

FINAL

MC Canada Endorses *For the Love of Creation*

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MC Canada Release

Winnipeg, Man. – MC Canada’s Joint Council has approved a recommendation from the Sustainability Leadership Group (SLG) to endorse the For the Love of Creation (FLC) initiative at its May 5 -7 meetings in Saskatoon.

FLC rallies faith communities to learn and act together to address human-caused climate change. With a theological basis for climate justice, participants are urged to engage friends, neighbours, governments, and political leaders to address the effects of a warming planet.

Joanne Moyer, SLG member and Director of Environmental Studies at The King’s University in Edmonton, wrote the recommendation to the Joint Council (JC). “I’ve been campaigning for Mennonite Church Canada to join For the Love of Creation, so I’m excited that it has finally happened.”

She cited FLC as an established initiative of trusted members in the broader Christian community with decades of expertise in this work. “Over the last ten years, I have studied the work of KAIROS and Citizens for Public Justice, some of the organizations that are facilitating the FLC initiative, and I have been very impressed with their work. We are in good hands.

“I think many people are worried about climate change but don’t know what to do, so FLC provides us with projects and actions that we can join without having to invent everything from scratch,” she added.

Mark Bigland-Pritchard serves as a member of the Climate Emergency Response Team of MC Saskatchewan and is part of the FLC leadership. This summer Bigland-Pritchard will use his spare time to work on a framework for Saskatchewan to decarbonize electricity by 2033. “I don’t think that’s the job of the church, but I do want the church to be informed by it as soon as we have something to show,” he said.

Bigland-Pritchard’s concerns are also driven by his work as Migration & Resettlement Coordinator for MCC Saskatchewan. He notes that marginalized people around the globe are the most vulnerable to extreme weather such as wildfires, floods, and droughts. He said we need to address “the high level of [carbon] emissions from wealthy industrialized countries, and lack of adequate plans for rapid emissions reduction,” adding that “Canada is one of the worst offenders.”

Sandy Plett, Climate Action Coordinator for MC Canada hopes congregations will make use of the many opportunities offered by FLC. “There is a comprehensive suite of resources on the FLC web site to help individuals and congregations host conversations and respond faithfully to the climate crisis.” She urges Mennonites to visit fortheloveofcreation.ca.

“What’s available there is always changing and expanding,” said Plett. One of her favourite tools is the Climate Conversation Guide, which is “... an excellent aid to begin and advance group discussions about climate change.” She urges folks to sign up for the FLC newsletter to stay informed about opportunities for action and advocacy as they are released by FLC. For news and updates on climate action within the Mennonite community, she recommends www.mennonitechurch.ca/climate-action.

Doug Klassen, executive minister of MC Canada, said, “The endorsement of FLC was a consensus decision of Joint Council. It follows the encouragement we received from the thoughtful and articulate youth and young adults who attended the Living Hope church and climate event back in April.”

Shannon Neufeldt is KAIROS staff and member of FLC Coordinating Committee. A tally of numbers received from KAIROS estimates 125 people from MC Canada congregations have participated in various FLC connected climate action events and conversations in the last year.

“As a member of Mennonite Church Canada and an organizer with For the Love of Creation, I am so pleased to see my church formally endorse [it]. To me, climate justice is an imperative that grows out of my faith in Christ, in the Gospel,” said Neufeldt.

The FLC initiative is endorsed by 37 faith-based organizations and denominations across Canada. It was launched in 2020, on the 50th anniversary of Earth Day and envisions a ten-year focus on Canada’s emission reduction goals. MC Canada joins others such as Mennonite Central Committee, Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Anglican Church, and Quakers in the initiative.