

**Green Churches**  
Network



## ***ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020***



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## A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

A very exceptional year indeed! Fall 2019 started very strong with demonstrations for the planet across the globe, finally the climate crisis was widely covered in mass media and people all over were mobilizing to make change! People look toward their communities to do their part for the planet, and this is where church communities play an important role. The Green Churches Network is there to support, assist and inspire these communities. Communities use church buildings as focal points of neighborhoods, whether it's for religious ceremonies, other events or simply as a gathering space, there is no village without at least one church! Society needs the church, and the church needs to work with the ever changing demands of society in order to stay relevant.

January 2020 was the beginning of my role as the executive director of the Green Churches Network. Diving in the deep end, I immediately started attending meetings, promoting ecological practices, and supporting our registered churches. We built a project and were successful securing funding (recycling 101). We also attended an energy audit at St. Lambert United Church, which was very informative, inspiring and beneficial for forming partnerships. Energy efficiency is the direction we would like to focus on in the coming year; it is time that church buildings simultaneously reduce their maintenance costs and their carbon footprint.

Also noteworthy is the article that was published by the Catholic Register in early March 2020 about the Network and how we persevere to meet our goals and the role that churches play on the community level as examples of environmental stewardship. This article was also republished on the American Newsbreak website, as well as on the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon website. This type of publicity furthers our reach and helps build our network stronger. We are now in 5 provinces (BC, AB, ON, QC, NS) with goals to expand to all our Canadian provinces and territories!

With the onset of the pandemic and the lockdown restrictions we managed to maintain communications via phone and email, and were pleasantly surprised by the increased requests to our organization, people are rethinking their relationship to the environment, God's Creation. It is with a heavy heart that I say that our communities have suffered great losses due to this public health crisis and we hold you all dear in our prayers. May we come out of this pandemic stronger and build a brighter more sustainable future for all to enjoy through the protection of God's Creation.



**Erica Follon**  
Executive Director



## Our mission



**The Green Churches Network supports Christian communities that improve their environmental practices. It offers practical tools geared to action, education and spirituality which enable them to successfully integrate the ministry of Creation care into the regular activities of their church.**

Our ecumenical organization welcomes Christian communities from all denominations.

We invite church communities to make the biblical theme of our role as stewards of Creation part of their prayers and teachings and to adopt better environmental practices such as recycling, energy efficiency and water conservation. Churches in our Network also organize educational and community service activities which foster a healthy and sustainable environment. Their 'green' initiatives are shared through our website and our newsletters.

## MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

M. Benoit Lacroix Vachon, (president) Engineer

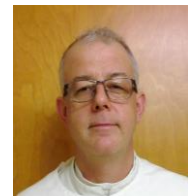
M. Michel Pilon, (Vice-President) Coordinator at RATTMAQ

M. Norman Lévesque, (Secretary) Founder of the Green Churches Network

M. Gregory Lynch, (Treasurer) Director at Mantis Environmental

M. Simon Lepage (Administrator) Agent de pastorale St. Eustache

M. Stephane Demers (Administrator) Brother stephane o.praem



## A CHARISMATIC TEAM

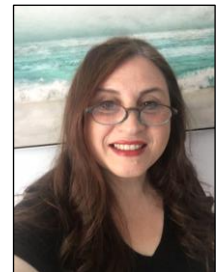
### **Bernice Baranowski,**

Bernice has over 30 years' experience in research and volunteers 4 days a week researching useful material and responding to telephone calls and visitors. She also does proofreading and handles the translation of texts from French to English. We are blessed to have her "encyclopedic" input in the office!



### **Angelina Ferreira**

Angelina joined the team in November 2016 as Administrative Assistant. She is responsible for communicating with our registered green churches and for guiding interested Christian communities through the process of finding their place in the network. She is always ready to answer your questions and responds to your requests. She is an asset and a pillar to the network!



### **Georgette Souaid**

Georgette joined the team in June 2019 and worked on education projects and support for registered churches. Georgette has experience in programs focused on the energy transition, the circular economy and sustainable development. Her contract finished in November 2019, it was a great pleasure to have worked with her.



### **Gregory Lynch**

Gregory joined the Network in September 2018 and held the position of Director until a replacement was hired in January 2020. His dedication and commitment to the Network transferred into a position on the Board of Directors as Treasurer. For more than ten years Gregory has worked in the field of environmental education and renewable energy. He holds a Masters in Sustainable Development from the University of Luxembourg.



