

7 Calls to Climate Action for Mennonite Church Canada¹

**This good world that God so loves is in a Climate Emergency.
And it is too late not to act.**

In 2015, the global community agreed that humanity should limit warming to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels.² We are currently at 1.09 degrees global heating³ and on track to blow past the 1.5-degree limit in five to 10 years.⁴ The results of this will be catastrophic.⁵

Even if the nation-states of our world live up to their current climate *pledges* to curb greenhouse gas emissions—and we should not assume that this will happen given decades of inaction—the best case scenario is that the planet will warm between 2.7 and 3.2 degrees by the end of this century.⁶ Based on the energy and climate measures that governments have *actually put in place*, climate models predict that we are on track to land somewhere between 3 and 4 degrees... or more.⁷ The amount of mass suffering and death in such scenarios is beyond comprehension.⁸ The scientifically rigorous *Climate Action Tracker* rates Canada's emissions reduction plan as “highly insufficient.”⁹ But the Paris commitment of 1.5 °C is still achievable—if we choose to achieve it.

Every sector of society has a critical role to play in order to avert ecological collapse. *This includes the church.* We are called to care for creation, defend those most vulnerable, and expose and disarm the powers of destruction (cf. Gen 2:15; Lev. 25; Ps. 82:3; Is. 58:6-7; Amos 5:24; Mic. 6:8; Mt. 25:40-45; Lk. 4:18-19; Eph. 6:12; Col. 2:15). Inaction is inexcusable. “Future generations will never forgive us,” warns a recent coalition of world religious leaders and scientists, “if we miss the opportunity to protect our common home.”¹⁰

As a community of peace, Mennonites in Canada must link arms with peoples of conscience and exercise a costly grace to address the violence of climate change. It is time to share our gifts, resources, imagination and even our lives, with courage, generosity, hope and sacrifice. In this kairos moment¹¹,

“True evangelical faith cannot lie dormant” (Menno Simons).¹²

“We can either save our world or condemn humanity to a hellish future” (UN Secretary General António Guterres).¹³

It is time to act, and to act boldly. To do so, is to express boldly God’s love to those who suffer climate impacts now and in the future. For “if we love one another, God lives in us and God’s love is perfected in us” (1 Jn. 4:12).

Therefore, we call on Mennonite Church Canada¹⁴, to summon its bravery and exemplify spirited leadership by embracing **7 Calls to Climate Action**; calls that are demanding, but “not too difficult for us, or beyond our reach” (Dt. 30:11).

7 Calls

1. Tell the truth
2. Create a Climate Emergency Mobilization Ministry
3. Support Indigenous land defenders
4. Support climate refugees & internally displaced people
5. Affirm nonviolent civil disobedience to defend creation as a normative expression of discipleship
6. Divest
7. Conversion & Accountability

1. Tell the Truth.¹⁵

We are in an emergency. As Sir David King, former Chief Scientific Advisor to the UK government, has stated: “What we do over the next three to four years, I believe, is going to determine the future of humanity. We are in a very, very desperate situation.”¹⁶ **That is the hard truth. We need to face it, and with God’s help, tell it.**

The recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report makes it plain—“greenhouse gas emissions from burning fossil fuels and deforestation are choking the planet and putting billions of people in immediate danger.”¹⁷ **We urgently require a transition away from the fossil economy, away from the dominant throwaway culture, and toward a sustainable and socially just set of relations.**¹⁸ Creation is no longer just groaning (Rom. 8:22). It is reeling. **New fossil fuel projects**

must be stopped and existing infrastructure rapidly drawn-down¹⁹ in order to prevent catastrophic levels of global heating, the collapse of ecosystems, and the extraordinary suffering of so many, especially the poor.²⁰

Climate change is already impacting Canada in severe ways. This summer an unprecedented heat wave killed hundreds of people in BC and broke Canadian heat records.²¹ Wildfires across Western Canada destroyed towns and caused Winnipeg hotels to fill up with climate refugees from northern communities. The drought on the prairies caused crop losses that will contribute to the average Canadian household food bill rising by more than \$1,000 this year.²² And Toronto's hot summers are forecast to get dangerously hotter in years to come.²³

As a church, we have been quiet on these matters.²⁴ And if we “are not talking about climate change,” says evangelical climate scientist, Katharine Hayhoe, “then it will never receive the priority that it requires.”²⁵

We therefore call on Mennonite Church Canada to

- break our silence and commit to telling the truth. Tell the truth to each other, to the world, and to the forces of destruction. Weep over the truth, rage over it²⁶, pray it, and above all, act on it. In solidarity with those most impacted by the climate emergency, the church must speak and embody the truth with fierce love through the power of the Spirit, that protective presence who broods over the darkness (Gen. 1:2); that liberating force who longs to free earth from its bondage (Rom. 8:21).

