

**FOLLOW-UP**  
**Faith & the Common Good and Noor Cultural Centre's**  
**Multifaith Climate Action Iftar**  
**Sunday July 5, 2015**  
**Noor Cultural Centre**

*Thank you for joining us for this evening of community, celebration and commitment to action on climate justice!*



As promised, we have put together this short document as a memento of the evening. It provides information on our presenters, and resources for becoming more involved in climate justice.

## Our Presenters

Samira Kanji - [Noor Cultural Centre](#)  
Lucy Cummings – [Faith & The Common Good](#)  
Dorothy Taylor – [Sacred Water Circle](#)  
Cathy Mitchell – [Sacred Water Circle](#)  
Hon. Glen Murray – [Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change](#)  
Rev. Willard Metzger – [Mennonite Church of Canada](#)  
Muaz Nasir - [Khaleafa.com](#)  
Canon Linda Nixon - [Anglican Diocese of Huron EnviroAction Committee](#)  
Ven. Jue Qian - [Fo Guang Shan Toronto](#)  
Ranjana Mitra - [Community Environment Alliance](#)  
Joy Kennedy- [Interfaith Fast for the Climate](#)  
Rita Bijons - [ClimateFast](#)  
Randal Goodfellow - [Faith & The Common Good](#)  
Irene Borins-Ash – [‘One Planet: Harnessing Hope’ Photo Exhibit](#)  
Cathy Pefhany - [Earth Day Flag](#)

## A few words from some of our presenters

### **Dorothy Taylor & Cathy Mitchell (Sacred Water Circle)**

One year after the very successful Sacred Water Circle Gathering 2014 - the Sacred Water Circle, Fleming College, Nibi Emosaawdamajig (“Those Who Walk for the Water”), the Sacred Water Circle, GreenUP, Trent University Indigenous Studies, TRACKS, Curve Lake First Nation and Faith & the Common Good- partnered to bring together Indigenous Knowledge, science and grassroots organisations all working for the betterment of water. The event showcased new and innovative water solutions being created and applied within the Kawartha region. The event featured Grandmother Josephine Mandamin (founder of the Mother Earth Water Walks) and local elder Shirley Williams (founder of the Kawartha Water Walk); a panel discussion with representatives from the Centre for Wastewater Treatment, School of Environmental and Natural Resource Sciences, Frost Campus Fleming College, GreenUP, and Green Communities

Canada.

The event also featured two short water documentaries and an introduction to the Sacred Water Circle's on-line Teaching Turtle. This event was followed by the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Water Awareness Walk in the Kawarthas, which took place on Sunday May 10<sup>th</sup> starting at the First People's House of Learning, Trent University at 6:30 am. Please explore the Elders Teachings on our website:

<http://www.sacredwater.ca/teachings/explore/> You can support Grandmother Josephine and the Water Walkers United by your prayers and support. Follow them on-line by visiting the website. <http://www.waterwalkersunited.com/>

### **Muaz Nasir (Khaleafa.com)**

As interest in the environmental movement continues to grow, many Muslims are revisiting their faith in an effort to identify the contributions Islam can bring in promoting greater environmental awareness. Muslims across the world have quickly adopted and adapted the green movement; spearheading new projects in their own communities and collaborating with other faith groups to address a broad range of common issues, ranging from animal rights to water management. Within Canada, Muslims are already involved in a diverse range of projects aimed at encouraging conservation, reducing waste and participating in ecologically-sensitive consumption. While there has been success in practicing the Islamic teachings surrounding the environment, there lacks a central forum for the exchange of ideas and recognition of our community's accomplishments.

The term 'Khaleafa' is the Arabic term for steward and represents the sacred responsibility that has been bestowed upon us by Allah. The concept of stewardship is the inspiration of this project and has formed for the foundation for discussion of the environmental ideals already present within the Islamic faith. The goal of this website is to reignite the discourse surrounding the Islamic approach to environmentalism and to draw upon the essence of these teachings, emphasizing the movement from a Canadian perspective.

