



Faith & the
Common Good

La foi et le
bien commun



2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Above, photos from our Ottawa chapter, clockwise from upper left: Sheng Shen Catholic Church Youth Group receiving award at All Saints Sandy Hill; students from L'école élémentaire catholique Saint-Albert in their Ontario150 community garden; Climate Action after Paris event at Centretown United Church; pollinator garden at Trinity Presbyterian Church.



OUR MISSION

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

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2017 HIGHLIGHTS



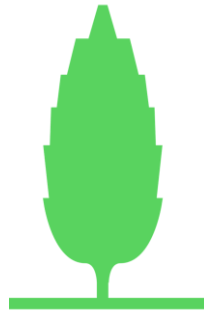
3,300-5,800
Page views per month
600-1,150
Website users per month

Website
Subscribers
410



725+

Green Events & Actions



4,000+

Direct Participants

600+ **Active Faith Communities**

20 **Faith Traditions Represented**

- 8** Gardens created
- 3** Faith Building Audits
- 6** Green Certifications
- 5** Green Sacred Space Awards

79 **Partner Organizations**



Facebook Likes



955

(12% more than 2016)

27 **Blog posts**

22 **Media articles**

2 **YouTube videos**

Newsletter Subscribers

2,350



1,000

Twitter Followers

(14% more than 2016)



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S LETTER



Caring for the Land that Takes Care of Us

How do we take care of one another and the land that takes care of us? In 2017, faith communities in our networks made good use of our diverse programs to this end.

In the winter, we heard stories of regeneration and strategized about how to renew the houses of worship that we have erected upon this land so that they can better serve the communities they are a part of. Together, we forayed into the world of extreme weather preparedness: How can we, as faith communities, be neighbourhood anchors – resilience hubs to ready ourselves *before* disaster strikes?

Starting in the spring, with the support of Ontario150 funds, we grew communities by engaging youth in planting and tending gardens: gardens for meditation and prayer, veggie plots to feed our neighbours, and habitats to support biodiversity – the abundance and diversity of life on earth, which is increasingly under threat.

In late spring, many in our networks accepted the Faith Commuter Challenge to get to worship without cars; we moved across the land as lightly as possible, by bikes, on foot, and by carpooling.

In the fall, we walked as allies with First Peoples in protecting the life-giving waters of the land's Great Lakes.

All these things and more we did with the support we received from our various funders and you, our partners and supporters.

Lucy Cummings

Executive Director, Faith & the Common Good

NEIGHBOURHOOD EXTREME WEATHER RESILIENCE



Above left: *Resilient Hamilton Workshop, Art Gallery of Hamilton.*

Above right: *Chryssa Koulis (School for Social Entrepreneurs), Rajah Lehal (BMW Foundation), Lynda Lukasik (Environment Hamilton), Sheila Murray (CREW TO) at Resilient Hamilton Workshop, Art Gallery of Hamilton.*

Below right: *Faith & the Common Good's "The Lighthouse Project"*
<https://lighthouse-project.weebly.com/>

Below left: *City of Brampton, Lighthouse Program symbol.*



How does a community plan and prepare for extreme weather emergencies? That was the focus of a Resilient Neighbourhoods workshop held in February 2017 at the Art Gallery of Hamilton. Hosted in partnership with [CLARION \(Community-Led Action to Resilience in Our Neighbourhoods\)](#), and [Environment Hamilton](#), the day's project was to identify and support the social capital that's critical to effectively responding to, withstanding, and recovering from disaster.

The big picture – the risks that Hamilton faces – was presented by City of Hamilton staff (Emergency Management and Climate Change Management) followed by a role playing game: Resilientville. This game asked players to think like neighbourhood stakeholders whose decisions can enhance the well being of residents in times of extreme stress. One special guest was the [Tamarack Institute's](#) Sylvia Cheuy, a leading expert on creating community change, who offered her experience of best practices from across Canada and the USA. The point is, it takes a community to prepare for the worst; we can't depend on government to get us through the first 72 hours of disaster. We need to help one another, and it begins with knowing our neighbours and building social strengths – which research shows is what is required to help weather the storm.

