



Climate Justice & Care for Creation *Protecting People & Our Common Home* 2024 Strategy and Investment Approaches

Introduction

Climate Justice is a movement calling for solutions, accountability, and policies that address the root causes of climate crises and the disproportionate health and economic impacts these crises have on people of color, the poor, and the working class. We will have climate justice when social, economic, and health inequities no longer impact communities of color and other marginalized communities disproportionately.

Care for Creation is our responsibility to care for and protect the earth and all people, who are part of creation. Promoting care for creation means resisting irresponsible consumerism and uniting to address, and work to reverse, the impacts of environmental degradation and global warming.

Allegany Franciscan Ministries recognizes that low-income communities and communities of color are disproportionately at risk from the impacts of climate change due to existing social, economic, and health inequities. The people doing the least damage are closest to the problem and solutions yet furthest from resources and power. As such, Allegany intends to create space and distinct opportunities for the enhanced involvement of community members and potential stakeholders in building this initiative through the initial investment stage and beyond.

In 2024 Allegany Franciscan Ministries is embarking on a new strategic initiative to address the disproportionate impacts of climate change on communities of color and other marginalized communities throughout Florida.

Background

The Climate Justice & Care for Creation Initiative is the result of a deliberate process which started in late 2021. Since that time, we worked with board members, community partners, and consultants to increase our learning and understanding about climate justice and climate change, and their impact on the communities we serve.

Listening Sessions/Community Conversations

In keeping with our values, we engaged in a series of community conversations and listening forums to better understand the impact in Florida communities. From the outset, we understood that we were embarking on an entirely new strategic journey, one which impacts all of humanity but nonetheless impacts Floridians in unique ways. Even within the state, multiple impacts are felt and experienced differently, oftentimes depending on the area of the region of Florida.

The listening sessions were structured to focus attention on specific areas and locations to ensure the voices and unique perspectives of BIPOC, indigenous, LGBTQ and Farmworker populations are heard.

Listening session participants affirmed a key message we'd learned in our research: those closest to the problem and effects of climate change are generally the farthest from the resources to mitigate, build resilience, and implement solutions.

Participants identified common climate-related challenges, including:

- Weather changes (increased heat, more flooding, more intense storms),
- More health problems related to climate change,
- Reduction in outdoor activities due to the increased heat,
- Investment disparity between more and less affluent parts of area,
- Increased housing prices and gentrification driving out lower-income residents,
- Lack of preparation for climate change-related events (e.g., flooding),
- Greater financial hardship and more homelessness.

Community members also identified strategies to address these challenges, including:

- Financial support is needed to incentivize the community to act on climate change,
- Access to information/education on climate change would encourage residents to contribute to climate change alleviation efforts,
- More opportunities for community connection and civic engagement may foster greater community involvement in climate change-related issues.

Concurrently, we made specific strategic investments in a limited number of projects. These investments included support for programs which:

- ❖ build capacity for residents, tenants, community members, students, and organizers,
- ❖ promote network and coalition building,
- ❖ sustain activities and efforts to share best practices,
- ❖ research new opportunities for collective action and policy change.

As part of our learning and planning work, we met with and listened to key thought leaders and organizations invested in climate justice throughout the state and nationally. Various organizations and groups have already brought attention to this issue, yet there remain many opportunities for action.

We also partnered with a Florida-based network of university level researchers and evaluators with unique experience and groundbreaking perspective on the issue of climate change. Their knowledge added valuable guidance grounded in research and science.

With this background and insight, we undertook a critical thinking and strategic mapping process to consider how and why change is likely to occur, aligning Allegany's beliefs and vision with the current reality in and for the communities we serve. We created a Theory of Change that identifies the preconditions necessary to move from "where we are now" to "where we want to be". We identified strategies and interventions that can address, influence, or create these conditions. The Allegany team including staff, board, and consulting partners, also considered what investments – of financial, social, and human capital, are within our capacity in 2024 and the future. Through this planning and learning process, we identified specific, focused strategies and investments for 2024.

As we implement the inaugural phase of the Climate Justice & Care for Creation Initiative, we will continue planning for the next phases. Our mission, vision, and core values, together with what we have learned, will shape our strategic planning and program development, establish the basis for evaluation, and facilitate continued critical reflection and long-term organizational learning. Allegany anticipates that our beliefs and approaches will evolve over the life of this initiative.

Our Focus

Climate Change is an intersectional issue which multiplies already existing social, economic, and health inequities and further threatens access to safe, affordable, and stable living environments for low-income BIPOC communities and other historically marginalized communities. While the impacts are broad, we will focus on the following two issues which emerged during our planning phase.

