangelicals' "personal influence strategy" motivates them to support and elect people who are an extension of their personal values and priorities.¹⁵⁶

Comparing Trump Voters on a Political Map

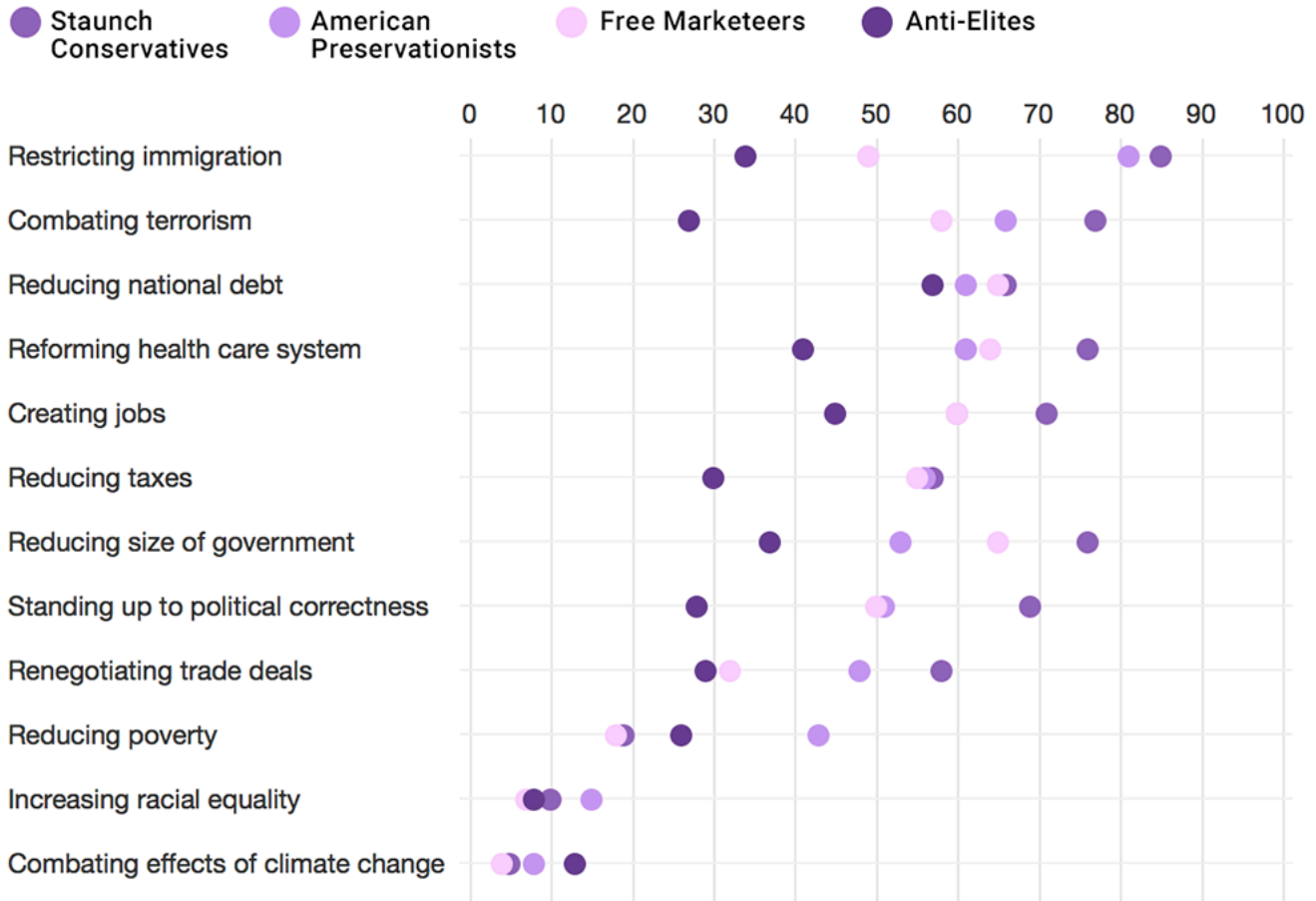


A study from the Democracy Fund found that Trump supporters generally fall into five categories: American preservationists (20%), staunch conservatives (31%), anti-elites (19%), free-marketeters (25%), and the disengaged (5%).¹⁵⁷

Note: axes approximate the median Trump voter

Trump Voters' Priorities for the Republican Party

Percentage who say they want the Republican Party to do "much more" about the issue



Note: The Disengaged (5%) excluded from chart for clarity

Highly religious Americans are significantly more likely to identify as Republicans than as Democrats.¹⁵⁸ Evangelicals in particular vote 4-1 for Republican candidates, whomever they may be.¹⁵⁹ In addition to individual voting behavior, evangelicals also feel a responsibility to use their God-given talents to transform culture and society.

