



ELECTION 2019

**FOR A WHOLE
SOCIETY**

PARTY PLATFORMS
&
OUR BAPTISM



St. Anselm's
ANGELICAN CHURCH

Compiled by: Rev. Alex Wilson

TABLE OF CONTENTS

02 Why this, why now?
Credits & Purpose Statement

03 Baptism & The Ballot Box?
A reflection

04 The Baptismal Coverant
Do you? Will you?

06 Carbon Tax
The Platforms

08 Climate Change
The Platforms

12 Heath Care
The Platforms

13 Housing
The Platforms

15 Indigenous Reconciliation
The Platforms

20 Taxes
The Platforms

22 Next Steps
So now what?

WHY THIS, WHY NOW?

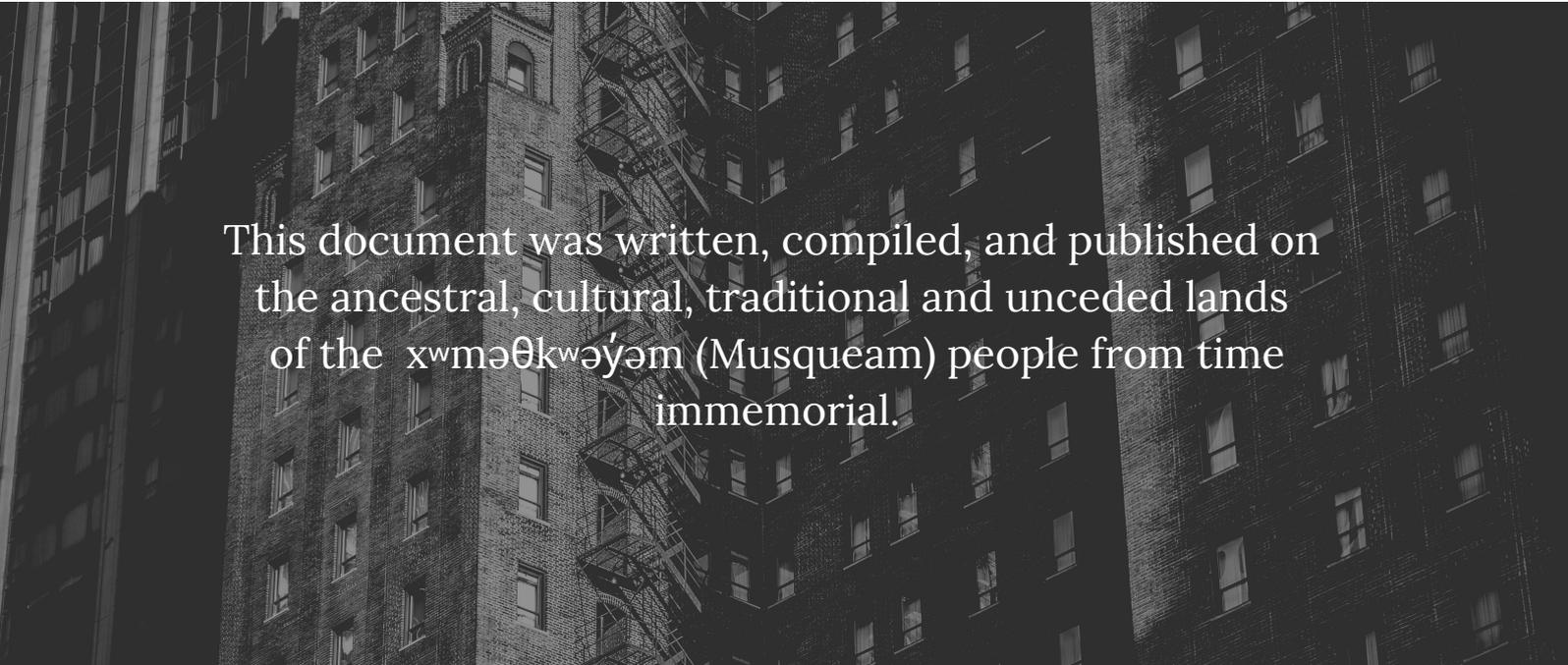
The Church has a duty to ask questions of government, political parties, and its candidates to ensure Canada remains a society of the whole, not just the few.

This report was compiled using data from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporations election platform comparison tool, accessed on Sept. 30, 2019. All platforms were written by Haydn Watters of the CBC. (<https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/elections/federal/2019/party-platforms/>)

The purpose of this report is not to endorse or support any specific candidate, party, or platform. Rather it is compiled to give voters access to information as the election nears. The desire is to spark conversation and engagement with the electoral process.

The reflection on baptism provided at the beginning is a frame through which all Christians look into the world. Its intention is to provide space for the voter to ask questions of the federal party platform, because of what they believe and confess, as they engage directly with the parties through their local candidates and neighbourhoods.

This document can be used alone, in a group, or form the beginning of an all candidates meeting. This document exists to get voters talking about the federal issues, with the hope of increasing community awareness of gaps, needs, and strengths, ahead of the election. Every voice matters in Canada. This is our time to be heard.



This document was written, compiled, and published on the ancestral, cultural, traditional and unceded lands of the x̱w̱məθkw̱əy̱əm (Musqueam) people from time immemorial.

BAPTISM AND THE BALLOT BOX?

