



Banking

Banks in the UK have approximately £8,000 billion of assets¹. This is over 700 times the £11.6 billion that our government has pledged to give annually to the International Climate Fund² but may reduce because it is considered unaffordable³.

Who do you bank with?

List the banks that members of the group have accounts with:

2 minutes

Barclays Bank and Christian Aid

Earlier this year, Christian Aid moved stopped banking with Barclays Bank who have invested over £150 billion in fossil fuel companies since 2016 despite having set a target to reduce global emissions by 40% by 2030⁴:

“Their record on fossil-fuel finance, and their weak commitment to future improvements in this area meant that we had to seek a more suitable provider.”

Martin Birch, Chief Operating Officer, Christian Aid

What role should our faith play in choosing who we bank with?

6 minutes

¹ www.bankofengland.co.uk/statistics/visual-summaries/money-and-credit-statistics [figures for August 2023]

² www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-climate-finance-results-2022/uk-international-climate-finance-results-2022

³ www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-66105901 [July 2023]

⁴ www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2023/28-july/news/uk/christian-aid-to-stop-banking-with-barclays-after-climate-campaign [July 2023]



Other banks

Bank	Fossil fuel investments (2016-21) ⁵
Barclays	£167 billion
HSBC (including FirstDirect)	£130 billion
Santander	£43 billion
NatWest (inc Royal Bank of Scotland)	£15 billion
Lloyds (inc. Bank of Scotland)	£13 billion



The Good Shopping Guide produces ethical ratings for banks and building societies as shown in the table below⁶. Although general, these place a strong emphasis on how green investments are.

Charity bank	100
Ecological Building Society	98
Triodos Bank	98
Leeds Building Society	85
Nationwide Building Society	85
Cooperative Bank	83
Virgin Money	80
Monzo	55
TSB	55
Lloyds, Halifax, Bank of Scotland	42
NatWest, Royal Bank of Scotland	33
Santander	25
Barclays	21
HSBC, First Direct	21

As a Christian, how should I respond to this information?

7 minutes

⁵ www.bankingonclimatechaos.org/wp-content/themes/bocc-2021/inc/bcc-data-2022/BOCC_2022_vSPREAD.pdf

⁶ <https://thegoodshoppingguide.com/subject/ethical-banks-building-societies/> [Accessed September 2023]



Wills

Over £98 billion is left in wills in the UK each year⁷. This is about 9 times the £11.6 billion that our government has pledged to give annually to the International Climate Fund⁸ but may reduce because it is considered unaffordable⁹.

Leaving a legacy

How many people in your group have made a will?

2 minute

Most of us will leave most of our money to family members but we often hear of people who have chosen to leave money to a church or another charitable cause.

List some bequests that members of the group know of and chat about the impact they have made:

6 minutes

⁷ <https://demos.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/inheritance-done-2.pdf>

⁸ www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-climate-finance-results-2022/uk-international-climate-finance-results-2022

⁹ www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-66105901 [July 2023]



Our children or their children?

A will is a gift to the future. It allows us to pass on money we have acquired through our lifetimes to future generations.

We now know that much of the wealth generation by western economies over our lifetimes has resulted in greenhouse gas emissions that will have the greatest effect on poor people in the global south far into the future.

Only 4% of inherited wealth in the UK is donated to charities¹⁰, and only a small portion of this will go to overseas aid. 96% is passed down to family members. Half goes to individuals who are already among the wealthiest 20%¹¹ in this, the fifth richest country in the world¹².

As a Christian, how should I respond to this information?

6 minutes

Faith will...

Christian Aid are currently running a campaign called “Faith will...” in collaboration with the Church of England, Church of Scotland and the Quakers to encourage people to make a bequest to both their church and the charity in their wills. People can write or update their wills with their own solicitor, or through one of Christian Aid’s free Will writing partners (who can be contacted through www.caid.org.uk/Faith).

“For me I think leaving a gift to Christian Aid in my will is important because it says something about me. It says something about the values I had in my life. I would encourage other people to make a gift in their will because of the impact they can make after they die.”

Wilf Hardy, Christian Aid Supporter

You might like to reflect on this opportunity.

1 minute

¹⁰ <https://smeeandford.com/articles/2022-was-a-record-breaking-year-for-charity-legacy-income/>

¹¹ <https://demos.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/inheritance-done-2.pdf>

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_total_wealth [accessed September 2023]



Make polluters pay

Think global

It has been estimated that the 20 countries most vulnerable to climate change have lost £421 billion since 2020¹³. The floods in Pakistan last year caused £24 billion worth of damage despite emitting less than 1% of greenhouse gases¹⁴.

At the COP26 meeting in Egypt last year the UN decided to set up a *Loss and Damage* fund to help low-income countries, but it is not yet clear where the money is going to come from¹⁴.

Last year alone the top 6 fossil fuel companies internationally made profits of £213 billion¹⁵. Taxes on these profits could help pay for the damage their products cause and reduce the financial incentives to continue producing fossil fuels.

List some of the big oil, gas and coal companies that you know of:

(someone could use their phone to search Google for “biggest fossil fuel companies”)

3 minute

What is the Christian perspective on the information on this page?

6 minute

¹³ www.v-20.org/resources/publications/climate-vulnerable-economies-loss-report

¹⁴ <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/what-you-need-know-about-cop27-loss-and-damage-fund>

¹⁵ www.ippr.org/blog/fossil-fuel-giants-profit-while-households-and-environment-suffer



Act Local

This year Christian Aid are joining several different organisations¹⁶ in a campaign to “Make Polluters Pay”¹⁷. They are suggesting four actions for local churches or groups.



A. Contact a local representative



B. Hold a local pilgrimage



C. Hold a discussion event



D. Hold a local demonstration

Think a little about what each action might look like locally.

If Poynton Methodist Church was to hold an action as part of this Christian Aid campaign then rank them in order of preference:

- First preference
- Second
- Third
- Fourth

6 minute

¹⁶ <https://makepolluterspay.co.uk/make-polluters-pay>

¹⁷ <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/news/campaigns/make-polluters-pay-blog-1>