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CHRISTIANS UNITE IN CALLING FOR ECO-JUSTICE:

Season of Creation Declaration 2018

1 September, 2018, Assisi

As Christians across denominational traditions, we come together once again during this year's Season of Creation filled with gratitude for God's gift of life. We recognize that we humans are part of God's creation. We celebrate the diversity, beauty and mutual sustenance of all creation, intended by God to live in just relationships.

Our world in crisis

We live in a time when all of creation is facing major existential threats. The way we have built our economies and societies has led to incalculable harm to the plants and animals with whom we share the Earth and to us in the human family as well. Rather than honouring our role as stewards of God's garden, we have monetized life and sought profit from it, resulting in destruction of life for all. Our excessive production, consumption, extraction and greed have contributed to unprecedented levels of inequality, where only a few possess, controlling, massive amounts of resources and the vast majority have little or nothing at all to help them live in dignity. We have destroyed life and have willfully denied our Lord's desire for fullness of life for all (John 10:10).

A call for climate justice

Our steadfast call for climate justice continues to be an important priority. We believe that God has called us into right relations with each other and the Earth. We recognize that the present crisis we are in is because we have not heeded God's call to love creation and each other and have sought self-interest instead. We seek to return to a God of life and hear the groaning of all creation which seeks redemption (Romans 8: 19-21).

A call for new global solidarity with the affected

We further call for renewed global solidarity with people and communities in developing countries, and especially those that are on the front lines of climate change impacts. We are dismayed by the inadequacy of solidarity and support for people and communities whose territories are lost as a result of climate change impacts, such as sea level rise and other slow or sudden extreme weather events. We are concerned for the plight of those who must migrate as their homelands become inhabitable. We support the Paris agreement but are concerned that the positive spirit of the 2015 agreement is fading away. We call for a renewed commitment to this agreement.

International Action

International cooperation is essential to solve this planetary crisis. We look forward with hope to the Global Climate Action Summit, at which non-state actors will make their commitments to progress. On the governmental level, we strongly support the Paris climate agreement and its goals to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees, build global resilience and provide finances, technology and capacity to support climate action. We are concerned that many countries in the world have not fully committed to the plans and policies that are required to achieve these goals. We call for a renewed commitment to the agreement, and in particular we call for greater ambition at the upcoming COP24 UN climate negotiations in Poland this year. As people of faith, we strongly encourage political leaders to agree on a Paris rulebook and the necessary guidelines to ensure the ambitious, equitable and just implementation of the agreement. This must be done in a way that heeds the call for just transition towards more resilience and lower greenhouse gas emission for the protection of this and the generations to come.

Our commitment and responsibility

Already, Christians around the world are taking action: planting trees, placing solar panels on their church roofs, responding to climate induced disasters, and educating their communities about climate change and the environment, among many other initiatives. Among these efforts, the movement to divest from fossil fuels deserves special attention, as it addresses structural injustices and draws us closer to a clean energy economy. We invite all people of faith to join these efforts and take part in the growing movement to care for our neighbours by caring for creation.

We affirm our call and responsibility to care for creation, and our mission to serve in unity and solidarity with people and communities in all parts of the world. We affirm our commitment to share our knowledge, resources and fellowship with them. We shall do our very best to change our economic and investment models and our individual and institutional routines in order to serve the climate justice agenda. We shall advocate and campaign for climate justice and utilise every opportunity accorded to us to speak boldly with people and communities affected by the current environmental crisis. We commit ourselves to embark on a greater care for all creation and continue to walk together towards climate, ecological, and economic justice.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul tells us that “creation waits with eager longing.” With the hope born of the gift of grace, we look forward to the day when humanity will rediscover its love for Creator, its reverence for creation, and its love for all the creatures who share this, our common home.

Assisi, September 1 2018

First Ecumenical Prayer for Creation, *Walking together to COP24*

Members of the Season of Creation Ecumenical Steering Committee,

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