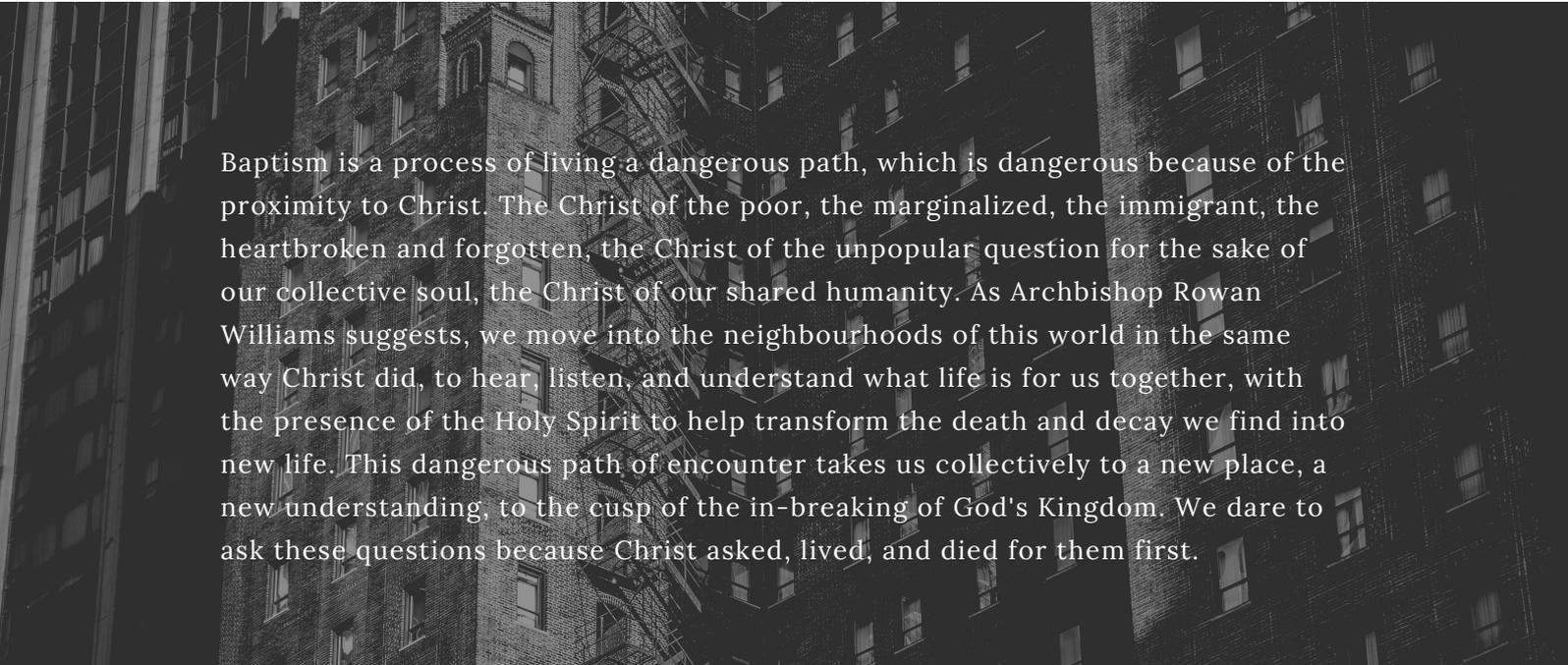
Do you believe? Will you act?

Words matter, and what we say affects not just our life, but the communities we live in. The same is true for those seeking public office and our votes in the election. What they say, matters. When we gather around the font, we are making a bold statement: that we are in the business of building a better world, where everyone matters, because of who we follow- Jesus Christ.

In following Christ, we are committing ourselves to being accountable to our words and promises, and those made on our behalf as citizens. It is in this accountability that we flourish as a country and peoples.

We are called to be accountable for what we believe in, and in Christ we believe that we have a role in God's vision for a world where people are respected, the environment honoured, profit and development enhance all of society, and that all of what we see and have are entrusted to us to steward for God's purpose in the world, rather than our isolated security. We want to leave this world better than we found it.

As you read the platforms ahead, ask yourself, "Do these promises reflect God's vision for this world, and how can we continue to develop them for the better?"



Baptism is a process of living a dangerous path, which is dangerous because of the proximity to Christ. The Christ of the poor, the marginalized, the immigrant, the heartbroken and forgotten, the Christ of the unpopular question for the sake of our collective soul, the Christ of our shared humanity. As Archbishop Rowan Williams suggests, we move into the neighbourhoods of this world in the same way Christ did, to hear, listen, and understand what life is for us together, with the presence of the Holy Spirit to help transform the death and decay we find into new life. This dangerous path of encounter takes us collectively to a new place, a new understanding, to the cusp of the in-breaking of God's Kingdom. We dare to ask these questions because Christ asked, lived, and died for them first.

THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT

cov·e·nant/*noun*: covenant; plural *noun*: covenants
an agreement which brings about a relationship
of commitment between God and his people.

DO YOU BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER?

I believe in God, The Father
almighty, creator of heaven and
earth.

DO YOU BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD?

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only
Son, our Lord. He was conceived
by the power of the Holy Spirit and
born of the Virgin Mary. He
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was
crucified, died, and was buried. He
descended to the dead. On the
third day he rose again. He
ascended into heaven, and is
seated at the right hand of the
Father. He will come again to judge
the living and the dead.

DO YOU BELIEVE IN GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT?

I believe in God the Holy Spirit, the
holy catholic Church, the
communion of saints, the
forgiveness of sins, the
resurrection of the body, and the
life everlasting.

**WILL YOU CONTINUE IN THE
APOSTLES' TEACHING AND
FELLOWSHIP, IN THE BREAKING
OF BREAD, AND IN THE
PRAYERS?**

I will, with God's help.

**WILL YOU PERSEVERE IN
RESISTING EVIL AND,
WHENEVER YOU FALL INTO SIN,
REPENT AND RETURN TO THE
LORD?**

I will, with God's help.