The definition of “evangelical”: An umbrella term for various religious traditions of Christianity that believe in the Bible’s superiority, having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and the use of faith-based activism.¹⁶⁰

To strengthen their efforts toward societal reform, evangelicals have come together to form formal institutions, social networks, and alliances, and have achieved positions of great power. They have the networks, resources, and connections necessary to influence formidable national change.¹⁶¹ Having developed the infrastructure to advance their movement, evangelicals now leverage money and other resources through associations, publishing houses, educational institutions, and social-service agencies.¹⁶²

For example, in 1994, several prominent conservative American evangelical and Catholic leaders acknowledged the commonality of their religious and social concerns in *First Things*, a conservative Catholic journal. They released a public declaration to come together, in the third millennium, for unified social collaboration in “the one mission of Christ.”¹⁶³ Their announcement was called “Evangelicals and Catholics Coming Together.” Leaders have called for both groups to work toward elevating Christian values, transforming American policies, and pursuing “the right ordering of civil society.” By promoting faith-based policy, evangelical and conservative Catholic groups believe they can promote virtue in culture and better align the nation with these groups’ fundamental convictions. Evangelical and conservative Catholic groups have committed to reversing the marginalization of religion in public life by seeking increased religious freedoms.¹⁶⁴ By formally aligning themselves, evangelical and conservative Catholic groups have strengthened their political power.

“We affirm together that we are justified by grace through faith because of Christ. Living faith is active in love that is nothing less than the love of Christ.”– Institute on Religion and Public Life

“Christians individually and the church corporately also have a responsibility for the right ordering of civil society. We embrace this task soberly; knowing the consequences of human sinfulness, we resist the utopian conceit that it is within our powers to build the Kingdom of God on earth.” – Institute on Religion and Public Life

“Together we contend for the truth that politics, law, and culture must be secured by moral truth...we hold that this constitutional order is composed not just for rules and procedures but is more essentially a moral experiment. With them, we hold that only a virtuous people can be free and just, and that virtue is secured by religion.” – Institute on Religion and Public Life

A Closer Look

Reclaiming Jesus

A new ecumenical effort, Reclaiming Jesus, was started by 23 progressive Christians, including some progressive evangelical leaders, to push back against far-right Christian groups and to reframe what it means to be Christian. The movement's official statement says, "***It is time to be followers of Jesus before anything else***—nationality, political party, race, ethnicity, gender, geography—our identity in Christ precedes every other identity...When politics undermines our theology, we must examine that politics. The church's role is to change the world through the life and love of Jesus Christ. The government's role is to serve the common good by protecting justice and peace, rewarding good behavior while restraining bad behavior (Romans 13). When that role is undermined by political leadership, faith leaders must stand up and speak out. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, 'The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state.'...Therefore, we reject the resurgence of white nationalism and racism in our nation on many fronts, including the highest levels of political leadership. We, as followers of Jesus, must clearly reject the use of racial bigotry for political gain that we have seen. In the face of such bigotry, silence is complicity."¹⁶⁵

HOW TRUMP ENGAGED EVANGELICALS ON HIS ROAD TO VICTORY

The election of President Trump in 2016 reflected **decades-long strategy and planning** by the religious right to effect political change in America. The Trump campaign enthusiastically supported this effort. In addition to selecting the **evangelical Mike Pence** for his running mate, Trump hand-selected 25 evangelical leaders for his **Evangelical Advisory Board**, with whom he held weekly calls during his campaign.¹⁶⁶ Many of the members came from the world of TV ministry.¹⁶⁷ These advisers continue to influence the president and have contributed to numerous conversations and decisions that could shape America for decades to come.

"Mike Pence is the 24-karat-gold model of what we want in an evangelical politician. I don't know anyone who's more consistent in bringing his evangelical-Christian worldview to public policy." – Richard Land, president of the Southern Evangelical Seminary and a Trump faith adviser (quoted in The Atlantic)

"If you look at his evangelical advisory council, it's people with media connections...That's a weird slice of the evangelical world." – Robert Jones, CEO of the Public Religion Research Institute (quoted in Politico)

One important way in which Trump gained popularity among evangelicals was with his **campaign promise to repeal the Johnson Amendment**, an addition to the U.S. tax code, which prohibits tax-exempt organizations, including places of worship, from supporting, funding, or opposing political candidates. A repeal would increase the Religious Right's political power greatly and weaken the separation between church and state. Evangelical churches would be able to accept and make tax-exempt donations to political campaigns. As of 2018, Trump claims to have repealed the Johnson Amendment to make good on his campaign promises and show that he will continue to do so as he seeks reelection.¹⁶⁸ However, technically the president technically does not have the power to repeal the amendment.