2. Create a Climate Emergency Mobilization Ministry.

Climate change is an existential threat; the biggest that humans have ever faced.²⁷ We need action that is commensurate to our predicament.

The Church of England has a National Environmental Programme in order to empower their church “to address—in faith, practice and mission—the issue of climate change.”²⁸ They have dedicated budget and employed leadership to facilitate “bold, deliberate collaborative action across the Church to tackle the grave existential crises of climate change and biodiversity loss.”²⁹

Every Christian denomination needs to do the same—prioritize the climate crisis in ministry, and allocate monies accordingly. Church institutions must be empowered to speak, to act and to mobilize effectively to “fight the good fight” (1 Tim. 6:12).

We therefore call on Mennonite Church Canada to

- create a Climate Emergency Mobilization Ministry; a program with full-time staff and a fulsome budget that will focus, primarily, on organizing our people into vulnerable and risk-taking collaborative action³⁰ for the “big changes” (e.g., transforming our energy system away from fossil fuels to renewables; a just transition for all workers, etc.) alongside and for the benefit of the creation community.³¹ Creation care education is good.³² Greening congregation initiatives may have their place.³³ But they are secondary matters as we seek to address pressing, systemic evil.³⁴ As political scientist Leah Stokes reminds,

“No one can unilaterally choose to live in a low carbon economy. The goal is not self-purification but structural change.”³⁵

Collective, whole-of-society deeds must be prioritized over words, and over individual and congregational concerns, for there is no time to waste.

3. Support Indigenous land defenders.

Around the world, Indigenous peoples are on the frontlines defending the earth. And though they have paid a steep price for their efforts to protect homelands from extractive powers, they have often been successful.³⁶ Across Turtle Island, Indigenous resistance to fossil fuel projects has dramatically reduced greenhouse gasses—up to a quarter of annual Canadian and U.S. emissions.³⁷

We must honour the Original Nations whose vocation it is to be stewards of ancestral lands and waters—holy places where Creator reveals millennia-old wisdoms and purposes. Yet we must do more than lift our hands and hearts. We must support their efforts, and struggle together.³⁸ Many years ago, Mennonites promised to recognize the jurisdiction of Indigenous peoples to their territories, their spiritual bonds to their homelands, and their right to protect their *nahala*³⁹ by saying

“No!” to resource extraction.⁴⁰ We must breathe life and material substance into these vital, yet largely forgotten, covenants.

We therefore call on Mennonite Church Canada to

- designate 1% of its overall budget to support Indigenous land defenders and water protectors across Turtle Island⁴¹;
- publicly stand with those who, like Naboth (1 Kgs. 21), are protecting their ancestral lands;
- bless, invite, and support members of our church body to be with those on the frontlines who are defending their territories and our common home.

4. Support climate refugees and internally displaced people.

The World Bank estimates that 216 million people will be on the move by 2050 because of climate change.⁴² Other research asserts that—in the absence of decisive action to mitigate climate change—more than 3 billion may be living outside the “human climate niche” by 2070.⁴³ This could face one-third of the world’s future population with the choice between starving in situ or migrating to an uncertain future elsewhere. In climate vulnerable countries, far too many face that choice already.

While sudden destructive events such as hurricanes, cyclones and forest fires often attract media attention, an even greater concern is the cumulative impact of slow-onset events such as droughts (and the torrential downpours and mudslides which often follow them), repeated or extended heatwaves, and large-scale pest infestations—all of which are being made more frequent and more intense by rising global temperatures.⁴⁴ A multi-year record drought—together with the oppressive response of the Assad regime to those impacted by it—has been shown to be a key causal element in the Syrian crisis;⁴⁵ a decade later, half of that country’s population remains displaced either inside or outside its borders.⁴⁶

In response to the loss of food supply or other resources, people can respond in one of three ways: sharing, conflict or displacement. Where there is pre-existing conflict over land, climate change impacts will tend to increase its intensity and the chances of it flaring into lethal violence, from which potential victims will flee. This has been observed already in some locations.⁴⁷

In the coming years, Canada will need to prepare to welcome large numbers of people displaced by global warming.

