

July 10, 2018

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Subject: Open Letter to Ontario Premier Doug Ford

Dear Premier Ford,

Congratulations on being given a mandate to form government and assume the role of Premier of Ontario. The people have given you the responsibility to lead the province with integrity, wisdom, and compassion.

As ministry leaders in The United Church of Canada who live and serve in Ontario, we are encouraged by your promise to listen to faith communities such as ours. We are asking the members of our congregations to be conscious of working with our government for the greater good of all Ontarians.

The communities we serve and lead may write to you on their own accord, but we write to you today as ministry colleagues who collectively wish to highlight a number of important issues. We ask that you and your colleagues keep them in mind throughout your term in elected office.

We recognize that much of your platform was centred on economic issues, planned economic reforms, and the pursuit of prosperity for the people of Ontario. We trust that the reforms your government introduces will take into consideration the poor and marginalized of society and will work towards advancing their prosperity. It is our experience that the weakest of our society are the most vulnerable to any change, even change that is warranted.

Although there are many issues that are of concern to us as United Church ministry leaders, these are some of the specific points we ask you to keep in mind as you assume office:

- The vulnerable and marginalized must not pay the cost of budget cuts. The poorest members of our society cannot break free of the cycles of poverty, hunger, homelessness, and poor medical care without programs that enable them to become healthy members of our communities. It is far too easy to fall between the cracks of our currently broken systems.
- Safe, affordable housing for all Ontarians needs to be a priority so that all people can benefit from the physical and emotional safety and stability a good home provides. We are particularly concerned about the lack of quality housing options for people who live with disabilities, seniors with low incomes, and Indigenous people living on reserves.
- It is a moral obligation to help those in need, particularly those fleeing for their lives from

other countries. We ask you to do your utmost to welcome and support refugees and to embody a leadership style that is open and compassionate.

- You have promised to make improvements to our health care system, notably doing away with hallway medicine. We encourage you to keep your promise in this regard and to deliver better access to healthcare for all Ontarians. We are particularly concerned for those struggling with addiction and ask that you give weight to the evidence that supports a variety of approaches to harm reduction.
- We value teaching comprehensive sexual education in our schools and believe strongly that knowledge leads to better choices and better health outcomes.
- Climate care is an expression of our call to be good stewards of God's creation. We encourage your government to find and implement strategies that will reduce Ontario's carbon emissions while contributing to a robust "green" economy. We are concerned that lower gas taxes and a move away from both solar technology and light rail transit will have an adverse impact on the environment in Ontario and beyond.
- As the gap between rich and poor widens, access to higher education is becoming increasingly difficult for a growing number of people. Education in general needs to be a priority. As you have stated, Ontario can be one of the most competitive economies in the world. A well-educated workforce is key to that goal.

We appreciate your desire to unify all Ontarians in a vision of prosperity. We respectfully ask that this vision include the points we have raised, namely care of the vulnerable, affordable housing, support for refugees, quality healthcare, comprehensive sexual education in our schools, climate care, and access to higher education for all.

We would be pleased to meet you and with MPPs in our local areas to begin a dialogue about these matters. Lastly, we wish you well as you fulfil your mandate to serve all citizens of Ontario.

Yours sincerely,

Adam Hanley (Rev.), *Toronto*
Adam Kilner (Rev.), *Sarnia*
A. H. Harry Oussoren (Rev. Dr.), *Ottawa*
Alana Martin, *Toronto*
Alexa Gilmour (Rev.), *Toronto*
Alison Mock (Rev.), *Mississauga*
Alison Nicholson (Rev.), *Hamilton*
Allison Playfair (Rev.), *Burlington*
Allan Baker (Rev.), *Toronto*
Allan Smith-Reeve (Rev.), *Peterborough*
Amy Lee (Rev.), *Toronto*
Andrea Allan (Rev.), *Embro*
Anita Rowland (Rev.), *Grand Valley*
Anita Spiller (Rev.), *Lincoln*

