



FAITHFUL GREEN ACTIONS NEWSLETTER

From your North Toronto Cluster
Faithful Green Actions Team

Deer Park United
Glebe Road United
Manor Road United
Lawrence Park Community Church

Calvin Presbyterian
Leaside United

Fairlawn United
Rosedale United
Northlea United
Eglinton St. Georges United

Welcome to the Fall edition of the Faithful Green Actions Newsletter. If you are not already familiar with the work of the Faithful Green Actions Team, we are a mission within the North Toronto Cluster with representatives from the churches named on the masthead of this newsletter. Our purpose is to provide education on environmental issues and social justice and to advocate for a healthy planet.

This year, several of our member churches hosted a series of Zoom evenings featuring environmentally themed books or videos. We were very pleased with the turnout at these evenings and the lively discussions that each theme engendered. We are already planning another event for early in the New Year, where we hope to have a guest speaker. We hope you enjoy our latest newsletter and that our tips and resources help you head into the holiday season in a sustainable way.

Great Lakes Untamed on TVO

We would like to recommend this excellent 3-part series from TVO.

“For the first time we reveal the natural history secrets of one of our planet’s most important, beautiful and forgotten ecosystems: North America’s Great Lakes. Nearly as wide as the Atlantic Ocean with three of Earth’s five largest lakes, this spectacular watershed contains one quarter of our planet’s available fresh-water; and yet, we’ve rarely seen it before on the screen. But how were these lakes formed and how have its animals, plants and people been shaped by the extremes of this vast watershed? The series answers these important questions and explores the many ways climate change is challenging one of the largest freshwater environments on Earth containing 84% of North America’s freshwater.”

The series premiered on September 26th on TVO and is available from [TVO](#) and [YouTube](#).

Edition 2, Volume 1, 2022
Save a tree, read digitally.





Come one, come all to the...

Holly Berry Fair

Saturday, November 5

10 am - 3 pm

159 Roxborough Drive (at Glen Road)

*Join our new greener fair with all proceeds funding
Rosedale's compassionate outreach efforts.*

Shop, Food and Social Activities for All!

- Green Vendors
- Kids Zone
- Knitting and Baking
- Fran's Diner
- Silent Auction
- Books
- and much more!



Rosedale United Church

Centre For Human Flourishing

 Holly Berry Fair - Rosedale |  @HBFInfo | rosedaleunited.org/outreach/holly-berry-fair

SAVE THE DATE!

January 25th 7:00 p.m.

What happening with Plastics?

Everything you need to know about the Federal plastics ban, Toronto's waste strategy and how we can reduce or eliminate our use of plastics. Virtual webinar with Emily Alfred from TEA (Toronto Environmental Alliance). Look for more information in your church bulletin in December.



Garden Primer: 5 Tips for Tending to Your Autumn Garden

By Charlie Dobbin, October 1, 2022: ZONE The Zoomer Classifieds – Reprinted with permission.

I used to have a neighbour who loved the fall since it meant she could rip out all her annual flowers. For her, autumn was the end of the garden season, but oh how wrong she was!

Autumn is absolutely optimal for garden renovations, planting and transplanting, pruning and propagation. We tend to believe spring is best for all those activities, but in the fall the soil is warm, nights are cool, and rain usually arrives on schedule.

While our gardens are still top of mind, this is a wonderful time to fix any of the mistakes we've made this past season. We've all noticed the plants that

failed to read its catalogue description and didn't grow to the size or colour we expected. This is the perfect time for transplanting.

Take a really good look at your garden and see if there are areas that need more height, or a bench or bird bath. Make notes and follow these tips to ensure better results next year.