Thanks to generous sponsorship from [The BMW Foundation](#) for providing us with this opportunity!

Following this workshop, in the late fall, we were fortunate enough to receive a year-long seed grant from the [Ontario Trillium Foundation](#) to explore community resilience further in three GTHA communities: Hamilton, Toronto, and Brampton. Called the [Lighthouse Project](#), it is inspired by the work of the City of Brampton's Office of Emergency Management, which has been developing relationships with 22 faith communities across Brampton in preparing them to be emergency responders. The Lighthouse Project continues until November 2018.



REGENERATION WORKS: PLACES OF FAITH



Above left: *FCG's Stephen Collette facilitates Q&A at Peterborough, ON "Regeneration Works" training workshop.*



Above right: *Partners for Sacred Places and Regeneration Works teams in action at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church congregational gathering, Hamilton, ON.*

Below right: *Poster for March 11 annual forum.*

The greenest building is the one that already exists. Regeneration Works: Places of Faith – www.placesoffaith.ca – is a collaboration between the [National Trust for Canada](http://www.nationaltrust.ca) and Faith & the Common Good to support capacity building in communities and congregations who are seeking to regenerate places of worship at risk of closure. Our coaching workshops bring together diverse stakeholders across communities to build support networks and share "regeneration" best practices – including new models of shared governance/usage; community engagement tools; mission-led planning; interfaith/ecumenical collaborations – to enhance the "mission per square foot" and community value of our places of faith. Highlights include:

- On February 25th, our workshop in Peterborough (co-hosted with the City of Peterborough, the Peterborough Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee, and our partners at the National Trust for Canada) brought together local faith groups, heritage and community organizations to share their experience, concerns, and creative solutions to the challenges confronting places of faith in south-central Ontario, with a special emphasis on the challenges faced by rural and small-town places of faith.
- On March 11th, our 2017 [annual forum](http://www.placesoffaith.ca) – "Exploring Sacred Space: Regenerating Places of Faith" – was held at the University of Toronto, co-hosted by the Green Awakening Network, Toronto Area Interfaith Council, University of Toronto's Multifaith Centre, and the National Trust for Canada. In addition to key notes and workshops, 4 congregations – Hare Krishna Toronto, Fairlawn Avenue United Church, Manor Road United Church, and International Muslim Organization of Toronto – shared their faith property renewal journey.
- Regeneration Works & US-based [Partners for Sacred Places](http://www.partnersforsacredplaces.org) are supporting the leadership and members of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Hamilton to undertake a thoughtful and groundbreaking effort to explore new models, tools, and resources that could help the congregation develop a plan for the future that is sustainable and community-oriented.

Exploring Sacred Space

Regenerating Places of Faith

Sat. March 11, 2017
10:00 am - 3:30 pm
Multi-Faith Centre
569 Spadina Ave.

Registration:
\$35 (includes lunch)
<http://tinyurl.com/exploringsacredspace>



In Canada's ethnically and religiously diverse urban centres, religious communities face many challenges as they seek to live faithfully and make their contribution to the common good.

Many established faith communities are declining in strength, and find their houses of worship under-utilized; they are struggling to maintain their traditional role of caring for the community. At the same time, the aspirations and values of many new faith communities are not well understood by society, and in a fearful age, they are sometimes met with suspicion.

The forum will bring together people from a variety of religious traditions to explore the challenges presented to faith communities by changing demographics. It will stimulate thought as to how we can creatively transform and use our religious institutions for the next generation. We hope you can join us for an informative and frank conversation on this topic.

Highlights:

- Keynotes: Dr. Stephen Schaeffer (School of the Environment, University of Toronto), and Dr. Mike Wood (The Halo Project) on Sacred Space in religious thought and measuring the social impact and value of faith communities.
- Workshops: focus on diverse building, regeneration case studies.
- Interactive presentations: find winning ideas for re-purposing and regenerating your faith building.