**WILL YOU PROCLAIM BY WORD
AND EXAMPLE THE GOOD NEWS
OF GOD IN CHRIST?**

I will, with God's help.

**WILL YOU SEEK AND SERVE
CHRIST IN ALL PERSONS,
LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS
YOURSELF?**

I will, with God's help.

**WILL YOU STRIVE FOR JUSTICE
AND PEACE AMONG ALL
PEOPLE, AND RESPECT THE
DIGNITY OF EVERY HUMAN
BEING?**

I will, with God's help.

**WILL YOU STRIVE TO
SAFEGUARD THE INTEGRITY OF
GOD'S CREATION AND
RESPECT, SUSTAIN, AND
RENEW THE LIFE OF THE
EARTH?**

I will, with God's help.

CARBON TAX



The Liberals set a minimum carbon price of \$20 per tonne this year, increasing \$10 a year to \$50 by 2022, and imposed a carbon tax on businesses and individuals in provinces with no federally approved carbon price plan. In those provinces, Ottawa is handing back carbon tax rebates to most residents. The tax has faced unsuccessful court challenges from several provinces.

Conservatives have called the Liberals' carbon tax ineffective and have vowed to repeal it. The party would leave it to the provinces to decide if they want to put a price on carbon. It promises to reduce carbon emissions by investing in green technology funded in part by polluters who fail to meet new standards, but haven't explained how this would be more effective than a carbon tax.



The Bloc is in favour of a carbon tax but argues the Liberal plan doesn't go far enough. It wants a tax of \$30 per tonne on greenhouse gases in provinces where emissions per capita are higher than average. This would increase to \$200 per tonne by 2030. The charge wouldn't apply in "greener" provinces like Quebec.

New Democrats are in favour of continuing with a carbon tax and the rebate program. However, Leader Jagmeet Singh wants to crack down more on heavy emitters. He said he wants those who produce the most emissions to "have the most burden" and vows to change the requirements slightly for industrial emitters.



The People's Party plans to get rid of the carbon tax, citing an increased cost for business and the threat of job losses. Instead, it plans to allow provinces to reduce emissions through their own programs "if they want to."

Leader Elizabeth May supports the carbon tax, saying putting a price on carbon has been "one of the cornerstones of Green Party climate policy for many years." But she said it alone is not sufficient to meet the emissions targets of the Paris Accord, a target she hopes to double.



CHILD CARE



The Liberals' have increased the amount families will receive under their Canada Child Benefit and propose a further 15 per cent increase for families with kids under one. The party wants to make parental benefits tax-free and promise up to 250,000 new child care spaces for before and after school. They've also proposed 15-week leave for adoptive parents.

The conservative party has pledged to maintain Liberal initiatives — it would continue with the Canada Child Benefit and increase social transfer payments by at least three per cent every year, which helps provinces and territories finance childcare and early learning. Leader Andrew Scheer made a new promise to make Employment Insurance benefits for new parents tax-free.



The party has not released a policy on this issue. That's likely because it's not really an issue in Quebec; the province already has its own extensive subsidized child-care program.

New Democrats would commit \$1 billion to affordable, not-for-profit child care in 2020 and increase it yearly. They plan to build on child-care programs already in place in some provinces, including Quebec, British Columbia and Alberta. The party also would like to implement a national school nutrition program — something the Liberals are also considering.



The party has not released a policy on this issue.

The party wants a universal child-care program, with an emphasis on creating child-care spaces in workplaces. It also plans to create a children's commissioner, an advocacy role to ensure children are considered in government policy.



CLIMATE CHANGE



Liberals plan to phase out coal power by 2030 to help meet the Paris agreement's carbon emission reduction targets. They pledge net-zero emissions by 2050. The party wants to end "inefficient" fossil fuel subsidies and protect a quarter of Canada's natural land and ocean habitats by 2025. It plans to ban some single-use plastics and plant 2 billion trees over 10 years.

Conservatives say they are committed to meeting the Paris agreement target but would axe the carbon tax. They propose replacing a policy taxing heavy emitters with requirements they invest in clean technology or research. The party wants to sign agreements allowing Canada to get credit for helping achieve emissions reductions internationally and launch a green-tech patent tax credit for businesses.



The Bloc is committed to meeting the Paris agreement targets – and examine exceeding them. It opposes building pipelines or investing in fossil fuel projects, promising to cut subsidies within 100 days post-election. The party proposes using money saved on subsidies to promote clean energy. It wants Quebec to have a veto over any pipeline that would run through the province.

The NDP says it wants to reduce emissions by 38 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030. To get there, it would spend \$15 billion retrofitting buildings and create a "climate bank" to invest in renewable energy and clean technology. It wants to introduce a single-use plastics ban by 2022 and to boost the support fund for communities hit by natural disasters.



Leader Maxime Bernier acknowledges climate change is happening, but isn't convinced humans play a role. He has said he would do "nothing" to address climate change and leave it to the private sector to find solutions. The party would withdraw from the Paris accord, get rid of green subsidies and ditch "unrealistic greenhouse gas emission reduction targets."

The Greens aim to reduce emissions to 60 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030 – doubling Canada's current Paris agreement targets – and hit net-zero emissions by 2050. The party would ban fracking, end imports of foreign oil and oppose fossil fuel projects. It says it would end fossil fuel subsidies within a year.



DEFICITS



The party had pledged to keep deficits under \$10 billion and said its government would balance the books by 2019. It hasn't. The Liberals' spring budget included extra spending and projected a deficit of \$19.8 billion for 2019-20. Given current trends, the finance department doesn't predict a return to balanced budgets until at least 2040.