On a related note, Trump's controversial **recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel** was a popular policy goal for many evangelicals,¹⁶⁹ who believe that this fulfills biblical prophecy.¹⁷⁰ By acknowledging Jerusalem as Israel's territory, Trump has delivered for evangelicals.

Trump's promises to "**make America great again**" (MAGA) and to "**drain the swamp**" support the view of 70% of white evangelicals, who think that American culture and its way of life have worsened since the 1950s.¹⁷¹ Meanwhile, 57% of Americans say that discrimination against Christians is just as big a problem as discrimination against other groups, such as people of color and other minorities. Trump's slogans tap into the promise of a better world. In addition, Christian nationalism plays a key role in the religious support for Trump.¹⁷²

One of the most important campaigners for President Trump has been the African American **televangelist** and pastor Mark Burns, who lives in the small town of Easley, South Carolina, but whose influence goes far beyond the state. He gained national attention from his TV broadcasts through the NOW network, a Christian platform he founded, which features 24-hour live-streaming and prayer hotlines. Burns has given charismatic speeches that have harnessed religion to unite Trump supporters of all races. He spoke at the Republican National Convention prior to the 2016 election, where he delivered a passionate speech in which he explained that under a Trump administration, "all lives matter." He now advocates for President Trump's generosity and his desire to help ordinary people achieve success. Burns thinks that racist Trump supporters are a minority who have given the president a bad name. Burns' national attention and recognition have led to his current congressional campaign in his home state.



Pastor Mark Burns by Sarah Rogers for The Daily Beast

Pastor Paula White is another key figure in Trump's campaign and presidency. White has been an adviser to Trump for over a decade and a half and is currently (as of September 2018) the chair of Trump's evangelical advisory board. She is a powerful religious figure who leads a large Pentecostal church in Orlando, Florida, and also advises celebrities. White believes and **promotes the view that God chose Trump to be president** "because God says that he raises up and places all people in places of authority. It is God who raises up a king. It is God that sets one down."¹⁷³ Both White and Burns characterize Trump as a spiritual man who has changed for the better.