1. If your garden needs more colour now, consider planting Asters, Mums or Sedum to jazz up your garden for many years. Or perhaps your garden needs more colour in the early spring. If so, now is absolutely the best time to plant spring bulbs. Like showy Tulips and Daffodils, which are very available and easy to plant. I also like to incorporate some of the smaller bulbs that will 'naturalize' or keep coming back every year with more and more flowers. Bulbs like Scilla, Grape Hyacinth (Muscari) and Crocus.
2. Often, nurseries will put perennial plants on sale in the autumn. Trees, shrubs, roses, and vines can all be purchased for rock-bottom prices. And, as mentioned, now is the best time for planting.
3. Now is also the time to transplant any spring flowering perennials — like Peonies, Hellebores and Bleeding Heart. Moving them now means you won't sacrifice any flowers next spring. But avoid moving any spring flowering shrubs now if you can wait until after they flower next spring and move them at that time.
4. Pruning away any dead or diseased branches on our trees and shrubs can happen at any time. An overgrown deciduous hedge can be rejuvenated in the fall by cutting it right down to 4-6 inches (10-15cm) tall. Believe it or not, it will grow back thick and lush next spring! Remember, don't prune any of your early spring flowering trees and shrubs now. Examples include: Lilacs, Magnolia, Rhododendrons and Forsythia. Wait until they have finished flowering next spring, then prune as needed. Some people like to prune their fall flowering shrubs now, but I prefer to leave the flowers in place, then prune in spring. Hydrangeas and ornamental grasses enhance the winter garden if you ask me.
5. No fertilizing at this time, unless you have a lawn. Fall fertilizer is required if you want your turf to come through the winter in good condition to get growing once soil warms in the spring.

Speaking of soil — I would be remiss if I didn't provide tips on being good stewards of your soil. Most plants thrive in a fertile, well-drained soil. But how do we get that? You can't go wrong by adding organic matter to any soil. This could be bags of composted manure, homemade compost or a truckload delivered onto the driveway. Organic products make clay soil better drained, and sandy soils hold water. Best of all, organic matter "feeds" the microorganisms in the soil, helping your soil to be alive and healthy. Assume you should add approximately one inch (2.5 cm) of good quality to all your garden beds every year. Spring or fall works, but autumn has the advantage of good working temperatures and the ground is not typically soggy like it can be in the spring.

Charlie Dobbin hosts "The Garden Show With Charlie Dobbin" on Zoomer Radio AM740 [a ZoomerMedia property] every Saturday at 9 a.m., ET.

FLOURISH



ESG Community Garden – Project Flourish What's it all about?

Community Garden & Grow Staff

- 11-plot Community Garden, rented by community and ESG member
- Hired Summer Grow Staff
- Highlights from the summer included:
 - Building & staining 3 picnic benches
 - Two Food Drives for Little Free Pantry
 - Four Workshops
 - Community Meals featuring new pizza ovens and, also Grow Staff cooking
 - Conversation in the garden and stocking the LFP



Workshop Topics

- Pollinators
- Native Plants
- One Month Crops
- Medicinal Plants
- Home Composting



Tasks completed by Grow Staff:

- Make repairs to wood on some existing raised beds.
- Stain large circular beds.
- Stain bottom of single circular beds
- Keep edge around existing raised beds clear of grass and weeds.
- Regularly empty tenant weeding to mulch bins in back.
- Trim back overgrown plants
- Watering. Check soil daily
- Be an “ambassador”: be “open” to passers-by”; take time if anyone in the community wants to talk about the gardens and why we are doing
- Dog bowls put out/refill
- Bird Baths refill
- Three picnic tables construction and staining
- Design and put-up signs - Signs contemplative and native
- Including education on Native plants
- QR code and write up put online
- Maintain edging of trees and garden beds.
- Remove weeds on property edges, including circular drive.
- Complete 2-3 paths with flagstone in Contemplative Garden and path to shed.
- Get mulch beds in backyard “cooking”. Turn over mulch at least weekly. Daily is the preference
- Water problem areas (Contemplative Garden) with can if necessary.
- Deadheading the perennials and annuals.
- Remove garbage when found in beds (esp Duplex side).
- Trim vines that are within reach from the ground, using pole extender.
- Hostas transplanted under Spirea bushes on Duplex
- Plant annuals in circular drive west bed
- Mulch Top up especially around trees
- Fix area where mulch bin was on West side – take out 2x4s
- Remove cedars from front lawn.
- Cut down or remove tree stump from front lawn
- Maintain beds on top of front cracked sidewalk.
- Keep gardens in front yard tidy. Mainly this is weeding.
- Fix up backyard sitting surface and large stones for border
- Line of cedars in backyard
- Fix lights and hang new lights.
- Instagram live with garden topic focus
- Regular posts about summer
- Community Garden Workshops
- Community Meals, featuring pizza ovens
- 2 plot-renters’ meetings
- Shooting and compiling of video clips to tell the story of the Community Garden
- Create Reels, etc and send to Ashley@esgunitied.org
- Engage with local outreach organization
- Restock Little Free Pantry Monday-Wednesday Weekly
- Conduct 2 food drives to help stock the Little Free Pantry
- Lead 1 Sunday Morning Worship

What’s Next?