Leader Andrew Scheer has criticized the Liberals' spending and promised his party would erase the deficit while cutting taxes. He hasn't announced much on how he'll do that just yet, but has said he'd cancel at least \$1.5 billion in corporate handouts and subsidies. He has revised a promise to balance the books in two years and is now aiming to do it over five.



The party has not released a policy on this issue but has criticized the Liberals over how they are reducing the deficit, claiming it's being done "artificially" through "accounting maneuvers" and accusing the government of placing the burden on the provinces.

The party plans to balance the budget "when prudent" but has no target date. That's a stark contrast to the 2015 campaign, when the party promised to run four years of balanced budgets.



Leader Maxime Bernier has promised to eliminate the deficit within two years and maintain a balanced budget after that. He has yet to provide any concrete details on how his party would do this.

Leader Elizabeth May has committed to balancing the budget in five years. Among the ways she says her party would do it is by increasing the corporate tax rate to 21 per cent, raising \$2 billion from a "wealth tax," imposing a new tax on sugary drinks, and imposing a financial transactions tax of 0.5 per cent.



EDUCATION



Liberals want to attract more foreign students to Canadian universities from a broader range of countries. Before the campaign, they pledged almost \$30 million over the next five years towards recruitment. The party has also committed to working with Ontario to fund a French- language university in the province and pledged budget money to a national school lunch program.

Conservatives have promised a boost to the Registered Education Savings Plans, raising contributions from 20 to 30 per cent for every dollar invested up to \$2,500 a year, to a maximum of \$750 a year. Leader Andrew Scheer backed away from a tax credit for parents who send kids to private and independent schools after critics said it benefited the wealthy.



The Bloc want larger transfer payments to provinces and territories to help pay for education and finance more university research. It is also in favour of building a Francophone university in Ontario, a project the province cancelled late last year but is now pursuing again.

The NDP's goal is to work towards free university and college tuition. To get there, they say they'll work with provinces and territories to put a cap on and reduce tuitions. The party says it will eliminate federal interest rates on student loans and put more money into Canada Student Grants. It also wants to expand the education benefit from veterans and implement a national school nutrition program.



Leader Maxime Bernier feels the federal government intervenes too much in education and calls it “provincial jurisdiction.” But he has yet to outline exactly what he would do to change the current system.

Greens want to get rid of university and college tuition – and forgive any existing federal student debt. The party wants to make sure all Indigenous students have access to post-secondary education while expanding curriculum on Indigenous education overall. It would boost funding for training new immigrants in English and French and supports a national school lunch program.



GUNS



Liberals already introduced Bill C-71, expanding firearm background checks. But they've rolled out more gun policy mid-campaign, promising to ban semi-automatic assault-style rifles and buy back any that were legally purchased. Like the NDP, they want to give cities more power to restrict or ban handguns. The party has reiterated it will not bring back the long-gun registry.

Leader Andrew Scheer is strongly against a handgun ban, arguing it punishes lawful gun owners. He's proposing lifetime bans for those convicted of violent crimes or gang activity, and for those who buy firearms in bulk and resell them on the black market. Conservatives have also promised more money for police to combat gun and gang violence.



The party has not released a policy on this issue. But guns have been a big talking point in Quebec since the 2017 mosque shooting that claimed six lives. The province instituted its own gun registry a year after the shooting, though most guns still have not been registered.

The party has not endorsed a national handgun ban but has called for cities to be given the power to ban handguns in their jurisdictions. It also wants to crack down on illegal handguns and assault weapons and target gun smuggling. Following gun violence in 2018, Leader Jagmeet Singh called on Liberals to spend \$100 million a year to tackle gang violence.



The party has criticized any moves to make gun ownership more complex and supports lifetime firearm certifications after proper vetting and training. It promises anyone who legally bought a gun and had to relinquish it to the government due to new rules would be reimbursed. It wants future regulation of firearms to be handled by Parliament, not police or cabinet.

Greens are in favour of both a handgun and an assault rifle ban. To make it happen, they would run a confidential buy-back program. The party wants to make sure they are "kept out of our cities." It would permit handguns if "restricted to secure shooting ranges."



HEALTH CARE



Liberals have promised to take the "critical next steps" toward a national pharmacare program but are giving few details beyond that. The Liberal government signed a health care funding agreement with the provinces and territories, promising a three per cent annual health transfer increase with more funding for mental health, addictions and home care programs.

Conservatives also have pledged to increase health transfer payments by at least three per cent every year and uphold other parts of the health accord. They've dismissed pharmacare and would instead focus on those not covered provincially or at work. To tackle wait times, the party has promised \$1.5 billion to buy more MRI and CT machines.



The party has warned Ottawa that Quebec needs more money if a national pharmacare program is to be implemented. The Bloc also argues Quebec should be compensated for the cost of drugs, which, according to the party, will go up significantly if and when the new North American free trade deal is enacted.

New Democrats say they want to expand the current model to include mental health, dental, eye and hearing coverage. They are also proposing a "pharmacare for all" plan, covering Health Canada-approved drugs, by late 2020. It would cost an estimated \$10 billion annually – cheaper than the plan being looked at by Liberals. They oppose any privatization.



The party claims there's too much federal meddling in health care. It's proposing making provinces and territories fully responsible for funding and managing health services. To do that, it would replace the federal health transfer with tax points, allowing provinces to raise their own money. Leader Maxime Bernier also wants more options for private healthcare.

Greens promise to boost funding to train doctors and nurses and expand midwifery programs. They want to extend health care coverage to include universal pharmacare plus dental care for low-income Canadians. The party also says every Canadian should have the right to a "living will" to limit or deny medical treatment. To address the opioid crisis, the party would decriminalize all drug possession.