As Canadians we are intrinsically connected with the environment. The Canadian wilderness conjures up images of pristine lakes, vast tracts of forests and endless coastlines. Although most of us live in urban areas, we identify with these cultural

symbols and have incorporated them into our national identity. It is safe to assume that Muslim Canadian attitudes reflect similar national trends. While the community as a whole has only recently recognized the future potential of the environmental movement, the Islamic tradition is rich in progressive conservation ideals based on the Islamic teachings of the Quran and Sunnah. It is only through awakening the stewardship responsibility inherent to all of us will we be able to develop new solutions to reversing the environmental problems plaguing our planet.

#### Green Khutbah Campaign 2015 - Press Release

TORONTO, March 16, 2015 - Muslims across the world will commemorate Earth Day on Friday, April 24th, 2015, with the 'Green Khutbah Campaign' as religious leaders deliver a sermon to raise awareness on the environmental challenges facing humanity.

"The theme of this year's Green Khutbah Campaign is "Water – A Sacred Gift," said Muaz Nasir, the publisher of the Canadian environmental website, Khaleafa.com and one of the founders of the Campaign. "God states in the Qur'an, 'We made from water every living thing (21:30),' and we hope, this year, to raise awareness on the immense gift of water that we're blessed with."

"The Campaign challenge is to request all Muslims to commit to protect, care for and wisely use our water resources with the 3 C action plan: Consume wisely, Conserve responsibly and Care for our waters."

The Campaign was launched in 2012 in Canada and, every year, Imams across the world are encouraged to deliver a message that remind their congregations of the Qur'anic message to be stewards of the earth and its environment.

The 'Green Khutbah Campaign' commemorates Earth Day that will take place on Wednesday, April 22.

The first Earth Day, held on April 22, 1970, activated 20 million Americans from all walks of life and is widely credited with launching the modern environmental movement. More than 1 billion people across the world now participate in Earth Day activities each year, making it the largest civic observance in the world.

Environmental concern around the world is on the wane, according to the GlobeScan global poll that tracked public concern on six environmental issues. The poll found that across eighteen countries, public concern about water pollution, fresh water shortages,

natural resource depletion, air pollution, climate change and biodiversity loss is way down from its peak in 2009.

However, Muaz Nasir says that Muslims cannot tune out from the environmental damage. "Tuning out would mean that we are disregarding our moral responsibility to God's creation," he said.

"Those who violate or abuse the Trust are described in the Qur'an as those who corrupt, degrade and bring ruin on earth," Muaz Nasir added. "The corrupters abuse the Trust and are in clear contrast to what Muslims must be - the stewards of the earth."

An extensive online resource has been created by Khaleafa.com ([www.khaleafa.com/greenkhutbah](http://www.khaleafa.com/greenkhutbah)) to support the 'Green Khutbah Campaign' and Islamic organizations and well-known leaders are throwing their support behind the initiative.

For more information, photos or to arrange an interview please contact:

Umar Nasir, Media Relations,

Green Khutbah Campaign e: <http://khaleafa.com/contact>

#### Article | Let's become stewards of the earth - Published April 21, 2011

"It is he (Allah) that has appointed you (mankind) as stewards in the Earth..." (Qur'an, 35:39)

As Earth Day 2011 quickly approaches, many of us take this opportunity to reflect and participate in annual community events aimed at reducing our environmental impact on our planet. Every year more than 6 million Canadians join over 1 billion people globally in 170 countries in staging events designed at raising awareness of the environment[i]. As Canadians we are intrinsically connected with the environment. The Canadian wilderness conjures up idealized images of pristine lakes, vast tracts of forests and endless coastlines. Although most of us live in urban areas, the multi-billion dollar outdoor and recreation industry indicates most of us seasonally enjoy the great outdoors[ii].