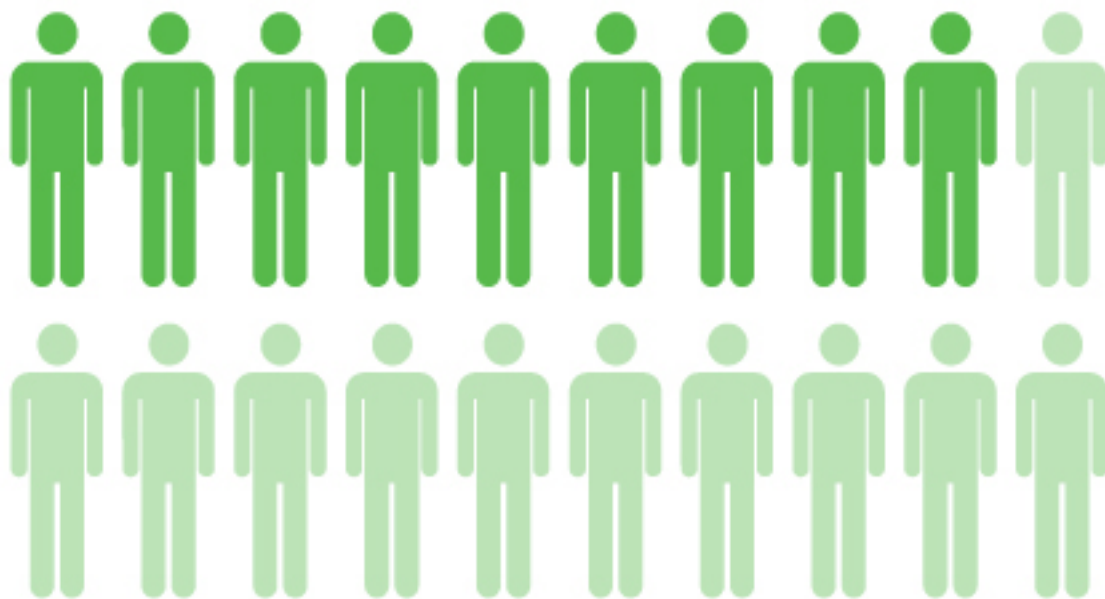


Televangelist Paula White by Michael Rubenstein for NBC News

Christian media outlets played a large role in Trump’s campaign and continue to do so during his presidency. Some of the most popular **Christian media** sources include the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN), the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN), and the Salem Media Group, which together provide a direct route to the screens and radios of 1-in-3 Americans.¹⁷⁴ Christian media outlets are the preferred news and entertainment sources for evangelicals. TBN, for instance, has more local networks than Fox or the three major networks individually (ABC, CBS, and NBC).¹⁷⁵ Two-thirds of evangelicals and weekly churchgoers use Christian media sources weekly, which they consider a godly source of information on Trump’s presidency; secular or mainstream media sources denote a lack of holiness.¹⁷⁶

The “tribe” dynamic of evangelical media may lead to excluding alternative viewpoints while providing an oversimplified narrative that eschews realities that are deemed too secular. Christian networks have started to air mainstream political shows from networks such as CNN after editing them to remove profanity and add religious scenes, such as families praying. As Christian media networks have begun to include more and more political reporting in their programming over the years, the Trump campaign was quick to transform this trend into a new pipeline to spread its narratives, both before and after his election. For example, the Christian Broadcasting Network consistently has portrayed President Trump in a favorable light and has been rewarded with unprecedented access to the president. In 2017, President Trump gave more interviews to CBN than to CNN, ABC, or CBS. CBN also has been granted access to interview his spokespeople, advisors, and other staffers.¹⁷⁷ Even before the 2016 election, Trump’s personal network included key players in Christian media.¹⁷⁸

American adults who watch Christian TV on a monthly basis



In 2005, 45% of American adults watched Christian TV on a monthly basis (evangelical pollster Barna Group)¹⁷⁹

KEY RESULTS: WIN-WIN

Engaging with and appealing to right-wing Christian evangelicals served Trump well in his election. His campaign promised to bring their agenda to fruition, and it delivered. Deep collaboration and investment are key in successfully mobilizing faith communities. Having access to the president has been a momentous win for evangelicals, giving their voice, agenda, and politics unprecedented influence. Trump has appointed people with evangelical ties to several Senate-confirmed roles, advisory boards, and positions within the administration. Efforts to fulfill the evangelical agenda continue, as noted below, as Trump's 2020 re-election campaign gears up.

Trump's Successes for Evangelical Agenda	
Political platform	Wins
Judicial appointments	Trump appointed 12 justices on the U.S. Court of Appeals, in addition to six district court justices, a record for first-year presidencies.
Pro-life measures	Expanded existing law that prohibits U.S. aid from reaching international groups that promote abortion.
Advancing religious protections	Expanded existing law that prohibits U.S. aid from reaching international groups that promote abortion.
Recognizing Jerusalem	Trump formally recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and ordered the U.S. embassy to relocate from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, undoing nearly seven decades of foreign policy ¹⁸
Federal relief funds to rebuild churches	The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is allowing houses of worship to receive funding to rebuild after natural disasters
Aid to persecuted Christians abroad	The State Department will use faith-based groups to aid Iraqi Christians and other persecuted religious minorities, circumventing the United Nations
Child tax credit doubled	Recent tax reform doubled the child tax credit from \$1,000 to \$2,000 per child in an effort to support families, despite this benefit being mitigated by other changes

Status of Trump administration efforts on the evangelical agenda ^{180, 181, 182}

Reporting From the Field

Religious Resistance to Trump by Dr. Kraig Beyerlein, PhD

While evangelicals played an important role in getting Trump elected and continue to support him, this is only part of the story of faith-based political activism in regard to Trump. Faith communities from the other end of the theological and political spectrum have mobilized against Trump, fighting for women, immigrants, people of color, and LGBTQ people. For example, during the 2017 Women's March in Chicago, leaders and members from progressive faith communities joined other participants in solidarity to let the world know that the Right does not have a monopoly on religion.¹⁸³ Moreover, religious groups were present in over 50% of sister marches in local communities across the country on January 21, 2017.¹⁸⁴ This is an important corrective to the popular view that conservative religion is the only type relevant in the Trump era.