HOUSING



The Liberals' \$55-billion plan would build 100,000 affordable homes over a decade and includes first-time home-buyer subsidies of 10 per cent on a new home purchase and 5 per cent on resale homes — with restrictions. Liberals would loosen restrictions in expensive markets and impose a surtax on absentee foreign owners. They would offer interest-free loans up to \$40,000 to make homes resilient to extreme weather.

Andrew Scheer says he would ease regulations to get new homes built. He would raise amortization limits to 30 years for CMHC-backed mortgages and review the mortgage “stress test” for first-time buyers. The party would implement a 20 per cent green homes tax credit for up to \$20,000 spent over two years to pay for energy-saving renovations.



The Bloc proposes allowing natural disaster victims be able to take money out of their RRSP without penalty or tax to renovate their home post-disaster. They would have to prove damage was caused by a climate change related event. It also wants more money for Quebec social housing but hasn't provided a detailed plan for spending it.

New Democrats want to build 500,000 affordable housing units over 10 years; until then, they propose a rental subsidy. They want to scrap the federal GST/HST for those constructing new affordable units. The party would reintroduce 30-year terms for mortgages insured by the CMHC for first-time buyers and give low-interest loans to retrofit houses. It proposes a 15 per cent surtax on foreign buyers.



The party has not released specific policy on this issue — but Leader Maxime Bernier has blamed high housing costs in Toronto and Vancouver on zoning regulations and high immigration levels.

The party wants a rethink of the CMHC and more resources available for housing co-ops. It would like to build 25,000 new affordable units and renovate 15,000 others every year for the next 10 years. Greens want to legislate housing as a “legally protected fundamental human right for all Canadians” and appoint a minister of housing to oversee the National Housing Strategy.



IMMIGRATION



Immigration has increased under the Liberals; 321,045 immigrants came in 2018 – the largest number since the First World War. The party hopes to bump that number to 350,000 by 2021. Liberal Immigration Minister Ahmed Hussen said he wants to accept more refugees, while the Liberal government has imposed measures to crack down on “asylum-shopping” and regulate immigration consultants.

Conservatives haven’t said how many immigrants they would accept each year. But leader Andrew Scheer has stressed the importance of “economic immigration” and prioritizing those facing “true persecution.” Conservatives also want to crack down on illegal border crossings. They would instead promote the private sponsorship of refugees and increase refugee screening.



The party says the Quebec National Assembly should decide how many immigrants and refugees the province accepts – not the federal government. It wants Quebec exempted from the Multiculturalism Act. Like the NDP, the party wants to scrap the Safe Third Country agreement and give Quebec veto powers over federal decisions to expel refugees.

The NDP don’t cite a specific number when asked how many immigrants they would accept. The party has stressed the need to tackle applicant backlogs and prioritize family reunification. It promises to regulate the immigration consultant industry and get rid of the Safe Third Country agreement, which prevents migrants who made claims in the U.S. from making claims in Canada.



The party says it believes current immigration levels are “unsustainable.” It suggests a substantial drop in immigration, from 321,045 (the 2018 number) to between 100,000 and 150,000. It wants fewer refugees, too, and would rely instead on private sponsors. It promises to designate the entire border an official port of entry, fence off problem areas and send back those crossing illegally.

Greens want to increase immigration to places that can’t fill job vacancies, but don’t cite targets for the number they would accept. The party also wants to start a discussion about climate refugees. Greens want them included as an official refugee category. They too want to get rid of the Safe Third Country agreement.



INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION



Liberals have stressed their commitment to reconciliation while brushing off criticisms of their policies – including their support for the Trans Mountain pipeline, which will run through reserves. It added \$4.5 billion in the 2019 budget for Indigenous services, which includes money to address Inuit healthcare gaps, revitalize languages and create a national council on reconciliation.

The party's relationship with Indigenous communities were rocky under Stephen Harper; the Assembly of First Nations is eager for a change. But little is known about how Leader Andrew Scheer would do that. He was booed while speaking at the Assembly's chiefs' meeting last year after failing to say how his policies would differ. He has said he is eager to work with Indigenous communities which embrace developing energy resources.



The party has not released much policy on this issue. It does call itself an “ally of the First Peoples” and wants to fully implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The party wants to develop an action plan for reconciliation, based around the 94 calls to action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It would be overseen by a new national council for reconciliation. New Democrats also promise to lift all drinking water advisories by 2021, a goal they share with the Liberals.



Leader Maxime Bernier would explore ways to replace the Indian Act with a new legal framework. He suggests western pipelines would present Indigenous people with a “golden opportunity for economic development.” He also wants to look at ways to give Indigenous people individual property rights on reserve and bring clean drinking water to remote communities.

The Greens think the Indian Act is racist and are committing to dismantling it. They also want to create an Aboriginal Lands and Treaties Tribunal Act to oversee claims and negotiations. They've promised more money for First Nations education and would implement all recommendations from the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls inquiry.



JOBS



Liberals are heading into the election feeling pretty happy about job gains – Canada’s unemployment rate dropped to 5.4 per cent in May this year, its lowest number since comparable data was first collected in 1976. It’s since edged up slightly to 5.7 per cent. The party also has been mulling a guaranteed minimum income, but has not detailed further plans.

The party has railed against many Liberal policies, claiming they threaten jobs. Leader Andrew Scheer has been a fierce advocate for struggling oil workers. Conservatives have promised to end foreign oil imports and get pipelines built, including the Trans Mountain, which they claim will create “tens of thousands” of jobs. It also wants to improve “credential recognition” to make it easier for immigrants to get jobs, if they have equivalent skills.



