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Sacredness of Water

Resource conservation is just one aspect of greening; when we approach it from a faith-based perspective, we consider our role as stewards of natural resources and the sacredness of these resources.

Water is life; it is hydration, habitat, and health. Our faith traditions teach us to revere this resource, to give thanks when it is abundant and to cherish it when it is scarce.

We have been working with the Sacred Water Circle ([sacredness_of_water](#)) in central Ontario for a number of years, helping to bring attention to the sacredness of water and our role as stewards of water protection. Inspired by traditional Indigenous teachings and leading with hope and spiritual courage, the Sacred Water Circle sees a restored relationship between human communities and water.

Through these relationships, we became one of the founding partners in the Great Lakes Water Walk (<http://greatlakeswaterwalk.ca/>), held in Toronto in September 2017. The Great Lakes Water Walk invited people from all backgrounds to join Indigenous Grandmothers, Knowledge Holders and Elders to share and re-awaken our commitment to safeguarding the water by walking together along the Toronto waterfront. By sharing the Indigenous practice of honouring and giving thanks to those same Lakes, *The Great Lake Water Walk* was an invitation to pause and reflect upon what we can do individually and collectively to ensure the health and well-being of our waters for generations to come.

In 2018, we took part in:

- the Niigaani-Gichigami (Lake Ontario) Gratitude Walk & Festival (gratitude_walk_and_festival) in June, organized by the Toronto Urban Native Ministry, St James Cathedral, and the Niigaani-Gichigami Collective
- the All Nations Grand River Water Walk in September
- an Indigenous-led, multi-faith sacred water ceremony as part of the Toronto-based 2018 Parliament of World Religions (2018_parliament_of_world_religions) in November

We will continue to support Sacred Water Walking as a powerful way to respect and honor Nibi (water). By walking together under the ceremonial leadership of Indigenous Grandmothers, Knowledge Holders and Elders, we acknowledge the strength, resilience and resurgence of Indigenous women as 'keepers of the water'. We walk in solidarity and recognition of First Peoples, who have been on the frontlines in the struggle to respect and protect the waters for future generations. Together, praying with our feet, we will walk towards love and a better future for all.

Here are more details on our water programs, partners, and project suggestions:

Great Lakes Water Walk

(<http://greatlakeswaterwalk.ca/>) On Sunday, September 24, 2017, Anishinaabeg Grandmothers led hundreds of participants in a ceremonial water walk along Toronto's waterfront trail, with blessing stops at Toronto's four river deltas (Credit, Humber, Rouge, Don). This Indigenous ceremonial walk was an invitation to pause and reflect upon what we can do individually and collectively to ensure the health and well-being of our waters.

At the close of the walk, respected Elders Dr. Shirley Williams and Grandmother Josephine Mandamin, led a multi-cultural, multi-faith water blessing of the Great Lakes at Marilyn Bell Park, assisted by Elders and Leaders representing all facets of the Toronto community. Read more ([great_lakes_water_walk](#))...



Sacred Water Circle



Inspired by traditional Indigenous teaching and leading with hope and spiritual courage, the Sacred Water Circle sees a restored relationship between human communities and water.



(<http://greeningsacredspaces.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Sacred-Water-Gathering-2013-1000px-11.jpg>)

The 2014 Sacred Water Circle Gathering hosted a Ceremony of the Arts presentation, an evening celebration of song, dance and film offered to the Spiritual Elders and

Community Leaders in gratitude for sharing their knowledge with the gathering participants.





The event featured five young women of The Ridpath Singers, giving a debut performance for these grade 5 students without the support of the other singers, drummers and teachers.

It was an exceptional highlight of the Gathering to hear young Anishinaabeg



voices; something we plan to do lot more of as a community moving forward in action to protect sacred water for future generations.

Water Conservation and Education in your Faith Community



World Water Day, March 22nd, is an opportunity to raise awareness of and action on water issues.

You can start with celebration and appreciation of your favourite body of water. Photos: "My favourite body of water is..."





Greening Sacred Spaces September Challenge:
"Get Water Wise"
Help rehabilitate local waterbodies by joining a Great Canadian Shoreline Clean-up Initiative.
Bring your friends and family!
Youth will receive community service hours!!

Shell Park Clean-up
with Friends of Sheldon Creek Watershed
Saturday September 13 2014
11:00 a.m. at Shell Park (off Lakeshore Rd W.), Oakville

Woodington Green (just north of Mississauga Valley Park)
with Credit Valley Conservation
Saturday September 27
10:00 a.m. in the parking lot at Sts. Peter and Paul Separate School
4205 Woodington Dr. Mississauga, ON

Help keep our waters healthy for everyone. Including me.