We therefore call on Mennonite Church Canada to:

- designate 1% of its overall budget to help congregational efforts to support people displaced as a result of climate change, both through assistance in place and through resettlement to Canada.
- advocate for climate refugees to be recognised as eligible under Canada's refugee class immigration programs.⁴⁸

5. Affirm nonviolent civil disobedience to defend creation as a normative expression of discipleship.

"The early Christians were by and large completely committed to the nonviolence of Christ and thus regularly civilly disobedient to imperial violence. With the emergence of Christendom, the light began to dim and their subversive faith subsided" (John Dear, SJ).⁴⁹

We have known about the climate crisis for over half a century. Nation-states, big corporations and the wealthy have done little-to-nothing to address the crisis. More often than not, they have fueled it.⁵⁰ Creation is under attack, and the church must defend it against the principalities and powers that refuse to change, or will not change soon enough.⁵¹

We have learned from the Canadian government's perpetual neglect of treaty obligations, their continual failure to honour Indigenous rights and responsibilities to traditionally owned and occupied lands and waters⁵², as well as the disproportionate rate of Black and Indigenous people in poverty and prison⁵³, that the law and order of society can be unjust—terribly so. We also see a failure of domestic and international law to hold countries and corporations to account for the environmental damages they commit.⁵⁴ In light of these realities, we believe that faith may call us to disobey such unjust laws and order.

In a world where present and future generations of God's creation face mass suffering and extinction, "it is time for the church to become more public in its recognition of civil disobedience as an appropriate expression of faithfulness to our God."⁵⁵

We therefore call on Mennonite Church Canada to

- affirm that active nonviolent civil disobedience and resistance to defend creation is a normative expression of Christian discipleship, just like prayer is a normative expression of Christian faith.

6. Divest.

Jesus said, “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Mt. 6:21).

Around the world, schools and cities, businesses and non-profits are actively divesting from extractive companies that are largely responsible for the socio-ecological damage of the planet.⁵⁶ And so are many churches.⁵⁷

Though runaway global heating threatens to sacrifice the earth, Canadian fossil fuel corporations and governments continue to invest their treasure in extraction efforts (despite green promises to the contrary).⁵⁸ Jesus said, “You cannot serve both God and mammon” (Mt. 6:24). Beyond shareholder activism⁵⁹, there is no ethical reason to invest in the fossil fuel industry.⁶⁰ There is every reason to divest and redirect our monies and hearts toward Life.

We therefore call on Mennonite Church Canada to

- divest from all fossil fuel related investments;
- invest in what is sustainable and just (e.g., “impact investments”);⁶¹
- move bank accounts away from institutions that are putting billions in fossil fuel companies and projects, and toward credit unions.⁶²

7. Conversion and Accountability.

Today’s youth know that our world and their futures are under threat. They are “demanding that we listen to the scientific insights and that we, their elders, do much more.”⁶³ Yet children and teenagers in our church do not see—in the main—a faith community that is engaging the crisis with deep conviction, concerted action, and converted lives. Everyone in the church has a part to play and a holy responsibility to take up. We all need to reorient our faith and practice, replacing “consumption with sacrifice, greed with generosity, [and] wastefulness with a spirit of sharing.”⁶⁴ We all must come to see “the world as a sacrament of communion, as a way of sharing with God and our neighbours on a global scale.”⁶⁵

At the same time, our church needs climate leaders; those who will embody ways of ecological integrity through radical simplicity, brave truth-telling, alternative living, and liberating sacrifice. And in so doing, arouse and stir the good, the best, and the power of the Spirit, that is present in all of us. To paraphrase Dorothy Day, “We need climate saints. God, give us climate saints!”

Let it be said again—in the priesthood of all believers, everyone is called to be God’s agent of change, everyone called to an ecological conversion, to political holiness, and to lives of joyful resistance against the drivers of global heating.⁶⁶ And yet as Pope Francis, Patriarch Bartholomew, and Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby state in their recent joint letter on climate change, “To those with more far-reaching responsibilities... we say: become leaders in the transition to just and sustainable economies. ‘To whom much is given, much is required’ (Lk. 12:48).”

We therefore call on Mennonite Church Canada leaders⁶⁷ to

- live lives of simplicity in solidarity with the poor; this concerns our travel, food, housing, habits of consumption, and more;
- fixed times of prayer, fasting, and study with attention to our ecological crisis, discerning “what the Spirit is saying to the Church” (Rev. 3:22);
- active participation in preaching and public discourse regarding the ethical and moral choices before us as we seek to address the environmental (and economic) crisis;
- organize a semi-annual check-in with a Youth Climate Action Council; this online council will encourage and support MC Canada leaders with prayer, discernment, prophetic voice and loving accountability; it will report what they have “seen and heard” to our constituency (Acts 4:20).

It is too late not to act.