Extreme Heat is defined as summertime temperatures that are much hotter and/or humid than average. Extreme heat forces the body to work harder to maintain a normal temperature and can lead to heat-related illnesses and death. ***Outdoor workers specifically and other individuals living or working outside more generally are disproportionately at risk from the social, economic, and health impacts of extreme heat caused by climate change.***

Climate Gentrification refers to a phenomenon where the impacts of climate change, such as rising sea levels, increased flooding, or extreme heat, contribute to changes in the socioeconomic makeup of a neighborhood or community. The desirability of certain locations changes due to their relatively higher or lower exposure to climate risks. This leads to increased property values, redevelopment, and the subsequent ***displacement of long-standing, often marginalized, communities.*** These movements, intentional or otherwise, also have secondary effects as populations with economic and financial means migrate from at-risk areas, thereby leaving behind populations 'stranded' in areas especially exposed to risks from climate change.

Our Approach

Climate Change is a global issue, however for Allegany to create meaningful change, our efforts will be focused locally, within Florida. Historically, Allegany has limited much of its financial support to three regions of Florida (Miami-Dade County, Palm Beach/Martin/St Lucie Counties, and Hillsborough/Pinellas Counties). Recognizing that the effects of climate do not stop at county borders, our approach in this initiative will reach new partners in communities around the state and those working statewide or regionally. We see that Climate Change disproportionately and negatively impacts people experiencing poverty and people of color. As a basis for this work, it is important to acknowledge the historical and ongoing marginalization and disenfranchisement of populations and the disproportionate impact of climate change on these communities.

Low-income communities and communities of color are disproportionately at risk from the impacts of climate change due to existing social, economic, and health inequities. The people doing the least damage are closest to the problem and solutions yet furthest from resources and power. We ultimately seek a condition where everyone in our communities will have the resources, support, and opportunities necessary to thrive in the face of multiple risks, uncertainty and threats caused by climate change.

Our approach will prioritize the voices and needs of historically marginalized communities, ensuring they are included in the creation and development processes and that their unique strengths and challenges are recognized.

Climate Justice Overall Goal

Our overarching vision and goal is that:

Everyone in our communities will have the resources, support, and opportunities necessary to thrive in the face of multiple risks, uncertainty, and threats caused by climate change.

Early-Stage Climate Justice Goals

Extreme Heat Goal:

Outdoor workers (*and other individuals living or working outside*) will have the resources, support, and opportunities necessary to thrive in the face of multiple risks, uncertainty, and threats associated with extreme heat caused by climate change.

Climate Gentrification and Housing Goal:

Low-income BIPOC communities have and retain access to safe, affordable, and stable living environments in the face of multiple risks, uncertainty, and threats caused by a changing climate.

Our Objectives

- Reduce exposure to risk from extreme heat and climate gentrification.
- Reduce sensitivity to risk from extreme heat and climate gentrification.
- Increase power and adaptive capacity.

Climate Justice & Care for Creation Initiative - 2024 Investments

2024 Cycle 1 Climate Justice & Care for Creation Grants

The Climate Justice & Care for Creation Initiative will launch in early 2024 with an initial round of grants. We will invest up to \$500,000 to support nonprofit organizations and coalitions engaged in climate justice work, specifically as it relates to the impacts of extreme heat and climate gentrification. Initially, approximately 20 organizations will receive funding ranging from \$10,000 to \$40,000 for a one-year term, strengthening or supporting existing or planned efforts that align with the goals of the initiative. As part of this first cycle of grantmaking, Allegany hopes to begin to get to know organizations and efforts across the state and to cultivate new partnerships.

The purpose of the grants in Cycle 1 is to support activities throughout Florida that:

- Educate workers, employers, and the community about the effect of extreme heat on people who work outdoors;
- Educate people about climate gentrification and how it affects low-income communities and communities of color; or
- Develop coalitions that address the effect of extreme heat or climate gentrification.

Details about this grant offering can be found beginning on page five of this document.

Climate Partnership Grants

In addition, in the first half of 2024, Allegany Franciscan Ministries will identify organizations or coalitions that already play an important regional or statewide role in support of climate justice or as key leaders in the Climate Justice advocacy and/or policy areas. We intend to select two to four organizations or coalitions and award Climate Partnership Grants ranging from \$50,000 to \$150,000. Partners for these inaugural awards will be identified through emerging or existing relationships; Allegany will reach out directly to organizations identified as potential partners.