MORAL FOUNDATIONS IN PRESIDENT TRUMP'S ELECTION THROUGH LANGUAGE:

Language supporting Trump's election is effective, as it employs several Moral Foundations (the theory that intuitive ethics are based on six universal psychological systems: Care/Harm; Fairness/Cheating; Loyalty/Betrayal; Authority/Subversion; Sanctity/Degradation; and Liberty/Oppression),¹⁸⁵ in a manner that serves a different function than other campaigns. It is rooted in the understanding that to live out faith, one must be active in radical love, the love of Christ, and reject human sinfulness. The narrative suggests a level of sanctity to uphold. Because adherents are warned about the pain and suffering of eternal damnation, they are called to political action and participation. A society that is truly free from pain requires politics and culture to be informed by faith teaching.

Moral Foundations	
Language employed by Insitute on Religion and Public Life	Moral Foundations
<p>“We affirm together that we are <i>justified by grace</i> through faith because of Christ. <i>Living faith is active in love that is nothing less</i> than the love of Christ...” - Institute on Religion and Public Life</p> <p>“Christians individually and the church corporately also have a responsibility for <i>the right ordering of civil society</i>. We embrace this task soberly; knowing the consequences of human sinfulness, <i>we resist the utopian conceit</i> that it is within our powers to build the Kingdom of God on earth.” - Institute on Religion and Public Life</p> <p>“Together we contend for the truth that politics, law, and culture must be secured by moral truth...we hold that this constitutional order is composed not just for rules and procedures but is more essentially a moral experiment. With them, we hold that <i>only a virtuous people can be free and just</i>, and that virtue is secured by religion.” - Institute on Religion and Public Life</p>	<p>Authority/Subversion</p> <p>Sanctity/Degradation</p> <p>Fairness/Cheating</p> <p>Care/Harm</p> <p>Loyalty/Betrayal</p>

Summary of Learnings - President Trump’s Election		
Category	Description	Outcomes to Date
Strategy and Approach	<p>Catholics and evangelicals have come together on religious and social concerns, releasing a public declaration of unity</p> <p>Formal institutions, social networks, and alliances</p> <p>Backing by powerful religious figures</p>	<p>Trump appointed people with evangelical ties to several Senate-confirmed roles, advisory boards, and positions within the administration.</p>
Tactics	<p>Leveraging money and other resources through associations, publishing houses, educational institutions, and social-service agencies</p> <p>25 evangelical leaders are on Trump’s Evangelical Advisory Board</p>	<p>Voice, agenda, and politics to have unprecedented influence</p> <p>Two-thirds of evangelicals and weekly churchgoers use Christian media sources weekly!</p>
Messaging	<p>Trump’s promises to “make America great again” (MAGA) and to “drain the swamp”</p> <p>Christian media sources: the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN), the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN), and the Salem Media Group”</p>	<p>The Christian Broadcasting Network has consistently covered President Trump in a positive manner and has been rewarded with unprecedented access to the president. In 2017, President Trump gave more interviews to CBN than to CNN, ABC, or CBS</p>

**RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR CLIMATE
ADVOCACY**

INTRODUCTION

These learnings are based on expert insights, leading research, a team of peer reviewers, and other social science research conducted by ecoAmerica, namely on [Mental Health and Our Changing Climate](#).

In the Black Lives Matter and New Sanctuary (NSM) movements, as well as in the election of Trump, Americans have organized for political and cultural change, motivated by **emotional tipping points of frustration**. These issues resonate personally with many Americans who are fed up with betrayal or inaction by civic and political institutions of authority that conflict with their morals as people of faith, and they are **no longer able to sit by idly** and watch. Each of these movements has **compelled people, beyond core activists, to take action** and be **bold and fearless**. Participants are **willing to take social risks**, have **transcended their fear of being unpopular**, are **stepping forward to name the issue and defend their point of view** in the face of opposition, and are motivated to **advocate publicly or engage in resistance efforts**.