The Bloc says it would work to keep head offices for large corporations in Quebec – and would offer a remediation agreement to SNC-Lavalin. It opposes the sales any Quebec business to foreign companies. The party is proposing a tax credit for recent graduates or immigrants who move to rural areas for jobs.

New Democrats propose raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour. Their platform pledges to create 300,000 new jobs in the NDP’s first term. The party also wants to ban unpaid internships if they don’t count for school credit. It would require employers spend one per cent of their payroll on annual employee training.



The party has not released a policy on this issue, but claims getting rid of supply management would create “thousands of jobs.”

The party wants to raise the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour and ban unpaid internships, excluding those for school credits. At the federal level, it would like to study raising the minimum amounts for vacation and look at implementing a shorter work week. It also wants to cancel the Temporary Foreign Worker program and implement a guaranteed liveable income.



PIPELINES



For Liberals and pipelines, it's pick and choose. They support Line 3, Keystone XL, the massive LNG project running to B.C.'s coast and the Trans Mountain pipeline extension, which they bought for \$4.5 billion. But they cancelled the Northern Gateway pipeline and changed the rules for the Energy East pipeline, leading to the project's abandonment.

The Conservatives want to expand Canada's oil and gas sector and have accused Liberals of stalling Trans Mountain. Leader Andrew Scheer said he would use constitutional powers to declare construction of pipelines to be in the national interest, a move he argues would get them built faster. He also would overturn recent legislation restricting the movement of oil tankers in northern B.C.



The party is against new pipelines — especially Energy East, the proposed pipeline that would have run right through Quebec. TransCanada cancelled it in 2017, after stiff protests and a federal change in the approval process.

Leader Jagmeet Singh has strongly opposed the Trans Mountain project. But his reversal over the liquefied natural gas project in B.C. has drawn ridicule. He previously supported the project, but backed down in May. He still won't say whether he supports it, telling reporters the future of energy does not include fracking or fossil fuels. He would give provinces veto power over national infrastructure projects that run through them, including pipelines.



The party strongly supports building pipelines and, like the Conservatives, would use constitutional powers to declare pipeline building to be in the national interest. Leader Maxime Bernier has said he would be willing to use the Constitution to “impose a pipeline in [his] own province of Quebec” — a move many Quebec politicians reject.

Leader Elizabeth May would not approve any new pipeline project and opposes any pipeline carrying diluted bitumen. She would also cancel Trans Mountain — and was even arrested while protesting the project. Her party wants Canada off oil by 2050. Until then, the party wants to stop imports of foreign oil.



SENIORS



If re-elected, Liberals are promising to boost Old Age Security at age 75 by 10 per cent and the Canada Pension Plan by 25 per cent for widows and widowers. Leader Justin Trudeau hasn't said whether this would translate to higher premiums to cover the cost.

Leader Andrew Scheer is touting some of his signature promises as benefiting seniors in particular, including removing GST from home heating and reintroducing a public transit tax credit. He has promised to increase the Age Tax Credit by \$1,000; the credit is available to seniors making less than \$87,750.



The Bloc are proposing to make the Caregiver Tax Credit refundable. It also wants the guaranteed income supplement for seniors increased – and to raise the amount seniors can earn before being disqualified for this supplement.

The party promises to create a national seniors strategy, which would include a national strategy for dementia and a prevention plan for elder abuse. It proposes making the Caregiver Tax Credit refundable, to help those who look after seniors. The party says its affordable housing units plan will include accessible units, benefiting seniors.



The party has yet to release policy on this issue.

Greens also propose developing a national seniors strategy, which includes a national dementia strategy. It wants more long-term care beds in neighbourhood facilities but encourages creative home-sharing plans to allow seniors to stay home “as long as possible.” Over time, it proposes boosting the CPP's target income replacement rate from 25 to 50 per cent of income made.



SMALL BUSINESS



The party got a lashing from small business owners after proposing tax reforms and had to backpedal parts of the proposal to soften impact. Amid criticism, Liberals did lower the small business tax rate from 10.5 to 9 per cent as promised. They've now pledged to give cash to entrepreneurs to build startups and eliminate the tax "swipe fee" merchants pay to credit card companies.

The Conservatives reject Liberal tax reforms, calling them attacks on "job creators." They've promised to repeal the changes and make the tax system easier to navigate. The party says it will keep the small business tax rate at 9 per cent. It also proposes lowering the tax rate from 15 to 5 per cent for green technology companies.



The party has not released much policy on this issue but has said it would like to invest more in rural regions to encourage more people to stay or move there. It argues investments in things like transportation services would encourage job creation. The party is expected to release more details on this during the campaign.

New Democrats argue their plan for universal pharmacare would save small businesses money on benefits. The party has advocated for a cap on the fees small businesses pay credit card companies. It would keep the small business tax rate at 9 per cent and change rules for family transfers to avoid "the unfair tax treatment."



The party has not released a policy on this issue but leader Maxime Bernier has some experience — he served as minister of state for small business while he was a Conservative MP under Stephen Harper.

The Greens say they are "the party for small business." They want to bring in a law that would force government to consider the impact on small businesses of all future legislation. The party proposes a Green Venture Capital Fund to aid green business start-ups and wants to eliminate the need for a small business to file taxes multiple times.



TAXES



The party has promised to raise the basic personal income tax deduction to \$15,000 for anyone earning under \$147,000. In 2015, the Liberals added an upper tax bracket for those making more than \$200,000 a year, while dropping the tax rate on earnings between \$45,282 and \$90,563 from 22 to 20.5 per cent.

Conservatives have promised a “universal tax cut,” cutting the rate on taxable income under \$47,630 from 15 to 13.75 per cent over three years. There’s also a promise to make Employment Insurance benefits for new parents tax-free, remove the GST from home heating costs and revive the public transit, children’s fitness and arts tax credits offered under Stephen Harper.



