Earth Week 2025 - Ecumenical Statement

As we mark **Earth Week 2025**, we do so with awareness that the attention of Canadians is splintered. Concerns about climate change and biodiversity loss overlap with threats to the Canadian economy and sovereignty, affordability issues, lack of access to health care, insufficient housing, job insecurity, the suffering of so many people in conflicts around the world, political polarization, and more.

The quickly approaching federal election means there has never been a more urgent time for conversations about the root causes of these issues and the paths toward a better future. Serendipitously, the theme of Earth Week 2025 is "**Our Power, Our Planet."** We are urged to focus on how renewable energy can help us to counter the climate crisis and work toward a sustainable future.

This is a critical time for discernment. As Canadians rise to defend our sovereignty, it is important to reflect on who we want to be as a nation and how our relationship with all earth's inhabitants can be transformed.

The stunning interconnectedness of life on earth urges us onto a path of deep solidarity. We need decisive action to address biodiversity loss, climate change, and the gap between rich and poor. Addressing the root causes of these issues will lead to a new Social Contract, with each other, the nations of the world, the bioregions of the planet, and all earth's inhabitants.

As we seek to strengthen our economy, any newly-elected federal government must renew our pledge to meet Canada's GHG reduction commitments. While building truly green energy and transportation infrastructure across Canada, we also must be attentive to doing our 'Fair Share' to cut emissions and to help finance climate change mitigation and adaptation both in Canada and the global South. In addition, let us ensure that the extraction of critical minerals is carefully regulated to protect bioregions, and that Indigenous communities are properly consulted such that extraction does not occur without their free, prior, and informed consent.

As we rightly protect workers in jobs that are vulnerable to tariffs, let us remember that we always need access to strong social protections such as EI, health care, income support, childcare and much more, not just during times of crisis. Let us also remember that young adults continue to struggle to find decent work. A Youth Climate Corps could give young people in Canada training in green jobs related to addressing climate change and biodiversity loss. It would be a critical pillar in a wider effort to ensure that all jobs in Canada, including those performed by migrant workers, are earth-friendly, and well-paying with good working conditions.

As we seek to make life more affordable in Canada, let us be mindful that current global financial structures both perpetuate unsustainable debt in low-income nations and fail to recognize the ecological debt which wealthy countries in the global North owe to countries in the global South as well as to Indigenous peoples. At a time when multilateralism is under threat, these are spaces open for Canada to assume a leadership role in canceling odious debt burdens and helping create the necessary clean and fair global economy of tomorrow.

In this time of disruption caused by trade conflicts, let us lean into transformation, choosing the deep systemic change that will enable us to face together the challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss, and the gap between rich and poor.

Signatories

Alongside Hope (formerly PWRDF)

Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ)

Climate Witness Project

KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives

Mennonite Central Committee Canada

Ministry for Social Justice, Peace, and Creation Care, Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto

Office of Religious Congregations for Integral Ecology

The Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph of Canada

The Presbyterian Church in Canada