Ann Harbridge, *Rosemont*
Anne Beattie-Stokes (Rev. Dr.), *London*
Anne Dionisio (Rev.), *Toronto*
Anne Meredith (Rev.), *Brooklin*
Barbara Clark (Rev.), *Ilderton*
Barbara Creelman, *Denbigh*
Barry King (Rev.), *Toronto*
Bill Boyd (Rev.), *Parry Sound*
Blair R. Paterson (Rev.), *South Mountain*
Bob Root (Rev. Dr.), *Peterborough*
Brian McIntosh (Rev.), *Etobicoke*
Bri-anne Swan, *East Gwillimbury*
Brad Morrison (Rev. Dr.), *Sarnia*
Brooke Belliveau (Rev.), *Clarington*
Caitlin MacKenzie, *Jerseyville*
Cameron Watts (Rev. Dr.), *North York*
Carey Wagner (Rev.), *Wyoming and Watford*
Carol-Ann Chapman (Rev.), *Nobleton and Schomberg*
Carol L. Hancock (Rev.), *Bracebridge*
Caroline Penhale (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Carolyn Smith, *Mississauga*
Catherine Gutjahr (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Cathy Gradante (Rev.), *Campbellford*
Cathy Taylor (Rev.), *Sudbury*
Ceri Rees (Rev.), *Orono*
Cheri DiNovo (Rev.), *Toronto*
Chris Fickling (Rev.), *Kitchener*
Christine Johnson (Rev. Dr.), *Fitzroy Harbour*
Cheryl Kirk (Rev.), *Wallaceburg*
Cheryl Kinney Matheson (Rev.), *Kenora*
Cheryl Wood Thomas (Rev.), *Fort Erie*
Christina Crawford, *Sweaburg*
Christina Paradela (Rev.), *Lynden and Dundas*
Christine Smaller (Rev.), *Toronto*
Christopher White (Rev.), *Toronto*
Cindy Randall (Rev.), *Toronto*
Colin Swan (Rev.), *Comber*
Cordelia Karpenko (Rev.), *Ajax*
Cory Vermeer-Cuthbert (Rev.), *Elliot Lake*
Curtis Marwood (Rev.), *Blenheim*
Craig Donnelly (Rev.), *Lindsay*
Cynthia O'Connell, *Toronto*
Cynthia R. Stretton (Rev.), *Toronto*
Daniel Benson (Rev.), *Toronto*
Daniel MacDonald, *Cannington*
Darlene Hardy, *Woodstock*
Dave Jagger (Rev.), *Hamilton and London*
David Lander (Rev.), *Castleton and Grafton*

David Moore (Rev.), *Oshawa*
Dawn Vaneyk (Rev.), *Sudbury*
Deanna Gibson (Rev.), *Brigden*
Deb Hinksman (Rev.), *Delhi*
Debbie McMillan (Rev.), *Hamilton*
Deborah Deavu (Rev.), *Cambridge*
Deborah Elliott (Rev.), *Salem*
Deborah Hart (Rev. Dr.), *Toronto*
Deborah Laforet (Rev.), *Oakville*
Deborah Poirier, *Chesterville*
Debra Kigar (Rev.), *Burlington*
Debra Schneider (Rev.), *Toronto*
Donald D. Wachenschwanz (Rev.), *Prescott*
Don Stiles (Rev.), *Seeley's Bay*
Donna Bowman-Woodall (Rev.), *Lake of Bays*
Doug Wright (Rev.), *Parkhill*
Edward Wells (Rev.), *Clarington*
Elaine Beattie (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Eleanor Barrington (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Eleanor Scarlett (Rev.), *Bolton*
Elizabeth Boehm-Wilson (Rev.), *Glenburnie*
Elizabeth Bryce (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Elizabeth Cunningham (Rev.), *Stouffville*
Elizabeth Lemon (Rev.), *Woodstock*
Ellen Walker (Rev.), *Kitchener*
Emily Gordon (Rev.), *Toronto*
Eric Lukacs (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Erin Burns (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Erin McIntyre (Rev.), *Dryden*
Étienne LeSage (Rev.), *Ancaster*
Evelyn McLachlan (Rev.), *Nobleton*
Frances Combs (Rev.), *Toronto*
Frances Flook (Rev.), *Emo*
Fran Ota (Rev.), *Mono Mills*
G. David King (Rev.), *Belleville*
Gail A. C. Christy (Rev.), *Ottawa*
George Clifford (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Georgina Fitzgerald (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Gord Dunbar (Rev.), *Kincardine*
Grant Dillenbeck (Rev.), *Stittsville*
Grant McNeil (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Greer Anne Wenh-In Ng (Rev. Dr.), *Toronto*
Gregory Daly (Rev.), *Caledon*
Greg Smith-Young (Rev.), *Elora*
Hannah Lee (Rev.), *Toronto*
Harry Morgan (Rev.), *Haliburton*
Heather Davies (Rev.), *Neyaashiinigmiing*
Heather McCarrel (Rev.), *Annan*