- **Community garden & Grow Staff**
 - Wrapping up season
 - Final paperwork to receive final payment
- **Flourish House**
 - Thursday Community Meal relaunch October 6th
 - Intro Flourish House Residents on Sunday Oct 2nd
- **Young Adult Building Confidence Event September 22nd**
- **Families Cooking Event, with in-person family cooking**
 - Topic – The Importance of Canning
 - Making and Sharing Pasta and Pasta Sauce
 - Leader: Sofia Finley
- **Community Kitchen visioning**
 - Meeting with potential partners
 - Creating vision of this space and the outreach, partnerships and preparing and sharing food components





Let's Try for a Greener Christmas 2022

"Christmas doesn't have to be a burden on the planet. With a little effort and imagination, we can reduce the environmental impact of the holiday season. Here are some ideas to help celebrate the season while caring for the earth." (Eartheasy.com)

Eco Friendly Greeting Cards

Paper Cards

For those of you who enjoy sending or delivering Christmas cards by mail or by hand, we hope you might consider eco - friendly cards.

If choosing cards from a store, consider cards that can be recycled: i.e., cards with no ribbons, no glitter and that are not glossy. Look on the back of the card to see if it says that the card has been produced responsibly, made with recycled paper or carries the FSC label on the back. The Forest Stewardship Council is an international, non-profit, multistakeholder organization, established in 1993. It promotes responsible management of the world's forests. FSC labels assure you that the products you are buying are made from responsible sources and have been verified to meet FSC's strict environmental and social standards.

Examples of where you can purchase Eco friendly paper cards:

- **David Suzuki Foundation:** also supports work for climate action and protecting nature
<https://store.davidsuzuki.org/collections/greeting-cards>
- **Canadian Wildlife Federation:** also supports conservation of Canada's wildlife and habitats
<https://apps.cwf-fcf.org/social/>. For cards, it is best to contact customer service: 1-877-599-5777; Monday-Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm ET
- **Hospital For Sick Children, Women's Auxiliary, 555 Shop:** also funds projects that benefit the children and their families. 416-813-8555 or <https://thesickkids5fifty5shop.ca/>
- **Etsy:** google eco-friendly greeting cards, made in Ontario or Canada <https://www.etsy.com/ca/>
- **Hazy Jean:** Ontario based, family owned <https://hazyjean.ca/>
- **Ontario Nature:** <https://ontarionature.org/give/other-ways-to-give/greeting-cards/>. Call at 1-800-440-2366 or 416-444-8419 ext. 232



Electronic cards

If you would prefer to consider an electronic card:

- **Jacque Lawson** has a nice selection. This site requires a membership but is very inexpensive, compared to purchasing paper cards:

www.jacquielawson.com

- **Nature Conservancy of Canada** holiday ecard comes with a personalized message, and you can send them now or at a future date.
<https://www.giftsofnature.ca/products/merry-christmas-cardinal-e-card>
- **Make your own cards** by recycling images from last year's calendars, cards or children's art and craft projects and use glue stick to a folded over piece of paper. Save heavier stock paper over the year for this activity.



Christmas Tree Options



Living Tree

A non-pine potted plant or potted Norfolk pine, not as large as traditional pines, can be enjoyed all year and then decorated at Christmas. No cutting, not artificial.

Artificial Tree

1. Reusable
2. Normally made of metal and petroleum products (PVC), which produce carcinogens during manufacturing and disposal. PVC-free Christmas trees normally made of polypropylene (PP) or polyethylene (PE) are safer types of plastic. Does not guarantee that these trees will be free of lead and flame retardants. Research before buying.
3. When discarded, it would go to land fill-with plastic and metal content lasting forever. Alternatively, use as long as possible, gift or donate, to postpone landfill option.
4. Uses resources in manufacturing and shipping (many transported from Asia.)

Cut Live Trees

1. Live trees are a renewable resource on land that may not be the best farmland.
2. While growing, the tree contributes to air quality, generates oxygen. fix carbon in their branches and in soil, provides habitat for animals and birds.
3. Usually locally grown and sold. Saves transportation costs and additional air pollution.
4. Excessive driving by consumers to a tree farm or to purchase site could impact greenhouse gas emissions.
5. Contact tree farms to find out their growing process. Is growing done in an eco-friendly way? And is their use of fertilizers and pesticides? Are these applied at the base or on the tree? Alternatively, look for organic tree farms.
6. Recyclable in Toronto- all trees are mulched and reused. Nothing goes to landfill.