Faith leaders and communities' involvement has helped achieve progress in each of these movements. In addition, key aspects of the strategies and tactics that these movements use are uniquely contemporary and can provide guidance to help move America forward on climate solutions. The climate movement can harness these learnings to grow a movement that is both geographically diffuse, yet unified – the first engaged citizenry of its kind.¹⁸⁶

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MORE EFFECTIVE CLIMATE ADVOCACY

1. Think Nationally, Act Locally

Beginning in the 1970s, the Religious Right defined its political aspirations and long-term plans to build political will and influence across the country. Black Lives Matter and the New Sanctuary Movement (NSM) emerged more abruptly in response to immediate challenges, leaving them little time for strategic planning. Notably, these more recent movements have no discernable central leadership or faces of the fight, but rather a collection of leaders organizing locally and nationally.¹⁸⁷

Long-term, centralized national planning allows for goals, focus, and direction, while short-term, decentralized planning allows for broader inclusion, co-ownership, and agility. A mixture of both approaches could prove successful for climate advocacy, as movements and campaigns then could evolve and respond rapidly, deferring to their members to shape their local programmatic work. Each of these three contemporary national social movements has followed a unique strategy that can be replicated independently and locally. National unity provided by strategic campaign designs, standardized messaging, and independently implementable tactics then becomes self-reinforcing.

To those outside the movement, climate advocates appear fractured. We don't have a plan, or rather we have too many conflicting plans to offer. Climate advocates would benefit from coming together in a **new cohesive movement, aligned on a national strategy for finding solutions**. Just as faith has come together in the Reclaiming Jesus movement, so must the climate movement. The strategy must allow state, local, and personal customization of plans. Such a focus could nurture vast networks of local organizations, as well as grassroots activists (see partnerships, below). This strategy also requires yielding the microphone – and the focus of attention – to constituents. Having a national climate strategy can **empower local organizations and individuals with relevant, replicable, and constructive actions**, such as lunch-counter sit-ins, die-ins, and the sharing of firsthand stories. And, with the growth of social media, these actions can be shared broadly, which will garner greater attention to the cause and invite increasing numbers of people to participate. Notably, traditional tactics – such as marches, protests, and rallies – are not enough: Actions should be authentic, dynamic, emotional, and even entertaining.

Specific asks are a crucial element. Otherwise, advocacy efforts will appear weak, vague, and futile. The climate movement would benefit from clearer, **unified** calls for policy change – policies that include a role for local and individualized advocacy – rather than having competing national policy proposals.

2. Go Public in Partnerships and Make Public Commitments

Deep, authentic, and lasting partnerships build trust and create reliable and invested networks of people on the ground, which have been essential to these three campaigns. Each of these movements has encouraged various levels of commitment to show support. From sharing the hashtag to affirm #BlackLivesMatter, to wearing a MAGA hat, to making the bold commitment to house, protect, and defend sanctuary seekers, public commitments have been key in stimulating deeper participation, diffusing ideals throughout society, and creating the conditions that make it socially safe for more Americans to engage in their work.

The climate movement would benefit from expanded public support and political will. Given the disrupted state of our climate, the short time we have left in which to avert dangerous climate impacts, and an administration promoting fossil fuels, the act of **pulling together a diversity of new constituencies to make and promote public commitments to climate action and advocacy** could prove materially useful in building momentum and could give others permission to others to participate at the same time.

To be truly effective, authentic and fruitful **partnerships require long-term investment and broad inclusivity** – they cannot be short-term, exclusive, or homogenous.

3. Collaborate for Inclusion and Reach

Sanctuary, BLM, and President Trump fostered authentic collaboration with all their allied organizations to increase reach and efficacy. This, coupled with membership recruitment, creates a strong movement that people can get behind.

To stand up successfully to the opposition's deep pockets and agility, as well as break through climate apathy, climate advocates need to **recruit many**

more people into the movement. These new members must come from **diverse backgrounds and communities** nationwide. Those on the frontlines who are already facing devastation often can produce the most creative and powerful ideas. The recent resurrection of the Poor People's Campaign, started by Martin Luther King Jr., does just that; its Moral Agenda is informed by interviewing Americans who are experiencing injustice and asking them to inform solutions and leadership.¹⁸⁸

New members should include people and organizations who are trusted by and can influence Americans on the ground, such as faith, health, and local community organizations. Standing alongside advocates **can show Americans that justice – in other words, climate solutions – is the new social norm.** Doing so can show people that by a significant margin, **more Americans support climate solutions than oppose them,** which will help them transcend fear and opposition.

4. Get Personal: Move Past Fear Toward an Emotional Tipping Point

Supporting Sanctuary, Black Lives Matter, and Trump campaigns requires taking a firm stance on controversial issues. Driven by a personal connection to the movement, and a higher moral imperative to correct intolerable injustices, participants are **willing to take bold social risks** in the face of powerful and sometimes even violent opposition. Participants have surpassed an emotional tipping point and feel that they are getting involved in **revolutions** that are near and dear to their hearts.