Presented by:



ONTARIO 150 YOUTH GARDENS



Above left: *St. John's Anglican Church, South March, ON.*



Above right: *Tucker House, Rockland, ON.*

Below left: *Tarbiyah Elementary School, Milton, ON.*

Below right: *Christ the King Catholic Secondary School, Georgetown, ON.*

FCG participated in Canada's and Ontario's 150th anniversary through the receipt of a grant from the Province of Ontario's Ontario150 Youth Partnerships Program. This grant allowed us to engage and support youth in creating new gardens at eight faith communities across the province.

Two faith-based schools were selected in Halton – a small Muslim elementary school and a large Catholic high school. Students really enjoyed the opportunity for hands-on work. Acknowledging the challenge of the 150th for First Nations in Canada, our coordinator worked with First Nations representatives to ensure recognition of the territorial land on which the gardens were built.

In Toronto, we worked with youth at a mosque, a synagogue, and a United church, creating native plant gardens in all three locations. One result was a new Native Plant Garden Guide resource, which can be found [on our website](#).

Our Ottawa chapter worked with a rural francophone Catholic elementary school and an ecumenical summer day camp to create edible community gardens. The final garden was a meditative garden in a cemetery beside an Anglican church.

This project allowed us to form new partnerships and strengthen existing ones. It was wonderful to see the youth truly take charge of some of these projects and run with them!



FAITH COMMUTER CHALLENGE



Above left: *Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver, BC.*



Above right: *Westdale United Church, Hamilton, ON.*

Below left: *St. Hilda's by the Sea, Sechelt, BC.*

Below centre: *Scarboro United Church, Calgary, AB.*

Below right: *St. Margaret's of Scotland, Halifax, NS.*

The inaugural Faith Commuter Challenge was a truly coast-to-coast event. Faith communities from Halifax to Vancouver participated in the challenge, encouraging their congregations to get to worship without their car. The challenge ran June 2-11, covering two weekends and the intervening week. In total, 41 faith communities in 5 provinces logged trips by alternative modes of transportation, saving over 1,500 kg of CO₂ emissions.

We loved the [blog submissions](#) from across the country! Participants reported "blessing of the bikes" ceremonies, bike tours, alternative transportation workshops, and simply finding new ways to get to worship. Challenges discovered during this pilot project included lack of public transit options in some areas and difficulties with the online registration system in some older communities. We were heartened to hear how carpooling can create new connections within communities.

Many thanks to the [Automotive Recyclers of Canada's](#) Grants in Gear program, which supported this cross-country initiative.



RENEWING THE SACRED BALANCE



Above left: *The Great Lakes Water Walk Grandmothers' Circle (L to R): Marilyn Longlade Capreol, Vivian Recollet, Shirley I. Williams, Josephine Mandamin, and Patricia Oakes.*

Above right: *Pre-walk volunteer training session led by Great Lakes Water Walk Protocol Director and Anishinaabe Grandmother Kim Wheatley.*

Below: *Amazing volunteers getting ready to depart from Scarboro Missions for the Eastern portion of walk.*



Renewing the Sacred Balance: Great Lakes Water Walk

On September 24, 2017, the Great Lakes Water Walk (Nibi Mosewin Onji Nayaano-nibimaang Gichigamiin) invited people from all backgrounds to join Indigenous Grandmothers, Knowledge Holders, and Elders in a day of "walking for the water" along the Toronto waterfront. (For details: <http://greatlakeswaterwalk.ca/>).

Heartfelt Miigwech / Niá:wen / Thank you to all in our network who responded to the call and walked, supported, spoke to, stood by, and prayed for the water on this special day. We estimated that close to 1,000 people took part in the walk and final blessing ceremony, despite the extreme heat alert. We couldn't have pulled it off without the love and support of so many of you.

