



**PRAIRIE TO PINE**  
**REGIONAL COUNCIL**  
The United Church of Canada



To Communities of Faith in Prairie to Pine Regional Council, from the Prairie to Pine Climate Finance Group

**Regional Invitation: Engaging your financial institutions on divesting from fossil fuel**

30 March 2024

Dear friends;

The past year was declared by scientists to be the hottest year on record. In Canada we saw record breaking wildfires across the country, a devastating flood in Nova Scotia and an April ice storm in Quebec that left a million people without power. The signs of climate change are all around us. As the Church we are called to respond in faith.

The 2023 Annual Meeting of Prairie to Pine Region approved a proposal committing the Regional Council to review its investments with a focus on climate justice. It also committed itself to communicating with you to provide suggested actions and background materials. [Click here to read the full proposal as passed.](#)

We know that many of you are making valiant efforts to lower your carbon footprint as individuals and as congregations. We encourage you to keep up this good work, and hope that the work to implement this proposal will help that work. Our web resource page is now available! [Please click here to access it.](#) On it we have all the materials needed to get started.

We are asking that both individuals and communities of faith or incorporated ministries do the following:

1. Communicate with your financial institutions with regard to any policies and practices that fall short of a transition to a green economy, particularly continuing investments in fossil fuel expansion projects.
2. Consider switching your ministry's and your own accounts to a more climate-conscious institution, divesting from less ethical investments, and/or transferring investments to ethical funds.

## Why this action?

Since the Paris Agreement in 2015, Canada's 5 primary financial institutions, all of whom have signed on to the Net Zero Banking Alliance, have increased their funding of fossil fuels rather than ensuring a managed decline to get us to Net Zero by 2050. Numerous institutions have challenged the Canadian banks and have received limited responses. The General Council has taken its investments out of fossil fuels. Our hope is that United Church communities of faith and members will follow suit. We hope to encourage other Regions to take up this challenge as well.

To that end, we are providing you with a number of resources to help you consider your community of faith, incorporated ministry, and personal investments. [All of these are available on our web page.](#)

## Working with your financial institution

As you consider what actions you might take with regard to investments and banking, please communicate with your financial institution. It is crucial that they understand that their members are concerned. We need our banks to take steps towards a managed decline in order to avoid economic collapse. And it needs to start now. The more they hear from their members, the sooner they will act. If we start taking our money out, they will act faster. If you deal with a credit union it is less likely that they will be invested in fossil fuels but it is always worth communicating your concern and asking some questions.

It is our hope to hear back from you about your decisions, and to support each other in our common longing for climate justice. We have provided bank letter templates to help you express these concerns. We are happy to speak with you or your ministry any time. We request that you begin this process as soon as you can.

## Monthly online forums on climate justice and financing

We will be offering a monthly Zoom forum starting on Earth Day (April 22nd) and continuing on the 22nd of each month over the coming year. This will be your opportunity to discuss actions, ask questions, get support and celebrate any changes. Eventually, we hope to invite guests with expertise in sustainable finance. To receive a link to the Zoom Climate Finance Forum, email [lyndatrono@gmail.com](mailto:lyndatrono@gmail.com) by the 20th of each month (starting in April), and you will get a link for the next forum on the 22nd.

Thank you so much for your ongoing work in caring for creation.

Yours,

Prairie to Pine Climate Finance Task Group, which welcomes new members. Current members: Eli Kanhai, Madelyn Robinson, Don Schau, Karen Tjaden, Lynda Trono. Staff resource: Julie Graham