



WOMEN'S MOSQUE  
OF CANADA

## March 8, 2022 - International Women's Day "Love: is the essence all we strive for"

This International Women's day, as we celebrate the countless accomplishments of women in our HerStory across communities and borders, we do so with hearts that are filled with bittersweetness from holding both awareness and space for the socio-political and economic challenges women globally have endured this past year and for the accomplishments that we have seen through the rising up of women globally in positions of leadership and on the ground in times of need.

From the COVID19 pandemic and its implications for those fleeing gendered violence, to ever-heightening resource in/securities, ongoing climates of xenophobic and islamophobic violence, and exacerbated socio-political conditions, women continue to be disproportionately impacted by interconnected structures of violence, power, and access.

More locally this past year, Muslim women - especially those racialized and/or practicing religious dress - have faced various forms of gendered islamophobia across the country, from hate crimes against Somali women in Edmonton, to the horrific attack in London Ontario, to Quebec's discriminatory hijab policies (Bill 21). Amidst the chaos of violence and hate, it feels almost impossible to make room for celebrations this year. But here, in lieu of celebration and in the face of uncertain times, we propose on this Women's Day a critical politic of love inspired by the dearly departed, bell hooks (1952 - 2021), who wrote:

*"It is essential to our struggles for self-determination that we speak of love. For love is the necessary foundation enabling us to survive the wars, the hardships, the sickness, and the dying with our spirits intact. It is love that allows us to survive whole." - bell hooks (2007)*

The Women's Mosque of Canada emerged from an ever-powerful love for ourselves and our sisters; its form is the physical embodiment of gendered resilience, reclamation, and collectivity.

This International Women's Day, we at the first Women's Mosque want to stay true to our very foundation, and speak from a place of abundant and overflowing love. Because we too believe that it is love, after all, that moves us forward through plight and struggle, in the face of ongoing violence and inequity.

It is the love for our Creator Allah SWT (the Most Glorified), our selves, for others, for our children, our communities and our planet, that keeps us hoping, planning, and longing for more equitable worlds. Love carries us onward.

Always in Solidarity,  
The Women's Mosque of Canada