



19 June 2015

On behalf of the World Communion of Reformed Churches we welcome the papal encyclical *Laudato Si* from Pope Francis. It is heartening to see that our sisters and brothers in the Roman Catholic Church share our deep concerns over the way in which we are treating God's creation, including all God's people but especially the poor and marginalised. We appreciate the focus on *all* life on earth, not just humans.

We in the WCRC have been confronting these same issues for many years. In the past decade the Accra Confession, adopted in 2004, has been a beacon for us, providing us with a theological foundation and a strong commitment to change the way in which the world works against the desires of God.

We would like to share the 20th paragraph of the Accra Confession as it undergirds our own work as well as the direction that Pope Francis has now called his flock to follow:

We believe that God has made a covenant with all of creation (Gen 9.8-12). God has brought into being an earth community based on the vision of justice and peace. The covenant is a gift of grace that is not for sale in the market place (Is 55.1). It is an economy of grace for the household of all of creation. Jesus shows that this is an inclusive covenant in which the poor and marginalized are preferential partners and calls us to put justice for the "least of these" (Mt 25.40) at the centre of the community of life. All creation is blessed and included in this covenant (Hos 2.18ff).

Our commitment to work with all the partners God provides—including interfaith partners and all people of good will—on changing unjust economic systems and structures and patterns of consumerism that drive economic injustice is already making itself manifest on many levels. We are deeply encouraged by the ecumenical partnerships and collaboration in projects related to economic and environmental issues we already share with others. Relationships with our Catholic sisters and brothers can only be deepened when we join together to work to fulfill God's call "that all may have life and have it in fullness (Jn. 10.10).

We commend Pope Francis for his inspirational and courageous leadership and pray that God may give us all the grace, wisdom and courage to work together to the glory of God and the *shalom* of the earth.

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