



Fossil Free Faith youth fellows in action

2015 ANNUAL REPORT



**Faith & the
Common Good**

**La foi et le
bien commun**

OUR MISSION

We support diverse faith and spiritual communities contribute to greener, healthier, more resilient neighbourhoods.

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2015 HIGHLIGHTS



**6000-
10000+**
Unique visits per month
to our GSS website

Website
Subscribers
300+



Facebook Likes



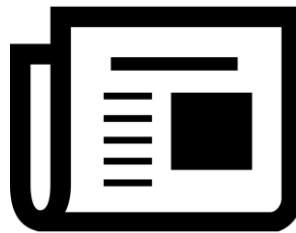
755

(20% more than 2014)



780

Twitter Followers



Newsletter Subscribers

3000+

(with a 25-30% open rate)

30 Media articles

(100% more than 2014)

500+

Volunteers, Interfaith
Steering Committee
Members & Trustees

12000+ Volunteer Hours



FossilFreeFaith

10,414 views from
(400% more than 2014)

5992 unique visitors
(1000% increase from 2014)
to our FFF website



120 Faith Communities in
Our Network with Solar

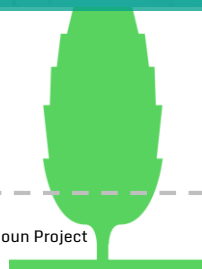
100+ Google Group Members (40% more than 2014)

367 Facebook likes (500% more than 2014)

1011+ Active Faith Communities **20** Faith Traditions Represented

790+

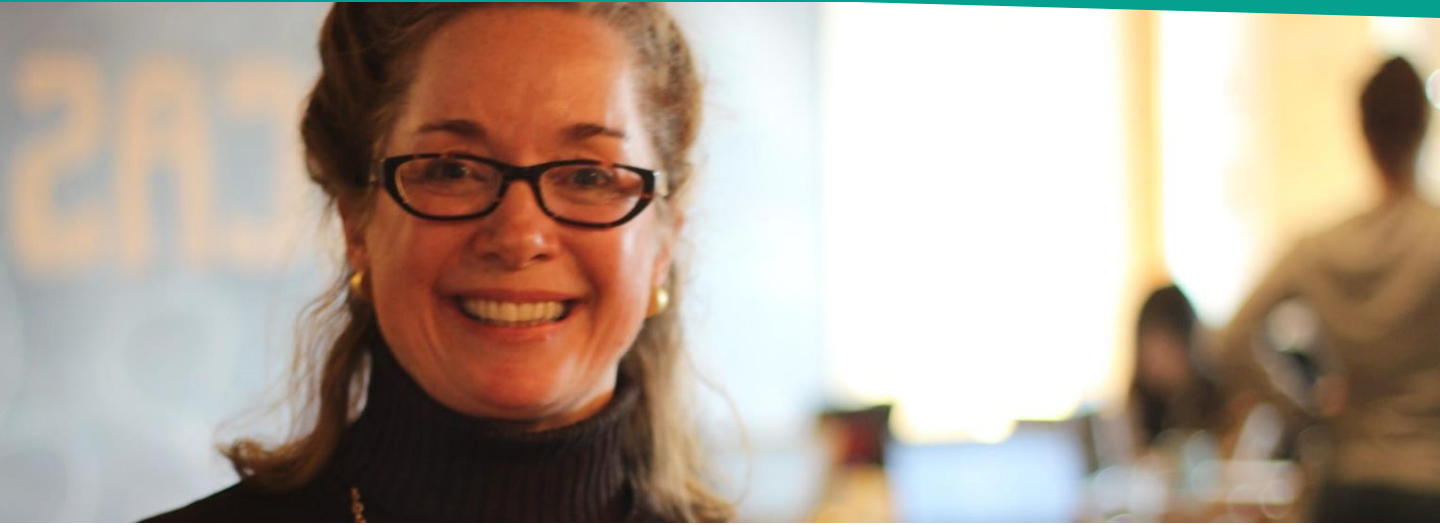
Green Events & Activities



8200+

Event Participants

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LETTER



We need to talk...