Show Americans that the impacts from climate change are already here, are happening in their own backyards and are affecting their loved ones. This will help elevate concerns about climate change. Show how solutions can be just, equitable, and beneficial to their health, wealth, and well-being. This can move the public toward a needed emotional tipping point for action.

Previous efforts to spark climate concerns among Americans largely have employed doomsday messaging, causing people to turn away.^{189,190} The doomsday narrative fails because it is abstract, distant, and emphasizes dangers over solutions. Instead, climate advocates need to make the issue local — featuring **impacts that Americans can see with their own eyes** – to make the connection between local seasonal changes, extreme weather, and our climate. This will **humanize climate change.**

Americans need to understand that **climate preparation and solutions are personal rights that will benefit their lives.** They are motivated by family, money, and health, and they deeply value their rights as citizens.¹⁹¹ **Trusted messengers** must help Americans understand that clean energy benefits individual and family health, strengthens the economy, creates jobs, and protects future generations. Furthermore, they themselves can make a meaningful difference on the issue. Climate communicators must help Americans overcome the idea that “it’s not my problem” by shifting their focus to **the moral imperative for policymakers to protect our collective health, wealth, and well-being through climate preparedness and smart climate solutions.**

These messages are best conveyed by local people (beyond the core advocacy community) who share the their audience’s values. Issues such as racism intersect with climate change, in that they both manifest in every city and town, but the wealthy mostly can evade the consequences, while the poor

are adversely affected. Race, more than economic class, is the largest indicator in the location of toxic facilities in the U.S.¹⁹²

The climate movement can make climate change personally relevant by empowering authentic stories from **diverse and other new messengers who:**

- (a) are members of front-line communities directly affected by climate change,**
- (b) would directly benefit from solutions that empower racial minorities, low-income people, and the historically under-served**
- (c) have had a “conversion” experience that has provoked their support**

Firsthand accounts that **expose unjust practices tied to the opposition’s skewed values** also have been shown to be helpful.

5. **Make Messages Moral: Ground Communication in Your Communities’ Values and Repeat Often**

The use of messaging such as “Keep families together,” “Black Lives Matter,” and “Make America great again” compels a moral choice. On its face, one either agrees or disagrees with them: **It is all in or all out.** They appeal to **moral foundations**, or beliefs about personal rights.¹⁹³ However, climate change is a relatively new phenomenon, and we need to make an effort to employ **long-held traditional values**, including those that are drawn from faith, which offer the strongest foundation of support.

	New Sanctuary Movement	Black Lives Matter	Election of Trump
Care/Harm	x	x	x
Fairness/Cheating	x	x	x
Loyalty/Betrayal	x	x	x
Authority/Subversion	x	x	x
Sanctity/Degradation	x	x	x
Liberty/Oppression	x	x	

Slogan repetition has also been a successful aspect of messaging, as shown in all three case studies. Phrases with a repetitive nature are chanted, hash-tagged, worn on T-shirts, and put on signs in the front yard. A successful message that connects with common and traditional values (see the “Let’s Talk Climate” series¹⁹⁴) is a key component of a movement’s success. They are validated in part because the messages are so prevalent that Americans have begun to accept them as truths.

6. Empower Success: Create and Share a Breadth and Depth of Best Practices and Tools

There is little time left to act alone on climate change. Help others in the movement achieve mutually successful outcomes. Rather than reinvent the wheel, we need to find the best thoughts and practices and work from there. In all three campaigns, multiple organizations produced and shared a **wealth of tools and resources**, including toolkits, social media packages, guides, pamphlets, and even training sessions on how to organize and execute nonviolent protests. Communications on climate should follow effective, vetted, and customized tools and resources from those who have gone before.

7. Become Modern-Media Savvy: Right-Size Content, Employ Innovation, Then Let Go

The use of modern technologies allows people across the country to form bonds, discuss issues, and collaborate on efforts from a variety of devices. Geographical distance is no longer a barrier to participation. While none of the campaigns would list social media as “new,” all three have been quick to employ a modern application. **Organizing and campaigning were done both in person and online.**

However, it was the **media’s content that was most important – vivid, authentic, firsthand, and emotionally compelling.** These messages demonstrated the **power of personal witness and testimony.** Headlines became pervasive on social media. Content must include compelling stories that **expose and unmask authority figures** and power holders who wield their influence unjustly. Successful movements evoke powerful emotions such as doubt, distress, anger, and sorrow, with sometimes hard-to-stomach footage that leaves an impression on the audience, but also builds resolve. Participants must not let instances of injustice go; people should be encouraged to post repeatedly, create content on behalf of the cause, and share widely.

