



June 21, 2021

Endorsing the *Joint Statement on Physical Punishment of Children and Youth*

The General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada met between June 6 and June 9, 2021, to discern the matters before it and to make the denomination's decisions. During its meetings, the General Assembly adopted the five recommendations listed below. In so doing, The Presbyterian Church in Canada endorsed the *Joint Statement on Physical Punishment of Children and Youth*.

1. That the Joint Statement on Physical Punishment of Children and Youth be endorsed.
2. That the Joint Statement on Physical Punishment of Children and Youth be circulated to congregations, worshiping communities, social ministries, camps, presbyteries, synods and colleges.
3. That congregations, worshiping communities, social ministries, camps, presbyteries, synods and colleges take steps to increase awareness in their communities about the impact of violence, including physical punishment, in homes, families, institutions and communities and to encourage healthy, effective and nonviolent approaches to discipline in raising children and youth.
4. That in line with the Calls to Action No. 6 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Moderator of the General Assembly write to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice advocating the full protection of children, including the repeal of Section 43 of the Criminal Code of Canada.
5. That in line with the Calls to Action No. 6 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, courts and individuals within The Presbyterian Church in Canada be encouraged to write to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Justice and their member of Parliament advocating the full protection of children, including the repeal of Section 43 of the Criminal Code of Canada.

The impetus to endorse *The Joint Statement* was a request from the congregation of St. David & St. Martin Presbyterian Church in Ottawa. The request was answered in the form of a report that outlined the findings of *The Joint Statement* and rehearsed the ways in which they aligned with the Bible's teachings, the tenets of Reformed Theology and the current doctrine and practices of the Church.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada, its ministries and its people will be better much equipped because of the resources and findings outlined in *The Joint Statement*. We are grateful to those who wrote *The Joint Statement* and for its content.

On a personal note, I should say that while preparing a report for the Church on *The Joint Statement* I had the great fortune to meet and work with Ron Ensom. Ron's time, guidance, wisdom, assistance, encouragement, and kindnesses were great blessings and are graces I won't forget.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Ross-McDonald". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Rev. Ian Ross-McDonald
General Secretary, The Life and Mission Agency