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Dear Alok Sharma,

Open letter on the climate crisis

This open letter is from the Methodist Churches (and URC/Methodist partnerships) in the United Stockport Circuit. We are writing to express our concerns about climate justice, and to ask for stronger and more immediate actions to move more swiftly towards the commitments we made during COP26.

In November, the world's eyes were on Glasgow, and everyone made strong impassioned speeches about the importance of tackling climate change. Yet now, it seems little has changed. Whilst our attention might, for good reasons, be elsewhere, this is an issue that will not go away. The metaphorical comet is still on its collision course. Urgent action is needed.

For example, urgent action is needed by our Government in the following areas, to enable us to meet our COP26 targets:-

- **Renewable energy:** Funding research and development is needed, as well as training for the jobs to support the renewable energy industry. For example, tidal power is an underused resource. The Government is currently putting considerable investment into fossil fuels, including fracking and a new coal mine in Cumbria. This should be diverted to renewables. Additionally, investment is needed to enable domestic users to convert to greener energy. At the moment the costs of installing domestic renewable energy, for example, ground source heat pumps, are prohibitive to most people. The Government, rather than increasing, has withdrawn some of the subsidies for solar panels.
- **Phasing out fossil fuel vehicles** Considerable investment is needed to ensure the charging infrastructure is available for electric vehicles. Additionally, the government needs to work with the motor vehicle industry to bring down the costs of electric vehicles, whilst ensuring the safety of those working in the supply chain of car batteries. Currently, incentives to install electric charge points in domestic homes are being withdrawn. Additionally, measures are needed to encourage and enable walking or cycling, and investments made in better public transport. Without measures such as this, it seems unlikely we will be ready to meet our target of phasing out petrol and diesel vehicles by 2030.
- **Financial support for poorer countries** Ensure that we are doing our bit to support the world's poorest communities in the global South. for both the effects of climate change and to develop their own clean energy infrastructure. The \$100 billion a year climate finance agreement made in 2009 at COP 15 is routinely missed. These countries have caused the least damage in terms of their carbon emissions, yet are the worst hit from the effects of the climate crisis.

This is not an exhaustive list, but illustrates that our country needs to invest in an urgent, robust and organised plan to tackle the climate crisis. As the current presidential nation, we should be leading the way on this.

As Christians, alongside other people of faith, we believe that this planet is created and loved by God, and we see it as our duty to do our utmost to protect it.

We therefore call on you, as President for COP26, and all with power and influence, to press the Government to take urgent action for God's world and our common home.

Grace and Peace,

The churches of the United Stockport Methodist Circuit.