



**EASTERN SYNOD** of the  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada**

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**BISHOP**

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October 6, 2008

The Right Hon. Stephen Harper  
Prime Minister of Canada  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

The Honourable Shawn Graham  
Premier of New Brunswick  
Centennial Building  
PO Box 6000  
Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1

The Honourable Rodney MacDonald  
Premier of Nova Scotia  
Office of the Premier  
PO Box 726  
Halifax, NS B3J 2T3

The Honourable Dalton McGuinty  
Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Building  
Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Dear Prime Minister Harper, Premier Graham, Premier MacDonald, Premier McGuinty:

For churches in Canada, climate change is a most urgent concern, not only because it poses the most serious challenge to us humans, who have caused it, as well as to our fellow species of flora and fauna, but also because concern for God's creation is basic to our faith and to our scriptures.

Each Sunday we in the Lutheran church confess our faith in God, "maker of heaven and earth." That faith roots in the Bible, which delights in creation and its creatures and where care of the earth is entrusted to humans.

Too often over the past two millennia we Christians have taken that to mean we can exploit the earth to our own ends, without regard to our fellow species or to the earth

itself. Along with our fellow citizens of all faiths, we are learning that that time has to be past and that we must live in partnership with the earth and its many creatures, as precious gifts from the Creator.

In the past few years we in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) have been gaged in theological study and ethical reflection on the crisis of climate change and global warming. One example is a study prepared for our church, which can be found on various websites but is most readily accessed by googling *kelly remus planet in peril*. It offers many suggestions for greening, by citizens and by governments.

In our churches and in our homes we have done energy audits, greened our homes and churches in various ways, sponsored “local” lunches and dinners and advocated 100km diets among our members, updated “waste not, want not.”

At its recent Assembly the Eastern Synod of the ELCIC adopted a motion encouraging its congregations and members to implement “measures that reduce their carbon foot print” and calling upon “the ELCIC to support the Lutheran World Federation carbon offset program for air travel.”

Our efforts alone, however, cannot bring about changes of the kind and on the scale that is needed. Those must come from governments—federal and provincial—acting quickly and seriously. For this reason, the synod asked me, as their Bishop, to:

call upon all levels of government in Canada to promote strong political commitments that would lead to achieving a 40 per cent reduction of CO2 emissions compared to the 1990 levels of CO2 by 2020 and to encourage advocacy for rapid transition from coal and other fossil fuels for power generation to non-nuclear renewable energy sources.

I would urge you, as those elected to act responsibly in our stead, to work toward these and other measures that will bring significant changes in the production and use of energy, so that the earth might again be “good,” as when the Creator looked upon it at creation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Pryse", with a plus sign to its left.

Bishop Michael J Pryse, the Eastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada  
MJP/cd

cc: Ed Stelmach, Premier of Alberta  
Gordon Campbell, Premier of British Columbia  
Gary Doer, Premier of Manitoba  
Danny Williams, Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador  
Jean Charest, Premier of Quebec  
Robert Ghiz, Premier of Prince Edward Island  
Brad Wall, Premier of Saskatchewan

Dennis Fentie, Premier of the Yukon Territory  
Paul Okalik, Premier of Nunavut  
Floyd Roland, Premier of the Northwest Territories  
The Rev. Susan Johnson, National Bishop, ELCIC  
Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Primate, the Anglican Church of Canada