Wrapping

Often, on Christmas morning, we are overwhelmed by the wrapping paper that has enclosed our gifts. In these days, with concern about waste and recycling and the precariousness of life on our planet, consider the following suggestions when it comes to wrapping your gifts.

1. Avoid using glossy foil, metallic paper or tissue paper with sparkles.
2. Try to use paper that is marked "100% recyclable."
3. If giving more than one gift to a person, put all the gifts, unwrapped, in a recyclable paper bag (you can decorate it with drawn pictures) or into a reusable bag or Christmas stocking that can be part of the gift.



Eco-friendly gift wrap and tags

Re-use fabric scraps, scarves, aprons, tea towels, napkins or pillow cases for larger gifts.
Use creative paper choices: children's art, old wallpaper, maps, sheet music or posters.
Use Kraft paper or paper bags. Add a message or have children decorate for you.
Use ribbons, twine or raffia—no tape please!
Turn old Christmas cards into gift tags.

The infographic features two cartoon reindeer icons at the top corners. Below the text are five images illustrating eco-friendly gift wrapping: a gift wrapped in a striped fabric bag, a stack of cookies tied with a ribbon, a gift wrapped in white paper with a red ribbon, a gift wrapped in brown paper with a red ribbon, and a jar of jam wrapped in a polka-dot paper bag with a red ribbon.

Sustainable Gifts

1. Local craft fairs and markets offer some amazing gift selections and provide support to local artisans.
2. Decrease transportation and greenhouse emissions.
3. Support businesses or craft people who use recycled materials.
4. Choose gifts that don't require batteries.
5. If done with care, re-gifting is a way to reuse a gift that you can't use by passing it on to someone who can.
6. Make your own gifts using your woodworking, knitting, sewing, culinary skills, etc.

Buy Less

For extended family, reduce your shopping list by drawing a name and buying one special gift.

Holiday Lighting

1. Reduce the number of lights used to decorate the outside of your home.
2. Use LED lights which use less energy and last longer than traditional bulbs. **Do not** throw out working non-LED lights because they will go to landfill.
3. Mini lights save energy.
4. Avoid wasting energy, turn off outdoor and tree lights at bedtime or consider a timer.

Holiday Decorating

1. Make decorations from items you have around or outside your home, such as wool, scraps of material, tree boughs, acorns, pinecones, decorative strings of popcorn or cranberries, cookies.
2. Hold a fun family activity or party with everyone making something to take home.



Reduce, Reuse and Recycle

As you enjoy the Christmas season try to lessen your impact on the environment by pre-planning and keeping the 3 Rs in mind. Sorting is critical to avoid contamination of the items to be recycled.

1. Wrapping paper, other than foil and tissue with glitter, can be recycled. When unsure if a product is made of real paper, do not recycle as it will contaminate the process. Reuse gift wrap where possible. Cut out the sections of the paper without creases or marks and save for small gifts next year. Save ribbons, bows, decorations and bubble wrap.
2. Laptops, cell phones, cameras, televisions, and other electronics given as gifts may replace electronics that are still in working order. Avoid having these items go to landfill. Place at curb on your regular garbage day for recycling and safe disposal by the City of Toronto or take electronics to a drop off depot, community environmental day or donate.
3. Once all decorations, plastic and tree stands have been removed, place live trees at the curb on designated days, in your area, for pick up by the City of Toronto. Trees are mulched and mulch is used for other purposes. In Toronto, no trees go to landfill.
4. Discarded artificial trees- in City of Toronto- go to landfill.
5. Reuse greeting cards for next year's handmade cards or children's craft projects or recycle, if you are sure the card is made of paper, with no additions such as glitter or ribbon.



Useful and Eco-Friendly Gift Ideas

- A charitable gift for a cause supported by your gift-recipient.
- A membership to a museum or a ticket to an on-line event.
- A gift card to a local restaurant, coffee shop or hair/nail salon.
- An offer to perform a service such as baby sitting, pet sitting, dog walking, or lawn cutting.
- A subscription to a streaming channel, newspaper or magazine.