We do not have much time—only a few years to turn the course of history and avoid so much suffering, sorrow, and death. God is calling us to do our part. We have so much to offer, “immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine” through Christ, our Lord (Eph. 3:20). With love for Mother Earth, and special attention to the poor and the most vulnerable, let us act.

“Now is the time for urgent, radical and responsible action.”⁶⁸

“Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him” (Deut. 30:19-20).

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NOTES

¹ These 7 Calls are directed not toward individual congregations within the Mennonite Church Canada community, but toward the Mennonite Church Canada institution/ministry, which is a covenanted partnership among MC Eastern Canada, MC Manitoba, MC Saskatchewan, MC Alberta, and MC British Columbia.

² *Paris Agreement to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, Dec. 12, 2015, T.I.A.S. No. 16-1104, https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf.

³ IPCC, 2021: *Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [Masson-Delmotte, V., P. Zhai, A. Pirani, S.L. Connors, C. Péan, S. Berger, N. Caud, Y. Chen, L. Goldfarb, M.I. Gomis, M. Huang, K. Leitzell, E. Lonnoy, J.B.R. Matthews, T.K. Maycock, T. Waterfield, O. Yelekçi, R. Yu, and B. Zhou (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press. In press.

https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGI_Full_Report.pdf, TS-8.

⁴ See John Morales, "Yes, the IPCC report was bad. But we can still salvage a livable planet," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, August 27, 2021, <https://thebulletin.org/2021/08/yes-the-ipcc-report-was-bad-but-we-can-still-salvage-a-livable-planet/>; see also "World now likely to hit watershed 1.5 C rise in next five years, warns UN weather agency," *United Nations News*, May 26, 2021, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/05/1092842>.

⁵ On this, see especially sections B.2-B.5 (pp. SPM-19 – SPM-30) of the IPCC, 2021: *Summary for Policymakers. In: Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [Masson-Delmotte, V., P. Zhai, A. Pirani, S.L. Connors, C. Péan, S. Berger, N. Caud, Y. Chen, L. Goldfarb, M.I. Gomis, M. Huang, K. Leitzell, E. Lonnoy, J.B.R. Matthews, T.K. Maycock, T. Waterfield, O. Yelekçi, R. Yu, and B. Zhou (eds.)], <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/>.

⁶ See "Nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement," *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, July 30, 2021, accessed October 4, 2021,

https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2021_08_adv_1.pdf; see also United Nations Environment Programme (2021), *Emissions Gap 2021: The Heat is On – A World of Climate Promises Not Yet Delivered*, Nairobi, p.36,

<https://www.unep.org/resources/emissions-gap-report-2021>, and William Booth and Tyler Pager, "As climate pledges fall short, U.N. predicts globe could warm by catastrophic 2.7 degrees Celsius," *The Washington*

Post, September 17, 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2021/09/17/un-climate-2030-biden/>.

⁷ “On the current path of carbon dioxide emissions, temperature could increase by as much as 4.4°C by the end of the century,” *Key Findings–The United Nations, Climate Action: Fast Facts*, accessed October 6, 2021, https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/fastfacts_temperature_rise.pdf.

⁸ See Joe McCarthy, “Climate Crisis: What’s the Difference Between a Rise of 1.5, 2, and 3 Degrees Celsius?,” *Global Citizen*, July 30, 2021, <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/the-difference-in-global-warming-levels-explained/>. See also “The impacts of climate change at 1.5C, 2C and beyond,” *Carbon Brief* (Interactive), accessed October 7, 2021, https://interactive.carbonbrief.org/impacts-climate-change-one-point-five-degrees-two-degrees/?utm_source=web&utm_campaign=Redirect.

⁹ Carbon Action Tracker, September 2021 update: <https://climateactiontracker.org/countries/canada/>.

¹⁰ “World Religious Leaders and Scientists Make pre-COP26 Appeal,” *UN Climate Change News*, October 5, 2021, <https://unfccc.int/news/world-religious-leaders-and-scientists-make-pre-cop26-appeal>.

¹¹ Kairos (καιρός) is an ancient Greek word meaning the right or opportune moment (the supreme moment). In the New Testament, kairos means “the appointed time in the purpose of God.”

¹² c. 1539.

¹³ “We can either save the world...,” Twitter Post, September 30, 2021, 5:30 PM, <https://twitter.com/antonioquiterres/status/1443704909300371457?s=20>.

¹⁴ Again, these 7 Calls to Climate Action are directed not toward individual congregations within the Mennonite Church Canada community, but toward the Mennonite Church Canada institution/ministry, which is a covenanted partnership among MC Eastern Canada, MC Manitoba, MC Saskatchewan, MC Alberta, and MC British Columbia.

