



Breakout Sessions at the 2025 Climate Conference

September 20, 2025

1. **“Building economies for life in response to climate crisis: God’s work in a global communion”** – Dr. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda

Description: In this workshop participants will learn from siblings in the global ecumenical communion regarding how their lives are intimately connected with ours through unseen economic dynamics and climate dynamics. We will explore those links and focus significant attention on practical action people may take to build life-giving connections as neighbor-love in action. Key biblical texts and faith claims will provide the foundation. Economies will be seen as webs of relationship, and economic life seen as spiritual practice.

Presenter: **Dr. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda** is Professor of Theological and Social Ethics with a joint appointment at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (PTLS) and Church Divinity School of the Pacific. She is a Founding Director of the PLTS Center for Climate Justice and Faith. She has lectured or consulted throughout the world on theological ethics addressing matters of climate justice. Among the books she has written is *Resisting Structural Evil: Love as Ecological-Economic Vocation* (2013) and *“Building a Moral Economy: Pathways for People of Courage”* (2024).



2. **“Engaging evangelicals and other conservatives in conversation and action on climate change”** – Rev. Dr. Jessica Moerman

Description: Compared to other religious groups and mainline Protestants, evangelicals are most likely to be skeptical about the reality of climate change and whether humans have a role in causing it. As President and CEO of the Evangelical Environmental Network, Dr. Jessica Moerman’s climate efforts focus on offering biblically grounded understandings to evangelicals and conversing in ways that engage them and encourage them to care for creation. In this breakout session, she will share what she has learned and what she is doing to engage evangelicals and other conservatives in conversation about climate change and to encourage them to take action.

Presenter: The **Rev. Dr. Jessica Moerman** is a climate and environmental scientist, pastor, educator, and advocate. She serves as the President and CEO of the Evangelical Environmental Network. Jessica received her Ph.D. in Earth and Atmospheric Sciences from the Georgia Institute of Technology and has held research positions at John Hopkins University, University of Michigan, and the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, where she researched how climate has changed throughout Earth’s history. Prior to joining EEN, Jessica was a AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow at the U.S. Department of Energy. Jessica regularly speaks on issues related to climate change, pollution, children’s health, the clean energy transition, environmental stewardship, and the intersection of science and faith. Jessica is co-founding Pastor at her church, which she planted in 2016 with her husband Chris in Washington, DC.



3. **“Climate action and advocacy at state and national levels”** – Sheri Ellwood and Dorothy Barnett

Description: Sheri Ellwood of Kansas Interfaith Action and Dorothy Barnett of Climate and Energy Project will share practical strategies for advocacy efforts on the state and national levels, along with insight into current legislative and regulatory efforts that need our attention. Come and learn more about how you can use your voice to put your faith in action.

Presenters: **Dorothy Barnett** is the Executive Director of the Climate + Energy Project, which is a Kansas-based non-partisan 501(c)3 nonprofit that is driving solutions for an

equitable transition for a clean energy future. Grounded in an approach based on common ground solutions, Barnett has been successful in convening diverse voices in this conservative region of the country. She has coordinated winning campaigns to protect the Kansas Renewable Portfolio Standard from special interest groups' attacks during legislative sessions, allowing the wind industry to grow to 40% of the state's power generation in just a decade. She provides expert testimony at regulatory proceedings and has been published in the Electricity Journal. In 2014 Barnett received the Advocacy Leadership Award from the U.S. Clean Energy, Education and Empowerment (C3E) program, run by the U.S. Department of Energy and the MIT Energy Initiative. She received her education at Friends University.



Sheri Ellwood is Development Coordinator for Kansas Interfaith Action (KIFA). She also provides leadership for KIFA's climate working group. She formerly served as a Lutheran pastor and holds a Master of Divinity degree from Luther Seminary and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Social Work from Kansas State University. She lives near Little River, Kansas with her husband Scott and serves as Livestock Manager for their family farm.



4. **"Climate action and advocacy at regional, city, and local levels"** – Chairman Mike Kelly

Description: This breakout session will focus on the topic of how churches and people of faith can engage in climate action at the local level and encourage climate policies that reduce greenhouse gases. As cofounder of Climate Action KC, Mike Kelly has been a part

of organizing leaders in the Greater Kansas City area to work on climate change, develop a regional climate action plan, and continue efforts to implement that plan. With experience in how city, county, and regional governments work, he will share his insights and suggestions on how churches and people of faith can effectively work with local governments on climate action, with specific information about working with Climate Action KC and local governing bodies in the Greater KC area

Presenter: **Mike Kelly** is Chairman of Johnson County's Board of Commissioners and chief elected official of the Johnson County Government (KS). Previous to that, he served as mayor of Roeland Park for four years. He has been Senior Counsel at Husch Blackwell, as well as volunteered as an attorney with the Neighborhood Justice Center at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church. In 2019, he co-founded and continues to serve on the board of Climate Action KC, a 501c3 organization dedicated to supporting the Kansas City region in achieving its net zero goals through collaboration and decisive action. He attended Cure' of Ars Catholic School as a child, Rockhurst High School, Kansas State University, and the University of Kansas for his law degree.



5. **"Going solar and electrifying everything: Transitioning off fossil fuels in homes and churches"** - Dr. Tarris Rosell and Cromwell Solar's Bill Wood and Brad Kaye

Description: Since burning fossil fuels causes most of the carbon emissions resulting in climate change, having clean energy sources for electricity and switching everything we use to be powered by that electricity can significantly reduce our emissions. Solar developers Bill Wood and Brad Kaye will help us better understand solar energy and the process of getting it on the rooftops of our homes and churches. Tarris Rosell has gone through the process of electrifying his home and a condo, switching out gas furnaces and hot water heaters for heat pumps, along with replacing other machines, so that gas is no longer used in either place. He will share practical knowledge about what this involved, as well as what it is like to own an electric car.

Presenters: **The Rev. Dr. Tarris Rosell** is Professor of Pastoral Theology - Ethics & Ministry Praxis at Central Seminary. Until last December when he retired, he was also the Flanigan Chair at the Center for Practical Bioethics and worked as a bioethicist at the University of Kansas Health System. He has served as a pastor in Upstate NY and as

Copastor of Asian Ministry in Prairie Village, resettling refugees from Laos and helping them start a church. As a homeowner, he has overseen the installation of rooftop solar and the replacement of all the gas systems and machines in his home with electric ones.

Brad Kaye is a Project Developer for Solar and Backup Power Solutions at Cromwell Solar. In 2016, he got a solar system installed on his first house. Then, in 2020, he had a career change from restaurant management to become a developer for Cromwell Solar to help others save money and grow sustainability efforts in KC and the surrounding area. He considers one of the best parts of being in solar development is educating others about the benefits of solar while feeling good about helping the environment along the way.

Bill Wood has been a Solar Project Developer for Cromwell Solar since 2014. His interest in solar dates back to his junior high days, and in the mid 1980s he helped organize workshops for building a hot air solar panel and a solar food dryer. In 2010, working as the Douglas County Extension Director, he helped get a solar system on the Extension office to save money and demonstrate to the public how solar systems work. His family purchased a solar system for their home in 2013. Bill retired after 34 years with the Extension service in May of 2014, and then joined Cromwell 2 days later. Bill enjoys helping educate people about how solar works. Bill has helped five churches install solar, and his faith calls him to be a good steward of the natural resources we have in this world.

