

Climate Emergency Response Team: Terms of Reference

1) Mission statement

- a) CERT exists to educate, advise and empower MCSask church communities in:
 - i) their quest for sustainable lifeways,
 - ii) their witness to the impacts of climate change on both human societies and ecological systems,
 - iii) action of various types to mitigate those impacts through emissions reductions, and
 - iv) relevant public advocacy towards decision-makers, for the integrity of creation and for international and intergenerational justice.

2) Mandate of the Committee

- a) To encourage leaders in churches and MC Sask stakeholders in prayerful listening to God and petitioning God in intercession for land and ecosystems, for those vulnerable to climate change impacts and for wise and compassionate decision-making in our own communities.
- b) To provide educational opportunities (theological, scientific, public policy, etc) concerning climate and creation care to church leaders, congregants and MC Sask leadership.
- c) To resource and support communities as they incorporate practices and projects for greenhouse gas emissions reduction.
- d) To advocate for the natural order to governments and big businesses when necessary.
- e) To offer support for those experiencing complex and difficult emotions associated with the climate crisis.
- f) To pursue effective and compassionate two-way communication with those most financially dependent on fossil fuel industries and high-emissions processes.

The committee will access the services of resource people when a project is beyond the scope of the team members. Funding will, unless otherwise decided, be from Ministries Commission.

The committee will develop a framework to ensure that, in all aspects of decision taken and projects undertaken, constituency youth perspectives are included. Likewise, the committee will seek the advice of Indigenous consultants in all aspects of its work, will seek input from international partners in climate change vulnerable locations, will consult with equivalent groups in other MC Canada regions and other denominations, and will have the ability to establish sectoral advisory reference groups (e.g. representing agricultural concerns).

3) Composition

- a) Eight volunteer standing team members, with the possibility of inviting specific resource people as needed.
- b) All standing team members should be members or regular attenders of a MC Sask member church. Resource people acting as consultants need not meet this criterion.
- c) Four team members will be named by MC Sask Ministries Commission and four by MC Sask Council.
- d) MC Sask Ministries Commission and MC Sask Council will cooperate to achieve a diverse demographic mix and a wide range of relevant skills and backgrounds. They will seek to ensure that theological, scientific, administrative, business, and communications backgrounds are represented, and that the committee includes persons who are under 30 years of age. A mix of urban and rural membership will be maintained.
- e) Half of the team members will be named for one-year terms and the other half for two-year terms. A person can be reassigned for three consecutive terms.
- f) Team members will appoint a chairperson at their first meeting each year. The chairperson will be assisted as needed by the administratively gifted member.

4) Role of Committee members

- a) To attend all scheduled meetings either in person or through electronic conferencing.
- b) To actively participate in conversations and decision making as connections with congregations are established and projects are developed and implemented.

5) Meetings

- a) Upon initial formation, CERT will meet monthly. The frequency of meetings will be periodically re-examined in CERT meetings, to ensure best use of Committee members' time.
- b) Meetings, when in person, will generally take place in Saskatoon, or otherwise in a location which works well for all members. Depending on the meeting's agenda, venues may change. Hybrid meetings with zoom connections are also possible.

6) Topics of discussion and possible targets for years 1 to 3

- a) Prayer
 - i) Earth Care Connections type prayers each week – sent out by Marianne
 - ii) Photo displays of interactions with one's environment
 - iii) Creation Care focused worship services – available from CommonWord
 - iv) Anthology of resources – CommonWord
- b) Education
 - i) Use of *For the Love of Creation* resources in member churches
 - ii) Development of Sunday school materials
 - iii) Introduction of the basic science to all clergy
- c) Local emissions reduction
 - i) Energy auditing of church buildings and church life with local congregations
 - ii) Development of congregational plans
 - iii) Encouragement of mutual aid in household emissions reduction
- d) Advocacy
 - i) Encouragement of churches to develop advocacy campaigns related to their local situation
 - ii) Information about, and selective participation in, existing campaigns
 - iii) Development of policy proposals to bring to MCSask council and/or ADS
- e) Emotional awareness
 - i) Facilitation of congregational meetings on request to enable open sharing about reactions to the emergency, with a particular concern for youth
 - ii) Establishment of connections to counselling services
 - iii) Emotional sensitivity in all events and processes in which CERT is involved
- f) Conversations and listening
 - i) Development of relationships with groups already developing processes around just transition (e.g. Iron and Earth; National Farmers Union)
 - ii) Specific invitations to groups of church-linked people engaged in fossil and high-emissions industries
 - iii) Involvement in at least one rural community consultation on potential futures

7) Reporting

- a) CERT will report directly to Ministries Commission at their bi-monthly meetings.
MC Sask Council liaison will bring report to MC Sask Council.
- b) When advocacy with government and/or big business is necessary, CERT will report directly to the MC Sask Council.
- c) CERT will report to Ministries Commission when working directly with a constituency church.