¹⁵ Many movements have called for truth telling on the climate and ecological emergency. Since 2018, *Extinction Rebellion*, a global and politically non-partisan movement to pressure governments to act justly on the climate crisis, has helpfully underscored the importance of radical truth telling by making it their first of three demands. See <https://extinctionrebellion.uk/the-truth/>.

¹⁶ As quoted in Benjamin Sylvester, “Forget 2050, experts say it’s 2030 or bust for net zero emissions,” *The Citizen*, February 12, 2021, <https://www.thecitizen.org.au/articles/forget-2050-experts-say-its-2030-or-bust-for-net-zero-emissions>.

¹⁷ “Secretary-General Calls Latest IPCC Climate Report ‘Code Red for Humanity’, Stressing ‘Irrefutable’ Evidence of Human Influence,” *United Nations Press Release*, August 9, 2021, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2021/sasm20847.doc.htm>.

¹⁸ “Scientists have warned us that there might be only one decade left to restore the planet.” From “World Religious Leaders and Scientists Make pre-COP26 Appeal,” *UN Climate News*, October 5, 2021, <https://unfccc.int/news/world-religious-leaders-and-scientists-make-pre-cop26-appeal>.

¹⁹ The 2021 Production Gap report, prepared by the Stockholm Environmental Institute and the United Nations Environment Programme, finds that “the world’s governments still plan to produce more than double the amount of fossil fuels in 2030 than would be consistent with limiting global warming to 1.5°C”: SEI, IISD, ODI, E3G, and UNEP. (2021). *The Production Gap Report 2021*, p.3. <http://productiongap.org/2021report>
The International Energy Agency, despite its history of support for the fossil fuel industry, has come to similar conclusions in two major reports this year. In a spring 2021 report, they state that “net zero means a huge decline in the use of fossil fuels: International Energy Agency (2021), *Net Zero by 2050 – a roadmap for the global energy sector*, p.18, https://iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/deebef5d-0c34-4539-9d0c-10b13d840027/NetZeroBy2050-ARoadmapfortheGlobalEnergySector_CORR.pdf.

This is confirmed and treated in more detail in their more recent *World Energy Outlook*, which also notes the opportunity for creation of more jobs than are lost in the energy transition: International Energy Agency (2021), *World Energy Outlook 2021*, p.54, <https://iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/888004cf-1a38-4716-9e0c-3b0e3fdbf609/WorldEnergyOutlook2021.pdf>

²⁰ Joe McCarthy, “Why climate change and poverty are inextricably linked,” *Global Citizen*, February 19, 2020, accessed October 6, 2021, <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/climate-change-is-connected-to-poverty/>. See also Pope Francis, “Integral Ecology” (Ch. 4) in *Laudato Si’: On Care for our Common Home* [Encyclical], 2015, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html.

²¹ Michelle Gomez, "June heat wave was the deadliest weather event in Canadian history, experts say," *CBC News*, October 2, 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/ubcm-heat-dome-panel-1.6189061>.

²² Temur Durrani, "Grocery store sticker shock: Food prices rising as drought takes toll—'And...the worst is yet to come'," *Winnipeg Free Press*, September 2, 2021, <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/business/grocery-store-sticker-shock-575226752.html>.

²³ Kirthana Sasitharan and Muriel Draaisma, "Toronto summers to get hotter as climate change intensifies, expert says," *CBC News*, August 9, 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/toronto-reaction-un-report-climate-change-buildings-transportation-heat-1.6135574>.

²⁴ We recognize that our denomination has made a number of "Creation Care" resolutions over the years (most recently in 2007) and has partnered in initiatives like the Mennonite Environmental Task Force (1990-2000) and Mennonite Creation Care Network (2005 onward). These have faithfully promoted awareness of God's call to care for creation, but none communicate that we are in a climate emergency, facing an existential threat, with only a few years to radically change course. Moreover, none have called the church to concerted public action to resist the powers that are destroying creation; collective action to help make the faith-filled "leap" to a new socio-economic order. See "Creation Care and Mennonites: Discernment Session, 2007 Assembly," *CommonWord*, <https://www.commonword.ca/ResourceView/82/9675>. Even the recent *Every Creature Singing* (2014; 2016 CA) curricula produced by MCCN—a wonderful resource in many respects—does not describe global heating as an "emergency" in its more than 200 pages and is heavily focused on individual and congregational change, rather than the massive structural transformation that is required. See <https://www.commonword.ca/ResourceView/82/16934>.