2015 was a year of climate conversation and call to action. These conversations are happening across the country. This is a good thing. We need to talk. Behind the headlines, local neighbourhood conversations seem to be the hook. Faith communities have an important role to play in building bridges for action.

At Faith & the Common Good (FCG), we have been facilitating interfaith dialogue on climate change and action, supporting our network in helping to create green, healthy, and resilient neighbourhoods.

Over the last year, we have been partnering with organizations who share our message: faith communities are an integral part of the solution. We need to speak up, speak out and be leaders towards a cleaner, more sustainable, more just society by serving our communities and speaking up for the vulnerable.

In this report, we are excited to share updates about the conversations and work we've been doing supporting religious communities to transition their buildings in becoming relevant community hubs. One pathway for this is through dialogue around congregations preparing their buildings to receive extreme weather impacted residents. Faith groups are working with community groups to this end. Setting an example by installing solar panels on religious buildings is another way to be climate ready role models. And being vocal about the need to divest from a destructive energy infrastructure and invest in renewable energy is an area our Fossil Free Faith program continues to focus on.

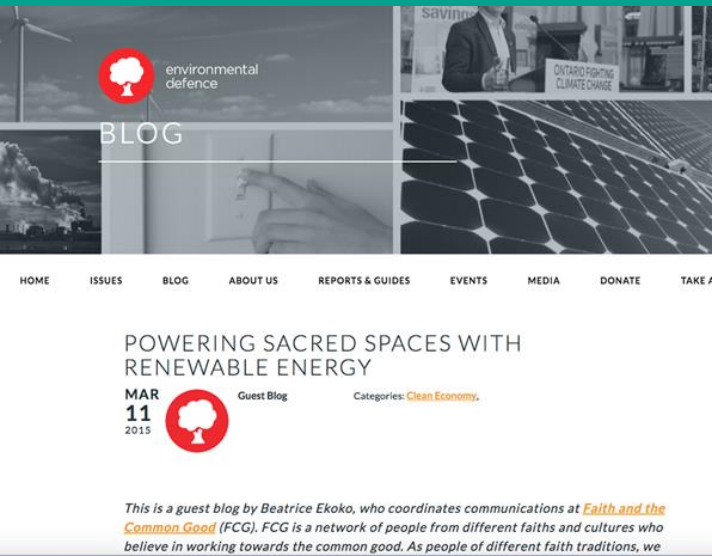
As always, my hope is that our 2015 Annual report will inspire your faith community to bigger and bolder action.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lucy Cummings'.

Lucy Cummings

Executive Director, Faith & the Common Good

RENEWABLE ENERGY REVIVAL



Left: FCG renewable energy article on *Environmental Defence* blog (March 2015).

Right: *Port Nelson United Church, Burlington, ON.*

Below: FCG faith community survey on barriers to installing solar.

In November 2014, we launched a one year initiative called *Renewable Energy Revival for Faith Communities*, to encourage faith communities to take advantage of Ontario's Feed-in-Tariff and microFIT program.

We partnered with groups such as [OurPower](#), [OSEA](#) and [Guelph Solar](#) to deliver webinars on how to get started and what to expect. We developed and updated our solar energy resources and case studies. These updated educational tools have equipped us with the ability to effectively make the case for the value of solar installations to faith sector partners - from both an ethical and financial perspective.

Taking advantage of the strong fossil fuel divestment movement among Canadian faith communities, we targeted the value of Ontario solar coops and renewable energy bonds as valuable "reinvestment" opportunities for faith groups.

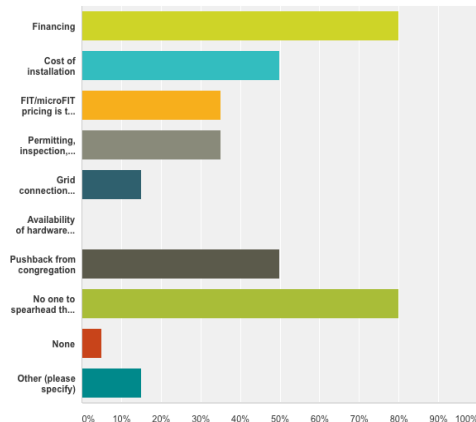
We learned from this project that to turn interest in renewable energy into action, the role of *solar energy champions* is crucial. Cultivating, mentoring and supporting faith-based renewable energy champions within congregations is a critical step in increasing the number of faith-based solar installations.

