

**Interfaith Center
for Sustainable
Development**



**THE ELIJAH
INTERFAITH
INSTITUTE**

“Returning to Sinai” — A Prophetic Call for Climate Justice and Ceremony of Repentance

**Sunday, November 13th, 2022, Mount Sinai
In parallel with the COP 27 UN Climate Conference**

Between November 6th and 18th, 2022, the UN climate conference COP 27 will take place on the Sinai Peninsula, in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. Religious communities and religious leaders have a key role to play in addressing climate change and climate justice, which requires deep transformation within society. The knowledge of what changes are critically needed to diminish longterm harm to the planet is readily available. However, bringing about change in action demands deeper changes in attitude, a change of heart. This has been the domain of religions for millennia. Religions are sources of inspiration for the transformation of heart and the ensuing changes of attitude.

To support, challenge and inspire discussions during COP 27 at Sharm El Sheikh, **a weekend event will be held at Mount Sinai that will be heart-stirring, transformative and a moment of inspiration for religious communities and for humanity.** Never before has such an interreligious Climate Repentance Ceremony been undertaken. From this moment and event, motivation for action emerges, calling for reexamination of deep-seated attitudes and for identifying ways to transform these attitudes for the wellbeing of Earth, our common home.

Over the weekend of November 12th-13th, few official discussions or activities are planned at COP 27. This provides a major moment when the attention of media and participants can be turned to interreligious climate messaging and a transformative vision. **On Sunday, November 13th, religious leaders will return to Mount Sinai, a mountain whose memory and meaning loom large as a place of revelation in the collective consciousness of Christianity, Judaism, Islam and others.** It is a site for turning to God and receiving God's message.

We return to Sinai in a movement of repentance and quest. We seek a new vision for humanity and its endangered existence, and we seek to receive and amplify a message of life-sustaining living and habits that humanity needs to hear today. In this spirit, the project partners will bring together premier religious leaders from the world's major religions to gather upon Mount Sinai to engage in a first ever Climate Repentance Ceremony, and to put forth a prophetic interreligious call to action: **“Climate Justice: Ten Universal Commandments.”**

The call's originality in compiling the finest teachings of all religions in support of climate justice draws inspiration from the great prophetic figures associated with Mount Sinai. Teachings and spiritual ideals will be highlighted, in order to help religious communities and humanity at large open their hearts to change for our collective survival. The ceremony will draw from liturgies, readings and the musical traditions of diverse religions. The event will incorporate concrete examples of how religious communities are actively meeting the climate challenge, and feature concrete initiatives that translate the broader spiritual practices into action.

Goals of the Event

- Inspire and unleash the power of religions, religious leaders and faith communities as change agents for climate action and as sources for inspiring and motivating discussions among politicians and civil bodies.
- Motivate action among religious communities and the wider public to curb climate change.
- Invite media to cover religious leaders' advocacy in combating climate change.
- Promote a coalition of religious leaders to work together for climate action.
- Generate new faith-inspired climate education materials for broad use.

Who: “

Returning to Sinai” is an event delivered by world religious leaders. At its core is the work of the Elijah Board of World Religious Leaders, an active community of high level religious leaders. The project partners also seek to actively involve at the event celebrities who have a track record of climate advocacy.

Follow Up and Outreach:

Following the “Returning to Sinai” event, we intend to launch a series of educational initiatives that will flow from it. We envision two tracks of continuing dissemination and legacy for the project.

1. The event, its preparation, and the stages of its unfolding will be filmed and made part of a documentary. Social media will be employed heavily to disseminate the event in real-time.
2. The materials produced by religious leaders participating in the event will be converted into study materials, that will serve the religious communities and the community of climate activists, in special seminars and ongoing teaching situations.

Partners:

The event will be coordinated by a coalition of organizations:

- The [Elijah Interfaith Institute](#) and its *Board of World Religious Leaders* brings together some of the world's most prominent religious figures from Judaism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and the Religions of India.
- [The Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development](#) reveals the connection between religion and ecology and mobilizes people to act through faith-based communities and more.
- The [Peace Department](#) is a US non-profit designed to solve global coordination failures by making philanthropy and impact investing effective and scalable.
- Climate activist Yosef Abramowitz serves as special advisor to the initiative.
- Local partners for realizing “Returning to Sinai” have been identified during the course of an exploratory visit to Mount Sinai in August 2022.