²⁵ Katharine Hayhoe, as quoted in Eric C. Miller, "Climate Scientist Katharine Hayhoe's Faithful Quest to Heal a Divided World," *Religion & Politics*, September 20, 2021, <https://religionandpolitics.org/2021/09/20/climate-scientist-katharine-hayhoes-faithful-quest-to-heal-a-divided-world/>.

²⁶ Pope Francis speaks of the need for the church to be angry in response to the plunder of Mother Earth in his 2020 Apostolic Exhortation, *Querida Amazonia*: "We need to feel outrage, as Moses did (cf. Ex. 11:8), as Jesus did (cf. Mk. 3:5), as God does in the face of injustice (cf. Am. 2:4-8; 5:7-12; Ps. 106:40). It is not good for us to become inured to evil; it is not good when our social consciousness is dulled before 'an exploitation that is leaving destruction and even death... jeopardizing the lives of millions of people and especially the habitat of peasants and indigenous peoples.'" *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation: Querida Amazonia*, 2020, paragraph 15, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/19q7RmW5wVUGo2KdSUmF8WjNCpva9VWBP/view>.

²⁷ "Climate Change 'Biggest Threat Modern Humans Have Ever Faced'," February 23, 2021, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2021/sc14445.doc.htm>.

²⁸ See "Environment and Climate Change," *The Church of England*, accessed October 5, 2021, <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/environment-and-climate-change>.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ According to Emily Ralph Servant, vulnerability and risk are vital postures in the mission of the church, yet largely forgotten by white Mennonite churches. See *Experiments in Love: An Anabaptist Theology of Risk-Taking in Ministry* (Eugene, OR: American Society of Missiology Monograph Series, 2021).

³¹ The "big changes" that we need to make are outlined in movement documents like the 2019 "The Pact for a Green New Deal" (see, for example, <http://www.couragecoalition.ca/a-green-new-deal-of-the-north/>) and its 2015 predecessor, "The Leap Manifesto" (see <https://leapmanifesto.org/en/the-leap-manifesto/#manifesto-content>). For an exemplary text that maps out how these changes can be implemented in Canada, see Seth Klein, *A Good War: Mobilizing Canada for the Climate Emergency* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2020).

³² We have no shortage of Creation Care resources available to help inform our constituency, including partner organizations that prioritize such work; see <https://www.commonword.ca/QuickSearch?search=creation+care&sort=relevance> and <https://mennocreacioncare.org/>.

³³ And yet as one church colleague and social scientist stated, "I wouldn't want to go about retrofitting church buildings for energy efficiency. That's an action that takes up a lot of time, effort, and money, but it doesn't go anywhere near far enough in changing the cultural and economic paradigms, nor does it transform the energy system and human use." (Personal email communique, October 2021).

³⁴ See Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, *Resisting Structural Evil: Love as Ecological-Economic Vocation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013).

³⁵ Leah Stokes, as quoted by Katherine Hayhoe, "The other day...", *Twitter*, September 25, 2021, 5:29 PM, <https://threadreaderapp.com/thread/1441892742620139520.html>.

³⁶ In 2020, over 200 people were killed for defending their lands and environment. See "Last Line of Defense," *Global Witness*, September 2021, <https://www.globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/environmental-activists/last-line-defence/>.

³⁷ See *Indigenous Resistance Against Carbon: Report of the Indigenous Environmental Network*, August 2021, <https://www.ienearth.org/indigenous-resistance-against-carbon/>.

³⁸ The recent Documents of the Pan-Amazon Synod stress the duty of the church to stand with and defend Indigenous peoples and their lands. Consider the following statement: "Protecting Indigenous peoples and their lands represents a fundamental ethical imperative and a basic commitment to human rights. Moreover, it is a moral imperative for the church," paragraph 5, "Justice and the Rights of Peoples," *Preparatory Document, Amazonia: New Paths for the Church and for Integral Ecology*, (2019), <http://secretariat.synod.va/content/sinodoamazonico/en/documents/preparatory-document-for-the-synod-for-the-amazon.html>.

³⁹ *Nahala* is the Hebrew word for inheritance. In 1 Kings 21, Naboth seeks to protect his *nahala*—his ancestral land—from the imperial powers, and pays for it with his life. Many land defenders around the world, including Canada, have referenced this ancient text in their struggles.

⁴⁰ See *Be It Resolved: Anabaptists & Partner Coalitions Advocate for Indigenous Justice* (Altona, MB: MC Canada & MCC, 2020), 26-31, 84-89, 358-361.