However our perception of nature is changing with 56% of Canadians rating the overall quality of the environment in their province as good or better. Many of us are concerned with the growing impact of climate change (85%) and our perception of the quality of the environment in general indicates it is getting worse (47%)[iii]. With growing concern over the future of our planet, the mandate of Earth Day has shifted



from increasing awareness of environmental issues to outlining proactive steps individuals can take to reduce their ecological footprint[iv].

It is safe to assume that Muslim Canadian attitudes reflect similar national trends. While the community as a whole has only recently recognized the future potential of the environmental movement, the Islamic tradition is rich in progressive conservation ideals based on Islamic teachings of the Quran and Sunnah. Muslim countries have quickly adopted the green movement with new projects appearing in Jordan, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. There are many proactive steps Muslims can take in their everyday routines that adhere to the Islamic perspective of stewardship and conservation.

### **Water**

*Do not the Unbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were joined together (as one unit of creation), before we clove them asunder? We made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe? (Qu'rán, 21:30).*

*Consider the water you drink. Was it you who brought it down the rain cloud or We? If We had pleased, We could make it bitter: why then do you not give thanks? (Qu'rán, 56: 68-70)*

Water is the sustenance of life, however we often take it for granted not realizing its true value. As freshwater resources become scarce, the future management is becoming increasingly important. Simple steps can culminate in saving large volumes of water over the long term.

- Ensure the fixtures in your homes, offices, schools and mosques are water efficient and be mindful of you water use. Monitoring your water consumption not only identifies potential cost savings but adheres to the Prophet's teaching surrounding its use.
- Make conscious purchasing decisions that include the hidden costs of water. It may surprise you to find out the amount of water that goes into the consumer products we purchase and foods we eat. There are many online tools that help you calculate the true water costs of everyday items.
- Become familiar with your municipality's water conservation plan and become engaged in the long-term management of water in your community. Various levels of government routinely consult with the public on the future direction of water use and its value to society.

### **Waste**

*And He gives you of all that you ask for. But if you count the favours of Allah, never will you be able to number them. (Qu'rán, 14:34)*

*It is He Who has brought into being gardens the trellised and untrellised – and the palm trees, and crops, all varying in taste, and the olive and pomegranates, all resembling one another and yet so different. Eat of their fruits when they come to fruition and pay His due on the day of harvesting. And do not waste (God’s bounties): verily, He does not love the wasteful. (Qu’rán, 6:141)*

Waste is something that has become endemic in our society. With the rapid evolution of technology and the spread of consumerism, we purchase, consume and discard material goods faster than any period in history. Waste has become incorporated into every aspect of our lives from excessive packing to disposable products but can be easily avoided by returning back to the basics of the 3R’s

- **Reduce:** Before making a purchase, think about if you really need the item to begin with. Reducing what you consume can be the most liberating action you can take. Many of our purchasing choices are driven by impulse derived from clever marketing campaigns. Preplanning can help with this by creating a list of items you need before you leave home and budgeting accordingly. At your mosque, consider holding litterless iftars this Ramadan and encourage your administration to adopt a green sourcing clause in its purchasing policies aimed at minimizing waste.
- **Reuse:** This goes beyond reusing glass jars and old boxes. Think about alternate uses for an old item or someone else who would make better use of it. Books can be passed on to local libraries, toys can be donated to community centers and children clothes can be exchanged with friends and family. At home consider installing a greywater system that uses rainwater for non-potable uses such as flushing toilets or in the garden. Also, think about purchasing reusable products as opposed to disposable. Not only will it be more economical, but will also reduce your own ecological footprint.
- **Recycle:** Most urban municipalities today have some form of recycling program in place. Several provinces have environmental fees for the safe disposal of electronics, tires, chemicals and other waste solvents that recover the valuable components of used products and safely dispose of the residual waste. While this only deals with the end product, the only way to truly eliminate waste is to avoid unnecessary purchases to begin with. Consider purchasing items that are designed for the environment; which are dismantable and can be easily recycled into other products.