Climate Partnership Grants will support and seek to strengthen relationships and partnerships with climate-focused organizations thereby building regional and statewide capacity to achieve climate justice. We know that people and organizations across the state are engaged in efforts to address the impacts of climate change. While many are not directly focused on extreme heat or climate gentrification, Allegany believes in the value of building partnerships and supporting the capacity and growth of communities and organizations.

Beyond 2024

Allegheny Franciscan Ministries anticipates prioritizing Climate Justice & Care for Creation for at least five years, through 2028. Over this time, Allegheny will invest human, social, and financial capital in strategies and activities to support these goals. We will continue to engage and listen to community members and partners as we further develop strategies while being transparent and open about the process and our direction.

We will support the development of community-led solutions and networks of empowered advocates. We will press for accountability in the development and expansion of policies that address the root causes of climate crises to mitigate the disproportionate impacts these crises have on BIPOC, Indigenous, LGBTQ and outdoor worker communities.

While the initial grants awarded in this initiative will address smaller, specific activities that represent early preconditions in our Theory of Change, future grants and investments will address bigger, deeper, and more systemic issues as well, still focused on the impacts of extreme heat and climate gentrification. This will include advocacy and administrative, local, and/or statewide policy work that promotes climate justice.

2024 Cycle 1 Climate Justice & Care for Creation Grants

In this initial stage, grants will be awarded to organizations or groups focused and actively working on one or more of the following issues:

Awareness and Access to Information Related to Extreme Heat: The goal of this work is to ensure that workers, employers, community organizations, and other stakeholders (government, foundations, institutions) are knowledgeable about the impacts of extreme heat on outdoor workers or marginalized individuals who spend significant time outdoors.

Awareness and Access to Information Related to Climate Gentrification: The goal of this work is to ensure that community residents, community organizations, and other stakeholders (government, foundations, institutions) are knowledgeable about the intersectional impact of climate gentrification, and about the need for safe, affordable, and stable living in light of climate gentrification.

Development and Support of Climate-focused Coalitions: The goal of this work this is to support coalitions of residents, organizations, and advocates that exist locally, regionally, and/or statewide, to develop and implement common agendas with actions that address climate justice, especially extreme heat and climate gentrification. Priority will be given to organizations or coalitions serving more than one county.

Eligibility

Nonprofit organizations and county or city entities may apply for funding. Community groups that are not recognized as a nonprofit entity by the IRS are encouraged to work with a local nonprofit which can serve as a fiscal agent. Funding is not available for individuals, capital projects (buildings, van/automobiles, etc.), or endowments.

To be considered for funding, the following criteria must be met:

1. The organization has received a ruling from the Internal Revenue Service confirming its exemption from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code OR be a city or county entity.
2. The organization serves residents of Florida; priority will be given to organizations based in Florida.
3. The organization is willing and able to comply with all requirements of the Allegany Franciscan Ministries Grant Agreement (see [sample agreement](#)).
4. At least 50% of the people or communities who are the target audience of the proposed project identify as BIPOC, LGBTQ+, or persons with a disability.
5. At least 25% of staff leadership (leadership team as defined by organization) includes individuals who identify as BIPOC, LGBTQ+, or persons with a disability.
6. The organization is willing to participate in an annual convening (TBD virtual or in person) of all partners funded through this grant program (additional funding will be provided if travel is required)
7. The organization is willing to engage with our evaluators in a simple process so that we understand what you are doing and how you are doing it.

Application Process:

This is a two-part online application process with a short Letter of Intent (two narrative questions plus contact and other basic info, total not more than 8,000 characters), followed by invitations to submit a simple application providing more detail.

Please see the [Grant Overview & Instructions](#) for more information. Attend the optional informational webinar on February 1, 2024 from 10 am – 11:30 am or watch the recording of the webinar.

The online application may be accessed through the [Apply](#) link.

2024 Cycle 1 Climate Justice & Care for Creation Grant Timeline	
Webinar	February 1, 10 am ET
LOI Deadline	February 22, 5 pm ET
Invitations to submit full application	March 7-8
Deadline to submit full application	April 4, 5 pm ET
Announce grants	May 1-2
Grant period begins	June 15

Our mission: *We, Allegany Franciscan Ministries and Trinity Health, serve together in the spirit of the Gospel as a compassionate and transforming healing presence within our communities.*

Our Vision: *The communities we serve will become ever more just, equitable, and caring; everyone in our communities will be welcomed and have the resources to thrive.*

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