

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC WITNESS FOR SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE COORDINATING COMMITTEE TO GENERAL SYNOD 2025

1. FOR ACTION OR CONSIDERATION

- Motion: The Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty
- Motion: Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Motion: A National Strategy for Local Ministries of Hospitality and Advocacy with Migrant Workers in Canada

2. FOR INFORMATION

The ministry of Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice (PWSEJ) is the work of the whole Church and is rooted in the calls for justice and dignity found in our scripture. The PWSEJ Coordinating Committee works to give shape and direction to national efforts addressing key issues in our society, rooted in our faith. Current priorities for the ministry of PWSEJ reflect the Anglican Church of Canada's commitment to the 4th and 5th Marks of Mission.¹ These priorities include:

- Migrant Justice and Human Trafficking
- Care for Creation
- Reconciliation and right relations with Indigenous Peoples
- Responsible resource extraction
- Homelessness and affordable housing
- Justice and corrections
- Peace, conflict and violence

The current members of the Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice Coordinating Committee are:

- The Rev. Canon Paulette Bugden (Chair; Diocese of Western Newfoundland),
- Miriam Blair (Diocese of Quebec),
- Nadia Sinclair (Diocese of Brandon),
- Christopher Sorio (Diocese of Toronto),
- The Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Green (Diocese of Algoma)
- The Ven. Tanya Phibbs (Ex-officio; Diocese of Huron)

The Coordinating Committee experienced significant challenges in moving ahead with its work due to the limited availability of committee members to participate. Members have not been available for various reasons. Therefore, there have not been many meetings over the past two years because of time constraints and scheduling issues, however the commitment to lifting up issues of migrant justice and migrants' rights as a particular focus for the work of the committee remains.

Below is a summary of some work in the ministry areas covered by Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice.

¹ To transform unjust structures of society to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

Selected Updates on Programming and Priority Areas

A. Dismantling Racism

- The Anglican Church of Canada is a strong supporter of Black Anglicans of Canada. PWSEJ collaborated with Black Anglicans of Canada to put on Disrupt, Heal, Lead, a successful first national conference for Black leaders across the Anglican Church of Canada held in Winnipeg, Manitoba. This conference was supported with a grant from the Ministry Investment Fund of the General Synod.
Conference attendees heard excellent presentations, participated in life-giving worship, and celebrated together at a gala dinner featuring the Deputy Premier of Manitoba. Disrupt, Heal, Lead was attended by approximately 30 people representing 10 dioceses and the Saskatchewan Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

B. Care for Creation

- The Creation Matters Working Group continued to meet regularly, under the leadership of co-chairs Nancy Harvey (Diocese of Huron) and the Very Rev. Dr. Tim Dobbin (Diocese of Niagara), including working steadily to prepare two environmentally-focused motions for General Synod which are listed in this report.
- Season of Creation activities were held in dioceses and parishes across the country between September 1 and October 4. Events ranged from special diocesan services, to outdoor worship, to speakers' series and more.
Season of Creation activities and initiatives continue to see increased participation across the church.
- The Anglican Church of Canada continues to provide active leadership to the For the Love of Creation (FLC) faith-based campaign for climate justice through education, advocacy, and local congregational engagement. FLC celebrated its 4th anniversary and various members met together for conversation on strategic visioning for the future of the network.

C. Homelessness and Affordable Housing

- Three representatives from the Diocese of Ottawa's Homelessness and Affordable Housing Working Group joined the Lead Animator for Public Witness at the 2024 National Conference on Ending Homelessness in Ottawa, ON. Participants shared their experiences and learnings with the wider diocesan community and are now preparing ways of engaging Anglicans across the diocese.

D. Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery

- PWSEJ and Global Relations staff have taken active leadership in developing a Churches Witnessing with Migrants – Canada network to bring together churches and church-based agencies, migrants, and migrant-serving organizations in our shared work for migrant justice in Canada and around the world.
Churches Witnessing with Migrants – Canada launched with an event in Ottawa on November 23, 2024, where migrants, various faith-based groups and advocates attended the event. This network is continuing to develop as a national platform for gathering member groups, planning future collaboration, sharing information about solidarity and advocacy campaigns, and local ministries of welcome and hospitality, both in Canada and globally.

At the event in Ottawa, discussions took place on how the church is the destination of newcomers when they arrive in Canada. Noting also that there are faith-based groups who are promoting anti migrants and right-wing political beliefs. Human trafficking victims are also highlighting how pastors and religious leaders are victimizing migrants as they act as recruiters (situation of The Promised land Consultancy in BC).

Among the recommendations is for CWWM Canada to map out faith-based groups that are supporting and promoting migrant justice.

- A joint Partners in Mission Coordinating Committee (PIMCC) and Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice Coordinating Committee (PWSEJCC) Task Group met regularly since December 2024, regarding a National Anglican Church of Canada Strategy for Hospitality and Solidarity with Migrant Workers in Canada of which the joint resolution and the presentation to General Synod 2023 was a result.

Members of the Task Group include: Mr. Christopher Sorio (Diocese of Toronto), The Rev. Antonio Illas (diocese of Niagara), The Rev. Enrique Martinez (Diocese of Huron), The Rev. Augusto Nunez (Diocese of Toronto), and Ms. Erie Maestro (Diocese of New Westminster). Dr. Ryan Weston, Lead Animator for Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice, and Dr. Andrea Mann, Director of Global Relations accompanied as staff support.

The objective of the Task Group was to begin to discuss the Anglican Church of Canada's need for a national strategy in support of migrant workers in Canada, with specific focus on:

1. Awareness raising about the scope, contributions, and situations of migrant workers in Canada;
2. Education and resources that will equip local parishes, dioceses and other Anglican groups for engagement in hospitality and justice for local migrant workers; and
3. Renewed national church policy in support of migrant justice and the eradication of modern slavery/human trafficking in Canada and globally.

E. Government Relations

- Regular advocacy with the federal government continued in key areas of concern including:
 - Migrant justice and human trafficking
 - Peace and Justice in Palestine and Israel
 - Environmental justice
 - Poverty and housing
 - Human Rights
 - Indigenous Justice

F. Justice and Corrections

- Pamela Dillon (Diocese of Montreal) continues to represent the Anglican Church of Canada on the Restorative Justice Working Group of the Canadian Council of Churches.
- The Restorative Justice Working Group held a successful webinar celebrating the work and legacy of the Church Council on Justice and Corrections and looking ahead to the next steps in this work.
- Ryan Weston, Lead Animator for Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice, will act as a liaison between the Commission of Justice and Peace and the Restorative Justice Working Group.

G. Peace and Conflict

- Ryan Weston, Lead Animator, serves on the Steering Committee for Kairos.

*Respectfully submitted by the Rev. Canon Paulette Bugden,
Chair, Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice Coordinating Committee*