Heather Leffler (Rev.), *Rockwood*
Heather McLurg (Rev.), *Inverary and Battersea*
Heather Power (Rev.), *Waterloo*
Heather Stevenson, *Caledon*
Hugh D. Reid (Rev.), *Toronto*
Jackie Harper (Rev. Dr.), *Belleville*
Ian Sloan (Rev.), *Hamilton*
Jack Carbert (Rev.), *Orillia*
James Lepard (Rev.), *Toronto*
James Murray (Rev.), *Ottawa*
James Ravenscroft (Rev.), *Richmond Hill*
Jane Capstick (Rev.), *St Catharines*
Jane Howe (Rev.), *North Bay*
Jane Sullivan (Rev.), *Toronto*
Jane Van Patter (Rev.), *Woodstock*
Janet Evans (Rev.), *Morrisburg*
Janet MacPherson (Rev.), *Toronto*
Janet Smith Zenwirt (Rev.), *Etobicoke*
Janet Stobie (Rev.), *Peterborough*
Janice Frame (Rev.), *Silver Water*
Jason Meyers, *Toronto*
Jessica McCrae (Rev.), *Toronto*
Jean Stairs (Rev. Dr.), *Kingston*
Jeff Doucette (Rev.), *Tyrone*
Jenn Hind (Rev.), *Waterloo*
Jennifer Palin (Rev.), *Toronto*
Jessica Cottrell (Rev.), *Harriston*
Jessica Hetherington (Rev. Dr.), *Richmond*
Jim Sinclair (Rev. Dr.), *North Bay*
John D. Suk (Rev. Dr.), *North York*
John Klassen (Rev.), *Toronto*
John T. Mathew (Rev. Dr.), *Mississauga*
John Perigoe (Rev.), *Toronto*
Joseph Ramsay (Rev.), *Napanee*
Joy Cowan, *Toronto*
Judith M. Evenden (Rev.), *Kingston*
Karen Boivin (Rev. Dr.), *Ottawa*
Karen Dale (Rev.), *Toronto*
Karen Hammond Croxall (Rev.), *Bolsover*
Karen Hilfman Millson (Rev.), *Orillia*
Karen J. Bowles (Rev.), *Toronto*
Karen Orlandi, *Niagara and St. Catharines*
Karlene Brown-Palmer (Rev.), *Tillsonburg*
Karlene Kimber, *London*
Kate Ballagh-Steeper (Rev.), *Goderich*
Kate Crawford (Rev. Dr.), *Grand Bend*
Katherine Brittain (Rev.), *Toronto*
Kathi Phillips (Rev.), *Mississauga*

Kathy Douglas, *Kitchener*
Kellie McComb (Rev.), *Waterloo*
Kenneth O. Robinson (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Kevin Logie (Rev.), *Parry Sound*
Kevin Steeper (Rev.), *Goderich*
Kieren Williams (Rev. Dr.), *Hamilton*
Kimberly Heath (Rev.), *Brockville*
Kim Falls (Rev.), *Omeme*
Kim Vidal (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Kirsty Hunter (Rev.), *Minesing*
Kristin Philipson (Rev.), *Toronto*
Larry Doyle (Rev. Dr.), *Courtice*
Lauren Hodgson (Rev.), *Toronto*
Laurie O'Leary (Rev.), *Exeter*
Linda M. Butler (Rev.), *Richmond Hill*
Linda Fuller, *Pembroke*
Linda Newnham (Rev.), *Burk's Falls*
Linda Walker (Rev.), *Hamilton*
Lois Gaudet (Rev.), *Avonmore*
Lorrie Daly-Price (Rev.), *Markham*
Louise Mahood (Rev.), *Toronto*
Lynn Smith Reeve (Rev.), *Peterborough*
Lynne Allin (Rev.), *Mount Elgin*
Lynne Gardiner (Rev.), *Delta*
Maggie Keates (Rev.), *Gravenhurst*
Marcie Gibson (Rev.), *Arnell*
Marg Smith (Rev.), *Stratford*
Margaret Murray (Rev.), *Woodstock*
Marilyn Zehr (Rev.), *Maynooth*
Mark Laird (Rev.), *Drayton*
Marlene Britton-Walfall (Rev.), *Thunder Bay*
Mary Dillon, *Putnam and Springfield*
Mary Elford (Rev.), *Richwood*
Mary-Margaret Boone (Rev.), *Janetville*
Mary Royal Duczek (Rev.), *Almonte*
Matt Gallinger (Rev.), *Merrickville and Ottawa*
Maya Brathwaite (Rev.), *East Gwillimbury*
Maya Landell (Rev.), *Toronto*
Meghan Gilholm, *Glen Morris*
Meg Jordan (Rev.), *Elmvale*
Melanie Kirk-Hall (Rev.), *Sarnia*
Melody Duncanson Hales (Rev.), *North Bay*
Meriel Simpson (Rev.), *Toronto*
Michael Blair (Rev.), *Toronto*
Michael Kooiman (Rev.), *Weston*
Michael Perreault (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Michael Shewburg, *Paris*
Michelle Brotherton (Rev.), *Bowmanville*

