**Framing Principles for Witness and Action**

**On Climate Justice, Energy, and the Economy**

**One World**

Earth is a singular, sacred Creation, the shared home of all humanity and the whole commonwealth of life. The security and wellbeing of all life depends on the integrity of Creation. Upholding the integrity of Creation is a moral requirement for people of faith.

 ***“****The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it,the world, and those who live in it;****”(Ps. 24:1)***

**Gift of Creation and the Common Good**

The Christian faith, along with many other religious traditions, embraces a vision of compassion and justice in which the whole human family shares the gift of Creation. Our commitment to the ancient religious obligation to “do justice” now includes safeguarding Earth’s climate against further disruption.A genuine commitment to the common good now requires a drastic curtailment of fossil fuel consumption in order to avoid severe climate disruption and its environmental consequences.Honouring the Creator means respecting the gift of Creation, safeguarding the environments of Earth, and advancing the common good so that “all may live” in the “Peace of God.”

***“****What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?****”
(Mic. 6:8b)***

**The Common Good and Climate Change**

Climate change is not a “concern” in the usual sense of the word, nor is it a “special interest:” It is now central to the Human-Earth Relationship and to our work for justice. The work for justice has traditionally focused on the causes of impoverishment, discrimination, and marginalization, and, in response, on fostering equity, inclusion, and the right to live in dignity. Climate disruption has now surrounded the work for justice in these societal relationships with the reality of our ecological situation. The Human-Earth Relationship is the context in which all justice concerns are now situated. Justice, equity, peace, and societal wellbeing have no other home than the Human-Earth Relationship in which to flourish or wither, as the case may be. All the areas of human concern that we have traditionally addressed in our work for justice are being negatively affected by the on going, disruptive impact of climate change. Climate disruption is, therefore, a justice issue. Climate Justice on behalf of the common good is now central to the moral assignment for people of faith.

*"Just as you did it to one of the least of these, who are members of my family, you did it to me." (Matthew 25:40)*

**Climate Justice**

To“do justice” in the fullest sense of our religious vision now includes acting to modify the Human-Earth Relationship in such a way that our economic behaviour stops damaging the climate system. Working for justice now means working to prevent further climate disruption; it means working for environmental stabilization that will enable all people to achieve thesecurity and dignity of a good life; it means working with a clear commitment to intergenerational equity. Climate Justice for the most vulnerable peoples of Earth – people who have contributed the least to climate change, but who are now affected the most – requires a new global approach to energy use and economic development – a new ethic of energy use. Increasing fossil fuel extraction and consumption, and the climate disruption that will result, moves us away fromour faith in the God of justice. Climate Justice draws us back to greater faithfulness.

***“****The days are surely coming ... when I will ... execute justice and righteousness in the land.****” (Jer. 23:5)***

**Transformation**

Climate change mitigation and the reversal of environmental degradation worldwide requires 1) a drastic reduction in the use of fossil fuelenergy, 2) a rapid increase in the use of renewable energy, and 3) the maturing of consumer societies into conserver societies. Transformative change of this kind has not found traction within political processes, nor has the accumulating scientific evidence yet triggered a sufficient movement of societalchange. However, in the deep stirrings of religious conviction, with itssense of moral responsibility and ethic of right relationship, the power for changing behaviourand policy around energy use may be found. Religious faith can provide the guidance we need to act ontransforming the Human-Earth Relationship in ways that address climate justice, shared security, and equitable access to the means of life for all people.

***“****Be transformed by the renewing of your minds* ***…” (Rom. 12:2b)***

**Right Relationship**

A living faith, a passion for justice, respect for all life, and a serious concern for the wellbeing of future generations requires that we redefine what the economy is for.In a deeply profound sense, both the human economy and Earth’s ecosystem are domains of relationship. The economy is about access to the means of life. The ecosystem is about the mutual interdependence of life communities. There is a deep sense of right relationship within a fully rounded understanding of these domains. Our spiritual traditions teach us that in Right Relationship we touch the fullness of human meaning and the Presence of the Divine. Climate justice, shared security, and equitable access to the means of life is about elevating all areas of human policy and practice into this zone of Right Relationship.

***“****I have taught you the way of wisdom;I have led you in the paths of uprightness.****” (Prov. 4:11)***

**Economy for Life**

The economy must be redefined as a system of mutually beneficial relationships for providing access to the means of life for all people, and for maintaining and enhancing the integrity of Earth’s life support systems.The purpose of the economy is to preserve and enhance the integrity, resilience, and beauty of the whole commonwealth of life. Thismutually enhancing economy can only be achieved if climate disruption is stopped. Climate disruption can only be stopped if the extraction and consumption of fossil fuel is drastically curtailed.

***“****Choose life so that you and your descendants may live****.”(Deut. 30:19b)***

**Covenant**

The Earth sciences have given us sufficient knowledge to understand that the continued high-level use of fossil fuels and unlimited economic growth cannot be sustained, and, if pursued, will lead to ecological, economic, and societal collapse. For people of faith, this path into the future is a betrayal of the goodness of God in Creation;it tramplesthe covenant of Right Relationship. There is a clear path to a different future, a path that honours a covenant with God for the care of the Earth. We have the renewable resources, and the renewable energy technology we need to turn aside from the fossil fuel economy, and create a way of life in keeping with the great mission of compassion and justice that rises from the best understanding of our faith traditions – an understanding of faithfulness that now extends in solidarity to all people and to the whole commonwealth of life.

*“This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ... between me and the earth.”*

***(Gen. 9:12-13)***

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*Climate and Energy Working Group, Commission on Justice and Peace, Canadian Council of Churches:*

 *Keith Helmuth, Kathy Vandergrift, Joy Kennedy, Joe Gunn, Peter Noteboom*