### **Erica Follon**

Erica joined the team as the Director in January 2020, she brings her experience from the environmental nonprofit sector, churches, and holds a Master's of Science from McGill's Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. Project driven and results oriented, she is here to help churches become examples of environmental stewardship within their communities.



## REGISTERED CHURCHES IN THE GREEN CHURCHES NETWORK

### New Green Churches (2019-2020)



Saint Joseph de Chambly Church,  
Chambly, Quebec



St-Joseph Parish ,  
Sorel-Tracy, Quebec



Ste-Anne Parish,  
Ste-Anne-de-Sorel, Quebec



Centre Le Rocher,  
Saint-Jérôme, Quebec



Saint-Maxime Church,  
Laval, Quebec



St. George & St. Andrew United Church,  
Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia

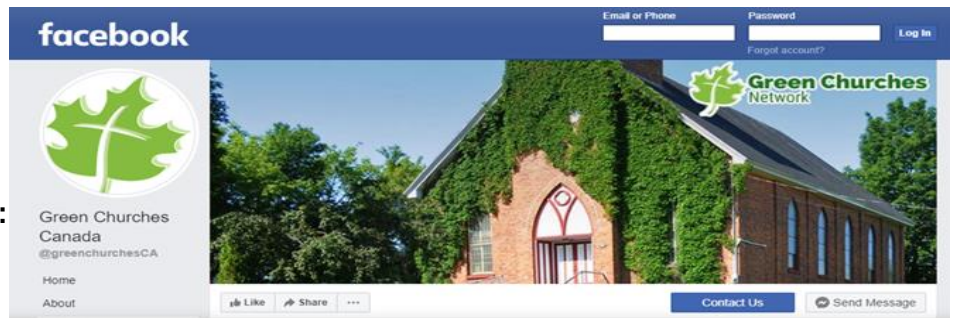
\* At year end, there were 80, at time of writing there are now 86 registered churches in our network



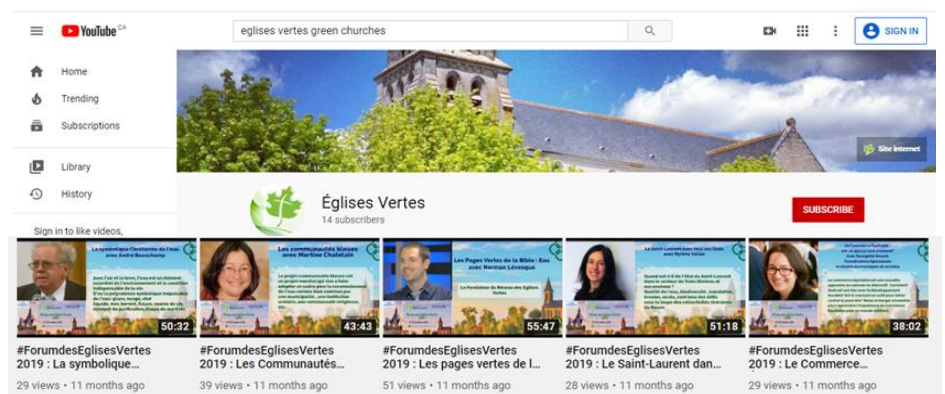
## Social Media



1383 people "like":  
@GreenChurchesCA  
@eglisesvertes



22 videos, views  
per video: 18 to  
600



682 followers total



## Monthly Newsletter

A total of 2295 individuals receive our newsletter;

1396 in French and 899 in English.

We keep our electronic monthly newsletter short and simple. Others organizations have been known to publish our news on their own platforms, which greater increases our exposure as well as traffic on our website.

People can subscribe to the newsletter through our website, or at our kiosk tables and conferences.



## Season of Creation 2020

<https://greenchurches.ca/season-of-creation/>

 <b>Season of Creation 2020</b> <small>A LAND FLOWING WITH MILK AND HONEY - Exodus 3:8, Ezekiel 20:6          "I have come to bring them to a good and fruitful land,          a land flowing with milk and honey,          the most glorious of all lands."</small>						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Creation Care</b> Discover more: <a href="https://greenchurches.ca/season-of-creation/">greenchurches.ca/season-of-creation/</a>		<b>World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation</b> Ps 65: 5-13	Build an insect hotel (and send us pictures!) <a href="mailto:info@greenchurches.ca">info@greenchurches.ca</a> #insecthotel	What's your favourite native pollinator? #nativepollinator	Make a seasonal produce menu plan for next week #seasonalproduce	Go to a farmers' market to buy your local produce for the week #localfarmersmarket
<b>Fair Harvest</b> Matthew 18, 15-20 "...there am I in the midst of them."	Buying local tells you how your food was produced and cuts transportation costs #localproduce	Choose the ugliest fruit or veggie and enjoy it! #uglyveggie	Leave those leaves and sticks on the lawn, they'll help all the good insects who live with us. #GardenWildlife	Learn about food security in Canada <a href="http://www.fsc.org/index.htm">www.fsc.org/index.htm</a> <a href="http://www.fsc.org/index.htm">www.fsc.org/index.htm</a> #foodsecurity	Use up all those leftover veggies <a href="http://www.plated.com/more">www.plated.com/more</a> <a href="http://www.plated.com/more">www.plated.com/more</a> #eatwhatyouhave	Plan a harvest time family gleaner outing #StopFoodWaste
<b>Reclaim, Restore</b> Psalms 102 (103) "Bless Jehovah, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."	Restore the earth, use organic cleaning soaps, natural cat litter #homemadepesticides	Recover the purity of water, use ecological cleaning soaps, natural cat litter #naturalcleaning	Don't forget your reusable bag when you go shopping #reusablebags	Why buy new when used clothing stores have all the best stuff? #ethicalfashion	Show people how to grow their own food, start a community garden #communitygarden	Share your green weed control tips in the bulletin #naturalweedcontrol
<b>Servantship</b> Matthew 20, 1-6 "...hire laborers into his vineyard."	Voluntary Simplicity for you! #voluntarysimplicity	Make oceans healthy, limit plastic use <a href="http://plasticfree.ca">plasticfree.ca</a>	Save rain water to water plants, to wash the driveway #saveRainWater	Why buy new when you can repair? Donate your used car etc. <a href="http://www.repair.ca">www.repair.ca</a> <a href="http://www.repair.ca">www.repair.ca</a>	Job 12:7-10 "The animals and plants will tell you that the hand of the Lord has done this"	Buying Fairtrade helps producers earn a living wage and feed their families #buyfairtrade
<b>Sharing, Caring</b> Psalms 24 (25) "Show me thy ways, O Jehovah, Teach me thy paths."	#gardenbees	Buy honey from a local beekeeper and ask about how it was made Prov. 16:24	Shop less. Spend wisely. Donate your old smartphone to help the blind. <a href="http://phonethurand.ca">phonethurand.ca</a>	Plan a church seed exchange day #seedexchange	St. Francis of Assisi Honor St. Francis, let his example guide you to deepen your fellowship with all creatures. #StFrancis	Thanksgiving Gifted with our bountiful land and with our adoption as children of God in fellowship with all his Creation

### Tools to download:

- Calendar of Daily Actions
- Poster
- Prayer Guide
- Fundraising Guide
- Spirituality Activity
- Education Activity
- Action Activity



In August 2017, the Green Churches Network launched the first Season of Creation Toolbox. We are the only organization in Canada to offer such a resource, and it's free of charge!



## What is the "Season of Creation"?

Every year, from September 1st to October 4th, churches around the world observe the "Season of Creation". Since 2008, the World Council of Churches has been promoting church participation in this special period of the year. Its popularity is growing in Europe and the United Church of Canada was the first in this country to celebrate it. The downloadable resources provided by the Green Churches Network make it possible for all of Canada's Christian communities to join in the annual celebration and reenergize their commitment as responsible stewards of God's Creation.

## Why the dates from September 1st to October 4th?

In 1989, Dimitrios I, Patriarch of Constantinople, dedicated the first day of the Orthodox liturgical year (September 1st) to the protection of the environment. He then invited the whole Christian world to "offer together every year on this day, prayers and supplications to the Maker of all, both in thanksgiving for the great gift of Creation and in petition for its protection and salvation". In 2015, Pope Francis named September 1 as the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. October 4 is the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology in the Catholic tradition. He is a model of integral ecology, where love for the poor, the sick and for all creatures flows from the same source.

## WALK FOR THE PLANET

On September 27, nearly half a million people took to the streets of Montreal, plus thousands took to the streets of cities across Canada. This show of solidarity was to demand action on climate change from our governments. The Green Churches Network and our member communities were present in force. At the start of the march the bells of downtown Montreal Churches rang and even Saint Francis of Assisi appeared in the crowd.



## The Green Churches Forum

In October 2019, the Green Churches Forum took place at the Notre-Dame-du-Cap Sanctuary in Trois-Rivières. This event was an opportunity for all of our members to share and learn while celebrating our faith and the gift of creation. The forum was a success thanks to our local volunteer committee, the involvement of several environmental organizations and the participation of over 150 people. A big thank you to everyone!



This year all the workshops, conferences and activities were organized around the theme: the "gift of water". We had the opportunity to explore the importance of water in scripture, in our communities and for the environment. We had an

abundance of activities during the two days at the Sanctuary including: 14 conferences and workshops, 2 panels, 9 booths and a water ceremony.



We are delighted to see the interest of our community in the Forum in Trois-Rivières and we look forward to seeing you again the next Green Churches Forum.



**The local committee:** Joan Hamel, Bernard Menard, Kim Desrosiers Coté, Jonathan Lacasse, Joyce Renaud, Marcel Poirier et Carmen Montour.

## Looking Ahead

We have a lot to look forward to! Keep up with all the developments through our website, our Facebook page and our newsletter. Upcoming projects include:

### Improving Energy Efficiency

We anticipate hiring professionals in the field of building energy efficiency. Reducing our carbon footprint is largely done through changes in our energy consumption. Our registered churches have expressed their need for information on finding ways to better maintain and improve the energy efficiency of their buildings. In the coming year we intend to develop the resources to respond to this need.



### Recycling 101

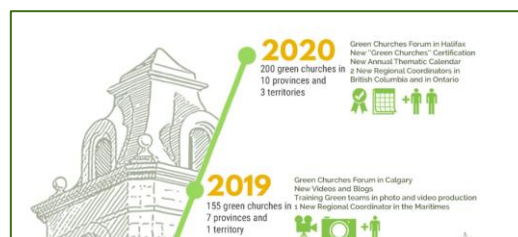
This is a project supported with a grant from TD Friends of the Environment in order to help those who require assistance with basic recycling practices within their church buildings. Targeted to help churches that serve their communities through rentals to community and-or nonprofit charitable organizations.

<https://greenchurches.ca/recycling-101/>



### Three-Year Plan

Our Action Plan for 2017-2020 is coming to a close; we have already started building our next Action Plan for the coming years. We are now in five provinces and we continue to work hard fostering relationships with our brothers and sisters outside of Quebec. Our goal is to have regional ambassadors representing the network in Christian communities throughout Canada.



### Season of Creation 2021

Our annual toolkit of downloadable resources for the worldwide celebration of the Season of Creation (1<sup>st</sup> Sept.- 4<sup>th</sup> Oct.) will be available to churches, schools, religious communities and interested persons across Canada.

Considering the slowdown of masses, ceremonies and gatherings due to the pandemic, 2020s season of creation was less active than usual. We will be ready for a season of creation 2021 in the hopes that our communities can safely come together and gather in the name of Creation Care.





## Looking Ahead (con't)

### Green Initiatives in Our Churches

We would like to work more closely with you to develop ecological activities suitable to your community. Share your ideas with us and let us know what you need so that we can create resources and materials you can put to good use for the members of your community.



### Mass Wine

Having locally available organic mass wine has been a request of some of our churches over the last few years. We have a product available in partnership with Vignoble VerteFeuille and are now waiting authentication approval from the Catholic Diocese of Montreal.



## Financial Statements 2019-2020

For the fiscal year: July 1<sup>st</sup> 2019- June 30<sup>th</sup> 2020

### REVENUS

Donations from Religious Communities	57 780
Donations from Foundations	11 500
Government wage subsidy grants	3 486
Individual Donations	1 077
Contributions from Registered Churches	4 000
Revenues from activities	3 931

<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>81 774</b>
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### Expenses

Salaries and employment costs	47 665
Activity Fees	7 671
Office Supplies	617
Representation expenses	266
Travel expenses	337
Rent	1 683
Professional fees	2 822
Telecommunications and internet	2 618
Contributions and subscriptions	200
Interest and bank fees	871
Taxes and permits	35
Website	293

<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>65 078</b>
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