Quick Guide-Holiday Waste Reduction Tips from the City of Toronto

Recycle Right

When you can't reduce or reuse, put your holiday waste in its proper place:

- **Garbage:** Foil/metallic gift wrap, ribbons and bows, bubble wrap, wooden fruit crates, broken dishes, glasses and black plastics
- **Green Bin: (organics):** Fruit and vegetable scraps, meat (including bones), spoiled cakes and cookies, soiled paper plates and napkins (be sure they are paper)
- **Blue Bin (recycling):** Paper gift wrap and cards (without glitter), plastic over-wrap, cookie tins, plastic disposable cups, disposable plates (if rinsed), aluminum trays, roasting pans
- Unsure where an item goes, visit the [Waste Wizard](#) or download the [TOWaste app](#).



Dear Garden
 Generous garden,
 you give so much joy
 and willingly surrender what you have created.
 Now it is time for you to rest
 as the season changes;
 to regenerate in apparent dormancy.
 Thank you for the lessons you teach
 about life and death and new life,
 for inviting us to care for something other than ourselves,
 for showing us how giving of ourselves,
 like you have done,
 is what we were always meant to do.

By Rev. Lee-Ann Ahlstrom

Take-Out Without Plastic

Here's a few ideas for enjoying take out without contributing to non-reusable plastic waste:

1. Reusable restaurant containers! There are 3 companies in operation at the moment:

Muuse (muuse.io/Toronto)

Suppli (mysuppli.ca)

Inwit (inwit.ca)

The idea is that you sign up on one of the sites, choose one of their restaurants, and make an order (or physically go there). You'll likely pay a fee or deposit. Check them all out to see if your favorite restaurant has signed up. Fee structures and deposits may be different for each.

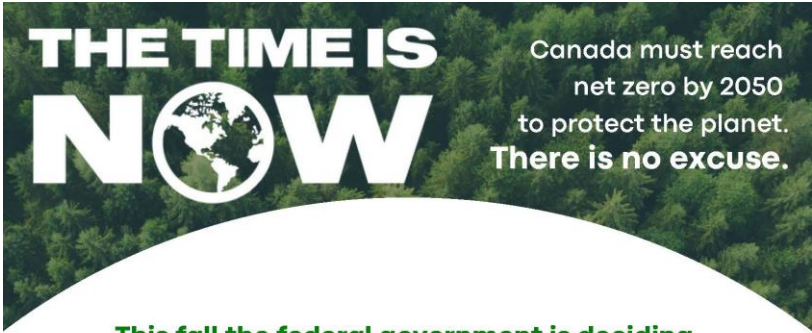
2. Bring Your Own Take-Out Containers

As consumers, we can decide how to take it home. I haven't found a restaurant yet that wouldn't allow me to take my leftovers away in my own containers.

3. Make It Your Business To Provide Alternatives

Create a business card for restaurant managers giving them links to organizations that produce containers that can be recycled or decomposed more quickly than non-reusable plastics. Use a provocative image to catch their attention on one side and put the links on the other. When dining, ask the server to pass your business card to the manager expressing your desire for your favorite restaurant to become green friendly. If they already are green friendly, make sure to tell them how much you appreciate their practices. Here's a sample of a business card we created to invite our favorite restaurants to stop using plastic straws and considering compostable containers. It worked in a few of the restaurants so the message from us and others must have had an impact.





This fall the federal government is deciding our country's climate emission targets.

Here's the problem: the oil and gas lobby is fighting hard for loopholes and weaker emission targets that aren't aligned with what the science says we need to do.

Let's make sure that doesn't happen.

Decision makers from across the country need to hear from their community that they want realistic climate action that is aligned with science.

The time is now. Join us today to push for real and effective emission targets.

CLIMATE ACTION ALLIANCE Contact Erin Reitknecht for more information!
✉ erin@climateactionalliance.ca
🌐 www.climateactalliance.ca



GET TRAINED

We'll provide professional, free trainings to existing grassroots groups like yours so you can turn your passion into effective climate change action across Canada



GET OUT THERE

We'll coordinate and mobilize other grassroots groups across the country to amplify our message and make our voices heard — loudly



MAKE AN IMPACT

We'll offer ongoing one-on-one support with you and your group to put pressure on federal governments to make climate action that starts today, a priority

CLIMATE ACTION ALLIANCE Contact Erin Reitknecht for more information!
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