

# FaithInvest

*Many faith-based organisations have substantial assets, but are unaware of the impact their investments are making. There is however a desire to place their funds ethically. Martin Palmer finds that faiths are pretty good at knowing what they don't want to invest in, but it is now time to say what they do want to invest in. FaithInvest is assisting in that task.*

A new global membership association and investment community of faith-based organisations has launched to grow the scale and impact of faith-consistent investing.

*FaithInvest* is a UK-based, international non-profit organisation that helps faith groups to invest in line with their beliefs and values. It grew out of an initiative by the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC), of which I have been Secretary General since 1995. Our aim is to support the rapidly developing movement of faiths actively using their investments to create a better world – for the benefit of people and planet.

Many people are astonished to hear that faith groups have billions of dollars' worth of assets invested in the global stock market. In fact, it wasn't until ARC began asking religious groups several years ago to add up the value of their investments that many of the faiths began to appreciate the amount they had.

Alongside this increased appreciation for the scale of faith-based investments, there is a rapidly growing movement for values-aligned action – putting investment money into values for people and planet.

This is prompted partly by concerns over the environmental crisis. As Justin

Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, said recently: 'We all have both a moral and financial responsibility to address the climate emergency... For Christians and people of conscience, this is even more so when you see the impacts on the world's poorest and least equipped to adapt to extreme weather, as well as the impacts on the beauty of God's creation.'

In the Roman Catholic Church, the Pope's 2015 ground-breaking encyclical, *Laudato si'*, or 'care for our common home', has had a huge impact in focusing attention among the faithful on environmental degradation and global warming.