Toronto's Adria Vasil's (Ecoholic) beautifully captured what participating in the walk meant to so many of us (nowtoronto.com/lifestyle/ecoholic/great-lakes-water-walk-walking-on-water):

"The copper pail passes into my hands It's heavier than it looks.... Next to me an Indigenous man, a housing worker by day, takes his turn holding the staff. It's his first water walk, too. I'm determined not to let any water splash excessively as I walk and remember what [Elder Dr. Shirley] Williams said earlier about sending the water good thoughts.

I try my hand at praying and tell the water that I hope the city will start taking better care of it as tears start welling up in my eyes. I hold them back. Can't waste precious water when it's a sweltering 30°C at 9 am. Another woman taps my shoulder and offers to share the load.

RENEWING THE SACRED BALANCE

cont'd



Above left: *Praying with our feet. Walkers approach the final blessing ceremony from the west.*

Above right: *Departing at sunrise, Mississauga, ON.*

Below left: Grandmothers' Circle member Marilyn Longlade Capreol with Sr. Janet Speth, Rev. Ian M. LaFleur, Swamini Shivapriyananda, and Ronnie Seagren at the final Blessing Ceremony, Toronto, ON.

Below right: *We are grateful for the support the walk received from many faith-based groups, including the [Parliament of the World's Religions](#), whose Toronto Steering Committee members are pictured here.*

Falling back into the tangle of water walkers, I recall Williams's words from our chat a few days earlier about carrying the water. "I have seen women change how they look at the water, how they treat the water. They make changes within themselves and also within their family. They stop putting chemicals in the water. They'll save water."

"It's important to bring the water awareness of the four races to this great area," Liz Osawamick, [Great Lakes Water Walk advisory council member and Anishinaabe Midewiwin-kwe community leader], says to me, "because you have all kinds of nationalities that live here in Toronto. We are made of water. It's [critical] that they know how sacred and important the water is to everyone."

Our network will continue to look for further opportunities to support Sacred Water Walking, under the ceremonial leadership of Indigenous Grandmothers, Knowledge Holders, and Elders, as a powerful way to honour Nibi (water) and walk towards a better future for all.



FAITH IN OUR FUTURE: CLIMATE ACTION



Above left: *Dr. Dianne Saxe, Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, speaking at the Jaffari Centre.*



Above right: *Jaffari Centre, Thornhill, ON.*

In 2017, the highlight of our climate action agenda was our work with the [Environmental Commissioner of Ontario](#), Dr. Dianne Saxe, via a series of regional active-learning events organized by our Greening Sacred Spaces chapters.

- On June 26th, [Environment Hamilton](#) hosted "Facing Climate Change" at the Hamilton Central Library, which featured a local climate action fair and recognition ceremony for the faith groups who participated in the Hamilton "Faith Commuter Challenge".
- On Sept 14th, [Halton Environmental Network](#) hosted "Stewards for Change" at the Anglican Church of the Incarnation, where Mayor Rob Burton, Regional Councillor Allan Elgar, Environmental Policy Director Cindy Toth, and many other representatives from the community of Oakville were present to discuss the urgency of climate change.
- On Sept 18th, [Jaffari Community Centre](#) hosted "Supporting Multi-Faith Climate Action", which featured a multi-faith panel of York regional faith-based leaders who were role modeling green buildings, sustainable urban agriculture, and waste management best practices for the larger community.

Dr. Saxe, who has been a green team leader in her own community of faith, traveled to these gatherings to highlight the important role for Ontario's communities of faith in the central moral challenge of our time – climate change. Her key message: climate change is having an immense impact on Ontario's people, environment and economy. The choices we make today matter deeply if we want the chance to positively shape what's coming. So:

- Figure out your carbon footprint and reduce it by 5% every year.
- Get ready for what's coming. We're in for a wetter and wilder world, and we must prepare for such incidents.
- Speak up. We need to talk to our elected leaders about climate change and the actions that are needed.