This project was funded by IESO. Visit the link <http://bit.ly/1MUgctK>

Webinars and presentations : <http://bit.ly/22rjpc7>

Please select the barriers that you feel might prevent other faith communities from following your lead with respect to installing solar. (multiple responses)

Answered: 20 Skipped: 0





Right: *Beth Emeth Bais
Yehuda Synagogue,
Toronto, ON.*

Community partners who expressed an interest in being part of our program include several additional faith communities, food banks, libraries, social service agencies, and local municipal government. We also received in-kind assistance with 2 training sessions from The Salvation Army. The Canadian Red Cross helped vet our “Ready” Emergency Preparedness tool kit. Other partners include CREW ([Community Resilience to Extreme Weather](#)), Toronto Area Interfaith Council, Intercultural Dialogue Institute Toronto, [ICLEI Canada](#), [Green Awakening Network](#), the City of Brampton Office of Emergency Management, and San Francisco’s Neighborhood Empowerment Network.

This effort was supported with funding from Live Green Toronto, The Olive Tree Foundation, and Evergreen CityWorks.

FAITH COMMUNITIES = NEIGHBOURHOOD RESILIENCE HUBS



Left: ***Talk Transformation: Preparing Toronto for an Extreme Weather Future*** (Sept. 24). FCG ED, Lucy Cummings was a featured panelist in the City of Toronto's Talk Transformation series where she discussed the role of Toronto faith communities in strengthening community resilience to climate impacts.

Right: ***Climate Change in our Backyard: A Multi-faith Symposium on Extreme Weather Resilience*** (Oct. 1, Scarborough Civic Centre, Toronto) with the Hon. Glen Murray, Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

CLIMATE CHANGE IN OUR BACKYARD: A MULTI-FAITH SYMPOSIUM ON EXTREME WEATHER RESILIENCE

As part of our efforts to raise awareness around community vulnerability to extreme weather, we dedicated our 2015 annual forum to the topic. We partnered with [Intercultural Dialogue Institute GTA](#), [Toronto Area Interfaith Council](#) and [Green Awakening Network](#) to host this event. Keynotes included the Hon. Glen Murray, Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, Rev. Dr. David Hallman, Former Climate Change Coordinator, World Council of Churches and David MacLeod, City of Toronto, Office of Energy and Environment.

The forum included multiple workshops. One workshop asked the question, "Who is vulnerable to extreme weather & how can faith communities help?" with Rich Waite, Toronto Public Health. A second workshop, "Preparing our Communities to Respond to Extreme Weather Emergencies," was lead by Boris Rosolak, Office of Emergency Management, City of Toronto.

As a result of the Toronto pilot and these awareness raising efforts, several congregations have expressed a desire to continue training, on an ongoing basis, throughout 2016 and 2017. We have committed to working with CREW, Toronto's OEM and the School for Social Entrepreneurs to support Toronto to enhance community resilience to extreme weather and offer ongoing training courses to our faith community partners.

MISSION PER SQUARE FOOT



Left: *Islam Care Centre, Ottawa, ON.*

Right: *St. Luke's Anglican, Ottawa, ON.*

Below: *Visiting Greenwood United Church in Baddeck, NS with the National Trust's ED Natalie Bull*



ENHANCING THE “MISSION PER SQUARE FOOT” OF FAITH BUILDINGS

Helping communities rejuvenate and repurpose faith buildings – where many faith buildings are more than 100 years old, facing dwindling congregations and increasing operating costs – to meet community needs in a sustainable manner is a pressing matter.

The *Mission per square foot (MPSF)* program supports faith groups to help create partnerships within the community to amortize embodied energy, operating energy and other environmental costs over more use, and to evaluate the service capacity of the congregation to meet its mission goals.