Michelle Robinson (Rev.), *Whitby*
Michiko Bown-Kai, *Toronto*
Molly Bell (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Monica Moore (Rev.), *Parry Sound*
Nancy Best (Rev.), *Orleans*
Nancy E. Hardy (Rev. Dr.), *Toronto*
Norm Seli (Rev.), *Toronto*
Norman Long (Rev.), *Tweed*
Oliver Dingwell, *Toronto*
Patricia James, *Stroud*
Philip Cable (Rev.), *Barrie*
Paul Dillman (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Paul Hutchison (Rev. Dr.), *Toronto*
Paul Reed (Rev.), *Kawartha Lakes*
Paul Shepherd (Rev. Dr.), *Toronto*
Peter Woods (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Phil Wilson (Rev.), *Moscow and Riverside*
Ralph Carl Wushke (Rev.), *Toronto*
Rob Metcalf (Rev.), *Toronto*
Robert LePage (Rev.), *Oshawa*
Roberta Howey (Rev.), *Toronto*
Robin Wardlaw (Rev.), *Toronto*
Robin McGauley (Rev.), *Toronto*
Rodney Smith-Merkley (Rev.), *Bobcaygeon*
Ruth McDonald (Rev.), *Barrie*
Sandra J. Yule (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Sarah Chapman (Rev.), *Willowdale*
Sarah Grady (Rev.), *Woodstock*
Sarah Miller (Rev.), *Toronto*
Sharon Ballantyne (Rev. Dr.), *Dunsford*
Shawn Ankenmann (Rev.), *Flesherton*
Sheila Macgregor (Rev. Dr.), *London*
Stephanie Bates (Rev.), *Cumberland*
Stephanie Richmond, *Kawartha Lakes*
Stephen Fetter (Rev.), *Toronto*
Stephen Milton, *Toronto*
Stephen Willey (Rev.), *Bracebridge*
Steve Clifton (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Steven Davis (Rev. Dr.), *Ajax*
Susan Eagle (Rev.), *Barrie*
Susan Emily Cole (Rev.), *Kitchener*
Susan J. Ivany (Rev.), *Thunder Bay*
Svinda Heinrichs (Rev.), *Maynooth*
Takouhi Demirdjian-Petro (Rev.), *Elgin and Portland*
Ted Colwell (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Ted Grady (Rev.), *Sutton*
Ted Harrison (Rev. Dr.), *North Bay*
Teresa Burnett-Cole (Rev.), *Ottawa*

Thelma Arnott, *Barrie*
Thérèse Samuel (Rev.), *Thornbury*
Tina Conlon, *Toronto*
Thomas Dunbar (Rev.), *Mitchell*
Tom MacNeil (Rev.), *Etobicoke*
Trisha Elliott (Rev.), *Ottawa*
Walter Ridley (Rev.), *Blenheim*
Wanda Stride (Rev.), *Kawartha Lakes*
Wanda Winfield (Rev.), *Blenheim*
Warren Ball (Rev.), *Richmond Hill*
Warren Vollmer (Rev.), *Frankford*
Wendy MacLean (Rev.), *Lyn*
Wendy Noble (Rev.), *London*
William Thomas (Rev.), *Fort Erie*
Will Kunder (Rev. Dr.), *North Bay*