CELEBRATING FAITH ROLE MODELS

Right: *FCG board member LoriAnn Givran moderates the Q&A with Fairlawn Avenue United Church at the annual forum in Toronto, ON.*

Below top: *Tristan Mohamed and Halton-Peel coordinator, Ramsha Ahmed.*

Below centre: *Halton-Peel Award winner Solel Congregation.*

Below bottom: *Halton-Peel Award winner St. Simon's Anglican Church.*



Green Sacred Space Awards in 2017

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 community to do the same. The awards presentations provide a networking opportunity for attendees to share ideas.

In 2017 the following chapters celebrated:

Our Toronto Chapter presented an award to the Hare Krishna Temple at the FCG annual forum in March. The forum took place at the Multi-faith Centre at the University of Toronto and focused on faith communities that have regenerated their buildings. Four faith communities, including the Temple, gave presentations on their accomplishments. The event featured talks by Dr. Stephen Scharper on sacred space in religious thought and by Dr. Mike Wood-Daly on The Halo Project, measuring the social impact and value of faith communities.

The Halton-Peel GSS Annual Awards Night & Networking Event took place in May at the Joshua Creek Heritage Arts Centre (Oakville, ON). The keynote speaker was Tristan Mohamed, a board member of our partner, Halton Environmental Network. As well as being a lawyer, Tristan teaches meditation classes and spoke about eco-spirituality. Awards were presented to Solel Congregation, Mississauga, and St. Simon's Anglican Church, Oakville.

Our Ottawa Chapter presented the 2017 Green Sacred Space awards to both Glebe-St. James United Church and Paroisse Sainte-Marie d'Orléans at individual events at the faith communities.



FCG IN THE NEWS

Besides our monthly articles on our blog (<http://www.faithcommongood.org/blog>), we have had much media coverage country-wide:

Feb. 2017

Our compassion for the earth – Ecology and spirituality <https://bit.ly/2L3xqtu> (Snapd South Mississauga)

Emission control <https://bit.ly/2x9yCti> (UC Observer)

Peterborough workshops consider the future for places of worship [*sic*] <https://bit.ly/2GKvjrp> (Peterborough Examiner)

March 2017

A big church tries to deal with its big carbon footprint <https://bit.ly/2J4BNHw> (Treehugger)

Churches mean millions to local communities: Halo study <https://bit.ly/2s6RYJX> (Anglican Journal)

Exploring sacred spaces: A reflection <https://bit.ly/2KMAsqQ> (Faith-based Consulting)

Environmental award given to our temple! <https://bit.ly/2KQXw2X> (Toronto's Hare Krishna Temple)

April 2017

Canadian Anglican, Lutheran leaders ask for Earth Day prayers, action <https://bit.ly/2s3i6pE> (Anglican Journal)

May 2017

ReThink Green hosts Commuter Challenge <https://bit.ly/2IJ4qXI> (The Sudbury Star)

National Faith Commuter Challenge: Spring 2017 <https://bit.ly/2IEUT7D> (St. Joseph's Parish, Ottawa)

Around town: Faith Commuter Challenge <https://bit.ly/2klnh00> (Church for Vancouver)

Holy rollers: Vancouver church blesses bicycles, transit cards, shoes <https://bit.ly/2x6pKEL> (Vancouver Courier)

June 2017

The extreme weather and high water of climate change <https://bit.ly/2sWMdP1> (The Hamilton Spectator)

July 2017

Tarbiyah Elementary experiences the joys of green space! <https://bit.ly/2H0kEcT> (Iqra.ca)

Sept. 2017

Sprited [*sic*] climate action in York Region on September 18, 2017 <https://bit.ly/2KMMxrc> (York Region)

Multifaith event raises awareness on climate change <https://bit.ly/2KKD57u> (Iqra.ca)

Great Lakes Water Walk has me walking on water <https://bit.ly/2s8gfPJ> (Now)

Oct. 2017

Greening Sacred Spaces issue <https://bit.ly/2xnbDel> (PEN Insider)