We are piloting this new program in Ottawa & Toronto, with financial support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. So far, we are learning from the 10 Ottawa area case studies that showcase the creative ways diverse faith groups are putting their buildings into action.: <http://bit.ly/2a3CWvy>

Regenerating Places of Faith

If large, urban religious centres are struggling, how much more are rural and smaller communities?

In conjunction with our program partners, [The National Trust for Canada](#), we held a day long workshop at the New Dawn Centre for Social Innovation in Sydney, Nova Scotia. The workshop explored what innovative projects have been tried, locally and nationally, to sustain and revitalize places of faith; ways places of faith can cut costs on heating and being greener; forming partnerships with other organizations; new ways to raise funds, etc. The workshop served as a pilot that faith groups and community organizations can apply in Cape Breton and beyond.



SPIRITED YOUTH LEADERSHIP

“Faith-based groups need to be brought into the environmental dialogue.”

- Sarah Beley, Eastern Orthodox- OCA, Vancouver BC



Left: *#FossilFreeFaith.*

Right: *FossilFreeFaith Youth Fellows in action, Vancouver, BC*

Youth are on the cutting edge of sustainability work. We are proud to be working with so many passionate, driven young people towards creating the change that needs to happen.

Fossil Free Faith

In 2015, our FOSSIL FREE FAITH program (in partnership with Vancouver-based Spirited Social Change) worked on a Youth Climate Initiative funded through the Inspirit Foundation.

Fossil Free Faith launched a call for religious-or-spiritual youth concerned about climate change to be part of a ***fellowship program aimed at amplifying young, faithful voices for climate justice.***

Fossil Free Faith Youth Fellows began mobilizing to build a stronger faith-based presence at the Jobs, Justice & Climate rally in Vancouver. They participated in 350 Vancouver planning meetings. And then hosted Calling on Faith Voices - a dialogue to mobilize faith communities around climate issues. On July 4th, the fellows organized and hosted a hugely successful 'Faith Hub' at the Jobs, Justice & Climate rally.

Fossil Free fellows hosted a public event called Conversations with Heart: Dialogue for Healthier Communities. Some were part of launching [EarthKeepers: Christians for Climate Justice](#) at the 10th Avenue Christian Alliance Church in Vancouver.

From this project, we learned that many young people of faith are already making their faith real, but often not visibly. Many are engaged in social change work, but keep their faith-motivation hidden. Creating space that celebrates that faith AND their actions was even more appreciated than we imagined. They were keen to not just be “activists” and “people of faith” but to bring those identities together.

SPIRITED YOUTH LEADERSHIP



Left: *Eastminster United Church, Toronto, ON.*



Right: *Fo Guang Shan Temple, Mississauga, ON (photo credit: Fo Guang Shan Temple).*

Interfaith Youth Forum

We were excited to co-sponsor the Interfaith Youth Forum at **Fo Guang Shan Temple** in May 2015 - a discussion of faith and social issues that brought together youth aged 16-30. The topic was a big one: the future!

The forum had two main panel discussions: "The Power of Faith, Value and Passion" and "Giving Back to your Community and Youth Voices on Social Issues Count." Fourteen youth speakers shared their thoughts on the role of faith in personal and social issues, including environmental degradation, world hunger, and homelessness.

Youth Workshop

In June, we hosted a youth workshop at **Eastminster United Church**, concerning how youth can prepare their vulnerable populations in the case of extreme weather. Youth from 8 different faith communities attended; they represented Global Kingdom, East Toronto Chinese Baptist Church, Islamic Foundation of Toronto, St. Margaret's in the Pines Anglican, Eastminster United, Harbour Light Ministries, Beth Tzedec and Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda. The age of participants ranged from Grade 7 up to 2nd year university. Maps of each faith community were created by the City of Toronto, Mapping Office, and they served to make the presentations both real and relevant. Volunteer, Kristy Thomas, filmed the workshop. <https://vimeo.com/123154730>

INTERFAITH CLIMATE ACTION



Left: *Proud to be part of Ontario's first Sikh Environment Day, Mississauga, ON*



Right: *A bird's eye view of the July Climate Action Iftar, Toronto, ON.*

Below: *Poster from Spirited Climate Action, featuring Bhumi Project's Gopal Patel, Toronto, ON.*

Globally, climate action stepped up with COP2015 and the Paris Climate Treaty in 2015. At FCG, we partnered with many groups to move climate action forward in our communities.