### **Nature**

*“There is none amongst the Muslims who plants a tree or sows seeds, and then a bird, or a person or an animal eats from it, but is regarded as a charitable gift for him.” (Bukhari, Vol3, B:39-513).*

*Corruption has appeared on the land and in the sea because of what the hands of humans have wrought. This in order that we give them a taste of the consequences of their misdeeds that perhaps they will turn to the path of right guidance (Qu'rán, 30:41).*

As stewards of the natural world, we have a responsibility to ensure that the principles of Islam are enshrined in the management of the environment. This starts with taking a proactive role in local communities as well as being included in the national discourse surrounding the future direction of environmental policy. Several measures can be taken to bring the environment to the forefront of these discussions.

- Become involved with your local conservation authority or national/provincial park. Many run outreach events for both children and adults that include aspects of conservation, education and monitoring of both wildlife and plant species.
  - Consider organizing your own clean-up, tree planting event or community garden at your local mosque. Events like this bring together communities around a common goal and enhance the natural surroundings for worship.
  - Perform outreach with other faith organizations that have similar environmental goals. Decision makers are more inclined to listen to a unified voice that represents all faith communities and possible barriers can be broken down through interfaith dialogue. While Earth Day may be one day out of the year for many Canadians, the stewardship responsibility of the planet should be a daily consideration of all Muslims. Simple steps in your daily routine can minimize your individual ecological impact and create a more livable environment consistent with Islamic teachings of the Quran and Sunnah.
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[i] Earth Day Canada (2011) Celebrated every April 22, Earth Day is the largest, most celebrated environmental event worldwide. Last Accessed April 20 2011 at:

<http://www.earthday.ca/pub/about/history.php>

[ii] Statistics Canada (2009) Summary statistics for the amusement and recreation industry, Canada, 2009. Last Accessed April 20 2011 at:

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/63-248-x/2011001/t001-eng.htm>

[iii] Martyn, Chris. (2007) Getting Real – How Do Canadians View the Environment and Energy? Ipsos Reid. Last Accessed April 20 2011 at: <https://www.ipsos-na.com/knowledge-ideas/public-affairs/ipsos-ideas/Default.aspx?q=getting-real-how-do-canadians-view-the-environment-and-energy->

[iv] Statistics Canada (2009) Households and the Environment. Last Accessed April 20 2011 at: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-526-x/11-526-x2007001-eng.pdf>





### Resources:

Green Deen South Africa: <http://greendeen.msa.org.za/>

Islamic Environmental Group Wisconsin: <http://islamicenvironmentalgroup.org/>

Green Muslims: <http://www.greenmuslims.org/>

MADE in Europe: <https://www.madeineurope.org.uk/campaigns/greenup>

GreenFaith - Islamic Statements on the Environment:

<http://www.greenfaith.org/religious-teachings/islamic-statements-on-the-environment>

Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences: <http://www.ifees.org.uk/>

CBC Ideas: Is Islam a Green Religion?: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/cbc-ideas-is-islam-the-green-religion-1.2810850>

### **Canon Linda Nixon (Anglican Diocese of Huron EnviroAction Committee)**

It was an honour to be part of the Multifaith Climate Ifatar and to be able to present the work of the Diocese of Huron's EnviroAction Committee. Our experience has proven over the last decade that a grassroots approach to working collaboratively can be and has been successful. We encourage anyone with an interest in the environment to gather like minded individuals together pick a perspective and a project and go for it! Our work has transformed over the years from very local initiatives like getting rid of styrofoam, plastic water bottles and building audits to now networking across the country and taking political initiative. There are many organizations now that have websites and initiatives that invite your participation, [350.org](http://350.org) being the one that helped pull our march in Toronto together.