Helping one another in times of climate breakdown <https://bit.ly/2zsXS11> (Environmental Defence)

Green Team reduces church's carbon footprint <https://bit.ly/2kl5cyU> (Anglican Diocese of Toronto)

Nov. 2017

Philadelphia's sacred and creative spaces uncovered <https://bit.ly/2hQrvMf> (Arts Build Ontario)

Dec. 2017

Why faith groups and arts groups should cohabitate <https://bit.ly/2BLAQ08> (National Trust for Canada)

REVENUE

Foundation and government grants	197,392
NGOs and partnerships	103,841
Fee-for-service	30,270
Donations	13,516
Interest and other income	2,186
Total Revenue	\$347,205

PROGRAM EXPENSES

Program salaries	103,320
Regional program costs	196,459
Events and meetings	11,195
Communications	6,318
Communications	4,682
Total Program Expenses	\$321,974

ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES

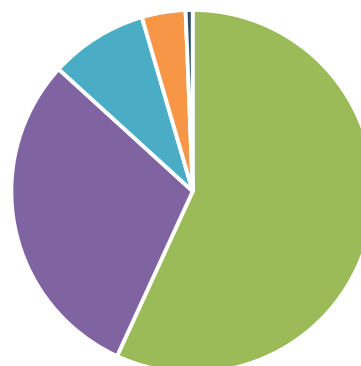
Administration salaries	11,335
Professional services	5,526
Rent and insurance	4,529
Telecommunications	3,033
Office expenses	1,108
Total Administration Expenses	\$25,531

Total Expenses **\$347,505**

Net Assets at Dec. 31, 2017

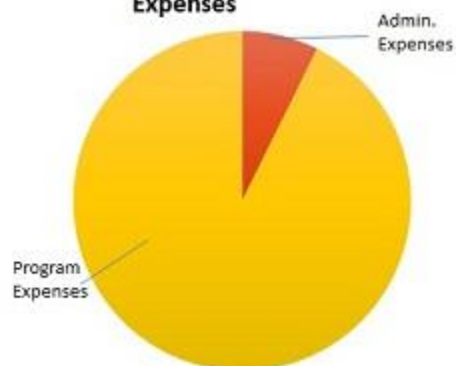
\$57,017

Revenue



- Foundations & government grants
- NGOs & partnerships
- Fee-for-service
- Donations
- Interest & other income

Expenses



OUR TEAM



Above left: *Part of the team visits the Scarborough Bluffs, Toronto, ON, November 2016.*

Above right: *Team retreat at Scarboro Missions, Toronto, ON, November 2016.*

FCG's accomplishments are made possible due to the passion, hard work, and talent of its terrific team of staff, animators, board members, and volunteers in many cities and regions.

We can't list everyone here, but our deep thanks to all! Special thanks to co-founder, Very Rev. Bill Phipps and long time board member Hon. David MacDonald who both retired from the board in 2017 and to Ottawa volunteer, John Dörner, who also retired after many years of service!

2017 Board of Directors

Randal Goodfellow (Chair), LoriAnn Girvan, Chris Hrynkow, David MacDonald, David McAuley, Bill Phipps, Garth Schmalenbourg, Azim Shamshiev, Janet Speth, Tom Urbaniak

2017 Animation Team

Lucy Cummings, Ramsha Ahmed, Christine Boyle, Adriana Chang, Stephen Collette, Rebecca Danard, Beatrice Ekwa Ekoko, Katherine Forster, Kendra Fry, Christelle Grondin, Laura Hamilton, Andrew Hurrell, Donna Lang, Juby Lee, Kim Maxwell, Chantelle Misheal, Sheila Murray, Emma Norton, David Patterson, Lisa Seiler

Bios for the team can be found on our website at www.faithcommongood.org/team

CONTACT US

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[www.youtube.com \(channel: FCG media\)](https://www.youtube.com/channel/FCGmedia)