Sikh Environment Day - March 2015

This was an interfaith event, co-sponsored with Ecp Sikh Ontario and Seva Food Bank where we learned about Sikhism and the environment, and discussed future EcoSikh activities such as workshops on food and waste. We also made "seed balls" to help promote biodiversity and pollinator health.

Interfaith Dialogue on Climate Action - May 2015

In May, we partnered with [Sufi Order International](#) and others to hold a workshop called Spirited Climate Action at the University of Toronto. Executive Director, Lucy Cummings was honoured to be the moderator of a panel of world renowned faith leaders including Pir Zia Inayat-Khan (Sufi), Gopal Patel (Hindu) and Dennis O'Hara (Roman Catholic), where we discussed the spiritual motivations behind our shared efforts to address climate change.

MultiFaith Climate Action Iftar - July 2015

Over 200 people attended the "sold-out" Multifaitth Climate Action Iftar in Toronto, on July 5. Iftar is the breaking of the fast at sundown during Ramadan. Taking place at the Noor Cultural Centre, many groups and dignitaries attended, including members from the Sacred Water Circle, Mennonite Church of Canada, Khaleafa.com, Anglican EnviroAction Committee, Fo Guang Shan Toronto, Interfaith Fast for the Climate, ClimateFast, Earth Day Canada and the Hon. Glen Murray, Ontario Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

Spirited Climate Action: An Interfaith Dialogue
Friday May 1, 2015 @ 7-8pm, U of Toronto Multi-faith Centre

Do you have a spiritual practice, religious faith, or ethical philosophy that informs your relationship to the environment?
How do your spiritual leanings strengthen your capacity to lead a life of commitment for our earth community?

Join our distinguished global panel for an evening of interfaith dialogue and Q&A centered on the relationship between spiritual practice and climate action.
spiritedclimateaction.ca



Sponsored by Faith & the Common Good, the Sufi



SHARED LEARNING



Left: *Sacred Water Circle leads with Indigenous spirituality, Peterborough, ON*

Right: *2015 Greening Sacred Spaces North Halton-Peel celebration at the Fo Guang Shan Temple in Mississauga, ON with interfaith steering committee members and representatives and CEA's Executive Director, Ranjana Mitra (far left).*

We wanted to extend a special thanks to two amazing community partners who have made our interfaith network stronger.

Community Environmental Alliance

Thank you to Brampton's Community Environmental Alliance (CEA) for 3 amazing years of partnership and shared learning. 2015 was the final year of our Ontario Trillium Foundation partnership grants in the Halton-Peel region, with CEA as our anchor partner for the North Halton and North Peel communities. CEA's special focus for the grant was on non-Christian faith communities, including those not worshipping in their own dedicated building.

Sacred Water Circle

2015 was also the final year of our funded partnership with the Sacred Water Circle (SWC). One of the most important outcomes from this project is the relationships built between First Nations and non-First Nations peoples, learning how to work together with a common vision to revalue Indigenous environmental knowledge and protect water, with hope and spiritual courage leading the way.

Cultural lessons and resources were developed to be shared with a wider network that will simultaneously support better relationships between professionals, consultants, community leaders, people of faith, students, teachers and First Nations. Business groups include the Chamber of Commerce and Sustainable Peterborough. An Innovation Branch of the Peterborough Economic Development has emerged and many water companies are now a part of the circle including Noble Purification, Aclarus and the Water Research And Innovation Network (WRAIN). Please see our video link:

<http://youtu.be/a33vcUSR5dw>

Our partnership with the Sacred Water Circle continues as we seek ways to replicate their learning models across our networks.



CELEBRATING FAITH ROLE MODELS



Left: *Labyrinth walk at Joshua Creek Heritage Art Centre, Oakville, ON, as part of the Halton-Peel Awards Night on June 10.*



Right: *Dr. Stephen Scharper addresses the gathering at the Halton-Peel Awards Night*

Below left: *Donna Lang presents award to Allan Prittie, and the Green Team, at Morningside-High Park Presbyterian Church, Toronto, ON.*

Below right: *Donna Lang presents award to Al Thompson, of St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Islington, ON*

Each year, FCG presents Green Sacred Space awards to recognize and celebrate those faith communities that have achieved excellence in greening their sacred spaces, as well as engaging their community to do the same.