Given thought to what might be useful to others, my co-chair and I suggest these books: Living Ecological Justice: A Biblical Response to the Environmental Crisis ISBN 978-0-9686695-2-5, This is a book that has a variety of suggestions for action and discussion. Naomi Klein's This Changes Everything. If you only read the introduction it is worth having this book! As we belong to the Anglican Church of Canada we are members of the Church of England. The following article is a useful tool for anyone who is seeking policy on Socially Responsible Investment

Plans. <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2223994/climate.change.policy.30.04.15.pdf> On October 25, 2011 there was a 'Canadian Interfaith Call for Leadership and Action on Climate Change'. On page 108 of Living Ecological Justice it says " We,



representative of Canadian faith communities, are united in our conviction that growing crisis of climate change needs to be met by solutions that draw upon the moral and spiritual resources of the world's religious traditions. ... " I have been humbled by the work of all those who presented on July 5 and proud to be part of our collective efforts. I truly believe that together we can and will make a difference in battling this climate crisis!

**Ven. Jue Qian (Fo Guang Shan Toronto) & Ranjana Mitra (Community Environment Alliance)**

Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Temple of Toronto ([fgs.ca](http://fgs.ca)) has been working with Community Environment Alliance ([communityenvironment.org](http://communityenvironment.org)) on Zero Waste Campaign project. The Zero Waste Campaign has been initiated by the Temple with multi-level commitment from the Temple Management, to the staff, the Temple volunteer including the Buddha's Light International Association (BLIA) membership. The project's primary objective is to adopt practices and policies that will help the Temple to reduce its ecological footprint while serving the congregation with care and compassion. Environmental protection and stewardship has been considered a priority. As such, every action, event and activity is currently being planned with due diligence to ensure that we reduce wastage, and reuse as much as we can to create a better future for this planet. Critical components of the project include *implementing a Waste Audit with Waste Reduction and Management Plan*, and establishing a *Zero Waste Learning Garden* for everyone to learn Zero Waste Growing technique. If you would like to reduce the environmental impact of your place of worship and want information on implementing a Zero Waste Campaign, please contact Community Environment Alliance ([connect@communityenvironment.org](mailto:connect@communityenvironment.org))

**Joy Kennedy (Interfaith Fast for the Climate) & Rita Bijons (Climate Fast)**

The fierce urgency of now.

**Engage with you candidates to sign the ClimateFast Pledge for Politicians!**



To date, **130 MPs** and **15 Senators** have signed the ClimateFast Pledge for Politicians, pledging to work to:

- put an end to fossil fuel subsidies
- put a price on carbon
- develop a renewable energy plan for Canada

To see who has signed, visit: <http://climatefast.ca/members-pledge-status>

We are asking you to seize the day, and engage with each of your candidates for our upcoming federal election, asking them to sign the Pledge, and thereby show their political will for real action on climate change. Thank you for sharing this necessary vision for a just transition to a safe climate future.

If you do not have a hard copy of the Pledge, you may print it from our website ( [www.climatefast.ca](http://www.climatefast.ca) ) ; click the thumbnail of the Pledge located in the right sidebar for the printable version. If you are able to meet a candidate in person, and also take a photo of your candidate signing, please send the photo to: [climatefast@climatefast.ca](mailto:climatefast@climatefast.ca)  
We also ask that you please send the hard copy of the Pledge, signed by the candidate, to:

ClimateFast  
c/o 14 Highview Crescent  
Toronto, Ontario  
M6H 2Y2

You may also call: [\(416\) 825 6773](tel:4168256773) or [\(647\) 667 2905](tel:6476672905) for any further information.

Your candidate may also sign the Pledge online

through: <http://www.climatefast.ca/pledge-support-fast-candidate>

To sign the Interfaith Fast for the Climate pledge, please visit

<http://fastfortheclimate.org/en/>

## Exciting News!

Turkey recently released the 'Islamic Climate Change Declaration', presenting the moral case, based on Islamic teachings, for Muslims and all people to take urgent climate action. The Declaration calls for a rapid phase-out of fossil fuels, a switch to 100%

renewable energy, and increased support for vulnerable communities already suffering from climate impacts.

