

July 1, 2021

For immediate release

The Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario of the Presbyterian Church in Canada is staging a virtual conference, ***Climate Change: What Can I Do? Christian Caring for Creation*** from October 14 to 16, 2021. Delegates to this event will come from all the Presbyterian Churches between Quebec City, including Montreal, Ottawa, the Seaway-Glengarry region, and Lanark and Renfrew, Ontario.

The Conference Keynote Speaker is **Dr. Norman Wirzba**, a Canadian, of Duke University. Dr. Wirzba will present three plenary sessions: *What Kind of World Are We In?* introduces the idea that the world is God's creation and what difference it makes to think this way; *What is the Point of the World?* says, even if the world is God's creation, we must still wonder about its point, meaning, and purpose. In *Eating Our Way to Heaven*, he uses food systems and eating practices to bring the two previous plenaries into a more precise focus.

On Friday evening, October 15, an invited panel of **Dr. Norman Wirzba**, **David Heurtel**, former Quebec Minister of the Environment, **Dr. Jessica Moerman**, an environmental scientist, and **Dr. Caroline Begg**, an ecological agriculturalist. will participate in a **Climate Change Town Hall**, moderated by **Thomas Mulcair**.

Climate change has been an ongoing concern in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global consciousness. As such, we are aware of the scientific and political ramifications for the future. The Conference will seek to find out what a Christian perspective can add to the fight to avoid global disaster. It is our objective to challenge our members to ask themselves what they can do. How might their belief in Jesus Christ be mobilized to help save the planet God created for our enjoyment?

Registration Levels: Basic \$25.00 and Premium \$50.00

- both the basic and premium come with a receipted charitable donation to PWS&D of \$25.
- the premium registration comes with a copy of Dr. Wirzba's book *From Nature to Creation* and a study guide.

The conference is supported in part by a grant from The Presbyterian Church in Canada. For more information and to register for the conference go to: <https://bit.ly/3jicYcJ>

### Conference Keynote Speaker and Town Hall Panel Member Bios



**Dr. Norman Wirzba** pursues research and teaching interests at the intersections of theology, philosophy, ecology, and agrarian and environmental studies. Dr. Wirzba frequently lectures in Canada, the United States, and Europe. He centres his research on recovering the doctrine of creation and a restatement of humanity and its creaturely life. Currently, he is the director of a multi-year, Henry Luce-Foundation-funded project entitled "Facing the Anthropocene." In this project, he works with an international team of scholars to rethink several academic disciplines in light of challenges like climate change, food insecurity, biotechnology and genetic engineering, artificial intelligence, species extinction, and the built environment.



**The Honourable Thomas Mulcair** is visiting Professor in the political science Department at l'Université de Montréal. A lawyer, he holds degrees in French Civil Law (B.C.L.) and in Common Law (LL.B.) from McGill University. Mr. Mulcair began his legal career at the Québec Justice Department and served as President of the Québec Professions Board. Elected three times to Quebec National Assembly, he is the author of Québec's landmark Sustainable Development Act when he was Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks. Elected four times to the House of Commons, he was Party Leader and Leader of the Official Opposition.



**Mr. David Heurtel** is Counsel at Fasken law firm, as well as Adjunct Professor at Concordia University in the Masters in Public Policy and Public Administration Program and a Political Analyst for CJAD 800 AM and CTV News Montreal. In Quebec's Liberal government, he was Minister for Sustainable Development, the Environment and the Fight against Climate Change from 2014 to 2017. Mr. Heurtel is Chairman of the Board of Ali et les Princesses de la Rue, a stay-in-school Montreal non-profit, and is a board member of Justice Pro Bono and Écotech Québec. He is also a member of the Expert Advisory Committee of the Association for Canadian Studies' COVID-19 Social Impact Network.



**Dr. Jessica Moerman** is the Senior Director for Science and Policy at the Evangelical Environmental Network. Dr. Moerman received her Ph.D. in Earth and Atmospheric Sciences from the Georgia Institute of Technology and has held research positions at John Hopkins University, University of Michigan, the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, and researched how climate has changed throughout earth's history. Dr. Moerman is passionate about leading church communities towards positive solutions to safeguard our cities, neighbourhoods, and the next generation from the effects of a warming world. She volunteers at the church which she and her husband co-founded in 2016 in the Dupont Circle neighbourhood of Washington, DC.



**Dr. Caroline Begg** is a Faculty Lecturer in the Department of Plant Science at MacDonald College of McGill University. Dr. Begg has worked in the field of sustainable agriculture in Tanzania and the Philippines with her main interest in ecological agriculture. She conducts research on food security on the island of Montreal and on ecological agriculture practices focusing on soil and crop management. Dr. Begg also mentors the Macdonald Student-Run Ecological Garden. She is president of the Marché Ste Anne farmers market, vice president of École-O-Champ, an agricultural education organization, and she serves on the Board of Corbeille de Pain, a food security organization in the West Island.