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UNITED
CHURCH
COUNCIL**

*The Toronto United Church
Council works with the church
community to connect
resources with ministry.*

*Offering access to
professional advice, financial
support and leadership
development, Council helps
our church address the social
and spiritual challenges of the
day.*

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Council E-News

February 8 2016

**St. John's United in Creemore Sets an Energy
Efficiency Example**

When Clearview Township unexpectedly removed two trees bordering St. John's United Church, the congregation chose to make the best of it. With the South side of the Church now exposed to the sun, the Board of Stewards saw an opportunity to invest in a photovoltaic solar panel installation through the Ontario government's microFIT program.

The panels are the second step in the congregation's journey toward clean, efficient energy. In 2015, St. John's obtained a loan from Council's [Sustainable Energy Loan Fund](#) to finance their "Greening the Church" project. The loan allowed them to install subfloor insulation below the Sanctuary and blown in ceiling insulation above, while switching from electric baseboard heating to natural gas using a high efficiency condensing furnace. Members have reported

increased comfort levels in the Sanctuary and the energy and cost savings have been significant. The congregation has witnessed an overall reduction in their heating bill of \$1,088.

Once the solar installation is complete the congregation believes that the "free" energy they will collect from the sun will, on a good year, approach and possibly exceed the cost of their present energy consumption with the added benefit of reducing their carbon footprint. It's a great example of how energy savings projects can present win-win solutions for congregations looking to save money and reduce their environmental impact.



**Exploring Sacred Space: Regenerating
Places of Faith**

A Forum on March 11 2017

Learn from faith communities who have regenerated their buildings and find your own winning idea for re-purposing your sacred space!

In Canada's diverse urban centres, religious communities face many challenges as they seek to live faithfully and make their contribution to the common good. Under-utilized houses of worship, declining numbers, and misunderstanding - even suspicion - on the part of the broader society are common stumbling blocks.

The forum will bring together people from a variety of religious traditions to explore the theme of sacred space and share ideas on how we can creatively transform and leverage our physical spaces for the greatest impact on the broader communities within which we are embedded.

Case study workshops and interactive presentations will follow keynotes by **Dr. Stephen Scharper** (School of the Environment and Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto), and **Dr.**

Mike Wood Daly (The Halo Project).

When: Saturday March 11, 10 am - 3:30 pm

Where: Multi-Faith Centre, University of Toronto, 569 Spadina Ave.

Registration: \$35 (includes lunch). [Register online](#) or [download an event poster!](#)

Presented by: Council's Green Awakening Network and Faith & The Common Good/Greening Sacred Spaces

Photo credit: St. Luke's Anglican, Ottawa



Living Presence Ministry Gets Attention in the Local Press

[Last year's November e-newsletter](#) profiled the

Living Presence Ministry, a new approach to mission in the expanding community of East Gwillimbury. Council's Centre for Church Development and Leadership is a proud partner in this new ministry venture whose unique approach pairs the start of a new community (pioneer) ministry with the revitalization of the existing congregations in the area. Now, this work is getting some attention in the local press. Read a profile of Living Presence Ministry and its new Community Pioneer Minister, Bri-Anne Swan, in [York Region's Metro news](#). You can also visit the [Living Presence Ministry's new website](#) for more information or to sign up for their mailing list!

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