Read [the Declaration](#)

Read media coverage about the Declaration on [MSNBC](#), [Reuters](#), and [Democracy Now!](#)

## Further Faith-based Environmental Resources

Union for Reform Judaism — <http://urj.org//green/index.cfm>

Khaleafa.com — <http://khaleafa.com/>

Green Muslims — <http://www.greenmuslims.org>

EcoSikh — <http://www.ecosikh.org/>

BrightNow — Fossil Free Churches Org in the UK — <http://brightnow.org.uk/>

Muslim Agency for Development Education — Green Up Campaign (Europe) — <https://www.madeineurope.org.uk/campaigns/greenup>

Canadian Interfaith Fast for the Climate — <https://www.facebook.com/climatefaith>

Blessed Tomorrow — <http://blessedtomorrow.org/>

Catholic Climate Covenant — <http://catholicclimatecovenant.org/>

One Earth Sangha — <http://www.oneearthsangha.org/>

Ecological Buddhism — <http://www.ecobuddhism.org/>

Our Voices — <http://ourvoices.net>

GreenFaith — <http://greenfaith.org/programs/divest-and-reinvest>

KAIROS — <http://www.kairoscanada.org/sustainability/climate-justice/>

Greening Sacred Spaces — <http://www.greeningsacredspaces.net>



Canadian Council of Churches — <http://www.councilofchurches.ca/social-justice/climate-justice/>

Citizens for a Public Justice — <http://www.cpj.ca/climate>, <http://www.cpj.ca/eco-justice>, <http://www.cpj.ca/ecological-justice>

Canadian Religious Conference — <http://www.crc-canada.org/en/workshops-activities/justice-peace-creation>

Fossil Free Menno — <http://fossilfreemenno.org/>

Anglican Communion Environmental Network — <http://acen.anglicancommunion.org/>

Trinity St Pauls United Church — <http://www.trinitystpauls.ca/climate-justice>

International Environmental Forum (Baha'i) — <http://www.iefworld.org/>

Eglise Vert — <http://egliseverte-greenchurch.ca/vert/>

The Yale Forum on Religion and Ecology — <http://fore.research.yale.edu/>

EcoSeva (Hindu American Seva Communities) — <http://www.hinduamericanseva.org/EcoSeva>

Alliance of Religion and Conservation — <http://www.arcworld.org/>

First Nations Environmental Network — <http://www.fnen.org/>

Assembly of First Nations, Environmental Stewardship — <http://www.afn.ca/index.php/en/policy-areas/environmental-stewardship>

Coalition on the Environment & Jewish Life — <http://www.coejl.org/>

The Bhumi Project — <http://www.bhumiproject.org/>

**Also:**

See Faith & The Common Good's [blog post](#) about the evening





*The Multifaith Climate Action Iftar was presented jointly by*

*[Faith & The Common Good](#) and [Noor Cultural Centre](#)*

*Please stay in touch by signing up for our mailing lists -*

*<http://greeningsacredspaces.net/news/newsletter-sign-up/>*

*[http://www.noorculturalcentre.ca/?page\\_id=316](http://www.noorculturalcentre.ca/?page_id=316)*

Thank you to the following for supporting this event -

[Canadian Council of Churches](#), [Church of Scientology Toronto](#), [Citizens for Public Justice](#), [Cordoba Centre for Civic Engagement and Leadership](#), [Donway Covenant United Church](#), [Eco-Sikh](#), [Fo Guang Shan Toronto](#), [Green Awakening Network](#), [Intercultural Dialogue Institute GTA](#), [KAİROS Canada](#), [Khaleafa](#), [Neighbourhood Interfaith Group](#), [Sacred Water Circle](#), Toronto Area Interfaith Council, [Toronto Board of Rabbis](#), [World Interfaith Harmony Week Toronto](#)