⁴¹ In 2020 and 2021, Mennonite Church Canada's expenses were approximately 2 million. One per cent of budget expenditures would equal approximately \$20,000. See *Financial Statements of Mennonite Church Canada: Year ended January 31, 2021*, accessed October 6, 2021, https://www.commonword.ca/FileDownload/39990/2021-01-31_Mennonite_Church_Canada_FS.pdf. This 1% support for Indigenous land and water protectors could also be understood as a small way of "paying the rent" for living on and benefitting from Indigenous lands. For more on this, see "Cash Back: A Yellowhead Institute Red Paper," *Yellowhead Institute*, May 2021, <https://cashback.yellowheadinstitute.org/>.

⁴² "Millions on the move in their own countries: The human face of climate change," *The World Bank*, September 13, 2021, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2021/09/13/millions-on-the-move-in-their-own-countries-the-human-face-of-climate-change>.

⁴³ Brian Palmer, "By 2070, more than 3 billion people may live outside the 'human climate niche'," *NRDC*, May 14, 2020, <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/2070-more-3-billion-people-may-live-outside-human-climate-niche>.

⁴⁴ For accessible introductory material on the complexities of the relationship between climate change and migration, see <https://climatemigration.org.uk/>

⁴⁵ Colin P. Kelley, Shahrzad Mohtadi, Mark A. Cane, Richard Seager & Yochanan Kushnir, Climate change in the fertile crescent and implications of the recent Syrian drought, *PNAS*, 2015, <https://www.pnas.org/content/112/11/3241>.

⁴⁶ See "Syria emergency," *UNHCR: The UN Refugee Agency*, accessed October 15, 2021, <https://www.unhcr.org/syria-emergency.html>.

⁴⁷ See, for example, Andrew E. Yaw Tchie, "How climate insecurity could trigger more conflict in Somalia," *The Conversation*, April 12, 2021, <https://theconversation.com/how-climate-insecurity-could-trigger-more-conflict-in-somalia-157696>. Also, the International Committee of the Red Cross's September 13, 2021 posting on the same subject at <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/somalia-herders-climate-change-conflict-crisis>

⁴⁸ Although Canada does not currently recognize climate migrants under immigration law, peoples forced to move because of natural disasters (e.g., 2010 Haiti earthquake) can be prioritized. For more on this, see Warda Shazadi Meighen, David Boyd & Manuela Jimenez Bueno, "Canada must develop immigration policy as climate change increases likelihood of mass displacement," *Policy Options*, August 26, 2021, <https://policyoptions.irpp.org/fr/magazines/aout-2021/canada-must-develop-immigration-policy-as-climate-change-increases-likelihood-of-mass-displacement/>. Also Stephan Labbe, "Is it time for Canada to open its doors to climate migrants," *North Shore News*, September 22, 2021, <https://www.nsnews.com/highlights/is-it-time-for-canada-to-open-its-doors-to-climate-migrants-4345242>.

⁴⁹ John Dear, *The Sacrament of Civil Disobedience* (Baltimore: Fortkamp: 1994), 100.

⁵⁰ See Chris, McGreal, "Big oil and gas kept a dirty secret for decades. Now they may pay the price," *The Guardian*, June 30, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/jun/30/climate-crimes-oil-and-gas-environment>; see also Dan Charles, "Countries promised to cut greenhouse gas emissions, the UN says

they are failing," *NPR*, September 17, 2021, accessed October 3, 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2021/09/17/1038294582/countries-are-breaking-their-climate-promises-the-united-nations-says>; Roger Harrabin, "World's wealthiest 'at heart of climate problem,'" *BBC*, April 13, 2021, accessed October 3, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-56723560>.

⁵¹ For courage and inspiration, we can turn our eyes to the Amazon where the Catholic Church has committed itself "to be an ally of Amazonian peoples in denouncing the attacks on the life of Indigenous peoples," asserting that "the defense of land [i.e., activity that is routinely criminalized by the State] has no other purpose than the defense of life." See *Final Document—The Amazon: New Paths for the Church and for an Integral Ecology* (2019), paragraph 45, accessed October 6, 2021,

<http://secretariat.synod.va/content/sinodoamazonico/en/documents/final-document-of-the-amazon-synod.html>. Pope Francis has repeatedly articulated his support for those who defend Indigenous lands and resist, even through protest and direct action, the unjust actions of state and business. For example, in *Querida Amazonia*, he states that those who "fail to respect the right of the original peoples to the land and its boundaries, and to self-determination and prior consent, should be called what they are: unjust and criminal" (*Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation*, 2020, paragraph 14).

