A CALL TO URGENT ACTION BY THE BC GOVERNMENT

November 2021

Dear Premier Horgan and the Government of British Columbia,

We write as faith leaders representing two local expressions of the Abrahamic traditions governed by the one, eternal and transcendent creator of the universe and the source of moral law. It is under this authority that we are compelled to urge you, as political leaders committed to "protecting and preserving our environment now and for future generations," (cleanbc.gov.bc.ca) to take immediate steps to develop and implement a transformative climate emergency plan.

In the aftermath of this summer's fires and the recent widespread flooding across this province, it is no longer acceptable to say that events of this nature were unexpected and to deflect responsibility. We are calling on you to do better.

Earlier this year, nearly 300 organizations including Indigenous groups, student clubs, faith communities, businesses, unions, environmental non-profits and cultural groups wrote to the provincial government with a list of actions it must take to combat this crisis. We are waiting for your government's response.

This crisis is a spiritual crisis; it's a failure to honour all human beings as made in the image of God and to live our lives in the best interest of the planetary common good. It is a turning away from our responsibility to be stewards of Creation.

We, as faith groups need to address our complicity in the economic drivers that have led us to the critical precipice. As government, you need to demonstrate bold leadership and undertake the systemic changes being called for by knowledgeable people across this province. It will require a cohesive plan, across all of government. If greenhouse gas reduction is important to one part of government, it MUST be a commitment made by all departments of the government.

We join our voices with those calling on you to be a leader in demonstrating that a zero-emission economy is possible. The science is clear. It will take an annual reduction of 6% year-over-year until 2050 to reach the acceptable 1.5C of warming agreed to at the 2015 Paris climate accords and COP26. What will your government do to reach this annual goal?

We look forward to hearing from you.

Signed,

Bishop Anna Greenwood-Lee, Bishop, Anglican Diocese of Islands and Inlets

Harry Brechner, Rabbi, Congregation Emanu-El Conservative Jewish Synagogue (Victoria)