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## **Christian Reformed Church Celebrates Papal Encyclical** *Welcomes Pope's moral call to climate action*

**GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (June 18, 2015)**—The Christian Reformed Church in North America, a denomination of roughly 280,000 members in the US and Canada, said on Thursday that it welcomes and celebrates Pope Francis' encyclical on creation care and climate change.

“Since its inception, the Christian Reformed Church has boldly affirmed the inherent goodness of the created world and our responsibility, as caretakers and divine image-bearers, to be good stewards of the many gifts of creation,” said Dr. Steven Timmermans, executive director for the CRCNA.

The Christian Reformed Church is not new to the issues of environmental and climate stewardship. In 2012, it became one of the first evangelical denominations in the US to affirm that human-induced climate change is not only occurring, but that it is a moral, social justice, and religious issue. It went on to call on its institutions, churches, and individual members to take steps to address it in their local contexts.

“We affirm Pope Francis' moral framing of the threats posed by climate change,” said Timmermans. “We have too many brothers and sisters around the world living on the edge of poverty whose livelihoods are threatened—and too many little ones in our congregations set to inherit a dangerously broken world—to believe otherwise.”

“For too long the church has been silent about the moral travesty of climate change,” Timmermans continued. “Today, the Pope has said, ‘Enough is enough,’ and the Christian Reformed Church welcomes his voice.”

*The Christian Reformed Church includes just over one thousand congregations across the United States and Canada. About 75 percent of the churches are in the United States; 25 percent are in Canada. It is one of only a few binational denominations.*

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