Proposal 1

Proposal Name: Climate Crisis: A Call to the Faithful to Work Towards Climate Justice

Origin: Ecological Justice Working Group of Justice, Mission and Outreach Committee, Region 15

Issue: We believe that we are called to work towards climate justice. God's great gift of Creation – the context in which all life seeks fulfillment - is in crisis. As people of faith we must respond now to work towards a sustainable future for all life on the planet.

> "*The climate crisis, while overwhelmingly frightening, calls the church to its deepest vocation: incarnating the love that is God*." - Richard Rohr

Why is it important?
In the United Church of Canada we have listened to our global partners, attended UN Climate Conferences, heard the warnings of Indigenous peoples across these lands and around the world. We have witnessed the predictions of climate scientists come true sooner than expected, and we have been moved by the outcry from young people taking to the streets.

As cited in the first "Sustainability Report" (2019-2020) "climate and ecological degradation has a disproportionate impact on the vulnerable."

The church has a mission and calling to respond.

As a denomination, we have committed to reducing carbon emissions in our buildings 80% by 2050 in line with the Paris climate targets. Resources, money, and time have been dedicated to this goal, including the Faithful Footprints program. We have begun to redirect investments from fossil fuels toward climate solutions. We are participating in ecumenical and interfaith advocacy and action. This is a start, but actions are needed at every level, and in every Community of Faith.

Addressing the present ecological crisis will require changing hearts as much as minds, developing caring relationships to one another and Creation, and building compelling visions for a future we want for coming generations. This is spiritual work. Communities of Faith and their leaders have important roles to play.

We recognize that we are facing an existential emergency. There is an urgent need to take wise action.

How should the Region respond?
We propose that Region 15 call upon Communities of Faith to prioritize the urgent need to work towards climate justice in 2021-22 through prayer, liturgy, education and action.

Responses may include:

- Regular preaching on seeking climate justice as a faith response

- Offering dialogues and studies, such as “Climate Change, Climate World: How People of Faith Must Work for Change.” Author Jim Antal, or “Faithful Climate Conversations” (from For the Love of Creation - fortheloveofcreation.ca)
- Reducing energy consumption in church buildings aiming to help contribute to reaching the UCC emissions reduction targets of 80% by 2050, with Faithful Footprints program as a resource. (faithfulfootprint.org)
- Forming a climate justice committee in their Community of Faith
- Acting ecumenically and with community-based organizations on climate justice-related advocacy
- Take part in community planning for responses to climate related emergencies

And that Region 15 ask that Communities of Faith share responses with the Ecological Justice Working Group, so that stories and actions may be communicated at the next Annual Meeting in order to inspire and encourage others.