The Bloc wants the Quebec government to collect federal income taxes, rather than the Canada Revenue Agency. They argue this would make things simpler for Quebecers, who would only have to fill out one form instead of two. They are also in favour of taxing online giants like Facebook, Netflix and Spotify and further clamping down on tax havens.

New Democrats propose hiking the rate for capital gains inclusion from 50 to 75 per cent, which means paying more income tax on profits from stocks or the sale of properties other than a primary residence. They also want to hike the top federal personal income tax rate from 33 to 35 per cent and impose a one per cent wealth tax on the “super rich” – those making more than \$20 million.



Leader Maxime Bernier is proposing a simplified, two-bracket federal income tax. He’s promising to get rid of the multiple brackets for higher income earners and just make everyone who makes more than \$100,000 pay 25 per cent. That’s a discount compared to the current rate.

The Greens want to increase corporate tax rates from 15 to 21 per cent. They also would apply a corporate tax on tech companies like Netflix, Facebook, Google and Airbnb and find a way to tax cryptocurrencies. The party says it would create a Federal Tax Commission to ensure the tax system is fair and accessible.



TRANSPORTATION



The Liberals have implemented or proposed a suite of transportation initiatives, including subsidies for zero-emission vehicles. The party says it wants all new sales to be zero-emission by 2040. It's also offered major funding for public transit. Recent announcements include \$1.3 billion for a Montreal metro expansion and \$1.2 billion for transit in Quebec City

Conservatives say they'll close the gap between conventional and electric vehicles but have not offered a timeline. Leader Andrew Scheer has promised not to renege on federal funds already committed to transit projects but would scrap the Canada Infrastructure Bank, which has funded transit. He plans to revive a public transit tax credit axed by Liberals in 2017.



The Bloc argues the subsidy for zero-emission vehicles isn't enough to impact the environment and is proposing bigger discounts. It too wants all transportation electrified across the country. In wake of the devastating Lac-Mégantic train derailment, the party wants a public inquiry to look at rail transport regulations and opposes any additional oil being moved around Quebec.

The party wants to electrify transit fleets by 2030 and work with municipalities to eventually make rides fare-free. New Democrats would waive the federal tax on zero-emission vehicles and work toward the goal it shares with the Liberals of getting all new vehicles zero-emission by 2040. They also promise to re-establish the rural bus service cancelled by Greyhound.



The party has not released a policy on this issue but leader Maxime Bernier is opposed to subsidies for zero-emission vehicles, claiming their buyers are already "wealthy people" and it's a waste of money.

The Greens call for a "massive re-investment" in transportation. They want all new cars to be electric by 2030 and to invest in a national grid so these vehicles can get across the country. They also want to re-invest in Canada's rail systems and work on increasing train speeds. As for bicycles, the party says they would make them GST-free.



SO NOW WHAT?

What to do, with what we've learned?

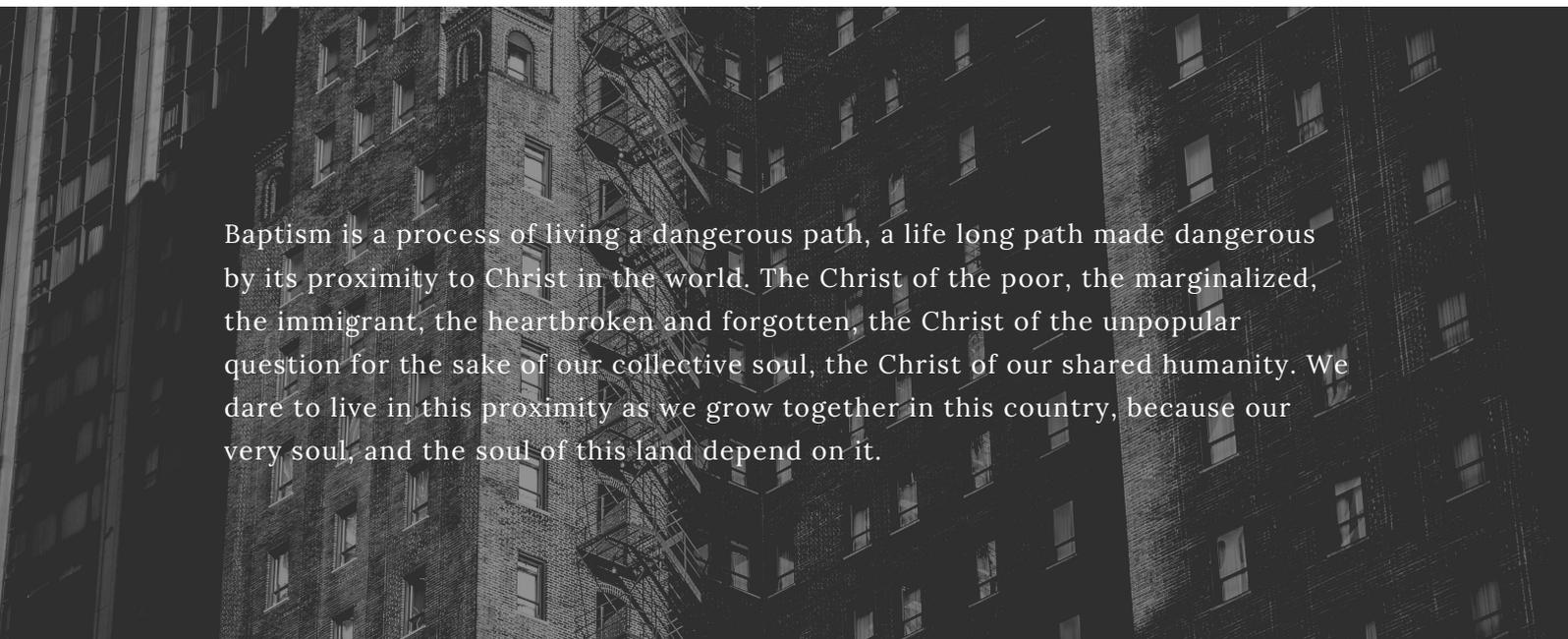
The policies and ideas of the political parties are being constantly updated and ramped up as we get closer to election day. At the same time, the attack ads are showing how scared the parties are to lose. When we attack our neighbour, we fail to live up to the truth of Jesus that tells us- everyone matters. Why should fear be apart of our politics? There is a lot at stake for this country and our future, just as there is every time we vote.