In 2015, Toronto's Morningside-High Park Presbyterian and St. Matthew's Anglican, Etobicoke, were two recipients. High Park Presbyterian earned the award for their environmental excellence; they have done a solar panel installation, energy retrofit and a large community garden. St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Islington won the award for their lighting retrofit and for sharing their case study with the Anglican community in Toronto.

Faith communities presented with the 2015 GSS South Halton-Peel Award were: Trafalgar Presbyterian Church in Oakville and Port Nelson United Church in Burlington. Dr. Stephen Scharper, author of *For Earth's Sake: Toward a Compassionate Ecology*, was the guest speaker at the Halton-Peel award night. An associate professor at the School of the Environment and the Department for the Study of Religion at the University of Toronto, Scharper talked about rejuvenating spiritual connections to the earth.



CAPACITY BUILDING



Above left: *Natalie Bull (Executive Director) and Tom Urbaniak (Chair), National Trust for Canada in Cape Breton, NS.*



Above right: *Great turn-out for a Greening Sacred Spaces 101 workshop with reThink Green in Sudbury, ON.*

Below right: *Partnership with Toronto-based CREW (Community Resilience for Extreme Weather) was a vital part of our capacity building around neighbourhood faith-based extreme weather pilot.*

As a national, interfaith network we have been stepping up our efforts to build new relationships and partnerships across the country.

Our reach has extended to Vancouver, with Fossil Free Faith, Sudbury, with our Greening Sacred Spaces program, extreme weather preparedness work with CREW in Toronto, and the longevity work to renew places of worship with National Trust in Cape Breton. We were in Calgary for the ICLEI conference. We are very active with the Anglican Church's Creation Matters Working Group, and participate in the monthly conference calls of diocesan "green team" leaders from across the country.



Anglican Church of Canada

Faith & the Common Good

Green Audits 2014-2015

Anglican Church of Canada
and
Faith and the Common Good



Roof installation at St. Luke's Berlingham, Ontario



CELEBRATE YOUR GREENING EFFORTS

with Greening Sacred Spaces

IN THE NEWS

Besides our monthly articles on our blog, we have had much media coverage country-wise, (30 in total, up from 15 in 2014):

- Jan 2015: A community-powered, church rooftop solar installation <http://bit.ly/1YPxZrS> [Ourpower.ca]
- Jan/Feb 2015: SOLAR ENERGY: A LEAP OF FAITH <http://bit.ly/1NnNw1e> [IQRA.ca]
- Feb 2015: Adding Faith to Climate Conversation <http://bit.ly/1TOdNF8> [Catholic Register]
- Feb 2015: Faith Communities and Schools can take on a Green Challenge <http://bit.ly/1TDcbQ2> [Inside Halton]
- March 2015: Powering Sacred Spaces with Renewable Energy <http://bit.ly/1NFERas> [Environmental Defence]
- March 2015: Letter to the City of Toronto Subcommittee on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation <http://bit.ly/1SZNrhq>
- March 2015: Learn how to detoxify your life at Burlington talk <http://bit.ly/29A3EdS> [Burlington Post]
- April 2015: Toronto Muslim leaders hold networking meeting <http://bit.ly/1XgmgE5> [Olive Tree Foundation]
- April 2015: Extremists Create a False Relationship Between Religion and Conflict <http://huff.to/1pvu9sl> [Huffington Post Blog]
- May 2015: Learn, respect and embrace our differences <http://bit.ly/1rdlBpe> [Voice]
- May 2015: Many faiths, one future <http://bit.ly/29GjliM> [Catholic Register]
- May 2015: One planet: Harnessing hope <http://bit.ly/1TOdVEz> [Irene Borins Ash]
- June 2015: Port Nelson Notebook <http://bit.ly/1T6mi1x>
- June 2015: Oakville and Burlington churches recognized for environmental work <http://bit.ly/1sx529y> [Inside Halton]
- June 2015: What Happened at Environment Committee Tuesday <http://bit.ly/1rdlZE4> [Ecology Ottawa]
- June 2015: Why the pope has caught this non-catholic's attention <http://bit.ly/1TNTp8B> [National Observer]

