

Wisconsin 7: Hold rally, press conference celebrating completing 22 days of fasting

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KENOSHA — On Friday, March 26th, the Wisconsin 7 will hold a rally and press conference celebrating their last day of their 22-day fast for climate justice in the state budget. The rally will take place at Grace Lutheran Church (2006 60th St., Kenosha WI 53140) at 10am.

The Wisconsin 7 are Tory Lowe, Vaun Mayes, Justin Blake, Jill Ferguson, Joe Cardinali, County Supervisor Andy Berg, and Rev. Jonathan Barker.

The Wisconsin 7 demand that the state legislature pass Governor Evers' climate justice initiatives in the 2021'-2023' state budget. The proposed state budget includes funding for renewable energy and jobs, energy efficiency and resiliency, renewable energy and equity, electrified transportation, clean water, and programs for farmers and land conservation.

"I won't say it was easy, but 22-days without eating is a very small price to pay in the urgent fight for climate justice for our state," said Rev. Jonathan Barker.

The Wisconsin 7 began fasting for climate justice on March 5th and will fast through noon on Friday March 26th. They have held rallies in different parts of the state, including Madison with Lt. Governor Barnes. A medical professional continues to monitor and advise them on their fast.

Justin Blake is a community leader in Southeastern Wisconsin who works to lift up African American communities from Chicago to Milwaukee. He founded Black Underground Recycling, a program that recycles to fund food programs and create

jobs. Justin possesses a deep understanding of environmental racism and how climate justice can uplift the African American community and all our communities. His Muslim faith sustains him in this work.

Joe Cardinali is a former Kenosha County Board Supervisor and current Chair of the UW Parkside College Dems. Joe also is the Wisconsin Dems Community Organizer of Kenosha County.

County Supervisor Andy Berg is the Executive Director of Garden of Eatin-Kenosha, Retired Army Veteran, and President of Kenosha County Veterans Council.

Tory Lowe is an activist in Milwaukee, largely known as a voice for equality and a resource for families in the aftermath of violence. He has built a name as an advocate for the people, whether the problem is police misconduct, dirty drinking water, missing persons, human trafficking, or violence in the streets. He's also one of the main people involved in 101.7 The Truth, a new news/talk radio station focused on Milwaukee's Black community.

Jill Ferguson is a grandmother of eight and soon-to-be great-grandmother. She is a life-long peace activist and serves on the steering committee of Peace Action Wisconsin.

Vaun Mayes is a community activist and advocate. He founded Program The Parks MKE, a youth empowerment focused non profit campaign, as well as Community Task Force MKE. Vaun is dedicated to confronting and eradicating racism, white supremacy, building better and safer communities and neighborhoods for all, as well as progressing social justice and police reform.

Rev. Jonathan Barker serves as the pastor of Grace Lutheran Church and is co-founder of Grace Welcome Center. Rev. Barker hosted President Joe Biden last summer at Grace Lutheran Church. Rev. Barker also completed a 12-day fast in 2019, and wrote a book about that experience titled, *Jesus Would Demand a Green New Deal: The Story of Why One Christian Pastor Went On a 12 Day Fast For a Green New Deal*.