Pray with what you've read, and reflect with the question posed at the beginning: how does this political promise reflect what I believe God and I committed to each other in Baptism? What is my call to action because of it?

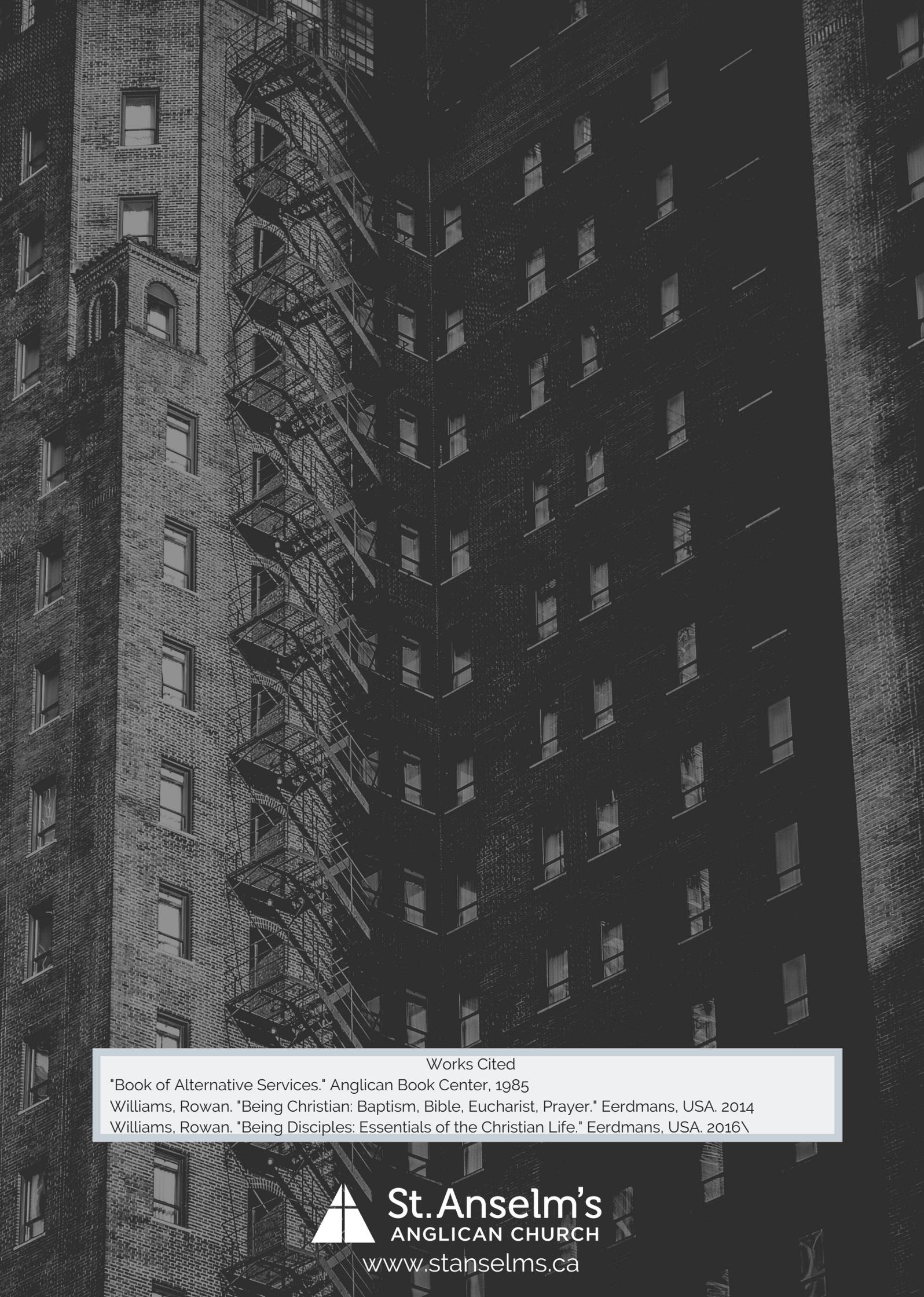
If there are areas of platform that do not make sense, reach out to the parties in your neighbourhood for clarification. Attend a rally, speak to a local candidate directly, or read more via their official websites.

Maybe start a conversation group with friends about this, whose aim is not to change minds but discuss. Or bring your questions to church for us to discuss together. We are a people in the world seeking to build bridges into the proximity of Christ, for a world and country that is whole.

This is a lot. It might feel overwhelming, but we have to start somewhere. Maybe this is your somewhere.



Baptism is a process of living a dangerous path, a life long path made dangerous by its proximity to Christ in the world. The Christ of the poor, the marginalized, the immigrant, the heartbroken and forgotten, the Christ of the unpopular question for the sake of our collective soul, the Christ of our shared humanity. We dare to live in this proximity as we grow together in this country, because our very soul, and the soul of this land depend on it.



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