Social campaigns reach all corners of the U.S. because of the **people** who are spreading them. **Individuals have real power** in leading and raising awareness. From online support to attending rallies or protests, individuals are propelling social issues onto the national stage. They are reducing the stigma of tackling controversial issues and are showing others that **advocacy is accessible to everyone.** Everyday people can draw connections to their closely held values, then encourage their neighbors to join in – and they can do the same for climate solutions.

8. Have Faith: Involve the Faith Community More Meaningfully

BLM, NSM, and the election of President Trump all had **prominent faith figures** among those leading the charge. These faith leaders are **respected moral messengers who were willing to stand up and fight for what is right and righteous** – however they defined what is right and righteous – and they were key in fostering progress.

Faith leaders have the **unique ability to bear witness to societal troubles and divisions**, and call out climate change as a scourge on all living things, particularly for the most vulnerable. They can **carry the torch of moral imperative as they continue to demand climate solutions from America’s elected leaders.**

The climate movement needs **new climate messengers who can connect with Americans in their daily lives** – people who share their values. By encouraging the growth of leadership, climate will be a leader-full movement with guiding voices, rather than a leaderless one.¹⁹⁵ While many faith communities have begun to engage with climate issues, untapped potential remains to **influence, scale, and build momentum** for climate action and advocacy.

Religious Americans **trust their faith leaders to guide them on a moral path** through scripture. Poll results show that **79% of Americans consider themselves religious**,¹⁹⁶ 36% attend weekly religious services¹⁹⁷ among the 350,000 congregations in the U.S.,¹⁹⁸ and **a majority of evangelicals (69%)¹⁹⁹ are regular consumers of religious media** – all with content and programming that offer guidance on social issues.

People of faith can join the masses advocating for issues that align with their most sacred beliefs and **help local congregations feel safe in contributing** by sharing space and resources to organize and act. Offering space for activists to hold meetings is one simple way that congregations can begin to step into the climate movement and build new partnerships. Through prayers and preaching, children's' education, and adult education, faith communities can help their members grasp that tackling climate change is essential to living a faithful life. Entire denominations can **lead by example** by committing and moving to 100% clean energy. To achieve the full potential of their reach and influence, faith communities need **the support of the climate-advocacy community**. This includes building lasting partnerships and **capacity building** to guide (with strategy, technical assistance, and tools and resources) and assist (with funding and collaboration) climate advocacy and impact reduction.

Interfaith collaboration provides particular leverage for change. Truly transformative climate action and advocacy can be achieved through **interfaith partnerships and commitments**. To overcome opposition and the misappropriation of scripture to defend the continued use of fossil fuels, faith traditions can band together in a united, highly visible faith/climate coalition that makes bold commitments to advocate, collaborate, provide mutual support, and demand solutions, standing shoulder to shoulder against all opposition. Such collaboration, in conjunction with local activation, will amass a faith/climate constituency that will inspire action in all communities – rural, suburban, and metropolitan.

Reporting From the Field

A Note from Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, PhD

Communities of faith have an essential role to play in mobilizing and sustaining a vibrant movement to avert climate catastrophe. Climate science has done its job, giving us essential facts about the catastrophic consequences of continuing to burn fossil fuels. However, facts alone are not sufficient to persuade people to take meaningful, concerted action. For that, we need:

- **a vision, goal, and purpose.** Faith communities can lift up a vision of people living in just and loving relationships with each other and with the Earth, upon which all life depends. Faith communities help us take hold of the kind of hope that doesn't depend on outward circumstances, but emerges from a deep and irrepressible place in the human spirit.
- **a place to grieve.** The climate crisis can make us numb. It's hard enough to face our own mortality or to mourn a loved one's death. How do we begin to feel our fear and grief in response to the existential threat of climate change? How do we move beyond helplessness and despair? Faith communities can give us practices, teachings, and rituals that allow us to feel, express, and integrate the painful emotions evoked by the climate crisis.
- **moral courage.** What is our moral responsibility to future generations? How determined are we to adjust our personal patterns of consumption and waste? Faith communities provide a context for wrestling with such questions and for remembering such old-fashioned values as generosity, simple living, justice, forgiveness, and nonviolent engagement in societal transformation. Faith taps into our capacity to dedicate ourselves to a cause greater than personal comfort and self-interest. Maybe we should think of the climate crisis as our doorway to enlightenment, a personal and collective challenge to expand our consciousness and to live based on our highest moral values.

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