

The Anglican Church of Canada



L'Église anglicane du Canada

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*...to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. Micah 6: 8*

Dear friends in Christ,

Once again we are in the midst of a federal election in Canada. As a church, our first responsibility is to pray for this country and the welfare of all who live here. Specifically, we pray for all who offer themselves for public office, that they may hear and respond to the real issues on the hearts and minds of all Canadians.

Our second responsibility is to engage those running for office in respectful discussion. The Anglican Church of Canada, along with ecumenical and interfaith partners, has prioritized several public witness issues.

With 4.3 million Canadians living in poverty and 150,000 people homeless, we urgently call on all parties to commit to establishing a **poverty reduction** fund, a long-term housing strategy, social security initiatives, and increased child tax credits. This work should be done in partnership with provincial and territorial initiatives. We support the recommendations of the recent report, "Federal Poverty Reduction Plan: Working in Partnership Towards Reducing Poverty in Canada," known as the HUMA report. We call for the dignity for all people to be respected.

We urge all parties to commit to implementation of Canada's November 2010 endorsement of the United Nations Declaration on the **Rights of Indigenous Peoples**. In honouring that commitment, Canada needs a comprehensive plan for adequate housing, health care and education in Aboriginal communities. Conditions in many of them are absolutely deplorable and must be addressed. We also note with grave concern the alarmingly high rate of suicide among Indigenous peoples. Canada must adopt a national suicide prevention strategy, as all other G8 countries have done.

We encourage Canadians to engage candidates with respect to their personal and party commitment to the work of the **Truth and Reconciliation Commission**. Established to hear, record and preserve the story of the Indian Residential Schools system, the commission is hosting several national and regional events. The hope of the commission

and the churches is to set this country on a new and different path of improved relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

Many faith communities are calling for Canada to adopt a comprehensive **climate action** plan with firm targets for greenhouse gas emission reductions: from 25% to 40% by 2020. We must prioritize long-term environmental sustainability and implement concrete plans to ensure global temperatures do not exceed a 2 degree centigrade increase.

With respect to our place in the world, we would encourage renewed commitment to international development assistance that pushes forward the achievement of the **Millennium Development Goals**. Let us rise to new heights in our resolve to work for **human rights, democracy and peace** among all peoples.

Our third responsibility is to exercise our right to vote. It is a freedom and a right that so many in the world do not have. We have it – let us use it with care and responsibility.

The times in which we live call for inspired leadership that is committed to bold action. This leadership contributes to our true growth and well-being as a country, and to our place on this earth in building a truly just, healthy and peaceful world. For this we pray and work.

“O God, keep this nation under your care. Bless the leaders of our land, that we may be a people at peace among ourselves and a blessing to other nations of the earth. Help us elect trustworthy leaders, contribute to wise decisions for the general welfare, and thus serve you faithfully in our generation to the honour of your holy name. Amen.”

I am, sincerely yours,

Archbishop Fred Hiltz

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fred Hiltz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada