

Église verte Green Church

2010-2011 Annual Report

June 2011

www.GreenChurch.ca

Centre canadien
d'œcuménisme



Canadian Centre
for Ecumenism

INFORMATION • DIALOGUE • RECONCILIATION

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A Word from the Director

2010-2011: The year *Green Church* went national!

What a difference in only two years! Two years ago, hardly anyone had heard of the *Green Church* program; today, the media are pursuing us for interviews. My favourite thing is to see the astonishment on journalists' faces when they realize how creative and professional the program is. With close to 30 churches seriously committed to caring for Creation, our program proves that faith in God does bear visible fruit, and that spirituality can be a force for positive change in society.

Integrating the *Green Church* program at the *Canadian Centre for Ecumenism* has yielded many benefits: a huge bank of contacts, mailings that are easy to do, professional graphic design and volunteer translators. The program could never have gone so far so fast without the *Canadian Centre for Ecumenism*. Thank you to the Director and the entire team at the CCE.

In the words of Jesus, the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. The program is carried on by one half-time employee (the director) and occasional volunteers. I am convinced that the *Green Church* program is God's will. And so I pray that our God, the Creator who always meets our needs, will send us the necessary resources (financial and otherwise) for carrying out our mission.



Norman Lévesque

Director of the *Green Church* Program
offered by the *Canadian Centre for Ecumenism*

Mission

The *Green Church* program, offered by the ***Canadian Centre for Ecumenism***, supports faith communities in adopting practices that will lead to environmental action and awareness, as well as in developing a Christian spirituality that is closer to creation.

Faith communities are invited to integrate the concept of caring for creation into their worship and teaching, and to adopt best practices such as recycling, energy efficiency and water conservation. They connect with environmental organizations and take part in awareness campaigns. Their activities are posted on our website.

Steering Committee

The *Green Church* program has a director who is advised by a Steering Committee made up of members from different churches, mainly from the United Church of Canada, the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Church, but we are also hoping to recruit members from other churches. These volunteers meet on a regular basis to bring this exciting project to life.

Catherine Gillbert, *Stewardship of the Environment*, Anglican Diocese of Montreal

Paula Kline, Executive Director of the *Montreal City Mission* (United Church)

Dan Lafrenière, Member of *Development and Peace*, Catholic

Norman Lévesque, Director of the *Green Church* Program, Catholic

Patricia Lisson, Executive Director of *Saint Columba House* (United Church)

Roger Snelling, Member of the Justice Global and Ecumenical Relations Committee, United Church

New logo

The *Green Church* program is represented by a very dynamic logo.



The colour **green** is a natural choice because our program is related to the environment. Green reminds us that our life on earth is made possible by vegetation, from the smallest blade of grass to the vast boreal forest. In Church tradition, green is the symbol of hope, a key virtue in our program.

The words **Église verte** and **Green Church** are in the form of a wave to reflect that we are moving toward improvement. Also, the convergence of the French and English words is a sign of unity between languages and Christian denominations (Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox).

The **cross** imprinted on the leaf is a sign of our common faith in Jesus Christ. The Scriptures remind us that “all things have been created through Him and for Him” (Colossians 1:16).

The **green maple leaf** is a sign that the program is offered across Canada, a land that stretches some 7,000 km from sea to sea. This vast country and its resources are a gift that God commits to our stewardship.

Members of the Green Church Program

List of new green churches

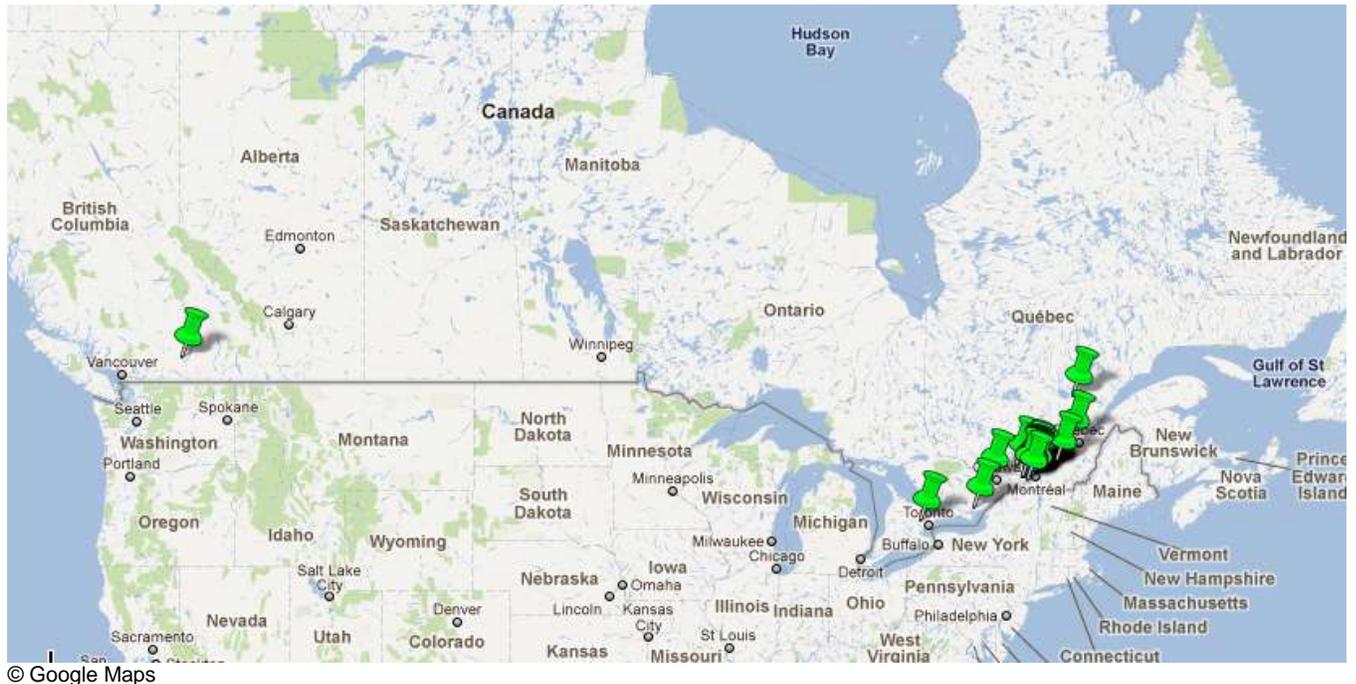
- Archdiocese of Montreal (Montreal, QC) Catholic
- Centre Agapê (Quebec City, QC) Catholic
- Centre Emmaüs (Victoriaville, QC) Catholic
- SIAF (Montreal, QC) Catholic
- Saint-Charles-Borromée (Quebec City, QC) Catholic
- St. Charles Garnier (Kelowna, BC) Catholic
- Saint-Elzéar (Laval, QC) Catholic
- St. Gabriel's (Toronto, ON) Catholic
- Saint-Martin (Laval, QC) Catholic
- Sainte-Maria-Goretti (Pointe-aux-Trembles, QC) Catholic

Churches that have been green for more than one year

- Beaconsfield United (Beaconsfield, QC) United
- Cedar Park United (Pointe-Claire, QC) United
- Centre Emmaüs (Montreal, QC) Catholic-Orthodox
- Grand Séminaire de Montréal (Montreal, QC) Catholic
- Monastère des Prémontrés (St-Constant, QC) Catholic
- Mont-Bruno United (St-Bruno, QC) United
- Montreal City Mission (Montreal, QC) United
- Précieux-Sang (Répentigny, QC) Catholic
- Sainte-Anne (Chicoutimi, QC) Catholic
- Saint-Charles (Montreal, QC) Catholic
- Saint Columba House (Montreal, QC) United
- Saint-Jean and Camino de Emaús (Montreal, QC) United
- Saint-Sauveur (St-Sauveur, QC) Catholic
- St-François-d'Assise (Montreal, QC) Catholic
- St. Mark (Dorval, QC) Anglican
- St. Peter (Town of Mount Royal, QC) Anglican
- Summerlea United (Lachine, QC) United
- United Theological Seminary (Montreal, QC) United



“Green Church” Interactive Map on Google Maps



On July 1, 2011, there were 28 member churches. In this year’s expansion, 10 churches were added, all Catholic. However, the *Green Church’s* presence is now being felt in Ontario and British Columbia.

The program will expand geographically in 2011-2012, with churches in the areas of Calgary AB, Winnipeg MB, Moncton NB and Halifax NS all expressing interest in the program.

The expansion will also be ecumenical, since Orthodox and Evangelical churches will be joining soon.

The first *altar wine* made in Québec !



The vineyard *Le domaine des Côtes d'Ardoise* in Dunham will now be producing an altar wine, because it has recently received the authorisation from the catholic bishop of St-Hyacinthe, Mgr François Lapierre. **The Green Church Program started this project**, because if altar wine is produced in Quebec (for Churches in eastern Canada), that means less greenhouse gas emissions due to transportation (unlike the bottles from California) and a way to stimulate the local economy. The Catholic and Anglican Churches are quite strict when it comes to altar wine: it must be natural wine from grapes, pure and uncorrupted, without any added substances (can. 924). The "Vin de messe" from Quebec is a great alternative to the wine from California presently used by priests in Eastern Canada.

Our presence at events

Green Choices for Faith Communities (Toronto, ON)

Norman Lévesque represented the program at its booth and gave a workshop at the annual forum *Green Choices for Faith Communities*, on March 26 and 27, 2011. Some 15 Green Church toolkits were handed out, and numerous contacts were made. At least one Anglican church expressed keen interest in joining the program.

Environmental fair (Greenfield Park, QC)

Two volunteers and Norman represented the program at its booth at Greenfield Park's Environmental Fair on March 31. During the day, Norman presented what the churches are doing to reduce their environmental impact in the form of a game. That evening, the volunteers answered questions from the curious (projecting a positive image of the Church) and from people from different faith communities interested in the environment.

39^e Session pastorale (Trois-Rivières, QC)

Norman Lévesque represented the program at its booth and gave a workshop at this Roman Catholic event on May 4 and 5, 2011.

Table d'écologie chrétienne du Québec (Montreal, QC)

The *Green Church* program organized a meeting of leading figures in Christian ecology in Quebec in order to create synergies. The meeting, on May 16, 2011 was held at the Biosphere environment museum.

Montreal-Ottawa Synod (Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, QC)

For a second year, the United Church invited Norman Lévesque to present a workshop and have a Green Church booth. A number of toolkits were distributed. The Synod took place from May 27-29, 2011.



Rencontre de la pastorale sociale (Valleyfield, QC)

Norman Lévesque represented the program at its booth and gave a workshop at this Roman Catholic event on social and pastoral ministry on June 3 and 4, 2011.

Congrès de l'école française de spiritualité (Ottawa, ON)

Norman Lévesque represented the program by giving the conference's closing address, on wishes for the world of the future, at Saint Paul University on June 5, 2011.

Initiation diocésaine à la pastorale de la Création (Moncton, NB)

Norman Lévesque was invited by Gladys LeBlanc, the coordinator of social and pastoral ministry for the Catholic diocese of Moncton, to present the *Green Church* program and what it could offer her diocese on June 16, 2011. At the end of the meeting, the group decided to have Norman come back to give them a training in October 2011.

Our presence in the media

Press releases were sent to the mass media, local media and Church media, about every two months, to announce new stages in the program. They are always aired on *Proximo* (Radio Ville-Marie). Here is some excerpts from our press file:

Radio and television:

Téléjournal (RDI), May 8, 2011

Perspectives (Sel et Lumière TV), May 2011

Parole et Vie (Vox), April 2011 and December 2010

Jour du Seigneur (Radio-Canada), January 2011

En dialogue (Radio Ville-Marie), January 2011 and September 2010

Salut! Bonjour (TVA), November 2010

Mise à jour (Vox), October 2010

Written media:

Quebec churches switch to environment-friendly holy wine (*Vancouver Sun*, May 9, 2011)

Du vin de messe québécois (*La Presse*, May 8, 2011)

Chemin de croix de la terre (*Prions en Église*, Apr. 22, 2011)

Quand l'Église vire au vert (*Revue Notre-Dame-du-Cap*, June 2010)

Protéger la création (*Prions en Église*, Oct. 3, 2010)

Spreading the new green gospel (*The Gazette - Montreal*, Feb. 25, 2011)

Green Church Program aims at environmental awareness (*Catholic Register*, Nov. 25, 2010)



Churches preaching for climate justice



Explanation of the event

Christians have a faith tradition that challenges them to support the fight against climate change, because the poor are the most affected by it. To make people aware of this issue, a special worship service was available on the website.

On Sunday, October 10, 2010, some 20 Canadian churches (mostly in Quebec) joined forces with the 350.org movement to show their support for an international agreement to reduce the greenhouse gases that are heating up the Earth's atmosphere. The initiative was promoted by the *Green Church* program.

That Thanksgiving weekend, the homily or sermon dealt with climate justice and the prayers focused on environmental awareness. At the end of the worship service, a church photo was taken with the number "350", a reference to the objective of getting back to a 350 ppm concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere in order to maintain what climatologists consider to be the safe upper limit for a habitable climate. At the present time, the concentration of CO₂ has reached 385 ppm and is continuing to rise.

Results

We estimate that some 20 churches of many denominations (Catholic, Anglican, United Church) took part in the initiative in Quebec.

A short commemorative video is available on the home page of the 350.org website.



Green Church TOOLKIT

Following many months of work, the *Green Church* program has published the Green Church TOOLKIT, available free of charge. The kit contains 11 sheets (double-sided) on the program's three aspects: spirituality, awareness and action.

The toolkit is available in paper form. More than 50 kits have been mailed out or handed out at events.

It can also be downloaded from the GreenChurch.ca website.



Recycling ink cartridges

More than 100 cartridges have been recycled in the space of a few months thanks to ink cartridge collection boxes like the one shown opposite. The program is carried on jointly with KO-REC-TYPE. Recycling cartridges offers two advantages: first, it reduces waste in landfill sites and second, it is a good way to raise funds.

Each cartridge is worth from \$0.50 to \$3. The funds generated are divided between the local church and the *Green Church* program.



Monthly newsletter

The monthly newsletter is always three paragraphs long, making it short, clear and to the point. It is received by close to 1,000 people. Certain church media, such as the Diocese of Chicoutimi website, or newspapers like the *Montreal Anglican* have sometimes published paragraphs of interest.

The newsletter has been very successful and has increased traffic to the website.

Website

Traffic to the website has increased considerably. There were 364 new visitors in December 2010, and in May 2011, a total of 1,870 visitors consulted the site. This success is because of the distribution of information to faith communities and press releases.



The Future

Our focus in 2011-2012 will be on promoting **Green Sanctuary Certification** in cooperation with Greening Sacred Spaces. This organization has already set up a registration system on the Internet. On our side, we will offer distribution through our network and translation of the materials into French.

The **2nd Green Church Conference** will be held in the Diocese of Nicolet in Quebec on October 16, 2012. For demographic reasons, it will be held in French only, but it will be ecumenical, as the first one was. It is hoped that conferences will be organized in other Canadian provinces.

A letter of invitation will be sent to all Catholic and Anglican dioceses, all United Church presbyteries and all Orthodox bishops, as well as to all Evangelical associations to encourage the largest possible number of churches to join the *Green Church* program.