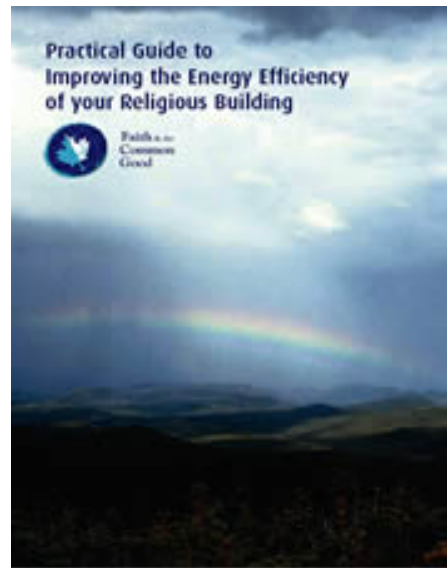
Tweet us: @GSSHalonPeel
Like us: FCGreeningSacredSpaces
Visit our website: www.greeningsacredspaces.net
Contact us: cread@greeningsacredspaces.net

Great Canadian Shoreline Clean-up
Greening Sacred Spaces
Friends of Sheldon Creek Watershed
Credit Valley Conservation
Sts. Peter and Paul Separate School

Organize a stream, lake, or pond clean-up; join or support a local riverkeeper or watershed conservation group. Look for a cleanup event near you at www.shorelinecleanup.ca (<http://www.shorelinecleanup.ca/en>) or search www.waterkeeper.org (<http://www.waterkeeper.org/>) for a local waterkeeper or riverkeeper group for a place to start. BC, Ontario, Labrador, New Brunswick and Alberta have waterkeeper groups, many conservation authorities have watershed protection events, and most regions have creek, river, or shoreline cleanup events.

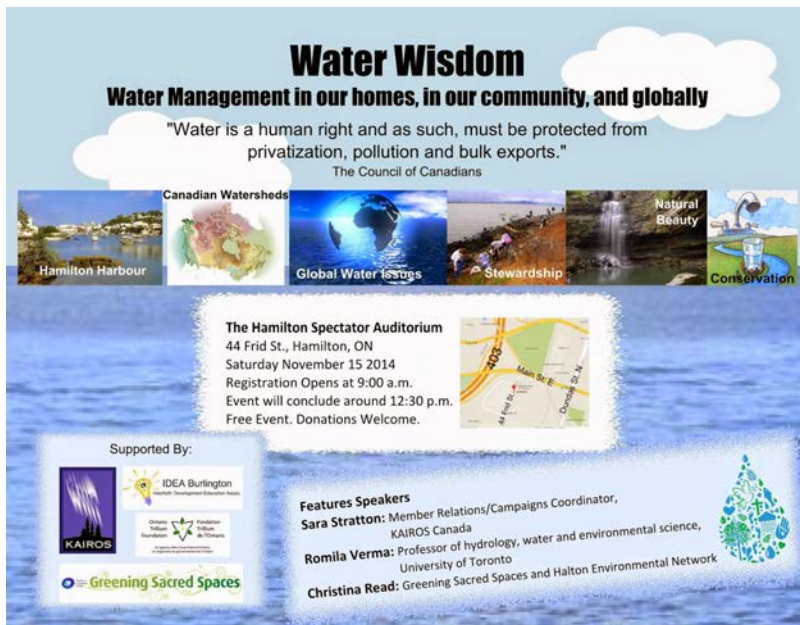


Explore the water use and conservation practices of other faith traditions by hosting a multi-faith water event, or undertake an assessment of water use at your home or place of



worship. Reflect on the sacred use of water in ablutions, baptism, mikva'ot, and other sacred ceremonies and practices.

Greening Sacred Spaces offers a water conservation priorities guide (<https://assets.nationbuilder.com/faithcommonsgood/pages/59/attachments/original/1506366666/water6.pdf?1506364742>) as part of our Practical Guide to Improving the Energy Efficiency of your Religious Building (gss_resources).



Water Wisdom
Water Management in our homes, in our community, and globally

"Water is a human right and as such, must be protected from privatization, pollution and bulk exports."
The Council of Canadians

Canadian Watersheds: Hamilton Harbour, Global Water Issues, Stewardship, Natural Beauty, Conservation

The Hamilton Spectator Auditorium
44 Frid St., Hamilton, ON
Saturday November 15 2014
Registration Opens at 9:00 a.m.
Event will conclude around 12:30 p.m.
Free Event. Donations Welcome.

Supported By: KAIROS, IDEA Burlington, Greening Sacred Spaces

Features Speakers
Sara Stratton: Member Relations/Campaigns Coordinator, KAIROS Canada
Romila Verma: Professor of hydrology, water and environmental science, University of Toronto
Christina Read: Greening Sacred Spaces and Halton Environmental Network

(<http://greeningsacredspaces.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Water-Wisdom-Event-Nov-15.jpg>)

Encourage outdoor conservation and protection of water by promoting the use of rain barrels, landscaping with drought-resistant plants, and avoiding the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers.

Host a water presentation on watersheds, stewardship, or pollution prevention.



Inspiration:

Water as health, habitat, and hydration is also an issue of sustainability and social justice. Below is a display of faith community members pledging not to use bottled water as part of an awareness campaign about the commodification of water and unsustainable sales of bottled water. Bottled water uses a tremendous amount of fossil fuels in bottle production and transportation, and is often sourced in a manner that undermines sustainability of aquifers and public water supplies. Most plastic water bottles end up in landfills; recycling is better but is still wasteful compared to tap water.

A bottled water free campaign can be paired with social justice studies and activism to draw attention to and support for communities within and without Canada who have no access to clean water and for whom boil water alerts and bottled water imports are a costly necessity.



(<https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/faithcommongood/pages/59/attachments/original/small.jpg?1506363945>)