CELEBRATE YOUR GREENING EFFORTS

with Greening Sacred Spaces

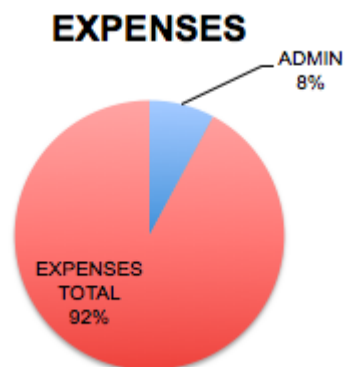
IN THE NEWS, cont'd

- Summer 2015: Streams of Justice <http://bit.ly/1QNMxbA> [Presbyterian Church in Canada]
- July 2015: Faith communities need to get on environmental bandwagon <http://bit.ly/1NFEE7k> [Hamilton Spectator]
- July 2015: Working for climate justice <http://bit.ly/1NSSIEe> [Jewish Independent]
- Aug. 2015: United Church of Canada votes to divest from fossil fuels <http://bit.ly/25qYY4e> [Fossil Free Faith]
- Aug. 2015: Keeping the Fossil Free Faith <http://bit.ly/25nplEP> [Vancouver Courier]
- Sept. 2015: Regenerating places of worship <http://bit.ly/276jBRF> [National Trust for Canada workshop]
- Fall 2015: Change your lifestyle and your community <http://bit.ly/1Y3j8th> [Development and Peace]
- Oct. 2015: Care for God's Creation: A guide for Parishes <http://bit.ly/1Wjvlrc> [Ottawa Archdiocese]
- Oct 2015: Anglican Church of Canada election resource highlights climate change threat <http://bit.ly/1O9PQJk> [Anglican Communion News Service]
- Oct 2015: Mission Per Square Foot Project -- Lessons Learned <http://bit.ly/1WQJLnP> [PERC.ca]
- Oct. 2015: Faith Communities in Ontario go solar <http://bit.ly/25mONKy> [PERC.ca]
- Nov. 2015: Role of Faith Communities as Resilience Hubs (video) <http://bit.ly/1QW1nqa> [Toronto Councillor Gord Perks]
- Nov. 2015: On promoting climate justice and ending poverty <http://bit.ly/24F26cy> Council of Churches
- Dec. 2015: Climate Justice As A Matter Of Faith <http://huff.to/1SXEcS0> [Huffington Post Blog]

REVENUE	
Grants and foundations	202,477
Donations	17,172
Corporate and NGO contributions	14,786
Publications, green audit fees, and other	15,265
Revenue Total	\$249,700



EXPENSES	
PROGRAM	
Green audits	7,788
Partnerships and promotion	93,662
Travel and website	4,745
Workshops and events	1,748
Staff and contractors	118,986
Program Total	\$226,929



ADMINISTRATION	
Personnel	11,250
Insurance	2,714
Office expenses	1,060
Professional services	3,014
Telecommunications and rent	3,133
Administration Total	\$21,171

Net Assets at Dec. 31, 2015	\$60,228
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CONTACT US

FCG's accomplishments are made possible due to the passion, hard work, and talent of its terrific team of staff, board members and volunteers in many cities and regions. We couldn't list everyone here, but our deep thanks to all!

Board of Directors

Bill Phipps, Randal Goodfellow (CHAIR), Ayal Lesh, Azim Shamshiev, David MacDonald, Garth Schmalenburg, Peter Wilkins and Sr. Janet Speth

Staff Team

Diana Brushey, Chaya Chengappa, Stephen Collette, Lucy Cummings, John Dorner, Beatrice Ekwa Ekoko, Kristina Inrig, Donna Lang, Kim Maxwell, Cathy Mitchell, David Patterson, Christina Read

Bios for the team can be found on our website at
<http://greeningsacredspaces.net/about-us/our-team/>

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