⁵² See "Land Back: A Yellowhead Institute Red Paper," *Yellowhead Institute*, October 2019, <https://redpaper.yellowheadinstitute.org/>.

⁵³ Rai Reece, "Carceral Redlining: White Supremacy Is A Weapon Of Mass Incarceration For Indigenous And Black Peoples In Canada," *Yellowhead Institute*, June 25, 2020, <https://yellowheadinstitute.org/2020/06/25/carceral-redlining-white-supremacy-is-a-weapon-of-mass-incarceration-for-indigenous-and-black-peoples-in-canada/>.

⁵⁴ Though the legal landscape may be turning due to the work of activists and a growing understanding of how pressing the climate emergency is. See for example Michael Gerrad, "Taking Climate Change to the World Court," *Bloomberg Law*, October 25, 2021, <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/environment-and-energy/taking-climate-change-to-the-world-court>; see also, Julius Melnitzer, "Why Canadian companies are preparing for a wave of ESG coming their way," *Financial Post*, October 6, 2021, <https://financialpost.com/commodities/energy/oil-gas/why-canadian-companies-are-preparing-for-a-wave-of-esg-cases-coming-their-way>.

⁵⁵ Jim Antal, *Climate Church, Climate World: How People of Faith Must Work for Change* (Rowman & Littlefield: New York, 2018), 97. For an example of a Christian community practicing nonviolent direct action to pressure those in power to take climate action, see <https://christianclimateaction.org/>.

⁵⁶ See Matthew Taylor and Jonathan Watts, "Revealed: the 20 firms behind a third of all carbon emissions," *The Guardian*, October 9, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/oct/09/revealed-20-firms-third-carbon-emissions>.

⁵⁷ See Sarah George, "Care for Creation: Fossil fuel divestment promised by dozens of major faith institutions," *Edie*, May 17, 2021, <https://www.edie.net/news/7/-Care-for-creation---Fossil-fuel-divestment-promised-by-dozens-of-major-faith-institutions/>.

⁵⁸ See Barry Saxifrage, "Canada's climate solution? Keep increasing fossil fuel extraction," *National Observer*, September 15, 2021, <https://www.nationalobserver.com/2021/09/15/analysis/canadas-climate-solution-keep-increasing-fossil-fuel-extraction>.

⁵⁹ And one can raise serious doubts about the efficacy of shareholder activism. It takes time and intention, often much money, and the results are questionable. See, for example, the following reflection on the apparent shareholder victory in relation to Exxon—Michael Barnard, "ExxonMobil's new board members are good news, but aren't climate activists," *CleanTechnica*, May 27, 2021, <https://cleantechnica.com/2021/05/27/exxonmobils-new-board-members-are-good-news-but-arent-climate-activists/>.

⁶⁰ And there is decreasing financial benefit to do so, as climate liabilities and stranded assets become riskier.

⁶¹ So-called "impact investments" are made into organizations and initiatives with the intention to generate a measurable, beneficial social or environmental impact alongside a financial return. They provide capital to address social and/or environmental issues. Impact investors actively seek to place capital in businesses, non-profits, and industries that are providing renewable energy, basic services including housing, healthcare, and education, micro-finance, and sustainable agriculture.

⁶² For information on how Canadian banks are financing the climate crisis, see <https://bankingonabetterfuture.org>.

⁶³ "Faith leaders and leading scientists join at the Vatican to raise ambition ahead of COP 26," Joint Appeal Document (p.4), *UK Government News*, October 4, 2021, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/holy-see-faith-and-science-an-appeal-for-cop26>.

⁶⁴ Pope Francis, 2015. *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home [Encyclical]*, paragraph 9, accessed September 29, 2021, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html.

⁶⁵ Patriarch Bartholomew as quoted in Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*. Canadians have a particular responsibility given our extremely high per-capita carbon emissions... far worse than the rest of the world. See Jaela Bernstien, "Canadians are among the world's worst carbon emitters. Here's what we can do about it," *CBC News*, October 8, 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/science/how-canadians-can-cut-carbon-footprints-1.6202194>.

⁶⁶ See Kevin J. O'Brien, *The Violence of Climate Change: Lessons of Resistance From Nonviolent Activists* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2017) for how we each might embody a discipleship that takes the climate emergency seriously.

⁶⁷ This includes, among others, Joint Council Members, Executive Staff Group, and Directors.

⁶⁸ "Global religious leaders, scientists join to release 'Faith and Science: An Appeal for COP26,'" *World Council of Churches News*, October 4, 2021, <https://www.oikoumene.org/news/global-religious-leaders-scientists-join-to-release-faith-and-science-an-appeal-for-cop26>.