



For the **Love**
of **Creation**

The Honourable Chrystia Freeland
Minister of Finance
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

September 14, 2020

**Open Letter from Faith Communities on
Climate Action, Indigenous Rights, and Building A Just Canada**

Dear Minister Chrystia Freeland,

Congratulations on your recent appointment as Minister of Finance.

Building on a long history of work in ecological conservation, environmental activism, and advocacy for climate justice, Canadian churches and faith-based organizations marked the 50th anniversary of Earth Day this year by launching **For the Love of Creation - A Faith-based Initiative for Climate Justice**.

Called as people of faith to love and care for Creation, we have come together as national churches and faith-based organizations in the hopes of making a meaningful contribution in the next decade towards a sustainable future for all life on the planet.

Never before has the interconnectedness of all of Creation been clearer than it is right now. The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically impacted every aspect of our lives. As is too often the case in times of difficulty, existing vulnerabilities are being exacerbated; many are dying and many more face economic ruin. The way we respond is of paramount importance.

Even before the emergence of COVID-19, we knew that we were entering into a crucial decade for climate action. Addressing the climate emergency is more important than ever and must now be done while also responding to the pandemic and devastating economic, political, cultural, and social fissures.

Indigenous Peoples have long spoken of the interconnectedness of all Creation. Respecting this interconnectedness is critical for ecological and economic integrity, right relations with Indigenous Peoples, and for holistic recovery from the pandemic.

The abrupt shift in human behaviour has resulted in very modest—but largely unsustainable—greenhouse gas emissions reductions and demonstrated the need for far-reaching systems change to stay within the temperature limits determined by science. We have an opportunity to build a just and equitable Canada.

As we mark the Season of Creation (September 1 - October 4), we call upon the Government of Canada to:

1. Commit to reducing Canadian GHG emissions by 60 percent below 2005 levels by 2030, while investing in a just transition to a fair, inclusive, green economy that creates good secure jobs, and promotes the well-being of everyone in Canada;
2. Honour the rights of Indigenous Peoples by recognizing and enacting the right to free, prior and informed consent, particularly in the context of climate policy, energy policy, and infrastructure development; and by legislating the implementation of the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
3. Commit equal support for climate change adaptation and mitigation measures in the Global South through international climate financing mechanisms, with additional funding for loss and damage, scaling up to a fair share contribution of at least \$4 billion USD per year;
4. Respond to the pandemic in the Global South through multilateral debt cancellation and increased grant-based support for Canadian international NGOs.

A national petition—sponsored by your colleague MP Nathaniel Erskine-Smith—with these same asks is currently open for signatures. In light of the prorogation of Parliament, however, and recognizing that important policy and budgetary decisions are being made right now, we felt that it was important to share our recommendations with you.

As a movement, **For the Love of Creation** will continue to explore how we can work together to build healthy, resilient communities, and a better future for all beings in Creation. We hope that you will join us in fulfilling this vision.

Sincere thanks,

The Most Rev. Linda Nicholls, Primate, The Anglican Church of Canada

The Most Rev. Mark MacDonald, National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop, Anglican Church of Canada.

Marilyn Manzer, Presiding Clerk, Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

The Rev. Susan C. Johnson, National Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

Rev. Amanda Currie, Moderator, The Presbyterian Church in Canada

The National Indigenous Ministries Council of The Presbyterian Church in Canada

The Right Rev. Dr. Richard Bott, Moderator, The United Church of Canada

Murray Pruden, Executive Minister - Indigenous Ministries and Justice, The United Church of Canada

Kelly Di Domenico, Director of Campaigns and Communications, Development and Peace
- Caritas Canada

Rick Cober Bauman, Executive Director, Mennonite Central Committee Canada

Will Postma, Executive Director, The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund

Sr. Denise Kuyp, Canadian Province Leader, Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions

Sr. Margo Ritchie, CSJ, Congregational Leader, Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada

Sr. Mary Ann McCarthy, CSJ, President, Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph of Canada

Sr. Georgette Gregory, CSJ Congregational Leader, Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto

Willard Metzger, Executive Director, Citizens for Public Justice

Jennifer Henry, Executive Director, KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives

Agnes Richard, Coordinator, Global Catholic Climate Movement - Canada

Rev. Laurel Dykstra, Salal + Cedar Watershed Discipleship Community, Anglican Diocese
of New Westminster